

## The Cultural Proficiency Continuum

*The Cultural Proficiency Continuum* below can be used to assess where individual members and the board as a whole are on the continuum of cultural awareness and competence. Please use this to guide a discussion among board members.

### **Cultural Destructiveness**

Cultural destructiveness is the elimination of other cultures. It is represented by attitudes, policies and practices destructive to culture and consequently to the individuals within that culture.

### **Cultural Incapacity**

Cultural incapacity is the belief in the superiority of one's culture and behavior that disempowers another's culture. Represented by extreme bias, this stages assumes a paternal posture toward 'lesser' groups and is marked by ignorance of other cultures.

### **Cultural Blindness**

Cultural blindness is acting as if cultural differences do not matter or is marked by an inability to recognize differences among and between cultures. It is represented by the intent not to discriminate by avoiding making an issue of the differences between individuals.

### **Cultural Pre-Competence**

Cultural pre-competence is an awareness of the limitations of one's skills or an organization's practices when interacting with other cultural groups.

### **Cultural Competence**

Cultural competence means interacting with other cultural groups using guidelines for individual behavior and practices, acceptance and respect for differences, ongoing assessment of culture, attention to dynamics of difference, continuous expansion of cultural knowledge and resources and the adaptation of values and behaviors in a cultural competent framework.

### **Cultural Proficiency**

Cultural proficiency means knowing how to learn of other cultures, interacting effectively in a variety of cultural environments, and leaders taking opportunities to increase formal awareness of other cultures and dynamics of difference.