



Office of Equity and Inclusion Newsletter

August 12, 2024



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

“A Message To New and Returning Students -
Embrace the Possibilities of Each Day ”

Dear Friends,

As summer fades and a new academic year approaches, new and returning college students are preparing to jump back into the vibrant and dynamic environment of campus life. The start of the fall semester is an exciting time filled with new opportunities, challenges, and experiences. Whether you're returning for another year or stepping onto campus for the first time, here's what you can look forward to as you embark on this fresh academic journey.

Each semester brings a chance to start anew. For returning students, it's an opportunity to build on previous successes and tackle new academic and personal goals. For newcomers, it's a blank slate to explore, learn, and grow. The beginning of the semester is a prime time to explore new courses, diving into subjects that pique your interest or challenge you in unexpected ways. This is the perfect time to take that elective you've been eyeing or to dive deeper into your major.

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**“It is in your hands, to make a
better world for all who live in it.”**
~ Nelson Mandela ~

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From joining clubs and organizations to attending welcome events, there are countless ways to connect with peers who share your interests. Building a network of friends and colleagues can enrich your college experience and open doors to new opportunities.

This is also a time to reflect on what you want to achieve academically, socially, and personally this semester. Setting clear, achievable goals can help you stay focused and motivated throughout the term.

The start of the semester is often marked by a flurry of campus activities designed to help students acclimate and engage with the university community. These events are tailored to help new students get acquainted with campus resources, meet faculty and staff, and learn about the academic and social life at the university. Enjoy a variety of fun and informative events, such as club fairs, open houses, social gatherings and even catching a football game. These activities are designed to introduce you to campus life and help you make the most of your time at ETSU.

It is equally important that students keep track of their assignments, deadlines, and exams using planners or digital tools. Staying organized can help reduce stress and ensure students stay on top of their coursework. Don't hesitate to reach out to professors, academic advisors, or campus resources if you need assistance, earlier the better. ETSU offers tutoring services, a writing center, counseling resources, and a host of many other services to support your academic success.

As a student, you should participate in discussions, ask questions, and connect with your professors. As always, attend classes regularly and on time. You should sit as close to the front of the room as possible. Building relationships with your instructors can enhance your learning experience and open up opportunities for mentorship and research.

As you prepare for the start of the semester, embrace the excitement and possibilities that come with it. The beginning of a new academic semester is a chance to set the tone for a successful and fulfilling year. Whether you're delving into advanced coursework, making new friends, or discovering new interests, remember that each day is an opportunity to learn and grow.

The Office of Equity and Inclusion welcomes our new and returning students to ETSU. We are planning a lot of exciting activities that everyone is welcome to be a part of. Please visit our [website](#) and learn of the many initiatives, including, but not limited to Moonshot for Equity, annual equity and inclusion conference, George Nichols Academy, and the like. I encourage

Continued ~ Message from Dr. Keith Johnson

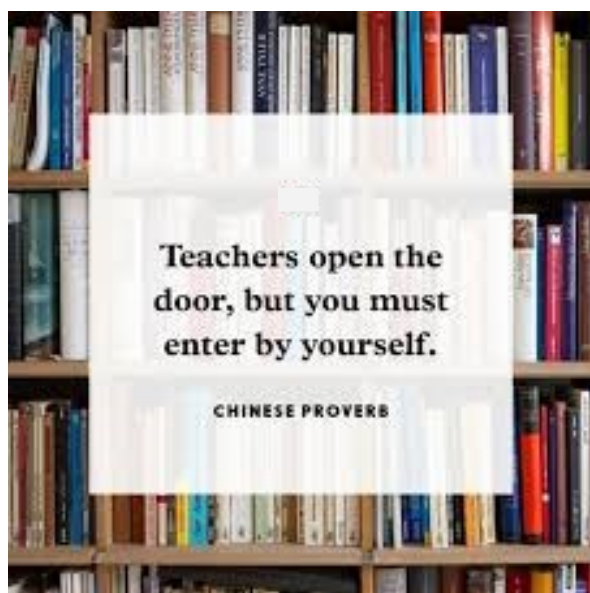
you to approach the semester with an open mind and a positive attitude. The experiences you have and the people you meet will shape your college journey and contribute to your overall personal and academic development. Here's to a successful and enriching start to the fall semester!

Don't forget, at ETSU,

- PEOPLE come first, are treated with dignity and respect, and are encouraged to achieve their full potential;
- RELATIONSHIPS are built on honesty, integrity, and trust;
- DIVERSITY of people and thought is respected;
- EXCELLENCE is achieved through teamwork, leadership, creativity, and a strong work ethic;
- EFFICIENCY is achieved through wise use of human and financial resources; and
- COMMITMENT to intellectual achievement is embraced.

Sincerely,

Dr. Keith V. Johnson



“Intelligence plus character — that is the goal of true education.”
— Martin Luther King Jr.

“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.”
— Nelson Mandela

“The ability to read, write, and analyze; the confidence to stand up and demand justice and equality; the qualifications and connections to get your foot in the door and take your seat at the table — all of that starts with education.”
— Michelle Obama

Dr. Keith Johnson Receives James H. McGraw Award at the ASEE Annual Conference



Dr. Keith V. Johnson, Department Chair, Engineering, Engineering Technology, and Surveying and Vice President for Equity and Inclusion was presented with the 2024 James H. McGraw Award by the American Society for Engineering Education (ASEE) President Doug Tougaw.

About the Award: James H. McGraw was recognized as the dean of industrial publishers. He spent some 40 years in the publishing business, beginning as a teacher turned subscription salesman and going on to lay the foundation of one of the largest industrial publishing organizations in the world.

The purpose of the James H. McGraw Award is to recognize outstanding service in engineering technology education. It is presented to a faculty member, author, or administrator who is, or has been, affiliated with an institution that provides engineering technology education. Established by the McGraw-Hill Book Company in 1950, the award is now cosponsored by McGraw-Hill Higher Education, the Engineering Technology Council, and the Engineering Technology Division of ASEE. The award consists of a \$1,000 honorarium and a plaque.

This award recognizes contributions to engineering technology education. The following achievements are required: Clearly discernible contributions to engineering technology education. Outstanding achievement in one or more of the following activities specifically related to engineering technology education: Teaching: evidence of outstanding subject matter competence, student guidance and course development; Publications: textbooks, articles, reports, bulletins and tests; Administration: outstanding contributions to curriculum development, cooperation with industry, student selection and placement as well as buildings and facilities; Other activities: participation in engineering technology studies and surveys and leadership in local and national institute groups.

Matthew Gilbert, Associate Director of Disability Services

Matthew began his career at East Tennessee State University as a Graduate Assistant in English and later served as an Adjunct Instructor at ETSU and Northeast State Tennessee Community College. Building on his academic experience, he transitioned to the role of Accessibility Coordinator at ETSU, where he promoted Disability Services and ensured classroom accessibility for students.



In his role as Accessibility Coordinator, Matthew advanced inclusive practices across campus and educated the community on accessibility. He collaborated with Academic Technology Services and the Center for Teaching Excellence to deliver workshops on classroom accessibility. His work has been recognized for its focus on creating equitable learning environments and supporting diverse student needs. Notably, Matthew received the New Professional of the Year Award from the Division of Student Life and Enrollment, served as Accessibility Coordinator for the Equity and Inclusion Conference in 2023 and 2024, and holds the position of Membership Chair for the Tennessee Association on Higher Education and Disability (TN-AHEAD). He is also a member of the national organization, Association of Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD).

As Associate Director of Disability Services, Matthew aims to further develop and apply his expertise in accessibility to drive meaningful change. His commitment to fostering an inclusive educational environment underscores his dedication to both students and faculty, and ensuring that accessibility remains a key priority at ETSU.



Ethan Hutchinson, Interim Executive Director of Academic Advisement



Ethan Hutchinson will serve as interim Executive Director of Academic Advisement. Ethan has served as Associate Director of Advisement Training and Technology since July 2021. He has fifteen years of experience in academic advising in higher education. Before coming to ETSU, Ethan served as a Director of Cowell College Academic Advising at the University of California Santa Cruz and has held academic advising/student success roles at East Carolina University, Guilford College, and Saint Mary's College of California. He is an alumnus of the University of North Carolina at Greensboro (M.Ed. in Student Personnel Administration in Higher Education, 2010; Bachelor of Science in Recreation Parks & Tourism, 2006).

Moon Shot For Equity Update



During the 2023-24 academic year, East Tennessee State University (ETSU) participated in Moon Shot for Equity – a public-private partnership dedicated to ensuring that more students complete college degrees, especially those most often left behind – low-income, first-generation, and students of color.

With support from the Office of Equity and Inclusion, ETSU focused on five initiatives related to Moon Shot “Best Practices:” Coordinated Care, Holds Reforms, Student Microgrants, Transfer Student Pathways, and Student Belongingness. During the 2022-23 academic year, committees were formed to develop strategies and goals, many of which were carried out this academic year.

To learn more about each initiative’s progress please [click here](#).

ETSU colleges and units support the University’s commitment to the promotion of diversity of people and thought in the ETSU community. They are dedicated to creating high quality educational experiences for students.

Learn about these [University Communities](#).

Viewpoint Diversity Initiatives

Diversity of people, ideas, experiences, and contributions is highly valued at ETSU and is embedded in the [mission and values](#) of the university. ETSU is committed to promoting a welcoming, supportive, and inclusive living, learning, and working environment for all faculty, staff, students, and visitors.

[Learn more](#) about the current programs, events, and resources that foster a community where people come first, are treated with dignity and respect and are encouraged to achieve their full potential.

National Civility Month

People being civil to other people is what makes the world a whole lot better and is the key focus of National Civility Month, which is held in August each year. This holiday was founded to help the world remember to treat others the way we wish to be treated ourselves — with kindness, empathy, and respect.

What is the purpose of civility?

Civility helps diverse groups come together as a society and group, reducing disputes and conflict significantly.



What are examples of civility?

Civil behavior involves kindness, empathy, respect, humility, and more. Practicing civil behavior means acting with humanity, whether helping someone cross the street, feeding the homeless, or even helping someone financially.

What does lack of civility mean?

Lack of civility, or incivility, describes people acting against humanity and empathy by harming others through actions, words, or gestures. 'Incivility' comes from the Latin 'incivilis,' which means 'not a citizen.'

Intersectionality

Intersectionality, as defined by [Oxford English Dictionary](#), is “the interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, and gender, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage”.

Kimberlé Crenshaw introduced the concept in 1989 to discuss how oppression cannot truly be addressed if the varying forms of discrimination are only ever looked at separately and not where they may overlap.

Intersecting identities can include, but are not limited to, race, gender identity, sexuality, socioeconomic status, disability, and religion. Each of these categories influence a person’s experience of privilege or discrimination depending on the context.

For instance -

A Hispanic woman might face both ethnic and gender discrimination, which intersect to create a unique experience different from a white woman or a Hispanic man. In a corporate

environment, she might encounter microaggressions related to both her ethnicity and gender, such as assuming she doesn’t have a strong grasp of the English language or that she is too emotional. These compounded biases can limit her career advancement and create a hostile work environment.

In healthcare, a transgender man of color might experience both transphobia and racism, leading to inadequate medical care and mistrust in the healthcare system.

A low-income single mother might encounter systemic barriers that are both economic and gender-based, such as limited access to affordable childcare and flexible job opportunities, perpetuating cycles of poverty and social exclusion.

Understanding this context is essential for developing policies and interventions that actually address the needs of individuals with intersecting identities.

[Read more.](#)

ETSU among Forbes' list of America's Best Employers for Women 2024

East Tennessee State University has been recognized as one of America's Best Employers for Women 2024 by Forbes magazine.

[America's Best Employers for Women 2024](#) were identified by Forbes and Statista Inc., the leading statistics portal and industry ranking provider, in an independent survey from a sample of over 150,000 women working for companies employing at least 1,000 people within the U.S. from all industry sectors.

Survey respondents were asked to evaluate their own employers; other employers in their industry; and those that employ their family, friends and acquaintances and family. The ranking also reflects diversity among top executives and board directors.

At ETSU, women make up 59% of the workforce, according to Lori Erickson, assistant vice president for Human Resources. Women hold many high-ranking positions in both academics and administration at ETSU, including those of provost, vice presidents, deans, directors and more.

Erickson notes that ETSU's generous leave policies make it easy to balance working and parenting, and that ETSU also offers paid parental leave.

In addition, ETSU's Commission for Women Standing Committee, [Women and Gender Resource Center](#) and [Office of Equity and Inclusion](#) serve as advocates for women on campus.

Statista publishes hundreds of worldwide industry rankings and company listings with high-profile media partners. This research and analysis service is based on the success of [statista.com](#), the leading data and business intelligence portal that provides statistics, relevant business data and various market and consumer studies and surveys.

See the full listing of America's Best Employers for Women 2024 [here](#).

At East Tennessee State University, we believe that all of our employees play a vital role in providing the student-centered community of learning that has made us the pinnacle of higher education in our region.

Our dedicated and highly qualified full-time and part-time faculty, professionals, administrators, and support staff that exemplify our core values in order to grow our ETSU Family and build upon the Buccaneer legacy that started in 1911.

Call For Volunteers



The 6th Annual Equity and Inclusion Conference is September 26 – 27, 2024. We are excited to be welcoming presenters and participants from college, community, and business organizations from in and out of state!

This year's conference organizers **would like to invite you to serve as a conference volunteer**. The efforts of the volunteer team are instrumental to the success of the conference.

There are several roles identified for volunteers including room hosts, greeters (throughout campus), set-up crew, and more. As an added benefit, conference volunteers are provided a \$10 registration discount. Volunteers can expect a minimum time obligation of 3 - 4 hours in addition to the 1-hour volunteer training prior to the conference.

If you are interested in volunteering, please complete the [Volunteer Sign-Up form](#) after which you will receive correspondence from me with the volunteer registration code. We ask volunteers to sign up by August 31.

Thank you for considering this opportunity. If you have any questions, please contact Trish Caughran, Conference Volunteer Coordinator at CAUGHRAN@etsu.edu.

With Gratitude,
Trish Caughran
Conference Volunteer Coordinator



Upcoming Events



Equity & Inclusion CONFERENCE



ETSU Employees: \$85

\$100 After September 19
ETSU employees may utilize their education benefits to cover the cost of registration. If you elect to use this option, please be sure to select the appropriate ticket type when registering.

Higher Ed Faculty/Staff: \$100

\$125 After September 19

Community Partner/ Member: \$100

\$125 After September 19

Students: Free

[Register](#)

It's time to register for ETSU's sixth annual [Equity and Inclusion Conference](#) taking place September 26-27, 2024 in the D.P. Culp Student Center.

The conference is open to anyone who wishes to attend. Community members as well as higher education professionals and students from other institutions are welcome and encouraged to join us.

New International Student Volunteer Opportunities

Walmart Shopping Trip

International Student Success (ISS) is organizing a Walmart Shopping Trip on **August 18th from 3:00 PM to 5:30 PM** to assist newly arrived international students in purchasing groceries and other essential items. Volunteers are needed to drive students to Walmart and back to campus. While you are not expected to accompany students inside the store, your assistance would be greatly appreciated if you choose to do so. ISS will ensure that students understand they should only purchase what they can carry from the car to their room. The planned time to leave the store is 5:00 PM to ensure a timely return to campus by 5:30 PM.

If you would like to volunteer for the Walmart Shopping Trip, please sign up here: <https://forms.office.com/r/T0kwVy68sb>

Your support and participation in these programs is invaluable and greatly appreciated. By volunteering, you will play a significant role in helping our international students feel welcomed and supported as they begin their journey at ETSU.

Thank you for considering these volunteer opportunities. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us at ifp-ibb@etsu.edu.

The Supper Club is a wonderful initiative where local families invite a group of international students to share a meal once a month throughout the semester. This program aims to create a sense of community and belonging for our international students, allowing them to experience local culture and build meaningful connections.

If you are interested in hosting international students for a meal and helping to create a warm and welcoming environment, please sign up here: <https://forms.office.com/r/YCR3CcBqds>



Supper Club

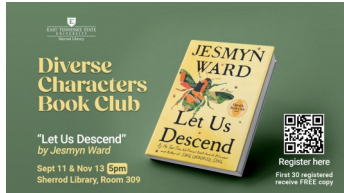


Want to make a difference in welcoming international students to East Tennessee?

Sign up today to host new incoming ETSU international students in your home for a meal once a month!

Interested?
Contact Hannah at ifp-ibb@etsu.edu or scan the QR Code above!

Upcoming Events ~ continued

August 2024				
Monday	August 26th	Fall 2024 Classes Begin		
Friday	August 30	Coffee Talk Get to know the Center for Teaching Excellence	Via Zoom Register	9:00-9:30am
September 2024				
Monday	Sept. 2nd	University Closed		
Wednesday	Sept. 11th	Sherrod Library Diverse Characters Book Club  First 30 to register receive a FREE copy of the book. Register here	Sherrod Library Room 309	5:00-6:00pm
Thursday and Friday	Sept. 26th-27th	6th Annual Equity and Inclusion Conference	All Day	D.P. Culp Student Center
October 2024				
Monday-Tuesday	October 14th-15th	Fall Break		
November 2024				
Wednesday	Nov. 13th	Sherrod Library Diverse Characters Book Club Register here	Sherrod Library Room 309	5:00-6:00pm

A Look Ahead

Hispanic Heritage Month—September 15th-October 15th

International Day of Peace - Saturday September 21st

Recordings of previous Office of Equity and Inclusion Lunch and Learn sessions can be found at Digital Commons: <https://dc.etsu.edu/equity-lunch-learn/>

Faculty and staff can also view video recordings and assets from the East Tennessee Higher Education Regional Alliance eConvenings led by the USC Race and Equity Center by signing up on the [USC Portal](#).

Borchuck Plaza Memorial Fountain Update

The location of the new proposed monument that commemorates the first African American students enrolled at East Tennessee State University has changed.

A couple of winters ago, a major freeze impacted several buildings, including damaging the fountain that served as the iconic piece of artwork acknowledging those first African Americans. The fountain in the center of the plaza tells a story of hope, inspiration, and courage and is dedicated to the five Black students who first desegregated East Tennessee State University: Eugene Caruthers, Elizabeth Watkins Crawford, Clarence McKinney, George L. Nichols, and Mary Luellen Owens Wagner. These students went on to succeed in education, civil rights activism, military service, and business. The constantly flowing water in the fountain is a reminder of these pioneering individuals' enduring place in our university's history.

A committee comprised of ETSU faculty, staff, students, and community members was organized. Their charge was to identify a new design that would replace the damaged one. The committee requested proposals from Artists from around the country to re-envision what the new fountain could look like. There were many proposals submitted, but only a select few were chosen to present their ideas. The selected artists traveled to Johnson City to present their ideas. After the presentations, the committee deliberated and came to a consensus with one of the artist's work.

Given the design that was selected by the committee, applying water to the design to form a new fountain would not take advantage of the fountain concept in a very appropriate way. A decision was made to repair the existing fountain and keep it in its current location. The new design will be located adjacent to the existing location but still maintain a presence in Borchuck Plaza in front of the Sherrod Library. Below, you will see an image of the new proposed monument and the area where it will be located.



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Instagram and Twitter - [etsu_equity](#)

**We would like to
hear from you.**

If you have an announcement, event, accomplishment, etc. you would like to have published in the newsletter send them to Kim Maturo at maturo@etsu.edu.

To add a name to our mailing list, please email Kim Maturo at maturo@etsu.edu.