



Update on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Activities Supporting our Academic Mission

1 message

Jim Garrett <provost@cmu.edu>
Reply-To: provost@cmu.edu
To: [redacted]

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Dear Members of the CMU Community,

I am so pleased to share a sample of the work being done across our academic units to build a more diverse, inclusive and equitable community at Carnegie Mellon University.

First, the [search](#) for an inaugural **Vice Provost for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI)** is making good progress. We received an impressive group of candidates, which the committee is presently evaluating. We will provide a more detailed update to the university community before Winter Break.

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, all of the academic units have launched their **5-Year Strategic Plans for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI)**, and are now in the final approval and early implementation phases this semester, on schedule. These plans embody the commitment, diligence and creativity of the deans, the college plan leads, their committees and collectives, as well as the many faculty, students and staff who have participated throughout the design process. Some examples of projects undertaken under these plans include:

- The Heinz College appointed a Social Justice Committee comprised of students, faculty and staff representatives to envision and design programs, utilizing the college's relevant scholarship to shape national discourse and policy action. The first program, [Reimagining Public Safety](#), launched on October 30 with a panel sharing diverse points of view on police reform and is open to the entire community.
- The University Libraries debuted their [What We Don't Have](#) exhibit this fall which shows gaps in the archival collections that fail to reflect the diversity of the CMU community and the experiences of faculty, staff and students.
- Dietrich College continues to develop community engagement programs like [Arts Greenhouse](#), an arts and humanities education initiative supported by the College of Fine Arts and in partnership with Pittsburgh Public Schools, Homewood Children's Village and the Center That CARES. The program fosters the expressive and intellectual development of Pittsburgh's youth.
- The development of a new general studies course in the School of Drama focused on the core competence of identifying, confronting and overcoming racism in the collaborative theater profession.
- The Mellon College of Science (MCS) has been holding a series of [dialogues](#) for the MCS community in order to empower their faculty, staff and students to identify and work to address racial inequalities in their personal, professional and educational spheres.
- The College of Engineering, in cooperation with the Center for Student Diversity and Inclusion, hosted the Forum on Inclusive Excellence as part of Homecoming this fall. This forum equipped students, staff, faculty and alumni with resources and tools to help continue advancing DEI efforts at CMU and beyond.
- In addition, the [College of Engineering](#), College of Fine Arts, [Mellon College of Science](#), and the School of Computer Science are conducting searches to recruit associate deans who will lead their efforts on diversity, equity and inclusion. These new leaders will join incumbents in Dietrich and Heinz Colleges, the Tepper School and CMU-Q.

Please get involved in your department, school, college, campus and with the University Libraries. As we move forward, we will continue to identify areas for coordination and collaboration with the new Vice Provost for DEI playing a critical role in supporting these efforts.

In the meantime, [Dr. Shawn Blanton](#), our Interim Vice Provost for DEI, is working to advance institutional DEI goals during the current academic year. This includes helping to expand CMU's partnership with [The National GEM Consortium](#)

(GEM) to improve recruitment of underrepresented graduate students. As a result of the GEM program, racially underrepresented students enrolled in our engineering graduate programs more than doubled between 2017 and 2020 and racially underrepresented students now represent more than 20 percent of our domestic graduate students in engineering. In addition, he is partnering with the Office of Admissions to engage historically underrepresented prospective students from the Pittsburgh Public Schools and is conducting an inventory of current DEI activities and programs at CMU.

Dr. Blanton will also administer the new **Strategic Faculty Opportunity Fund** that was announced as part of our Confronting Racism action plan and recently made available to the academic deans and department heads. This fund is designed to support the recruitment, retention and development of outstanding scholars in all fields who will contribute to diversity and equity. We are finalizing the process for awarding these funds and look forward to sharing more details about the first round of support being provided in the near future.

The **Campus Climate Implementation Steering Committee** also continues to meet and act on several university commitments made last fall. The steering committee is planning a climate survey for faculty and staff, which is scheduled to launch in the spring semester. In addition to the committee's progress on other commitments noted above, a number of [new training and awareness programs regarding civility, diversity and inclusion](#) are available to the CMU community. Please look for future updates from human resources and the vice provost for faculty on additional training and programs as they become available.

We continue to be heartened by the efforts of colleagues across the university to create a true sense of belonging for Carnegie Mellon students. Last year we launched the **Tartan Scholars program**, with a mission to support students who are academically high-achieving but may have experienced opportunity gaps. We have doubled the size of this program, and now 100 first-year students are participating, in addition to the inaugural scholars now in their second year at CMU.

We are also proud to announce the inaugural cohort of **Provost's Inclusive Teaching Fellows** are enhancing inclusion and equity in CMU's learning environment. This year's projects explore approaches to inclusive excellence regarding course materials and curricula, student projects and assignments, and learning experiences across a variety of CMU disciplines. As part of our recent commitment to confront racism and promote equity and inclusion, future cohorts will expand to twenty fellows, starting next year. The call for applications will be announced early in the spring semester.

There is so much more happening across campus. And yet there is so much more to accomplish, and we are committed to sustaining CMU's momentum. In the coming weeks, you can expect another update from President Jahanian with additional details about our broader DEI activities, including ways to track the progress of our Confronting Racism and Promoting Equity and Inclusion [action plan](#). Thank you to all of you for ensuring that diversity, equity and inclusion play a central role in our academic mission through your own commitment and effort.

Sincerely,

Jim Garrett
Provost