

Inclusive Campus Initiative (ICI) Virtual Community Forums:
Year-End Recap

September 2021-March 2022

ICI Virtual Community Forum with Dr. Jabbar Bennett: Sept. 13, 2021

General Summary:

- First ICI forum held to increase transparency and communication surrounding diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) efforts on campus.
- Focus on making connections between students and administration to address issues and concerns students have regarding DEI
- Designated forum topic: campus safety
- Mental health awareness and CAPS resource presentation by Dr. Swapna Hingwe
- Open discussion/concerns/questions
- Special guest Q&A: Dr. Jabbar Bennett, MSU's vice president and chief diversity officer

Detailed Summary:

- Introductory remarks made by ICI Interim Project Manager Meaghan Kozar and Senior Vice President for Student Life & Engagement Vennie Gore
- Review of forum agenda with Meaghan Kozar
- Mental health awareness and CAPS resources with Dr. Hingwe
 - Review of forum community guidelines
 - Possible symptoms and when to seek help
 - Return of CAPS Connect
 - Review of CAPS resources
 - APIDA identified women's support group, African-American women's support group, first-gen student groups and Empower U!
 - Open Discussion and Concerns
- COVID-19 test results running late
- Home football games and tailgating concerns with COVID-19
- COVID-19 notifications in regard to classroom exposure
- Professors wanting students to come to class despite contracting COVID-19

- Antisemitism among the Jewish student community and an Anti-Semitic incident occurring at the Rock
- Issues regarding Asian-American women on campus
- The necessity of listing race and ethnicity on applications and concerns about implicit bias

ICI Virtual Community Forum with Chief Marlon Lynch Sept. 27, 2021

General Summary:

- Forum topic: Campus safety-policing at MSU
- Mental Health and CAPS resources with Dr. Hingwe
- Updates on campus DEI efforts
- Open discussion/concerns/questions
- Q&A with Chief Marlon Lynch, vice president of Public Safety and chief of MSU Police and Public Safety (MSUPPS)

Detailed Summary:

- Introductory remarks and community engagement guideline review from student hosts Sharron Reed-Davis and Lesly Morales
- Mental health and CAPS resources with Dr. Hingwe
 - CAPS 24/7 Crisis Line
 - Protect-Reflect-Connect steps to promote mental well being
 - Reflection questions
 - *How can campus police engage in culturally responsive interventions?*
 - *How can campus police hold themselves accountable when working with underrepresented or marginalized populations?*
 - *What is the role of campus police in promoting mental health and well-being?*
- Updates on campus DEI efforts
 - Latinx/Hispanic Heritage Month
 - Implementation committee to be created from DEI Strategic Planning Committee
 - Creation of Multicultural Building Planning Committee

- Board of Trustees hiring an architectural firm and engineering firm for the multicultural building
- CORES and COPS bonding retreat for student leaders
- ICI project documenting the history of activism at MSU
- Following up with student demands from previous summit

ICI Virtual Community Forum: COVID-19

General Summary:

- Forum topic: preparing for town hall meeting regarding COVID-19 Safety with President Stanley, Provost Woodruff and Dr. Weismantel.
- Mental health and CAPS resources with Dr. Swapne Hingwe
- Open discussion/concerns/questions

Detailed Summary:

- Introductory remarks and community guidelines presented by Rebekah Long
- Mental health and COVID-19 with Dr. Hingwe
 - Healthy Minds shows that 41% of college students screened positive for depression and 34% for anxiety.
 - High rates of isolation, anxiety, lack of motivation and burnout among students in relation to COVID-19
 - Financial hardships, food insecurity, housing insecurity
 - “Back to normal” expectations and adjusting to being back on campus
 - Reflection questions:
 - *How has and how is the pandemic influencing your college experience?*
 - *How has the pandemic impacted your mental health? How does it continue to do so?*
 - *How can we stay motivated in times of uncertainty?*
 - *What is something you’ve learned about yourself during the pandemic?*
- Open discussion/concerns/questions:

- Students share tips for motivation and self-care
- Concerns about professors not being lenient about illness and absences
- Concerns regarding vaccine availability internationally
- Issues with professors being able to use technology to host online classes
- Financial issues, paying full tuition prices for hybrid/online classes
- Lack of to-go options in dining halls

ICI Virtual Community Forum: DACA Student Safety Nov. 1, 2021

General Summary:

- Forum Topic: DACA student safety and support
- Mental health and CAPS with Dr. Hingwe
- Open discussion/concerns/questions

Detailed Summary:

- Introductory remarks and community guidelines
- Mental health awareness with Dr. Hingwe
 - Mental health check-in questions
 - Protect-Reflect-Connect for emotional well-being
- Open discussion/concerns/questions
 - DACA vs Dreamer
 - Mayor Jessy Gregg discusses East Lansing sanctuary city status
 - Policies regarding ICE both on and off MSU campus
 - Mayor Gregg Updates on East Lansing DEI efforts:
 - Hired DEI administrator for East Lansing
 - City wide DEI training Initiative
 - Removal of specific religious icons to promote inclusivity
 - Partners with student groups to bring diverse cultural celebrations to East Lansing
 - Creation of Police Oversight Committee

- Discussion of East Lansing Equal Rights Ordinance and Human Rights Commission
- Universal design standards in housing and building codes, including disabled people on committees
- Diversity in East Lansing councils

ICI Virtual Community Forum: Supporting Black Students Nov. 15, 2021:

General Summary:

- Forum topic: raising concerns and support for Black students at MSU
- Mental health regarding Black student leaders/activism with Dr. Hingwe
- Open discussion/concerns/questions
- Q&A with Vennie Gore

Detailed Summary:

- Introductions and community guidelines with members of Black Student Alliance
- Mental health and Black student leadership/activism with Dr. Hingwe
 - Summary of impact that Black student activism has had on culture
 - Sustainability for student activists/leaders “Care-Relax-Celebrate-Buffer-Spirit”
 - Student activist/leader tips: connecting with others, setting clear boundaries, understanding not being able to participate at all times, and disconnecting from social media
 - Reflection questions for faculty/staff/administrators:
 - *What supports do you have in place for students from vulnerable populations?*
 - *What are you going to do with what you’ve learned at these forums?*
 - *What self-work have you done to increase your understanding of your biases and prejudices or the lived experiences of the students you serve?*
 - *What systems of support have you put in place for your own self-care?*
- Open discussion/concerns/questions:
 - Upper-class students being forced to move off campus

- Spartan Advantage concerns
- Harassment at MSU football games
 - Racial comments/condescending comments/hair touching from white people
 - MSU riots/accountability
- Professors of in-person not having leniency regarding absences
 - Concerns about falling behind in classes due to COVID-19 or other illnesses
 - Satisfactory/not satisfactory grading option returning
- Lack of Black faculty at MSU
 - Emphasis on Black faculty in James Madison College
 - Lack of minority resident assistants (RAs)
 - Student parking concerns
 - Desire for student parking closer to campus other than Lot 89
 - Student employees not being able to park near their places of employment on campus
 - Healthcare services
 - Olin Health center not accepting Medicaid/low-income insurance

ICI Virtual Community Forum: Supporting International Students Jan. 24, 2022

General Summary:

- Forum topic: supporting international students
- Mental health and CAPS services with Dr. Hingwe
- Message from Dr. Ashley Green, assistant dean for Administration and DEI director of International Studies and Programs (ISP)
- Introductory message from Krista McCallum Beatty, director of Office for International Students and Scholars (OISS)
- Open discussion/concerns/questions

Detailed Summary:

- Introduction and community guidelines

- Mental health and CAPS services with Dr. Hingwe
 - CAPS services overview
 - CAPS wait times and what to do while waiting to get connected to a mental health professional
 - Issues faced by international students
- Introductory message from Dr. Ashley Greene
 - Explanation of various roles that are overseen
 - ISP and global DEI, new DEI taskforce and focus on global engagement
- Introductory message from Krista McCallum Beatty, director of OISS
 - International students having technical issues with virtual classes
 - Time zone issues in relation to classes/exams and social interactions are limited
 - Textbook availability
 - Students being unable to go home due to pandemic issues
 - Financial challenges due to not having access to many forms of financial aid
 - Difficulty with access to WHO approved vaccines
 - Prejudice/racial injustice
- Introductory message from International Student Association (ISA) President Nikunj Agarwal
 - Immigration
 - Immigration processes changing due to pandemic
 - Brief mention of DACA students and concerns
- Message from Kaitlyn Bolton, president of Resident Halls Association (RHA)
 - RHA is a safe space
 - Emphasis on DEI in RHA

Open discussion/concerns/questions:

- Concerns with APIDA violence
- International faculty/staff suffering from same issues, sense of understanding
- Tuition for international students being high

- Lack of diverse ethnic foods on campus dining hall menus, particularly regional African cuisine
- Keeping an international audience in mind when giving out information
- Students coming back for in-person classes and immigration delays due to pandemic
- Flight issues, no flights leaving China to the US, overall travel issues.
- Issues with food vendors of color due to language barriers and payment issues
- Lack of connection between OISS and other units at MSU
- Professors' empathy toward international students

ICI Virtual Community Forum Feb. 21, 2022

General Summary:

- Forum topic: community connection with student leaders
- Mental health and Black History Month/Black scholars in mental health with Dr. Hingwe
- Introductory remarks from staff/faculty
- Open discussion/concerns/questions

Detailed Summary:

- Introduction/community guidelines with Meaghan Kozar
- Mental health and Black scholars in the field of mental health with Dr. Hingwe
 - Managing emotions during charged discussions
 - Celebrating Black history through the lens of health and wellness
 - Highlighting variety of healing/health in African diaspora: (Doulas, midwives, naturopaths, etc)
 - Black scholars in the field of mental health: Bebe Moore Campbell, Dr. Solomon Carter Fuller, Dr. Paul Cornley, etc.
- Introductory remarks from:
 - Dr. Jimmy Bruce and Dr. Olivia Scott from CAPS
 - Anthony Williams, assistant vice president for Student Development and External Relations and Dean of Students (SDER)

- Dr. Ray Gasser, assistant vice president for Residence Education and Housing Services (REHS)
 - Eduardo Olivo, assistant director of DEI for REHS and SLE
 - Coree Newman Coronado, REHS staff
 - Rebecca Selesky, assistant vice president for Culinary Services
 - Chris Stone-Sewalish, associate director for Administration at REHS
 - Sergeant Dwayne Jones, sergeant of inclusion and Anti-bias Unit of MSUPPS
- Open discussion/concerns/questions
 - Junior/senior housing
 - ASMSU bills regarding non-local take out and student choice between in-person or online modalities for classes
 - Transition to reusable China/silverware in dining halls and sanitization concerns
 - Relationships with MSUPPS and RAs and other members of MSU community
 - Wellness checks including social workers
 - Vandalization of bulletin boards in residence halls
 - Improper mask wear/mask mandates
 - Red Cedar River safety
 - Safety for POC – emphasis on Asian-American women
 - Hiring people Asian/Latinx ethnicities on campus

ICI Virtual Community Forum March 21, 2022

General Summary:

- Forum topic: student challenges for the 2022-23 school year
- Mental health and CAPS with Dr. Hingwe
- Open discussion/concerns/questions

Detailed Summary

- Introductory remarks and community guidelines from Meaghan Kozar and Rebekah Long

- Mental health and CAPS with Dr. Hingwe
 - Overview of CAPS resources
 - Navigating the end of the semester
- Open discussion/concerns/questions
 - Remarks from Nadir Harmon, president of Muslim Student Association (MSA) regarding MSA events and sense of unity at MSU
 - Concerns with safety surrounding Asian-American women (racial prejudice, harassment, desire for more consequences for those who commit sexual violence, intersectionality of race and gender)
 - APASO demands from a town hall meeting not being met
 - Repercussions for students and faculty/staff/admin who contribute to oppressive and unsafe behaviors on campus (defamation of rock, faculty having sexual harassment claims against them, hate crimes being downplayed as “pranks”)
 - Desire for campus wide updates on repercussions received by those who are involved in unsafe/oppressive behaviors.
 - Advocacy efforts to take place more so on administrative level rather than student level
 - Student frustration with voicing concerns multiple times and no sufficient action being taken
 - Barriers for student activism/advocacy/student government involvement on campus (lack of time to take part due to financial issues and students who need to work multiple jobs – no time for involvement) and desire for more funding
 - Concern on forming a community – suggestion of faculty/student committee and how to spark change
 - Students sharing multiple identities and trying to explore those identities, but feelings of being an “outsider” when attending groups related to their identities
 - Building bridges and connections across all groups on campus
 - Inclusion with RAs and intercultural aides (ICAs)/relationships with RAs and ICAs
 - Transitions from online to in-person classes
 - Lack of lighting on campus (classes ending later, walking in the dark, safety concerns around the river)

- Defining hate crimes and hateful things painted on the Rock
- Concerns for students with disabilities on campus
 - Goal to educate people more about the Counsel of Students for Disabilities
 - Feelings of being the “invisible group” on campus
 - Bringing awareness to accessibility issues on campus
 - Sharps containers on campus
- Feelings that MSU downplays events/issues happening in the minority communities
- Racist incidents occurring that MSU didn’t acknowledge properly
- Feelings that MSU doesn’t support minority groups (person passing away in Latinx community did not get formal address from President Stanley, no news coverage)
- International students having to choose majors based on what allows them to stay in the country rather than being able to choose the major they want
- Lack of awareness of Optional Practice Training and Curricular Practice and visa issues
- Inclusion for international students and initiatives taken in campus groups to include international students
- Concerns that MSU has an ongoing culture of dismissing important issues
- Lack of protection for student employees on campus
- Make sure to write down and document concerns/events that occur and keep in contact with student leaders to stay educated and informed
- Understanding “red tape” and “higher admin” – understanding that those in higher power may not have the answers to concerns right away, legal barriers stalling progress and the ability to take action
- Education surrounding the process when submitting a report regarding Anti-discrimination Policy (ADP): reporting hate crime, hate speech vs. free speech, etc.
- Financial aid concerns with the Spartan Advantage