

Thursday, November 21, 2024



City of Olympia Boards and Commissions Committee Application

DEADLINE FOR APPLICATION SUBMISSION

Friday, December 13th at 5:00 PM PST

Advisory committees are a structured way for individual community members to share their opinions and perspectives, study issues, and develop recommendations in a focused small group. Their primary purpose is to provide judicious advice, from a community member's perspective, to the Olympia City Council.

Committee activities may include study of critical issues, hearing public testimony, independent research, and reviewing staff reports and recommendations - all of which is intended so that the committee is prepared to discuss, formulate, and forward well-developed, thoughtful recommendations to the City Council in a timely manner.

The City of Olympia values participation from all perspectives and life experiences and looks for equity and inclusion in advisory board appointments.

To reduce barriers to community member participation, the City offers stipends of \$25 per meeting attended to Advisory Committee members. Those members who certify as low income are eligible to receive stipends of \$50 per meeting attended. Advisory Committee members may waive the stipend upon request.

The Olympia City Council's Community Livability and Public Safety Committee recommends appointments to the full Council. Recommendations are made following review of applications and interviews of qualified candidates.

All of this careful consideration takes time, please be aware that you will not be notified until February of 2025 of any next steps in the process.

The City of Olympia is committed to the non-discriminatory treatment of all persons in employment and the delivery of services and resources. Questions? Contact Dawn Carvalho, Executive Services Assistant, 360.753.8065, dcarvalh@ci.olympia.wa.us

If you saved or submitted an application and did not receive a confirmation, please check your spam folder. When filed with the City, your application and attachment documents are public records and may be subject to public release.

Name	Kieran Stilson
Email	[REDACTED]
Primary Phone Number	[REDACTED]
Address	[REDACTED]

Some appointments require that applicants reside within Olympia city limits. Even though your mailing address may be Olympia, you may reside in the County or another jurisdiction. Are you a resident of the City of Olympia?

Yes

Select your residential area (Olympia residency is not required; however, it is a primary consideration.)

Westside

Which Boards and Commissions would you like to apply for?

Social Justice and Equity Commission

Interests & Experiences

Please keep answers concise and informative. You are introducing yourself to the Olympia City Council and sharing with them why you are interested in being considered for appointment. You may attach a resume.

Attach a Resume



Kieran Stilson Resume Social... .pdf

Briefly describe why you wish to serve on this/these Advisory Committee(s).

From the moment I learned about social injustice, I've been passionate about changing it. My journey in this area began with a leadership seminar back in 2012, where I was presented with statistics that highlighted the prejudice faced by many. I have spent the last 12+ years learning all I can to improve the world around me, which involved switching my major in college and pursuing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) work in my career. About a year ago, I embarked on a certificate program at the Evergreen State College for Trauma Informed Engagement and Healing. It was heavy and intense, but illuminating and transformational. As a lifelong Olympia native, I am ready to commit to a more intentional opportunity for inspiring change at a local level, making a difference and honoring the community that has always been my home.

Describe your experience, qualifications, and/or skills which would benefit the advisory committee(s) you are applying to.

I am skilled at interpersonal relations, facilitation, listening, conflict resolution, and emotional intelligence. My understanding of the human experience allows me to bring inclusion and compassion into all interactions. Experience in corporate DEI and its strategy has taught me patience and professionalism on the journey towards equality.

And from the great Loretta Ross, I have learned that joy is an essential part of activism. I'm starting to realize just how true that is. I not only bring passion for change, but the joy to keep us fighting.

Share the ways you've been involved or have volunteered in the community.

Getting involved in my local circus community has been one of my favorite ways to give back. That community has taught me practical understanding of DEI concepts, especially within the LGBTQIA+ community. Serving on the Airbound Arts Board of Directors challenged me to find commonality and compromise among dissenting board members.

In my youth I loved to give back to Olympia, from LEAD environmental outreach, Tumwater Youth Programs, Capital Playhouse, various leadership seminars, etc. There is so much research into how giving back is returned exponentially to our own wellness. I am ready to give more in this area.

List your educational and/or professional background and area of study.

My specialty is in Culture & Diversity work, as well as various capacities of Human Resources. I currently design all culture and diversity assets for various monthly observances, acting as the face of our DEI programs. I host and facilitate trainings, develop DEI content and presentations; we are currently launching Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) and are in the midst of vetting external platforms and vendors who can provide relevant, unbiased, engaging DEI content for staff training.

Appointment to an advisory committee will require your attendance at evening meetings, and undertake other work (reading, meeting preparation etc.). How many hours per month are you willing to commit as a volunteer?

15 - 20 hours a month seems reasonable, though I can be flexible with this.

Question Applies to the Social Justice and Equity Commission: What is your understanding of, or experience in, issues related to social justice, human rights, racial and/or other forms of discrimination?

Unfortunately, there are demographics that experience systemic discrimination and inequality which leads to illness, poverty, and the destruction of beautiful people and communities. This inequality is so deeply engrained, as it is the foundation of our very society. Whether it's employment, education, wealth, home ownership, the Prison Industrial Complex, healthcare, food insecurity, etc., it is rampant and suffocating. These groups are strategically disenfranchised, in order to keep a specific dominant, privileged identity in power. That power takes precedent over the rights and needs of these marginalized communities. All humans deserve safety, equality, and compassion. This is a fight for our humanity.

Question Applies to the Social Justice and Equity Commission: What lived experiences or skill sets would you bring to the Commission?

Although there are elements of my identity that are targeted (woman, queer, middle-eastern), I hold many privileges. With this privilege comes a responsibility to make a difference and fight injustice so that someday, all people feel safe to exist exactly as they are.

Question Applies to the Social Justice and Equity Commission: Describe a time when you experienced a personal bias and how you worked through that bias; or describe a time when you worked with someone with different viewpoints than yours and how you worked through those differences?

Any time you are working with someone with different viewpoints than you, effective communication, listening to understand, and finding common ground is key. This was how Airbound Arts survived during a global pandemic with a consensus board. Our only option was to find compromise and solutions that worked for everyone.

With that said, what I have learned is that humans are biased as a part of our biology, and it's sometimes necessary for survival. I have had to learn to be aware of my biases towards those who hold power (white, able-bodied, cisgender heterosexual men), to understand that stereotyping and judgment of any demographic will not bring the equality I seek. At the same time, there is a knowing that I am also conditioned to be prejudiced towards the marginalized communities I am fighting for. Oftentimes, reality (and our identities) are the coexistence of multiple contradictory truths.

The work is never done. As much as one may study and learn about these topics, true processing of our engrained conditioning will only come from exposure to diverse bodies and experiences, who can inspire and challenge us to learn from one another and create a more just world.

Question Applies to the Social Justice and Equity Commission: Describe what a "just and equitable Olympia for all people" looks or feels like to you and how would you include all marginalized people into this vision.

All Olympians would have their basic human needs met, which means some may need more or less resources than others. We lift each other up, empower authenticity in our identities and inner multitudes, acknowledge intersectionality, find nuance within the binary. We see each person as a spirit having a human experience, and we nourish that spirituality through ensuring our needs are met within all areas of wellness.

And I think it's important to understand that this vision can and will change. As we grow and learn, we get closer to what we envision, but there is always work to do, both within and around us.

If you are not appointed to a Board or Commission at this time:

Do you wish to be considered for appointment to another Board or Commission?

Yes

Do you wish to be considered for future appointment to your preferred Board or Commission?

Yes

If you wish to be considered for another Board or Commission, please identify others you would be interested on being considered for in order of interest:

I would be open to joining the Arts Commission, Cultural Access Advisory Board, or similar (no specific order of interest).

Thank you for your interest in serving on a City of Olympia Advisory Committee!

Please hit the "submit" button below when you have completed your application .

KIERAN STILSON

SHE / THEY



Professional Experience

CULTURE & DIVERSITY SPECIALIST

WSECU | APRIL 2019 - PRESENT

- Lead culture and employee development programs to promote inclusion, drive engagement, and enhance community
 - Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion (DEI), classes, wellness, recognition, volunteerism, onboarding, surveys, brandwear, employee events
 - Improved efficiencies to save four weeks of annual work
- Implement Employee Resource Groups (ERGs), racial equity training, unconscious bias courses; standardize employee DEI learning journey
- Strategize, design, distribute all culture and diversity assets
- Facilitate, organize, present, and evaluate culture & DEI trainings
 - Monthly feedback that classes are inspiring, impactful, & inclusive
- Champion brand as ambassador and liaison with community partners, volunteer organizations, members, employees, vendors
- Provide strategic engagement recommendations to C-Suite

PROGRAM SPECIALIST

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR & INDUSTRIES | JULY 2018 - APRIL 2019

- Program and administrative support, maintaining 20+ calendars
- Determined variances from program standards, updating policies to reflect unit goals/objectives while adhering to state laws
- Planned and facilitated conferences and department meetings
- Served as liaison for departments and external stakeholders

HUMAN RESOURCES ASSISTANT

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH RESOURCES (BHR) | JULY 2016 - JULY 2018

- Managed training, recruiting, funding, leave, credentialing, payroll, benefits, HR information system for 300+ employees
- Implemented applicant tracking system, recruiting strategies, desktop procedures, employee programs (onboarding, NEO, wellness)
- Researched HR laws and advocated for changes re: compliance

Volunteer Experience

AIRBOUND UNDERGROUND CIRCUS COLLECTIVE (2021 - PRESENT)

- Project management and organization of shows
- Perform and volunteer in various capacities

AIRBOUND ARTS BOARD OF DIRECTORS (2020 - 2023)

- Led a nonprofit arts organization through a global pandemic
- Facilitated meetings, navigating & resolving conflict between dissenting members of a consensus board
- Established and evaluated organizational policies through DEI lens
- Increased revenue, acquired grants, managed budget

Profile

Certified DEI professional with a nuanced understanding of the human condition and over 10 years of education and experience in understanding systemic inequality, fighting for human rights, inclusion, & belonging in the Olympia community.

Education

BACHELOR OF ARTS

Western Washington University
Communications & Music
magna cum laude

CERTIFICATIONS

- Trauma Informed Engagement & Healing
- Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion
- Project Management Essentials
- Human Resources Essentials
- SharePoint

Skills

- Communication
- Conflict Resolution
- Event Planning
- Creative Problem-Solving
- Facilitation & Public Speaking
- Leadership
- Emotional Intelligence
- Organization

HUGH O'BRIEN & ALBERT SCHWEITZER YOUTH LEADERSHIP (2012 - 2018)

- Facilitated intentional conversations around DEI, empowering students to bring leadership, service, and action to their communities
- Seminar planning and recruitment
- Developed and presented content around DEI and effective communication