

Academic Affairs

Newsletter Supplement on Diversity and Inclusion

Diversity Dialogues: Conversations on Color

from the Office of the Chief Diversity Officer

Our very first Diversity Dialogue: Conversations on Color is the winner of the 2018 Council for Advancement and Support of Education (C.A.S.E.) District III Grand Award in the category of Diversity Programming. The Award will be presented during the annual conference on Feb. 11-14, 2018 in Atlanta, Georgia.

<http://www.casethree.org/awards/2018-award-winners/>

African American History Month Programs and MLK Events

Monday, January 29, 2018

6:30 p.m.- Jane Elliott (creator of “Blue Eyes, Brown Eyes.”) speaking at the Bardo Arts Center. Free and open to the public. (See pages 2-3 of this insert. Courtesy of Student Affairs.)

Wednesday, February 7, 2018

Dr. Ibram X. Kendi will lead a discussion of diversity and inclusion from an academic perspective during the month of February.

Dr. Kendi is professor of History and International Relations and the Founding Director of the Antiracist Research and Policy Center at American University and author of *Stamped from the Beginning: The Definitive History of Racist Ideas in America*.

- Where: UC Grand Room
- Time: 7:00 PM

For additional information, please see <https://www.ibramxkendi.com/>. (Courtesy of the College of Arts & Sciences.)

Monday, February 19, 2018

The College of Engineering and Technology is spearheading events in honor of engineering week and Black History month. Lonnie Johnson ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lonnie_Johnson_\(inventor\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lonnie_Johnson_(inventor))), an innovator and entrepreneur will visit WCU on Monday, February 19th culminating in a public presentation at 6:00 pm location TBA. His company, Johnson Research and Development is based in Atlanta, Georgia.

Watch a CBS clip of Lonnie at the following link <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wW71vqyY4II>.

Diversity Student Ambassador Program

The Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity Programs (EODP) at Western Carolina University (WCU) has established the Diversity Student Ambassador Program to have students of diverse racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds advance the learning and knowledge of diversity by applying theory to practice. This prepares students with the skills needed in a growing multicultural world and challenges them to identify the legacy they want to leave behind. At WCU, we strive to cultivate student leaders who are focused on current diversity issues.

“We are excited to have a group of students for whom inclusive excellence is important,” says Chief Diversity Officer, Ricardo Nazario Colon, “We look forward to their peer-to-peer work and the programs they will enact.”

The ambassadors are: Daniel Ortiz (Sr., Criminal Justice & Sociology), David Benoit (So., Political Science & International Studies), Imani Jones (So., Communication Sciences and Disorders & Special Education), Autumn James (Fr., Film and Television Production), Eric Cotter (International Student, Parks and Recreation Management), Robert Mack (So., International Studies, Political Science, & Japanese) and Josiah Buchanan (Jr., International Studies & Political Science). Some of their proposed activities include: Certificate in Critical, Cultural Competence (4 Cs), Unity Gathering, Multicultural Competence Conference, Latin American & Caribbean Festival.

President and Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia member, Daniel Ortiz, is extremely excited to be a part of this new program on campus focused on diversity and inclusion. “We want to be your voice on campus and in the community in order to effect real change here at WCU, says Ortiz, “The Diversity Student Ambassadors want to show you that ‘Whee’ care about the students here at WCU and the rich history of our University, but also understand that we need to continuously strive to move forward and handle those tough issues that need to be addressed. If you feel that there is something that needs to be addressed on campus or in the community, I want you to be able to come talk to us.”

Graduate Assistant and Coordinator of the Diversity Ambassador Student Program, Caroline Duffy, hopes the program will be able to give students a voice and create discussion on diversity-related issues within the WCU community and beyond.

For more information, you can visit the EODP website here (<https://www.wcu.edu/discover/diversity/eodp/index.aspx>).

Martin Luther King Jr. Keynote Speaker

“Jane Elliott, internationally known teacher, lecturer, diversity trainer, and recipient of the National Mental Health Association Award for Excellence in Education, exposes prejudice and bigotry for what it is, an irrational class system based upon purely arbitrary factors. In response to the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr. over thirty years ago, Jane Elliott devised the controversial and startling, "Blue Eyes/Brown Eyes" exercise. This, now famous, exercise labels participants as inferior or superior based solely upon the color of their eyes and exposes them to the experience of being a minority. Everyone who is exposed to Jane Elliott's work, be it through a lecture, workshop, or video, is dramatically affected by it.” –from <http://www.janeelliott.com/>



Where there's community, we will have unity...

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Jane Elliott

January 29, 2018

6:30 PM

Bardo Arts Center



This event is free and open to the public.

National Coalition Building Institute (NCBI) Update

Last May, 27 individuals on our campus participated in a "Train the Trainer" program offered by NCBI. This program has prepared these individuals to provide diversity and inclusion workshops across campus. We are excited to take leadership and institutionalize the skills needed to welcome diversity and build an environment in which everyone wants to belong.

This Spring, our teams will be gathering and preparing to deliver training across campus. We expect the first sessions to roll out in April.

The workshops consist of series of incremental, experiential activities that help participants:

- To celebrate their similarities and differences
- To recognize the mis-information they've learned about various programs
- To identify and heal from internalized oppression-the discrimination members of an oppressed group target at themselves and each other
- To claim pride in group identity
- To understand the personal impact of discrimination through the telling of stories, and
- To learn hands-on tools for dealing effectively with bigoted comments and behavior

Please be on the lookout for more information on session offerings.

Any questions can be directed to Ricardo Nazario-Colon, Chief Diversity Officer.

