



Employees from Farm Credit Associations across the country travel to FCSAmerica's office to learn more about diversity and inclusion from experts.

Since 1980, Gardenswartz & Rowe has specialized in shaping corporate culture for a variety of clients across the country, helping them build productive and cohesive work teams and create inter-cultural understanding and collaboration in the workplace. On August 4-6, authors of numerous articles and books on diversity, Lee Gardenswartz and Anita Rowe taught a train-the-trainer diversity class in Omaha for Farm Credit System employees from across the United States. Attendees came from large and small Farm Credit associations and all different job roles.

FCSAmerica President and CEO, Doug Stark kicked off the training and shared the company's diversity and inclusion statement, "Embracing diversity and inclusion enables us to leverage our diverse talents to best serve our customers. We will continue to promote a culture where all team members appreciate and respect differences and foster an atmosphere of inclusion while working together to fulfill our mission and vision."

"The energy was unbelievable as Lee and Anita brought us their 30 year combined knowledge of working in the diversity and inclusion industry," said Sarah D'Accio, Risk Analyst. "The stories Lee and Anita shared as well as the participants' stories opened the eyes and hearts of everyone in the room."

FCSAmerica was well represented with four attendees from the Diversity Leadership Team: Karim Khayati, Lead Programmer/Analyst, Ramona Hernandez, Mortgage Specialist, Sarah D'Accio, Risk Analyst, and Erin Flores, Customer Service Coordinator. FCSAmerica brought its diversity and inclusion message and expertise to assist other associations on their diversity and inclusion journey. The session provided participants with the underlying tools needed to assist in training classes at the associations, the opportunity to design a training activity and the chance to present the activity to the class.

The session was filled with a wide range of emotions. Each participant's passion and commitment regarding diversity and inclusion was evident and many ideas and thoughts were shared. As the training came to a close, the participants agreed to keep in touch and help other associations. Lee and Anita inspired the participants to go even farther in their journeys towards inclusion and supplied the tools to pave the way. Though Lee and Anita

have been doing this for 30 years, the information they brought was still very relevant and presented enthusiastically. Even they said they are still learning!

“Lee and Anita brought such great energy and life to the training, one couldn’t help but feel inspired,” said Ramona Hernandez, CHL Mortgage Specialist. “I think it is safe to say that we all walked out of the room feeling motivated, inspired, and appreciative.”