



Office of Equity and Inclusion Newsletter

December 4, 2023



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

“Celebrating International Day of Persons with Disabilities”

Dear Friends,

As we get closer and closer to the end of the year, December becomes the month that has many days that are celebrated, including several big holidays like Christmas, New Year, Kwanza, and Hanukah. It also includes several national and international holidays for us to enjoy as well. International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPD) is one of those international days.

International Day of Persons with Disabilities observed annually on December 3rd, serves as a reminder of the importance of inclusivity and accessibility for individuals with disabilities. Established by the United Nations in 1992, this day aims to promote the rights and well-being

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***“Ask many of us who are disabled what
we would like in life and
you would be surprised how few
would say, ‘Not to be disabled.’
We accept our limitations.”
~Itzhak Perlman~***

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of people with disabilities while raising awareness about the challenges they face. Celebrating International Disability Day provides an opportunity for communities worldwide to reflect on progress made, address existing barriers, and foster a more inclusive and equitable society.

Individuals who exemplify overcoming their disability whom you might be familiar with include but are not limited to Stephen Hawking, Michael J. Fox, Stevie Wonder, Helen Keller, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Robin Williams, and Tom Cruise, to name a few. These individuals did not allow their disability to define them or derail their careers by any means. Each of these individuals have their own unique stories. For example, Stephen Hawking was a theoretical physicist, astrophysicist, cosmologist, and eminent scientist. He was diagnosed with ALS at the young age of 21. He was paralyzed from head to toe. He used a voice synthesizer to communicate and a wheelchair operated through sight movement of his head and eyes. He became an exemplary researcher and professor and arguably became the most recognizable celebrity of our time. You can learn more about Stephen by watching the movie entitled "[The Theory of Everything](#)".

This month we celebrate all individuals with disabilities. The celebration of International Disability Day is grounded in the fundamental principle of inclusivity. It emphasizes the need for societies to recognize and appreciate the unique contributions of individuals with disabilities. Inclusivity goes beyond mere acknowledgment; it involves creating environments that meet the diverse needs of everyone, regardless of their abilities. This day serves as a catalyst for promoting understanding, acceptance, and respect for individuals with disabilities, fostering a sense of belonging within communities.

One of the primary objectives of International Disability Day is to raise awareness about the challenges faced by people with disabilities. Through various campaigns, events, and educational initiatives, the day seeks to dispel misconceptions, reduce stigma, and promote a more informed and empathetic society. Advocacy efforts play a crucial role in pushing for policy changes and ensuring that the rights of individuals with disabilities are upheld. The day serves as a platform for activists, organizations, including East Tennessee State University and individuals to unite in their commitment to advancing the rights and well-being of people with disabilities.

Celebrating International Disability Day is not just a symbolic gesture; it is a call to action. It is an opportunity for individuals, communities, and nations to reflect on the progress made, recognize the challenges that persist, and commit to creating a more inclusive and accessible world. By fostering awareness, advocating for change, showcasing achievements, and promoting inclusive practices, International Disability Day serves as a catalyst for building a society that values and embraces diversity in all its forms. It is a celebration of resilience, strength, and the inherent dignity of every individual, regardless of their abilities.

Continued ~ Message from Dr. Keith Johnson

Make sure to take a little time from your busy holiday shopping and preparation, to acknowledge, celebrate, and conduct your life in a way that promotes inclusive practices that educate the public on creating accessible spaces, both physical and digital. By doing this, it serves as a step closer to breaking down barriers and creating environments that cater to the diverse needs of all individuals. Always remember, as an institution, your participation and support are essential if the vision and mission is to be achieved. It is essential that the university continues to press onward with transforming the campus and the greater ETSU community into an environment that lives out the values of the university which include the following:

- 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 Johnson



HEED Diversity Survey Result

[HEED Diversity Survey Results by College 2021](#)

(Instructions: When you open the document, there would be list of every college. Click on the college of your need and the data will be updated on the left side.)

Meet Dr. Antony Norman, Presidential Fellow

Dr. Antony (Tony) Norman comes to ETSU as a one-year Presidential Fellow to support the implementation of several institutional initiatives, among them Moon Shot for Equity. Tony earned his Ph.D. in Educational Psychology from the University of Virginia in 1990. He participated in the American Council on Education (ACE) Fellows program (Class of 2018) and spent his fall 2017 semester at ETSU as part of his fellowship. Tony's motto for this year at ETSU is, "Here to Serve."



Tony most recently served as Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs at Morehead State University in Kentucky. He came to Morehead State as the Ernst and Sara Lane Volgenau College of Education Dean after a 25-year career as a faculty member and administrator at Western Kentucky University (WKU), where he holds faculty emeritus status. His administrative roles in WKU's College of Education and Behavioral Sciences included serving as Associate Dean for Retention, Persistence, and Degree Completion, Interim Director of the School of Professional Studies, Director of the Educational Leadership Doctoral Program, Interim Chair for the Department of Educational Administration, Leadership and Research, and Associate Dean for Accountability and Research. He began his administrative career as Assistant Dean for Assessment and Accountability in the College of Education and Human Services at Longwood University in Virginia. Prior to entering administration, Dr. Norman moved through the faculty ranks in WKU's Department of Psychology where he held tenure as a full professor.

Over his many years in education, Tony has visited, occasionally presenting or teaching, in a variety of countries—China, India, Korea, Mexico, Haiti, and France, just to name a few—and has always found much to admire and embrace in every one of them. Expanding on the value of his international travels, Tony observed, "Even within our own borders, diversity and cultural variety bring a richness of experience and a broader spectrum of thought and wisdom to the educational environment. At times, differing backgrounds and perspectives may lead to individuals and groups who are seemingly 'at odds' with each other, but I have found a spirit of civility and Covey's admonishment to first seek to understand, then to be understood lead to common ground and shared principles."

Regarding Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, Tony's past efforts at WKU include securing grant funds for a graduate-level Math and Science teacher residency program in partnership with Louisville's highly diverse Jefferson County school district. He also served as lead evaluator of the Kentucky Green River Regional Educational Cooperative's five-year, \$42 million Race to the Top-District Project, focused on improving educational outcomes of students from high-poverty backgrounds attending academically low-performing schools.

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Continued ~ Bio. Dr. Antony Norman

As the first full-time director of WKU's newly launched Educational Leadership Doctoral Program, Tony moved the program from a "concept on paper" to a fully functioning program with over 100 doctoral students enrolled by focusing on strategic planning aligned with WKU priorities and procuring grant dollars for scholarships to attract more international students and those from diverse backgrounds. While at Longwood University, Tony laid the groundwork for a "Call Me Mister" program designed to attract and prepare Black males to serve as elementary school teachers.

Regarding student success, while serving as Associate Dean for Retention, Persistence, and Degree Completion he worked with colleagues on a "last dollar" scholarship initiative, entitled "Project Finish," to encourage former students with less than 30 hours needed to graduate to return and complete their degree. While at Morehead State serving as dean, he worked with the university's Advancement and Foundation staff in developing the Volgenau Scholars Program to recruit and prepare future math and science teachers, as well as establishing a new Appalachian Future Educators Scholars Program with a focus on recruiting and supporting students from the eastern Kentucky region who commit to return as educators in their home communities.

Through collaborative relationships with colleagues, Tony has published over 40 articles, book chapters, and technical reports, conducted nearly eighty national presentations, served as external evaluator for five U.S. Department of Education funded grants, and served on numerous state and national professional boards and committees. Recently, he and others worked with the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet to develop, disseminate, and analyze results from its statewide REAL-ID Survey. This year, he and colleagues are finalizing revisions to an introductory Educational Psychology textbook scheduled for release by Sage Publishing in 2024.



ETSU Disability Services

ETSU admits students without regard to disabilities. The university is committed to making physical facilities and instructional programs accessible to students with disabilities. Disability Services coordinates accommodations and services designed to provide access for students with disabilities.

[Disability Services](#) offers a variety of accommodations and assistance to qualifying students who register with their office. Their mission is to provide services and promote an accessible environment which allows people with disabilities an equal opportunity for participation in educational pursuits and other campus activities. Their office:

- Assists students in negotiating disability-related barriers to their pursuit of education.
- Strives to improve access to university programs, activities, and facilities for students with disabilities.
- Promotes increased awareness of disability issues on campus.
- Aids in developing self-awareness, self-determination, and self-advocacy.

Under the Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), employees are entitled to reasonable accommodations, which can be a modification or adjustment to a job, the work environment, or the way things are usually done during the hiring process. Employees of ETSU are urged to contact Disability Services if they require accommodations in the workplace.



"The measure of a man, or woman, is not so much what they have accomplished, though that has weight. It often is much more though what that man or woman has overcome to accomplish what they have."

*~Leif Gregersen, ~
Through The Withering Storm*

Empowered by the Office of Equity and Inclusion and the Department of Computing

By Nafisat Bako, final year graduate student majoring in information systems/data analytics in the Department of Computing



Attending the AFROTECH conference, which took place from November 1st-5th, 2023 in Austin, Texas, was an enlightening and transformative experience, greatly enhanced by the generous sponsorship from the Office of Equity and Inclusion and the Department of Computing. Their support played a pivotal role in facilitating our participation in this significant event.

AFROTECH, an annual congregation that unites professionals, entrepreneurs, and students, serves as a vibrant showcase of technology, culture, and innovation, emphasizing the contributions and future potential of the African American tech community.

The conference's atmosphere was charged with the excitement of new ideas and the potential for innovative collaborations.

One of the highlights of AFROTECH was the array of speakers. Industry leaders and pioneers shared their insights on various topics, including artificial intelligence, blockchain, and the future of tech in various industries. These sessions not only provided valuable knowledge but also served as an inspiration for many attendees. Networking opportunities were abundant, with spaces designed to foster connections and collaborations. Attendees could easily interact with potential mentors, partners, or employers. The sense of community was palpable, with everyone eager to support and uplift each other.

The sponsorship from the Department of Equity and Inclusion and the Department of Computing was instrumental in enabling attendance, thereby enriching our experience and underscoring the importance of diversity and inclusion in technology. Their support is greatly appreciated and will undoubtedly contribute to the continued growth and impact of the future of ETSU students.



ETSU Graduate Students at The AfroTech Conference 2023

L-R: Adesewa Ogunnubi, Nafisat Bako, Adesola Ogunnubi, Courage Ojo, Chigozie Agwubuo, Grace Ofiah



"Impossible is just a big word thrown around by small men who find it easier to live in the world they've been given than to explore the power they have to change it. Impossible is not a fact. It's an opinion. Impossible is not a declaration. It's a dare. Impossible is potential. Impossible is temporary. Impossible is nothing." ~Muhammad Ali~

Upcoming Events

December 2023				
Tuesday	Dec. 5th	Moon Shot for Equity Professional Learning Series led by USC Race and Equity Center <i>Strategic Planning and Action For Racial Equity</i>	1:00-3:00pm	Register Here



LGBT Tea Party!

DECEMBER 6 | CULP CENTER EAST TENNESSEE ROOM | 5PM-7PM



EAST TENNESSEE STATE
UNIVERSITY
Dr. Patricia Robertson
Pride Center



EAST TENNESSEE STATE
UNIVERSITY
Women and Gender
Resource Center

THE MARY V. JORDAN MULTICULTURAL CENTER
PRESENTS



MULTICULTURAL CENTER CELEBRATION

Please Join Us for a Celebration

DEC	13	2023
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📍 CULP AUDITORIUM
🕒 7 PM

EMAIL: ETSUMC@ETSU.EDU / CALL: (423) 439-4844



EAST TENNESSEE STATE
UNIVERSITY
Mary V. Jordan Multicultural Center



December 14, 2023

East Tennessee Room, D.P. Culp Center

Doors open at 5:30

Event begins at 6:00 PM

Light Refreshments Provided



**EAST TENNESSEE STATE
UNIVERSITY**

**Dr. Patricia Robertson
Pride Center**



**EAST TENNESSEE STATE
UNIVERSITY**

**Women and Gender
Resource Center**

eConvenings

East Tennessee Higher Education Regional Alliance

USC Race and Equity Center

This professional learning series is for full-time and part-time employees at Alliance member institutions. Each month, nationally renowned equity experts will offer a highly-engaging live session via Zoom on a different racial equity topic. Useful tools and practical strategies will be provided in every synchronous three-hour experience. Every campus can send up to 400 employees to each session – it could be the same 400 people, or a different set each month. While there is no cost, advance registration is required for each individual session.

Understanding and Addressing Implicit Bias

Thursday, January 26 | 1-3pm EST

Register at www.uscrec.info/ETHERA_1

Engaging in Productive Conversations About Race and Racism

Tuesday, February 28 | 1-3pm EST

Register at www.uscrec.info/ETHERA_2

Understanding the Effects of Racism on Students' Experiences and Outcomes

Thursday, March 30 | 1-3pm EST

Register at www.uscrec.info/ETHERA_3

Confronting Explicit Acts of Racism and Racial Violence on Campus

Wednesday, April 19 | 1-3pm EST

Register at www.uscrec.info/ETHERA_4

Strategically Recruiting Employees of Color

Monday, May 22 | 1-3pm EST

Register at www.uscrec.info/ETHERA_5

Supporting and Retaining Employees of Color

Thursday, June 30 | 1-3pm EST Register at

www.uscrec.info/ETHERA_6

Accountability and Incentives for Advancing Racial Equity

Wednesday, July 26 | 1-3pm EST

Register at www.uscrec.info/ETHERA_7

Fostering and Sustaining Inclusive Classrooms for Students of Color

Thursday, August 24 | 1-3pm EST

Register at www.uscrec.info/ETHERA_8

Meaningfully Integrating Racial Topics Across the Curriculum

Thursday, September 28th, 1:30-3:30pm
ETSU DP Culp Center Ballroom

Engaging Students of Color in High-Impact Educational Practices and Experiences

Tuesday, October 24 | 1-3pm EST

Register at www.uscrec.info/ETHERA_10

Using Disaggregated Data to Identify and Address Racial Inequities

Thursday, November 9 | 1-3pm EST

Register at www.uscrec.info/ETHERA_11

Strategic Planning and Action for Racial Equity

Tuesday, December 5 | 1-3pm EST

Register at www.uscrec.info/ETHERA_12

race.usc.edu

Direct all inquiries to
Dr. Minh Tran (mctran@usc.edu)

Festival of Nations

December 14 | 11am-1pm
Langston Centre Auditorium, 315 Elm St

Join us for a Festival of Nations! It's time to celebrate the many cultures in the Tri-Cities area and learn about each culture's traditions and celebrations.

Free for all ages.



Call 423-434-5785, email
Langstoncentre@johnsoncitytn.org, or
visit myjcparks.org to register.



JOHNSON CITY
PARKS & RECREATION

USC Race and
Equity Center

EQUITY CONNECT



INTERACT



CONNECT



SHARED LEARNING



FORM INTEREST GROUPS



**VIRTUAL COMMUNITIES
OF PRACTICE**



FIND RESOURCES

Learn more at
equityconnect.usc.edu

This portal is for employees of colleges and universities that are members of the USC Race and Equity Center's alliances, equity institutes, leadership academies, and other partnerships. It includes video recordings and assets from eConvenings, as well as other downloadable racial equity resources. This portal also allows persons with authenticated profiles to form and actively participate in virtual communities of practice. Posing questions of practice, offering advice to colleagues, sharing effective practices, and fostering new collaborations are all possible in the virtual communities.

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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.