GREETINGS
Dr. Rénard Harris

This semester has been a blast! The Office of Institutional Diversity (OID) hosted an alumni/student dinner, awarded scholarships, covered new territory in its programs and workshops, and established new relationships with other departments on campus. This month’s edition of the Bridge Builder celebrates Women’s History Month and especially highlights women who lead and teach in higher education. I hope that you enjoy this final installment of our monthly newsletter for the 2016-2017 academic year - it’s been fun!

Sincerely,

Dr. Rénard Harris
Interim Associate Vice President
& Chief Diversity Officer
OID Updates
JANUARY & FEBRUARY 2017

THE MASK YOU LIVE IN: EXPLORING BLACK MASCULINITY

Special thanks to Dr. Anthony Greene, Dr. Kendall Deas, and Dante Pelzer for co-facilitating the workshop portion of OID’s program entitled “The Mask You Live In: Exploring Black Masculinity” last month. This event gave attendees an opportunity to peel back the layers of black masculinity in the areas of sports (Greene), education (Pelzer) and the arts (Deas).

CROSSING THE CISTERN DINNER

Many thanks to the Black Alumni Council and the Office of Multicultural Student Programs and Services for their help in hosting the Crossing the Cistern Dinner last month. This new initiative seeks to improve the retention rate of minority students enrolled at the College by providing one year of academic, financial and social support to full-time sophomores and juniors. The program will officially kick-off during the 2017-2018 Academic Year.

SHARE THE DREAM

Stop by OID (second floor of Robert Scott Mall) to see the dreams students shared during our event held in Cougar Mall honoring the legacy of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

THE COLLEGE CARES: CHILDREN’S BOOK DRIVE

OID has extended its college-wide children’s book drive through the end of April. Thank you to the following departments that have assisted with this effort so far: Student Affairs, Community Relations, Addlestone Library, the Center for Student Learning, the Graduate School, the Honors College, Academic Affairs and the School of Professional Studies. Please stop by OID if you have any new or gently-used children’s books that you would like to donate. Books will be delivered to local barbershops and hair salons at the end of the semester.

SHARE THE LOVE WRITE-IN

OID dropped off nearly 500 handwritten notes of encouragement to students at Sanders-Clyde Elementary/Middle School during Spring Break. Sincere thanks goes to Student Affairs, Community Relations, Academic Affairs, the School of Professional Studies, the Call Me MISTER Program, the School of Education, Health and Human Performance, the Graduate School and all students, faculty and staff who contributed to this project. Thank you!

OID DEPARTMENTAL SCHOLARSHIP

Nearly 200 students applied for OID’s inaugural Diversity Scholarship Award announced in mid-January. 2017 Spring recipients of the $500 award are listed below:

Tyrone Bell
Jason Boulware
Emanuel Byas
Quantrisha Clark
Shannard Deas
Na Duong
Victoria Edmund
Asia Edwards

Sophia Emetu
Gabrielle Gallbreath
Averyona Gainey
Amber Gray
Courtney Hicks
Owais Jadoon
Lisa Kight
Paula Gaffney

Anh X Le
Jiaying Li
Tea Luu
Mary Pumper
Kassidy Sullivan
Almaandria Powell
In celebration of Women’s History Month, the Bridge Builder focuses on women who lead and teach in higher education. The first section of this special feature highlights a few women currently leading in the College’s administrative ranks.

This section highlights a few women leading in the College’s professorial ranks, while the final section (pages 7-8) highlights young women on campus making a difference in the areas of diversity and rape prevention.

“I lead because I have a passion for the work of educating current and future teachers and health professionals and because these professionals are so critically needed and important in our world.”

“I teach because I was taught by great educators who inspired me and helped me to reach my full potential and I endeavor to do the same for future generations of students.”

“I teach because I am passionate about empowering my students with a gift of knowledge and I cannot imagine my life without teaching.”

“I lead because of a sincere desire to assist in unlocking an individual’s full potential by serving and inspiring each one to work diligently to achieve those dreams and goals that may ‘appear’ unattainable.”

“I teach because I have the privilege of mentoring the critical thinking, professional skills, and self-confidence that enables students to become impactful agents of change in the lives of children, youth, and families.”

“I lead because I want to make a difference by creating a sustainable culture of assessment and accreditation, where faculty, staff, and administrators use results for continuous improvement of academic quality and services.”

“I teach because it’s part of democracy.”
Senior biology major Niki Patel has worked to champion diversity and inclusion since her freshman year at the College. She initially joined OID’s student staff as a Diversity Associate where she worked in the Eddie Ganaway Diversity Education and Resource Center (ECDERC). From there, Patel worked alongside OID’s former Director of Diversity Education and Training where she coordinated logistics for workshops. Since then, she has taken on various roles in OID by assisting with the development and execution of programs and by serving as the inaugural president of the Student Diversity and Inclusion Council. She is an A student in the Honors Program and aspires to become a doctor. Ultimately, she hopes to put much of what she’s learned in OID to use among her future patients and colleagues.

Meagan Dunham, found her niche advocating against sexual assault. Since her freshman year, Dunham has worked with S.C.O.P.E. (Safe Campus Outreach Prevention & Education Peer Team) where her primary mission has been to increase awareness regarding interpersonal crimes by hosting informative and engaging events highlighting crimes affecting college students such as sexual assault, relationship/dating violence and harassment and stalking. She is now the organization’s Student Coordinator. After graduation, the senior public health major plans to attend graduate school where she will study Health Informatics. Her ultimate goal is to impact population health in rural communities through advancements in health information.

Female representatives from the College’s Black Student Union (BSU) participated in the Women’s March on Washington held in January. The Bridge Builder (BB) caught up with executive board members Kaleene Parker (KP) (president) and Tia Dye (TD) (secretary) to learn more about their experience. A recap of the conversation is provided below.

BB: What word would you use to describe your overall experience at the March?
KP: Eye-opening.
TD: Exhilarating.

BB: What were your expectations?
KP: I expected there to be more minorities at the rally, but we found it to be more white women than anything that participated. I also expected there to be a possible aggressive outbreak, but it was extremely peaceful.
TD: I, for sure, expected it to be a lot of people and sure enough it was. It was overwhelming to be somewhere that usually always has a lot of people moving at fast paces, use public transportation all the time, etc. A big city can be a lot for a small town girl but it’s exciting.

BB: What stood out to you most?
KP: What stood out the most was that so many non-minority participants had so much vigor and passion for how they felt about the matter, but on an average day you really don’t see that. It just puts in perspective that people only fight for causes that directly affect them.
TD: I believe the wide range of people was the most beautiful thing and what definitely stood out the most. People of different races, sexual orientations, ages, religious beliefs, etc. came out to support a cause and that’s what it’s supposed to be for ALL big movements. Not just the Women’s March, but for everything that advocates for justice for all.

BB: How has this experience inspired you to continue making a difference on campus?
TD: This experience has definitely inspired me to “stay woke” and continue to fight for what is right. I believe we can live in a time where everyone can understand where others come from and stay away from blatant ignorance, but when you’re such a big dreamer, you have to stay hopeful that with enough effort and commitment from yourself and like-minded peers, you’ll get the task done. We can’t just live in a moment anymore, we have to continue this movement or even spark another one.

BB: How has this experience inspired you to make a difference after you graduate in May?
KP: I will actually be graduating in December, however this has inspired me to continue the work of service that I’ve been doing because eventually some change is going to come out of it. I just have to keep my passion and zeal where things matter most and I know that eventually I will begin to see change. Things don’t happen overnight so it’s inspired me to just keep at it until I see what I want. “Be the change you wish to see in the world”
EGDERC Items of the Month

MAKERS: WOMEN WHO MAKE AMERICA (VOLUME 1)

Produced by PBS, this powerful documentary highlights the contributions women have made to American politics, sports, mass media, education and business.

MONTHLY PLAYLIST

Happy listening from OID! This month’s playlist is about self-love and girl power.

- Beyoncé
  - Formation
- Beyoncé
  - Run the World (Girls)
- Janelle Monae
  - Electric Lady
- Megan Trainor
  - Woman Up
- Demi Lovato
  - Confident
- India.Arie
  - Video
- Mary J. Blige
  - Work That
- Pink
  - Just Like Fire
- Alicia Keys
  - Superwoman
- Megan Trainor (Me Too)
- Mary J. Blige
  - Just Fine
- Pink
  - Perfect

Upcoming Events

FILM SCREENING

Love is Universal
#CofCDisabilityAwareness

OID will partner with the student organization Not Just Another Club (NJAC) to host a game-themed awareness activity focused on disabilities March 22-23 in Cougar Mall from 11:30 a.m. - 2 p.m. Prizes will be awarded to contestants. These events will set the stage for an upcoming film screening and discussion of "Autism in Love" scheduled for March 30 in RSS Room 235 from 6-7:30 p.m. Snacks will be provided. We hope to see you there!

Workshops

OID and Business Services Partner to Host Workshops for Managers and Staff

Dr. Kendall Deas hosted a series of customized workshops for managers and staff in the College’s Business and Auxiliary Services Division. This three-part series encouraged participants to explore team building across cultures in the workplace. Sessions were held March 15-17 in RSS Room 137.
A Final Word...

SDIC

This month the Student Diversity and Inclusion Council (SDIC) will continue its focus on Middle Eastern Culture by hosting a lecture and discussion facilitated by Professor Ahmed Khorshid on Thursday, March 23, 2017 at 6 p.m. in RSS Room 235.

We will finish out this semester in April with a Middle Eastern Celebration and a Staff Appreciation celebration to recognize members of the College’s grounds crew for the work they do every day.

Students interested in joining SDIC should email Membership Chair Averyona Gainey at gaineyan@g.cofc.edu.

GDIC

Graduate students: are you looking for an opportunity to lead, serve, advocate and engage? The Graduate Diversity and Inclusion Council (GDIC) may be the place for you! GDIC exists to create a community that enhances the academic and social experience of all graduate students through the provision of professional and leadership development opportunities and engagement in community service. Leadership positions are currently open for assistant director and finance director. Students interested in serving in a more focused role can do so by heading-up one of our four advocacy committees which seek to serve the interests of female, international, ALAANA and LGBTQ students. To learn more, contact GDIC Director Kim Gailliard at kdgailli@g.cofc.edu.