

Emory University DEI Strategic Planning Community Report

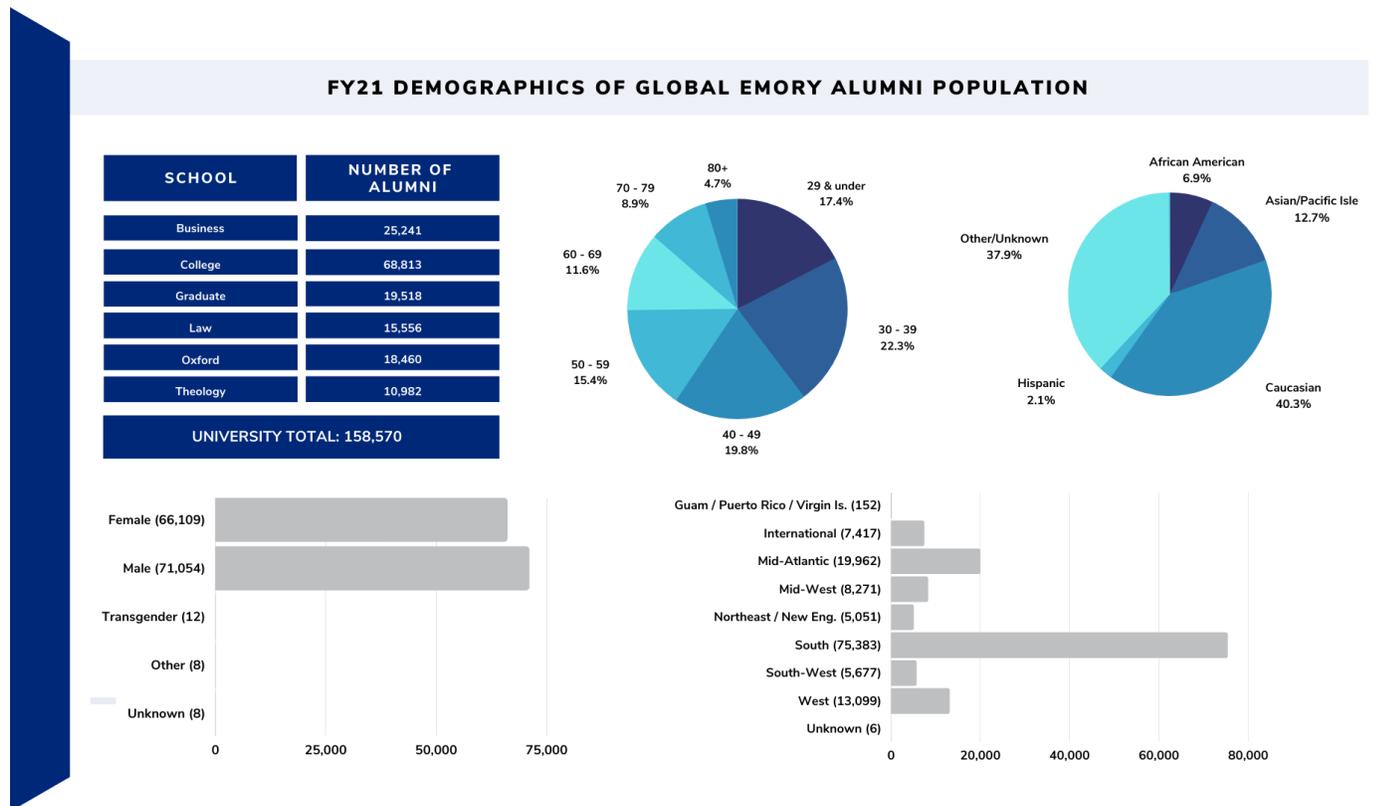
Community Group: Emory Alumni

Community Lead(s): Munir Meghjani 080x 10C and Isabel Garcia 99L

Date: September 8, 2021

Background- Who are Emory Alumni?

Emory’s alumni network is strong; at its core is a diverse population of 158,000 individuals who are leaders, professionals, volunteers, mentors, and much more. Here is a statistical snapshot of the Emory Alumni community:



The Emory Alumni Association's mission is to connect alumni to the university and to each other, build traditions, foster student and alumni leadership, serve the diverse needs and interests of our community, and create opportunities for investment in Emory's future. We strive to develop a dedicated and dynamic, global alumni community whose members are committed to each other, devoted to Emory's mission, and invested in its future.

Alumni Committee

Committee members: Jeremy Berry 97C 03L, Jonathan Butler 96C, Isabel Garcia (co-chair) 99L, Steve Greenfield 04MBA, Pierce Hand 11C, JingJing Li 19G, Munir Meghjani (co-chair) 08Ox, 10C, Beth Michel 12PH, Jalyn Radzinski, Maria Town, Antoine Trammell 16MPH, Isam Vaid 93Ox 95C 99PH. Marche Simpson and Laurie Stephens Hunter were the staff partners for the committee.

The committee included a diverse group of Emory alumni that spanned generations, geography, race/ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religious backgrounds and disabilities. Our purpose was to explore the alumni experience through the lens of diversity, equity and inclusion. An Emory student becomes an alumnus after completing two semesters at the university. Since the alumni journey begins as a student, we focused our work on the stages of engagement – prospective student, student, new graduate, young alumni (1- 10 years post-graduation), and seasoned alumni. We also examined Emory's alumni board and volunteer leadership structure and operation.

Meeting schedule

- January 25 – Kickoff
- February 15 – Overview
- March 15 – Alumni
- April 19 – Young Alumni
- April 21- DEI workshop with Valerie Williams 13MBA, Founder & Managing Partner of Converge Firm
- May 17 – Organizational Structure
- June 21 – Recruitment / Student/new graduate
- July 19 – Wrap up

The committee met monthly to share their personal experience and that of their peers as they proceeded through the continuum of alumni engagement. These meetings functioned as focus groups and offered a space for alumni voices to be heard. We also delved into the experiences, events and communication offered to our alumni and asked key questions about inclusion, messaging, opportunity, and access.

We held a workshop on DEI with Valerie Williams 13MBA who is the Founder & Managing Partner at Converge Firm. The mission of Converge is to help organizations design and implement DEI strategies and have bold conversations. The workshop helped the committee

develop a shared understanding of DEI and how it can be embedded into University Alumni Associations. Valerie also led us through a strategic discussion to help us define our goals and priorities, identify potential roadblocks and challenges, and determine the key stakeholders in our work. In order to broaden our reach and perspective, we included the Emory Alumni Board DEI Task Force in this workshop. The Task Force was working in tandem with our committee and included the incoming presidents of each of Emory's schools and unit alumni boards. Their involvement and buy-in is critical for us to create diverse and inclusive leadership opportunities for all alumni.

Additional research utilized by the committee:

- Emory Alumni community statistics (attached as addendum)
- The Emory Alumni Attitude survey (attached as addendum)
- Converge workshop results – mural board (attached as addendum)
- Benchmarking with peer institutions – Yale and University of Michigan (included in Workshop addendum)
 - <https://alumni.yale.edu/your-alumni-association/diversity-equity-and-inclusion>
 - <https://alumni.umich.edu/about/diversity/>
- Results from the DEI Alumni Boards Leadership Task Force (attached as addendum)

Inclusion Alumni Engagement Strategy

Emory Alumni Association embraces the full identity of not only our alumni community, but our Emory community at large and by building authentic relationships. We welcome diversity of identity, lived experience, background, and thought. We commit to removing barriers that prevent our community from accessing and participating as full community members: in programming and alumni benefits, in making a connection to campus, and in cultivating a sustainable relationship with Emory Alumni Association and Emory University.

Key Focus Areas for Inclusive Alumni Engagement:

- Programming and Engagement
- Leadership Development and Service Opportunities
- Campus and Community Partnerships
- Divisional Commitment to People Centered Better Practices

Diversity and Inclusion Engagement seeks to curate and produce opportunities toward:

- ACCESS – Making it a priority to implement the change and updates needed to make programming, engagement, and leadership opportunities accessible to all. Full equity and inclusion must be considered in everything that we do in service to the Emory community.

- OPPORTUNITY – We must provide our alumni the ability to lead, serve, and engage without barriers. Recognizing and acknowledging our alumni from diverse backgrounds and identities is the only way the work that we do will be long lasting and sustainable.
- INCLUSION - It is vital that alumni see themselves represented in all that we do and that students see themselves represented in our alumni. Increasing diversity on our alumni boards, network boards, and committees is one way we elevate that representation.

The Emory Alumni Community Committee offers the following recommendations for consideration:

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, EDUCATION/AWARENESS

- Review the admissions recruitment and outreach process to ensure that the high schools visited include diverse (geography, racial/ethnic and socio-economic) populations and clarify the alumni volunteer role in this outreach. (mid-term)
- Create a focused admissions outreach effort in Atlanta area high schools to recruit students who would qualify for the MLK scholarship and expand the alumni volunteer role in meeting this goal. (mid-term)
- Ensure that the Alumni Admissions Program creates a positive experience for alumni volunteers and students. Program should include intentional recruitment for diverse volunteers, review training and a feedback process for alumni interviewers to create a welcoming and inclusive experience for all prospective students. (mid-term)
- The EAB, school/unit alumni boards and network groups should annually offer workshops and training on DEI related issues. (mid-term)
- A DEI checklist for alumni events should be created and utilized to ensure that activities are inclusive. (short-term)
- Create a plan to ensure a personal and warm connection between student based and alumni-based identity/affinity groups so new alumni feel welcomed and connected to the alumni community. (long-term)

CLIMATE AND CULTURE

- Study the challenge of how to seed an interest and commitment to service in students and young alumni. (long-term)
- Ensure that alumni events and programs include a mix of topics and activities that will appeal to a variety of alumni interests, particularly family friendly or alcohol-free events. (mid-term)

- Study the need for the creation of identity/affinity groups and programs for Emory alumni who are Asian and Asian-American. (mid-term)
- Identify and/or create accessible and welcoming meeting spaces on campus for alumni groups – (mid-term)

ACCOUNTABILITY

- The EAB, school/unit alumni boards and alumni network groups should conduct an annual review of their current leadership, membership, and pipeline to ensure diversity of all kinds is reflected and that the body represents the alumni population that it serves. (short-term)
- Assess the current Emory admissions process to ascertain if the legacy status of prospective students creates an unfair advantage over those who are unaffiliated with the University, particularly those in marginalized communities. (long-term)
- Ensure that a variety of diverse communities is at the table when developing the concept/design for new buildings and spaces on campus; accessibility being of great importance. (long-term)
- Diversify vendor list for Emory alumni events and consider providing equity for small caterers who meet dietary needs yet struggle to afford Emory's requirements. (mid-term.)