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Equity & Inclusion Matters - Issue 8

Otterbein University

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EQUITY & INCLUSION MATTERS

Pastor Vauhn Bell (center) was the speaker at Otterbein's annual Martin Luther King Convocation.



Angel Banks (left) and Reverend Judy Guion-Utsler (right) won the Peace and Justice Awards.

See Something, Say Something, Do Something

By Julia Grimm '22

According to Otterbein's speaker at the annual Martin Luther King Jr. Convocation on Jan. 22, we can be more than just a college student in figuring out how we create a community out of chaos.

"Both systemic and individual, racism in America in the 21st century is alive and well," said Pastor Vaughn Bell in his speech centered around the idea in King's last book. The book is entitled *"Where Do We Go From Here: Chaos or Community?"*

As Bell noted, the obvious answer is community, and he outlined the three ways we can achieve a community: see something, say something, do something.

Bell stated that we must create a vision of the world as it should be, speak up when our vision doesn't align with the current world we live in and act on the differences that we speak about.

"It's not enough to just say, 'I'm not racist. I don't see color. I love everybody,'" said Bell. "If we're not actively working to tear down the walls of racism, sexism, and classism, then we are perpetuating them by keeping them propped up."

His appeal was to the college students in the audience, noting that sit-ins and protest movements in history were led by young people.

"Choose a major that's aligned with your vision of the world, not based on how much money you make."

Sarah Simmons, a sophomore acting major, connected with Bell's message.

"Whenever I see people in poverty that really pulls at my heartstrings, so I want to do more of helping disadvantaged kids," said Simmons. "What I hope to do eventually is to bring theatre to kids who wouldn't be able to have that opportunity in their lives because of their situation."

At the convocation, two outstanding Otterbein community members were awarded the Peace and Justice awards based on their involvement in the community and their efforts to raise awareness and promote equality on campus.

Angel Banks, a junior with a double major in psychology

and criminology justice studies, was awarded the student Peace and Justice Award.

"I feel really honored, and I'm really excited," said Banks. "I do a lot for my Otterbein community because I care a lot about other people and making sure they feel safe and comfortable here."

“
Choose a major that's aligned with your vision of the world.”

For the faculty and staff Peace and Justice Award, Reverend Judy Guion-Utsler, Otterbein's chaplain, was chosen.

"I think it's the most important thing that I do is to provide ways for students to learn how to be allies...[and] try to be more inclusive, more welcoming," said Guion-Utsler.

Health Disparities Part of Life in New Game

A group at Otterbein University is taking a unique approach to educating the public about health disparities that exist in society — from access to healthcare to financial repercussions of an unplanned health emergency. They were inspired by the Game of Life to create a game as a teaching tool, and their game is receiving recognition.

The game was created by public health education student Mariah Nevels and alumni Chris Saylor and Brooke Stephen with the help of Associate Professor of Health and Sport Sciences Robert Braun.

Braun wanted to create an interactive way to teach social and physical determinants of health to students, which resulted in the game.

“What makes this game successful is how realistic it truly is,” said Braun.

The game has been in the prototype process for two years and more scenarios are still being created. Players begin in poverty and roll the dice to determine if they have a college degree, high school diploma or if they’re married. They then roll the dice to land on pay days and various scenarios.

On these scenario spaces, players are confronted with a problem and they must



Mariah Nevels (left) and Professor Braun (right) receive the Ruffin Award for their board game.

determine how they are going to respond from a list with only one correct answer.

For example: The player and their mother don’t speak English and there is no interpreter available at the doctor’s office. What do you do?

The board also features “Did you know?”

bubbles, which are facts that players may not know about healthcare. There are also visuals across the board showing the different obstacles to good health, like a picture of a fast food restaurant.

“This game is very important for students, staff and professionals to play. Through it, they are able to understand and identify current issues that are present within minority communities,” said Nevels. “Our game allows for each player to experience a life in poverty, while gaining insight on issues that individuals face on a daily basis.”

Nevels presented the game at a national conference in April, where she was personally awarded the John Ruffin Young Investigator Award. After the presentation, she was approached by five universities that wanted her to bring the game to their campuses for their students to play, with one group having 250-300 students.

Further, she was also approached by a CEO who wanted to talk with the group about developing an app for the game.

Braun and his students hope to travel to these universities in the coming school year to not only develop awareness, but also for research purposes to improve the game. ■

Racial Bias Incident Process EXPLAINED

By Catie Duzzny '21

Otterbein strives to be an inclusive community that welcomes, recognizes and celebrates all differences. Otterbein is committed to making the entire campus community a positive environment.

In times when an individual or group is disrespected or subject to discrimination or a bias based on particular characteristics of social identity, such as race or gender, it has a negative effect on the entire campus community. Violence and bias-related incidents are addressed by the university.

Bias-related incidents are behaviors that express hostility against a person or property of another because of the person’s age, disability, ethnic or national origin, gender, marital status, political or social affiliation, race, religion, or sexual orientation. Even if offenders are unaware of their bias or did not mean to offend, they will still not be tolerated.

When a racial bias incident occurs, the university goes through a process following the initial report:

Safety issues will be addressed by Otterbein Police (OPD), with Residence Life’s assistance if applicable.

A Student Affairs employee from the Office of Social Justice

and Activism or Student Conduct and Wellness will reach out to offer support.

The Student Affairs staff member will discuss options for addressing the incident. They will communicate with the appropriate vice president (for student cases) and/or Human resources (for faculty/staff cases) for next steps.

If appropriate, OPD will investigate and prepare a report. If the behavior is criminal, OPD will file criminal charges if requested.

Whether or not the behavior is criminal, the OPD report (concerning student behavior) will be submitted to Student Conduct for resolution.

In two to four weeks after resolution there will be a meeting with the concerned party to review satisfaction of the process.

If a report needs to be made, the following numbers are available to call and begin the reporting process:

- Otterbein Police at 614-823-1222
- Director of the Office of Social Justice and Activism at 614-823-1312
- Associate Dean of Student Affairs at 614-823-1250 ■



photo by Lance Kriesch

International Education Week

By Catie Duzzny '21

In the spirit of international educational exchange and cultural exploration, all current Otterbein students, domestic and international, were invited to submit an entry into Otterbein's International Education

Week 2019 Photo Contest that was sponsored by the Office of Social Justice and Activism. Students were able to enter only one photo into one of two categories which were Exploring U.S. Culture and Global Adventures.

A panel of faculty and staff judged and selected one winner from each of the categories. The winning student entries received a \$50 Amazon gift card. Entries were displayed and prize winners were announced during the International Student Association International Night, that was held on Friday, Nov. 22. The 1st place prize for the category "Exploring U.S. Culture" goes to Sabina Lamichhane Wagle, nurse anesthesia DNP, Nepal, and the 1st place winner for the category "Global Adventures" goes to Lance Kriesch, studio art major, United States.



photo by Sabina Lamichhane Wagle

At the event, the International Student Association hosted it in the Campus Center for International Education Week. All nationalities were welcome to engage in an evening of cultural exchange. They had student and faculty performances, raffle prizes, food from around the world, cultural information and activities. Students were able to experience different cultures outside and inside of Otterbein's diverse walls of culture and walks of life. ■

Student Organization Spotlight: AASU – Life at a PWI

By DaViona Fowler '22

The African American Student Union (AASU) offers programs that benefit equity and inclusion across Otterbein's campus by consistently working with students through numerous meeting topics that impact people of color. AASU had an event at the beginning of fall semester 2019 called Life



at a PWI. A PWI is a "predominately white institution." Some of the things discussed were microaggressions, not feeling supported, not being able to afford things like other students, racism, managing the college journey and what things they could do to alleviate those instances. Several students talked about their experiences at Otterbein but ultimately had the same message: if you want to be involved, go out and do something about it.

"You will find a place here at Otterbein, but if you are not looking, you are not going to find it," said Frandie Francique, a junior sociology and psychology major. ■

from the DIRECTOR

Greetings,

When we think of Otterbein University, we must think of including everyone in our pursuit of excellence. Inclusive excellence involves implementing steps to intentionally assist an institution in supporting a comprehensive and harmonized set of systemic actions that focus specifically and purposefully on fostering greater equity, inclusion and accountability at every level of the institution.

Our goal is to further integrate diversity efforts into the core aspects of our institutions, such as academics, leadership, quality improvement initiatives, decision-making, daily operations and organizational cultures. Some of those efforts are captured in this newsletter and the Equity and Inclusion page on our website, www.otterbein.edu/equity.

Inclusive excellence is also essential for engaging, supporting and celebrating our faculty, staff, students and alumni for sustaining a welcoming campus community that values and respects the identities, insights and contributions of everyone.

Traditionally, diversity has been measured by demographics or statistics. We must continue to move beyond solely numbers toward an inclusive community that embeds equity throughout our institution's committee service, policies, curriculum, pedagogy, recruitment, hiring, retention and evaluation. We are certainly on the right path and must continue moving forward every day.

Accomplishing inclusive excellence is a long-term commitment and must have a full approach that embeds holistic appreciation and best practices into the very fabric of Otterbein's organizational culture.

As you filter through the material, please think about what your role is within the work that is being done and the work that has yet to be done. We all have spheres of influence in our daily lives. How can you use your influence to create a more inclusive culture within your classrooms, families, friend groups, etc.?

Sincerely,

James E. Prysock III, MBA, Director of OSJA

Pulling Together: Intersectional Activism Conference Announced

By James Prysock III, MBA, Director of OSJA

The diversity of our nation has long been praised and valued. As a university, we value the diversity of ideas and beliefs that fuel innovation, economic vitality and social change. We depend on our collective abilities to transcend differences by identifying solutions that encourage collective action for the common good.

The power of collective action in our country has led to social, political and cultural movements that have resulted in lasting changes for our society: acknowledgement and expansion of civil rights, including disability rights; women's rights; LGBTQIA+ rights; and religious expression.

These movements were not successful because of one individual's actions, but rather the collective action of many diverse and engaged individuals advocating with one another. The power of collective activism has been, and will continue to be, the impetus for sustainable change.

As a result, the Office of Social Justice and Activism (OSJA) will be hosting a spring conference entitled Pulling Together:

Intersectional Activism.

The conference will focus on key questions for collective action:

- How can we collectively and intentionally design institutions to be reflective of our mission, values and beliefs? How do we move beyond mission and value statements to actions and accountability structures that promote shared responsibilities?
- What are effective practices for authentically implementing culturally responsive pedagogy?
- How can students address social challenges and become change agents?
- In what ways can student activism be a high-impact practice that drives change? How can institutions partner with students in more intentional ways?
- What are promising strategies for honestly acknowledging and examining the historical, social, cultural and political contexts that

influence our actions and decision-making, as part of providing students a high-quality liberal arts education?

- How are we addressing unconscious bias and systemic and structural racism, sexism, ableism, classism, ageism and heterosexism in our institutional policies and practices?
- What does it mean to build and strengthen communities across our diverse society? How can we do this effectively without marginalizing certain groups?
- How can we help those who have experienced trauma? How can we recognize and address microaggressions?
- What types of partnerships across institutions can drive collective action and change in higher education to advance the public good?

Be on the lookout for more information in the university's weekly newsletter as well as OSJA's social media platforms. ■

CALENDAR

FEB. 13

Science Lecture Series
The Selfie Generation: The Psychology and Neuroscience of Representing Self with Dr. Jim Tanaka
6 p.m., Riley Auditorium

MARCH 12

Army Lecture Series: Eboo Patel
7-9 p.m., Church of the Master

MARCH 30

The Vernon L. Pack Distinguished Lecture Series:
Nikole Hannah-Jones and Jonathan Kozol
7 p.m., Cowan Hall

APRIL 7

Take Back the Night
7-8:30 p.m.

APRIL 18-19

Wrestle Against Autism
4-9 p.m., Clements Recreation Center

WGSRC Spring Open Hours

The Women's Gender and Sexuality Resource Center's (WGSRC) will be holding open hours for Spring 2020.

The WGSRC is staffed by students trained in crisis response, trauma support and emotional support. Their peer resources and peer advocates are there for anybody in emotional distress with identity, relationship, sexual wellness, dating or sexual violence, stalking, or harassment issues and questions. Open hours are:

- SUNDAY, 9-11 p.m.
- MONDAY, 6-7 p.m.
- TUESDAY, 5-6 p.m.
- WEDNESDAY, 6-7 p.m.
- THURSDAY, 5-6 p.m.

The WGSRC is located in 25 W. Home rooms 159-160 with access through the call box at the Cochran Alley entrance or by a message to Suzanne sashworth@otterbein.edu.



LOCATION

25 WEST HOME. RM 159-160

CONTACT

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