



Stronger Together Newsletter

APRIL 2023

Letter from **The Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer**

Greetings,

It is an honor to greet you as Sacred Heart University's (SHU) chief diversity and inclusion officer (CDIO). I have dedicated my life to serving my purpose and passion for advocacy. Therefore, it is a blessing to serve SHU in ways that advocate for so many underrepresented people and needs. Rooted in the Catholic intellectual tradition and the liberal arts, our institution embraces a vision for social justice, and I sincerely appreciate the opportunity to help advance our social justice calling as the CDIO.

In my role, I lead the Office for Inclusive Excellence (OIE), SHU's division dedicated to advancing all things related to diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging (DEIB). As we pursue inclusive excellence as a community, I encourage you to engage with areas of the OIE. Encompassing Multicultural Affairs, Sexuality and Gender Equity, Inclusive Excellence Education and Development, and anti-discrimination work, there are many opportunities to engage with OIE. Explore our website, check for global emails and follow our social media accounts for more information on ways to get involved. We are on Instagram @shu_inclusion and @shu_multiculturalcenter_.



Maurice D. Nelson, CDIO

We are excited to launch the *Stronger Together* newsletter, which is designed to be another access point to keep the SHU community informed and engaged in inclusive excellence efforts throughout the community. Thank you to our OIE graduate assistant, Maeve St. Onge, for your leadership as editor of the *Stronger Together* newsletter.

One of my favorite quotes is by Maya Angelou, and it says, "people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but they will never forget how you made them feel." My personal and professional life is committed to ensuring that people feel like they belong, in perception and in truth. In DEIB, belonging is the outcome that I aspire to facilitate for every person at or connected to SHU.

With Pioneer pride,
Maurice D. Nelson

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What's Happening in OIE

News and Updates

Introducing MACC Pioneers!



MENTORS ADVOCATING FOR CULTURAL CONNECTIONS - MACC PIONEERS

The MAC Pioneers program is designed to connect first-year students from diverse backgrounds with similarly identifying upper-level SHU students. We encourage first years to sign-up for the SHU MAC mentoring initiative!



Multicultural Affairs is excited to announce our new initiative MACC-Pioneers! The Mentors Advocating for Cultural Connection (MACC) program is designed to connect first-year students in both undergraduate and graduate programs who have diverse identities and backgrounds with upper-level SHU students—called “connectors” — who have similar diverse identities and backgrounds.

The inaugural 2023 cohort in the MACC Pioneers program will consist of incoming first-year students in undergraduate and graduate programs who will be matched with trained upper-level connectors. These upper-level students will share skills and strategies on successfully navigating the SHU academic, social and cultural journey.

Throughout the academic year, both connectors and mentees will have the opportunity to enhance their academic abilities, foster a supportive peer community, and cultivate meaningful relationships that facilitate personal growth and development in academic, career and life skills.

To Nominate a “Connector” [click here.](#)

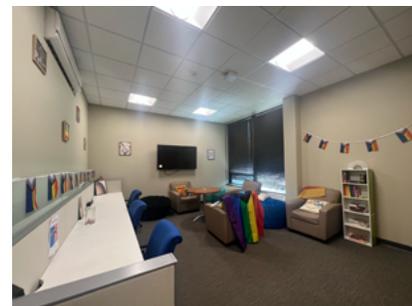
To Apply to be a “Connector” [click here.](#)

SAGE Center Transitioning to OIE

In a letter from President Petillo, it was announced that the Sexuality and Gender Equity (SAGE) Center will transition to the Office for Inclusive Excellence. See highlights from the message below.

“I want to share that the Sexuality and Gender Equity (SAGE) Center will transition to the Office for Inclusive Excellence, effective Monday, May 15, 2023. Thank you to the Center’s current co-directors, Alex Barkley and Nick Frias, for their leadership and contributions.

The SAGE Center centralizes a safe and welcoming atmosphere where queer members of the Sacred Heart community can gather. It is designed to center, celebrate and uplift the experiences of SHU’s queer community. Additionally, it promotes the inclusion of all identities through programmatic and (cont. on page 3)



(cont. from page 2) educational initiatives.”

The SAGE Center has moved from its location in Hawley Lounge to the second floor of the Academic Building, HC-224, formally the Veterans Lounge. The Veterans Lounge is now located in Hawley Lounge. For more information on the SAGE Center [click here](#).

Inclusive Excellence Education at SHU

The OIE provides a myriad of services that promote inclusive excellence education and development. Led by the director of inclusive excellence education, Dr. Lee Morgan, we offer consultations in collaboration with our Center for Teaching and Learning, curate inclusive excellence education resources, facilitate Inclusive Excellence Education and Development presentation and more. Our services support students, faculty, and staff, pursuant to OIE’s mission, vision, and functional goals.

OIE provides presentations and workshops that foster education and development on inclusive excellence related subjects. Most recently, Dr. Morgan facilitated a workshop titled, “Inclusive Engagement.” The session explored ways to employ inclusive engagement across various constituencies. Participants learned strategies to improve internal engagement as a foundation to the ways they are suited to inclusively engage with others. The presentation included opportunities for reflection and discussion on practical applications.

The session was a lunch and learn, and it included more than 60 staff members from Student Affairs. The full launch of Inclusive Excellence Education and Development is forthcoming and will be announced as soon as it become available. [Click here](#) to request a presentation.



Dr. Morgan engaging in dialogue with Student Affairs staff across various departments

OIE in Action



Mia Romano, Class of 2026

“What I like about this office is that it focuses on the engagement and academic excellence of students. The MC is very inclusive and welcoming to everyone of all ethnicities, cultures, and communities. I feel that this place is both a judgment free and friendly zone. This is truly a place to come to and unwind and feel accepted”.

“Lee provided the opportunity for staff to have meaningful conversations on the role we all play in creating an inclusive community. This session was interactive, engaging and allowed for staff members to share their experiences, challenges and ideas on how we can all work together to make SHU safe and welcoming for all.”



Denise Tiberio (she/her), Senior Associate Dean of Students.

Recap: Multicultural Center's Spring Semester 2023 Events



Dr. Albert Lee speaking at the MLK Day Celebration

Martin Luther King Jr. Day Celebration:

On Wednesday, January 18th, 2023, the Office for Inclusive Excellence & Multicultural Affairs hosted an impactful and engaging Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day Celebration. Guest speaker Dr. Albert Lee discussed the power of community in a speech titled "The Beloved Community In Our Time."

Black Love Gala:

On February 16th the Multicultural Center cohosted our second annual Black Love Gala with the Black Student Union. Black Love Gala is a fun and festive celebration of Black love during Black History Month to promote healing forgiveness and love in the black community.



Students at the Black Love Gala in February



Student coloring during the workshop

Wellness Workshop:

Celebrating Women's History Month, our Multicultural center hosted a two-hour workshop on women's wellness. Guest facilitator, Shyanne Valentine implemented her use of coloring as a way to promote wellness for women.

Wisdom Wednesdays:

Wisdom Wednesday is our weekly personal and professional development initiative to talk to students about motivation, resilience, and character development. Some of the topics covered this semester were "Levels of Empowerment," "Fish Out of Water - You Belong," "Counteracting Complacency," "Commitment to A Cause," and "Communicating Across Cultures."



Students after a Wisdom Wednesday



Kickback in the Multicultural Center

Multicultural Kickbacks:

Multicultural Kickbacks offer students the opportunity to create and build a sense of community with one another. This series consists of multiple events throughout the academic semester where students engage with one another in enlightening each other about their cultural backgrounds and lived experiences. The themes for our kickbacks can range from "taking a break from midterms" to "repping your ethnic flag."

SHU Student Named AAIDN/CIEE Intern Scholar

The African American Irish Diaspora Network and CIEE have partnered to launch the AAIDN/CIEE Intern Scholars in Ireland Program for African American college students. Sacred Heart University Psychology student Jayla Vyent, '25, has been named to the first cohort of AAIDN/CIEE Intern Scholars in Ireland.



Three exceptional African American students will attend CIEE's Summer Global Internship in Dublin. During the students' eight-weeks in Ireland, CIEE will provide the academic and work experience for each intern, while AAIDN will provide funding to offset travel and living expenses.

[Click here](#) to read the full story.

Inclusive Excellence Faculty and Staff Fellowship Program

The Office for Inclusive Excellence (OIE) is excited to announce the Inclusive Excellence Faculty and Staff Fellowship program.

OIE proudly engages faculty and staff fellows to lead education and service that contribute to the Pioneer pursuit for inclusive excellence. Under the leadership of the chief diversity and inclusion officer (CDIO), the Inclusive Excellence Fellows program promotes faculty and staff engagement with the Pioneer Plan for Inclusive Excellence (PPIE), SHU's diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging plan that will launch fall 2023.

The scope of the fellowship is university-wide inclusive excellence, and the inaugural 2023 cohort will consist of six fellows. More information on the structure, benefits, eligibility, and application submission information will be sent in an email announcement to faculty and staff. The application deadline will be Friday, May 26, 2023, the inaugural fellows will be announced in July, and the fellowship will begin in August.



Inclusive Excellence

Spotlights

Inclusive excellence initiatives taking place on our campus

Social Justice Week

Sacred Heart University's La Hispanidad club recently sponsored and organized its annual Social Justice Week—a week designed to celebrate and promote diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging.

Junior Amanda Bonet, La Hispanidad president, coordinated the week's agenda and helped with her organization's event as well. La Hispanidad, a club that helps SHU students connect to their Hispanic heritage, hosted a unity walk to demonstrate the value of diversity while promoting the ideals of the University's Catholic intellectual tradition.



Events held throughout the week included "Let's Talk About It" underrepresented student panel and workshops about confronting prejudice. The week culminated with the La Hispanidad Unity Walk. Read more about Social Justice Week [here](#).

March for Queer and Trans Youth Autonomy

Co-sponsored by SHU PRIDE and Kappa Alpha Theta, the March for Queer and Trans Youth Autonomy was held at the Upper Quad on Friday, March 31st. Honoring Transgender Day of Visibility, dozens of people came out to show their support for LGBTQ+ rights.



"Being gay, being trans, being any form of LGBTQ+, shouldn't be different, and we need to help bridge the gap between everyone and create an inclusive and equitable society for everyone," said SHU PRIDE president Jonah Savage.



University leadership and student leaders spoke following the March. Read the full story [here](#).

Antiracist Symposium



Sacred Heart University's School of Social Work and the PhD in Social Work program are pleased to announce our 2nd Annual Antiracist Symposium, [Creating Antiracist Solutions: Navigating the Journey Together](#) on August 9, 2023, 8:00am- 4:30pm ET at Sacred Heart University West Campus in Fairfield, CT.

We have opened our [Call for Proposals](#) and look forward to sharing your innovative work in antiracism and anti-oppression.

Upcoming OIE Events



Multicultural Year End Celebration Ceremony:

On April 27th, Multicultural Affairs will be hosting their Inaugural Multicultural Year End Celebration Ceremony at the Edgerton Atrium at 7:30 pm. This ceremony celebrates the involvement and success of students, while honoring the seniors graduating in May.

Equity at the Heart of Teaching:

The SHU Center for Teaching and Learning and the Office for Inclusive Excellence are delighted to announce a Fall 2023 symposium, "Equity at the Heart of Teaching," to be held Friday, October 20, 2023 at the Sacred Heart University Guest House on West Campus.

This symposium will bring together our campus community to meaningfully discuss ways to promote equity in teaching at classroom, department, college, and university levels. The event will include a keynote by [Dr. Tracie Addy](#), author of *What Inclusive Instructors Do* and Associate Dean of Teaching and Learning at Lafayette College. The event will also feature a discussion panel and opportunities for SHU instructors to share their equitable teaching practices via presentations and other formats.

Livestream and/or recording opportunities will be made available for remote faculty. All SHU instructors will also be invited to participate in a Faculty Learning Community in Spring 2023 to read *What Inclusive Instructors Do*.

SAVE THE DATE!



Symposium at the West Campus Guest House

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2023



Contact Us

Visit our webpage [here](#)

[Meet the OIE Team](#)

Email us: inclusiveexcellence@sacredheart.edu

Follow us on Instagram: [@shu_inclusion](#) [@shu_multiculturalcenter_](#)

Have any stories or upcoming events you'd like us to include in our next issue? [Submit your stories here!](#)



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