



REFRAMING THE

NARRATIVE

2022 EQUITY SUMMIT

MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION
& WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

INTRODUCTION

The MDHEWD Equity Summit is a two-day virtual learning opportunity to address the changing issues presented in higher education with respect to disability, diversity, and intersectionality. The aim of the conference is to aid participants and their institutions to navigate new territory: to re-frame the narrative surrounding the culture of disability compliance, address institutional infrastructure impediments, and to offer insight into inclusionary practices for Latinx and LGBTQIA+ learners. The conference is designed with a goal of moving disability and diversity from a locus of charitable interaction toward a place of agency within higher education.

Our digital format will offer opportunities for learning across the globe, to engage with scholars at the forefront of their fields, and to boldly consider new ways to remove barriers, be they institutional or cultural, that learners face in higher education. Our conference will offer synchronous participation in workshops, featured speaker sessions, and trend topics. In addition, the sessions will be recorded and made available on demand for those unable to participate in the conference.

Thank you to MDHEWD staff:

- Conference Proposal Review Committee: *Leroy Wade, Interim Commissioner of Higher Education, Misty Nunn, MDHEWD, Chief of Staff, Samantha Dickey, Interim Assistant Commissioner for the Office of Postsecondary Policy, and Brian Fogle, Executive Vice President of the Community Foundation of the Ozarks*
- Conference Webex Host: *Megan Sheets*
- Conference Emcee: *Dr. Matt Newlin*
- Conference Moderators: *Carla McDaniel, David Hewkin, Alicia Erickson, and Joshua Fischer.*
- MDHEWD Communications: *Jessica Duren, Natalie Sanders, Shelby LePage, Mervyn John, Natalie King, and Devin Jungmeyer.*
- Special Thanks to: *Claudia Browner, Executive Director of the Governor's Council on Disability, Chris Moore, Office of Administration: ITSD, and Lainey Strange, Office of Administration: ITSD*
- Conference Organizer: *Dr. Kara Cahill*

OCTOBER 25, 2022

9:00 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.

Opening Convocation

9:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.

Keynote Address

Prof. Dr. Jojanneke van der Toorn

Diversity and inclusion are topics that are increasingly getting attention in education and industry. Although progress has been made, there are still many obstacles to overcome when it comes to inclusive workplaces. In this keynote, Prof. Dr. Jojanneke van der Toorn demonstrates the power of the norm and what institutions can do to counteract it.

10:30 a.m. - 10:45 a.m.

Break

BREAKOUT SESSIONS

10:45 a.m. - 11:45 a.m.

From Deficit to Difference: A Cross-Cultural Communication Approach to Neurodiversity in the Workplace

Dr. Marlo Hode

Diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) efforts in organizations are slowly beginning to turn their attention to the issue of neurodiversity, or neurological differences, in their hiring and retention efforts. Universities also have increased awareness and services for students diagnosed under the umbrella term Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). However, the current paradigm frames individuals who are neurologically different than the dominant norm, such as those identified on the Autism Spectrum, as having a disorder. They are described as having deficits in social interaction because they have difficulty interpreting non-verbal, contextual, and emotional cues. This label and description are based upon neuronormative assumptions about communication that stigmatize those who are neurologically different from the dominant norm. To help construct more inclusive and equitable workplace environments, this presentation offers a cross-cultural approach that recognizes ASD communication as a difference in communication styles rather than a deficit and provides a cross-cultural communication framework for understanding how these differences might be bridged.

10:45 a.m. - 11:45 a.m.

You Have a Friend in Me: Creating Safety and Belonging for LGBTQI+ Refugees

Misha Smith

A record number of anti-LGBTQI+ bills have been proposed or passed in the past year. LGBTQI+ refugees who are fleeing violence due to their sexual and/or gender identity can experience ongoing trauma if the area where they resettle has anti-LGBTQI+ bills in place that targets their community and limits their human rights.

The presentation will include data regarding current anti-LGBTI+ legislation as well as evidence-based information on what steps need to be taken to create inclusion and safety for refugees who resettle in the United States. The legislation's impact on refugees will be discussed as well as the role of community and peer supports to create a sense of safety and belonging for refugees in our communities.

11:45 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Lunch

1:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.

Featured Workshop: Student Journey Mapping Experience and How to Apply to EI Opportunities

Alice Whalen and Sarah A. Leassner

Understanding your student experience is KEY to improving your service to diverse populations. East Central College participated in the MDHEWD Journey Mapping Workshop with the purpose of matriculating students from AEL to the college. Representatives from multiple divisions of the college, including administrative team members, invested their time and expertise in this best practice activity. The Journey Mapping Experience has since been applied in other areas of the college, particularly around students' success, and how our institution can serve our students better. This session will give a high-level overview of the Student Journey Mapping process, and how to utilize it to better understand your LGBTQIA+ students' experiences on your campuses.

2:30 p.m. - 2:45 p.m.

Day One Closing Session

8:30 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.

Day Two Opening Session

BREAKOUT SESSIONS

9:00 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.

Institutional Infrastructure and Its Impact on the Student Experience Through an Intersectional Lens

Brian Lutcmiah, Piers Wilkinson, Alex Bacon

Committed to raising the profile of Social Justice in Higher Education in the UK and internationally, Diversity and Ability (D&A) will present this session in three distinct parts, with focus on ensuring equity of opportunity and access to education for all, achieving sustainable participation across learning pathways in Higher Education, and inclusive of Student Services offer.

- **Part 1: Setting the tone of inclusive culture**
Sharing experience and insight into the responsibilities and behaviors needed to ensure effective and supportive leadership that fosters an inclusive culture from within, Brian Lutcmiah, Piers Wilkinson and Alex Bacon will compare and contrast practice across the UK and US to explore a framework for creating anticipatory spaces that celebrate difference through an intersectional lens, inclusive of race and disability and LGBTQIA+ communities.
- **Part 2: Embracing inclusivity in service design and delivery**
Using examples from D&A's UK work creating inclusive campus environments, Brian Lutcmiah will share how providers' systems, practices and community access can span physical, virtual and academic spaces anticipatorily. He will outline the core principles needed to ensure services that are high-quality, driven by students' lived experience and engagement, and in meeting the needs of diverse student communities with agility, creativity and compassion.
- **Part 3: Working with the student community**
Drawing on their authentic expertise of the student experience, Piers Wilkinson and Alex Bacon will explore the importance of the student voice in inclusive design. They will unpack how to foster meaningful consultation and utilize it to design an inclusive culture across campuses, and how long-lasting narrative shifts and attitudes to social mobility and inclusion across teaching and learning can be achieved using lived experiences to influence development and in doing so, authentically reflecting the diversity of student need.

9:00 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.

Growing and Sustaining Affinity Groups in Higher Education

Gabriela Flores, Dr. Thomas W. Meyer, Jan S. Rog, Dachia Busch, Jessica Gamarra, Celia Hancock

The intent of this 90-minute panel discussion style workshop is to explore the development and implementation of affinity groups at one diverse, community college institution in the Kansas City region. "Affinity groups, also known as employee resource groups (ERGs), bring together employees with similar backgrounds or interests and can have a powerful influence in the workplace" (SHRM, 2019). The format of this workshop would be a moderated panel discussion with expert panelists who bring rich knowledge and experience in leading affinity groups, followed by break-out sessions around each affinity group area: African American Faculty/Staff Affinity Group, Latin X Affinity Group, LGBTQ Affinity Group, and Women's Mentorship and Networking Affinity Group. The panel discussion and question portion would focus on issues of developing new affinity groups, programming and collaboration and maintaining momentum across the spectrum of new to mature groups. The break out portion of the session would allow participants to connect with other groups they either have interest in starting or leading, where participants can share ideas, resources and best practices.

10:30 a.m. - 10:45 a.m.

Break

10:45 a.m. - 11:45 a.m.

Featured Session: Supporting Student Success through a Thoughtful Data Strategy

Dr. Nick Sproull and Bill DeBaun

In this session, we will identify the disconnects that often stand in the way of meaningful progress. From inquiry to analysis, we will explore a cycle connecting your mission, assets, needs, and intended outcomes to a thoughtful data strategy for supporting student success.

11:45 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Lunch break

BREAKOUT SESSIONS

1:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.

Connecting Diverse Talent with Opportunities Using Micro-Internships

Dr. Leigh Anne Taylor Knight, Kristin Schrader, Goldie Gildehaus, and Davlon Miller

In this panel conversation, learn about unique partnerships connecting diverse students to businesses and networks that will expand career pathways via paid, professional projects. Each program provides an accessible opportunity for students of differing backgrounds and abilities while also increasing student placement rates and driving economic development.

1:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.

Disability: New, Different, Transformatory, or Revolutionary Strategies and Approaches in Higher Education

Dr. Joel Snyder

This presentation will demonstrate how audio description (AD) provides access to the arts and myriad cultural activities for people who are blind. AD, a form of audiovisual translation, translates visual images to a sense form that is accessible for people who are blind or have low vision. Using words that are succinct, vivid, and imaginative, describers observe, select, and then succinctly and vividly use language to convey the visual image that is not fully accessible to a segment of the population—the American Foundation for the Blind notes that 31 million Americans are blind or “have difficulty seeing even with correction”.

Cultural activities are an important element of our society, often expressing values, trends, fads, historical perspectives, or future directions. People who are blind or visually impaired want and need to be a part of society in all its aspects. Audio description – for media, voiced in pauses between lines of dialogue or critical sound elements – provides the means for blind or visually impaired people to have full and equal participation in cultural life. This is particularly true within higher education contexts, in arts presentations on campus and in every academic presentation or lecture that includes visual elements.

In the United States and in countries throughout the world the principal constituency for audio description has an unemployment rate of about 70%. With more meaningful access to our culture, people become more engaged with society and more engaging individuals—thus, more employable.

2:30 p.m. - 2:45 p.m.

Break

BREAKOUT SESSIONS

2:45 p.m. - 3:15 p.m.

Trend Talk Outcomes for Students Enrolled in Inclusive Higher Ed Programs in the Midwest

Jonathan Lidgus

This trend talk will share data and information from the over 15 years of Inclusive Higher Education programs in Missouri. The signing of the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008 launched the growth of inclusive post-secondary programs (IPSE) for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). Now Missouri is home to three IPSE programs at the University of Missouri-St. Louis, Central Missouri, and Missouri State University. With more programs in development the presenters will review the impact that IPSE programs in the state have had on the students enrolled in them. Through visuals the presenters will review outcome data in the programs as it relates to employment, independent living, community connection, and academics. This presentation will show through data and discussion the impact the IPSE has had on the state and region, and help attendees gain a better understanding of the importance of these programs for quality-of-life outcomes for individuals with disabilities.

2:45 p.m. - 3:15 p.m.

Trend Talk: Engaging Communities to Promote Competitive Integrated Employment of Students with Disabilities

Dr. Magen Rooney, April Regester, Lindsay S. Athamanah, Wen Zeng, Andrew Kliethermes

This trend talk will share findings from community conversations that focus on identifying innovative ways to increase the competitive integrated employment of college students with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). The presenters will graphically display and discuss (a) innovative strategies communities can use to prepare college students with IDD for competitive integrated employment and (b) ways in which community members can work together to implement these strategies.

2:45 p.m. - 3:15 p.m.

Trend Talk: Centering Intersectionality in Metrics of Postsecondary Access and Success: Implications for Equity in Missouri Higher Education

Dr. Evan Rhinesmith

College completion is important for both individuals and the economy, as the Coordinating Board for Higher Education recognized in setting the "Big Goal." Yet, disparities in degree completion by student demographic characteristics have been persistent over time. Using publicly available data from DESE and DHEWD, we present trends in postsecondary access and success for Missouri high school graduates, providing an in-depth examination of how these results vary by geographic region and high school characteristics including school locale, racial composition, and income levels. This trend talk, in addition to our reports on postsecondary access and success in Missouri, is intended to encourage civic leaders, educators, and the public to focus on postsecondary access and success when they consider the performance of Missouri high schools.

Findings indicate college enrollment in Missouri has declined and credential attainment has remained relatively stagnant over the last decade. We observe clear differences in college access and success for our students based on school location and student population, with the largest disparities occurring by income and racial composition of high schools.

2:45 p.m. - 3:15 p.m.

Trend Talk: KC Scholars: Uncommon Results for Equitable Futures

Dr. Angie Besendorfer and Natalie Lewis

KC Scholars is achieving uncommon results with scholarship programs for low and modest income individuals in the Kansas City Metro. The program serves 6,069 scholars with 81% individuals of color in three scholarship programs. The first cohort of traditional scholarship awardees have a 94% annual persistence rate and a projected 70+% graduation rate for next spring. Learn about the this program as well as the exciting new endeavors for KC Scholars including short term pathways to jobs paying \$45,000-\$85,000 and the KC Talent Network.

3:15 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Summit Closing Session

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