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GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY

Division of Inclusion and Equity | Fall Update



A message from Vice President Bernal:

As the energy and bustle returns to campus, ushering in the start of another academic year, I am reminded of the imperative nature of Grand Valley's ongoing efforts to become more equitable and inclusive. A socially just and welcoming campus is essential for both the success and well-being of GVSU's students, faculty, and staff. It is with this understanding and focus that the Division of Inclusion and Equity enters the second year operating under its [2016-2021 Strategic Plan](#) and [Framework for Inclusion and Equity](#). And, with the addition of four new staff members (see below), the division has undergone significant reorganization.



This academic-year marks the beginning of the first full-year with the Milton E. Ford LGBT Resource Center, Office of Multicultural Affairs, and the Women's Center in the Division of Inclusion and Equity. This is also the inaugural year for Campus Interfaith Resources and our Social Justice Education Program, with further developments underway. Together with our existing offices, Disability Support Resources, Title IX, and Affirmative Action (now under the umbrella of the Equity, Planning and Compliance unit), we are working hard to provide resources for and to meet the needs of our diverse campus.

This semester the Milton E. Ford LGBT Resource Center will launch an LGBT mentoring program to connect students with faculty and staff. The Office of Multicultural Affairs is piloting a Student Success Coach to better serve our students. The Women's Center is reflecting on its history and preparing for the future as they celebrate their 15th anniversary. Disability Support Resources continues to meet the needs of our community and has already registered a record number of first-year students for resources this semester. We are undergoing changes to our Affirmative Action program, and continue emphasis on our commitment to eliminating sexual violence and sexual- or gender-based harassment at GVSU through our Title IX office along with other campus partners.

At the same time, we recognize that the Division of Inclusion and Equity cannot increase inclusion or improve our campus climate alone. We rely heavily on our partners across the university and count on each of you to be a positive force in our community. GVSU's commitment to inclusion and equity is embedded across all of our

areas. Together, we will continue to strive to not only make GVSU the model for diversity and inclusion in higher education in West Michigan, but across the country.

Sincerely,

Jesse M. Bernal, Ph.D.

Vice President for Inclusion and Equity



New Faces in the Division

Over the summer, we welcomed four new staff members to our division and the university. From left to right: Gary Gawel - Director, Affirmative Action and EEO; Relando Thompkins-Jones - Social Justice Educator/Coordinator; Jen C. Hsu - Director, Milton E. Ford LGBT Resource Center; Taran McZee - Special Associate for Inclusion and Equity. Help us welcome them to Grand Valley!



The Women's Center is embarking on its 15th year of celebrating women and advocating for gender justice through the education, engagement, and empowerment of students and the greater Grand Valley community. Join us as we reflect and honor the history and achievements of the Women's Center's past, celebrate the present, and gear up for the future. Learn more [here](#).

Internal Staff Changes since April 2016:

***Aaron Bretting**, formerly Adjunct Van Coordinator for Disability Support Resources is now the Testing Coordinator. ***Erica Bringedahl**, from the Seidman Graduate Office, is now the Multicultural Assistant in the Office of Multicultural Affairs. ***Ashley Schulte**, formerly the VAWA Grant Coordinator and Adjunct Victim Advocate is now the full-time Victim Advocate. ***Etonia Todd**, formerly the Testing Coordinator for Disability Support Resources is now the Disability Resources Administrator.

REMINDER:

The Responsible Employee Training module for Title IX was sent to all faculty, staff, and student workers on August 29th. Please complete this important training by September 16, 2016.

The Speak Up! Campaign has a new look. Keep an eye out for new materials around campus. Learn more at gvsu.edu/bias

NEW: Student Success Coach

A Student Success Coach is a professional staff member who can assist with academic, personal and cultural adjustments to a University setting. A Success Coach helps to empower students to develop skills for academic and personal success. Kristie Scanlon, assistant director in the Office of Multicultural Affairs, will be serving as a Student Success Coach beginning Fall 2016. Kristie can help students with career exploration, goal setting, study skills, time management, campus involvement, campus resources and much more. To make an appointment with Kristie, write to oma@gvsu.edu or call (616) 331-2177. To learn more about this resource, click [here](#).



anyBODYs app

Looking for a private, single-use restroom or nursing nest? There's an app for that! The app, "anyBODYs," was developed by t3 (Teaching Through Technology) in response to the needs of transgender and gender non-conforming students, faculty, and staff as well as persons with disabilities and nursing mothers. Learn more [here](#) and [here](#).

Community-Based Learning at GVSU

As a part of the Division of Inclusion and Equity's mission to build capacity for intersectional, social justice based community-engagement at Grand Valley, the Division is cosponsoring a new colloquia series on community-based learning at GVSU. Learn more about the three part **Fall Colloquia series** [here](#). Registration is available through [Sprout](#).

Native American Employee Affinity Group

The Division of Inclusion and Equity, in partnership with Human Resources, currently supports eight unique employee affinity groups (learn more [here](#)). Those interested in the creation of a **Native American Faculty & Staff Association** should contact Simone Jonaitis (jonaitis@gvsu.edu).

Save the date:

Inclusion Advocate trainings will take place on October 24th and November 8th. Faculty and staff who are interested in attending a training should contact Connie Wiers (wiersco@gvsu.edu).

myGVSU Campus Climate Project

Data from the 2015 myGVSU Climate Survey is currently being analyzed. This semester, faculty, staff, and student action teams will meet to review data and make recommendations to the Vice President for Inclusion and Equity. Data beyond what was presented in March 2016 will be released to the campus later this semester. In addition, the full reports from the Action Teams will be made public by January 2017. Following this, all deans and vice presidents at the university will receive an overview of the climate in their respective colleges and divisions. Individual requests for data analysis, from members of the campus community, will be accepted beginning in January 2017.



LGBTQ Mentoring

The Milton E. Ford LGBT Resource Center is seeking LGBTQIA+ students to participate in **Queer Connections**, GVSU's new LGBT mentorship program. Students will be matched with LGBTQIA-identified faculty, staff, or graduate students. Mentoring pairs will meet regularly over a six-month

period during which time they will build connections, explore resources, and work toward collaboratively-constructed goals. To express interest in being matched with a mentor, fill out a [Mentee Application](#). To learn more about being a mentor and to sign up, visit the [LGBT Faculty and Staff Association's website](#).



Replenish Open House and Women's Center Annual Art Show

September 22nd - 1:30 p.m.

Come celebrate the new home of Replenish, formerly the Student Food Pantry, on the lower-level of the Kirkhof Center (room 0074) on Thursday, September

22nd. The ribbon cutting and brief remarks will take place at **1:35 p.m.** When it was established by two Women's Center student workers in 2009, the Student Food Pantry consisted of a single box of non-perishable food in the lobby of the Women's Center. After years of growth, the pantry, now called Replenish, is at home on the lower-level of the Kirkhof Center (Room 0074). This new space, equipped with refrigeration, is able to provide a wider variety of food, including fresh produce, to students in need. During the 2015-2016 academic year, Replenish served more than 500 students.

Following the Replenish ribbon-cutting, light refreshments will be available in the lobby of the Women's Center where the Women's Center's 15th annual Art Show will also be taking place.

Made in Michigan: Interfaith Lab

From September 16-18th, Grand Valley will host Interfaith Youth Core's first Interfaith Leadership Lab, a new initiative which funds regional conferences led by select institutions. Interfaith Youth Core is a national organization committed to making interfaith cooperation a social norm. Students from GVSU and area colleges will have the opportunity to develop interfaith leadership skills through participation in this weekend-long interfaith leadership experience. The weekend will include a Shabbat Dinner hosted by Hillel of Michigan, an Interfaith Leadership Training from Interfaith Youth Core, and an interfaith community service project. Organized and hosted by Campus Interfaith Resources and the Kaufman Interfaith Institute of GVSU, the institute is being funded by Interfaith Youth Core



MI GEAR UP at Grand Valley

Over the summer, the Office of Multicultural Affairs hosted 29 students from Grand Rapids Public Schools for an in-residence experience at Grand Valley and several other public colleges in the state. The effort was part of Grand Valley's partnership with MI GEAR UP, an initiative designed to increase college awareness and readiness among underrepresented youth in Michigan.

After the week of Michigan college visits, Associate Director Bobby Springer, traveled with 30 high school students for a second week of campus visits to Nashville, TN; Birmingham, AL; and Atlanta, GA.



Inclusion and Equity Faculty Associates

Danielle Lake, assistant professor of Liberal Studies; Donald "DJ" Mitchell, assistant professor of Higher Education; and Dana Munk, associate professor of Movement Science and director of Part-time Faculty Support serve as Faculty

Associates in the Division of Inclusion and Equity. More information about the Faculty Associates program, as well as the application for faculty interested in being a 2017-2018 associate will be available later this semester.

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