



Office of Equity and Inclusion Newsletter

October 9, 2023



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

"10 Reasons Why You should Support Moon Shot for Equity"

Dear Friends,

Closing equity gaps in higher education is of paramount importance and critical for several reasons:

1. **Equal Opportunity:** Education is often considered a pathway to socioeconomic mobility and a better quality of life. Closing equity gaps ensures that all individuals, regardless of their background, have equal access to these opportunities.
2. **Social Justice:** Equity in education is a matter of social justice. Systemic disparities in educational outcomes perpetuate existing inequalities in society, including those related to race, socioeconomic status, gender, and more. Closing these gaps is a step toward a fairer and more just society.

~ continued on page 2 ~



"As we express our gratitude,
we must never forget that the
highest appreciation is not to utter
words, but to live by them."
~ John F. Kennedy ~

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Continued ~ Message from Dr. Keith Johnson

3. **Economic Benefits:** A well-educated workforce is essential for economic growth and competitiveness. When equity gaps persist, it means that a significant portion of the population is not reaching their full potential. Closing these gaps can lead to a more skilled and productive workforce, benefiting the economy as a whole.
4. **Innovation and Problem-Solving:** Diverse perspectives and backgrounds enrich the educational experience and contribute to innovation and problem-solving. When equity gaps are addressed, higher education institutions become more inclusive and diverse, fostering creativity and critical thinking.
5. **Reducing Poverty:** Education is a key factor in breaking the cycle of poverty. By ensuring equitable access to higher education, we can empower individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds to improve their economic prospects and reduce poverty rates.
6. **Health and Well-Being:** Education is linked to better health outcomes and overall well-being. People with higher levels of education tend to make healthier choices, have access to better healthcare, and live longer. Closing equity gaps can improve the health and well-being of marginalized communities.
7. **Social Cohesion:** An equitable education system fosters social cohesion and reduces societal divisions. When people from diverse backgrounds have equal opportunities to learn and succeed, it can lead to greater understanding, tolerance, and unity.
8. **Global Competitiveness:** In a globalized world, nations that invest in education and close equity gaps are more likely to remain competitive on the international stage. A diverse and well-educated workforce is crucial for innovation and adaptability in a rapidly changing global economy.
9. **Reduction of Crime and Social Problems:** Higher education is often associated with lower rates of crime and social problems. By providing equitable access to education, we can reduce some of the social issues that arise from limited opportunities and economic hardship.
10. **Civic Engagement:** Education plays a vital role in preparing individuals for active and informed citizenship. When equity gaps are closed, it ensures that a broader and more diverse segment of the population is engaged in civic and political life, strengthening democracy.

Recently, four of the best practices team leaders provided the campus with an update of the work that is currently underway as part of the moonshot initiative. There were several recommendations that were made and the university will be acting on those recommendations.

Continued ~ Message from Dr. Keith Johnson

Please visit [Moon Shot for Equity](#) to learn more about those recommendations. At the conclusion of the convening, major commitments were made by President Brian Noland that will have an immediate and lasting impact on the moonshot efforts and support the closing of the equity gaps. Those commitments included the following:

1. Resources to launch a First Generation Student Center
2. An established new position that will support the moon Shot initiatives relative to Navigate.
3. A commitment to support a unique student success initiative that will have a positive impact on many of our students including, first generation, low income and underserved / underrepresented.

In summary, closing equity gaps in higher education is not only a matter of fairness and social justice but also a strategic investment in the well-being, prosperity, and social cohesion of society. It has far-reaching benefits that extend beyond the individual to the university, community and the nation as a whole. **ETSU** is fully committed to closing the equity gaps as a priority for the university. As a reminder, the university is attempting to live out its mission which includes:

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,

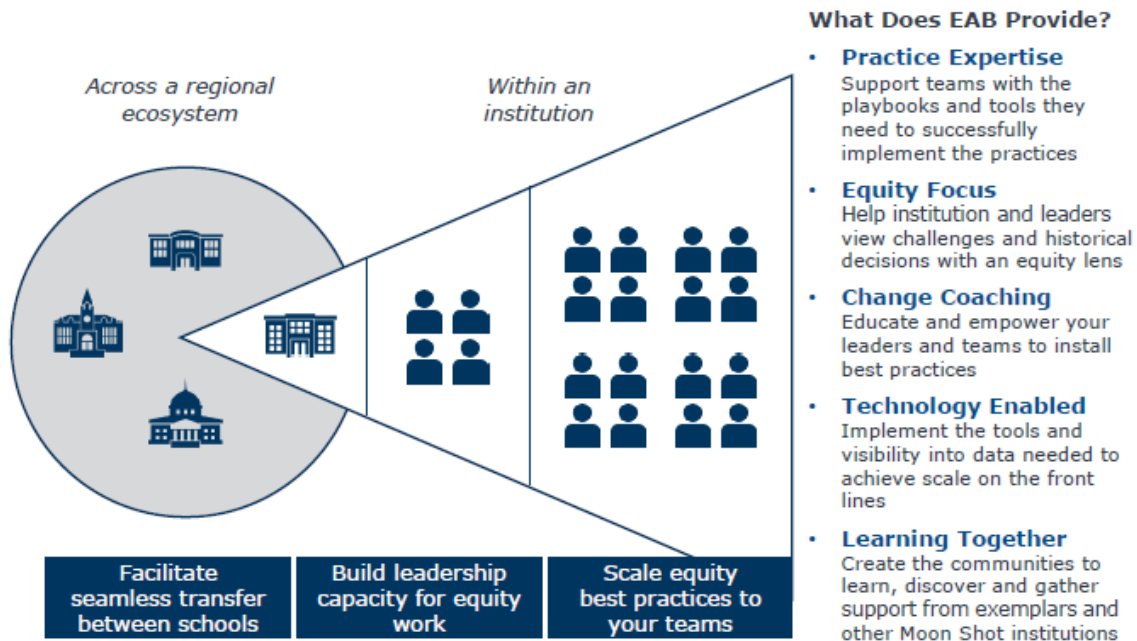
Dr. Keith Johnson

Aim for the moon. If you miss, you may hit a star.
~ W. Clement Stone ~

Moon Shot For Equity

Creating Your Scale On Campus

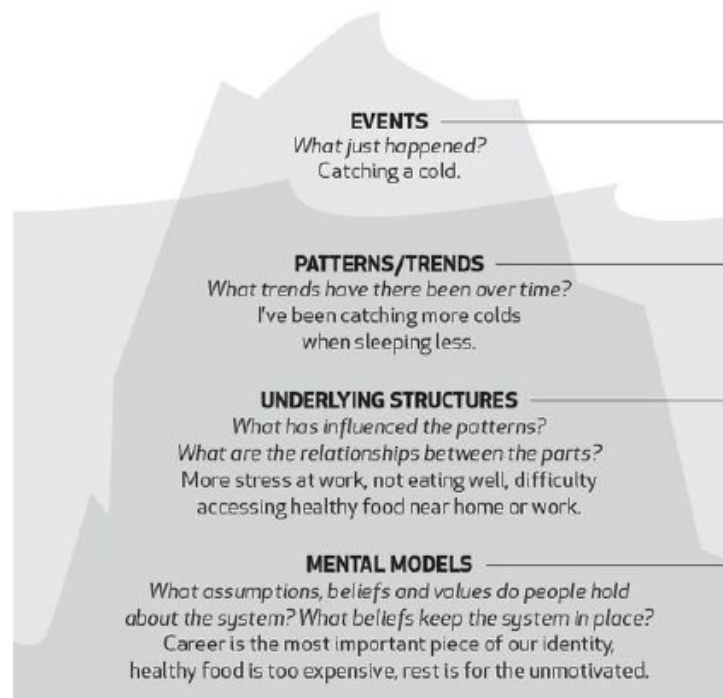
How to Scale Capacity For Closing Equity Gaps Across an Entire Region



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Initiatives vs. Transformations

Systems Thinking Tool: The Iceberg



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Source: The Iceberg Model.

Community Voices Magazine

Community Voices Magazine is a quarterly publication of individual stories from diverse points of view with hope of establishing productive dialogue on many challenges



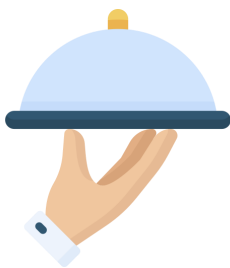
COMMUNITY VOICES

Helping People Hear Each Other..
One Story at a Time

[Click here](#) to read the latest issue.

Complimentary Lunch at ETSU Dining Hall for Veterans/Military Members

***All Veterans and current military members
are invited to a complimentary lunch on***



Date: Monday, November 13, 2023

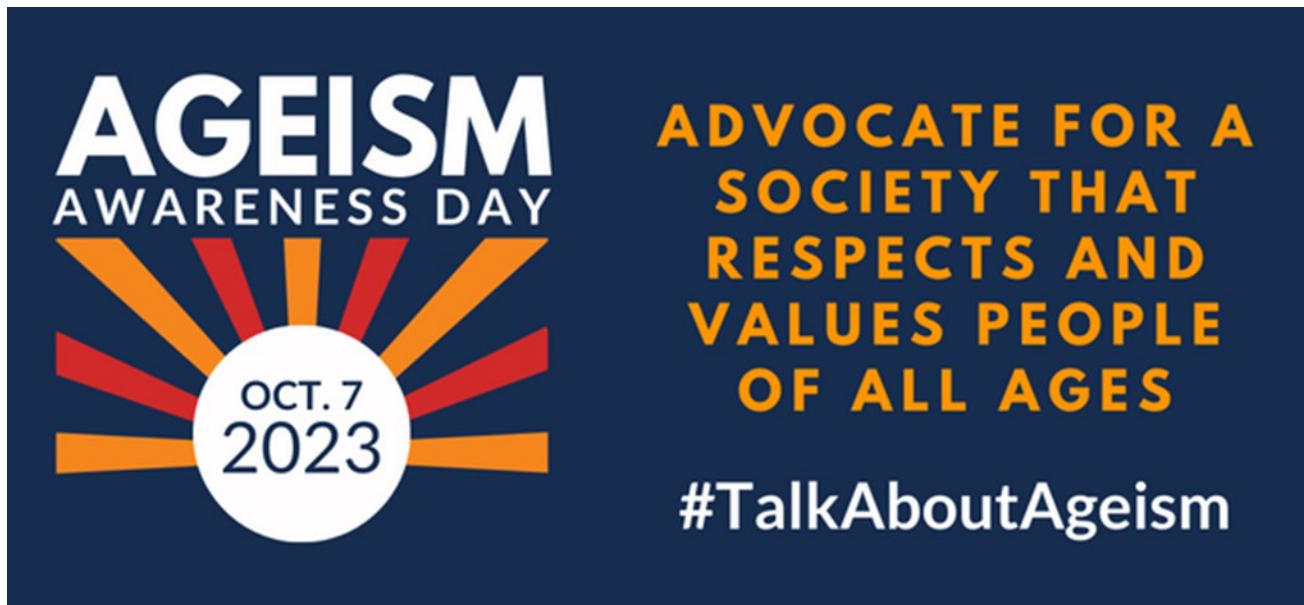
Time: 11:00am-2:00pm

Place: ETSU Dining Hall, 3rd Floor Culp Student Center

Pick up your meal ticket at one of the following locations:

- Office of Military and Veteran Services—125 Yoakley Hall
 - ETSU Army ROTC—206 Brooks Gym
- Office of Equity and Inclusion—109 Burgin Dossett Hall

Upcoming Events



Ageism Awareness Day was on Saturday, October 7, 2023, this day is an opportunity to draw attention to the existence and impact of ageism in our society and how we can reframe aging in our communities.

Learn more at [American Society on Aging](https://www.americansocietyonaging.org/).

Culturally Aware, Responsive, and Engaged (CARE) Training



We All Rise Virtual Conference October 18-20, 2023

In 2021, in response to requests for an annual event like the We All Rise Biennial Conference, a virtual conference was created to allow an additional opportunity for colleagues to convene and learn from others who are involved with access, diversity, and equity work, with an emphasis on increasing student success and completion rates, as well as workforce preparation. These biennial virtual convening cover topics such as reflections on implementation strategies and outcomes of access and diversity grant fund-

ed programs, innovations in practice, as well as extended sessions on critical and topical areas of focus.

ETSU Black American Studies Presents



ANTHONY RAY HINTON

*Author of **The Sun Does Shine: How I Found Life and Freedom on Death Row***

Lecture and Q&A Session

7 p.m.

Grand Soldiers Ballroom, Carnegie Hotel

OCTOBER 12, 2023

*Event is free and open to the public.
Audience Q&A and book signing to follow.*

This event is part of the Black American Studies Lecture Series.
For more information, contact Dr. Daryl Carter at carterda@etsu.edu



**BLACK AMERICAN
STUDIES PROGRAM**

EAST TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

Upcoming Events

October 2023				
Tuesday	Oct. 3rd	Lunch and Learn <i>Women in STEM</i> Discussion Lead: Brittany Butler, Senior Lecture, Department of Chemistry	12:00-1:00pm	Click here for recording
Monday	Oct. 9th	Red Flag Campaign on Campus	10:00am–2:00pm	University Commons
Monday	Oct. 9th	ETSU Elevates Nine student teams and their community partners will pitch their community service project ideas in front of a LIVE audience.	5:00pm	Martin Center for the Arts
Tuesday	Oct. 10th	ETSU Remembers ETSU Remembers is an annual ceremony to honor faculty, staff, and students who have passed away during the prior year. This special ceremony, which includes ringing of the ETSU Carillon bells in remembrance of those we have lost. Remarks will begin at 10:00am at the base of the Carillon and bells will ring at 10:11am.	10:00am	Carillon
Wednesday	Oct. 11th	ETSU Heroes Recognition A celebration of extraordinary individuals	4:00-6:00pm	D.P. Culp Student Center ballroom.
Wednesday	Oct. 18th	How to Series Decolonizing Research Methodology This workshop introduces attendees to ongoing scholarly conversations about incorporating decolonial learning into research methodology and overall practices.	12:00-1:00pm	Register here
Friday	Oct. 20th	Appalachian Highlands ETSU supply Chain and Digital Technology Summit Students and business professionals gather to learn best practices in supply chain and company digital transformation, how to cope and thrive with the changing nature of doing business in a digitally connected world, and much more.	8:30am-12:30 p.m.	Martin Center for the Arts
Tuesday	Oct. 31st	Lunch and Learn <i>Making Ally a Verb: Putting Action Behind Your Allyship</i> Discussion Lead: Bethanie Dye, Coordinator Pride Center	12:00-1:00pm	Via Zoom
November 2023				
Tuesday	Nov. 7th	Lunch and Learn <i>Preventing Burnout, Managing Grief, and Cultivating Resilience</i> Discussion Lead: Kate Emmerich, Clinical Instructor, Students Services, COM	12:00-1:00pm	Via Zoom
Wednesday	Nov. 15th	Lunch and Learn <i>Deaf and ASL Issues</i> Discussion Lead: Dr. Leonard Granda, Clinical Asst. Professor, Dept. of Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology	12:00-1:00pm	Via Zoom

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)

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.

Congratulations to Bethanie Dye, Coordinator Pride Center



The Mary V. Jordan Multicultural Center Hires First Fulltime Pride Center Coordinator

by

Alyssa Morel & Kevin L. Brooks, Ph.D.

The Mary V. Jordan Multicultural Center selects Bethanie Dye as the first fulltime coordinator of the [Dr. Patricia Robertson Pride Center](#). Dye is celebrating one year at the Multicultural Center with responsibilities for coordinating programs and events for the Pride Center.

Before joining the Multicultural Center, Dye has worked at ETSU as a marketing coordinator in Housing and Residence Life for six years, a marketing manager in Dining Services for three, and interim Pride Center coordinator. These experiences are the inspiration they used to create a vision for improving the campus experiences of students from underserved communities.

“It has always been a dream to work at the MCC, since my career started to work with minorities and [I] wanted to make sure everyone has the best experience here,” they stated. Dye is dedicated to caring for students in the center and across campus. “I saw gaps in that support that I felt as I could fill and always try to support students in any way I can, regardless of if it was in my job description.”

Dye creates settings where students can confide in and feel support from them to fill those gaps. “The little moments with my students when they want me to know how they did on an assignment and when they trust me when they are in crisis” are the most rewarding aspects of their position in both centers.

Their goals for the Pride Center are to expand the space and increase collaborations with other units and departments and provide greater access to resources and opportunities in the center. They emphasized, “[I] would love to see us in a bigger space to offer additional support for our students and to grow our internal and external partnerships to bring all the information our students need into one location.”

The Multicultural Center provides them with various opportunities to develop as a person and an educator. The diverse students they encounter help them gain knowledge from the interactions and experiences shared. “I love to learn and working here helps me learn more about the world and my place in it,” Dye said.

They are committed to addressing the biggest misconception about the Pride Center is that it is only suitable for those who identify with the community, but they ensure it is a support center for all students, and all are welcome.

Meet Onyedika Okonkwo, Graduate Assistant, Office of Equity and Inclusion

Onyedika Okonkwo, is a dynamic individual who is currently pursuing a master's degree in digital media at East Tennessee State University (ETSU). With a passion for creativity and a keen eye for detail, Onyedika has successfully balanced academics and a thriving career. Presently, Onyedika holds the role of Creative Team Lead at Digital Square Limited, where innovative ideas come to life through the digital realm. Simultaneously, Onyedika serves as a dedicated Graduate Assistant in the Office of Equity and Inclusion at ETSU, demonstrating a strong commitment to fostering inclusivity and diversity within the university community.

Onyedika is from Nigeria. Graduate of University of Nigeria Nsukka with a Bachelor's Degree in Fine and Applied Arts and a Diploma Holder in Advertising from 02 Academy Lagos. Beyond the academic and professional spheres, Onyedika finds joy and fulfillment in the world of art, particularly drawing. This creative outlet not only serves as a form of self-expression but also provides a unique perspective on visual storytelling. Additionally, Onyedika's passion for advertising reflects a desire to merge the worlds of creativity and marketing, finding innovative ways to captivate audiences through digital media. With a rich blend of academic prowess, professional experience, and a flair for creativity, Onyedika is poised to continue making meaningful contributions to the fields of digital media and equity and inclusion. Their journey exemplifies dedication, innovation, and a commitment to creating a more inclusive and imaginative world.



**[Click here](#) to find your photo from the
5th Annual Equity and Inclusion Conference
Photo Gallery**

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Facebook: <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.

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