BOBCAT BRIEF
The official Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion newsletter of UC Merced

A MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF DIVERSITY OFFICER

Dear Bobcat Community,

The work of equity, diversity, and inclusion has been defined by many voices. Community and individual contributions have been essential in helping guide this work. I have personally witnessed these contributions which have brought together individuals united in purpose and diverse in thought. Each student, staff, and faculty contribution sparks ideas that lead to change. The Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (OEDI) serves as a central hub of resources, tools, and information to create an inclusive space for students, staff, and faculty, and our local community. This edition of our Bobcat Brief highlights some of our recent and future work as well as that of our campus partners.

My hope is that this will better inform you of how we, as an institution, are furthering our equity, justice, and inclusive excellence efforts. You are invited to view our website at diversity.ucmerced.edu for additional information. If you are interested in submitting any materials for an upcoming EDI Newsletter, please email diversity@ucmerced.edu and we would be happy to amplify your efforts. To stay up to date about the latest news regarding equity, diversity, and inclusion around campus and beyond, join our email list!

Associate Chancellor & Chief Diversity Officer
Pronouns: she/her/ella
To Associate Chancellor and Chief Diversity Officer Dania Matos,

We would like to thank you for being our fearless leader and bid you a sad farewell. It is with heavy hearts that we help you close this chapter but excitedly congratulate you on your upcoming role as the Vice Chancellor of Equity and Inclusion at UC Berkeley. We know that this is not goodbye – your new position at a sister campus leaves the door open for continued collaboration and we already look forward to your first visit back to UC Merced!

You built OEDI from the ground up – going from an office that consisted of one executive assistant and two graduate student researchers to a team of eight – and have set the stage for equity and justice efforts to be sustained and supported on our campus. You consistently tell us that your goal is always to leave people and places better than you found them, and we saw this permeate through your drive for this work, the team you have built, and your larger vision for equity and justice. You were not willing to transition into this new role before ensuring that the structures we have collectively put in place have a sturdy foundation to stand on. We were honored to have your tenacity and passion on the frontlines of the battle against systemic oppression on this campus and in the world of higher education at large. Although you will be sorely missed, we will use the valuable lessons we have learned from you to ensure that your vision lives on through us. We are grateful to have shared this journey with you and look forward to the ripple effects your work will continue to have in higher education.

Yours Truly,

UC Merced’s Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Team

Berkeley News

"Dania Matos will ‘lead with love’ as Berkeley’s new head of equity, inclusion"
At UC Merced we steadfastly uphold the concepts expressed in the University of California Diversity Statement including, “the variety of personal experiences, values, and world views that arise from differences of culture and circumstance. Such differences include race, ethnicity, gender, age, religion, language, abilities/disabilities, neurodiversity, sexual orientation, gender identity, socioeconomic status, geographic region, and more.”

We affirm that a diverse campus furthers our mission to create, interpret, and disseminate knowledge and values. The manifold diversity of our community encourages each of us to reflect on intellectual and cultural orthodoxies, and thus stimulates the creativity at the heart of our academic mission as a research university.

We take pride in serving a large population of first-generation college students, including the broad representation of background on our campus as a Hispanic (HSI), Minority (MSI), and Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander (AANAPISI) serving institution. As a common goal, we will work together to ensure all members of our academic community reflect the multiplicity of identities in our region.

Our commitment to diversity will foster our ability to thrive in a complex world.

Approved March 15, 2019, by the Chancellor’s Advisory Council on Campus Climate, Culture and Inclusion (CCCI) at UC Merced.
The Speaker Selection Committee has completed its rigorous review of speaker proposals for the Diversity 5.0 Conference, and they have selected nearly 30 dynamic and engaging learning sessions. Designed by Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) leaders for EDI leaders, this unique conference will not disappoint! Some of our distinguished keynote speakers and topics include:

--- *Leah Smiley*, CDE, presenting "The 7 Trends That Will Change the Future of EDI Work"
--- *Jenn Tardy*, CDE, presenting "The Hiring System: Identifying + Dismantling the Hidden Obstacle Course"
--- *Mona Ameli* presenting "An Innovative, Quantifiable Approach to Creating Full Inclusion in Corporate America"
--- *LaKisha Brooks*, CDE, presenting "Is Intersectionality Being Considered in Your DE&I Strategies?"

**REGISTRATION FOR THE DIVERSITY 5.0 CONFERENCE IS OPEN!**

**TO LEARN MORE AND REGISTER VISIT:**

SAVE THE DATE!

Happening in Fall 2021! We invite you to save the date for a Townhall from 12 - 1:30 p.m. on Thursday, September 9 where we will discuss the Valuing Black Lives Initiative and receive your feedback.

If you have any questions, email Diversity@ucmerced.edu

https://diversity.ucmerced.edu/valuing-black-lives-initiative
To: All faculty, staff, and students  
Re: Valuing Black Lives Initiative  
June 25, 2021

Dear Campus Community,

We have collectively experienced a trying year, seeing drastic changes in how we lead our daily lives. Simultaneously, we have witnessed a global demand for the acknowledgment and dismantling of systemic racism. This pandemic made the very real impacts of racism difficult to ignore and we must use the energy of this past year to persist in this fight.

UC President Drake recently announced that Juneteenth, having been declared a federal holiday, will be observed systemwide on June 28, 2021. We share President Drake’s sentiment that we should use this time to reflect “on our nation’s history, the horrors of centuries of bondage, and the difficult road from liberation to equality”.

We know that the declaration of Juneteenth as a federal holiday carries no weight if it is not accompanied by real actionable change. As we prepare for this reflective day of rest, we share with you the culmination of the work we have been doing in this past year, which is outlined in the Valuing Black Lives Initiative: Annual Report 2020-2021. This report provides details about the accomplishments of the Valuing Black Lives Task Force, the Valuing Black Lives Dashboard, and the framework for how we ensure that this is an ongoing commitment towards valuing Black lives on our campus and combatting anti-Blackness. This report carries with it our promise of accountability and transparency and provides context for the Valuing Black Lives Initiative and what it entails.

Chancellor Muñoz and Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost Camfield developed a memorandum outlining their response to the Valuing Black Lives Initiative Administrative Co-Leads Report. In this memo, you will find the institutional commitments of the Valuing Black Lives Initiative. The memo provides short-term, mid-term, and long-term goals, the units responsible for the oversight of each goal, as well as the financial commitments being made. We invite you to save the date for a Townhall from noon - 1:30 p.m. on Thursday, September 9 where we will discuss the Valuing Black Lives Initiative and receive your feedback. This work not only requires accountability and transparency, but also constant collaboration.

We know that the fight against systemic racism is arduous and ceaseless and each step towards progress marks another countless number of steps that need to be taken. We remain hopeful that this past year of critical work sets the foundation for us to continue to grow UC Merced into a campus whose core tenants are of equity, justice, and inclusive excellence.

Always in community with you,

Juan Sánchez Muñoz, Ph.D.  
Chancellor

Gregg Camfield, Ph.D.  
Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost

Dania Matos, J.D.  
Associate Chancellor and Chief Diversity Officer  
Pronouns: she/her/ella

Robin DeLugan, Ph.D.  
Associate Professor and Academic Senate Liaison

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Valuing Black Lives Initiatives

OEDI | ISSUE 01
Re: Celebrating Pride Month
To: All campus
June 4, 2021

Dear Campus Community,

One year after the start of the Stonewall Uprising, on June 28, 1970, the first Pride parades and marches were organized. Pride Month now takes place annually in June as a month of remembrance and celebration, and to renew our conviction for a society with equal rights and opportunities for all citizens. In recent years, Pride Month has made an immense impact globally, where LGBTQ+ communities around the world get together to commemorate great moments in queer history and celebrate queer liberation.

Earlier this week, the city of Merced recognized the start of Pride Month with the raising of the Progress Pride flag in Bob Hart Square on Main Street. The Progress Pride flag was introduced in 2018 to expand the efforts around inclusion. It includes as its base the rainbow flag, which has become widely recognized as the symbol of the LGBTQ+ community and adds a chevron along the side of black, brown, light blue, pink and white. The brown and black are to represent communities of color within the LGBTQ+ community and the light blue, pink and white are from the Transgender Pride Flag.

The Chancellor’s Advisory Committee on Queer Issues (CACQI) shares a number of resources here for members of the UC Merced community to learn more about the Pride movement in the US.

This year, because of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, UC Merced will be celebrating Pride Month virtually. Social Justice Initiatives and Identity Programs, LGBTQ+ Initiatives and the CARE Office are providing virtual programming to remind us of our LGBTQ+ history, celebrating the lives and accomplishments of our LGBTQ+ colleagues.

On June 28, 1970, the first Pride Parade and marches were organized. In 2021, after more than 50 years of efforts that have helped galvanize momentum for progress and change, Pride Month reminds us of the movement and energizes us around continued action. We hope that you take time during this month to learn, celebrate and advocate.

Wishing everyone a happy and safe Pride Month,

Juan Sánchez Muñoz, Ph.D.
Chancellor

Dania Matos, J.D.
Associate Chancellor and Chief Diversity Officer
Pronouns: she/her/ella

Charles Nies, Ph.D.
Vice-Chancellor of Student Affairs
Pronouns: he/him/his
The Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion announces our inaugural Equity & Justice Awards 2021 recipients in an effort to recognize individuals and groups who have dedicated their time and effort to further equity & justice at UC Merced. Congratulations to the recipients!!!

Qualifications for awardees included:
Advocated for equity and justice, demonstrated a sustained commitment to the advancement of equity and justice at UC Merced, modeled respect or inclusive treatment when interacting with others, and/or implemented an initiative, event, or program which cultivates equity and justice.

**Sarah Hopkins-Chery**  
Head Coach for Women’s Basketball

**Dalena Ngo**  
Graduate/Professional Student  
Nominator: Sean Malloy

**Ashley Summerset**  
Game Operations Manager  
Nominator: Marie Supanich

**Merritt Writing Program**  
Intergroup Collaboration  
Nominator: Catherine Koehler

**Danielle Bermudez**  
Graduate/Professional Student  
Nominator: Maria Mora

**Dr. Whitney Pirtle**  
Faculty, Assistant Professor of Sociology  
Nominator: Dalia Magaña

To learn more about each recipients and their work, visit:  
https://diversity.ucmerced.edu/EquityJusticeAwards-Recipients

**BELOW ARE JUST A FEW QUOTES ABOUT OUR RECIPIENTS:**

"Advocates for equity and justice through her scholarship, student mentorship, and activism in the community."

"Unique among those students in the outstanding intelligence, original thinking, commitment to diversity, and community service that she brings to her work."

"Have been instrumental by having monthly forums on equity and social justice issues"

"Highly conscious of the social justice needs of students of color at the UC Merced campus, both undergraduate and graduate."

"Demonstrated comprehensive and sustained advocacy and efforts toward equity and justice at UC Merced, particularly for non-senate teaching faculty and toward equitable and just teaching practice."
EDI TEAM UPDATES

DR. HALA ALNAGAR

The Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (OEDI) would like to welcome Dr. Hala Alnagar as our Inclusive Excellence Initiatives Coordinator.

Dr. Alnagar has been with OEDI since January 2020 as a graduate student researcher (GSR), and one of the building blocks of the research and development arm of our office. As of May 2021, she completed her Ph.D. in Sociology and took on this new role.

Dr. Alnagar's work continues much of what she has taken on during her time as a GSR, but with broader scope and oversight. As the Inclusive Excellence Initiatives Coordinator, she will advise on and oversee initiatives that ensure the success of underrepresented populations on campus, including our Valuing Black Lives Initiatives, collaborations with HBCUs and HSIs, and HSI programs and funding opportunities that further our commitment to equity and justice. In addition, Dr. Alnagar's role will work collaboratively with various campus units and the Merced community to ensure that our stakeholders are equipped with the tools and resources to be equity-minded practitioners.

Born in Yemen and raised in the Central Valley, Dr. Alnagar's roots intrinsically result in her dedication to the promotion of equitable access for underrepresented communities. Her educational and career pursuits have consistently led her on paths of questioning and challenging systemic oppression. She is proud to have received her degree at UC Merced and to now have the opportunity to continue promoting equity and justice on our campus.
The Office of Equity, Diversity & Inclusion, in partnership with the Center for Engaged Teaching & Learning, presents the Equity Advancing Showcase on Education (EASE), which served to explore different issues and practices associated with supporting equity, diversity, and inclusion as they are experienced within the classroom and other learning spaces. As the culminating event of a year-long multi-disciplinary learning community, EASE featured the work of UC Merced instructors who engaged in a collaborative discussion about anti-racist pedagogy and employed course redesign principles to develop more effective teaching practices that promote inclusivity and support transformative learning for our diverse student population. EASE also featured cross-disciplinary UC Merced panelists who discussed how to approach decolonizing pedagogy and showcased effective teaching strategies to help facilitate transformative learning for our student population.

**LEARNING INVITATIONS**

Building on Purkey & Novak's ideas about intentionally "summoning students cordially" into our Learning spaces, this panel will explore strategies for building classroom community, revealing and decoding the "hidden curriculum," and language choices for essential course policies and documents (syllabi and assignments)

**DECOLONIZED PEDAGOGY**

Seeking for holding space for all cultures and knowledge systems in the curriculum and being aware that what is being taught frames the world, this panel will explore ways of reframing course CLO's, creating anti-racist course content, "flipping the classroom," helping students manage cognitive load, and identifying and leveraging students' community cultural wealth

**LIBERATORY TEACHING**

Disrupting the "banking system" of education and practicing Freire's critical pedagogy, the panel will explore centering authority (the professor as 'sage on the stage'), lifting students agency, and practicing transparent teaching in a culturally responsive manner

**NON-VIOLENT ASSESSMENT**

Symbolic violence replicates dominant norms, is manifested in the power differentials between groups and reinforced through coercive practices. This will explore the ways many traditional assessment practices violence against students and will propose an alternative that celebrates student assets (not deficits)

https://diversity.ucmerced.edu/events/equity-advancing-showcase-education-ease
CHANCELLOR’S ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN (CACSW)

2019-2020 AY CACSW Annual Report
Please contact Amelia Johnson (ajohnson78@ucmerced.edu) for more information regarding CACSW.

Visit their website: CACSW Website Link

CHANCELLOR’S ADVISORY COUNCIL ON CAMPUS CLIMATE, CULTURE & INCLUSION (CCCI)

2019-2020 AY CCCI Report
2019-2020 AY CCCI Non-senate Academics Council Report
2019-2020 AY Diversity & Equity CCCI Report Academic Senate
2019-2020 AY CCCI Memorandum Social Justice Initiatives
Identity Programs Report
Please contact Hector Cuevas (hcuevas@ucmerced.edu) and Christopher Ramirez (cramirez24@ucmerced.edu) for more information regarding CCCI.

Visit their website: CCCI Website Link

CHANCELLOR’S ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON QUEER ISSUES (CACQI)

2019-2020 AY CACQI Report
2019-2020 AY CACQI Data Collection Wishlist
Please visit their website for more information regarding CACSW.

Visit their website: CACQI Website Link
AFFINITY GROUPS

STAFF AND FACULTY OF COLOR

The Staff and Faculty of Color Association at UC Merced (SFCA) provide opportunities for members to develop a sense of community and strengthen their professional and social networks. Memberships are prioritized to staff (excluding student staff members) and faculty members who identify as People of Color (people from historically marginalized backgrounds). The goal of the group is to empower staff and faculty to engage in conversation about campus climate issues and to foster professional development.

Visit our Website for more information: https://diversity.ucmerced.edu/

LANGUAGE ACCESSIBILITY COMMITTEE

The charge of the Language Accessibility Committee members is to:
Create an inclusive environment where staff members can develop their cultural competencies when engaging parents, students and community members when representing the university. Identify experts each year such as faculty, staff, and community members that will review, and assess (terminology) oral fluency suitable for university programs. The dominant 2nd languages spoken on campus are Spanish and Hmong. Other languages will be incorporated as needed and with capacity. Advise campus leaders and the campus community when initiatives are developed to engage non-English speaking parents and community members. The commitment is to attend a monthly meeting, make recommendations about cultural and linguistic communication, and be available for university events to engage with parents, students, and community members.

Please contact LAC@ucmerced.edu for more information regarding the Language Accessibility Committee.

UC MERCED BLACK ALLIANCE

Visit our Website for more information: https://diversity.ucmerced.edu/
Learn about UC Merced’s journey in leading Higher Education towards Inclusive Excellence. This session provides an overview of the establishment of the recently created Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion led by Associate Chancellor and Chief Diversity Officer Dania Matos, JD. Showcasing the power in intentional partnerships, different campus stakeholders will present their unique efforts and contributions towards institutional equity and justice. The welcome was provided by Dr. Mary Wardell-Ghirarduzzi, President of the NorCal NADOHE Chapter and inaugural Vice President for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at the University of the Pacific.

Learning outcomes include:
1. How to grow a new Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) office
2. Highlight the process of implementing responsive new and existing initiatives
3. Showcase the power of effective partnerships across campus

Visit https://diversity.ucmerced.edu/nadohe-norcal-summit for more information
The Picture a Scientist screening and discussion panel provided members of our campus community with a critical space to reflect on issues of equity both in STEM and in the broader context of academia. The conversation went beyond equitable access on the basis of gender and to an intersectional perspective that included all marginalized communities. While the session was not recorded in order to allow folks to be their truest self regarding their experiences, the discussions that took place will likely have a lasting effect as important ideas were shared and valuable connections were made.

In conversation with Dr. Yashica Crawford, we explored ways of getting comfortable with being uncomfortable and choosing to be BOLD when it's time to speak. Guest Presenter: Dr. Yashica Crawford, is an Instructor in the Behavioral Sciences Department at the College of Marin & Chioma Ndubuisi, She has a bachelor's degree in Computer Information Systems from California State University, Chioma is passionate about the transformative power of technology and volunteers for opportunities that empower women and girls. She enjoys reading inspirational books and listening to Afrobeat music.

In conversation, featuring Ma Vang she is an Assistant Professor and founding chair of Critical Race and Ethnic Studies at the University of California, Merced. Her book, History on the Run: Secrecy, Fugitivity, and Hmong Refugee Epistemologies (Duke University Press, 2021), examines how secrecy structures both official knowledge and refugee epistemologies about militarism and forced migration. In History on the Run Ma Vang examines the experiences of Hmong refugees in the United States to theorize refugee histories and secrecy, in particular those of the Hmong. Vang conceptualizes these histories as fugitive histories, as they move and are carried by people who move. In so doing, Vang outlines a methodology for writing histories that foreground refugee epistemologies despite systematic attempts to silence those histories.

In modern times, people don’t generally realize that there were once thousands and thousands of Native Americans in California. Nor do they realize that well over 100 different indigenous languages were once spoken across the State, with rich cultural diversity that varied according to various factors, including physical geography. Why don’t people know this? This is because the 1800s and into the 1900s, scores of California indigenous people were killed off by genocide, illness, and many forms of social injustice. Well into the 1900s, these people were forced to give up their identities, land, and cultural practices.

To learn more visit: Previous virtual Dialogue Series
LEARN MORE

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT VALUING BLACK LIVES TASK FORCE VISIT: https://diversity.ucmerced.edu/valuing-black-lives-task-force

TO LEARN MORE AND REWATCH EVENT FREE SPEECH WEEK VISIT: https://diversity.ucmerced.edu/events/free-speech-week
ANTI-RACISM RESOURCES

- Anti-Racism Resources compiled by Sarah Sophie Flicker, Alyssa Klein in May 2020
- Being Anti-Racist by the National Museum of African American History & Culture
- Being Anti-Racist-Racial Healing Handout
- Recognizing Race in Language: Why We Capitalize "Black" and "White" by Ann Thúy Nguyen and Maya Pendleton
- Resources to Educate Yourself on Anti-Blackness 15 Way to Strengthen Anti-Racist Practice by the Catalyst Project
- Scaffolding Anti-Racism Resources curated by Anna Stamborski, Nikki Zimmermann, & Bailie Gregory
- Stop Killing Black People: An Anti-Racist Reading List from the English faculty at UC Merced

HOW TO BE AN ALLY RESOURCES

- A Guide to How You Can Support Marginalized Communities curated by CNN
- White Allyship 101 by Dismantle Collective
  For Our White Friends Desiring to Be Allies by Courtney Ariel
- 5 Steps Latinx Individuals Can Take to Combat Anti-Blackness curated by Remezcla

IMPLIED BIAS RESOURCES

- Understanding Human Bias by the National Museum of African American History & Culture
- Videos and Learning modules from UCLA
- Project Implicit
- University of California Office of the President: Managing Implicit Bias Series

For more racial trauma resources visit: https://diversity.ucmerced.edu/racial-trauma-resources

MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES  RECOMMENDED READINGS
We know that meditation and mindfulness can’t solve everything. What mindfulness can do is help us look inside of ourselves to become aware of how racism lives within us and how it is perpetuated through us. In fact, several studies have suggested that mindfulness can reduce implicit racial bias (Link to research). The Calm team has been listening and asking ourselves how we can interrupt systemic racism and show up in solidarity with the Black community. This is - and will continue to be - a work in progress but I wanted to share some resources that could be helpful to share with your community.

1. We have tips for using mindfulness to stand in solidarity with the Black community. Please feel free to share this article or pull language from it to share with your team. How to use mindfulness to stand in solidarity with the Black community
2. We have our free resource page on our blog. Please share it with your community. No subscription is required to access the programs on this page: Calm.com/together
3. We’ve curated a list of Black voices in the wellness and mindfulness space. This is our first push to amplify Black voices, and won’t be the last You can access the list here: Amplify Black Voices.
WEAR A FACE COVERING
In compliance with the California Department of Public Health, all individuals on UC Merced property are required to wear face coverings to reduce possible exposure and help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

VISITORS AND GATHERINGS
Limits on Campus Visitors & Limits on Large Gatherings. Please read the full interim policy on Universal Requirements for Physical Mitigation and Reduction of the Transmission of COVID-19.

CLEAN AND DISINFECT WORK SPACES
Individuals must follow all guidance provided by the University regarding cleaning and disinfection of their personal workspace and/or dorm room.

HEALTHY BEHAVIORS
Physical Distancing: All individuals must maintain a distance of at least six feet from others, except for those with whom they share a primary residence. If You Are Sick, Stay Home.

HEALTH SCREENING
On a daily basis, and before reporting to campus, individuals must conduct a symptom survey, Campus offers Covid testing Visit https://health.ucmerced.edu/

For more information go to https://doyourpart.ucmerced.edu/
Visit Health Services (https://health.ucmerced.edu/) For more Information
TO STAY UP TO DATE WITH INFORMATION REGARDING COVID-19 PLEASE VISIT THIS PAGE:

FACULTY INFORMATION:
https://emergency.ucmerced.edu/covid19-faculty-information
Resources: https://emergency.ucmerced.edu/covid19-resources-faculty

STAFF INFORMATION:
https://emergency.ucmerced.edu/covid19-staff-information
Resources: https://emergency.ucmerced.edu/covid19-resources-staff

For more information visit our website:
https://diversity.ucmerced.edu/COVID-Resources
SUBSCRIBE
To opt-in to our newsletter click the link below:
https://diversity.ucmerced.edu/form/join-our-email-list

FOLLOW US
Follow the Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion on Twitter!
https://twitter.com/UCMDiversity

FIND OUT MORE
To receive more information related to diversity and inclusion go to our page!
https://diversity.ucmerced.edu/

FEEDBACK
Your feedback is important to us. To provide feedback click the link below:
https://diversity.ucmerced.edu/form/feedback