



PROVIDENCE  
COLLEGE

**CONTINUING OUR JOURNEY**  
TOWARD BECOMING THE BELOVED COMMUNITY

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## INTRODUCTION

I began writing this report on the afternoon of April 11 — Divine Mercy Sunday. I had just celebrated the 11 a.m. Mass in St. Dominic Chapel, and I was moved and inspired by many of the sentiments expressed in the Scripture readings, and how relevant they are to our campus community and our country in these challenging times.

The reading from the Acts of the Apostles began with the words, “The community of believers was of one heart and mind,” certainly a goal to which we aspire. The reading from St. John’s Gospel described two appearances of the Risen Jesus to His disciples. In both cases, the first words spoken by Him are “Peace be with you,” a peace that we long for. The passage from the First Letter of St. John included the admonition, “For the love of God is this, that we keep His commandments.” Recall that for Jesus, the heart of the Law and the Commandments is expressed through the mutual love of God and neighbor. And in describing his vision of a beloved community, a vision that inspired Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., St. John in the same letter wrote, “Beloved, let us love one another, because love is of God; everyone who loves is begotten by God and knows God (1 John 4:7)”; and “Beloved, if God so loved us, we also must love one another. No one has ever seen God. Yet if we love one another, God remains in us, and His love is brought to perfection in us (1 John 4:11-12).”

I share these thoughts to remind us that our universally shared goal of becoming a community informed by charity—a Beloved Community—and the efforts to achieve this goal are our response to a sacred call from God.

I am grateful to the Cabinet, to the Board of Trustees, and to the many faculty, staff, and students of good will who have engaged in discussions that have led to important actions toward addressing systemic racism and intolerance. I am especially grateful to Father James Cuddy, Ms. Jackie Peterson, and the staffs in Mission and Ministry and Institutional Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion for their collaborative efforts in addressing and responding to our challenges. I have asked them to continue to work closely together and to engage a variety of constituencies (including me) to arrive at ways of achieving our shared goals by drawing from a multitude of resources, including the Sacred Scriptures, best practices at other colleges and universities (particularly Catholic colleges), and from the richness of Catholic teachings that inspire and challenge us to be the best that we can be.

In the next few weeks, I will introduce a presidential initiative to begin frank discussions on important, sensitive, and at times, highly charged issues that are relevant to our life together as a Catholic Dominican college. I will engage a variety of faculty, staff, members of the Dominican community, and students in these discussions, with a goal of overcoming some of the divisions that continue to wound us and setting a framework for ongoing future discussions on sensitive and difficult topics through mutually respectful dialogue. One goal is to develop a comprehensive statement on what it means for us, as a Catholic and Dominican college, to be the kind of Beloved Community that we aspire to be.

Many of you have indicated to me that you are “tired of talking” and want to see action. I hope that this document will demonstrate that so much has been done to address issues of racism and intolerance. Much more, of course, remains to be done, and will be. But it also has been made clear to me that valued members of our community have not always felt heard, and they deserve to be.

As members of a Catholic and Dominican college, we should not rest until every member of our community feels the love and dignity to which we are all entitled as people created in the image and likeness of God.

## **RESPONDING TO OUR CHALLENGES**

As I reported in my December 21 message to the campus community, I received a comprehensive list of demands for redress prepared by the Coalition against Racism and their allies and signed by more than 25 student organizations. I also received from Student Congress a document entitled “Building a Beloved Community: History, Policy, and Action” which outlines a number of recommendations aimed at helping us to become a Beloved Community, as well as recommendations from the PC chapter of the NAACP. There are several overlapping themes in these documents, and responses to many of the concerns, as well as a significant number of other initiatives, are detailed on these pages.

In addition, I have had fruitful discussions with Student Congress, the Board of Multicultural Student Affairs (BMSA), with a number of faculty, and with ad-hoc groups of students and staff to solicit their input and to discuss steps being taken, or to be taken, by the College.

I would like to share further some of these efforts that have either been completed or are in progress. Note that these categories and initiatives are not exhaustive; they are often not complete; they must be tested, and if necessary, revised; and they are not listed in order of priority. The five categories addressed in this report are derived from a structure we have created in collaboration with our IDEI colleagues. Foundational Catholic and Dominican values and the Association of American Colleges and Universities’ (AACU) research-based model of Inclusive Excellence support our actions toward becoming a Beloved Community. The five focus areas provide the framework and common language used to accomplish goals related to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

## **STRUCTURAL DIVERSITY, ACCESS, AND EQUITY**

We continue to make progress in the area of increasing and supporting people of color in our campus community. We recognize that this is a continuous effort. We also are giving attention to strategies that support retention and success of underrepresented faculty, staff, and students.

### **Fundraising for Diversity Initiatives**

Recently, an additional category for contributions was added to the Fund for Providence College. Donors now have the option of directing their annual fund contributions specifically to efforts and programs related to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. Total contributions to date for the current fiscal year are \$45,043. Of this amount, \$42,345 was raised during the Friars Give annual day of giving.

### **Recent Financial Aid Initiatives**

Nearly \$29 million (35.4% of the total financial aid budget) is awarded to students of color. Three new scholarship funds aimed at first-generation and under-represented students were established recently. These include:

- A \$1 million gift in scholarship money from Providence College trustee William F. Concannon '77, '08P and Claudia Concannon '08P, which will help to close the financial gap for underrepresented students. An endowed scholarship fund will be used to award scholarships each year to deserving students whose financial aid package does not meet all of their demonstrated need.
- The Reverend Brian J. Shanley, O.P. Access Scholarship (directed at first-generation and under-represented students)
- Michael J. Berkeley '85 Scholars (a donor-funded program dedicated to educational excellence, professional development, and community-building for a cohort of Providence College School of Business students of color.)

### **Faculty Diversity and Support of Faculty of Color**

#### **Current Hiring Data:**

This year, the College conducted 10 successful tenure track searches. This included three joint appointments to the Black Studies Program as part of a cluster hire, which is a best practice in higher education. It involves hiring faculty into multiple departments around interdisciplinary research topics, or clusters, with a goal of supporting faculty of color at predominantly white institutions. New hires included eight women (four of whom are women of color) and two men (both of whom are men of color).

At the current time, 66 of 302 (21.8%) of ordinary faculty, and 11 of 67 (16.5%) of visiting faculty are people of color.

Faculty hiring data for the past five years are as follows:

<b>FACULTY HIRING DATA</b>						
Academic Year	# of Tenure-Track Searches	# of Tenure-Track Hires	Female	Male	Faculty of Color	Dominican Friars
2016-2017	8	9	4 or 44%	5 or 54%	5 or 54%	
2017-2018	11	10	5 or 50%	5 or 50%	5 or 50%	3
2018-2019	10	8	3 or 38%	5 or 62%	2 or 25%	
2019-2020	16	16	9 or 56%	7 or 44%	8 or 50%	
2020-2021	9*	10	8 or 80%	2 or 20%	6 or 60%	Pending

\*Search resulted in hiring two faculty members as part of a cluster hire.

**Support and Retention:**

The Division of Academic Affairs closely tracks faculty retention at the three, five, seven, and ten-year cohorts. The results are as follows:

<b>FACULTY RETENTION</b>					
	# Faculty (231)	3-year Retention (175)	5-year Retention (143)	7-year Retention (111)	10-year Retention (73)
Total	193	91%	82%	78%	70%
Male	79	95%	85%	79%	69%
Female	112	89%	79%	76%	70%
Faculty of Color	43	86%	81%	72%	55%
Academic Affairs Goal		90%	80%	N/A	70%

In January 2020, the Task Force for Faculty Inclusion, with representation from members across the School of Arts and Sciences, submitted a report to the Dean of Arts and Sciences, the Provost, and the Office of Institutional Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. The report summarizes an assessment of the concerns, obstacles, and needs of faculty of color at the College and outlined a number of recommendations for the College to consider in support of the retention and success of underrepresented faculty. While the initiative focused on the School of Arts and Sciences, the recommendations are applicable across all schools. The goals and recommendations are in the following areas: expanding professional development opportunities aimed at promoting the success of faculty of color, creating a hospitable climate, instituting flexible and accommodating practices to promote success of faculty of color, and implementing transparent procedures with regard to faculty evaluation. While this is a comprehensive set of recommendations, a number are in progress, including:

- The development of a faculty-search online toolkit to assist search committees with guidance and resources on best practices for inclusive faculty searches.
- Each year, prior to launching a search, all faculty search committees engage in workshops to avoid unconscious bias in searches.
- Continuously, as part of orientation for new faculty, the Office of Institutional Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion provides a session on inclusive curriculum and pedagogy.
- The Division of Academic Affairs funds participation in the National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity (NCFDD) Faculty Success Program, a 12-week summer program that helps tenure-track faculty learn the skills necessary to increase research and writing productivity.
- As of Fall 2021, members of the College's Committee on Academic Rank and Tenure (CART) must participate in professional development on the topic of implicit bias in performance evaluation.
- Within the last academic year, affinity programs for faculty and staff have begun as a means of promoting dialogue, encouraging mentoring, and supporting the diversity that exists within the campus community.
- Professional development on topics such as creating inclusive departments has been offered to departmental chairs and directors.
- Academic Affairs and the Office of Institutional Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion have sponsored funding for women faculty of color to attend the national conference on Women of Color in the Academy.
- The College maintains membership in the National Institute for Faculty Development and Diversity and this academic year continues to support underrepresented faculty attendance in a Certified Productivity Coach program.

In support of increasing student diversity and retention in STEM, Providence College has received its first-ever grant from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute (HHMI). As part of HHMI's Inclusive Excellence grant competition, PC is one of 108 institutions (out of 354) invited to join the HHMI Inclusive Excellence Learning Community. An initial \$30,000 grant accompanies PC's participation in the learning community and will support programming that promotes inclusive excellence in STEM.

### **Ombudsperson:**

In September 2020, the Faculty Senate Ad Hoc Committee on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and the College Committee on Shared Governance began exploring the creation of a faculty ombudsperson as a means of opening the pathway for critical dialogue. As a result, the committees are researching the role of an ombudsperson on a college campus, engaging in dialogue about the need for creating such a position at Providence College, and reviewing best practices at other institutions to inform the development of a joint recommendation for an ombudsperson who would serve faculty exclusively, or the entire PC community. This will be explored during the summer with a decision to be made during the fall semester.

## **Other Structural Diversity, Access, and Equity Initiatives**

### **Providence College School of Business**

The Providence College School of Business has introduced a number of diversity-related initiatives that are described [here](#).

### **Diversity Initiatives in the Division of Student Affairs**

#### **Diversity of Student Affairs Staff:**

The division has worked purposefully over the past several years to increase diversity among the members of its staff.

Overall:	2015: 12%	2021: 27%
Personal Counseling:	2015: 0%	2021: 40%

#### **Division of Student Affairs Guiding Principles:**

In order to support Goal 2 of PC200, A Model of Love, Inclusivity, and Equity in a Diverse Community, the Division of Student Affairs makes a strong commitment to transformative actions intended to ensure all members of the campus community feel that they matter and experience a sense of belonging.

The Division of Student Affairs is guided by the structure created by colleagues in the Office of Institutional Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, organizing planning within five distinctive, complementary categories:

- Structural Diversity, Access, and Equity
- Institutional Infrastructure
- Climate and Intergroup Relations
- Formal and Informal Curricula
- Student Learning and Development

With that framework in mind, the division will:

- Examine, create, or re-create recruitment, hiring, retention, training, and professional/paraprofessional development programs and processes that demonstrate an active, overt, and explicit understanding of the rich diversity of the human family and optimally facilitate the human flourishing of each member of the Division of Student Affairs. (Structural Diversity, Access, and Equity)
- Audit, assess, and adjust existing structural and infrastructural opportunities and obstructions to the cultivation of the virtues of courage, generosity, justice, friendship, compassion, and citizenship in keeping with the extension of a loving embrace to all. (Institutional Infrastructure/Climate and Intergroup Relations)
- Explore and engineer co-curricular and extracurricular programs that foster inclusion and mutual respect — understanding the natural world, other cultures, and diverse traditions through critical thinking and engaged learning. (Climate and Intergroup Relations/Formal and Informal Curricula/Student Learning and Development)



**Division of Student Affairs Diversity Action Plan:**

The action plan will include the following:

- A statement on the role of diversity and inclusion in student affairs, to be guided by the mission of IDEI;
- Developing purposeful collaborations across all areas of the College and the greater community to foster an environment where people of all backgrounds, cultures, identities, and perspectives can flourish;
- A summary of assessments that illustrate the needs of students and the division;
- A statement of priorities, clearly stated, and guided by the three charge items listed above and the assessment summary;
- Compelling, achievable, and beneficial action items for each priority;
- A delegation of responsibilities (per committee member and by office/department) towards the achievement of the plan; and
- An assessment and accountability strategy for measuring progress and success and for identifying areas in need of refinement.

**Creation of Student Affairs Diversity Task Force:**

The Vice President for Student Affairs/Dean of Students has recently appointed a Diversity Task Force.

- Members of the Task Force are asked to critically confront and reconcile the theological and ideological dissonance inherent to the pursuit of *veritas*, the integration of equitable and inclusive practices, and the invocation of the power of grace to enlighten minds, open hearts, and transform lives, yielding effective recommendations that affirm the God-given dignity, freedom, and equality of each person.
- The Division of Student Affairs Diversity Task Force reports directly to the Vice President for Student Affairs/Dean of Students, in consultation with IDEI, and has the authority to make recommendations and adjustments based on feedback received.

**Increasing Diversity of the Board of Trustees**

The Board Affairs Committee of the Board of Trustees continues to seek to increase diversity and the number of women on the Board. With the newest additions to the Board, eight of 30 (27%) lay trustees are women; four of 30 (13%) are people of color.

## **INSTITUTIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE**

There have been a number of measures implemented to reinforce equity and inclusion within the overall infrastructure of the College.

### **Public Safety**

An assessment of the Public Safety Division has been underway for several months now, after a consultancy group was identified and highly recommended for its approach toward the concept of community policing. Renz Consultants LLC began working first with the College's Public Safety leadership and has moved along to conducting one-on-one sessions with individual Public Safety officers. For the past six weeks, the Renz group also has held focus group listening sessions with faculty, staff, and students to gain insights into how Public Safety is perceived by various constituencies. Once all the focus groups have been completed, the consultants will prepare a report and make subsequent recommendations for the type of professional development training to be considered to benefit our officers and improve relationships with the community. Agreed-upon training for Public Safety officers will begin this summer, and thereafter consultants will conduct two training sessions per semester. Other opportunities for officers to participate in off-site learning sessions will be made available throughout the year.

After carefully analyzing the Renz report, we will conduct a national search for a new Director of Public Safety. The search will happen in the fall to ensure that the campus community has the opportunity to interview finalists. A search committee chaired by Vice President for Student Affairs/Dean of Students Dr. Steven Sears and comprised of students, faculty, and staff will be formed toward the end of summer.

Ms. Ann Manchester-Molak, executive vice president, will continue to supervise the Office of Public Safety. Any concerns, recommendations, or observations about Public Safety can be directed to her, or as appropriate, through the Title VI protocols (see below).

### **Title VI**

Based on feedback from and concerns expressed by a number of people, communication and guidance regarding the Title VI (Anti-Harassment and Discrimination) Policy and procedures for reporting have been significantly improved and can be found here. These procedures are described further in a COWL interview with Title VI Coordinator Dr. Quincy Bevely. We will provide, on an annual basis, summary statistics of the number of Title VI reports filed and how reports were processed and resolved.

### **Office of Institutional Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**

The Office of Institutional Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (IDEI) continues to re-design and update its webpages to provide greater transparency and information about DEI initiatives with College-wide impact. The staff of IDEI continues to work diligently in making our community more welcoming and inclusive.

When the College's first chief diversity officer left Providence College to pursue opportunities elsewhere, the administration elevated the CDO position to a Cabinet-level position of Vice President/Chief Diversity Officer. The College conducted a national search two years ago, but the search was not successful. Soon after, Ms. Jackie Peterson was hired as the Special Advisor to the President for IDEI. Ms. Peterson sits as a full member of the President's Cabinet and has been instrumental in building a strong foundational DEI framework and preparing the College to be better positioned to attract the best candidate to serve as a permanent VP/CDO.

This process will be conducted in the spring semester (2022) and will engage multiple campus constituencies. We will seek a person with the appropriate expertise and requisite experience who is committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion, and to progressively moving us toward becoming the Beloved Community we aspire to be, while honoring and supporting the Catholic and Dominican mission of the College. Faculty, staff, and students will have the opportunity to engage in this process.

### **Support of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) and Undocumented Students**

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) has been unflinching in its support of DACA and other undocumented individuals. The College will continue to provide support to DACA and other undocumented students. The administration recently approved the formalization of the position of Campus Immigration Liaison. Dr. Kara Cebulko, who has been a strong advocate and valuable resource for our students, currently holds this position. The position is housed in the Office of Institutional Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, and reports to the Executive Vice President. The College also will provide funding for additional scholarships, emergency funds for students, programming, community building needs, and research.

### **Creation of Board and College Committees**

In the fall semester, two new committees were created—one is an advisory committee to the President, and is comprised of faculty, staff, and students. The second is a standing committee of the Board of Trustees and is comprised of trustees, faculty, staff, and students. Committee work by the Faculty Senate also is described below. Note that the following list of committees is not exhaustive. A more complete list, as well as membership on individual committees, can be found [here](#).

**President’s Advisory Council on Equity and Inclusion | Committee Charge:** Flowing from the Catholic and Dominican identity of Providence College, informed by Gospel values and Church teachings, and building upon the work of previous diversity, equity, and inclusion committees, the President’s Advisory Council on Equity and Inclusion will advise the President and his Cabinet on effective practices and strategies that eradicate systemic racism and other forms of bias to ensure the fulfillment of Goal 2 of the PC200 Strategic Plan: A Model of Love, Inclusivity, and Equity in a Diverse Community.

**Board of Trustees Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee | Committee Charge:** The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Committee shall consist of the Executive Vice President, the senior executive for DEI, the Vice President for Mission and Ministry, and at least eight (8) additional members appointed by the Chairperson of the Board, including two (2) faculty members, two (2) students, one (1) member of the Providence College Community Advisory Committee, and four (4) trustees. The Committee shall be concerned with ensuring that the College’s commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, as inspired by Catholic teaching and St. Dominic’s wide embrace of all people informs all facets of the academic and social life of the campus community. This includes, but is not limited to, assurance of an environment of equitable and inclusive policies and practices; recruitment and retention of diverse students, faculty, staff, and trustees; ongoing and transparent assessment of campus climate; and continuing progress toward the achievement of the DEI initiatives in the PC200 Strategic Plan.

**Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Permanent Committee (proposed):** The Ad Hoc Committee on DEI and the Constitutional Amendments and Bylaws Committee of the Faculty Senate have submitted a bill to amend the Bylaws to establish the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Permanent Committee. This change would support Senate needs to address the DEI aspects of the mission in a permanent way, rather than in an ad hoc manner, given the centrality of Community and Diversity in the [College Mission Statement](#).

## **Anti-Bias Training and Related Initiatives**

### **EVERFI Modules for Faculty and Staff:**

The Cabinet, the Office of Academic Affairs, the Office of Human Resources, and the Office of Institutional Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion have worked together to create a new educational and professional development opportunity for all staff and faculty to increase awareness of, and comfort with, diversity, equity, and inclusion topics. This multi-dimensional, employee-wide DEI professional development initiative is focused on equity and inclusion in the workplace and was implemented in February 2021. Professional development will be an ongoing College practice and a part of the onboarding of all new faculty and staff, complementing the similar DEI personal development training provided to every student.

We partnered with EVERFI, a renowned leader in providing evidence-based trainings to over 1300 academic institutions, including a dozen or so Catholic colleges on this initiative. As of April 9, the vast majority of full-time faculty and staff had completed both modules.

I must disclose that some faculty and other members of the community have objected to these modules on the grounds that some of the ideology of EVERFI and similar organizations is inconsistent, at least in some areas, with Catholic thought and teachings. I will continue to engage faculty and the Dominican Community in these discussions to find ways of developing and implementing trainings that flow from our identity as a Catholic and Dominican institution.

### **Other Initiatives:**

The President's Cabinet has engaged consultant Dr. Oscar Santos of the Center for Collaborative Education, who has facilitated five Cabinet retreats on issues related to DEI. The vice presidents have begun developing divisional DEI action plans corresponding with the objectives of Goal 2 of the PC200 Strategic Plan, to become A Model of Love, Inclusivity, and Equity in a Diverse Community. Inherent in the plan of some of the divisions is the appointment of members of the division to provide ongoing leadership and guidance for divisional support of equity and inclusion.

The School of Professional Studies also has engaged Dr. Santos and is in the process of reviewing and defining its vision with respect to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

### **Office of Mission and Ministry:**

The vice president for mission and ministry is working with colleagues to produce a booklet designed to give the community a shared language through which one can better understand the College's Catholic and Dominican identity. This brief publication will provide historical context for the College's mission, an identification of key concepts related to Catholic education, and an exploration of the opportunities and challenges before us as a Catholic and Dominican college. It will be used to reaffirm to the community the College's foundational infrastructure and to help acclimate and welcome new members of the community to the College's unique Dominican underpinnings.

## **CLIMATE AND INTERGROUP RELATIONS**

During the past year, there have been multiple opportunities for meaningful interactions across our differences, enhanced dialogue, and ongoing intercultural learning across the campus. Continuing these types of initiatives, and continuing participation in them, will be instrumental in creating a community of mutual respect and civility.

### **Climate Survey**

The HEDS Diversity and Equity Campus Climate Survey is an initiative that has been implemented as an ongoing College practice to inform the areas to address for improving campus climate. It will be administered triennially. The results of the most recent survey, conducted in spring 2020, are not satisfactory and indicate the need for, and importance of, our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. The report was shared with the Board of Trustees and at a faculty and staff meeting. The full report can be found [here](#).

### **Honoring and Respecting the LGBTQ+ Members of Our Community**

Issues pertaining to the LGBTQ+ (lesbian gay, bisexual, transgendered, queer/questioning) community continue to be pressing concerns. Students, faculty, staff members, and alumni have reached out to me since I began my service as president to talk about their experiences, sometimes painful, and their hopes for how our community might address these issues.

By way of action, we have hired Ms. Erin Corry to work with both the Offices of Mission and Ministry (OMM) and Institutional Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (IDEI) as our LGBTQ+ Resource Coordinator. Ms. Corry comes to PC with over a decade of undergraduate ministry experience with InterVarsity/USA and has spent many years ministering to the LGBTQ+ community. We also have asked Dr. Dana Dillon, a professor in the theology department with a specialization in moral theology, to serve as our Theological Praxis Consultant. Together, Ms. Corry and Dr. Dillon are working to summarize Church teaching in a body of work that will continue to guide our practices. I am grateful for their efforts thus far and am confident and excited about their work in the weeks and months to come.

Thus far, the OMM and IDEI teams have engaged with the Board of Trustees Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee, our National Alumni Council, the Presidential Committee on Equity and Inclusion, as well as focus groups of LGBTQ+ faculty and staff, members of the theology and philosophy faculties, members of SHEPARD, Student Congress, and alumni. We have learned a lot along the way and are dedicated to becoming more and more a place where every member of our community feels welcomed, loved, and respected. We also are committed to doing this in a manner that explores and explains the goodness, beauty, and fullness of the Church's teaching on human sexuality. It is my desire that every one of us might be able to speak honestly about our experiences, ask questions of one another in charity, and delve into the Church's teaching in a manner that will help us to know and love one another more. This difficult and sensitive work will take time and I appreciate your patience with the process. But we are headed in a positive direction and I am confident that the work will bear good fruit.

Our next steps in this process involve engaging additional members of the community on these questions for the remaining weeks of the spring and into the summer. This will prepare us for broader engagement throughout the Fall 2021 semester with students, as well as more faculty and staff, on these important questions. Ms. Corry will prepare an institutional report with recommendations for where we need clarity, education, and resources. We will hire a long-term professional staff member to oversee this work, which will become part of the comprehensive Statement on Diversity at Providence College.

### **Town Hall Meetings**

In November 2020, College leadership held an open-invitation community conversation for faculty, staff, and students. The topic of discussion was centered around the ongoing issues surrounding the prevalence of systemic racism on campus. The goals of the virtual gathering were as follows:

- To shed light on the College's systemic level issues, the plan for addressing these challenges, and a vision for the future;
- To provide the opportunity for the entire community to have a voice and participate in the dialogue related to systemic racism on campus; and
- To begin to heal and work together as we pave the way for a more accepting, loving, equitable, and inclusive community.

### **Informal Communications**

Last fall, I launched a series of Friarside Chats for students, faculty, and staff to discuss important campus issues and concerns with me in an informal setting. Attendees set the agenda for these opportunities to share insights on a range of topics that are most salient to the individual constituent group. To stay informed and to encourage dialogue, I have and will continue to engage with Student Congress, BMSA, and other student organizations, as well as participate in meetings of the Faculty Senate.

## **FORMAL AND INFORMAL CURRICULA**

The College has created opportunities and experiences that prepare students to actively engage in an increasingly diverse, inter-connected, and global society through formal and informal curricular practices.

### **Development of Western Civilization**

Objective III.2 of the PC200 Strategic Plan calls for “Invigorating the Development of Western Civilization Program, the centerpiece of PC’s liberal arts education, through efforts led by the faculty.” Since DWC is the one academic experience shared by all students regardless of course of study, the PC200 Implementation Team is discussing ways in which the four-semester course can complement and strengthen the First-Year Experience and the Signature Work Project, which are key to Goal 1 of PC200—to deliver a distinctive educational experience. Preliminary discussions have centered on how the study of DWC ties into students’ ability to consider “big-picture questions” that will provide valuable insights and opportunities for self-directed inquiry, while fostering growth and development that encourages students to expand their world-view.

A PC200 steering committee has charged a project team that consists of faculty (including a Dominican Friar) and students with evaluating changes to the DWC Program that will achieve this objective. Dr. Jennifer Illuzzi, associate professor of history, was recently appointed as DWC program chair and will lead these efforts. Dr. Illuzzi, along with previous program chairs, Drs. Sandra Keating and Alex Moffett, recently provided an update to the PC200 steering committee. This project team will augment the DWC Program Committee.

The Academic Affairs Committee of the Faculty Senate submitted legislation to the Senate on April 21 that includes adding two items to the current DWC Objective List. These two objectives “Affirm the immense diversity of western civilization by studying the contributions and perspectives of historically underrepresented groups” and “Require students to reflect critically upon the terms ‘western’ and ‘civilization’ and to articulate how the West has been shaped by interactions with other cultures and polities.” The legislation was approved by the Senate.

One of the most significant benefits described in the proposed legislation is that the changes recommended will bring further diversity to DWC syllabi.

Student input is valued and is an important component of these deliberations, and there is student representation on the DWC Program Committee to ensure that student perspectives are heard. However, changes to curriculum and modifications to academic programs are the purview of the faculty and the Faculty Senate. This is consistent with the values and practices of academic freedom and shared governance that are central to Providence College.

### **Assessment of Courses that Meet the Diversity Proficiency Requirement:**

A comprehensive diversity proficiency study report has been completed by Dr. Comfort Ateh. It has been reviewed by the Core Curriculum Committee and will be shared with the Faculty Senate.

In addition, there have been a number of professional development sessions on inclusive pedagogy and curricula for faculty across schools and departments.

### **Elementary and Special Education Department (ESE)**

Some faculty and students have expressed concern about DEI matters within the Elementary and Special Education Department (ESE) department. Several DEI initiatives are in progress under the leadership of assistant dean of education Dr. Beth Schaper and ESE department chair Dr. Bret Cormier, both of whom are new to the College this academic year. These efforts ensure that ESE programs are compliant with the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) standards.

Dr. Cormier is assessing the admission and retention aspects of ESE. Formal admission into the ESE program is partially dependent on RIDE criteria to which the ESE must adhere.

The ESE expects all non-Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) assessments to be course embedded and curriculum revision work will establish benchmarks. The 2021-2022 academic year will include reviews of assignments, books, readings, etc., to address DEI. The chair will be utilizing outside experts to assess DEI in the curriculum.

The department has begun a process to modify the ESE curriculum, including required courses that focus on DEI. There are two courses in EDU that address DEI (EDU 125 & 221). The ESL and the autism courses will be submitted to the Faculty Senate for review. The courses will be guided by the mission of the College and the School of Professional Studies mission and values. This work has begun and will be implemented over the summer and the next academic year.

Drs. Cormier and Schaper also are developing partnerships with the Providence Public Schools Department (PPSD). Part of the mission and values of the ESE is to have a robust presence of our student teachers in the PPSD.

### **Initiatives Related to our Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) Community**

The fatal shooting of six Asian women in Atlanta in March heightened our awareness of a series of violent and horrific attacks against members of the Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) communities. As I stated in my March 18th letter to the community, I stand in full solidarity with our AAPI faculty, staff, and students, and unequivocally condemn heinous acts of injustice, racism, and violence levied against them. In that communication, I also suggested that “while we may feel powerless to stem the tide of the reprehensible tragedies that seem to plague our nation with ever-increasing frequency, there is something that we can do as members of a Catholic and Dominican community. In the midst of profound suffering and senseless violence, we can strive to be ever mindful that God alone can bring light out of seemingly impenetrable darkness.”

As a Catholic college, we need to make these words come alive with action. To that end, the Office of the President will develop closer relationships with the College’s AAPI community to identify ways in which the College community may help heal those who have been profoundly hurt by bias, hate, and injustice. The Provost will consult with faculty leadership to explore a number of new academic initiatives that also may lead to understanding and healing.



### **Other DEI Initiatives**

The Dialogue, Inclusion, and Democracy (DID) Research Lab partnered with a group of students, a faculty member, and an administrator in the development of a series of methods and strategies to facilitate critical dialogue around issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion on campus and in the community. The critical dialogue was facilitated interactively in campus spaces and on social media. The flagship project has been series of “democracy walls” on campus; findings around strategies for overcoming polarization; amplifying student voices; and creating civic spaces. The outreach has included collaboration with Student Congress, Athletics, the School of Business, Student Affairs, and the Office of Institutional Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

Funding from IDEI’s Equity and Engagement Innovation Mini Grant program was awarded to the Department of History and Classics to participate in a workshop series entitled Social Justice Infusion Initiative. The aim of the program is to increase faculty registration, increase accountability for full participation and completion, and fairly compensate faculty for the work of skills acquisition and curriculum development. The primary outcome of this grant will be revised syllabi and curricula in alignment with the Student Learning and Development DEI focus and Goals 1 and 2 of PC200.

Funding from IDEI’s Equity & Engagement Innovation Mini Grant program was awarded to the Department of Health and Policy Management (HPM) to form a Black, Indigenous, and Person of Color (BIPOC) Advisory Group. This group is one of several initiatives the department is undertaking with a deep commitment to active, accountable change regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion on our campus and within the community. To take action against racism, HPM will draw on expertise from alumni, in conjunction with current students, on how to ensure an inclusive learning environment in which people of color feel represented, involved, and safe to express their opinions in our classrooms.

As both a response to the growing need for DEI discourse and anti-racist education, the Office of Institutional Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, alongside many other campus partners, developed and facilitated the inaugural Providence College Anti-Racism Summer Series. Over the course of eight weeks, IDEI sponsored a total of six webinars led by members of the College community, including BMSA, Campus Ministry, and The Feinstein Institute.

The School of Arts and Sciences recently completed a semester-long series of keynote speakers and panel discussions focused on Decolonizing the Curriculum. The speaker series featured three events focused on the sciences, humanities, and the social sciences. Faculty from across campus are invited to participate in a workshop in May where the principles discussed can be applied to individual course syllabi.

IDEI and the Center for Orientation, Transitions and Leadership are collaborating on the creation of a four-year developmental model for students that will lead to a certificate in equity and inclusion.

## **STUDENT LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT TRAINING, WORKSHOPS, AND EDUCATION**

The College implemented comprehensive Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) training for students in 2020, beginning with sophomores, juniors, and seniors, and adding incoming students during Class of 2024 summer orientation; follow-up modules on micro-aggressions, implicit bias, identity, and ally-ship will be offered to all first-year students.

PC's 1,100 first-year students also participated in a DEI workshop entitled Building an Inclusive Community: Combatting Macro-aggressions and Title VI Reporting. In this session, incoming first-year students unpacked the DEI impacts of COVID-19 and national unrest and engaged in learning about how to build an inclusive community at Providence College.

In 2019, the School of Business began providing workshops on implicit bias and creating inclusive environments to PCSB faculty members and first-year students.

The School of Business dean's office also led creation of a "bias-busting" video, involving cross-campus collaboration, for PC students to watch before filling out faculty teaching evaluation forms.

The College has provided training to some 1,100 first-year students to help them learn more about and to explore the Student Affairs pillar on Cultural Agility.

It also has offered diversity, equity, and inclusion trainings and workshops to various student organizations and paraprofessionals, including Campus Ministry, Student Congress, Dirigo, Social Justice and Immersion, Residence Life, and Orientation Leaders.

### **Student Support Opportunities**

Personnel from the Dean of Students office and the Feinstein Institute developed affinity groups (i.e., racial caucus, people of color, etc.) designed to provide an opportunity for students and a staff representative to engage in meaningful dialogue with their respective peers. In the Fall of 2021, staff members from the Personal Counseling Center and The Center at Moore Hall collaborated on the establishment of a Black, Indigenous, and Person of Color (BIPOC) Student Support Group.

As a response to the need for career support for students of color, the Center for Career Education developed the REAL Talk Series to include MSP, Transitions, Horizons, Peer Mentoring Program, and all underrepresented students.

Student Activities and Cultural Programming continues to lead the FaculTeas Series to increase faculty and student engagement outside of the classroom.

The Personal Counseling Center is providing enhanced web resources, including crisis support options specific to diverse groups of students.

Personnel from the Dean of Students office continue to advise and support student clubs organized around marginalized identities including LGBTQ+ and students of color.

## Providence College Athletics Program

The Athletics Department is strongly committed to efforts and initiatives aimed at making our athletic program a national model for diversity, equity, and inclusion. The department's numerous initiatives include the following:

### Overview:

Connected to the IDEI Five Focus Areas, the department has identified three pillars of diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts within Athletics.

- Education
- Infrastructure
- Community

Throughout 2020-2021, Athletics has spent a majority of energy within its education pillar. In 2021-2022 we will build on our efforts in the education pillar and spend more time on the infrastructure and community pillars.

### 2021 Athletics DEI Updates:

- Launched Athletics DEI learning Communities
  - Staff/coaches small group learning workshops focused on identity
- Delivered five-part series for the Student-Athlete Advisory Council (SAAC) DEI Subcommittee entitled, "How to Lead a DEI Conversation"
- Successful Relaunch of Athletics Inclusion Committee
  - Four meetings in 2020-2021
  - Hosted several guest speakers
- Black History Month Programming
  - Friars In Black – Social Media Campaign
  - Friars in Black Interview – Interview with Main St. Living about Friars in Black
  - Divine Providence: The Jamel Thomas Story – Alumni Webinar with Jamel Thomas
- Collaboration with Human Resources on Best Hiring Practices
  - In the early stages of working with Human Resources on updating and examining best practices for hiring within Athletics
- Collaboration with local schools on a Northeast Black Student-Athlete Summit
  - Nick Sailor served as a representative on a committee to bring a Northeast Black Student-Athlete Summit to Gillette Stadium for Summer of 2021. Dates for the Northeast Black Student-Athlete Summit will be announced within the next few weeks.

## Friars United Week (April 6–11, 2021)

The goal of this Solidarity Week was to unite Providence College student-athletes, athletic staff, and the entire campus around the principle of accepting all diverse identities and rejecting any notions of hate, intolerance, and discrimination. By offering a variety of events, workshops, presentations, and educational materials, the goal was for Athletics to promote an anti-racist, anti-homophobic, and anti-prejudiced agenda that allowed individuals to better increase their awareness about diversity and acceptance.

A student-athlete driven initiative, Friars United Week, provided an opportunity for student-athletes, staff, coaches, and administration to engage in learning opportunities around DEI topics.

**April 6th - April 11th**

**April 6th - Allyship & Conversations**  
*Discussion led by members of the SAAC DEI Subcommittee*  
12 pm - Athletic Staff & Coaches | 7:30 pm - Student-Athletes

**April 7th - Racial Justice: "Beyond the Knee"**  
*A Conversation featuring Dave Hoffman, VP of Community Engagement - Boston Celtics*  
1 pm - Athletic Department Coaches, Staff, Student-Athletes  
7 pm - Recording of conversation to be played

**April 8th - LGBTQ+ Inclusivity**  
*SHEPARD: How to Be A Better Ally Workshop*  
7:30 pm - Athletic Department Coaches, Staff, Student-Athletes

**April 9th - Stop Asian Hate: Storytelling with Asian-Am**  
5 pm - Stop Asian Hate banner  
6 pm - Athletic Department Coaches, Staff, Student-Athletes

**April 10 & 11th- Friars United**

- All PC students, staff & faculty are invited to attend athletic games
- Special warm up Friars United shirts will be worn by all athletic teams throughout the week during their home games.



**FRIARS  
UNITED**

Each day had a particular focus, and each learning opportunity was a result of collaboration with different organizations and clubs on campus to highlight the unity and togetherness of PC Athletics' mission of building an inclusive community at PC.

[This Friars United Public Service Announcement-type video](#) was based on a script written by Julia Murphy '21, a political science major who plays on the Friar softball team.