



# Office of Equity and Inclusion Newsletter

November 2, 2020



## ***A Message from Dr. Keith Johnson, Vice President of Equity and Inclusion***

**“Celebrate our Veterans: They help move us to becoming the university of choice”**

The month of November is typically the period that we set aside to celebrate our veterans and the contributions and sacrifices that they have made for this country. Often when we talk about contributions made by veterans, normally the discussions center around leadership, teamwork, and are mission-driven. Though these areas are all important, there are less than talked about attributes that veterans bring to a work environment including East Tennessee State University that impacts the climate in a way that will make it more welcoming, exciting, and inclusive. This month's message is copied from a piece written by Jeff Ross, a former Navy SEAL and staff writer for “Task and Purpose”, an online website <https://taskandpurpose.com/> with a focus on military news, analysis, culture, and careers. There are eleven attributes that he points out as valuable to a work environment:

### **1. Sense of humor**

When the going gets tough, the tough get *sarcastic*. [Jeff Ross] remembers in Basic Underwater Demolition/SEAL training being on their fifth or sixth set of 50 push-ups, arms shaking as he strived to hold [himself] up and in complete agony, when an instructor walked into the room and yelled, “Looking good gents, looking good ... not you, *me!*”

What this did — probably unintentionally, but nonetheless important — was teach them how to direct their attention away from the emotion of the moment and instead redirect their focus elsewhere. Ultimately, it taught them to separate themselves from the moment and take an objective rather than a subjective perspective.

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**"How important it is for us to recognize and  
celebrate our heroes and she-roes!"**

**~ Maya Angelou ~**

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### 2. Cool Stories

One benefit veterans have is a laundry list of unique experiences that *no one* in the office can likely match.

Tell them about the time you woke up in your car in a junkyard in another state after a long night out, or perhaps what it was like to walk through an Egyptian bazaar.

Whatever stories you share, they offer a personalization, sense of awe, and interest to those who have yet to be bitten by the travel bug. [Believe it or not, stories are what connects all of us in one way or another. As we share our stories, we began to learn that we have more in common than not.]

### 3. Presence of mind

If getting shot at didn't ruffle your feathers, chances are that product deadlines or meeting updates won't either. Veterans are used to working in chaos and dealing with adversity. Instead of being crippled by change, they choose to stand tall, find solutions, and keep moving.

### 4. Punctuality

Believe it or not, being on time apparently isn't a natural phenomenon outside the military bubble. Veterans are used to the hurry-up-and-wait agenda the military is known for whereas many civilians are of the hurry-up-and-minimize-how-late-I-will-be approach.

What is meant here is that meetings in the military served a purpose (at least most of them), so one of the best contributions a veteran can bring to any formal gathering is a mindset of accountability.

### 5. Mission Mindset

Veterans come from a world where "me" is at the bottom of the organizational totem pole and "we" is the flavor of the day, every day. A "we" mindset is contagious because people see how you think which only broadens *their* awareness. Mindset is contagious. It can

be toxic or liberating depending on who you are (values) and what you want to spread (character).

### 6. Opportunity

Many people think veterans are ticking time bombs waiting to go off because they're now in a "different world." Quite the contrary. Veterans have the opportunity to dispel this myth and show the general public the value that serving in the military brings; namely, an attitude of selflessness and higher purpose that drives them to achieve more every day rather than just show up.

### 7. Decisions, decisions

Progress only comes from a willingness to move ahead, and that willingness is a conscious choice — a decision — to do so. Veterans know that whether they want to or not, decisions must be made that are often-times unpopular.

### 8. Project Management experience

When it all boils down, veterans have a vast amount of project management experience that allows them to see the individual pieces within a greater organizational puzzle.

For example, one position [that Jeff Ross] held as a Navy SEAL was serving as a team leader for a joint outpost on a forward operating base in Afghanistan. [His] job was to coordinate intelligence with other Department of Defense and civilian units and fuse those relationships together so that we could execute targets *together*.

Translating this into business-speak wasn't easy, but under the umbrella of "project management" the challenge of managing divergent interests, personal agendas, resources, and logistics became much more apparent.

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## Continued ~ Message from Dr. Keith Johnson

### 9. Fitness

Not in the sense of how many push-ups you can do, but rather one's ability to sustain superior performance. [Jeff Ross] believes that **organizational fitness** — the overall readiness and willingness of a company to execute its strategy and achieve stated objectives — comes from the summation of each and every individual who is physically, mentally, and emotionally competent enough to perform. Veterans know this. They understand the value of *personal* fitness as it relates to *organizational* fitness because a team is only as strong as its weakest link.

### 10. Idea flow

At the end of the day, diversity plays a key role in performance. In his book [Out of Our Minds: Learning To Be Creative](#), author Ken Robinson notes how “our world views shrink as we see the same people talking about the same topics, again and again.”

Veterans bring in new perspectives that enhance idea flow (i.e. “the good idea fairy”). Without strong idea flow, innovation is limited.

### 11. Network

With a vast amount of experience comes a vast array of relationships. The relationships formed in the military, both personal and professional, serve as huge support networks that can last forever. The amount of expertise and knowledge that is readily accessible in the military is a blessing, and being able to call upon subject matter experts for advice is yet another powerful weapon veterans bring into the workforce.

In a 1985 study at Bell Laboratories, Robert Kelley of Carnegie Mellon University investigated why some people were considered better performers than others. His findings: high performers actively sought to build relationships with subject matter experts and later tap into said expert's knowledge base for specific tasks. In other

words, a more diverse social network allowed high performers to see more moving parts and gain a better strategic view, whereas average performers tended to stay within the confines of their job own functions.

At the end of the day, veterans bring a plethora of unique experiences, insight, and mental models to the workforce that could only come from military service. Nowhere else do the same amounts of risk, decision-making, mission focus and team spirit exist.

In higher education and specifically at ETSU, if we embrace these eleven areas, among others, it will help the university move closer to achieving its mission where

**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.

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## Veteran Spotlight



Vernon Bradley is an alum of East Tennessee State University, the current Director of East Tennessee State University Parking Services, and the faculty advisor of Theta Zeta Chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc.

In 1978, Vernon was a member of the ROTC program and became a member of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity Inc. In 1986, Vernon earned a second Bachelor of Science Degree from Troy State University and a Master of Science in Administration from Central Michigan University in 1990.

Upon graduation from East Tennessee State University, in 1979, Vernon was commissioned as second lieutenant in the United States Army. He served in numerous leadership positions. In Berlin, Germany, Vernon served as a Mortar and Anti-Tank platoon leader and Company Executive Officer. Upon his return

to the United State, he served in various positions: Instructor at the U.S. Army Infantry School, Detachment and Company Commander at Ft. Benning, Georgia, an Assistant Professor of Military Service at Central State University, Battalion Executive Officer for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 29<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment, and Professor of Military Science at East Tennessee State University.

His last assignment was returning to East Tennessee State University as the Chair of the Military Science Department and then retiring at the rank of Major in 1997. After military retirement, Vernon held positions as a Johnson City Public Safety Office, and Director of Community Safety for the Johnson City Housing Authority in 1998 and returned back to East Tennessee State University in 2008. He also served the community through serving two terms on the Johnson City Regional Planning Commission.

He is married to Linda and they have three daughters, Lindsey, Melissa, and Natalie, and four grandchildren. Let's celebrate our veteran, Vernon Bradley!

## Where Do I Post A Job Opportunity?

It can be a challenge to recruit women and underrepresented candidates for job openings. The Office of Equity and Inclusion [Job Opportunities/Resources](#) webpage has information/resources



to assist you in posting open positions. The job boards at these organizations will allow you to reach a more diverse population of candidates. They include: [SREB](#), [NCORE](#), [Insight Into Diversity](#), [Diverse Jobs](#), [HBCU Connect](#), and [The Academic Network](#).

Colleges/departments are advised to work directly with these organizations to discuss additional ways to reach potential employees and request job postings.

Contact our office at [maturo@etsu.edu](mailto:maturo@etsu.edu) or 423-439-4445 if you have any questions.



## ETSU Office of Veterans Affairs

**Office Hours:** 8:00 AM - 4:30 PM Monday-Friday

**Office Phone:** 423-439-6819

**Office Locations:** Nell Dossett Hall, 2nd Floor, Rooms 220, 204, 205, 206  
**Military Student Resource Center (MARC)** - Yoakley Hall 005

Guy Hurd, Director/School Certifying Official  
David Haselroth, Executive Aide/School Certifying Official

[Visit the Veteran Affairs website.](#)



## ETSU Veterans Upward Bound

Veterans Upward Bound is a program that helps veterans receive basic instruction in pre-college or GED courses to help prepare them for college, technical, or vocational school enrollment, GED exam and career development.

All services, books, supplies and instruction are provided **FREE OF CHARGE** to eligible veterans. They offer classes in Grammar, Composition, Literature, Science, Basic Math, Algebra I, Algebra II, Advanced Math, Probability and Statistics, Spanish, Basic Computer Skills: Word, Advanced Computer Skills: Excel, and Computer Lab.

They also offer study skills, financial aid and college success workshops.

Veterans Upward Bound at East Tennessee State University has been in operation since September of 1980 providing educational opportunities to veterans in upper East Tennessee and Southwest Virginia. It is funded by a grant from the United States Department of Education under Title IV.

[Visit the Veterans Upward Bound website.](#)

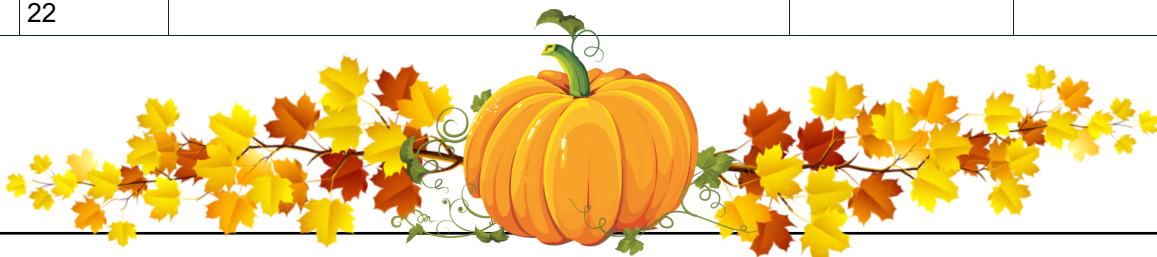
## Upcoming Events

### November 2020

|         |         |                                                                                                                                                            |              |                                   |
|---------|---------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|-----------------------------------|
| Wednes. | Nov. 4  | Women on Wednesdays Lecture Series<br>Rachel Miller-Slough, Psychology, A&S<br><b><i>Examining Risk and Protective Factors for Youth Mental Health</i></b> | 12:00-1:00pm | Zoom ID 992 0791 0939             |
| Tuesday | Nov. 10 | Lunch and Learn Session<br><b><i>The Biology of Skin Color</i></b><br>Discussion lead: Dr. Cerrone Foster, Assistant Professor, Biological Sciences        | 12:00-1:00pm | <a href="#">Join Zoom Meeting</a> |

### 2021

|         |             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |              |                                   |
|---------|-------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|-----------------------------------|
| Tuesday | January 26  | Lunch and Learn Session<br><b><i>Make Your Classroom More Inclusion</i></b><br>Discussion lead: Dr. Taine Duncan, Associate Professor & Director of Gender Studies, University of Central Arkansas                  | 12:00-1:00pm | <a href="#">Join Zoom Meeting</a> |
| Wednes. | February 17 | Lunch and Learn Session<br><b><i>Working With First Generation Students</i></b><br>Discussion lead: Dr. Michelle Hurley, Assistant Director McNair Program and Ms. Meagan Stark, Retention Coordinator TRiO Program | 12:00-1:00pm | <a href="#">Join Zoom Meeting</a> |
| Tuesday | February 23 | Lunch and Learn Session<br><b><i>Debiasing Techniques</i></b><br>Discussion lead: Dr. Antonio Rusinol, Associate Professor, Biomedical Sciences, COM                                                                | 12:00-1:00pm | <a href="#">Join Zoom Meeting</a> |
| Tuesday | March 2     | Lunch and Learn Session<br><b><i>New Models of Recruitment and Retention</i></b><br>Discussion lead: Dr. John Kuykendall, Dean and Associate Professor, School of Education, University of Indianapolis             | 12:00-1:00pm | <a href="#">Join Zoom Meeting</a> |
| Tuesday | March 9     | Lunch and Learn Session<br><b><i>Recruiting and Retaining Diverse Populations</i></b><br>Discussion lead: Ms. Jessica Wang, Director of Student Success, Clemmer College                                            | 12:00-1:00pm | <a href="#">Join Zoom Meeting</a> |
| Tuesday | April 6th   | Lunch and Learn Session<br><b><i>Social Learning and Social Justice</i></b><br>Discussion Lead: Deidra Rogers, Lecturer, Department of Counseling & Human Services, Clemmer College                                 | 12:00-1:00pm | <a href="#">Join Zoom Meeting</a> |
| Tuesday | TBA         | Lunch and Learn Lecture Series<br><b><i>Coping With Crisis</i></b><br>Discussion lead:<br>Tonya McKoy, Ph.D., LPC-MHSP/AS, NCC<br>Licensed Professional Counselor                                                   | 12:00-1:00pm | Join Zoom Meeting                 |
| Spring  | 2021        | Corazon Latino                                                                                                                                                                                                      | TBA          |                                   |
| Fall    | Sept. 21-22 | 3rd Annual Equity and Inclusion Conference                                                                                                                                                                          | TBA          |                                   |



## Equity and Inclusion Advisory Council Member Spotlight



Phyllis Thompson is director of Women's Studies and associate professor of Literature. She grew up in the Appalachian mountains, learning herbal remedies from her grandmother, trout fishing on the banks of the little Wilson with her daddy, and playing the piano and dancing the jitterbug with her momma. These early life lessons inform her teaching, research, writing, and community engagement to this day. Phyllis teaches courses on women in the archives, queer literature, and gender-based violence; is a certified Safe Zone, RAD, and trauma-informed care instructor; and publishes on women's medicinal recipe books from the 18<sup>th</sup>-century. She has served on the Board of Directors for Holston Habitat for Humanity, the Advisory Group for the YWCA's EMERGE Women's Leadership Series, the TN Economic Commission on Women, and Past-President of the South-

eastern Women's Studies Association. For fun, Phyllis likes to play frisbee with her Border Collie Bob and whitewater kayak with her partner David.

## Office of Equity and Inclusion Lunch and Learn Sessions

Recordings of Past Lunch and Learn Sessions can be found on the Equity and Inclusion website. [Click here](#) to learn more about:

Inclusive Language, Trauma Informed Teaching and Learning, The Culturally Responsive Classroom, Reframing Disability, Supporting Underrepresented Learners in an Online Environment, Social Media Presence, Becoming an LGBTQ Ally, How to Run an Inclusive Search, and Diversity, Inclusion, and Career Services: Helping Students Navigate Their Career Through and After College.

**Office of Equity and Inclusion**  
**230 Burgin E. Dossett Hall**  
**P.O. Box 70705**  
**Johnson City, TN 37614**  
**P 423-439-4445**  
**F 423-439-4543**

**Webpage:** <https://www.etsu.edu/equity/>

**Facebook:** [https://](https://www.facebook.com/etsuequity/)

[www.facebook.com/etsuequity/](https://www.facebook.com/etsuequity/)

**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](mailto:maturo@etsu.edu).

To add a name to our mailing list, please email Kim Maturo at [maturo@etsu.edu](mailto:maturo@etsu.edu).