

**Equity and Inclusion Advisory Council**  
Minutes  
April 17, 2023

**Present** - Chassidy Cooper, Gladstone Gunn, Adrianna Guram, Keith Johnson, Kim Maturo, Phyllis Thompson, and Rachel Walden.

**Not Present** - Felipe Fiuza, Mary Jordan, Joe Sherlin, Laura Terry, and Jessica Wang

- I. **Call to Order** - Chassidy Cooper called the meeting to order.
- II. **Approval of Minutes** – A motion was made by Keith Johnson, and seconded stating, “I move that the minutes from the February 15, 2023 meeting be approved as written. The motion carried. In keeping with open lines of communication, the approved minutes will be uploaded to the Office of Equity and Inclusion website.
- III. **Old Business**
  - A. **Annual Review of Bylaws** – A motion was made by Keith Johnson, and seconded stating, “I move that the Bylaws be approved with one change, add the words *recruitment and* to Article II. Mission, before retention in the first paragraph”. After discussion, the motion was unanimously approved.
- IV. **New Business**
  - A. **HEED Award** – Chassidy Cooper shared that an email was sent to the HEED Award Application Workgroup requiring their feedback/submission by May 7<sup>th</sup>. This will provide time to review and gather additional information if necessary to compile and submit a sufficient award application to INSIGHT to Diversity before the June 30<sup>th</sup> application deadline.
  - B. **Student Membership** – Chassidy Cooper noted that the council’s current student member, Gladstone Gunn, graduates in May 2023. Katherine Madison, a doctoral student at Clemmer College has applied to join the council which was forwarded to council members for review and comment.
  - C. **Memorial Fountain Redesign Committee** – Keith Johnson met with the Memorial Fountain Redesign Committee. Kevin Brooks, Director Multicultural Center and Travis Graves, Professor, Arts & Design are committee co-chairs. A Call for Artists will go out to include design recommendations, the committee will narrow down the submissions and hopes to get the campus involved in the selection process. The committee would like to make the memorial more educational. For instance, individuals could scan a QR code that would take them to other places on campus. One of the names on the fountain markers is George Nichols, a decorated military serviceman. The QR code would direct them to ROTC where more could be learned about Mr. Nichols and ROTC.
  - D. **Call for Proposals – 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Equity & Inclusion Conference** – Faculty, staff, and students are encouraged to submit a proposal for presentation at the conference. The Call for Proposals is

being distributed to other institutions and professional organizations across the state and region. Information can be found on the conference website. The conference will be held September 28-29, 2023 and student track on September 30<sup>th</sup>.

The East Tennessee Higher Education Regional Alliance eConvening with USC Race and Equity Center scheduled for September 29th will be held in person as part of the conference programming.

Keith Johnson shared that he has begun his internal and external fundraising efforts for this year's conference.

- E. Moon Shot for Equity** – A well-attended Moon Shot for Equity convening was held in March. Several attendees shared with Keith Johnson that they were shocked to realize that equity gaps were so bad. The data shows that only 13% of African American males graduate in 4 years and 23% in 6 years; Latino/Hispanic males graduate at 20% in 4 years and 31/32% in 6 years. Keith Johnson shared that there has been an increase in African American student athletes, a large number of Latino/Hispanic students, and a decrease in white male and female students. The white male/female student population is around 40% male/60% female which is a national trend. The ETSU student population is more diverse than it has ever been with about 25/26% underrepresented students. There is still work to do on the campus. The administrative, faculty, and staff positions on the campus are not following these same trends, they are not representing the population of students they serve. Another focus area is student retention as graduation rates, at best for ETSU are at 55% for students. The University needs to create an environment of belongingness that affects all students regardless of their race or ethnicity.

The PowerPoint slides from the convening were distributed to those in attendance with the recommendation that they are shared within their respective colleges/departments. Using the data in the slides informs administrators, faculty, and staff of the current problems/issues at ETSU.

**F. Open Dialogue/Current Issues -**

Rachel Walden shared that at the recommendation of the Dean and student affairs, she held diversity, equity, and inclusion events with the first and second year students at the Quillen College of Medicine. These included panel discussions with providers and social workers on the topics of care for underserved populations, LGBT, unhoused populations, and other groups. There were also discussions about the history of Islamic contributions to medicine and science and the use of materials from the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecologists to talk about the history of racism and medicine in that area.

Kim Maturo shared that the Dr. Patricia Robertson Diversity Scholarship applications are currently being accepted from students through April 30<sup>th</sup> for the academic year 2023-2024.

The fourth issue of the Community Voices magazine has been published. It is posted on the Office of Equity and Inclusion website.

Keith Johnson shared that a new position to support strategic initiatives and special projects such as the Moon Shot for Equity will soon be posted in eJobs.

Keith Johnson gave a brief update on the establishment of the Angela Radford Lewis Inclusive Excellence Award. He has discussed the award with the Provost to have this as a university recognition similar to the teaching, service, and research awards.

Adrianna Guram recapped the Students of Color Symposium held in late February. She shared that there was strong attendance, active and vibrant dialogue, and several institutions volunteered to host the event in the upcoming years. The next Symposium will be held at Belmont University. Keith Johnson added that one agenda next year would include discussions about legislative policies.

**IV. Next Meeting Date** – May 17, 2023, 1:00-2:00 pm, via Zoom.

The meeting adjourned at 2:00 pm.

**Respectfully submitted by Kim Maturo**