

# INCLUSIVE VOICE

Newsletter-Fall 2020



**OLD DOMINION**  
UNIVERSITY

**Dr. Narketta M. Sparkman-Key**  
(Academic Affairs Director of Faculty Diversity and Retention)

**Allison Barber**  
(Administrative Assistant)

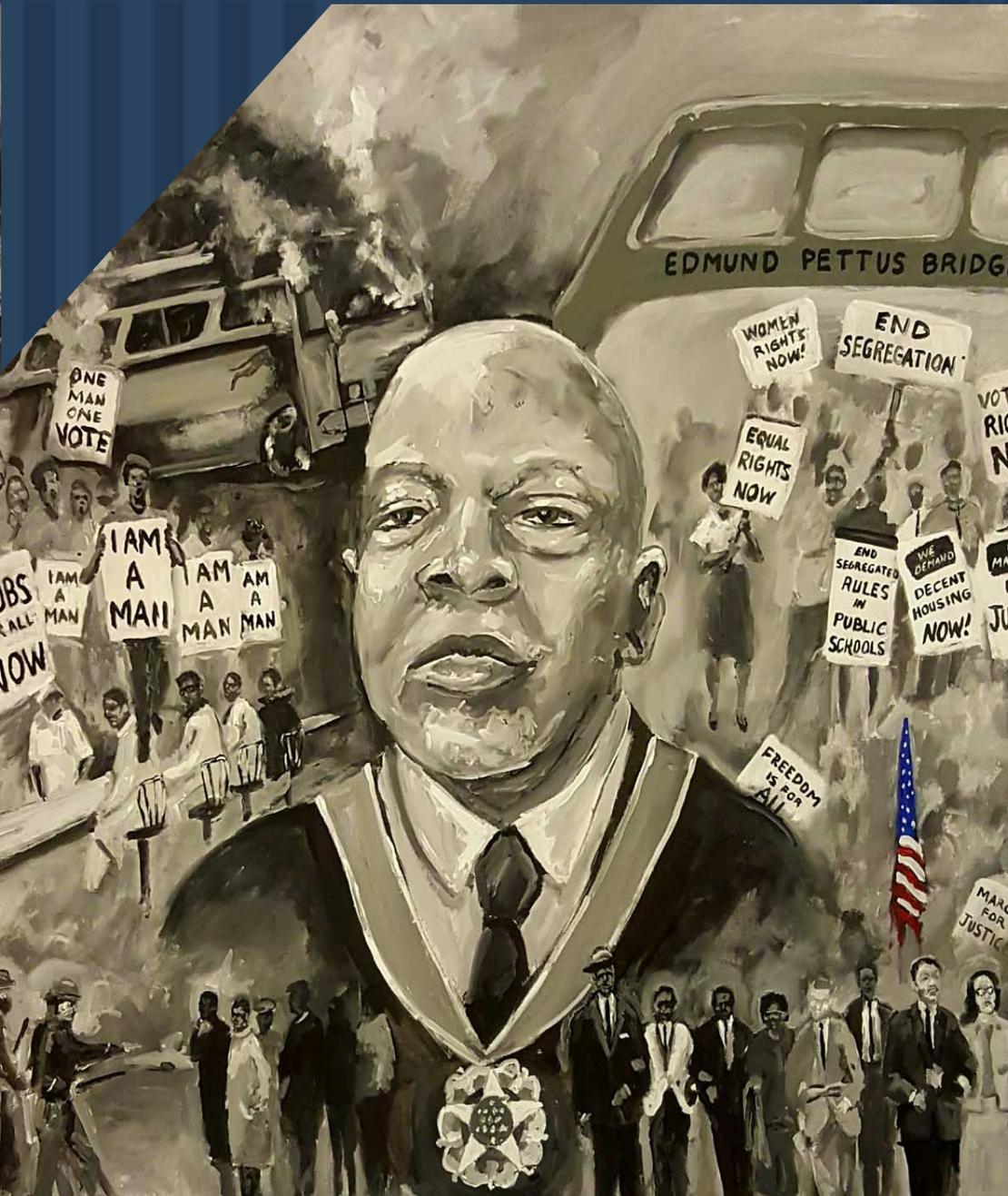
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▼ "The John Lewis Story" by Ted Ellis.

**Be hopeful. Be optimistic. Never lose that sense of hope. ~John Lewis**



**Dr. Narketta M. Sparkman-Key**  
(Academic Affairs Director of Faculty Diversity and Retention)



**Allison Barber**  
(Administrative Assistant)

## Message from Dr. Key

Fall Semester 2020 has probably been the most challenging semester yet. We made many adjustments due to the pandemic. We suffered the loss of a few of our most esteemed colleagues. We engaged in difficult dialogues about racism. We took a good honest look at ourselves and our practices and noted the areas we needed to change. Despite the weight of our journey this semester, we all came together. We made plans, we supported students and we addressed racism head on creating a more inclusive environment. There is still more to be done but all colleges have made a stance, over 955 faculty have engaged in our workshops and 54 faculty have enrolled in our Blackboard organization to continue diversity related conversations. Two faculty have completed all requirements of our certificate program. ODU is committed to creating a more inclusive environment for our students and colleagues and this is evident through attendance and support of the initiatives hosted by our office. We cannot stop here. We must continue to work together to create a culture we are all comfortable in. In the words of the late John Lewis, "Don't give up, Don't Give in, Keep the faith and Keep your eyes on the prize". True inclusion is our prize.

## Welcome Allison Barber to the Diversity Team

Allison Barber, B.S. in Biology, worked for the University in the Provost's Office for eight years before transferring to the Office of Faculty Diversity and Retention over the summer. She has a great deal of knowledge about the University and experience working with faculty and staff. Allison feels working with Dr. Sparkman-Key has been a great opportunity, and she looks forward to continuing to learn from her. She plans to pursue her master's degree in biology starting in Fall 2021.

## Advisory Committee



▶ **Dr. Mary Kate Andris**  
President and CEO  
YWCA South Hampton Roads



▶ **Mr. Mekbib Gemed**  
Vice President of Diversity in Education  
Eastern Virginia Medical School



▶ **Dr. Dorothy Jones**  
Faculty  
Norfolk State University



▶ **Ms. Shené V. Owens**  
Associate Director for the Center for Student Diversity  
College of William and Mary



▶ **Dr. Kaprea Johnson**  
Associate Professor  
Co-Chair at the Department of Counseling & Special Education  
Virginia Commonwealth University



▶ **Ronnie Parker,**  
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Officer  
Hampton Roads Chamber



▶ **Mr. Christian Strange**  
President  
Hampton Roads Business Outreach (HRBOR)

## Virtual Café

Virtual Café is an open and safe forum for faculty to discuss whatever they want whether it be challenges they are facing due to COVID-19 or the joys of coffee. Between July and October, this supportive community met 10 times on most Wednesdays at 9:00 AM with a total of 114 participants. During this time there were two special Virtual Cafés with one addressing juggling children learning online while working and the other on how to respond to media request and remove inaccurate quotes from publications.



## Virtual Watch Party

At our Virtual Watch Party events, we watch and discuss short videos. Over the last few months, there were 5 Virtual Watch Party events with a total of 210 participants that covered the topics Anti-Asian Racism, An Anti-Racist Interview with Ibram X. Kendi, What being Hispanic and Latinx means in the United States, “Imagining America Anew” by Eddie Glaude, Jr., and What LGBTQ Students Want Their Professors to Know. Each Virtual Watch Party had unique, informative, and sometimes moving conversations. These discussions contributed to an increased understanding and appreciation of different cultures in an approachable way.



Lecturer Brett Cook-Snell  
Department of STEM Education and Professional studies

## Town Halls with Provost Agho

The Office of Faculty Diversity and Retention hosted two Town Halls with Provost Agho. The first Town Hall took place in June with 219 attendees. At this event, Provost Austin Agho and panel of faculty discussed supporting black faculty and students during the COVID-19 crisis. In October, 183 people attended the Town Hall where Provost Agho and a panel of Academic Deans and Executive Committee members answered questions regarding diversity and inclusion efforts at ODU.

## Diverse Conversations: Using Art to Understand Racism

Office of Faculty Diversity and Retention  
Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity  
400 Years of African American History

### Diverse Conversation

We were fortunate enough to have two Diverse Conversation events with special guests Ted Ellis and Dr. Marvin Chiles. Ted Ellis is a renowned and distinguished artist who communicates the truth of the African American experience in the United States through his art. The Diverse Conversations with Ted Ellis: Using Art to Understand Racism, aimed to foster conversations on the history of racism and its impact on the human condition of African Americans within the United States as a method to help faculty understand the concept of racism. Dr. Marvin Chiles is an expert on American race relations, and his dissertation investigated racial reconciliation in the modern South, focusing specifically on Richmond, Virginia, from the Brown v. Board of Education decision to the present. In the Diverse Conversations with Dr. Marvin Chiles: History of Racism in Academia, Dr. Chiles discussed the systematic racism with the world of academia. A total of 116 faculty members participated in these two events.

### Faculty Recruitment Event

On December 10, 2020, the Office of Faculty Diversity and Retention hosted a Faculty Recruitment event. After welcoming remarks from President Broderick and Provost Agho, representatives from each of the academic colleges, the Libraries, and the School of Cyber Security shared their perspectives on the culture and working environment at ODU, provided information on the interviewing process, and answered questions from the audience. Approximately, 178 people attended this event with one individual stating, "I learned so much about ODU and it was a wonderful experience to engage the Dean and faculty members in our breakout room."



**Professor Ravi Mukkamala**  
Computer Science Department

## Workshops

There have been three workshops covering a variety of subjects. The first workshop, Supporting LGBTQ+ Students in the Classroom which was facilitated by Cathleen Rhodes, Women's Studies. Cathleen discussed using small group activities and feedback to provide participants the opportunity to revise current classroom strategies to better meet the unique needs of LGBTQ+ students. The second workshop, White Allies: Moving Beyond Fragility, had a panel of faculty from across campus to discuss what it means to be an ally and how they are moving beyond white fragility. Finally, there was the Linguistic Justice as Anti-Racist Practice Workshop where panelists from the English Department discussed linguistic facts, research on language policing and linguistic justice, and strategies to apply linguistic justice in the classroom. A total of 214 faculty members participated in these workshops.



Assistant Professor Andrew Bennett  
Department of Management

## New Faculty Drive Thru Welcome

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, we had to be creative when planning our New Faculty Welcome. Our solution was to have the new faculty members drive by to receive a welcome gift and say hello to Austin Agho, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, and Kate Hawkins, Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs and Strategic Initiatives. Despite the rain, all 13 new faculty members who attended were in great spirits and happy to see someone outside their own household. Those that could not attend the event received mailed welcome gifts through a partnership with Distance Learning.



Our New Faculty drive through welcome

## Certification Program

We are excited to announce a new way to complete the Diversity and Inclusion Certificate. You can now complete it asynchronously through our Blackboard Organization. For more information on how to asynchronously complete the certificate please visit our [Resource Center](#) page.



Tracy Sohoni Certificate Recipient.  
College of Art and Letters



Janice Hawkins Certificate Recipient

## Faculty Members Complete Diversity and Inclusion Certificate

Congratulations to Janice Hawkins, clinical associate professor in the School of Nursing, and Tracy Sohoni, assistant professor in the Department of Sociology and Criminal Justice, on earning the Diversity and Inclusion Certificate. They each attended a minimum of 10 hours of approved events and wrote reflections on them in order to complete the certificate. When asked why she wanted to complete the Diversity and Inclusion Certificate Dr. Hawkins responded, “I completed the Diversity and Inclusion Certificate training to increase my awareness and competence of inclusive practices. As a healthcare professional, I'm aware that a diverse and inclusive healthcare workforce positively impacts patient outcomes. I want to do my part to contribute to an inclusive culture.” To the same question, Dr. Sohoni answered, “I undertook the Diversity and Inclusion Certificate program because I believe that we all have a responsibility to seek out learning opportunities to better understand the diverse range of experiences of those that share our world. This is my responsibility not only as a professor and a researcher, but also as a responsible member of the community. You can find more information on how to complete the certificate [here](#).”

## Announcing the Culturally Competent Content Development Program

The Office of Faculty Diversity and Retention is excited to announce the new Culturally Competent Content Development Program. This program encourages faculty to review existing course content for opportunities to infuse multicultural perspectives and to advance the focus on multicultural competence and racial and social justice in support of the 6 Point Plan. Without compromising academic rigor, academic freedom, or quality of instruction. Faculty members will receive a stipend for their participation in this program. [More information.](#)

## Blackboard Organization

The Office of Faculty Diversity & Retention is excited to announce our newly created Blackboard Organization. You requested a place to communicate with one another and continue the conversation related to the many events we showcase. This space was developed for that purpose and to provide opportunity for us all to grow together. All we ask is for you to remain respectful, supportive, and open to new ideas. In addition, the Blackboard Organization streamlines the Diversity & Inclusion Certificate Program with all reflections being submitted in one place. You can self-enroll by logging into Blackboard and clicking on the Organizations tab. Next click on Organization Catalog on the top right-hand corner of the page. Then search for Office of Faculty Diversity and Retention with “and” spelled out instead of an “&”. Once it appears hover your mouse over the organization to make a gray dropdown arrow appear to enroll.

## Diversity Center

The Office of Faculty Diversity and Retention and the Darden College of Education and Professional Studies collaboratively launched the DCEPS Diversity Center which will house our office and The Alliance for Equity-Based Research and Practice with the focus on specific diversity initiatives related to college, K-12, and professional studies.



Our new signage for our new location

## Academic Affairs Six Point Plan Towards Inclusive Excellence

Please review the video and document on the Academic Affairs Six Point Plan Towards Inclusive Excellence where ODU reaffirms their commitment to diversity and inclusion.

Reference Video: [Click Here](#)

Reference Document: [Click Here](#)





# ODU

## Faculty Diversity and Retention

### Upcoming Events in Spring 2021

- Linguistic Justice Book Club Meetings
- Diverse Conversations with Dr. April Baker-Bell
- Advisory Committee Panel-Addressing How other Institutions are handling Racism and Inclusion
- Diverse Conversations: Racial Trauma and Battle Fatigue
- Supporting LGBTQ+Students in the Classroom, Part 2

### Coming Soon – Culturally Competent Classroom Practices

This video project aims to capture classroom practices and experiences that promote the inclusion of all voices. Faculty members were interviewed to learn how they make sure they teach the experiences of all cultures and what strategies they use to help their students understand and respect each cultures journey. These interviews will help other faculty members learn how they can embrace diversity within their classrooms. Keep an eye out for the video this Spring!

### Resources Center

Check out our Resource Center on our website. Here you can find recordings of our workshops.

[Click here](#)

### Resources for Departments

Departments can begin making strides towards becoming more inclusive by doing some of the activities listed that are based on the 6 Point Plan. Reference Document [Click here](#)

### Racial Trauma Resources

After the events of this year, it is even more important to be mindful of racial trauma. The Office of Faculty Diversity and Retention created a document with a list of resources to help individual's understand what racial trauma is, what the symptoms are, and how it can be treated/managed.

[View Document](#)



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*Happy Holidays*