

Perspectives

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Leadership for the
21st Century**

Inclusion goes beyond numerical diversity. Real inclusion is the creation of a climate where all feel valued and appreciated...

- Brooklyn College

The focus on inclusive approaches to higher education . . . has led to new opportunities for widening participation and improving the learning outcomes of students from diverse backgrounds.

- Denise Wood

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The Inclusive Campus: One College, One Voice, One Future

Edna Baehre-Kolovani, PhD

*President, Tidewater Community College
Norfolk, Virginia*

In 2012, Tidewater Community College (TCC) initiated its new strategic planning efforts by using the Appreciative Inquiry (AI) methodology. AI encourages considerate and deliberate actions that are inclusive of all. As noted by Articulate Inquiry Commons and articulated by David L. Cooperrider and Diana Whitney, "Appreciative Inquiry is about the coevolutionary search for the best in people, their organizations, and the relevant world around them. In its broadest focus, it involves systematic discovery of what gives 'life' to a living system when it is most alive, most effective, and most constructively capable in economic, ecological, and human terms. AI involves, in a central way, the art and practice of asking questions that strengthen a system's capacity to apprehend, anticipate, and heighten positive potential. It centrally involves the mobilization of inquiry through the crafting of the 'unconditional positive question' often involving hundreds or sometimes thousands of people."

The AI process is, in our view and experience, the perfect tool to foster a campus environment that is inclusive and encouraging of all people.

As Cooperrider and Whitney further stress, "In AI the arduous task of intervention gives way to the speed of imagination and innovation; instead of negation, criticism, and spiraling diagnosis, there is discovery, dream, and design. AI seeks, fundamentally, to build a constructive union between a whole people and the massive entirety of what people talk about as past and present capacities: achievements, assets, unexplored potentials, innovations, strengths, elevated thoughts, opportunities, benchmarks, high-point moments, lived values, traditions, strategic competencies, stories, expressions of wisdom, insights into the deeper corporate spirit or soul – and visions of valued and possible futures." It fosters an environment of inclusivity where diverse populations have the opportunity to collaborate.

The Tidewater planning effort involved over 500 individuals from across the college. The resulting report had identified three core strengths of the college as: Collaboration, Dedication and Innovation, with the college also adopting the tag line, One College, One Voice, One Future, to emphasize the inclusive nature of implementing the three-year strategic plan.

The AI process is, in our view and experience, the perfect tool to foster a campus environment that is inclusive and encouraging of all people. As an example, many community colleges mirror diversity that is similar to that

of the military (race, ethnicity, nationality, age, etc.) and as such, the inherent culture drives its resolve. At the community college, top down and bottom up, everyone (faculty, staff, and students) is a stakeholder, and by actively taking ownership and responsibility to lead and execute in a manner that encourages diversity and inclusion, the outcome will be productive for all. People feel comfortable and are productive when they feel welcomed, appreciated, and respected.

Important steps in cultivating an inclusive environment include:

- ▲ Design recurring training on diversity and inclusion; foster open dialogue on many forums immersed with the welcoming of ideas without fear.
- ▲ Engage in behaviors that support inclusion and incorporate intentional acts to reach and engage others who might not normally be considered or included.
- ▲ Incorporate policies, procedures, and most importantly, practices that demonstrate that lack of inclusion is not acceptable. While it's okay to disagree, equal opportunity to reach consensus is paramount.
- ▲ Include intercultural and international programs and studies as part of the college's integration/orientation or required curriculum process for all students; then report-out on assignments and subjects that are contrary to each person's norm.
- ▲ The college's website and customer support staff should be trained and well-versed in these expectations as they constitute the first-contact and first impression of the college.
- ▲ Peers, colleagues, and students must take immediate and appropriate action in situations that are contrary to the college's expected norms and their concerns must be given high priority. Established Task Force/Councils, comprised of representatives from a diverse pool of the college's population at all levels, should be in place and be recognized as the executors to address these concerns.
- ▲ If there is unrest from any level or group, they should be given fair opportunity to be heard and engaged in discussions to reach a solution or compromise.
- ▲ The impoverished or homeless students are often overlooked in settings where students are invited. They should also be given equal consideration, since that exposure might often be the most impactful.

Being deliberate in exploring differences and incorporating respect and compassion provides depth and breadth for inclusion in any environment. The College used the same AI principles when initiating its college-wide Diversity and Inclusion strategic planning.

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EMERGING LEADERS' PERSPECTIVES

Given their open door policies, community colleges are reflective of the diverse makeup of today's society. Additionally, nearly half of the underrepresented students who do attend college enroll in two-year institutions. Therefore, in recent times, colleges have become focused on the importance of creating an inclusive, welcoming, and accepting campus environment that also responds to the issues and concerns facing underserved constituent groups. We posed the following question to emerging and national leaders. Their answers appear below:

Marcus Bennett, EdD

Director of Residence Life and Judicial Affairs
Northwestern Michigan College
Traverse City, Michigan

College leaders today are charged with providing all student learners, staff, and faculty with an environment that embraces and encourages an inclusive community committed to open-mindedness and valuing differences. Research reveals that students are at their best when they feel valued, respected, and welcomed on campus, which is pertinent if the learner is going to succeed academically and grow personally.

One step that college leaders can take to ensure that the learner is in a position for success is to have sufficient resources designated toward the cultural capital of the student. For instance, colleges serve learners who may come from a variety of urban or rural areas. Many of these students have a difficult time assimilating to the institution due to the lack of services they are accustomed to such as barbershops, specialty stores, and others. Having some semblance of home can assist these learners in maintaining their identities, along with embracing the culture and values of the new community. The institution has to commit to partnering with agencies, groups, and members of the various underserved constituent groups if students are going to achieve their desired educational goals.

If leaders are not having conversations with those whose roles are essential to ...an inclusive environment, the needs of the student will not be met...

Another strategy that college leaders must implement on their campus is the creation of intentional engagement opportunities that inspire active, focused dialogue among all stakeholders, including students, faculty, staff, community members, visitors, and others. If leaders are not having conversations with those whose roles are essential to the creation of an inclusive environment, the needs of the student will not be met or even discussed. The discussion and implementation of needed resources is crucial in today's campus climate if college leaders want to ensure that the environment being displayed is inclusive of the culture encouraged in the mission/vision statement of the institution.

Finally, if college leaders truly desire an environment that is inclusive and encouraging of all people the institution serves, then it becomes critical that representation of those underserved groups be addressed in the hiring and policy-implementation practices of the institution. College leaders must be certain that those individuals holding key positions of service and leadership clearly understand and appreciate the significance of an inviting and inclusive campus. When students see an environment that is composed of persons who embrace both differences and civility – crucial values of an inclusive community – then all vested stakeholders will thrive culturally, personally, and professionally.

QUESTION OF THE MONTH:

What steps can college leaders take to develop a campus environment that is inclusive and encouraging of all people?

Sedgwick Harris, MA

Vice President of Student Services
Kishwaukee College
Malta, Illinois

As leaders of any educational organization, creating environments of inclusiveness can significantly benefit the successful advancement of the institution. The question seems extremely elementary. However, the challenge is meeting all members of the institution where they are and encouraging them to become a community of one. I believe a clear leadership philosophy must be constructed with the input of thought from throughout the institution in order to effectively create an atmosphere of inclusion.

The spirit and principles of inclusion must be woven into the mission, vision and purpose of the institution. This must become a fundamental practice among all employees of the organization. These principles of inclusion must firmly be ingrained in the organization's foundation nonetheless; without it, the spirit would be lost and never surface for the benefit of all that serve and are served by the college. With the enforcement of this component in the foundation, designing a systematic approach to engaging faculty, staff, and students to become the advocates of this design will be strengthened. By involving each of these groups, they will be able to maximize their success in building positive characteristics to heighten inclusion. The levels of accountability and responsibility for organizations to make a data-driven decision to improve inclusion as a part of the strategic model will enhance the sense of credibility of the institution.

In the context of the implementation, it is paramount that the organization focuses its efforts on, but not limited to, diversity, equity, and inclusion. Each of these ideologies is infused into the culture of the campus. This approach would be considered less task-orientated while avoiding weak effort to institute this new strategy. We must also strive to improve the institution's level of competencies in all areas.

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As higher educational institutions continue to face challenges of inequities in their forward progression, we must as leaders learn to take different approaches that are methodical to amplify inclusion. We must continue to strive to improve the principles of inclusion as the student, faculty, and staff are becoming more diversified than ever before. These efforts must be the foundations of our hiring processes, committees, academic and co-curricular activities, our relationships with external customers, and the general public. Such improvements will expand the level of opportunities to improve inclusion. These improvements will indeed create a powerful organizational transformation for institutional success.

Marcus Bennett, EdD, serves as Director of Residence Life and Judicial Affairs at Northwestern Michigan College in Traverse City, Michigan. With over 16 years of student affairs experience in the areas of student housing and conduct, he maintains a commitment to assisting students with their academic and professional development. He earned his Master's in Leadership and Public Administration from Saginaw Valley State University and his doctorate from the Ferris State University DCCL program.



Sedgwick Harris is the Vice President of Student Services at Kishwaukee College in Malta, Illinois. Harris started his career at Kellogg Community College in Battle Creek, Michigan, where he held several roles within the division of Student Services and recently, focused his interest on the development of minority students, specifically athletes. He received his Master's degree in Higher Educational Leadership from Western Michigan University and is currently enrolled in the Ferris State University DCCL program.



NATIONAL LEADER PERSPECTIVE

Given their open door policies, community colleges are reflective of the diverse makeup of today's society. Additionally, nearly half of the underrepresented students who do attend college enroll in two-year institutions. Therefore, in recent times, colleges have become focused on the importance of creating an inclusive, welcoming, and accepting campus environment that also responds to the issues and concerns facing underserved constituent groups. We posed the following question to emerging and national leaders. Their answers appear below:

Community College Leadership and the Inclusive Campus

Walter G. Bumphus, PhD

President and CEO
American Association of Community Colleges
Washington, D.C.

Students at community colleges come from diverse backgrounds. The colleges provide access and opportunity for students who want to complete associate degrees and transfer to four-year institutions, or build skills to attain better earnings. Nearly half of all U.S. undergraduate students (46 percent) attend a community college, as do 41 percent of all freshmen. Most of those students are nontraditional, representing more than half of all single-parent college students, first-generation students, and students with disabilities.

A good mission statement that promotes inclusivity as a value can be used to integrate diversity into the campus culture.

As a former community college president, I am very aware of the need to provide an inclusive and welcoming environment to the students and community served. Community colleges serve the majority of the underrepresented in the United States, making them among the most diverse environments in the country. As the pathway to the middle class for many Americans, community colleges students are not just ethnically diverse, but come from various socio-economic backgrounds, are often first generation college goers, are often older than traditional students, and most must balance the demands of work and family. It is important to look at inclusiveness with a wide lens that includes all of these factors.

College leaders can and should set the tone for an inclusive campus. The college mission statement is a great way to start. A mission statement is an opportunity to define your goals and values for conducting the business of education, including the manner in which diversity is woven into the fabric of day-to-day operations, student services, community outreach, and instruction. A good mission statement that promotes inclusivity as a value can be used to integrate diversity into the campus culture.

It is incumbent upon the leadership to not only uphold the college's values, but to model the behavior that is ultimately sought for campus dealings.

As a leader, it is key that you hold true to the values articulated in your mission statement or diversity plan. Diversity as a statement is not enough and must be the guideline toward actual practice. It is good practice to define diversity and associated terminology so that all constituents have the same basis for understanding. Whether exploring new cultures as a part of curriculum or ensuring that diversity is a part of the hiring process, actions speak louder than words when true inclusiveness

QUESTION OF THE MONTH:

What steps can college leaders take to develop a campus environment that is inclusive and encouraging of all people?

is the goal. It is incumbent upon the leadership to not only uphold the college's values, but to model the behavior that is ultimately sought for campus dealings.

A part of that modeling is to respect and champion equity, promote cultural awareness, and to celebrate diversity and collaboration. Work with your executive team and meaningfully reflect upon practices on your campus. Participate in active listening and include diverse representatives in decision-making as it pertains to diversity and

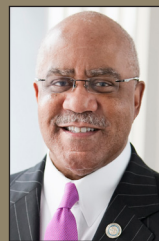
equity. Shared input and planning will go a long way in creating a culture of respect for diversity issues.

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It is also important to understand that respecting and accepting diversity does not always provide for smooth sailing. Conflicts can and will arise, but the manner in which they are addressed will be remembered long after the conflict has settled. Conduct these difficult conversations with respect for all parties and provide a safe place for discussions when conflicts arise. Civil disagreement can be a catalyst for enlightening others as to matters of equity and cultural differences.

It is important that you remain authentic and consistent in your actions with regard to diversity. Again, actions speak louder than words. It is not always easy to know that all eyes are on you, but if you are genuine in manner, word, and action regarding the importance of creating or sustaining a culture of acceptance, then you will be on track to create a campus environment that is authentic and accepting of all people.

Civil disagreement can be a catalyst for enlightening others as to matters of equity and cultural differences.



Dr. Walter G. Bumphus is President and CEO of the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC). His prior positions include that of Professor in the Community College Leadership Program and chair of the Department of Educational Administration at the University of Texas at Austin, where he also held the A. M. Aikin Regents Endowed Chair in Junior and Community College Education Leadership. He previously served as president of the Louisiana Community and Technical College System (LCTCS), chancellor of Baton Rouge Community College (BRCC), and president of Brookhaven College in Dallas County Community College District. His work in the corporate world included serving as President of the Higher Education Division of Voyager Expanded Learning.

Dr. Bumphus holds a master's degree from Murray State University and a Ph.D from The University of Texas at Austin. In 1992, he was recognized as a distinguished graduate from both Murray State University and The University of Texas at Austin. Dr. Bumphus holds the distinction of being one of the few leaders in the field of education to receive the ACCT Marie Y. Martin CEO of the Year Award, to chair the AACC Board of Directors, and to receive the AACC Leadership Award.

QUICK TAKES
Highlights
from the Field

Talking About Race, Class, and College Access: An ACE-Hobsons Convening of Higher Education Leaders

By Lorelle L. Espinosa and Matthew N. Gaertner

Given that the means by which institutions pursue diversity are inevitably shaped by politics and law, this work reveals the outcomes of a recent Hobsons-sponsored discussion on college access and success for underrepresented minority and low-income students. A series of panel discussions, composed of leading higher education experts, studied the challenges, successes, and promising practices that will allow education professionals to meet mission-critical diversity goals and advance equity in postsecondary education. Access this work here: <http://bit.ly/1V6Fb4p>

Committing to Equity and Inclusive Excellence: Campus Guide for Self-Study and Planning
by AAC&U

Higher education must make a pervasive commitment to equity and inclusive excellence—both preparing students for and providing them with access to high-quality learning opportunities, and ensuring that students of color and low-income students participate in the most empowering forms of college learning. This guide is designed to advance equity and inclusive excellence by providing a framework for needed dialogue, self-assessment, and action, and helping campus leaders focus on the success of traditionally underserved students. Access this work here: <http://bit.ly/1Nr04zb>



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The Inclusive Campus: One College, One Voice, One Future (continued from page 1)

From the first task of developing a Diversity and Inclusivity statement to planning training and strategic initiatives, the AI principles served not only as the vehicle to include as many voices as possible, but also as the tool to develop the definition for what TCC envisions as its Diversity and Inclusivity statement and the strategic direction.

The TCC Campus Culture of Diversity and Inclusion Model. Tidewater Community College is dedicated to cultivating and sustaining a diverse and inclusive environment that embraces all identities, perspectives, expression of ideas, and backgrounds. The entire college community benefits from experiences that foster mutual respect, celebrate differences, and value commonalities. – Tidewater Community College Diversity & Inclusion Statement.

- ▲ Information about diversity and inclusion will be continually shared in group settings to include the Convocation, Administrators’ work session, open campus meetings, Classified Staff professional workshops, and with the College Board, Educational Foundation Board, and Alumni Association Board.
- ▲ The Office for Intercultural Learning works with the Global and Intercultural Learning Committee (comprising faculty, staff, and students) to develop annual college-wide themed curricular and co-curricular programs with specific learning outcomes.
- ▲ The Office of Educational Accessibility provides access to programs and facilities for students, faculty, and staff in a supportive atmosphere and in accordance with Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act and the Americans With Disabilities Act as amended. This office arranges appropriate accommodations to meet the needs of students with disabilities and chronic health issues.
- ▲ The Job Skills Training Program (JSTP) “partners with social service and community agencies, the business community and industry leaders to provide counseling, internships, workforce readiness, and job follow-up for students who require job training and placement, but face barriers to employment.”
- ▲ The On-Ramp Program, a unit within the Center for Workforce Solutions, is supported by the Workforce Investment Act Rapid Response funds. It helps dislocated workers who have been laid off due to company closures, downsizing or elimination of positions, upgrade their job skills through degree or certificate programs.
- ▲ TCC promotes inclusion through its partnership with Hampton Roads Transit, the regional transit provider in its service area, to provide students with discounted public transportation, reducing a significant barrier to student success. Discounted services also include transport for disabled students.
- ▲ TCC improves access and academic success for parenting students through its collaboration with the YWCA South Hampton Roads to provide high quality, affordable, and convenient child care on all four of its campuses.

Mentoring

- ▲ Recognizing that one-third of TCC’s students have a relationship with the U.S. military (i.e., active duty, veteran, or family), the Center for Military and Veterans Education (CMVE) developed a Blackboard-hosted site, the Military Cultural Awareness Resource Center, which serves as a one-stop professional

development resource for faculty and staff. The structure brings awareness of military-related culture and issues and is accessible to all faculty and staff through Blackboard.

- ▲ The college established the TCC Chapter of the American Association for Women in Community Colleges (TCC-AAWCC) in 2014-15. The organization boosts mentorship, development, networking, and leadership. It solicits candidates for the AAWCC Region 3 National Board Student Scholarship and the AAWCC Doctoral Program Scholarship. This year, two TCC students were awarded the 2015-16 American Association for Women in Community Colleges (AAWCC) National Scholarship.
 - ▲ The college provides mentoring through a variety of options. The Women’s Center on all four campuses provides a structured setting for mentors and mentees. The process entails screening and the signing of a Women Inspiring Self-Empowerment (W.I.S.E.) Mentoring Agreement by both parties. The Open Door Project and Great Expectations mentoring programs are somewhat similar in scope.
 - ▲ A New Faculty Academy and Mentoring Program was established in 2011-12 under the Office of Academic Services. The academic deans nominate mentors from a slate of full-time qualified faculty volunteers with at least three-years of teaching experience and they are trained as mentors beforehand.
- Hiring and faculty and staff diversity**
- ▲ Led by the Internal Relations Committee, the college is developing a new employee orientation program that speaks to EEO and cultural diversity. Using Dashboard as a foundation, the college plans to measure gender and racial/ethnic diversity at all levels and at academic discipline levels.
 - ▲ The TCC Diversity Officer works collaboratively with Human Resources to develop a standardized employment search committee/interview panel checklist delineating diversity expectations (gender, race/ethnicity, etc.) that must be considered and met while developing search committees.
 - ▲ The college will continue to strive to increase its minority full-time teaching faculty by 6 percent within the next five years.



Dr. Edna Baehre-Kolovani, president of Tidewater Community College in Virginia, has extensive experience in strategic planning, expanding and diversifying college enrollment, and exemplary fundraising and public advocacy campaigns. Prior to her current presidency, Dr. Baehre-Kolovani served as president and superintendent of Napa Valley College in Napa, California, and also as president of Harrisburg Area Community Colleges (HACC). She holds a doctorate and a master’s in German and comparative literature from the State University of New York at Buffalo. In addition to her academic and professional activities, Dr. Baehre-Kolovani serves on a variety of boards and has received numerous honors, including the 2016 YWCA Woman of Distinction Award for Education; YWCA Women of Excellence; the Gandhi, King, Ikeda Award for Peace from Morehouse College; the Global Vision Award from Embracing Global Women in Harrisburg; the Compass Award by the Pennsylvania Immigration and Refugee Women’s Network; the Shirley B. Gordon Award of Distinction from Phi Theta Kappa; and the Carolyn Desjardins President of the Year Award from the American Association for Women in Community Colleges.