



# Office of Equity and Inclusion Newsletter

December 5, 2024



## A Message from Dr. Keith Johnson, Vice President for Equity and Inclusion

“Reflecting On Our  
Incredible Community”

Dear Friends,

The year has been a mix of highs and lows, marked by significant events and emotional challenges. On the positive side, there have been advancements in science and technology, efforts to address climate change have gained momentum in some areas, and communities have shown remarkable resilience and unity in the face of adversity. Celebrations, personal milestones, and acts of kindness have brought hope and joy to many.

However, the year has also been marked by tragedies. Hurricane Helene was a devastating natural disaster, leaving widespread destruction and displacing many families. Recovery efforts have been ongoing, with communities coming together to rebuild. Additionally, the loss of loved ones has been a poignant reminder of life's fragility, touching families and communities around the world. Through it all, the year has highlighted humanity's capacity to persevere, adapt, and support one another, even in the most challenging circumstances.

~continued on page 2~



*During the holiday season, it's easy to forget that sometimes the best gift of all is simply the gift of time. I can't think of anything a writer would appreciate more than being given time and space to work.*

~Kate Klise ~

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## Continued ~ Message from Dr. Keith Johnson

It serves as a reminder to cherish the good moments and learn from the difficulties and differences that we share as we move forward.

As the year draws to a close, I want to take a moment to reflect on the incredible community we have built together at ETSU and extend my heartfelt gratitude for all you do. To our faculty and staff, your dedication to fostering a vibrant, inclusive, and enriching academic environment is the foundation of our success. Your tireless efforts to support our students, innovate in your work, and contribute to the university's mission inspire us all.

To our students, your curiosity, resilience, and commitment to learning embody the spirit of our institution. Thank you for your enthusiasm and for contributing to the diverse and dynamic fabric of our university.

Together, we've achieved so much this year, including, but not limited to completing the HEED application, continuing with the moonshot initiatives, hosting the annual equity and inclusion conference, launching the student success planning process, expanding services in the Women and Gender Resource Center, and a host of many other initiatives. None of this would have been possible without your support, collaboration, and passion. As we move into the holiday season, I hope you take time to rest, celebrate, and enjoy the company of loved ones. As we are in our reflective mode, please continue to remember our core values, which include:

- PEOPLE come first, are treated with dignity and respect, and are encouraged to achieve their full potential;
- RELATIONSHIPS are built on honesty, integrity, and trust;
- DIVERSITY of people and thought is respected;
- EXCELLENCE is achieved through teamwork, leadership, creativity, and a strong work ethic;
- EFFICIENCY is achieved through wise use of human and financial resources; and
- COMMITMENT to intellectual achievement is embraced.

Wishing you a joyous holiday season and a prosperous and fulfilling New Year!

Sincerely,

Dr. Keith V. Johnson

**“Be like a tree. Stay grounded. Connect with your roots. Turn over a new leaf. Bend before you break. Enjoy your unique natural beauty. Keep growing.”**

**~ Joanne Raptis ~**



## Complimentary Dinner at ETSU Dining Hall for Veterans/Military Members

ETSU Dining Hall hosted a special event to honor and celebrate Veterans and Military Members by offering a complimentary dinner. This thoughtful gesture was a heartfelt way to express gratitude for their service and sacrifices.

The event brought together members of the ETSU community, creating a warm and welcoming atmosphere to recognize these heroes.

Added here are pictures capturing the meaningful moments and connections shared during this memorable celebration.



## Human Rights Day **2024 Theme: "Our Rights, Our Future—Acting Now"**



Human Rights Day is celebrated each year on December 10th to commemorate the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948.

Each year, Human Rights Day focuses on a specific theme to address a particular human rights issue. Themes have included topics such as the right to education, freedom of expression, and the fight against discrimination.

The theme for Human Rights Day 2024, "Our Rights, Our Future—Acting Now," emphasizes the urgent need to address human rights challenges today to ensure a brighter and more equitable future for all. It serves as a powerful reminder that human rights are the foundation of peaceful and prosperous societies and that safeguarding these rights cannot be delayed. [Read more.](#)

# Empowering Your Journey: Unlock Support with ETSU Disability Services!

## UNLOCKING YOUR POTENTIAL WITH DISABILITY SERVICES

Are you a graduate student at ETSU looking to access support services tailored to your needs? ETSU Disability Services is here to assist you every step of the way. Whether you are seeking accommodations, resources, or guidance, Disability Services is dedicated to ensuring your academic journey is accessible.

### Services Offered:

- **Accommodations:** From extended test-taking time to note-taking assistance, Disability Services provides a range of accommodations to meet your individual needs.
- **Accessibility Resources:** Explore a wealth of resources, including accessible formats for textbooks and material as well as assistive technology to ensure you have everything you need to excel in your studies.
- **MentorMe!:** Mentors are available to students registered through Disability Services to help ensure a smooth journey through academic, professional, and personal development as well as social engagement.
- **Outside the Box:** A social gathering for ETSU students diagnosed with a neurodevelopmental disability, created to connect neurodivergent peers in a fun atmosphere.



Graduate  
Student  
Success  
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*This & That  
for Graduate Success*

**NOVEMBER 2024**

Aaron Smith & Hannah McDermott  
Sherrod Library, 453  
423-439-7062  
gradsuccess@etsu.edu



**GRADUATE SCHOOL**  
EAST TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY



## HOW TO GET STARTED:

### Contact Information:

Phone: (423) 439-8346

Email: [disabilityservices@etsu.edu](mailto:disabilityservices@etsu.edu)

If you choose to self-identify a disability, you can register online at:  
<https://www.etsu.edu/students/ds/student/registration.php>

Do not let barriers hinder you – Take advantage of the resources and support available through ETSU Disability Services!

## Celebrating Diversity, Leadership, and Community Through Culture, Heritage, and Excellence at ETSU



**LADIES OF ELEGANCE  
UMOJA FESTIVAL PERFORMANCE**

**LaTisha Vaughn & Victoria Williams,  
LOE President & Vice President**

“ The Ladies of Elegance Dance Club performed at the Umoja Festival on September 14th in downtown Johnson City. Ladies of Elegance promotes academic excellence, artistic expression, and an inclusive community while celebrating the legacy of Majorette culture.

### ASIAN AMERICAN STUDENT ASSOCIATION & CHINESE STUDENT SCHOLAR ASSOCIATION



Celebration of the moon festival on September 20th in the Amphitheater.

“ Mid-Autumn Festival ”

**Emily Baker, AASA  
President**

“ Students and ETSU community came together to enjoy mooncakes, snacks, tea, and Chinese lantern-making, along with student performances.

## Celebrating Diversity ~ Continued

### GOSPEL & INTERNATIONAL CHOIR CONCERT



Jerrica Anderson & Jayla Sanders,  
GIC Director & President

“ On October 6th, the Gospel & International Choir held their annual 'Welcome Home' concert during ETSU Homecoming, celebrating inclusivity, warmth, and unity through the power of gospel music.

### BLACK AFFAIRS ASSOCIATION



Jade Barfield, BAA President

“ On November 13th, the Black Affairs Association hosted 'Hot Wings and Hot Topics' at the MCC, offering students a fun, lively forum to discuss a range of topics while enjoying wings, sides, and honest conversation.

**HOT WINGS & HOT TOPICS**

## Celebrating Diversity ~ Continued

### WOMEN OF KNOWLEDGE & EXCELLENCE



**LaTisha Vaughn, W.O.K.E.  
President**

“ On November 22nd, the National Association of Colored Women’s Clubs, Inc. inducted 10 students into the ETSU Mary Church Terrell Women of Knowledge and Excellence Chapter, honoring the organization’s mission of uplifting communities through education, advocacy, and leadership.

### SOUTH ASIAN STUDENT ASSOCIATION



**Aashi Vora, SASA President**

“ The South Asian Student Association hosted its second annual Diwali Holiday fest on November 23rd. The event had an incredible cultural exhibition, authentic South Asian dinner, dance performances and so much more. Diwali is the celebration of the new year and the Festival of Light.



## Celebrating Diversity ~ Continued

### NICHOLS ACADEMY

**Sneh Patel & Teycien  
Singh Massengill,  
NA Student Leaders**



“

Nichols Academy is a holistic mentoring program designed to support and monitor the academic progress of historically underserved male students, honoring Captain George Nichols, ETSU's first African American male graduate.

### BEST MENTORING PROGRAM

**Angelliz Lopez, MCC  
Program Assistant**



“

BEST is designed to establish and develop mentoring relationships between ETSU students, faculty, staff, alumni, and industry leaders. The purpose is to provide strategies to build support networks, improve academic performance, and increase student success.

## Celebrating Diversity ~ Continued

### WASHINGTON, D.C. CULTURAL EXPERIENCE



Team Leaders of BUCS Academy, Quest, and Nichols Academy traveled to Washington, DC for a cultural experience during Fall Break.

Kennedy Averhart & Angelliz Lopez,  
MCC Program Assistants

“

Students visited museums and monuments to explore the rich history of the United States. The highlight of the trip was having brunch with Ms. Mary V. Jordan, the MCC's namesake.

## Diverse Student Organizations

The Multicultural Center sponsors diverse student organizations that bring a sense of belonging and community for our students.

- Black Affairs Association
- Chinese Student and Scholars Association
- Gospel Choir
- International Choir
- International Student Association
- Shades of Africa
- Asian American Student Association
- Hispanic American Student Community Alliance
- Kompa Dance Club
- Native American Student Organization
- National Association of Colored Women's Club Inc. Women of Knowledge and Excellence (W.O.K.E)
- South Asian Student Association
- Ladies of Elegance
- The ROOTS

[Click here](#) to learn more about these student organization.

# Upcoming Events

December 2024				
Friday	Dec. 6th	Safe Zone Ally Training <a href="#">Registration</a> is Free	C. Sherrod Library - Room 433	1:00-4:00pm
Wednesday	Dec. 11th	Multicultural Center Celebration	Culp Auditorium	7:00pm
Thursday	Dec. 12th	Lavender Celebration	Culp 272	6:00pm
January 2024				
Monday	Jan. 13th	The MLK Legacy Program	Carillon Alumni Plaza (Bell Tower)	11:30am-12:30pm
Tuesday	Jan. 21st	MLK Cake Cutting Celebration	Culp Student Ctr	11:00am-2:00pm
Thursday	Jan. 30th	<a href="#">Neurodivergence and Gender Workshop</a>	Culp Student Ctr Room 219	4:40-6:30pm



Mary V. Jordan Multicultural Center  
Martin Luther King, Jr.

## MLK Legacy Program

# JAN 13

Alumni Bell Tower  
Rain location: Burgin Dossett 2nd Floor  
11:30 am to 12:30 pm



EAST TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY  
Mary V. Jordan Multicultural Center

For more information contact [Etsumc@etsu.edu](mailto:Etsumc@etsu.edu) or 423-423-4844



Mary V. Jordan Multicultural Center

Martin Luther King, Jr.

## DAY OF SERVICE

MONDAY, JANUARY 20, 2025  
9:00 am to 1:00 pm

Carver Recreation Center  
322 W Watauga Ave. Johnson City TN 37601

“ WHAT ARE YOU DOING FOR OTHERS? ”

- MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.



EAST TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY  
Mary V. Jordan Multicultural Center

For more information, contact 423-439-4844 or [etsumc@etsu.edu](mailto:etsumc@etsu.edu)

# Upcoming Events ~ continued

THE MARY V. JORDAN MULTICULTURAL CENTER  
PRESENTS



# MULTICULTURAL CENTER CELEBRATION

You Are Invited To Join Us

DEC	11	2024
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📍 CULP AUDITORIUM

🕒 7 PM

EMAIL: [ETSUMC@ETSU.EDU](mailto:ETSUMC@ETSU.EDU) / CALL: (423) 439-4844

  
EAST TENNESSEE STATE  
UNIVERSITY  
Mary V. Jordan Multicultural Center

You are cordially invited to



*Light Refreshments Provided*

December 12, 2024 | East Tennessee Room, D.P. Culp Center

Doors open at 5:30

Event begins at 6:00 PM



PRESENTED BY THE ETSU WOMEN'S, GENDER, AND SEXUALITY STUDIES  
PROGRAM, DEPARTMENT OF LITERATURE & LANGUAGE AND "THE MOCKINGBIRD"

# SPEAKING QUEERLY



AN LGBTQ+  
POETRY NIGHT

WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY  
12TH 2025, 7-9PM  
CULP CENTER 272 EAST  
TENNESSEE ROOM

COFFEE BAR BY EARLY BIRD'S COFFEE CO.

FEATURED PERFORMERS

OPEN MIC BY ETSU COMMUNITY

TO SHOWCASE THE POETRY OF THOSE OF US WHO BELIEVE IN  
THE RESILIENCE OF THE QUEER COMMUNITY — AND TO  
UPLIFT THOSE WHO MAY NOT YET KNOW HOW.

\*EVENT IS 18+ AND MAY CONTAIN SENSITIVE CONTENT. PLEASE HELP US CREATE  
A SAFE AND SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT AND TAKE CARE OF EACH OTHER!

WGSS@ETSU.EDU / DAUGHT@ETSU.EDU

# Congratulations Dr. Kevin L. Brooks, Director of the Mary V. Jordan Multicultural Center

## FELICITATION



**CONGRATULATIONS  
DR. KEVIN L. BROOKS  
ON RECEIVING THE  
NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR  
BLACK STUDIES  
PRESIDENTIAL AWARD!**



**EAST TENNESSEE STATE  
UNIVERSITY**

Mary V. Jordan Multicultural Center

National Council for Black Studies exists to promote academic excellence and social responsibility in the discipline of Africana/Black Studies through the production and dissemination of knowledge, professional development and training, and advocacy for social change and social justice.

NCBS seeks to:

- Facilitate through consultation and other services, the recruitment of Black Scholars for all levels of teaching and research in universities and colleges;
- Assist in the creation and implementation of multicultural education programs and materials for K-12 schools and higher education institutions;
- Promote scholarly African-centered research on all aspects of the African World experience;
- Increase and improve informational resources on Pan-African life and culture to be made available to the general public;
- Provide professional advice to policymakers in education, government and community development;
- Maintain international linkages among Africana Studies scholars;
- Work for the empowerment of African People.

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Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/etsuequity/>

Instagram and Twitter - [etsu\\_equity](#)

**We would like to  
hear from you.**

If you have an announcement, event, accomplishment, etc. you would like to have published in the newsletter send them to Kim Maturo at [maturo@etsu.edu](mailto:maturo@etsu.edu).

To add a name to our mailing list, please email Kim Maturo at [maturo@etsu.edu](mailto:maturo@etsu.edu).