



# Office of Equity and Inclusion Newsletter

September 14, 2023



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

**“Beyond 'Checking a Box:' Building and Sustaining  
Campus-Wide Engagement for Belonging through the  
Annual Equity and Inclusion Conference ”**

Dear Friends,

We are only a couple of weeks away from our fifth annual Equity & Inclusion conference at East Tennessee State University, scheduled September 28-30.

The conference was an extension of the vision that I had when I first began serving as your Vice President for Equity and Inclusion at ETSU. For the first conference, I had just a few months of planning, and was really pushed for time to pull together a dynamic team who could help me make the conference a reality.

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If you're going to be a winner  
in life, you have to constantly  
go beyond your best.  
~Robert Kiyosaki~

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## Continued ~ Message from Dr. Keith Johnson

Each year the conference has grown and proudly hosted many highly accomplished keynote speakers including: Wes Moore, Michael Eric Dyson, and Dr. Paul Farmer. And this year we are hosting critically acclaimed author, Imani Perry- who is renowned for her work exploring the intersections of history, race, law, and culture.

During the pandemic, we learned many creative ways to deliver classroom instructions, conduct virtual meetings, master dynamic forms, deliver hands-on laboratory experiences and deliver a virtual Equity and Inclusion conference with just under 500 registrants. We moved from on-ground, to virtual, to hybrid, to now back to on-ground without missing a beat. I hope you enjoy all of the networking opportunities and strategically planned learning sessions that this conference will provide.

For our readers outside of the university community, ETSU's story began in 1911 on land once owned by railroad magnate, George L. Carter. Our institutional foundation was as a normal school. More than a hundred years ago ETSU and the state of Tennessee sought to uplift the region through education. This goal helped to improve the life prospects of countless citizens in our region and beyond.

But many of our citizens, African Americans in particular, were left behind as de jure segregation prevented African Americans from enrolling at ETSU. Only court orders, especially *Brown v. Board of Education*, finally opened the door to integration. African American faculty at ETSU did not exist prior to mid-to-late 1970. And the institution struggled to hire and retain faculty well into the nineties.

By the end of the twentieth century ETSU increasingly reflected a rapidly changing world. ETSU's advancements began with racial diversity but later included gender diversity, sexual diversity, and ethnic diversity. And ETSU student body is more diverse today than at any other time in its longstanding history.

This conference is a celebration of our central institutional mission: to educate people without regard to race, gender, sexual orientation, or place of origin. Numerous breakout sessions have been built to discuss practical ways all faculty, staff, and administrators can improve and promote the ETSUs goal of being welcoming and accepting of everyone. Those lessons learned could be inferred to any college or university.

Further, this conference focuses on the basic humanity of every person and the reasonable expectation that every person deserves respect. Our focus this year is called: "Beyond Checking a Box: Building and Sustaining Campus-Wide Engagement for Belonging."

I encourage everyone to register for the conference because it truly has something planned for everyone. Please visit the conference [website](#) to explore the many sessions that are planned for our participants and learn how you can [register](#).

## Continued ~ Message from Dr. Keith Johnson

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ETSU is proud to host the annual Equity and Inclusion conference in our region. It is an institution that is striving to set the standard for celebrating all peoples, while at the same time spotlighting many who help us become a university that is increasingly inclusive. As we continue to move forward, it is important that the university continues to press onward with creating a campus environment that lives out the values of the university 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.

Sincerely,

Dr. Keith Johnson

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## Community Voices Magazine

Community Voices Magazine is a quarterly publication of individual stories from diverse points of view with hope of establishing productive dialogue on many challenges



## COMMUNITY VOICES

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Helping People Hear Each Other...  
One Story at a Time

[Click here](#) to read the latest issue.



ETSU's fifth annual Equity and Inclusion Conference will be held September 28-30, 2023. This year's conference theme is "Beyond 'Checking a Box:' Building and Sustaining Campus-Wide Engagement for Belonging."

### ***Bestselling author Imani Perry to headline ETSU conference***

Perry is renowned for her work that explores the intersections of history, race, law and culture. Born in Birmingham, Alabama, in the aftermath of the horrific 16th Street Baptist Church bombing, Perry's life and work have been deeply imbued with a commitment to justice and progressive change.



Perry's academic and literary contributions, including her National Book Award-winning work "South to America: A Journey Below the Mason-Dixon to Understand the Soul of a Nation," explores how the South shapes American history and culture. Her numerous accolades, including awards for her exploration of the life of underrecognized Black artist Lorraine Hansberry, firmly position her as a significant figure in contemporary literature and academia.

[Read more](#)

The conference is open to anyone who wishes to attend. Community members as well as higher education professionals and students from other institutions are welcome and encouraged to join us. ETSU employees may utilize their education benefits to cover the cost of registration. If you elect to use this option, please be sure to select the appropriate ticket type when registering.

## **Register**

### **Regular Conference**

Before September 22: \$75

After September 22: \$125

Student Rate: \$25 (with valid student ID)

### **Keynote Only**

Dr. Imani Perry: \$20.00

### **Student Conference**

Free with valid ETSU student ID

\$25 with valid student ID (non-ETSU)

Additional information can be found on the [Equity and Inclusion Conference website](#).

## Upcoming Events

September 2023				
Tuesday	Sept. 12th	Lunch and Learn <i>The State of Higher Education Today</i> Discussion Lead: Dr. Daryl Carter, Assoc. Dean College of Arts and Sciences	12:00-1:00pm	<a href="#">Via Zoom</a>
Tuesday	Sept. 19th	ETSU/EAB Moon Shot For Equity Convening  The Office of Equity and Inclusion invites all faculty and staff to attend an informational and Q&A session on the Moon Shot For Equity initiative. EAB and ETSU Moon Shot for Equity Steering Committee and Best Practice Team members will provide an update on the initiative and discuss the next steps to moving forward. The convening will be held on September 19th, 1:00-4:00pm, in the DP Culp Student Center, East Tennessee Room. Registration is not required.	1:00-4:00pm	East Tennessee Room, Culp Ctr.
Thurs- day	Sept. 28th	Crafting Blackness Initiative Panel Reception	4:00-6:00pm 7:00pm	Ball Hall Slocum Galleries
Thurs- day	Sept. 28-29th	<a href="#">5th Annual Equity and Inclusion Conference</a>  Keynote Speaker: <a href="#">Dr. Imani Perry</a>	8:30am-4:30pm 7:00-9:00pm	Culp Center Culp Center
Friday	Sept. 29th	5th Annual Equity and Inclusion Conference	8:30am-3:30pm	Culp Center
Saturday	Sept. 30th	5th Annual Equity and Inclusion Conference  Student Track	9:00am-5:30pm	Culp Center
October 2023				
Tuesday	Oct. 3rd	Lunch and Learn <i>Women in STEM</i> Discussion Lead: Brittany Butler, Senior Lecture, Department of Chemistry	12:00-1:00pm	<a href="#">Via Zoom</a>
Tuesday	Oct. 31st	Lunch and Learn <i>Making Ally a Verb: Putting Action Behind Your Allyship</i> Discussion Lead: Bethanie Dye, Coordinator Pride Center	12:00-1:00pm	<a href="#">Via Zoom</a>
November 2023				
Tuesday	Nov. 7th	Lunch and Learn <i>Preventing Burnout, Managing Grief, and Cultivating Resilience</i> Discussion Lead: Kate Emmerich, Clinical Instructor, Students Services, COM	12:00-1:00pm	<a href="#">Via Zoom</a>
Wednes- day	Nov. 15th	Lunch and Learn <i>Deaf and ASL Issues</i> Discussion Lead: Dr. Leonard Granda, Clinical Asst. Professor, Dept. of Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology	12:00-1:00pm	<a href="#">Via Zoom</a>

# eConvenings

## East Tennessee Higher Education Regional Alliance

# USC Race and Equity Center

This professional learning series is for full-time and part-time employees at Alliance member institutions. Each month, nationally renowned equity experts will offer a highly-engaging live session via Zoom on a different racial equity topic. Useful tools and practical strategies will be provided in every synchronous three-hour experience. Every campus can send up to 400 employees to each session – it could be the same 400 people, or a different set each month. While there is no cost, advance registration is required for each individual session.

### **Understanding and Addressing Implicit Bias**

Thursday, January 26 | 1-3pm EST

Register at [www.uscrec.info/ETHERA\\_1](http://www.uscrec.info/ETHERA_1)

### **Engaging in Productive Conversations About Race and Racism**

Tuesday, February 28 | 1-3pm EST

Register at [www.uscrec.info/ETHERA\\_2](http://www.uscrec.info/ETHERA_2)

### **Understanding the Effects of Racism on Students' Experiences and Outcomes**

Thursday, March 30 | 1-3pm EST

Register at [www.uscrec.info/ETHERA\\_3](http://www.uscrec.info/ETHERA_3)

### **Confronting Explicit Acts of Racism and Racial Violence on Campus**

Wednesday, April 19 | 1-3pm EST

Register at [www.uscrec.info/ETHERA\\_4](http://www.uscrec.info/ETHERA_4)

### **Strategically Recruiting Employees of Color**

Monday, May 22 | 1-3pm EST

Register at [www.uscrec.info/ETHERA\\_5](http://www.uscrec.info/ETHERA_5)

### **Supporting and Retaining Employees of Color**

Thursday, June 30 | 1-3pm EST Register at

[www.uscrec.info/ETHERA\\_6](http://www.uscrec.info/ETHERA_6)

### **Accountability and Incentives for Advancing Racial Equity**

Wednesday, July 26 | 1-3pm EST

Register at [www.uscrec.info/ETHERA\\_7](http://www.uscrec.info/ETHERA_7)

### **Fostering and Sustaining Inclusive Classrooms for Students of Color**

Thursday, August 24 | 1-3pm EST

Register at [www.uscrec.info/ETHERA\\_8](http://www.uscrec.info/ETHERA_8)

### **Meaningfully Integrating Racial Topics Across the Curriculum**

**Thursday, September 28th, 1:30-3:30pm**

**ETSU DP Culp Center Ballroom**

### **Engaging Students of Color in High-Impact Educational Practices and Experiences**

Tuesday, October 24 | 1-3pm EST

Register at [www.uscrec.info/ETHERA\\_10](http://www.uscrec.info/ETHERA_10)

### **Using Disaggregated Data to Identify and Address Racial Inequities**

Thursday, November 9 | 1-3pm EST

Register at [www.uscrec.info/ETHERA\\_11](http://www.uscrec.info/ETHERA_11)

### **Strategic Planning and Action for Racial Equity**

Tuesday, December 5 | 1-3pm EST

Register at [www.uscrec.info/ETHERA\\_12](http://www.uscrec.info/ETHERA_12)

**race.usc.edu**

Direct all inquiries to  
**Dr. Minh Tran** (mctran@usc.edu)



**USC** Race and  
Equity Center

# EQUITY CONNECT



**INTERACT**



**CONNECT**



**SHARED LEARNING**



**FORM INTEREST GROUPS**



**VIRTUAL COMMUNITIES  
OF PRACTICE**



**FIND RESOURCES**

Learn more at  
[equityconnect.usc.edu](https://equityconnect.usc.edu)

This portal is for employees of colleges and universities that are members of the USC Race and Equity Center's alliances, equity institutes, leadership academies, and other partnerships. It includes video recordings and assets from eConvenings, as well as other downloadable racial equity resources. This portal also allows persons with authenticated profiles to form and actively participate in virtual communities of practice. Posing questions of practice, offering advice to colleagues, sharing effective practices, and fostering new collaborations are all possible in the virtual communities.

# Welcome New Staff in the Women and Gender Resource Center & Mary V. Jordan Multicultural Center

The Office of Equity and Inclusion is delighted to announce that Heidi Marsh, M.A., Coordinator, Undergraduate Research and Creative Activities Honors College will also serve as the Director of the Women and Gender Research Center.

The Women and Gender Research Center is located in the D.P. Culp Student Center, Room 215.

Heidi is excited to serve in this role and is actively planning programs for academic year 2023-2024.



The Office of Equity and Inclusion is pleased to announce that Wilma Fields Smith recently joined the team at the Mary V. Jordan Multicultural Center. Wilma looks forward to building meaningful relationship with students, faculty and staff who partner with the Multicultural Center.

Please drop by the Multicultural Center located on the 2nd floor of the D.P. Culp Student Center to say hello and welcome Wilma.

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**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).