

Office of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

2020-2021 End-of-
Year Newsletter
Volume 1, Issue 1

University of Missouri- St. Louis

Letter from the Vice Chancellor

As we sit at the end of the academic year, remembering the events that transpired, the nation and our communities continue to challenge what was comfortable while continuing to transform the very conscience of this country. This year we found ourselves confronted with our biases, challenged our personal belief system(s), but also showed great compassion for each other and found ourselves committed to engaging in difficult but necessary conversations. We watched, listened, and experienced a myriad range of emotions. And as we hear the words “returning to normal,” we would be remiss if we forgot what this year has taught and shown us. There were lessons in each moment, and we are better now because of those moments.

It is of crucial importance, for those of us in higher education, to take a stand in solidarity with our students, faculty, staff, alums and the communities we serve. This year has been a testament to our resilience at the institution, our ingenuity that transformed “what was” to “what is possible.” Social engagement, action and dialogue will remain critical on college campuses, and we must continue to emphasize the need to engage our communities on issues of racial equity, of justice, of reflection and, most importantly, of action.

Is this an easy task? The answer is NO, and over the course of the year, that has been quite apparent. However, we must collectively remain committed to this goal.

As we reflect in this moment and remember where we were this time last year, remember this: *“Compassion is the ability to look beyond your own pain, in order to see the pain experienced by others.”* This is our why... We must continue to engage in this work, not because of the return we want from others, but do so because of the return we want in ourselves.

“Fight for the things that you care about but do it in a way that will lead others to join you.” - RBG

Sincerely,

Tanisha Stevens, PhD

Inside this issue:

Training & Development	2
Title IX	2
Diversity Alliance	3
News & Events	4
CommUNITY Conversation	5

Welcome/Congratulations

- ❖ ODEI welcomes our new Graduate Assistant, Clare Dudoit!
- ❖ Congratulations to our Hero Award Recipient, Ericka Webb! Click [here](#) to read more about the UMSL Hero Award!

ODEI Training & Professional Development Update

Summer Programming- ODEI professional development offers opportunities to learn new things about yourself and others, meet new people, and engage in thoughtful, honest conversations. [Click here](#) to download the full schedule.

Diversity 101 Summer Intensive – Join a cohort of colleagues for [this 8-week fully online](#) (synchronous or asynchronous) deep dive into diversity and inclusion.

NEW! Join us this summer for a new series entitled “Let’s Talk about Race” (July 8- August 12). [Click here](#) for information and registration.

ODEI Digital Badges - Since the digital badging initiative started in February 2020, nearly 300 faculty and staff have earned over 500 [digital badges](#) for their engagement in ODEI programs. People add their badges to their email signatures and social media profiles to show that the UMSL community is committed to enhancing diversity, equity, and inclusion. If you haven’t already, start earning yours this summer!

Title IX Statement

"No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance."

Letter from the Title IX Coordinator/Chief Equity Officer:

As the UMSL campus begins to return to its new normal, we wanted to take the opportunity to re-introduce the campus to the Title IX and Equity Team. The Title IX and Equity Team is housed under the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. The Title IX and Equity Office conducts any campus investigation related to Title IX and equity concerns. Furthermore, the team works to ensure campus students, staff, and faculty are trained on matters related to Title IX and equity (e.g. harassment, discrimination, unequal treatment based on sex, gender, disability, religious affiliation, veteran’s status, pregnancy, and health status).

While we are currently working a remote schedule, please know this does not make us any less available to students, staff, and faculty. Dana Beteet Daniels, UMSL’s Title IX Coordinator and Chief Equity Officer, can be reached at dana@umsl.edu, as well as 314-516-4538. Jessica Swederske, UMSL’s Title IX and Equity Investigator, can be reached at swederskej@umsl.edu and 314-516-5748. You can also access Title IX and equity information or make an online report by utilizing the following link: <https://www.umsl.edu/title-ix/>.

If you have suggestions for the Title IX and Equity Team, please do not hesitate to reach out to Dana or Jessica directly. We would love to learn what you would like to see from us!

Dana Beteet Daniels
Title IX Coordinator & Chief Equity Officer

Jessica Swederske
Deputy Title IX Coordinator and Equity Officer

Diversity Alliance Members

In the Fall 2020 Semester, ODEI implemented the Diversity Alliance, a network of UMSL faculty and staff who champion diversity & inclusion initiatives within their departments/units. Over the academic year, alliance members have been working diligently in their respective areas to move the needle on diversity and inclusion. Below highlights some of the work of the alliance members. If you are interested in joining the Diversity Alliance, please send an email to odei@umsl.edu.

Kelly Adams **HR—Recruiting, Selecting & Onboarding**

Watch the interview with
Kelly [here](#).



Jonathan Lidgus **Director, SUCCEED Program**

Watch Jonathan's
interview [here](#).



Dr. Dana Klar **Assistant Teaching Professor**

Click [here](#) to watch Dr.
Klar's interview.



ODEI Hosts the 26th Annual Women's Trailblazer Celebration

The Office of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion, in partnership with Gender Studies, had the pleasure of honoring 7 amazing women, "Trailblazers", in the closing ceremony for Women's History Month. Covid postponed last year's event, but what a pleasure to be able to celebrate virtually. What an amazing ending to a great month of programming!

Click [here](#) to read about UMSL's 2020/2021 Trailblazers. You can watch the full recording of the Trailblazer award ceremony [here](#).



Celebrating Dr. Martin Luther King

Since the inaugural Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Observance at UMSL on January 18, 1988, our campus community has celebrated the life, legacy and message of Dr. King with prolific speakers, inspiring music, song and dance, and the presentation of scholarships. This year's theme, *How can we Come Together for Social Equality?* featured Michele Norris, former NPR host and special correspondent, our Mistress of Ceremonies, Marquetta Wise, a musical performance by Brian Owens, founder and executive director of L.I.F.E. Arts Inc. and the E. Desmond Lee Fine Arts Collaborative Community Music Artist in Residence as well as celebrated our MLK scholarship recipients.

Read more about this year's event [here](#).

