



## **AAHS 2022 Demographic Survey Summary Statement AAHS Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee**

With the goals of gaining insight into our current AAHS member demographics and as an initial step in learning how the AAHS leadership can improve our member experience, the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee sent a survey to members in the fourth quarter of 2022. As of 2022, the AAHS maintained 1,478 members. We had a high response rate with 454 members completing the survey (approximately 30% of the membership). Thank you for taking the time!

Why are diversity, equity, and inclusion important?

Diversity improves openness, equality, and a sense of belonging, and gender-diverse and ethnically diverse companies outperform their competitors by 15-35%. When the members of an organization feel a sense of belonging, they are more likely to remain. Universities and organizations have created initiatives to improve social justice and increase opportunities for all members of society. Volunteer organizations must also vie for members, and offering an opportunity to work with a diverse group to achieve shared goals can be an inducement.

The ten-question survey was reviewed and modified over 3 months by the DEI Committee and Board of AAHS members. Questions focused on personal and employment-related demographics. The findings were not surprising, but they will hopefully be helpful in long-range development plans for the Board. The analysis below reflects data on members who responded to the survey.

The percentages of plastic and orthopedic surgeon respondent members were fairly similar with 34% (n=154) of respondents being plastic surgeons and 45% (n=204) being orthopedic surgeons. Given the over 2:1 ratio of orthopedic to plastic surgeons in the US (18,000 vs. 7,200), this is an exciting finding as it creates equitable opportunities between members of the specialties in building an organization with diverse viewpoints. As was expected, only a small percentage of members were primarily trained in general surgery (5%), but this percentage is representative of that of hand surgeons with general-surgery backgrounds nationally. Twelve percent of our members are hand therapists, a distinguishing feature of our society that adds diversity of thought to committees and the Board. The remaining respondent members are Physician Assistants (1%) and residents or fellows (6%). We will explore all groups to identify recruitment strategies that would make them interested in becoming active members.

The ages of our members fall into a slightly bimodal distribution with peaks around ages 40 and 66 and a range between 27-87 years old! This reflects the overall trend of aging among US physicians: 47% of practicing physicians are older than 55. Knowing that our society values members of all ages is inspiring and provides needed perspective.

Two-thirds of our members identify as male and 31% as female. Two percent preferred not to answer or chose "other." When comparing our organization to others in terms of gender, 37% of all physicians in the US and 23% of plastic surgeons are women. In the American Society for Surgery of the Hand, 86% of members are men, similar to the gender split in orthopedic surgery in general (94% male 6% female). Our hand therapist members likely help the smaller gender difference, but it suggests that our organization welcomes all professionals.

Most of our members are White/Caucasian (77%), 5% are Black/African American, 6% are Hispanic/Latinx, 8% are Asian, and 1% are American Indian/Alaska Native. Our ethnic diversity is not very dissimilar to US physicians: 64% are white, 21% are Asian, 7% are Hispanic/Latinx, and 6% are Black. (AAMC Survey, January 2023) The ASSH membership is less diverse with 83% of members identifying as Caucasian, 2% as Black, 10% as Asian, and 4% Hispanic/Latinx. We do have room to grow compared to ethnic demographics in the US: 58% white, 12% Black, 19% Hispanic, 6% Asian, and 1% American Indian/Native Alaskan. Over the past year, medical school enrollment has increased by 3%. The number of

Black matriculants has increased by 9% (with the number of Black male 1st-year medical students increasing by 5%. Hispanic/Latinx students have increased by 4%; this group now represents 12% of all medical students. (AAMC survey)

Three percent of our members identify as LGBTQIA+; 73% do not. Approximately 5% of adults in the US identify as lesbian or gay (Editorial, Am J Surg, 2022) and 5-11% of surgical residents identify as LGBTQ+ (Lee, 2014; Heiderscheid, 2022).

We have members from a broad array of practice types: 28% are in private practice, 44% are in academia, 20% are hospital-based, 4% are in solo practice, 36% are in some form of group or multispecialty practice and 4% are working part-time.

Spouses/partners/significant others accompany the member to the AAHS Annual Meeting 52% of the time. 31% of members have children under the age of 12 (n=141). This is not surprising given our long-term goal of having the Annual Meeting in a resort location in January, which shows that our members value this.

Many respondents (30%, n=138) are active in committees or serve as faculty, and an additional 15% (n=69) are interested in becoming more involved!

In summary, the findings of the survey were encouraging in that we have an organization that is attractive to diverse surgeons and therapists at all stages of their careers. This initial demographic survey will help define our organization's makeup and follow changing trends.

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/joshbersin/2015/12/06/why-diversity-and-inclusion-will-be-a-top-priority-for-2016/?sh=5cc530672ed5>

<https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/gender-equality/taking-the-lead-for-inclusion>

<https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/mckinsey-explainers/what-is-diversity-equityand-inclusion>