

## **Diversity Committee End of the Year Report 2016**

### **Established Relationship with the MAC**

An integral aspect of this year's Diversity Committee was creating a strong connection with the Multicultural Affairs Center (MAC) located in the Adair House on Truman's campus. Every other Tuesday, the Diversity Chair would meet with Jerad Green and Carol Bennett, the MAC's directors and discuss projects of diversity to work together on campus. They are extremely supportive and provide logistic assistance for event planning and can even help host discussions of diversity matters.

### **Indigenous Peoples Day**

The MAC really pushed the idea to our committee to present a change from Columbus Day to Indigenous Peoples Day on the second Monday of October. This was following a trend of both cities and universities that were speaking out against the negative treatment of indigenous individuals by conquerors and explorers. Many viewed the celebration of Columbus as a blow to indigenous peoples everywhere. At first, this resolution was received well. On the second read, this resolution became a little more contentious when one influential senator opposed it. At a vote from 9-9 the resolution did not pass. However, after changing the wording of the resolution from "celebrating Indigenous Peoples Day instead of Columbus Day" to "celebrating Indigenous Peoples Day on Columbus Day." This was a change that the entire body approved and the resolution passed unanimously! The MAC was very excited that this change occurred; this showed a cultural awareness of our student body to recognize the intricacies of a historical event and take action to promote justice. This should be checked to make sure it is on the Truman Calendar in Fall 2016.

### **Paino Meeting #1**

At the beginning of the semester, Chair Christy asked President Molly to set up a visit with President Paino to inquire about Open Housing. Zachary Hollstrom, former Diversity Chair, and Christy Crouse, Current Diversity Chair, met with Dr. Paino, asking him about plans to implement the Open Housing. He responded by reviewing what happened at the Board of Governors meeting in the spring, following the past Diversity Committee's presentation to them. Dr. Paino said the Board was not fully supportive. They had some reservations that the Open Housing would be used for reasons that could lead to significant problems, such as boyfriends and girlfriends together and breaking up. They discussed other options such as a more advanced roommate-pairing process and software. This should definitely be followed up on with Residence Life Director John Gardner.

### **Paino Meeting #2**

During the fall semester Mizzou's president and chancellor resigned among protests from students regarding a variety of complaints from healthcare to racism. In its wake, Truman President Troy Paino sent out an email stating his willingness to work with groups on campus to address any complaints or ideas students may have to increasing inclusiveness and diversity on campus. Shortly after the email, Diversity committee was involved in a second meeting between a variety of campus organizations and President Paino. People aired their problems with the current state of affairs and suggested different courses of action to address them, including Spanish translations of admissions materials and the creation of a strategic committee to better look at these issues. Following these meetings, President Paino created the Presidential Strategic Committee for Inclusive Excellence and appointed members.

### **The Presidential Strategic Committee for Inclusive Excellence**

The Presidential Strategic Committee for Inclusive Excellence was a compilation of Truman administrators, staff, faculty, and students, including Christy Crouse as the representative from Student Government. A strategic plan was formed and will be published by the end of Spring 2016. Please read this thoroughly, pick out projects to pursue and push those through the logistic processes that you see fit. Contact the members of the committee, especially Jamie Ball and John Gardener, for more information and help.

### **Spanish Translation: Passed a Resolution**

We had our first meeting with the MAP (Minority Ambassadors Program) and talked with the current president and vice president of the organization about the possibility of translating admission documents to Spanish, due to the increasing numbers of Hispanic families interested in Truman. The reason for this would be to make these important documents clearer to parents of students who do not fluently speak English. With the number of Latino/Hispanic applicants to Truman has increased from 163 in Fall 2014 to 289 in Fall 2016, a 77.3% increase, this process is very important. Currently this project is still in progress with Christy Crouse spearheading the it.

### **LGBTQ+ Resource Center: Passed Two Resolutions**

One of the bigger projects this committee took on was the push for the installment of an LGBTQ+ Resource Center. Our first step was to pass a resolution in the support of the installment of the center. The process for this resolution was all about getting initial opinions from faculty, such as Dr. Sherri Palmer, as well as getting ideas about how other schools (Southeast Missouri State University, University of Missouri Kansas City, Missouri State University, and University of Missouri) in our state that have already had a center installed in their schools. Through phone interviews with the current leaders of the centers, they provided us with sufficient information pertaining to why the resource center started in the university, and we as a committee used that information to reinforce that Truman State needs a resource center as well. The resolution was passed unanimously by the body.

With the passing of the resolution in support of the installment of an LGBTQ+ Resource Center, we decided to meet with many of the organizations on campus that would help with the installment of the center such as **PRISM, MAC (Multicultural Affairs Center), and the WRC (Women's Resource Center)**. These groups can be crucial when presenting support to the body especially when it comes to all things diversity.

The Diversity Committee created an LGBTQ+ Resource Center Survey. To do this, we went through Dr. Edwards the Faculty Mentor and ITS to approve the survey that was made using survey.truman.edu. The survey received 648 complete responses and the detailed results were documented in the second resolution supporting the creation of the LGBTQ+ Resource Center passed in Spring 2016. Please make sure leadership within the university acts upon this support. The Women's Resource Center, PRISM, Dr. Sherri Palmer, the MAC, and the upper-level administration must be involved in the creation of this center. Diversity Committee is the catalyst, bringing these actors together to put this center into place.

### **Diversity Week 2016**

This is a huge week of events that Diversity Committee leads. This year, we held an event each day of the week of April 11-15, 2016. The process began by determining what themes would be focused on each day, what the structure of those events would be, what week we would like them to take place, where they would fit most, and submitting all of that to the CSI in the SUB for the room lottery approval.

#### **Monday: "Sin Nombre"**

Forty people attended a film showing of "Sin Nombre", which was a fictionalized account of a girl from Honduras and a Mexican ex-gang member as they made their way through Mexico to the United States. While the documentary was a success, there was a miscommunication as to the times, and thus many people arrived a half hour early on accident. We partnered with Sigma Delta Pi, who recieved money from Grants and Sponsorships committee to pay for the movie rights. Since Sigma Delta Pi is the Spanish honors fraternity, all Spanish students were offered extra credit, so this helped with attendance to the event.

#### **Tuesday: Discovering Abilities**

We had about 15-20 people show up to this event. We had three speakers: Joe Hamilton, Ashley, and Jaime Graham. Joe Hamilton spoke about mental health, Ashley spoke about the deaf community and also taught some signs. Lastly, we had Jaime Graham, a man with a mental disability from Kirksville, read two of the books he wrote (and consequently made the audience tear up).

#### **Wednesday: International Food and Dance Night**

We had about 60-70 show up to this event. We had Namaste Nepal, African Student Association, French Honors Fraternity, International Club, HALO, and SMEP help out and provide food and entertainment for the event. We had dancers also perform and then had some of the Spanish teachers teach some salsa dancing to the attendants. We got into some trouble with the SUB due to the rearrangement of the tables and chairs within the room, make sure to check with them next time before anything is moved.

**Thursday: Courageous Conversation on Systemic Racism**

We had 5 people come to this event. Jerad Green, from the MAC, and his wife Courtney Green spoke about various topics in regards to race and racial tensions. Also talked about were topics discussing research and books written relating to gender and sexual identity.

**Friday: "Out in the Night," Director and Subject**

We showed a documentary entitled "Out in the Night" which focused on many topics such as race, sexual orientation, discrimination, and corruption in the justice system for colored people. We partnered with the **MAC**, and provided funding for this event. The committee was there to help publicize this event for the MAC as well as bettering our partnership with the MAC incorporating this event in Diversity Week. This event was held at AT-Still, and the planning gofr the location was done by the MAC.

**'Diverse-Tree' on the Quad**

On top of the movie we had a poster project called 'Diverse-Tree' which was a fun interactive way to get students involved in a mural. On top of the poster we had 'Bulldogs for Diversity' and they could put their thumbprint on the mural, which will then hang outside of the library. We had over 200 thumbprints on the mural. The event was held on the quad, which needs to be reserved through the CSI at least **10 days in advance**.

We had a great year! We wish you success in all of the awesome projects you work on and hope that you will reach out to any of us, especially former Chair Christy Crouse, with any questions on how to continue the projects already started.

Thank you!

Diversity Committee 2016

Christy Crouse, Cory Hogan, Luis Ortiz, Paul Moe, and Christine Gooch