



UPDATE #3

December 2021

“Speak Even When Your Voice Shakes”

Last month we completed our fifth and final [Inclusive Campus Virtual Community Forum](#) for the fall semester. As I reflect on the five forums and our purpose for wanting to create a space to listen, support and empower students while also informing the larger campus community about DEI-related issues, I wonder if there are other spaces created across campus that also encourage students to share concerns. Do students know where these spaces are? Should we create more? As staff, faculty and administrators, what is our reaction to these concerns?

As I also reflect on the relationships I have built with students over the years, many of the most meaningful interactions have been when students felt comfortable sharing with me their academic, financial and personal challenges. In many instances, I have been able to support students by helping to resolve issues that seemed overwhelming and that were clearly impacting their student success. Literally, knowing about an issue is half the battle.

As we create more programs and develop initiatives that promote DEI and a sense of belonging to support student success, our efforts need to also include creating more listening or “real talk” spaces where students feel comfortable sharing what is negatively impacting their student success. But sharing is not always easy. Marginalized students are *already* navigating an environment in which their identities of difference tend to leave them with a disadvantage. Some are navigating the challenges that come as a first-generation student. And many of them are also experiencing an “impostor syndrome.” Speaking up, asking questions and seeking support can be terrifying. Student success and creating a space of belonging is essential in welcoming and encouraging students to share how they and their communities are *really* doing.

How do we shift our thinking of student concerns as disruptive or even inconvenient? How do we support our student leaders who, as voices of their communities, are often the ones pointing out where the university is falling short? How do we empower students to speak even when their voice shakes?

The Inclusive Campus Initiative’s (ICI) work has been informed by student concerns that have been raised for many years. Take some time to watch a [student voices video compilation](#) that was shared during the summer’s ICI summit.



This ICI update draws attention to the ways we can support student concerns raised by our students during the fall semester and from our distant past as we continue to create a more inclusive campus for our students.

Meaghan Kozar, Ph.D. (she/her)
Interim Project Manager – [Inclusive Campus Initiative](#)

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What's New?

INCLUSIVE CAMPUS TASK FORCES – Supporting Student Demands

I am excited to announce that we have created four Inclusive Campus Initiative Task Forces comprised of a variety of MSU staff within the [Division of Student Life and Engagement \(SLE\)](#) along with some of our campus partners. The plan for these smaller working teams is to centralize communications, increase collaborations and provide recommendations in response to many of the [student list of demands](#) that fall within the task forces' scope. Our progress will be tracked during monthly ICI updates and on the [ICI webpage](#).

The four task forces include:

1. Demands & New Challenges for Training, Education and Programming Resources
2. Demands and New Challenges for Creating an Inclusive Physical Environment
3. Demands and New Challenges for Inclusive Policy Changing
4. Demands and New Challenges for Inclusive Representation

[View ICI Task Force Members here.](#)

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Student Spotlight – Camille Hollenquest (they/them)

by Rebekah Long, *Inclusive Campus communications assistant*

Each ICI update will feature an outstanding MSU student leader for their work in promoting DEI on campus. Spotlighted in this ICI update is Camille Hollenquest (they/them), a *senior majoring in political science pre-law* who recently organized a collaborative program with the Gender and Sexuality Campus Center (GSCC) and the Office of Cultural & Academic Transitions (OCAT) called A Night at the Museum. This event featured a tour of the [Per\(Sister\): Incarcerated Women of the United States exhibit](#) on display at the Broad Art Museum.

Camille's leadership positions include:

- POE Student Voice for Prevention Initiatives Advisory Council member
- RVSM Ad-hoc Committee member
- MSU Black Undergraduate Law Association Community Service chair
- United Brody Black Caucus president
- POE RVSM and SA Prevention peer educator/facilitator
- GSCC student employee

What inspired you to create the program, A Night at the Museum?

“What drove me to create this event was the need for intersectional advocacy in the MSU community spaces on campus. There is a strong need for intercultural awareness

on campus as well. People are so prone to self-segregation that they fail to recognize other communities that exist around them in the overall salad bowl that is MSU. I wanted this event to be one step in the right direction toward campus unity.

“In this event, as a Queer nonbinary person myself, I mainly wanted to center Black trans femme and queer women and their often-silenced experiences when it came to the incarceration system. I also wanted to highlight how racism and bias affect women of color, specifically Black women, drastically different than it does our white queer and trans siblings. The queer and trans community at MSU has a small population of Black and POC students, so it was important to showcase these perspectives to cause a level of awareness/mindfulness in people who would not normally think about people who suffer like this.”



What is your greater vision?

“My greatest vision is to cultivate an environment at MSU that translates to the larger society, a world that is equitable for everyone. It really does pain my heart that people have to wake up in a world that hates them; a world that does not serve them in the way it should. I really just want everyone to have access to all the things that would make their life easier.”

How can others support your efforts? How can others remain motivated to keep doing activist work?

“Supporting through giving is super helpful, whether that be through finance, through showing up, passing off resources,



or actively combatting transphobia, queerphobia, and unjust bias. When it comes to staying motivated to do the work, rely on your activist siblings. Know that, while you are supporting others, there are people who are there and able to support you too. Also, understand that you do not have to carry everything on your shoulders. You are allowed to take breaks and you're allowed to give yourself grace.

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Student Concerns

INCLUSIVE CAMPUS VIRTUAL COMMUNITY FORUMS

The ICI Virtual Community Forums aim to provide a consistent space for increasing communication and visibility of student-centered on campus DEI efforts. These forums create an opportunity for students to share concerns, ask questions and engage in a discussion with a guest administrator about a topic centered on campus safety.

[\[View recordings from the five forums here.\]](#)

Stay tuned for spring semester dates and topics!

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On-going ICI Project Update

MAPPING THE HISTORY OF MARGINALIZED MSU COMMUNITIES

Project Description:

Mapping the History of Marginalized Communities is a living project that honors histories of struggle, achievements and activism of those from marginalized groups. The project seeks to gather existing stories from individuals, groups and organizations within Michigan State University. Designating it a “living project,” acknowledges there are stories missing, whether they be unknown or untold in the past, are being written or developing in the present, or are coming into being (future).

A sampling of questions that are grounding this project include:

- How do we pass on a more accurate representation of institutional knowledge?

- What are the implications if we erase the complex struggles rooted in activism faced by MSU marginalized communities?
- Whose stories are we remembering?
- What is missing from MSU's history?

Multipronged project that includes, but not limited to:

- Walking tour (MSU points of interest used for educational history as well as prospective campus visits.)
- Virtual timeline that creates a richer and more accurate version of MSU histories
- Collection of resources
- Multi-media visual interactive display for the freestanding Multicultural Building

HISTORY COLLECTING FORM

We need your help in collecting stories. Submit information at on the “history collecting form.”

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DEI Campus-wide Events

Shout out!

YEAR 49 OF THE BLACK POWER RALLY!

Congratulations to the Black Students' Alliance for an outstanding **49th Annual Black Power Rally (BPR)**. Imagine, next year the students will celebrate their 50th year! It made me wonder if there are members of the MSU community who have never been to BPR. How many other cultural celebrations or DEI-related educational and empowering events have been attended (or not attended) by faculty, staff and administrators? How can we create a campus culture that prioritizes DEI-related events and programs as part of our Spartan experience in the way not having attended an MSU sporting event is unheard of?

Save the dates!

42nd Annual Celebration

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Commemorative Celebration

Where Do We Go from Here – Chaos or Community?

Michigan State University • Jan. 16-21, 2022

MSU'S RACE IN TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY AMERICAS CONFERENCE

“Race and Rights: Empowering Our Communities”

Michigan State University • March 29 – 30, 2022

Significance of theme: The Race in Twenty-First Century Americas conference comes at a critical time of heightened state-sponsored brutality. The assassination of Marielle Franco and the murder of George Floyd and countless others, coupled by aggravated health and economic disparities made evident during the COVID-19 pandemic, has increased awareness of racial injustice and a call for change and social mobilization across communities. These growing concerns reflect systemic racial injustices that span across the Americas produced by national and transnational systems of government, capitalism and neocolonial power. Thus, this conference calls on scholars, activists and community organizers to dialogue and strategize about creating the conditions for sustainable actions. We hope to enable richer and more nuanced insights of racial injustices in the Americas and facilitate possible sites of solidarity. **Contact Rashida L. Harrison, Ph.D., James Madison College (harri516@msu.edu) with questions.**

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Inclusive Campus Ecosystem

CAMPUS PARTNERS SPOTLIGHT

The ICI Project **Outcome #1** is to “Increase awareness of DEI efforts on campus.” Let’s celebrate our collective DEI efforts as we build an inclusion eco-system across this beautiful campus. We must all be part of the solution!

For this update, the spotlight is on:

- OCAT’s 19th Annual Thanksgiving Unity Dinner
- MSU’s Global DEI Task Force
- DEI Communication’s Manager Henry Mochida

[OCAT’s 19th Annual Thanksgiving Unity Dinner](#)

Led by the [Office of Cultural & Academic Transitions](#), the [Thanksgiving Unity Dinner](#) (formerly known as Homiesgiving) is an annual event that brings together the MSU community in celebration of the Thanksgiving holiday. This event is a collaboration between many campus partners and would not be possible without their support. The event served over 560 meals.

“This annual event is important to the MSU community because on Thanksgiving Day when the university is closed, it provides students an opportunity to fellowship with one another while learning about a Thanksgiving tradition that is celebrated in every home across America.”

– Juan Flores, OCAT Event Coordinator since 2010 [[Read more in the 2021 report](#)]



Thanksgiving Unity Dinner 2021

[Global DEI Task Force](#)

Chaired by Dr. Ashley Green, assistant dean for Administration and Director for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, International Studies and Programs

Charged by Steven Hanson, associate provost and dean for International Studies and Programs, the Global DEI Task Force will develop resources that reinforce inclusive practices in a global context. The aim is to ensure procedures, policies, practices, and programs are in place to support an educational, equitable, inclusive, and welcoming environment for all with a specific lens on nuances related to internationalization. [View listing of task force members.](#)

Webinar Series – Global Inclusive Language & Images:

Nov. 30: An Introduction

What is globally inclusive language and why is it important? The first webinar in the series focused on how language and images are perceived in a global context and the need for an intentional shift toward communications that de-center the U.S. perspective and celebrate our Global Spartan community. [VIDEO RECORDING](#)

Upcoming webinars registration information TBA.

January 2022: Putting into Practice

How do globally inclusive language and images contribute to a welcoming university community? In this session, attendees will be given real-world examples, including common missteps and best practices, and learn how to begin implementing and strengthening more globally inclusive communications.

February 2022: Tips, Tools and Resources

How do we ensure we're being globally inclusive? Building upon the first two sessions, this webinar will focus on practical tips, tools and resources that can help attendees integrate more globally inclusive practices in their work and personal lives.

[Henry Mochida inaugural DEI communications manager, shares background and insight into the role.](#)

Henry Mochida (he/him) is the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion communications manager in [University Communications](#) at Michigan State University. He works with the [Office for Inclusion and Intercultural Initiatives](#) and the Vice President and Chief Diversity Officer Jabbar R. Bennett, Ph.D., to further DEI as an institutional priority.

I am a fifth-generation (Gosei) Japanese-American born and raised in Hawai'i. My family's relatives came to the Big Island as sugar cane plantation workers in the late 1800s. After growing up on 'Oahu and honing my community-based storytelling approach with Native Hawaiian groups and internationally, in East and South East Asia, I moved to the continent for an opportunity in Michigan where my partner and I are raising our children.

My upbringing as a *hapa* or half-white and half-Japanese person during the revival of the Hawaiian language following its erasure has shaped how I approach communications. In Hawai'i, we distinguish between a local resident, or *kama'āina*, and a Native Hawaiian, or *kanaka maoli*. Therefore, if you were to refer to me as a "Hawaiian," my response would be that I am not Hawaiian but a settler-migrant. [Read more here](#)



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ICI Reflection Question

How do you encourage students to share concerns?

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To learn more about the Inclusive Campus Initiative, contact:

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