

# INSIGHT INTO DIVERSITY®

June 2024 | \$3.99 | [insightintodiversity.com](https://insightintodiversity.com)

## Unpacking the Need for Advocacy

As campuses around the country shutter their vital LGBTQIA+ centers and reduce much-needed support services, the urgent need for advocacy is growing.



# At RIT, The Arts Take Center Stage Too

Rochester Institute of Technology is known around the world for excellence in STEM related fields. We're also getting rave reviews as a university where the performing arts play a starring role.

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RIT is breaking new ground. We are developing the leading performing arts program in the nation for non-majors. We provide Performing Arts Scholarships for talented and creative students who want to pursue their academic-and-artistic passions. We provide new spaces to do it! Inside our new Student Hall for Exploration and Development (the SHED), you have access to huge makerspaces, a black-box theater, a dance studio, and music rehearsal spaces. There's more. A two-theater complex to house a musical theater and an orchestra hall is currently under construction.

We are relentless in advancing the intersection of technology and traditional art and performance.

At RIT, we're always on to something new.





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INSIGHT INTO DIVERSITY  
*Alumni*  
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# UNPARALLELED INCLUSION. UNDENIABLE SUCCESS.

At VCU, we're challenging preconceived notions of higher education. Our success is defined by who we include, not by who we exclude.



Every person here is unique, coming to VCU from different places, backgrounds and lived experiences. Nearly half of all students are from minority backgrounds, and 37% of incoming freshmen are first-generation college students. We're also the only institution in Virginia to be named an age-friendly university.

We don't just accept those differences; we flourish because of them. And this unique approach has led to national recognition in innovation, research and creativity.

In the world of the common, we are the **uncommon**.

VCU is an equal opportunity/affirmative action institution.



# VCU



# SPECIAL REPORTS

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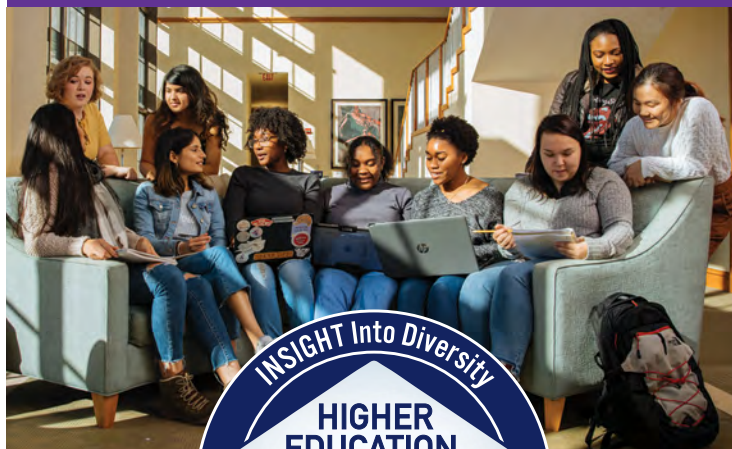
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A Northwestern University artist in residence program expands the diversity of their theatrical works and curriculum.



# Engaging the social and intellectual challenges of our time

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## Implementing the belonging, justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion (BJEDI) plan for a transformed future

Among National Liberal Arts Colleges:

- #1 Most Innovative (6 years in a row)
- #2 Top Performer on Social Mobility

Among All U.S. Higher Education Institutions:

- #3 for First-Year Experiences
- #4 for Learning Communities
- #9 Study Abroad



# INSIGHT INTO DIVERSITY®

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# FROM OUR EDITOR

Dear Reader,

Everything is on fire and it's becoming difficult to see the rainbows through the smoke.

Right now, anti-DEI legislation, callous and exclusionary LGBTQIA+ health care policies, and blatantly homophobic state and local legislative mandates are undoing much of the important higher ed framework that has been constructed to protect, support, and engage with LGBTQIA+ individuals and their allies.

Stand in any region of the country and you're within shouting distance of LGBTQIA+ students, faculty, and staff who don't feel safe and can no longer look for solace, protection, or dialogue within their campus community.

As a queer college student who then spent a decade as a queer university faculty member, and now as a queer magazine editor whose sole focus is the state of diversity, equity, and inclusion in higher education, I find this outrageous and heartbreaking. So much progress had been built, so much advocacy had grown and flourished, and now so much of both is being lost.

We are living in a time that history books will note as the age of regression.

Inclusive housing is being eliminated, LGBTQIA+ groups and clubs are being dismantled, lavender graduations are ending, LGBTQIA+ offices are being closed, and the employees who ran them are being fired. We also see health care services for these students being reduced. And websites are being scrubbed of pride flags.

These campus' students, faculty, and staff know this, and they are terrified.

They need their institution to step up for them. Is yours?

Have you made it clear to your campus that you stand, as a constituent of an institution of higher education, shoulder to shoulder with this vulnerable population? Have you spread the message that your campus is a bedrock of allyship, safety, respect, and advocacy? Have you championed the vital programs that care for the health of your LGBTQIA+ community and made sustaining them a priority?

If not, then don't wait another day. Because now is the time to be loud.

Advocacy can feel risky; there is an element of apprehension about putting ourselves out there on behalf of another. The vibrant, passionate, long-standing LGBTQIA+ ally community can attest to this. But they can also tell you about the power of unified voices shouting down the darkness.

As you look around your campus this month and notice gay pride bumper stickers and rainbow flags, I hope you will consider the risks LGBTQIA+ people take every time they announce their identity to the world. I ask you to step up and offer your allyship and support.



Katy Abrams



## Report: Companies Unlikely to Disclose Unfavorable Diversity Data

Despite a general increase in promoting DEI (diversity, equity, and inclusion) in major U.S. companies over the past several years, a recent study shows that people of color are still underrepresented in leadership roles and, moreover, that corporations are less likely to disclose diversity data if it's not considered favorable.

Conducted by researchers at the Columbia University Business School—Thomas Bourveau, PhD, an associate professor of business, and Anthony Le, a PhD candidate—along with Rachel Flam, PhD, of the London School of Business, the study investigates the landscape of DEI practices among publicly traded companies in the U.S., focusing on the disclosure of workforce composition and DEI metrics.

Titled “Behind the EEO Curtain,” the study examines Equal Employment Opportunity Commission EEO-1 reports from more than 800 federal contractors answering two main questions: What is the extent of diversity among

public firms and when do companies strategically disclose diversity metrics based on their level of diversity?

“[W]e provide evidence on the lack of racial diversity among U.S. public firms, particularly among the first and middle managerial ranks,” the study reads. “We further document that the lack of workforce diversity at the middle management level is negatively associated with the public disclosure of firms’ EEO-1 reports, suggesting that firms with greater imbalances hide their lack of diversity from investors and other stakeholders.”

Despite the increased interest in DEI practices, many companies do not disclose their diversity-related metrics, citing concerns about a competitive disadvantage. The researchers determined that gender and racial diversity at managerial levels lag behind overall workforce composition.

For example, women hold 35% of middle managerial positions despite constituting 39% of the workforce. Similarly, people of color are underrepresented, with White

employees occupying 71% of middle management roles compared to their 63% representation in the total workforce.

Analysis indicates that companies are more likely to disclose their EEO-1 reports if they have a higher ratio of managers of color relative to those at lower-level positions. Gender diversity, however, does not significantly influence transparency decisions. Furthermore, firms tend to reveal more when their diversity metrics surpass industry averages, particularly concerning race.

The study highlights the persistent underrepresentation of people of color, especially at managerial levels, and suggests that companies with less diversity may strategically withhold their data. These findings have implications for investors and policymakers, indicating the potential need for mandatory disclosure to ensure transparency and accountability regarding DEI practices in public companies. ●

## Art Professor Recognized for Outstanding Work ... Again!



Kim Cosier, PhD, working with art students. (Photo courtesy of University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee)

A Milwaukee art professor has now been recognized twice during this academic year for her remarkable contributions to the arts in higher education.

University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Peck School of the Arts Professor Emerita Kim Cosier, PhD, received the 2023 Wisconsin Art Education Association's Higher Ed Art Educator of the Year award in November. Now, Cosier has been recognized with the prestigious 2024 National Art Education Association's Western Region Higher Education Award.

Cosier, who has taught at Peck since 2001, embodies her philosophies of using art for impact and supporting marginalized communities both inside and outside the classroom. In addition to

publishing two books and multiple articles, she is the founder of the Milwaukee Visionaries Project, a program that specializes in helping urban youth tell their stories through multimodal art forms, and is the co-founder — alongside her wife, Josie Osborne — of ArtsECO, a social justice-oriented program that recruits and supports preservice teachers and provides professional development resources.

In her 2021 publication “Art Education When the World Is on Fire,” Cosier provides sage advice that is applicable across the disciplines. “We must proceed by loving fiercely. Moving toward a liberatory teaching and research practice that sees all oppressions and privileges linked (and therefore always relevant).” ●



# ‘A More Complete History of the South’

## University of Alabama Uncovers Hidden Past

Founded in 2006, the Frances S. Summersell Center for the Study of the South engages University of Alabama (UA) students in creating a “more complete history of the South,” focusing on untold racial justice and queer experiences.

Under the direction of John Giggie, PhD, associate professor of history and African American studies, the center has produced projects like “Alabama Memory: Remembering Lynching in Alabama,” a partnership with the Equal Justice Initiative in Montgomery to investigate the lives of lynching victims and re-create their stories, and “Queer Alabama,” a digital collection of documents and images that comprise the history of UA’s gay student organizations.

The current project, led by a team of undergraduate and graduate students, will construct a digital walking tour of Tuscaloosa that highlights LGBTQIA+-owned businesses and other points of interest.

In a statement to The Crimson White, UA’s newspaper, Giggie said, “The digital walking tour of downtown Tuscaloosa hopes to offer a different memory of the city and its physical landscape, one that recognizes queer businesses, spaces, and neighborhoods that have always been part of the fabric of daily life but have no public record.”

Along with the notable projects, Giggie and his students have developed research-intensive undergraduate courses within the center: “Religion and the Civil Rights Movement,” “Lynching in Alabama,” and “Queer History South.” These small classes work to uncover and share experiences of southern life that have been excluded, lost, or ignored throughout time.

With Alabama being among a growing number of states pushing to restrict diversity, equity, and inclusion in the classroom, the work of the Frances S. Summersell Center is more important now than ever. ●



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A COMMUNITY  
WHERE **EVERYONE**  
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## AAC&U Conference Focuses On ‘What Unites Us’

Students, educators, administrators, and DEI (diversity, equity, and inclusion) professionals from across the country descended on Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, in March for the American Association of Colleges and Universities’ (AAC&U) Conference on Diversity, Equity, and Student Success (DESS).

Tia Brown McNair, AAC&U vice president for diversity, equity, and student success and executive director for the Truth, Racial Healing, and Transformation Campus Centers, welcomed attendees, both virtually and in person, in the opening day plenary, saying, “All of us ... are here because we believe that DEI is not what divides us, but what unites us,” a theme that resonated throughout the three-day program.

Debra Humphreys, vice president for strategic engagement for the Lumina Foundation, led a session titled “Communicating About Equity and Inclusion Effectively in Challenging Times.” In this workshop, Humphreys presented research that identified the dominant anti-DEI narratives in the media to help practitioners understand the implications of this discourse and strategize practical ways to approach their communications and missions. Humphreys’ research team studied more than 33,000 anti-DEI articles to determine the main messages being

promoted by the anti-DEI movement, in order to educate others on how to best combat this propaganda.

A key takeaway was that, contrary to popular opinion, “fact versus fiction” framing is not as effective as authors think. According to the research, simply restating the negative “fictions” and rebutting with truthful information unfortunately reinforces the false narrative that the audience already believes to be true, and the “fact” is lost on them before they even read it because they feel vindicated seeing their thoughts clearly in print.

In the session “A Critical Conversation: Campus Climate for Transgender and Nonbinary Students in Higher Education,” Jamie Beth Schindler, program manager for Ansrsource, and Jon Humiston, director of noncredit and alternative enrollment initiatives at Central Michigan University, presented research that shows a persistent climate of clear discomfort exists for gender-nonconforming students in higher education, even within spaces touted as safe, like counseling centers.

Schindler and Humiston guided participants through their findings and offered strategies for adopting language that supports more students, including avoiding making assumptions about someone’s gender identity and expression; using gender-inclusive language when referring to

groups of people; and not reinforcing gender stereotypes.

Roundtable breakfast discussions offered attendees an opportunity to engage with a variety of presentations by prominent researchers in the field.

At one roundtable, Mary Dulatre, PhD, presented her content analysis “The Leadership Communication of Women of Color in U.S. College Presidencies.” Her research exhibited commonalities in leadership style and support systems that impacted their ability to successfully navigate their work environment and overcome race and gender barriers.

Another discussion, “White Savior Industrial Complex and How to Combat It,” presented by Matthew Johnston, director of student diversity and belonging at the University of Lynchburg, addressed the colonialist idea that Western models of knowledge are necessary to uplift or “save” marginalized or non-Western communities, fostering a discussion about identifying and combating this ideology.

Each facet of the AAC&U DESS conference was constructed around building a community of belonging and enabling students to succeed, as echoed in its theme: “What Unites Us is our shared responsibility and commitment to develop systems, structures, and policies that are centered in equality and justice for all.” ●

### The College Tour en Español Showcases Academic Pathways

**The College Tour** ▶  
en Español

A new show, The College Tour en Español, is traveling across the United States, offering a unique perspective on colleges and universities through the experiences of Spanish-speaking students. Each episode provides an insight into campus life, allowing Spanish-speaking audiences worldwide to explore educational institutions remotely.

Schools featured in Season 1 include Arizona State University, New Jersey Institute of Technology, Kean University, Community College of Denver, and Maricopa Community Colleges, all emphasizing a holistic approach to preparing students for success in various areas.

The show is available on Amazon Prime Video and at [thecolletour.com](http://thecolletour.com).

## Panels Discuss LGBTQIA+ Legal, Health Care Concerns

Recognizing the importance of advancing LGBTQIA+ rights, legal professionals and academics alike attended a recent University of Cincinnati (UC) College of Law colloquium featuring discussions on policy, health care, and family law as they relate to the LGBTQIA+ community.

Known as LGBTQ Plus the Law, the panel series took place April 12 at the Jones Center for Race, Gender, and Social Justice. The free event was open to UC law students, faculty, staff, and the public, and it also provided continuing legal education credits to practicing attorneys who attended.

The first panel, “This Is Where We Are,” offered a comprehensive look at LGBTQIA+ rights in Ohio and their national context. Experts, including law professor Jack Harrison from Northern Kentucky Salmon P. Chase College of Law, Carson Hartlage from TransOhio, and Sean McCann from the American Civil Liberties Union of Ohio, shared insights on recent judicial actions and their implications for the LGBTQIA+ community.

During the “Healthcare Access” discussion, panelists shed light on the challenges surrounding gender-affirming care and the need for inclusive health care policies. Ryan Thoreson, a UC law professor; Nick Zingarelli, director of the Hamilton County Clerk of Courts Help Center; and Maria Bruno, an attorney for Equality Ohio, highlighted common restrictions for transgender and gender non-conforming people’s health care options.

“Expanding the Family,” the final panel, explored the intersection of family law and LGBTQIA+ rights, focusing on issues such as parentage, adoption, and custody. Panelists included three practicing attorneys from the region with experience in LGBTQIA+ issues — Scott Knox, Nicole Kersting, and Rachel Loftspring — along with Marc Spindelman, a law professor at the Ohio State University Moritz College of Law. They analyzed existing legal frameworks and how they may affect LGBTQIA+ family rights.

With pending federal cases and state-level laws threatening or limiting already tenuous LGBTQIA+ rights, the event was a poignant reminder of the need for greater legal protections for this vulnerable community.

“Given what has already happened at the [U.S. Supreme] Court and what is likely to transpire next, and what could transpire after that, LGBTQIA+ communities, with others, must be preparing for how to operate in a newly emerging constitutional, legal, and political landscape, one that bears resemblances from the lived past,” Spindelman wrote in a recent essay examining the future of LGBTQIA+ rights. ●

## Colleges are Talking About Viewfinder Campus Climate Surveys!

Insight Into Diversity’s Viewfinder Campus Climate Surveys are the most comprehensive and affordable instruments used by over 200 Institutions of higher education!

Read what clients are saying about Viewfinder Campus Climate Surveys:

“Viewfinder® helped our university have one cohesive voice on climate. ...They supported our team with tailoring the survey to mirror our University’s cultural footprint.”

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY

“Viewfinder® was great to work with, accommodated all of our requests, and looked for ways to add value to our survey process. [They] made it possible for Utah State University to do our survey on a short timeline and collect meaningful data for our strategic plan.”

UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY

“Thank you for administering this survey. ...This information will put us on the right path to ensure we are adequately supporting our students.”

HILBERT COLLEGE

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# Recent Studies and Discoveries |



## Telehealth Effective in Opioid Treatment



Researchers at the **University at Buffalo** recently published a study that reveals the remarkable efficacy of facilitated telemedicine in treating hepatitis C virus (HCV) among individuals with opioid use disorder. The research showcased that those receiving telemedicine treatment within their opioid treatment program (OTP) were twice as likely to be cured of HCV compared to off-site referrals. The study, spanning from 2017 to 2022 across 12 OTPs in New York state, enrolled 602 participants. Notably, 90.3% of those in the telemedicine arm were cured, compared to 39.4% in the off-site referral group. This transformative approach not only ensured high patient retention but also led to substantial health and well-being improvements, including reduced substance use and enhanced socioeconomic prospects for participants. To learn more, visit [bit.ly/TeleHealthStudy](https://bit.ly/TeleHealthStudy).

## Breast Cancer Recovery Inequity



A comprehensive cohort study by **University of Illinois Chicago** faculty involving 69,139 women with breast cancer unveiled notable disparities in high-risk recurrence scores (RSs) on the 21-gene assay, particularly among minority racial and ethnic groups. Non-Hispanic Black and non-Hispanic American Indian/Alaska Native women exhibited a higher likelihood of high-risk RSs compared to non-Hispanic White women. Factors such as area-level socioeconomic status, urban residence, and insurance coverage explained 17% of the racial RS difference among non-Hispanic Black women, particularly in urban areas. To learn more, visit [bit.ly/CancerInequity](https://bit.ly/CancerInequity).

## Perinatal Mental Health Disparities



A team of researchers from the **University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign** is advocating for significant changes in U.S. health care and social policies to address perinatal mental health challenges and reduce disparities affecting women of color. Their commentary outlines seven key reforms, including a national training program for health care providers, community-based services, paid family leave, expanded perinatal psychiatry access, and reproductive rights initiatives. Lead author Karen M. Tabb Dina, PhD, emphasized the urgent need for comprehensive strategies to improve maternal health outcomes and promote equity, noting that perinatal mental health issues highlight systemic gaps in access, research, and social determinants. The paper highlights inclusive policies grounded in reproductive justice to close gaps and improve outcomes for perinatal mental health. To learn more, visit [bit.ly/mhdisparity](https://bit.ly/mhdisparity).

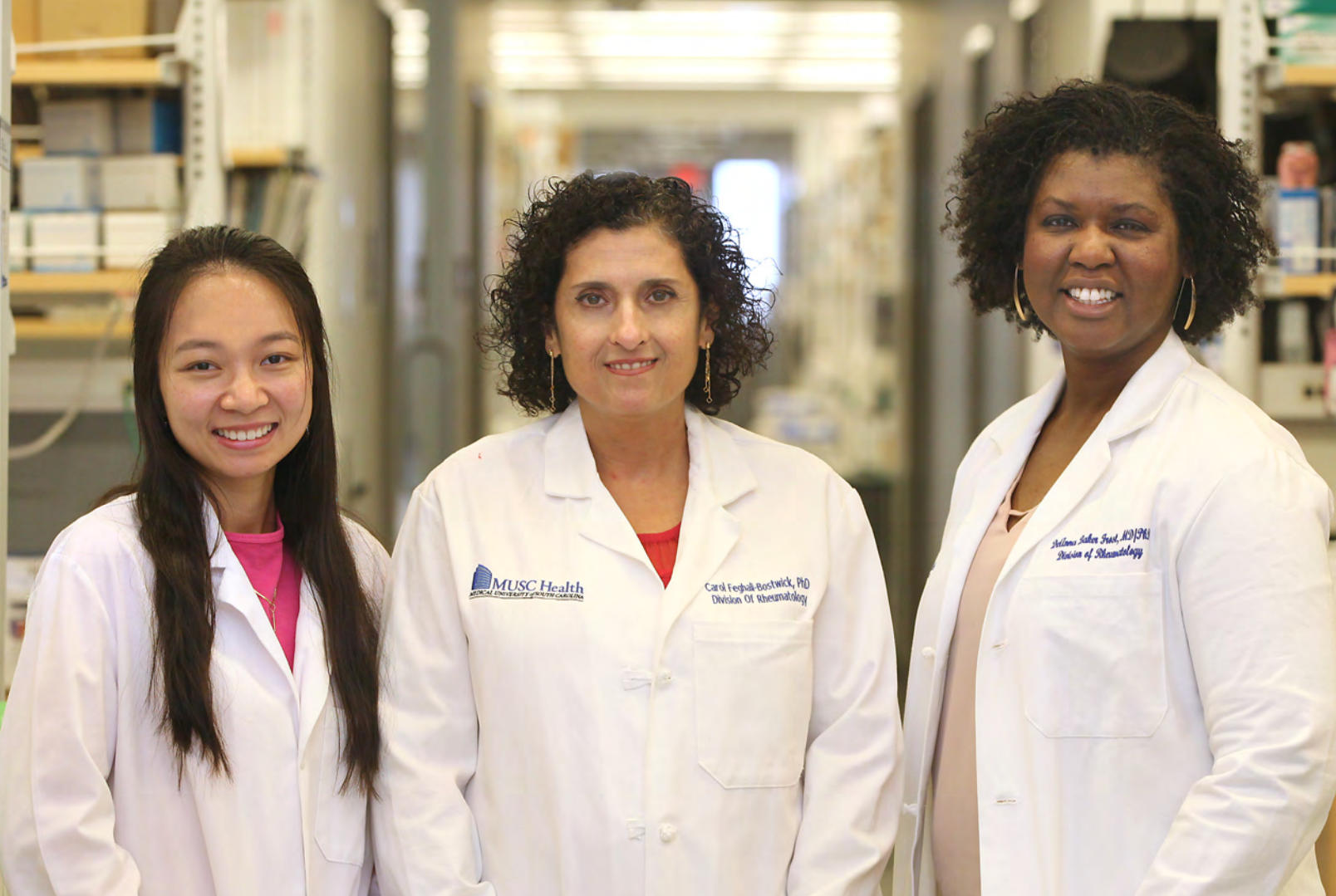


## Heart Disease Risk in Asian Americans



A recent study led by **Stanford University** researchers sheds light on the complex relationship between social determinants of health and cardiovascular risk factors among Asian American adults. Conducted from 2013 to 2018 using the National Health Interview Survey, the study revealed that unfavorable social factors such as income disparities, limited education, and lack of access to health care were associated with higher prevalence of cardiovascular risk factors like high blood pressure, poor sleep, and Type 2 diabetes. The authors emphasized the importance of understanding these differences among different Asian subgroups to tailor interventions effectively. The study's findings underscore the need for targeted strategies to address social inequalities and improve heart health outcomes in the rapidly growing Asian American population. To learn more, visit [bit.ly/heartdrisk](https://bit.ly/heartdrisk).





Xinh-Xinh Nguyen - College of Graduate Studies student; Carol Feghali-Bostwick Ph.D; and DeAnna Baker Frost M.D., Ph.D

# More Than a Commitment

## Systematizing the Professional Growth of Women

In 2024, the advancement of women can be seen and felt in programs that increase women in the hiring pool, thoughtful retention and promotion practices, and the provision of training, coaching, and support to achieve stunning career growth.

Carol Feghali-Bostwick, Ph.D. is the Director of A.R.R.O.W (Advancement, Recruitment and Retention of Women) at the Medical University of South Carolina—a dedicated mentor and sponsor of women who is changing the lives of others through research and entrepreneurship.



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<https://education.musc.edu/leadership/provost/reporting-units/arrow>

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FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS AT OSU

# Censoring, Penalizing, Legislating: The State of Free Speech in Higher Ed

By Courtney Mullins

## **Institutions of higher education**

have long served as bastions of free expression, fostering academic discourse and student activism. However, recent legislative actions in several states threaten to stifle this tradition by curbing free speech within these communities.

Organizers at Arizona State University (ASU) are monitoring the progress of Arizona House Bill 2759, which states that a public institution “may not formally recognize a student organization that ... promotes a foreign terrorist organization.” The bill stems from alleged links between some ASU organizations and Hamas, the terrorist group that attacked Israel last October.

Leadership and members of the targeted ASU student organizations refute any connection to Hamas and worry that their right to express support for the Palestinian people will be stifled, or even prevented, by the bill.

A similar bill in Iowa, House Bill 2077, revokes federal financial aid for students “if the attorney general determines that the student has endorsed or promoted terrorism or the actions of any foreign terrorist organization.” The bill’s opponents fear that the legislation could affect eligible students who oppose the Israel-Hamas war.

Indiana House Bill 1179 prohibits higher education institutions “from using state funds or resources” to “engage,” “contract with,” or “support” any adversarial foreign “sources.” Free speech experts theorize that this ambiguous wording could backfire on the stated goal, and activists are concerned that the measures will hinder individuals’ rights to free speech. After conflicts arose between administration



and student demonstrators at The University of Texas campuses at Austin and Arlington in March, Texas Gov. Greg Abbott signed an executive order — reportedly intended to decrease the tensions across the state’s college campuses — requiring institutions to review their free speech policies, define antisemitism, and implement more punitive consequences for those who violate them.

Those contesting the measure allege that it is antithetical to Abbott’s previous

stance on DEI, and that if the order reduces tensions on campuses, it is only because it may be seen as essentially criminalizing student expression. As institutions across the country continue to scramble to enact policies and procedures in response to the Israel-Hamas war, critics and experts alike voice increasing concern about the secondary, if unintended, consequences of these actions. It remains to be seen how significantly the aftermath will impact free speech and student rights. ●



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**For more information, contact Holly Mendelson  
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# THE ART OF THE POSSIBLE

## 1st-of-its-kind Ph.D. program celebrates inaugural class of arts leaders

The University of Kentucky is celebrating the inaugural cohort of graduates from its doctoral program in arts administration — housed in the College of Fine Arts, the program is the first of its kind in the nation.

Launched in 2020, the degree prepares students for careers in the arts and cultural sector, which contributes over \$1.1 trillion annually to the U.S. economy. The program is also entirely online, offering flexibility necessary for arts scholars to study in a rigorous degree program focused on field competencies and research methodologies.

The UK Department of Arts Administration has a long history of pioneering online arts administration education. In 2013, the department was the first public university to launch a Master of Arts Administration entirely online. Rachel Shane, chair of the department, says the Ph.D. is the latest step in their unwavering commitment to provide accessible, high-quality education for arts leaders.

"We believe this Ph.D. program fills a critical research gap within the academia, government, and arts and cultural industries," Shane said. "We're excited to see how it shapes the future of arts administration."

The five graduates are all working professionals whose diverse backgrounds and experiences speak to the program's ability to cater to a wide range of aspiring arts and culture researchers.

"Being part of this inaugural cohort has been the highlight of my academic career," said graduate Rebecca Ferrell. "Aside from the personal accomplishment I feel, this is also a milestone for the field itself, marking the recognition of arts administration as a stand-alone and important area of study worthy of doctoral-level inquiry."

"My goal was career advancement, but I found so much more," said graduate Heather McDonald. "I quickly felt like I was part of this incredibly supportive community of scholarship with my peers and faculty mentors that respected my work and that actually challenged me to respect my own work — something I hadn't realized was a struggle for me. I can't wait to continue our work in the field for years to come."

All five of the graduates traveled to Lexington, Kentucky last month to receive their diplomas on stage and be formally hooded as a Doctor of Philosophy during UK's Commencement Ceremonies.

Learn more about the program  
at [go.uky.edu/artsadminphd](https://go.uky.edu/artsadminphd).





# THE 2024 HEED AWARD



## Reinforce your institution's commitment to DEI and apply for the HEED Award

The HEED Award, the Graduate School HEED Award, the Community College HEED Award, and the Health Professions HEED Award are the only national awards that honor individual institutions for being outstanding examples of colleges, universities, community colleges, or health profession schools that are committed to making diversity and inclusion a top priority across their campuses. Sharing this important recognition with your campus and community helps showcase your school's excellence in developing innovators and leaders for today's global workforce.

## APPLICATIONS ARE OPEN NOW



# Community Colleges Vital to the Success of Prison Education Efforts

By Erik Cliburn

**As beacons of potential** for individual growth and social mobility, community colleges often serve as a catalyst for underserved students to pursue a path in higher education. This is perhaps most apparent in the critical role that two-year institutions play in the lives of incarcerated students by offering a wide range of prison education programs.

“Partnerships between prisons and community colleges can lead to significant benefits for all involved — community colleges, prisons, inmates, and the general public,” a U.S. Department of Education report entitled “Partnerships Between Community Colleges and Prison,” states. “[The partnerships] will better prepare inmates to rejoin society and thereby lower recidivism rates, increase public safety, and save taxpayers’ dollars.”

Coastline College, a community college system in Southern California, is one of many two-year institutions that provides educational opportunities to currently and formerly incarcerated individuals. Through the Hope Scholars Program, students in California correctional institutions have access to in-person and virtual courses, resources, and financial aid opportunities.

As part of its credential offerings for incarcerated students, the Hope Scholars Program facilitates three associate degree for transfer (ADT) programs — communication studies, psychology, and sociology — which are designed for students interested in transferring to a University of California or California State University institution. Along with the ADT programs, Coastline offers a certificate of achievement in business and six associate degree programs in the arts and sciences: American studies, arts and humanities, general business,



Incarcerated students graduate from Barton Community College’s Building Academic Skills in Correctional Settings program. (Photo courtesy of Barton Community College)

science and math, social and behavioral sciences, and sociology.

Each year, the program enrolls more than 7,000 incarcerated people. Throughout the 2021-2022 academic year, Coastline awarded 286 associate degrees and 71 certificates. For students like Ryan Stockton, a 2023 Coastline graduate and former Hope Scholar, prison education programs are important in not only earning a degree but developing a sense of self-worth,

pride in their achievements, and hope for their futures outside prison.

“It was an opportunity for me, for the first time in my life, to actually do something constructive and worthwhile,” says Stockton.

In addition to Hope Scholars, Coastline also operates the Rising Tide Scholars Program, which helps empower those formerly incarcerated through a range of support services. This includes academic and career

## Important Role of Community Colleges in Prison Education

A 2023 report from the Alliance for Higher Education in Prison titled “The Landscape of Higher Education in Prison” found that of 572 academic institutions affiliated with higher education prison programs during the 2020-2021 academic year, 282, or 49%, were nonprofit two-year institutions. This means that community colleges account for more prison education programs than public and private nonprofit four-year institutions combined (273 total).

Among these programs, certificates and associate degrees consistently rank as the two most popular credentials earned by incarcerated students. In the 2020-2021 academic year, 9,000 prisoners completed a certificate while more than 2,300 earned an associate degree, per the report. Licensures and bachelor’s degrees, the next most popular, each had fewer than 300 credentials earned across the same time frame.

counseling, tutoring, financial aid and community resource assistance, peer mentorship, meal vouchers, and technology loans. Participating students are required to meet monthly with the Rising Tide project coordinator, develop a postgraduation plan, and attend at least two workshops per semester dedicated to academic, personal, and career development.

With a mission to break the cycle of incarceration through effective correctional education, the Building Academic Skills in Correctional Settings (BASICS) program at Barton Community College in central Kansas has been a transformative force in correctional education for the past 21 years. Operating in the Ellsworth Correctional Facility (ECF) and Larned State Correctional Facility (LSCF), BASICS serves more than 200 people each year.

BASICS offers associate degrees in general studies, sciences, and business leadership to students in ECF and LSCF, as well as an adult basic education program for inmates looking to earn their GED diploma. Perhaps the most popular pathway for BASICS participants is through the program's 16-hour certificate program in welding technology, which trains nearly 100 students each semester. Based on the success of the welding certificate, Barton is developing similar offerings in plumbing and carpentry. Many in the program pursue their GED diploma and certificate at the same time.

Recognizing the pivotal role of education in reducing recidivism, BASICS matches incarcerated students with a career advisor and a transition specialist. Career advisors utilize motivational interviewing to create education and employment plans tailored to each student's goals. The plans help them navigate the challenges of applying to educational programs and receiving financial aid while in prison, and also overcome existing barriers to their success, such as loan defaults, child arrears, and employment limitations based on convictions.

A transition specialist is assigned to students with six to 10 months remaining on their sentences and helps them prepare for reintegration. Providing information on educational and career opportunities in their release area, transition specialists connect students with local workforce centers, colleges, vocational training centers, and the Offender Workforce Development Specialist network.

These are two examples of community college-based programs and partnerships that work to provide both education and career support to incarcerated students, and make a significant positive impact on their future opportunities and transition to life outside prison. ●

OHIO  
UNIVERSITY

## Building a culture of **INCLUSIVITY & RESPECT.**



At Ohio University, our vision for Diversity and Inclusion is to celebrate all members of our University community and to broaden our collective understanding by uplifting diverse identities, cultures, experiences, and perspectives. To succeed, we must be both relentlessly intentional and open to the spontaneous opportunities for positive change.

### **MAKE RESPECT VISIBLE**

We are here to learn from each other, to do the work that narrows divides and broadens understanding. It's about equity and humanity. It's about having the hard conversations and recognizing and calling out prejudice. It's about being willing to engage with others thoughtfully and respectfully, even when we hold vastly different points of view.

Learn more about OHIO's Division of Diversity and Inclusion at [ohio.edu/diversity](https://www.ohio.edu/diversity).



**6x HEED Award Winner**  
2023, 2022, 2021, 2020, 2019 and 2018

Visit [www.ohio.edu/equity-civil-rights](https://www.ohio.edu/equity-civil-rights) for Ohio University's Title IX Coordinator, contact information, and Notice of Non-Discrimination. UCM 5220. ©2023 Ohio University. All rights reserved.



# UW-Madison Program to Cover Tribal Students' Tuition and Other Expenses

By Nikki Brahm

**Federally recognized** Native American tribal members in the state of Wisconsin will qualify in the fall for a new program covering tuition and fees, housing, food, supplies, and other educational expenses at the University of Wisconsin-Madison (UW-Madison).

The initiative, known as the Wisconsin Tribal Educational Promise Program, is launching for undergraduate, medical degree, law degree, and currently enrolled Native American students.

Undergraduate freshmen will be eligible for four years of financial support, while transfer students will qualify for two years. The graduate degree program will start as a five-year pilot, with law school tuition covered for three years and medical school tuition for four years.

With a focus on expanding educational access for tribal students, the program addresses long-standing concerns around student loan debt by providing support to tribal students beyond other scholarships and grants, says Helen Faith, director of the Office of Student Financial Aid. And it's especially unique because it isn't based on financial need.

This support can have a profound impact on a student's life, as the estimated annual cost of attendance for in-state students at UW-Madison is \$28,900. For medical and law degree programs, this ranges between \$35,000 and \$42,000.

At this time, it's difficult to estimate how many students will qualify for the initiative, Faith says.

"UW-Madison is situated on tribal lands [and] those lands were taken forcibly," Faith says. "I think it's important that we extend the most basic ability for students to attend UW-Madison who



Kalista Memengwaa Cadotte, third-year UW-Madison student with the Odaawaa-zaaga'iganing tribe (Lac Courte Oreilles Band of Lake Superior Ojibwe), speaks at a press conference announcing the Wisconsin Tribal Educational Promise program. (Photo courtesy of Bryce Richter/UW-Madison)

are from those Native [tribal] nations whose lands were taken from them."

University leaders developed this initiative with input from the Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council, a group of leaders from each of the American Indian tribes in Wisconsin that serves as a forum for discussing and resolving issues that require intertribal collaboration.

Ongoing meetings took place between the 11 tribal nations and Jennifer Mnookin, JD, PhD, chancellor of UW-Madison, to discuss topics like access to education and resources, continuation of support, and student retention and outcomes, says Shannon Holsey, president of the Stockbridge-Munsee Band of Mohican Indians and Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council chairperson.

While there is still work to be done, this program is a move beyond land acknowledgement and reparation, she says.

"The truth is, if it were not for the loss of land by Indigenous peoples, American colleges and universities would not exist," Holsey says. "Institutions must challenge themselves to move away from encouraging acts that are performative, into commitments of transformative change. I believe Chancellor Mnookin's commitment, and [that of] the Board of Regents, to our students is the beginning of that."

For students to be successful, tuition and financial assistance is not the sole solution; many systems of change need to happen, Holsey adds.

"Colleges and universities, especially those that benefited from the first Morrill Act of 1862, must acknowledge and represent the true history of dispossession as a form of rematriation, by giving stewardship back to Indigenous communities." ●

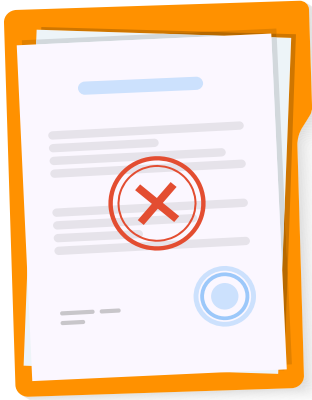
# Hudson County Community College Champions Diversity, Equity and Inclusion



Guided by its two overarching principles of Student Success and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI), Hudson County Community College is nationally recognized for DEI best practices.







# Despite Continued Attacks on DEI, the Business Case Remains

By Erik Cliburn

**DEI (diversity, equity, and inclusion)** has become a lightning rod for criticism from conservative lawmakers and legal groups, even as these efforts in business and higher education result in healthier bottom lines and a more competitive workforce.

The inherent, moral value of DEI is clear to many in higher education and, increasingly, the business world. Work in this space creates opportunities for historically marginalized and underrepresented people while improving social and economic mobility on an individual and community level. On top of that, research shows that diversity initiatives can lead to a healthier national economy and make individual businesses or industries more profitable.

Numerous economists and business consulting groups have found that diversity in the workforce — which is directly impacted by the demographic makeup of college graduates — makes companies more attractive and competitive to consumers, clients, investors, and potential employees. DEI efforts create a larger and more capable workforce, which leads to a surge in revenue generated in the economy and improved financial stability for individuals and families.

“Racial and ethnic diversity comes with a host of benefits at all levels of education and in the workforce — greater productivity, innovation, and cultural competency, to name a few,” the American Council on Education stated in “Race and Ethnicity in Higher Education: A Status Report.” “Moreover, the current and future health of our

nation — economic and otherwise — requires that the whole of our population have equitable access to sources of opportunity. Chief among such sources of opportunity is higher education.”

By targeting DEI programs, conservatives are actively hampering a significant source of potential economic growth, leaving a massive amount of money on the table, at both state and national levels. Now, as colleges and universities are no longer able to practice race-conscious admissions, experts agree that corporate diversity may suffer as a result.

“While the benefits of diversity are real and tangible — and corporate DEI programs seek to maximize those benefits — [we] do not recruit applicants in a vacuum,” reads an amicus brief supporting race-conscious college admissions, signed by nearly 80 major corporations including Apple, Mastercard, and Salesforce. “To succeed, these DEI efforts depend on university admissions programs that lead to graduates educated in racially and ethnically diverse environments. Only in this way can America produce a pipeline of highly qualified future workers and business leaders prepared to meet the needs of the modern economy and workforce.”

Analyses of race-based wage and labor market data by the Brookings Institution — a social sciences research and education think tank — show that a closure in economic gaps between Black, Hispanic, and White populations would have boosted the country’s GDP (gross domestic product) by \$22.9

trillion between 1990 and 2019.

For each year this wage and employment gap remains, the U.S. loses out on an estimated \$1 trillion in

**Gross Domestic Product (GDP)** is a measure of a country’s economic performance, representing the total value of all goods and services produced within its borders over a specific period, usually annually or quarterly. It serves as a key indicator of economic health, reflecting the overall level of economic activity and providing insights into the size and growth trajectory of a nation’s economy.

revenue, in tandem with the continued growth of racial diversity in the country, according to a 2021 Brookings research paper entitled “The Economic Gains From Equity.”

“The persistence of systemic disparities is costly, and eliminating them has the potential to produce large economic gains,” the authors of the study wrote. “The opportunity to participate in the economy and to succeed based on ability and effort is at the foundation of our nation and our economy. Unfortunately, structural barriers have persistently disrupted this narrative for many Americans, leaving the talents of millions of people underutilized or on the sidelines. The result is lower prosperity, not just for those [directly] affected, but for everyone.”

Key factors in addressing these



disparities, the researchers state, are through increasing education access and attainment for racially marginalized groups. These are core principles of DEI work in higher education. Without concerted efforts to improve these measures, experts agree that equity gaps will persist and the economy will suffer.

In addition to economists and academics, investors and shareholders also recognize the importance of diversity to long-term business success.

Companies that prioritize these initiatives stand to benefit from enhanced productivity, innovation, and shareholder value, according to the Human Capital Management Coalition (HCMC) — a group of institutional investors with more than \$9 trillion in assets. In fact, HCMC considers diversity data one of its four foundational disclosures when assessing the value and investability of a company.

Companies in the top quartile of gender and ethnic diversity on executive teams outperformed those in the bottom quartile by 25% and 36%, respectively, based on profitability.

Data from McKinsey & Company

Greater racial and gender diversity, particularly among corporate leadership, leads to greater profits. Companies in the top quartile of gender and ethnic diversity on executive teams outperformed those in the bottom quartile by 25% and 36%, respectively, based on profitability, according to

McKinsey & Company, a global management consulting firm.

Higher education institutions face political and legal challenges regarding their DEI work, but as a key source of opportunity and social mobility, these initiatives remain critical in supporting the economic future of the country, says Peter Blair Henry, PhD, economist and former dean at New York University's Leonard N. Stern School of Business.

"Diversity of perspective is not just a nice thing for companies. It is a critical competitive consideration in the business world," he said. "Building a diverse classroom experience is how to turn out the most informed critical thinkers. Classroom diversity is crucial to producing employable, productive, value-adding citizens in business." ●

## SWARTHMORE

### Celebrating diversity. Developing leaders.

At Swarthmore College, we are committed to cultivating a campus where differences in identity and experiences are celebrated as an integral part of developing future global leaders. We commemorate our continuous efforts to build a diverse, inclusive, and equitable working and learning environment that encourages dialogue, education, and support.



# UCLA Launches Bachelor of Disability Studies

By Nikki Brahm

Several years ago, Catarina Gerges' mother sustained severe injuries in a car accident and was subsequently diagnosed with fibromyalgia, a condition that causes frequent pain throughout the body.

"As a consequence of the invisible nature of fibromyalgia, I grew up witnessing the accommodations, which my mom had a legal right to, be outright denied to her because she 'doesn't look disabled,'" says Gerges.

When Gerges took her first class on disability studies at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), she was prompted to reflect on her past experiences and realized how passionate she is about the topic.

At that time, Gerges had declared a minor in disability studies and a major in neuroscience. However, when UCLA launched the disability studies major last fall, Gerges declared it as her second major; she plans to use her degree to raise awareness about disabilities.

While disability studies minors have existed for some time, there are only a handful of such bachelor's programs across the country. UCLA's was created 16 years after the university's minor was introduced, and is the first of its kind at a public university in the state of California.

The major was developed thanks to advocacy by faculty, students, the Disabled Student Union, and the UCLA Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, to advance the recognition of disability as part of civil rights issues on campus, says Victoria Marks, chair of the new program and faculty director of the Dancing Disability Lab.

The curriculum focuses on the concept of the social model of disability,

which is the idea that the barriers people with disabilities face are caused by society rather than by their disability. Instead of the misconception that a disability must be treated or cured, this model focuses on building systems of inclusion, Marks says.

"How do we construct the physical world so that everyone has equal access to participation and also access to education, access to health care, access to careers and work opportunities?" Marks asks. "[The concept] of normal, or this striving to be normal, as it becomes a sort of ideal of our population, is constructed. So how do we deconstruct that?"

The major is interdisciplinary, with classes focused on a wide range of topics, says Brooke Wilkinson, director of academic initiatives in the Division of Undergraduate Education. Some subject matters include disability literature, enforcing normalcy, gender and disabilities, bioethics of health and disability, and rechorographing disability.

Further education comes from the UCLA Disability Studies Inclusion

## Advancing Recreational Inclusion

The Adaptive Recreation Program offered at UCLA provides opportunities for people with or without disabilities to participate in adaptive sports and recreational activities. The UCLA Wheelchair Basketball program is open to all students, faculty, staff, and community members.

## Bachelor's Degree Programs in Disability Studies:

Arizona State University,  
Disability Studies

The City University of New York,  
Disability Studies

The University of Alabama at  
Birmingham, Disability Studies and  
Rehabilitation Science

University of Illinois Chicago,  
Disability and Human Development

University of Kentucky,  
Interdisciplinary Disability Studies

The University of Toledo,  
Disability Studies

University of Washington,  
Individualized Studies Major in  
Disability Studies

Labs, which offer interactive activities, workshops, seminars, and conferences. Students also are also required to take on two quarterlong internships, such as with a legal rights center, at local schools, or with area nonprofits.

Gerges' internship with the Disabilities and Computing Program (DCP) allowed her to remediate UCLA documents to make them compatible for all types of accommodations. She also collected data for the DCP's MetaMap project, a resource that shows the location of all





(Above) Students a part of the Sports and Society Lab practice Takkyu Volley, a fully-inclusive Japanese sport, at UCLA.

(Right) The Dancing Disability Lab at UCLA is a week-long dance intensive for dance artists with disabilities, founded and directed by Victoria Marks. (Photos courtesy of UCLA)



bathrooms on the UCLA campus that are ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) accessible.

The broad scope of the program, and the ability to pursue a double major, enables students to enter careers across a wide range of fields, Wilkinson adds.

“The structure of the program [allows] students [to] select their courses to a certain degree, their internship, their research, around an area that they have interest in, so they

can tailor [their experience],” she says.

The institution continues to support the consideration of disability in all of its dimensions, which is reflected in the university’s latest strategic plan, says Marks. Recently, funding was allocated for two new disability studies faculty positions. In addition, new initiatives are advancing across campus, including the new Inclusion Lab known as Legacy and Futures: The Judith E. Heumann Community Partnerships. ●

**Learn more about  
the disability studies  
program at [bit.ly/  
UCLAdisabilitystudies](https://bit.ly/UCLAdisabilitystudies).**



# NEW MEDICAL SCHOOL WILL IMPROVE RURAL HEALTH

By Nikki Brahm

**A new medical school** at the University of Georgia (UGA) will address health care disparities by creating a pipeline of physicians for populations across the state. This influx will help meet the ongoing need for providers in underserved and rural Georgia communities.

Following approval in February by the University System of Georgia Board of Regents, the new school, headquartered at UGA's Athens campus, will be the second public medical school in the state.

It will build on efforts by UGA and Augusta University's Medical College of Georgia (MCG) — the only existing public medical school — to address Georgia's chronic shortage of physicians.

In 2010, the two institutions launched the AU/UGA Medical Partnership, which created the medical campus in Athens. The new plan will gradually transition this partnership to become an independent medical school, separate from MCG and spearheaded by UGA.

Before the initiative can launch, leaders need preliminary accreditation from the national Liaison Committee on Medical Education. Design and construction plans are under development, with \$50 million in funding earmarked for the project by Republican Gov. Brian Kemp.

Leaders are working to launch as quickly as possible, says Shelley Nuss, MD, founding dean of the new school, campus dean of the AU/UGA Medical Partnership, and associate dean for graduate medical education.

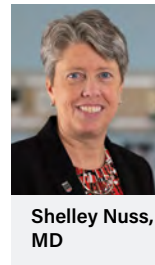
"The doctor shortage in the United States has been growing for quite some time," she says. "In Georgia, it's really no different. In fact, [the state has] some of the worst metrics in the United States in terms of the numbers of doctors per capita."

Although program specifics are still under development, in terms of enrollment, Nuss says the medical

school wants to create a diverse class of students with a holistic admissions process that looks beyond medical test scores and GPA.

"I think it's about looking at the whole person, and how do we get the right people here that are going to be the best doctors that they can be," says Nuss. "[Diverse representation] brings a broader perspective on every topic that we teach in medical school, [and] I really do believe that people like to go to doctors that are culturally like them; that's what I have personally found. I think having a diverse workforce [benefits] everybody."

Not only will the new school increase the number of doctors across the state, but Nuss says it will advance medical research and improve health outcomes for Georgians. Leaders will take inspiration from the AU/UGA Medical Partnership curriculum, which is focused on real patient cases, active learning, and an integrated education across courses.



Shelley Nuss, MD



Dr. Brett Symik studies the Anatomy Table with Anna Schramski and Barquiesha Madison. (Photo courtesy of Dorothy Kozlowski)

**Georgia ranks 40th in the U.S. for the number of active patient care physicians per capita, 41st for the number of primary care physicians, and 44th for the number of general surgeons.**

*Information courtesy of the Association of American Medical Colleges.*



Dr. Matt Crim talks with Chris Rhee and Erika DeAndrade during their clinical skills session at Piedmont Athens Regional hospital. (Photo courtesy of Andy Tucker)

Local partnerships with hospital systems and private practices will continue to advance clerkship opportunities for students, allowing them to learn various specialties from preceptors across Georgia. This is essential, as mentors and role models greatly impact a student's specialty selection, Nuss says.

The program will also build upon the Archway Partnership, an effort by UGA to address critical community and economic development needs, and work by the AU/UGA Medical Partnership operating the Athens Free Clinic, which offers free and low-cost primary health care.

"We hope through the [collaborations] and through the work that UGA's done before, that we can create partnerships across the whole state to help address some of the health outcomes in [critical] areas," says Nuss. "Everyone needs to be able to have access to high-quality care." ●

In addition to \$50 million in state funding for the University of Georgia's new medical school, Gov. Brian Kemp earmarked \$178 million for a new dental school at Georgia Southern University.

# ANCESTRAL LANDS. MODERN MINDS.

Texas Christian University's campus sits on the ancestral homelands of the Wichita and Affiliated Tribes, who have lived here for generations. The ground we walk on daily serves as a teaching tool for empathy, respect and action, and we honor these rich cultures by welcoming and connecting with Native American nations and communities.



How We're Honoring  
Our Native American  
Relationships

[TCU.edu/NAIPI](https://tcu.edu/NAIPI)



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# Alumni Association

## INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE AWARD

Recognizing Alumni Associations' outstanding efforts to foster inclusion, connection, and belonging.



College and university alumni associations were created to foster a lifelong connection between graduates and their alma mater. They strive to maintain a sense of community and pride among graduates, and facilitate opportunities for continued learning, career advancement, and social interaction. Through events, publications, and online platforms, they keep alumni informed about the university's developments, innovations, and achievements.

Alumni associations often play a crucial role in fundraising efforts, supporting scholarships, research, and campus initiatives. They can also serve as a powerful platform for networking, professional development, and mentorship among alumni. Ultimately, the goal is to cultivate a strong, supportive network that benefits both alumni and their alma mater.

## CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2024 RECIPIENTS!

American University

Arkansas State University  
Alumni Association

Bethune-Cookman University

California State University San Marcos

Drexel University

Elon University

Kansas State University

Kennesaw State University

Lehigh University

Macalester College

McDaniel College

Miami University

Michigan State University  
College of Agriculture and  
Natural Resources

Nazareth University

The Ohio State University

Ohio University

Oregon State University

Penn State University

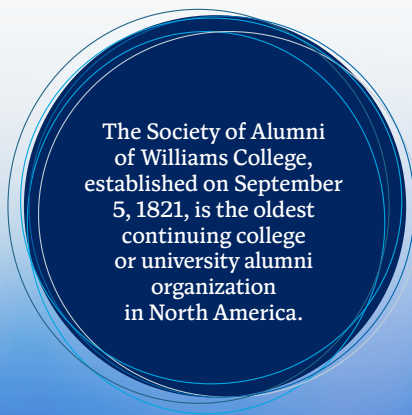
Syracuse University

Touro College of Osteopathic Medicine

UC Law San Francisco

This year, Insight Into Diversity introduced the Alumni Association Inclusive Excellence Award, our unique recognition of those outstanding alumni associations who demonstrate a commitment to encouraging a sense of belonging, connection, and community for all of their institution's alumni, regardless of racial or ethnic background, sexual or gender identity, religion, socioeconomic status, worldview, and more.

The call for nominations was announced in February, and we are proud to share this year's 32 winning associations.



University at Albany,  
State University of New York

University of California, San Francisco

University of Colorado, Boulder

University of Detroit Mercy School of Law

University of Georgia College of Pharmacy

University of Kansas

University of Kentucky

University of Michigan

University of Tennessee Knoxville

West Virginia University

Western Kentucky University

## Congratulations to the McDaniel College Alumni Association on receiving a 2024 Alumni Association Inclusive Excellence Award!



We are proud of the meaningful progress made by the DEI Committee of McDaniel College's Alumni Council to ensure that all alumni feel supported, engaged, and connected. Thank you to the members of the committee, specifically 2024 Trustee Alumni Award recipient and chair of the DEI Committee James A. Felton III '95, M.S. '98, for your leadership to McDaniel and our alumni!"

- DR. JULIA JASKEN, PRESIDENT OF MCDANIEL COLLEGE

MCDANIEL COLLEGE

## Jayhawks Belong



@  
The KU Alumni  
Association



We will continue to cultivate inclusion, connection and a sense of community among all KU alumni, students and friends.



ALUMNI  
ASSOCIATION  
The University of Kansas

[kualumni.org/jayhawks-belong](http://kualumni.org/jayhawks-belong)



# Alumni Groups Fight for DEI

By Erik Cliburn

Within the vibrant tapestry of academia, alumni stand as crucial threads weaving together the past, present, and future of their alma maters.

**Their importance and impact** is evident through the actions of the Alpha Chapter Alumni Association (ACAA) (Cornell University) and the Black Alumnae of Harvard Equity Initiative (BAHEI), who have openly voiced their support for the preservation and advancement of DEI (diversity, equity, and inclusion). Composed of industry leaders, policymakers, and other influential figures, these organizations are more than just groups for nostalgic gatherings. They can serve as engines of change and progress.

“We ... represent a rapidly growing cohort of lawyers, DEI experts, social scientists, entrepreneurs, businesspeople, scientists, educators, journalists, and media experts from the private and public sectors, who find it difficult to believe that fostering diversity, equity, and inclusion in an academic community could be deemed a controversial topic,” BAHEI wrote in a February letter to Harvard leaders.

In January, Jon A. Lindseth, a former trustee and donor to Cornell, penned an open letter to the university’s

board of trustees demanding that President Martha Pollack resign, and withdrawing his financial support due to what he believed was the school’s “toxic” DEI policies and its response to antisemitism. Soon after, the ACAA — the alumni arm of the predominantly Black Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity — issued its own letter to Cornell’s leadership, voicing its strong support for DEI policies and programming and calling Lindseth’s letter disingenuous.


“We are aware that there have been calls for the resignation of Cornell’s president [Pollack],” the group wrote. “Such a reaction would be a disappointing sign of contempt for many students and alumni of Cornell and a signal that Lindseth’s position is shared by the University’s leadership at the highest levels. Cornell would, indeed, move further away from its highest ideals and succumb to the essence of its past shortcomings. Do not make this mistake.”

The statement highlighted Cornell’s founding ethos of “any person, any study” as a cornerstone of its legacy,

emphasizing the importance of inclusivity and equal opportunity. The alumni expressed concerns over mischaracterizations and politicization of DEI efforts, citing the need for genuine progress that fosters inclusive environments for all students.

“It is worth noting that — like our country — Cornell University has not always lived up to its best ideals, especially in relation to its students and alumni of color,” the letter reads. “There were painful moments in Cornell’s history where diversity was limited, equity was an afterthought and many students — unfortunately — were excluded from core facets of campus life. ... We should learn from Cornell’s powerful history; not retreat from the best of its aspirations.”

Similarly, BAHEI has been vocal in addressing the challenges to DEI at Harvard, particularly following



As the leading institution for per-graduate donations, Princeton University receives financial gifts from 46% of their alumni, per 2022-2023 data.



the resignation of Claudine Gay, the institution's first Black president. In a leaked petition to Harvard leaders, the organization condemned the attack on Gay and called for greater transparency and inclusiveness in leadership selection, hiring practices, and admissions as part of a list of five key demands.

"BAHEI and other BIPOC alumni groups and allies are committed to preventing the distortion of facts around Dr. Gay's leadership and scholarship, the importance of diversity, and the historical success of DEI programs," the petition reads. "The attacks on Dr. Gay were designed to promote a false narrative and to dismantle diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives at Harvard and beyond. In our view, they were racist and misogynist and Harvard's silence or misreading of these attacks suggests a profound misunderstanding of the crisis confronting it and all institutions."

The significance of these alumni groups extends beyond their individual universities. They represent a broad movement within academia to uphold DEI as a fundamental pillar of educational excellence despite the recent barrage of external attacks. By leveraging their collective voice and expertise, these alumni are driving meaningful conversations and holding their institutions accountable to their DEI commitments. ●

## How Do I Get My Alma Mater to Support DEI?

Use this template, offered by Insight Into Diversity, to spark conversations with fellow alums so you can draft a letter to your institution, either individually or collectively.

Dear [University Governing Body],

As proud alumni of [University Name], we are writing to express our strong support for the ongoing diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) programs and initiatives on campus. We believe that these efforts are integral to fostering an environment that is welcoming, supportive, and representative of all members of our community.

Having benefited from the robust education and valuable experience we gained at [University Name], we understand the importance of ensuring access to higher education for everyone and a sense of belonging both inside and outside of the classroom. As such, we urge you to continue to support, expand, and protect existing DEI programs and initiatives on campus.

Specifically, we believe that the following actions are necessary:

- 1. [Increased] Funding:** We urge you to allocate [additional] resources to DEI programs and initiatives that will ensure their sustainability, efficacy, and stability.
- 2. [Expansion of/Creation of] Programs:** We recommend [expanding existing/creating new] DEI programs and initiatives to reach a broader audience and address the needs of underrepresented individuals in our community.
- 3. Community Engagement:** We encourage [ongoing/increased] collaboration with students, faculty, staff, alumni, and community members to ensure that DEI efforts are inclusive and representative of all stakeholders.
- 4. Transparency and Accountability:** We request that you provide regular updates on the progress of DEI programs and initiatives and implement cohesive mechanisms and data-driven methods for accountability and transparency.
- 5. Protection of DEI Efforts:** We ask that you take proactive measures to protect DEI programs and initiatives from any threats or challenges they may face, whether that be by developing institutional policies, pushing back against state legislative actions and anti-DEI organizations, endowing DEI-related positions, or other steps.

By intentionally aligning with these suggestions, we believe that [University Name] [can/will continue to] be a leader and a role model in promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion in higher education. We are proud to support our alma mater in this important work and stand ready to assist in any way we can.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.



# Johns Hopkins Alumni Gather for DEI Summit

By Erik Cliburn

Johns Hopkins University received the largest single alumni gift to any U.S. institution to date with Michael Bloomberg's historic \$1.8 billion donation to his alma mater.



A group of Vivien Thomas Scholars — made up of HBCU and MSI students — were among the attendees of the Johns Hopkins Alumni Identity and Equity Summit. (Photo courtesy of Johns Hopkins University)

## Alumni can make powerful

contributions to the culture of their alma mater. In recognition of this, Johns Hopkins University (JHU) recently hosted the inaugural Alumni Identity and Equity Summit, which brought together alumni, university leaders, and students to discuss and advance the institution's DEI (diversity, equity, and inclusion) values.

The two-day event facilitated collaboration between attendees and provided a space for them to network and to discuss the challenges and opportunities they have experienced related to DEI. Remarks were given by senior JHU leadership, including Katrina Caldwell, chief diversity officer and vice provost for diversity and inclusion; Harris Tildon, vice president of government, community,

and economic partnerships; and Tiffany Wright, deputy general counsel for the university.

A key point of conversation was "Realizing Our Promise: The Second JHU Roadmap on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion," which outlines the university's goals to improve belonging and representation within the campus community. The summit also touched on broader DEI topics, such as the U.S. Supreme Court's ban on race-conscious admissions and strategies to make workplaces more inclusive.

Among the attendees were a cohort from JHU's Vivien Thomas Scholars Initiative, which is open to approximately 100 underrepresented students — particularly those from historically Black colleges and

universities and Minority-Serving Institutions — pursuing a STEM PhD. Scholars receive full tuition support for up to six years, along with a stipend, health insurance, and numerous professional development opportunities.

"Attending the JHU Alumni Identity & Equity Summit was not merely about reconnecting, it was about reigniting our collective promise to inclusive excellence," Guillermo Ortiz, class of 2014, said in a press release. "Together we bridged experiences, shared insights, and worked toward a future where every voice resonates, every story matters, and every Blue Jay finds their place in our vibrant community. Let's embrace these moments, for in our unity lies the power to shape a brighter tomorrow for Johns Hopkins University and beyond." ●



The **OSU Alumni Association** is honored to receive the **2024 Alumni Association Inclusive Excellence Award**.

#### ALUMNI LEADERSHIP

- OSUAA Board of Directors volunteer leadership group reflects university demographics
- 50-50% gender identity split, 32% alumni of color (up from 8% five years prior)

#### ALUMNI ENGAGEMENT

- Development & support of five Alumni Identity Networks
- Events & initiatives invite & include diverse communities
- Virtual programming & access to all

#### ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENTS

- Stories focused on diverse identities, communities & initiatives
- Creation of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Alumni Legacy Award (est. 2020)

#### COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

- Fundraising support for underserved student communities
- Intentional purchasing & vendor selection of alumni, BIPOC and women-owned businesses



[ForOregonState.org/DEIB](https://ForOregonState.org/DEIB)



Oregon State University  
Alumni Association



## OUR NEXT ISSUE

The July/August 2024 issue of **Insight Into Diversity** will feature a special report on law schools, as well as a section on military-friendly schools.

**Advertising deadline is June 19.**  
For more information, email [ads@insightintodiversity.com](mailto:ads@insightintodiversity.com).

## We Believe **DIVERSITY** IS STRENGTH On Campus and Beyond

At Ohio University, our commitment to inclusiveness and diversity extends beyond our students' years on campus. The Ohio University Alumni Association (OUAA) provides Bobcats of all backgrounds with ways to stay supported and connected, including the Ebony Bobcat Network and PRIDE Network; professional development programming; programs like the triennial Black Alumni Reunion; and much more.

The OUAA shares this 2024 Alumni Association Inclusive Excellence Award from Insight Into Diversity with our 290,000-plus living alumni: Thank you!

**LEARN MORE ABOUT THE OUAA:**  
[ohio.edu/alumni](https://ohio.edu/alumni)

**OHIO**  
UNIVERSITY

Alumni  
Association



**INSIGHT**  
INTO **DIVERSITY**





# Your Campus Can, Too!

## Options for Offering Gender-Affirming Care

By Katy Abrams

**Choosing a college** is a complex process when weighing options such as available degree programs, housing, cost of attendance, and extracurricular activities. For transgender and nonbinary students, the decision can also include whether the institution offers gender-affirming care.

Gender-affirming care includes the resources, treatments, and services that recognize and support transgender and nonbinary students' gender identity. This can encompass providing access to hormone replacement therapy, reconstructive surgeries, mental health services with identity-affirming professionals, legal resources to assist with name and pronoun changes, etc.

A 2022 Association of American Universities survey found that 5.1% of respondents identified as transgender, nonbinary, or questioning. This translates to hundreds of thousands of students who need physical, mental, and emotional health care that respects and affirms their gender identity.

Some colleges and universities actively make this care a priority, and their wide variety of programs and initiatives have the potential to be replicated and customized at many more institutions.

The University of Utah offers the Transgender Health Program (THP), which partners with local organizations to provide or advocate for hormone therapy, gender-affirming surgery, fertility treatment, counseling, and

more. THP services also include a peer support system, assistance with gender marker changes on official documents, and free patient education seminars. The Human Rights Campaign ranked the university as an LGBTQ+ Healthcare Equality Leader in 2022.

Across the country in New York, the Ithaca College School of Health Sciences and Human Performance offers the Voice and Communication Modification Program for People in the Transgender Community. The clinic, established in 2011, serves transgender participants through skill development in vocal hygiene, resonance, articulation, pitch and inflection, and more. Led by speech-language pathologists, the program features experiential learning opportunities for graduate students while providing individualized treatment plans "designed specifically for the goals of each participant."

Harvard University, as part of its student health benefits, provides extensive gender-affirming care through comprehensive primary care as well as counseling and mental health services. Those interested can access hormone therapy consults and referrals for gender-affirming surgical procedures. Harvard's student health insurance plan covers hormone therapy, top surgery (mastectomy), breast augmentation, sperm and oocyte cryopreservation, among other treatments, with low co-pays for in-network providers. Individual sessions with an LGBTQIA+

**An identity-affirming institution actively supports and validates an individual's sense of identity, whether it's based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, disability, or any other distinguishing factor.**

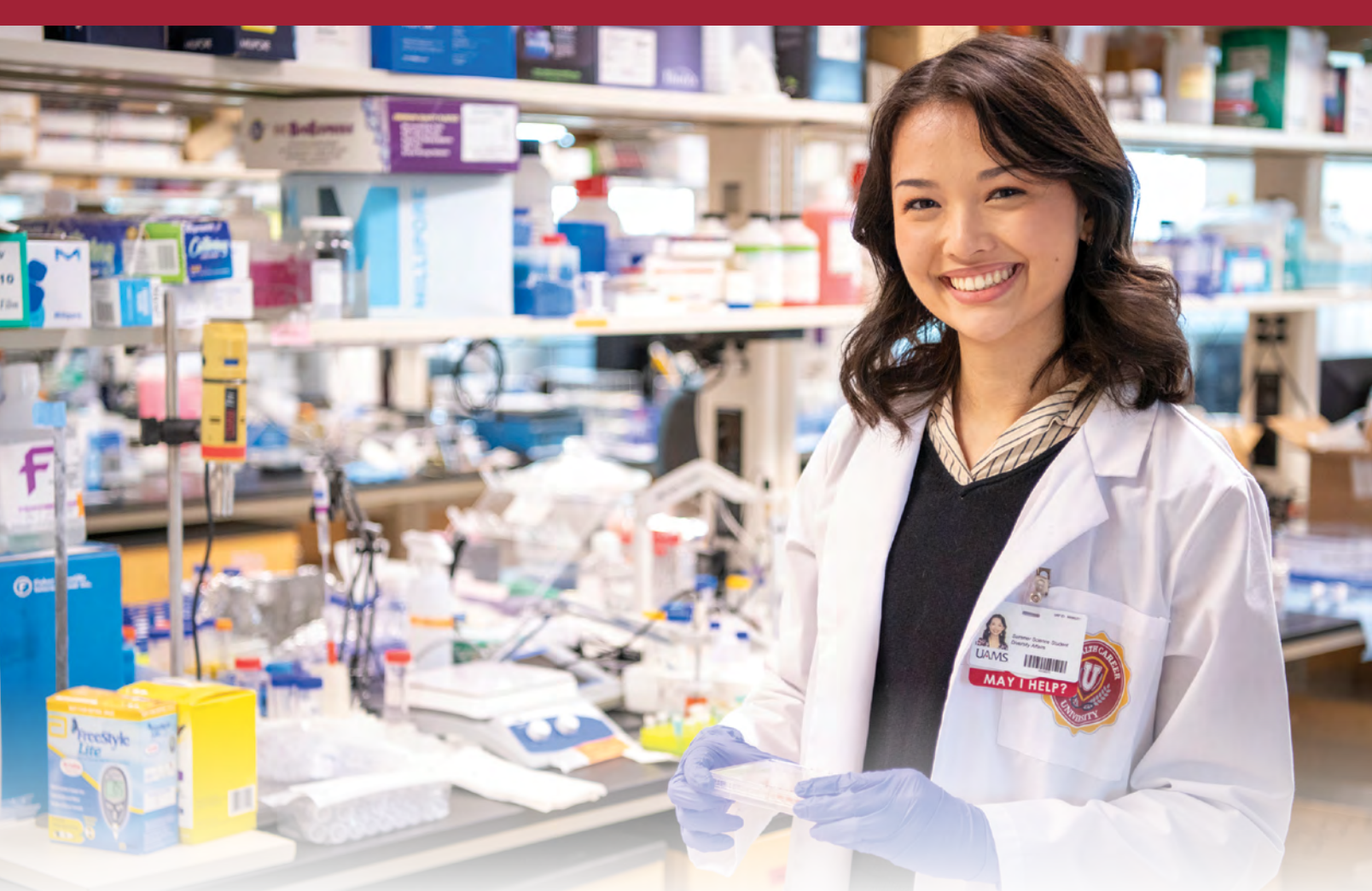
**A gender-affirming model is an approach to health care that prioritizes providing medical and psychological support for transgender and nonbinary individuals who may require specific medical interventions and treatments to align their physical bodies with their gender identity and to address their overall health and well-being.**

competent therapist, group therapy, and peer support programs are also available.

Many colleges offer lists or maps of single-stall and gender-inclusive restrooms on campus, simplified processes for ensuring records are under the student's chosen name, even if it's not a legal name change, and support groups for nonbinary, transgender and gender-questioning individuals. For institutions without the financial ability or infrastructure to offer more expansive services, these are efforts that cost little but send a resounding message of support and help create a welcoming environment. ●







# Creating Opportunities for People of All Backgrounds

The University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences' strives to create a campus environment that welcomes people of all backgrounds. In partnership with student- and employee-led organizations, we've invested our time and effort to create programs that benefit veterans, underrepresented minorities, individuals with disabilities, and members of the LGBTQ community.

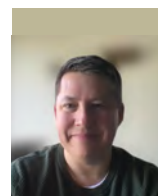
We're committed to making STEM-H education and health care careers attainable for everyone, opening new opportunities for students from underrepresented or underserved groups. Our K-12 and undergraduate programs reach hundreds of individuals each year and form a pipeline for those who dream of pursuing a degree in the medical field.

Training and employing tomorrow's brightest health care providers and research scientists, our mission is to improve health, health care and well-being of Arkansans and of others in the region, nation and the world.



# Dancing Beyond Pride

## Sustaining LGBTQIA+ Visibility Year-Round



By Jon Humiston, EdD (they/them), Director of Noncredit and Alternative Enrollment for Innovation and Online for Central Michigan University, and Aaric Guerriero, MA (he/him), a Central Michigan University Alum

### Celebrating pride on campus

is powerful, but it's not enough. Academic leaders need to ensure visibility of their LGBTQIA+ inclusion efforts all year long. Here, we outline some ways that leadership can work to maintain awareness throughout the year.

### Policies

Enact and enforce policies and practices that protect LGBTQIA+ individuals such as inclusive non-discrimination policies, chosen name, and pronoun policies.

### Benefits

LGBTQIA+ faculty, staff, and students should have benefits that truly meet their needs. That includes insurance that covers gender-affirming health care and providing inclusive parental leave. All employees and students should have access to identity-affirming support and resources tailored to support the LGBTQIA+ community.

### Education & Training

Education is an essential and crucial piece of the puzzle. Programs that teach everyone about LGBTQIA+ topics and create space where voices and perspectives are heard, valued, and respected are vital. This might look like campus climate studies, training workshops, and guest speakers who provide insight into the unique challenges faced by LGBTQIA+ individuals that both inform and encourage allies and advocates.



### Recruitment and Retention

Hiring and retaining openly LGBTQIA+ faculty and staff in all levels of leadership is necessary. Research shows that LGBTQIA+ youth desperately need visible role models. While faculty and staff may be committed to providing support, there must be adequate resources provided for them to truly meet the needs of this student population.

### Scholarships

University scholarships should be established to fund LGBTQIA+ research for faculty, as well as to financially support LGBTQIA+ students.

### Alumni Groups

Establishing an LGBTQIA+ alumni affinity group is a great step to help LGBTQIA+ students make connections with experts in their field and to also maintain a lasting connection with their alma mater.

This is not an exhaustive list, but creating LGBTQIA+ inclusion is more than checking a box. It goes well beyond simply celebrating Pride month or a brief display of rainbow flags. True belonging and inclusion result from continued, visible action. We challenge academic leaders to create an infrastructure that keeps pride alive after June 30! ●



# BE AUTHENTICALLY YOU

Proudly recognized as a leader in LGBTQ+ support, the University of Louisville consistently achieves high rankings from the Campus Pride Index. Through our dedicated LGBT Center, we are devoted to creating an inviting and supportive environment where every student, faculty and staff member can thrive while being true to who they are.

[louisville.edu/diversity](https://louisville.edu/diversity)

**PROUD TO BE A 2023 DIVERSITY CHAMPION, 10-YEAR HEED AWARD WINNER  
AND A FOUR-YEAR HEALTH PROFESSIONS HEED AWARD WINNER.**





# The End of Campus LGBTQIA+ Lifelines

By Erik Cliburn

**For years,** LGBTQIA+ resource centers on college campuses have served as havens for their communities and allies to gather, learn, and advocate.

However, after Florida and Texas lawmakers passed sweeping legislation in spring 2023 to end official DEI (diversity, equity, and inclusion) efforts and ban affiliated offices at state public universities, LGBTQIA+ individuals on these campuses have been left reeling from the recent elimination of many critical programs on which they have come to rely.

The closure of LGBTQIA+ resource centers — or pride centers — in particular has sparked protests, discussions, and reflections on their importance in fostering a safe and welcoming environment for these students. The loss of these vital support systems has left many feeling vulnerable and afraid.

At the University of North Florida (UNF), the shutdown of four diversity centers, including the LGBTQ Center, was met with student protests. In recent years, UNF had been ranked by the nonprofit Campus Pride as among the top colleges in the U.S. for LGBTQIA+ students.

“I believe this is an infringement of student rights,” Violet Lester, a UNF student, said during the protest. “[It is] not just the community center that will be missed, but the security that students have in the rights of being themselves, the rights of embracing themselves, and having that community that was there.”

Fortunately, some public institutions



**Students at the University of North Florida (UNF) protested the closure of the school's LGBTQ Center. (Photo by Justin Nedrow, Spinnaker Media Photographer)**

in the state, including Florida International University (FIU) have, so far, avoided closures of their pride centers. Given that Florida's mandate only prohibits DEI efforts that are supported by state and federal funds, schools that finance such programs through alternative means, such as student fees, outside grants, or community donations can remain open.

“There may be Florida campuses that have found ways to continue in quieter, more obscure ways to support their students, their LGBTQIA+

programs and other diversity work,” Shane Mendez Windmeyer, the CEO and executive director of Campus Pride, wrote in a blog after the state's anti-DEI law passed in 2023.

In spite of the barrage of anti-LGBTQIA+ legislation coming from Florida lawmakers, many administrators, staff, faculty, and students at FIU have remained steadfast in their support of the university's Pride Center, which is run through the Centers for Student Engagement. At a recent Miami Beach Pride parade, FIU President Kenneth Jessell, PhD, commended those who have worked to maintain and organize funding and events — such as Lavender graduations — for the center.



**In support of the LGBTQ Center, UNF protesters set up a variety of Pride flags on campus.**



“This doesn’t happen by chance,” Jessell said at the parade. “It takes a lot of people and a lot of work to get to where we are today. ... Your commitment, on a daily basis, in ensuring that there are safe places at FIU for LGBTQ+ Panthers never goes unnoticed, especially during these difficult times.”

With similar anti-DEI legislation in Texas, The University of Texas at Arlington quietly disbanded its LGBTQIA+ program. Student employees of the program also protested the decision and expressed disappointment and concern over the sudden removal of resources and support for LGBTQIA+ students on campus.

The University of Houston and Texas A&M University also announced the closures of their LGBTQ Resource Center and Center for Diversity and Inclusion, and the LGBTQ+ Pride Center, respectively.

Though anticipated after the bills’ passage, the decision to shutter these centers was still a blow to many students, faculty, staff, and alumni given their significance as safe spaces

**Among 18-to-24-year-old LGBTQIA+ youth, 34% considered — and 9% attempted — suicide within the past year. Those within that age range also experienced symptoms of anxiety and depression at a rate of 64% and 50%, respectively, per The Trevor Project. See page 48 for more information on supporting LGBTQIA+ student mental health.**

and resource hubs. These centers play crucial roles in providing counseling and support, education and training, and advocacy for LGBTQIA+ students.

They are also key to community building on campus, which helps students develop a sense of belonging and improves academic performance and retention, according to the commentary “Why LGBTQ+ Campus Resource Centers Are Essential,” written by researchers from The Ohio State University and Lehigh University.

“Their presence (along with

other LGBTQIA+ resource groups) is correlated with lower levels of discrimination, less distress, and increased self-acceptance among LGBTQIA+ students,” the commentary reads. “LGBTQIA+-affirming services and campus environments are crucial for the well-being and academic success of these students. It is the responsibility of all university community members — administrators, faculty, and students alike — to advocate for continuity in these services.”

Notably, the programs offer essential mental health access to a population with a higher risk of suicide, depression, and mental illness.

Among 18-to-24-year-old LGBTQIA+ youth, 34% considered and 9% attempted suicide within the past year, according to The Trevor Project’s 2023 U.S. National Survey on the Mental Health of LGBTQ Young People. Those within that age range also experienced symptoms of anxiety and depression at a rate of 64% and 50%, respectively. The mental health of respondents also ranked consistently worse in states that had passed or were considering anti-LGBTQIA+ legislation.

While some of the functions of LGBTQIA+ centers have been



**Vital LGBTQIA+ resources at the University of Texas at Arlington and the University of Houston were disbanded following the passage of anti-DEI legislation in the state.**



# Tracking the Advancement of Anti-LGBTQIA+ Legislation

So far during the 2024 legislative session, more than 500 bills have been proposed in state legislatures throughout the U.S. targeting LGBTQIA+ rights, according to the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU). These bills touch on a wide range of topics that impact the lives and liberties of LGBTQIA+ individuals, such as limiting expression, censoring curricula, making adoption more difficult, denying access to gender-affirming facilities, and more.

Though nearly half of the bills have already been defeated, an alarming 178 have passed into law or advanced in the legislative process. As the barrage of anti-LGBTQIA+ legislation continues in conservative-led states, the loss of campus pride centers will be even more devastating to queer and transgender students at the affected public institutions. The following bills are just several of many proposed legislative efforts to curtail the rights of LGBTQIA+ communities in 2024.

## Alabama

Proposed in February, HB 130 seeks to prohibit classroom instruction related to gender identity or sexual orientation in public K-12 schools. The initial restrictions proposed were more lenient, prohibiting such discussions that were not deemed age or developmentally appropriate for students up to fifth grade. Amendments, however, expanded the curriculum censorship to all grades and removed any wording about age appropriateness.

## Arizona

Referred to as a “forced outing” bill by the ACLU, SB 1166 would require public schools in the state to notify parents within five school days if an employee or contractor addresses their child using a pronoun or first name that does not align with their biological sex listed on official school records. Additionally, employees and contractors cannot be required to use pronouns conflicting with their religious or moral beliefs.

## Idaho

Claiming to “prohibit the state from discriminating against adoption agencies or adoptive parents on the basis of religion,” an Idaho law passed in March effectively limits the rights of LGBTQIA+ couples to adopt or foster children. While protecting potential parents from being denied for their religious

practices, the law also allows faith-based adoption agencies to turn away those who do not align with their beliefs.

## Iowa

An education budget bill that has advanced in both houses, Iowa’s SF 2435 prohibits public colleges and universities from establishing or funding DEI offices. The legislation bans institutions from promoting or endorsing concepts regarding gender theory, transgender ideology, heteronormativity, allyship, and numerous other DEI-related topics.

## Missouri

Missouri’s proposed HB 1650 broadly defines “adult cabaret performances” and assigns charges to anyone who is engaged in such a performance on public property or in a location where it could be viewed by a minor. Widely understood to target drag shows on college campuses — which have long been considered staples of the LGBTQIA+ community — those in violation could be charged with a class A misdemeanor for a first offense and a class E felony for a second or subsequent offense.

## South Carolina

The “South Carolina Student Physical Privacy Act,” or SB 1213, targets transgender individuals by requiring that every public school restroom and changing facility accessible by multiple people be designated for use only by members of one sex. The act aims to prevent transgender individuals from using facilities that align with their gender identity, instead mandating that they use those based on their sex assigned at birth.

## Tennessee

Having advanced to the Tennessee senate in late April, a proposed bill — SB 1722, or HB 1605 — would restrict the display of certain flags, most notably pride flags, in public and state-funded charter schools. Though initial wording limits flag displays to only the U.S. and Tennessee flags, the bill lists a number of exceptions to the rule, which does not include any flags related to LGBTQIA+ communities. Additionally, it would allow for schools to be sued for violating flag display rules.



absorbed into student- or community-led organizations, their termination has raised broader discussions about the impact of legislative changes on LGBTQIA+ communities in educational settings. Experts argue that these shutdown — and the laws they stem from — undermine campus efforts to promote inclusivity, safety, and support for marginalized groups, particularly LGBTQIA+ students. Given that conservative-controlled states continue to push anti-DEI legislation, there are concerns that even more resource centers could be in jeopardy.

In response, students, faculty, and other advocates emphasize the need for continued support, increased awareness, productive activism, and consistent engagement to ensure that all students feel safe, welcomed, and supported in their education.

“We all want [students] to have the best experience while they’re here and to graduate successfully,” said Monica Johnson, director of the Women’s and LGBTQIA Resource Centers at Bloomsburg University. “Creating community for them on campus, helping them to find space where they feel like they belong and are seen, and providing opportunities for education to students who aren’t part of these communities but are supportive and want to learn — in my mind, that’s all part of student success and persistence.” ●

## Lending A Hand

The University of Houston’s LGBTQ Resource Center closure this year prompted a club at Rice University, a private college in Texas, to extend membership to affected students statewide. Rice PRIDE, a student-run LGBTQIA+ group founded in 2017, has welcomed over 130 individuals from 20 different Texas universities. Rice PRIDE offers all student members equal access to facilities like the Queer Resource Center, and an open invitation to group events. Some students who have joined the club are on campuses as far as eight hours away. That makes it difficult for them to attend in-person, so many events now include virtual components. Affected students also have access to connect with the Rice LGBTQIA+ community through their GroupMe and other social media.

The University of California takes **pride** in its commitment to affirming diverse identities and lived experiences. Through intentional work in policies, programs and support, UC is continuously working to ensure inclusion and belonging of LGBTQIA+ students, faculty, staff and community members.

Join us at the **University of California!**

UNIVERSITY  
OF  
CALIFORNIA





# Diversity Matters at Indiana University



At Indiana University, diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) are integrated into every aspect of campus life. School leaders are steadfast in their belief that learning from people of all backgrounds enriches the college experience and prepares students for the diverse world in which we live.

“We are proud that our IU student body represents a record diverse population of more than 12,275 students of color—nearly 30 percent—for the first time.”

James C. Wimbush, Ph.D.  
Vice President for Diversity, Equity & Inclusion  
Johnson Chair for Diversity and Leadership

IU's DEI work has again been recognized by *INSIGHT Into Diversity*, the country's largest, oldest and most respected national diversity and inclusion publication in higher education. This year, for the ninth consecutive time, the magazine honored IU Bloomington with the **2023 Higher Education Excellence in Diversity (HEED) award**.

In addition, IU Bloomington received the **Diversity Champion Award** for the seventh consecutive year. Known for visionary leadership, Diversity Champions are institutions that set the standard for thousands of other campus communities striving for diversity and inclusion and develop successful strategies and programs that serve as models of excellence for other institutions.





# HOW DO I ADVOCATE

for LGBTQIA+ Students  
with Disabilities?



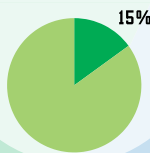
## USE THESE BEST PRACTICES

- 1 **EDUCATE YOURSELF** about the community so you can
- 2 **COMMUNICATE WELL** with everyone.
- 3 **RECOGNIZE** intersectional identities and
- 4 **ACKNOWLEDGE** each individual's identity.
- 5 Use **PERSON-FIRST** language or
- 6 **ASK** how your peer prefers to be identified.
- 7 **BE AN ALLY.** Start conversations on your campus and
- 8 **CHAMPION** accessible clubs.



### WHY HELP?

Only 15% of LGBTQ+ teens with a disability  
“always feel safe in the classroom.”



# Johns Hopkins University proudly celebrates **Pride**

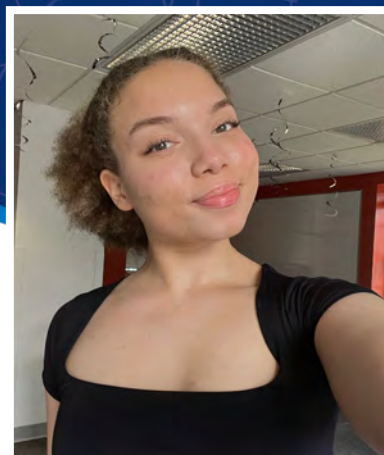
## **Affirming, fostering, and celebrating self-discovery and self-actualization**

At Johns Hopkins University we use an equity-and-justice lens to facilitate opportunities to navigate identity, build community, and (re)define belonging at home and beyond. We're proud of student leaders like Kylah who are committed to transformative justice and are creating safe and equitable spaces so all members of our community can be their most authentic selves.



"Pride is saying "yes" to your passions, your desires, your hopes, and your purpose regardless of the momentary doubt you may face from yourself or others."

-**Kylah**, Johns Hopkins student intern, Gender & Sexuality Resources Team and founder, Roots and Rainbows, a QTBIPOC student group





# Beyond Acceptance

## Transforming LGBTQIA+ Student Mental Health

By Courtney Mullins and Nikki Brahm

### As college campuses strive

to be havens of inclusivity and growth, support systems for LGBTQIA+ mental health are imperative for fostering a truly affirming and thriving educational environment.

This work is critical, as countless studies highlight the startling realities faced by LGBTQIA+ youth. For example, among a sample of more than 28,000 LGBTQIA+ young people, over one in three believe their chances of living over the age of 35 are low, according to the 2024 study “Perceived Life Expectancy and Life Purpose in LGBTQ+ Young People” by The Trevor Project, a suicide prevention and LGBTQIA+ mental health organization.

This belief correlates with increased mental health concerns; those who predicted a low chance of living a long life reported higher rates of recent anxiety, depression, past-year self-harm, suicide consideration, and suicide attempts.

As the data makes clear the urgent need for action, Genny Beemyn, PhD, director of the Stonewall Center at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, says students are finding their voice. Beemyn has published extensively on the experiences and needs of transgender college students.

“There are more students recognizing that they need help and seeking help than [ever] before,” says Beemyn. “I think [it’s] a positive change that people who are experiencing harassment and discrimination aren’t just sitting on it and letting that impact them in negative ways, but are [finding help].”

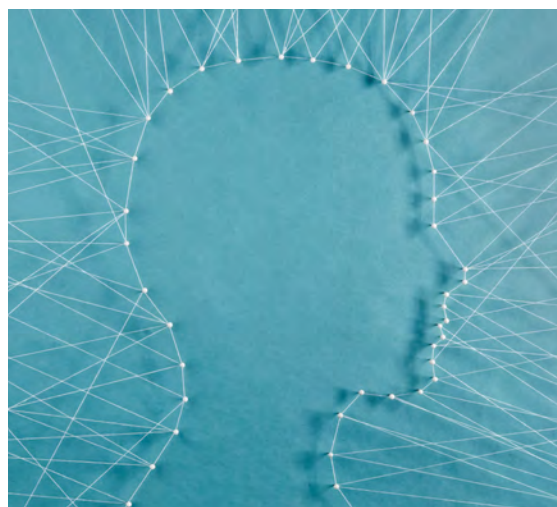
Experts say institutional leaders and the campus community can implement a number of actions that prioritize the psychological well-being of LGBTQIA+ students. Some include integrating DEI (diversity, equity, and inclusion) efforts with mental health support; providing specialized mental health services; bolstering organizations, programs,

and centers; and expanding faculty and staff resources.

### Strategies for Success

Further research is facilitating dialogue across higher education and advancing strategies in campus communities. For example, it’s imperative that institutions understand the connection between DEI and mental health because of the strong relationship between “discrimination and increased general distress, social isolation, and suicidal thoughts,” according to the Center for Collegiate Mental Health Annual Report, which accounts for more than 185,000 college students who sought mental health treatment at 195 campus counseling centers during the 2022–2023 academic year.

While it’s no secret that a sense of belonging contributes to an individual’s overall well-being and chance of success, continued stigma around mental health coupled with attacks on diversity programming and LGBTQIA+ rights



More than one in three LGBTQIA+ youth believe their chances of living over the age of 35 are low.

Those who predict a low chance of living report higher rates of mental health concerns:

Recent anxiety: **Over 80%**

Depression: **Over 75%**

Past-year self-harm: **Over 75%**

Suicide consideration: **Nearly 70%**

Suicide attempts: **Nearly 30%**

and policies contribute to overlooking this critical component.

“We can’t expect students to be able to fully be present and learn the course content if we’re not allowing them to show up in spaces as their authentic selves,” says Jon Humiston, EdD, director of noncredit and alternate enrollment programs for innovation and online at Central Michigan University. “Maslow’s hierarchy of needs will say if your basic needs aren’t met, your ability to grasp and focus on external content like learning course material is going to

Overall, because the quality of psychological health is so closely linked with the depth of social connection, every aspect of a campus should nurture a sense of community.

### **Impact of Faculty and Staff**

Whether a student, faculty, staff, administration, or a community member, one shouldn’t overlook the potential impact they may have on student mental health.

“Oftentimes, when we think of mental health, we think of counseling

DEI legislation. In some places, leaders and administrators may be penalized for even encouraging such training.

Institutions can prioritize education for students and educators alike by partnering with community organizations, distributing educational literature, or offering voluntary educational hours through LGBTQIA+ centers. Not only does guidance need to be offered to faculty and staff, but educators must also take the initiative to educate themselves, says Beemyn.

Humiston and their research partner



**“Oftentimes, when we think of mental health, we think of counseling centers. Certainly, they have an important responsibility for student mental health, but they can’t do it all. ... We all have a role to play [and] we all can make a difference.”**

**Genny Beemyn, PhD**

be much more challenging.”

Spanning two decades, Humiston’s career and research has focused primarily on the campus climate for LGBTQIA+ students, especially transgender and nonbinary individuals.

In the current climate, it is increasingly important that an abundance of resources are made available to offer much-needed support for LGBTQIA+ students, such as drop-in counseling hours, transportation services for on- or off-campus health care, and telehealth and virtual offerings. It’s also vital that institutions advance LGBTQIA+-inclusive environments, centers, housing options, organizations, programming, and systems for accurately identifying student names, pronouns, and genders.

“Trans and nonbinary students need places where they can have support, where they can be themselves and live their lives as themselves,” says Beemyn. “Too often that doesn’t translate in the campus environment.”

centers,” says Beemyn. “Certainly, they have an important responsibility for student mental health, but they can’t do it all. ... We all have a role to play [and] we all can make a difference.”

LGBTQIA+ and other marginalized populations report lower rates of perceiving that their professors care about them. However, LGBTQIA+ students who report feeling cared for by their teachers to a high degree are 30% less likely to attempt suicide, as indicated in The Trevor Project study “The Relationship Between Caring Teachers and the Mental Health of LGBTQ Students.”

In a vicious cycle, untrained faculty and staff attempting to support students in crisis are less likely to have the appropriate resources for them and more likely to then need support themselves. Exacerbating these circumstances are the restrictions on mandatory training for faculty and staff that have followed some states’ anti-

Aaric Guerriero have seen firsthand the impact that DEI objectives and LGBTQIA+ support structures can make in student success.

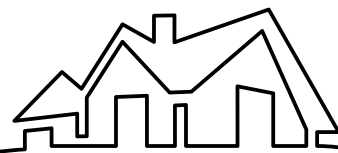
“Students are trying to navigate these academic requirements and all these other things that are placed upon them, but are also worrying about ... ‘I can’t even get out of bed because my depression is so bad. I’m navigating this situation and have no one to process with.’ [This is coupled with] faculty and staff who are not trained,” says Guerriero.

Overall, students need to know that there are individuals available, on campus and beyond, who are eager to offer assistance, says Beemyn.

“There’s so much support in the world,” says Beemyn. “Yes, there’s a lot of haters — but there’s also a lot of people who are there for you or who would be there for you. You just need to find those people.” ●



# Home, Sweet Home



## LGBTQIA+ Living Communities Improve Campus Life

By Nikki Brahm

**A year ago**, Binghamton University on-campus housing included specialized residential living/learning communities for students studying a romance language, those interested in environmental or animal issues, and more.

Since the fall 2023 launch of a new LGBTQIA+ residential community, students and allies are also able to enjoy a supportive network and improved sense of belonging — all within their residence hall.

“There are about 15 to 20 students that have been [in the living community] since the start of this semester,” says Eddie Stakelum, LGBTQ+ Living Community graduate assistant and a master’s degree student in student affairs administration.

### Students Say...

“You don’t have to explain yourself to anyone. Nobody asks questions or tries to isolate you. You are who you are, it’s really an awesome thing. ... I had two roommates [throughout] my time here, a gay man from California and then a jock lesbian from upstate, and they were some of the coolest people I’ve ever met. I always felt seen, and we taught each other things every day. I’ll never forget some of the nights we’d stayed up talking. Those are core memories for me, and that’s the living community. It’s family.”

Brandon Nudelman, Binghamton University student in the LGBTQ+ Living Community



Binghamton University community members participate in a Progress Pride flag raising ceremony to kick off Pride Month in June 2023. (Photo courtesy of Binghamton University)

“They’ve really gathered around each other and have had that sense of community for each other. They’ve really become a friend group.”

As of August 2023, more than 450 colleges and universities offer LGBTQIA+-inclusive housing, according to Campus Pride’s Trans Policy Clearinghouse, a group tracking these programs across higher education.

With the recent addition of the LGBTQ+ Living Community at Binghamton, as well as others like Lavender Lane at Lafayette College, these institutions have joined the ranks of schools with inclusive housing

initiatives. These residence programs serve as a model for other colleges and universities interested in developing similar projects.

### LGBTQIA+ Living Community

At Binghamton, the residential option is available in Newing College’s Delaware Hall. This academic year, it was exclusively open to incoming first-year undergraduates. Next year, returning students will be eligible as well.

In collaboration with the campus LGBTQ+ Center (Q Center), the living community hosts events, dinners, educational programming,

"I have made so many friendships that I value greatly and have met so many amazing people. I have learned so much through the events we have as a house, for example, house discussions, guest speakers, resource expos, and more. Not only that, but I have learned so much from the other students I am living with as well as the nonresident students that come to Lavender Lane to enjoy the space. I have also learned a lot about myself. I feel a lot more confident in my identities and in my ability to be a leader, activist, student, and friend. I love the person I am today and I know I would not be who I am now without Lavender Lane."

Jess Heske, Lafayette College student  
and president of Lavender Lane

## Students Say...

and community-building activities such as creating and signing a list of community guidelines, bookshelf painting and tie-dye craft events, movie and game nights, and a resume event.

Overall, there is a strong connection between students who visit the QCenter and those who live in the residential community, furthering across-campus relationships, says Nick Martin, associate director of the QCenter.

LGBTQIA+ resource centers provide a safe space for students to feel accepted while advocating for policies and practices that contribute to their success, according to the 2021 study "Why LGBTQ+ Campus Resource Centers Are Essential" from Psychology of Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity. Inclusive living communities designated for these students further this support, where they reside.

The living community addresses a variety of fears and challenges that LGBTQIA+ students may face when entering college. For example, while some may come from a supportive family, others may be searching for a safe space due to a lack of acceptance at home.

"This community [addresses this] because they're [around] people who have similar identities [and] past experiences," says Stakelum.

In addition, students have a safe space for discovering and developing their own identities, says Martin.

"I've seen a lot of students come in considering themselves more of an ally than actually someone that's in the [LGBTQIA+] community with a label, and then over the first year, they're really able to better understand their identity. ... So I think it gives students flexibility to really figure out who they are," they say.

### Lavender Lane

Lafayette College's LGBTQIA+ living group, Lavender Lane, is in its second year. Initiated by the student organization OUT, a campus club supporting



The LGBTQ+ Living Community at Binghamton University is housed in Newing College's Delaware Hall. (Photo courtesy of Binghamton University, SUNY)

## Students Say...

"Living in an LGBTQ+-inclusive community has made me feel safe and welcome on the college campus, which I consider to be one of its highlights. I feel incredibly honored to be living surrounded by individuals in a judgment-free zone. It has been a pleasure seeing some of my colleagues on the floor blossom into their true selves and find their own identity thanks to the community. Any inclusive living community allows for better connection to one's true identity."

Aidan, Binghamton University student in the LGBTQ+ Living Community



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Lavender Lane is a LGBTQIA+-centered living group house offered at Lafayette College. (Photo courtesy of Lafayette College)

LGBTQIA+ and gender-affirming causes, the living community houses 25 students in an on-campus residence, with one serving as a resident adviser.

Lavender Lane is open to those identifying as LGBTQIA+ or community allies who are sophomores or above. The living community also offers 24/7 access to all Lafayette students who apply for a key fob, which allows it to serve as a social center for the nearly 60 students who utilize this feature.

In addition, the home is self-governed, with an executive board that includes a president and vice president who select the housing roster, says Ken Burns, assistant director of residence life at Lafayette.

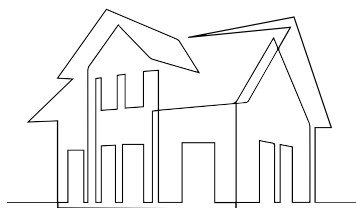
"We don't want to have to place someone in the house that maybe isn't going to care, or put the time and effort needed into what it means to live in Lavender Lane," Burns says. "[The executive board does] a great job of having that self-governance and having

their own autonomy to take the reins."

The community promotes LGBTQIA+ awareness across campus and offers a safe space for students to discover who they are, and their interests and passions, he adds. Leaders also organize a variety of community events, like a special graduation and alumni dinner, craft nights, a drag show, flower planting, and workshops.

Overall, Burns says it isn't a secret that student success is directly supported by their engagement on campus. For institutional leaders interested in creating a program of their own, he says it's important to prioritize student voices.

"Listen to your students," he says. "Obviously ... we can only give students so much based on what we have to work with, but your students will tell you what it is that they want, what it is that they're passionate about, and what it is they need to succeed." ●



As of August 2023, more than 450 colleges and universities have LGBTQIA+-inclusive housing, according to the latest update tracking these programs across higher education by the Campus Pride Trans Policy Clearinghouse.

# Artist-in-Residence Program Fosters Theatrical Talent

By Nikki Brahm

**This year,** Steven Sapp and Mildred Ruiz-Sapp, poets, performers, musicians, directors, and co-founders of the New York theater company UNIVERSES, co-taught a course and developed an ensemble for a theatrical production with the assistance of Northwestern University.

“We were really integrated as faculty, which I appreciated a lot,” says Sapp. “It’s always great to meet another generation of young artists coming up, I think that keeps us fresh and alive. ... Just having the freedom and the resources to create is a beautiful thing.”

This opportunity was made possible by the newly developed Astere E. Claeysens Artist in Residence at Northwestern’s School of Communication. Established with an anonymous \$3 million gift made in memory of Claeysens, the initiative provides visiting artists with a yearlong professorship dedicated to expanding the diversity of the school’s theatrical works and curriculum.

“The country is diverse,” says Sapp. “The student body is diverse. The field is changing. There’s a lot more people of color in charge of regional theaters now [than] ever before. So [considering that], I think the way students are taught or who is to actually interacting with them has to be a lot more diverse. This program in particular [achieves that].”

Throughout the duration of their residence, Sapp and Ruiz-Sapp built upon their own research and established the ensemble for the production “In the Beginning There Was House,” which is inspired by the life and work of Frankie Knuckles, a Chicago house music legend.



**Steven Sapp and Mildred Ruiz-Sapp were selected as artists in residence throughout the 2023-2024 academic year as part of the newly established Astere E. Claeysens Artist in Residence program at Northwestern University.**

They also did ethnographic research, during which they met and talked with people in the Chicago house music scene to further explore where the genre was once thriving.

Additionally, the pair co-taught a course on the history and development of ensembles. Through the class, students were able to hear firsthand business and management perspectives for pursuing a career in theater.

This aspect was incredibly beneficial, as students learned things like contract negotiation, developing relationships, and touring, says Tanya Palmer, MFA, assistant dean and executive artistic director in the School of Communication.

“I know the students got a lot out of [the business facet] too, understanding a little bit more about both the idea that you can make a living as an independent artist and do the work that is meaningful to you,” she says.

Overall, the artist-in-residence program enhances an overarching objective to bolster student body diversity, says Henry D. Godinez, MFA, Carlos Montezuma Professor and chair of the Department of Theatre.

“I’ve always been a big believer that in the academic setting, if a student sees themselves represented in the faculty, they’ll feel like [the university is] a place where they’re welcome, where they’re invited.” ●





## Giving Voice to Increased Representation in Music



By Erik Cliburn

**As music education** continues to embrace DEI (diversity, equity, and inclusion) principles, those at every level in the field are pushing for greater representation and exposure of music beyond the boundaries of the classical, Caucasian-centered curricula typical of academia.

Washington University (WashU) in St. Louis, for instance, actively promotes DEI through platforms like KWUR Clayton90.3 FM, a student-run radio station that celebrates a wide range of musical genres and artists. Through initiatives like KWUR Week, students engage in live performances that showcase the richness of musical diversity, fostering a sense

of community and belonging among listeners and performers.

Student DJs like Natalia León Díaz and Andrés Orbegoza use their weekly shows to spotlight unique and often underrepresented music genres, creating a space where underrepresented voices are amplified and celebrated.

"I just love doing it," Orbegoza told the WashU Newsroom. "Even though I sometimes end up putting the playlist together at 1 in the morning, I just get sucked into doing it. It's really a labor of love."

By incorporating DEI principles into their teaching practices, educators create inclusive learning environments where all students feel valued and

empowered, says Robert L. Bryant III, PhD, an assistant professor of music education at historically Black Tennessee State University.

Bryant's emphasis on student-led recruitment and retention strategies underscores the importance of faculty support in nurturing diverse talent within music programs.

"I believe that it is important for our students to feel that they are truly at the center of everything we do," Bryant said. "We must include and engage our students in all aspects of our program, for with greater inclusion comes new opportunities for us to improve our teaching, enhance student learning, and take our programs to the next level."

Above: Through the 'Música in Missouri' radio show, Washington University students Natalia León Díaz and Andrés Orbegoza expose listeners to a wide range of diverse musical genres. (Photo by Jin Park/Washington University)

Administrative backing — particularly through DEI offices — is essential in supporting greater representation in music.

Schools like the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music (CCM) demonstrate a commitment to equity, inclusion, and community through programs like the CCM Inclusive Community Impact Project. By providing funding for projects that address DEI in the arts, CCM empowers students, staff, and faculty to drive meaningful change within the institution.

Collaborations with universitywide resources further enhance DEI efforts in music education. Initiatives like the Hip Hop Hour at the University of

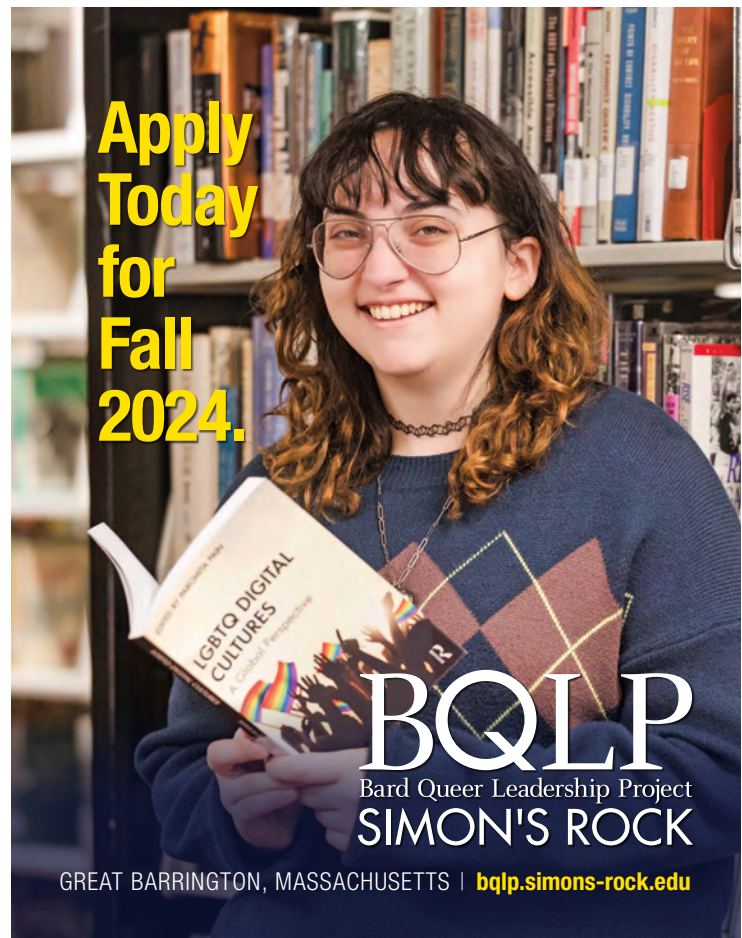
**“We must include and engage our students in all aspects of our program, for with greater inclusion comes new opportunities for us to improve our teaching, enhance student learning, and take our programs to the next level.”**

**Robert L. Bryant III, PhD**

Alabama at Birmingham’s Office of the Vice President for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion use hip-hop culture and music to engage students in conversations about social justice, identity, and expression.

By leveraging culturally relevant pedagogical practices, institutions can create inclusive spaces that resonate with students from diverse backgrounds.

Advancing DEI in music education requires collective efforts at every level of involvement. Students, faculty, and administration must collaborate to create inclusive learning environments, celebrate diverse voices, and empower students and community members to be agents of change. ●



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# Harmonies Heard

## Cali Pathways Project Promotes Access to Music Education

By Nikki Brahm



Cali Pathways Project students listen and engage with visiting artist David Krakauer, a world-renowned clarinetist, as part of the Immersive Residency program. (Photo courtesy of Rob Davidson Media)

**She started playing** trumpet in the fourth grade, but by the time she was in high school — when she thought about her future — Taymar Garlington still wasn't sure she could pursue music as a career.

Her experience in the Cali Pathways Project led by Montclair State University (MSU), which introduces eighth grade through high school students to music education, changed everything.

Not only did the yearlong program advance Garlington's love for music, but it also introduced her to a diverse community of talented musicians. Now Garlington is a first-year music education major studying classical trumpet at MSU.

"I just love how [MSU is] so supportive in the students' musical journey," says Garlington. "They do whatever they can to provide the resources for you to be where you want to be. They provided me with my instrument. They provided me with my jazz lessons, as well as some method books. I wouldn't even have an instrument today to even major in music, really, if I wasn't in this program."

The Cali Pathways Project is currently in its third year and serves between 30 and 40 students annually across the U.S., primarily in New Jersey and the New York City area.

"[The initiative] seeks to support talented high school students from

underserved backgrounds with a desire to pursue music in higher education and professionally," says Tomoko Fujita, DMA, Cali Pathways director.

"We create highly individualized support plans to provide financial, musical, [and] informational resources necessary to break down the barriers that might otherwise preclude these students from achieving their full potential."

The program offers private lessons, advising sessions, performance



Tomoko Fujita, DMA





**Marc Evans Calixte and Taymar Garlington, Cali Pathways Project students, play a jazz jam for the annual December performance evaluation, a requirement which provides mid-year performance experience and the opportunity to receive immediate feedback from a Cali School of Music professor. (Photo courtesy of Rob Davidson Media)**

opportunities, activities and seminars on campus, mentoring, tuition aid for summer camps, and travel expense coverage.

Once students become high school seniors, they also have access to college preparation resources, including mock auditions, financial aid guidance, and college application assistance.

Participants are introduced to a variety of music majors offered by MSU, like music performance, education, therapy, recording arts and production, and composition. Although they are not required to attend or apply to MSU, the Cali School of Music also offers need- and merit-based scholarships.

“We support [students] in whatever their college dreams are,” Fujita says. “We feel like that’s one of the ways in which we can level the playing field for them — not have them feel like they have just one choice, but that they have many choices [similar to] what students of more privileged backgrounds get.”

Underserved students face a

number of challenges when pursuing a music education, such as a lack of representation across the field and long-standing misconceptions regarding success in music careers.

In fact, there is currently a music educator shortage and music therapy practitioners are in high demand, says Fujita. MSU currently has a 100% job placement rate for graduating students in music education. Although music performance is less of a guaranteed path, the school helps students navigate career options that meet their interests.

“There’s just so many ways to make a living in music,” says Fujita. “I think the more students [and families] are aware of that, [it goes] a long way to dispel the ‘starving artist’ idea.”

Fujita says the pathways model of the program is especially unique because it is operated by a higher education institution. Leaders further their impact by partnering with organizations focused on expanding elementary and middle school access.

“[An early start to music education] can dramatically change the trajectory of what their skill level is when they get to college,” she says. “Getting students started earlier makes it easier for things to come more naturally physically with the instrument [and] it gives them more time to develop at the same rate [as] students with more resources.”

For Garlington, her excitement extends to her future career as a teacher.

“I feel like it’s really important for minority children to be able to see themselves in their lessons and in the music,” she says. “Because music is so diverse and there’s so many different ways of expressing yourself within music, exposure to different genres is the best way to be able to reach these children and get them interested in education.” ●

## Name-A-Seat Campaign Raises Funds for Cali Pathways Project

At Montclair State University, the John J. Cali School of Music **Name-A-Seat Campaign** is fundraising to advance student participation in the Cali Pathways Project.

Launched in spring 2023, the campaign raised additional money to provide scholarships for participating underserved students and musicians.

Donation opportunities start at \$2,000 and include an engraved plaque placed on one of the seats in the Leshowitz Recital Hall.

“It’s an opportunity for donors to make a lasting gift and one that they will be recognized for in a very public way,” says Tomoko Fujita, DMA, Cali Pathways director. “The proceeds for that go directly to supporting students of the Cali Pathways Project.”

**Learn more at [bit.ly/NameCaliPathways](https://bit.ly/NameCaliPathways).**



# Art Exhibition Elevates Diversity

"'Diversity Unveiled: An American Mosaic' isn't just an exhibition; it's an inclusive community event with a vibrant dialogue. We aim to showcase the power of art in fostering inclusive conversations. By bringing together artists from around the country with diverse perspectives, we hope to spark meaningful discourse and push the boundaries of artistic expression, academic inquiry, and scholarly production," said University of Wyoming (UW) graduate student and exhibit curator Gerald Lovato, whose philosophy of "curation as methodology" allowed for the creation of a "living laboratory" of DEI principles.

"Diversity Unveiled: An American Mosaic" was on display this spring at UW's historic Cooper House Mansion. The student-led exhibit served as a response to the recent state law restricting Wyoming institutions from spending state funding on the university's Office of DEI. The UW project demonstrates how art can serve as a powerful tool for social discourse and shape a more inclusive future. ●





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