

Navigating Diversity at HSHV

You'll meet a diverse group of Staff, Volunteers, Customers, and Community members through HSHV. A wide variety of social identity groups are represented, which can be race, ethnicity, culture, gender identity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, religion, disability, age, and many more. Many people may also belong to more than one of these social identity groups. It's important to understand that belonging to any one of these groups can change the way you experience the world, and people will have unique points of view because of this. These points of view are important to our organization, and it is important to us that Staff and Volunteers are respectful of each other's and others diverse traits. This document is meant to help you navigate the diverse world of HSHV!

Common Terms:

human rights: rights to which all human beings are inherently entitled. Human rights are defined by the United Nations as "universal legal rights that protect individuals and groups from those behaviors that interfere with freedom and human dignity".

marginalization: relegation to or placement in an unimportant or a depowered position in society.

privilege: unearned power that is afforded to some but not others based on status rather than earned merit; such power may come in the form of rights, benefits, social comfort, opportunities, or the ability to define what is normative or valued. A person has privilege not because they want to have privilege or promote inequity but because they exist within a system where biased values, attitudes, and behaviors have become integrated and normalized.

minority: a minority group is a population subgroup (e.g., ethnic, racial, social, religious, or other group) with differential power than those deemed to hold the majority power in the population.

bias: APA defines bias as partiality: an inclination or predisposition for or against something. Motivational and cognitive biases are two main categories studied in decision-making analysis. Motivational biases are conclusions drawn due to self-interest, social pressures, or organization-based needs, while cognitive biases are judgments that go against what is considered rational, and some of these are attributed to implicit reasoning.

stereotype: a set of cognitive generalizations (e.g., beliefs, expectations) about the qualities and characteristics of the members of a group or social category. Stereotypes

simplify and speed up perceptions and judgments, but they are often exaggerated, negative rather than positive, and resistant to revision even when perceivers meet individuals with qualities that are not the same as the stereotype.

prejudice: a negative attitude toward another person or group formed in advance of any experience with that person or group. Prejudices can include an affective part (e.g., nervousness, anger, contempt, pity, hatred) and a cognitive part (assumptions and beliefs about groups, including stereotypes).

discrimination: the unjust and differential treatment of the members of different age, gender, racial, ethnic, religious, national, ability identity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic, and other groups at the individual level (e.g., hate crimes, microaggressions, denial of service, etc.) and the institutional/structural level (e.g., operating procedures, laws, and policies) that favor certain groups over others and has the effect of restricting opportunities for other groups.

oppression: occurs when one subgroup has more access to power and privilege than another subgroup, and when that power and privilege are used to dominate the other to keep the status quo. Oppression is both a state and a process, with the state of oppression being unequal group access to power and privilege, and the process of oppression being the ways in which that inequality is kept.

social justice: commitment to creating fairness and equity in resources, rights, and treatment of marginalized individuals and groups of people who do not share equal power in society.

ally/allies: people who recognize the unearned privilege they receive from society's patterns of injustice and take responsibility for changing these patterns. Being an ally is more than being sympathetic and feeling bad for those who experience discrimination. An ally is willing to act with, and for, others in pursuit of ending oppression and creating equality. Real allies are willing to step out of their comfort zones. Those who decide to undertake the ally role must recognize and understand the power and privileges that one receives, accepts, and experiences and they use that position to act for justice.

What should you be doing at HSHV?

1. **Be respectful!** Almost all these topics and fancy words boil down to one thing; be respectful of other people. Respect for other beliefs, religions, gender identities, sexual orientation, and cultures can go a long way to creating a welcoming environment!
2. **Leave bias, stereotypes, and prejudice at the door.** While getting past many of these takes a lot of learning and effort, try your best to be mindful of preconceived notions when coming in to HSHV, and don't let them affect the way you interact with staff, volunteers, customers, and community members. Any bias, stereotype, or

prejudice you believe should never get in the way of an animal receiving proper care or finding a loving home!

3. **Keep an open mind!** Try to understand where people are coming from, rather than getting frustrated because of a difference in understanding or action. Everyone has had a different experience in life and will interact with the world differently because of that. Be accepting of differences and remember that different is not necessarily better or worse, it's just different!
4. **Ask for help if you need it!** If you're struggling with understanding a difference, ask for help! Staff should always feel free to speak with their manager or Human Resources, and volunteers should reach out to the volunteer department with issues. Additional resources are also available in the DEI folder.