



# Office of Equity and Inclusion Newsletter

October 4, 2022



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

**“Many Communities, One ETSU”**

Dear Friends,

By now many of you have read communications relative to a letter to ETSU from the Tennessee House chairman of the Legislature’s Joint Government Operations Committee. This letter ordered the university to unilaterally suspend any policies making LGBTQIA+ students a protected class amid federal litigation.

In that same letter, Dr. Noland was asked to immediately revoke and/or remove any publications, policies and website entries for which ETSU is responsible, that state or imply that LGBTQIA+ students are a protected class under Title IX. He was further instructed to respond by September 2 about completing any “required actions.”

ETSU complies with federal and state laws and therefore, this does not impact our commitment to supporting the safe inclusive environment for all of our students identified as LGBTQIA+. To date, it appears that our policies and publications reflect our legal obligations.

~ continued on page 2 ~



Does anybody really think that they  
didn't get what they had because they  
didn't have the talent or the strength or  
the endurance or the commitment?  
~ Nelson Mandela ~

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## Continued ~ Message from Dr. Keith Johnson

We are at a time and place where more calculated attacks on the LGBTQIA+ community are occurring all across the country. LGBTQIA+ identifying people often experience trauma due to discrimination and bias, including within their own families and communities and even from public systems that aren't appropriately designed to serve their needs.

ETSU is becoming a place where faculty, staff and students are treated with the highest level of respect. From a strategic perspective, the 125 Chapter II committee on Equity and Inclusion developed clear priorities in their commitment to the University's Equity and Inclusion goals:

- Everyone is responsible for and accountable to embodying DEI policy and practices in all of their work and interactions.
- A true climate and culture of diversity, equity, and inclusion equals belongingness.
- We always strive for diverse representation in recruitment, retention, and success of our people.
- Diversity, equity and inclusion will be embedded in the work of the university through teaching, research, service, and training.

ETSU is here to support and value ALL students, regardless of their status or sexual orientation. And ETSU is fully committed to the core values of people, relationships, diversity, excellence, efficiency, and honesty. And it is creating a university community based on integrity, respect for diversity, community engagement, and non-violence.

The Office of Equity and inclusion supports and advances ETSU's mission, vision, and values. We guide the development and implementation of diversity, access, inclusion, research, and retention initiatives for all faculty, staff, and students.

The office also serves to promote an environment where people come first, are treated with dignity and respect, and are encouraged and supported to achieve their full potential.

The office will continue to collaborate with university and community partners on matters associated with Equity and Inclusion to promote positive relationships and advocate for underrepresented populations, including the LGBTQIA+ community.

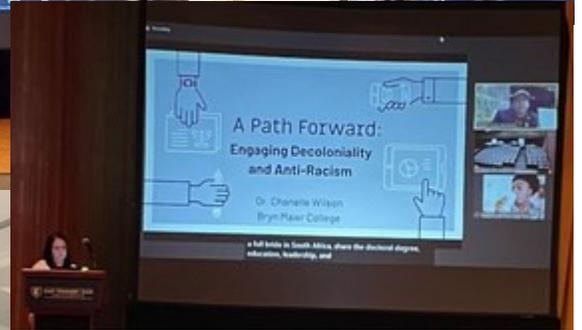
Sincerely,  
Dr. Keith Johnson

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### ETSU's core values:

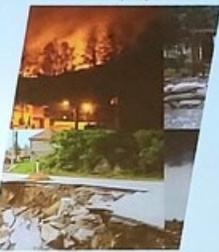
**PEOPLE** come first, are treated with dignity and respect, and are encouraged to achieve their full potential; **RELATIONSHIPS** are built on honesty, integrity, and trust; **DIVERSITY** of people and thought is respected; **EXCELLENCE** is achieved through teamwork, leadership, creativity, and a strong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

# 4th Annual Equity and Inclusion Highlights



**Results of the Disconnect**

Planetary Impacts



Personal Impacts

- ▶ Isolation
- ▶ Depression
- ▶ Anxiety
- ▶ Loneliness
- ▶ Nature-Deficit Disorder
- ▶ Attention-Deficit Disorder
- ▶ Addiction
- ▶ Diabetes
- ▶ Obesity
- ▶ Spiritual void



***Thank You***  
***Equity and Inclusion Conference***  
***Volunteers!***

## Office of Equity and Inclusion Open House

The Office of Equity and Inclusion welcomed faculty, staff, and students to its open house on Friday, September 9<sup>th</sup> at 109 Burgin Dossett Hall.

It was a successful event as Disability Services, University Compliance, Women and Gender Resource Center, Dr. Patricia Robertson Pride Center, and Women's Gender and Sexuality Studies were in attendance. Guests were treated with popcorn, free giveaways from campus units, and music performed by Dr. Lee Bidgood and Hiroshi Arakawa.



The Office of Equity and Inclusion collaborates, promotes, supports, and advances the University's mission, vision, and values by guiding the development and implementation of proactive diversity, access, inclusion, research, and retention initiatives for all faculty, staff, and students.

The office serves to promote an environment where people come first, are treated with dignity and respect, and are encouraged and supported to achieve their full potential.

The office collaborates with university and community partners on matters associated with equity and inclusion to promote relationships and advocate for underrepresented populations.

## Who Are Your People? - a Poem by Dr. Felipe Fiuza

### Who are your people?

People come first doesn't mean  
The early bird gets the worm.  
It means that whoever catches it  
Will share it with the whole group.

People come first doesn't mean  
Winning the race, receiving the gold.  
It means going back and carrying  
Those who felt – crossing borders together.

People come first doesn't mean  
Agreeing with each other all the time,  
Or never making mistakes. It obliges  
true listening, respect, and patience.

This is inspired by Nikki Giovanni.  
And it's about Charlie Warden,  
Stephanie Murphy, Daryl Carter,  
Angela Lewis, Steph Frye, Dr. King,

And it's about Lydia Carr, Lee Bidgood,  
Cameron Schaeffner, Kimberly McCorkle,  
César Chávez, Isabel Gómez-Sobrino,  
Mildred Maisonet, Karlota Contreras-Koterbay,

And it's about you, y'all, and me.  
And it's about jumping on a plane,  
Maxing out credit cards, and visiting  
Mee-Maw for maybe the last time.

And it's about war. Not only in Europe.  
Because there are wars being fought,  
Elsewhere, everywhere, every day.  
And it's about covid, life, Joy, love...

Peace. Who are your people?  
Whose people come first? My people  
Are the earthlings (and someday,  
Hopefully, the Vulcans). My people dream.

– a poem by Felipe Fiuza

## Women and Gender Resource Center Open House



On September 14th the Women and Gender Resource Center (WGRC) hosted an open house. The purpose of the open house was to reintroduce the WGRC to the campus and community, to invite people into the physical space, and talk about services they provide to the campus and community.

Dr. Phyllis Thompson, Dr. Jean Swindle, Dr. Judy McCook, Heidi Marsh and Dr. Stacey Williams were honored at the event for their contributions to women's affairs at ETSU. Presentations also included a song by Katelyn Gabler and poem reading by Zara Taylor. ETSU President, Dr. Brian Noland gave an encouraging and inspirational speech about the center and its history.

It was a day of fellowship, networking, and several partnerships were established with the ETSU Pride Center, Women and Gender Sexuality Studies, Branch House of Sullivan County in attendance. One hundred fifty people attended the open house. Attendees comments included "we are glad you are here, glad there is a gender focus, and the space is inviting and welcoming".

Services provided by the Women and Gender Resource Center include: information of a variety of community and campus outreach programs and resources, a lounge and study area, and free menstrual and safe sex products.

How to get in touch with the WGRC:

### Address

700 J.L. Seehorn Drive  
Culp Center, Room 215  
P.O. Box 70262  
Johnson City, TN 37614

### Phone

423-439-5772

### Website

[etsu.edu/wrcetsu](http://etsu.edu/wrcetsu)

### Email

[wrcetsu@etsu.edu](mailto:wrcetsu@etsu.edu)

## Meet Deborah Abdullahi Graduate Assistant, Office of Equity and Inclusion



Deborah Abdullahi serves as a Graduate Research Assistant for the Office of Equity and Inclusion. Prior to joining East Tennessee State University for her graduate studies, Deborah worked in a Marketing and Advertising Sector in Nigeria known as Explicit Communications Limited, as a Media Executive where she helped in developing state-of-the-art advertisement schemes through market penetration and customer behavior research studies, to realized clients' business objectives/expectations. She has demonstrated competence in strategy development, project management and corporate communications.

Deborah came to the United States of America in August 2022 to undertake her Master's in Public Administration. She likewise did her Bachelor's degree in Public Administration at Lagos State University, Nigeria, where she graduated as one of the best graduating students in her department in the year 2016. She found her career path in a marketing and advertising sector with over four (4) years of work experience before she came into the States for her Masters.

Practicing equity and inclusion for Deborah means fairness to all, recognizing that we do not all start from the same place. However, we must all acknowledge that there is always a room for adjustments in order to reduce the rate of imbalances. Deborah is passionate and self-driven, therefore she will make an excellent addition, support to the success of the Office of Equity and Inclusion.

## We All Rise Conference



October 19-20, 2022  
8:00 am - 4:30 pm CST

Conference Location:

**Embassy Suites by Hilton**  
1200 Conference Blvd,  
Murfreesboro, TN 37219

Registration is now open for the [2022 We All Rise Conference Biennial Conference for Equity and Completion](#).

## Upcoming Events

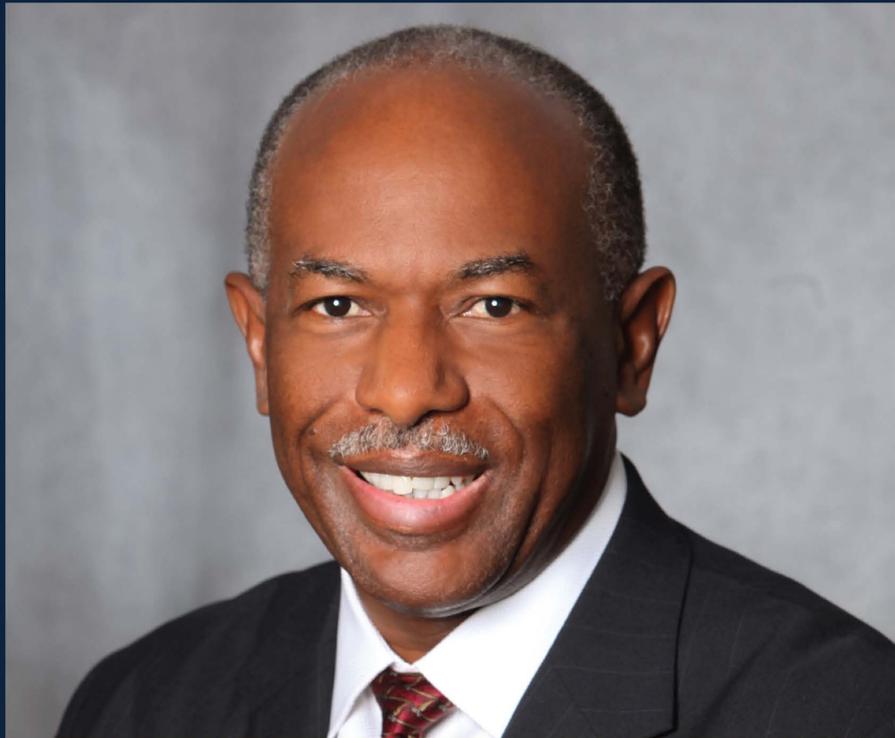
### October 2022

Tuesday	October 4th	Lunch and Learn Series <b>Multiraciality</b> Discussion Lead: Dr. Nicholas Wright, Director of Student Accessibility Services, St. Cloud State Uni.	12:00-1:00pm	<a href="#">Via Zoom</a>
Thursday	October 13th	ETSU Black American Studies Lecture Series Dr. James Hildreth, President and CEO, Meharry Medical College	6:30pm	Carnegie Ballroom
Monday	October 17th	Domestic Violence 101 Presented by the Women and Gender Resource Center and the Johnson City Family Justice Center	1:00-3:00pm	Culp Center, Room 210
Tuesday	October 18th	Lunch and Learn Series <b>Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Doesn't Have to be Honest Acceptance Grace</b> Discussion Lead: Christine D. Lewis Pugh, PhD, LPC (MS), NCC, NCSC, Assistant Professor, School Counseling Concentration Coordinator, Department of Counseling & Human Services, Clemmer College	12:00-1:00pm	<a href="#">Via Zoom</a>
Wednes.	October 19th	International Pronoun Day (Co-sponsoring with the Pride Center)	11:00am-2pm	Culp Center, Cave
Tuesday	October 25th	"Heart" Art with Pam Murray (therapeutic participatory art class)	11:30am-1:00pm	Culp Center, Room 217
Tuesday	October 25th	Asexual and Intersex Awareness Week (Co-sponsoring with Pride Center)	11:00am-2:00pm	Culp Center, Cave
Saturday	October 29th	Queer Talent Show (Co-sponsoring with Pride Center)	6:00-8:00pm	Culp Center, cave

### November/December 2022

Wednes-day	November 9th	Lunch and Learn Series <b>Health Equity in the Curriculum</b> Discussion Lead: Dr. Patricia Amadio, Course Director, QCOM, Dr. Brian Cross Assistant Vice-Provost IPERC, and Dr. Kiana Johnson, Associate, Professor of Pediatrics	12:00-1:00pm	<a href="#">Via Zoom</a>
Friday	November 11th	Veterans Day	University Closed	
Tuesday	November 15th	Lunch and Learn Series <b>Making Sense of American Fragmentation: Race, Class, and Politics in the early 2022</b> Discussion Lead: Dr. Daryl Carter, Assoc. Dean Equity & Inclusion, College of Arts & Sciences, Dir. of Black Studies Program, and Professor of History	12:00-1:00pm	<a href="#">Via Zoom</a>
Monday	November 7th	Intersectionalities of Gender with Audrey Besch (Co-sponsoring with Pride Center)	1:00-2:30pm	TBD
Monday	November 14th	Know Your Resources: Sexual Health (Co-sponsoring with WGSS)	12:00-2:00pm	Culp Center, Room 210
Sunday	November 20th	Trans Day of Remembrance (Co-sponsoring with the Pride Center)	TBD	TBD
Monday	December 5th	"Heart" Art with Pam Murray	11:30am-1:00pm	Culp Center, Room 217
Saturday	December 10	Commencement		

***ETSU Black American Studies Lecture  
Series Presents***



**DR. JAMES HILDRETH**

**President & CEO, Meharry Medical College**

**Lecture**

**6:30 p.m.**

**Carnegie Ballroom**

**Thursday, October 13**

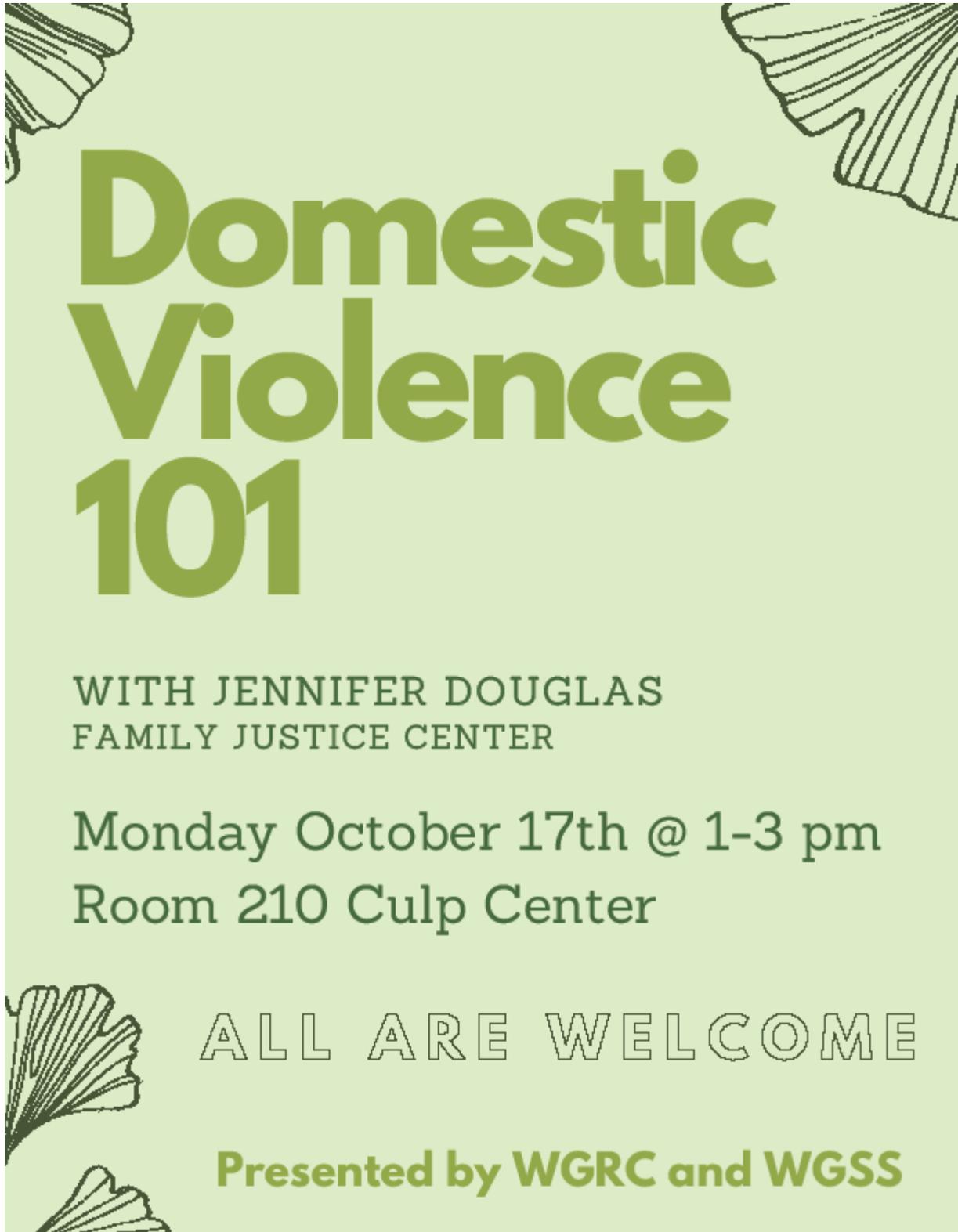
*Event is free and open to the public.  
Audience Q&A to follow.*

Additional support provided by Quillen College of Medicine  
and ETSU's College of Public Health



**BLACK AMERICAN  
STUDIES PROGRAM**

**EAST TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY**



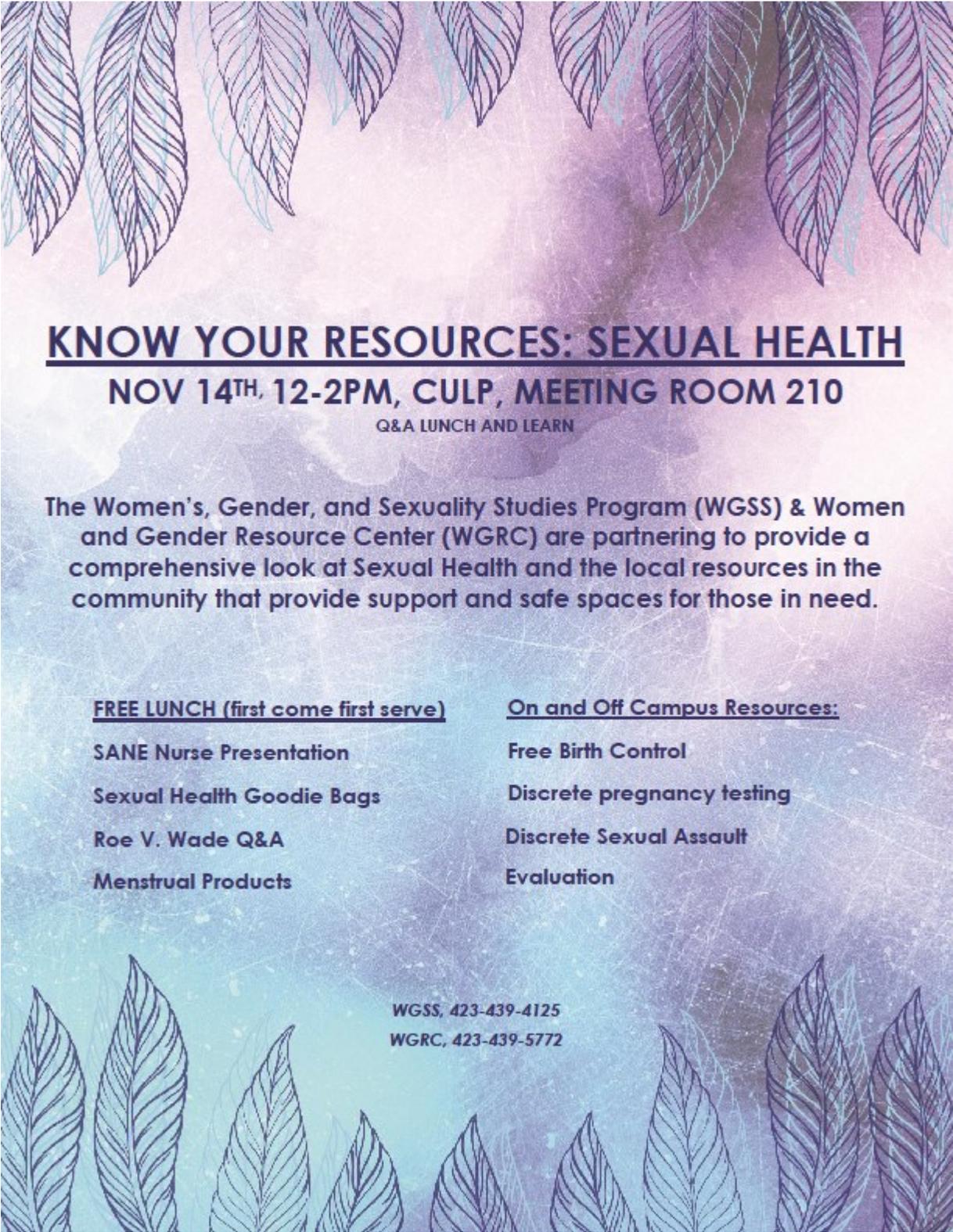
# Domestic Violence 101

WITH JENNIFER DOUGLAS  
FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER

Monday October 17th @ 1-3 pm  
Room 210 Culp Center

ALL ARE WELCOME

**Presented by WGRC and WGSS**



## **KNOW YOUR RESOURCES: SEXUAL HEALTH**

**NOV 14<sup>TH</sup>, 12-2PM, CULP, MEETING ROOM 210**

**Q&A LUNCH AND LEARN**

The Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Program (WGSS) & Women and Gender Resource Center (WGRC) are partnering to provide a comprehensive look at Sexual Health and the local resources in the community that provide support and safe spaces for those in need.

**FREE LUNCH (first come first serve)**

**SANE Nurse Presentation**

**Sexual Health Goodie Bags**

**Roe V. Wade Q&A**

**Menstrual Products**

**On and Off Campus Resources:**

**Free Birth Control**

**Discrete pregnancy testing**

**Discrete Sexual Assault**

**Evaluation**

**WGSS, 423-439-4125**

**WGRC, 423-439-5772**

## Equity and Inclusion Diversity Champion Spotlight



Meet Christa Reid, Coordinator of Student Access and Success at the Mary V. Jordan Multicultural Center.

*Thank you for allowing me to introduce myself as I pursue the hope of diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility for all.*

*I was born in Jackson, MS, but lived most of my life in Chattanooga, TN. After attending college at ETSU (where I received a Bachelor of Business Administration and the Masters of Arts in Teaching degrees), Johnson City became my home.*

*I have recently completed a long ,but successful career as a teacher in the Johnson City Schools System. Initially teaching Career Readiness Skills to at-risk youth in the Jobs for Tenn. Graduates course, I later taught Computer Education and Business subjects emphasizing topics and issues related to the Global Community.*

*One thing I am most proud of is my involvement and personal connections made in the local community. Whether as a sister in the Alpha Delta Kappa -Educators Sorority, a mentor of the Spring Cotillion Ball Committee, or teaching basic computer skills to senior citizens at the*

*Langston Center, I value my relationships with the people of the upper East Tennessee region.*

*Now returning to the ETSU family and joining the Mary V. Jordan Multicultural Center team, it is my hope that I will create a better world for the next generation by advocating for equality and justice.*

*In my current role in the, Multicultural Center interacting with both staff and students, my contribution will involve the following:*

- *Promote the Commitment of Diversity Work directly with each program to gather data, program ideas and best practices, that will establish a basic understanding of current performance, and desired outcomes.*
- *Multicultural Awareness and Sensitivity Work with all programs and to be proactive through cultural enrichment activities used to improve awareness in the current institutional systems, policies, and climate.*
- *Cross-Cultural Collaborations Work to facilitate a plan for open dialogue and collaboration between programs and team leaders related to strategies, values and goals that will benefit the MCC and ensure cross-culture interaction at the university.*

*God Bless and Go Bucs!!*

*~ Christa. J. Collins Reid*

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**Webpage:** <https://www.etsu.edu/equity/>

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

**Instagram and Twitter** - [etsu\\_equity](https://www.instagram.com/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).