

DoCS DEIA Newsletter

Issue 2

May-August 2024

Announcements

DEIA Learning Path Badging Program

Please complete your DEIA Reflection form if you recently participated in a DEIA workshop, tour, film screening, or volunteer opportunity. Your input is invaluable in advancing our commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility.

The DEIA Reflection form is conveniently accessible on our DEIA website: <https://deia.rutgers.edu/learning-badge>. We genuinely appreciate your active involvement in our DoCS DEIA events. Your participation and contributions are vital in shaping our division's culture and fostering inclusivity.

Thank you for your ongoing commitment!

DEIA Cultural Cookbook

We invite you to participate in our new [DEIA Cultural Cookbook](#) project. Every culture has unique flavors and cherished culinary traditions, and we want to celebrate the rich diversity within our community by showcasing them in our cookbook.

We're calling on you to share the flavors of your culture and the stories behind your favorite recipes. Whether it's a treasured family dish passed down through generations or a modern twist on a classic recipe, your culinary contributions will help create a cookbook that reflects the vibrant tapestry of our community. We encourage everyone to submit recipes, meaningful memories, and insights highlighting the cultural significance of the dishes you hold dear. Together, let's celebrate our cultural heritage through the universal language of food.

Submit your recipes today and contribute to creating something extraordinary!

Submit Your Recipe

Cook's Market at Rutgers Gardens

Join us in supporting our local farmers at the Cook's Market at Rutgers Gardens! Starting Friday, May 17, and continuing through Friday, August 23, we will sponsor shuttle rides to the Rutgers Gardens every Friday. Please meet at the LLC at 11 am on the 1st floor by the Information Desk.

Food Donation Drive

Our food donation drive is in full swing, and we've already made significant progress towards our goal! Let's keep the giving spirit alive by contributing to our year-long food drive. Whether it's a can of soup or a bag of rice, every donation makes a meaningful difference in someone's life. Together, we can make a positive impact on our community.

At this time, with your support we have reached 22% of our goal!

To view the LLC second and third floor status donation tracker please [click here](#).

DEIA Library: Film

We're thrilled to share the latest enhancement to our DEIA Library—the addition of films! If you missed any of our recent film screenings, fret not! Our library continuously expands, offering a diverse range of cinematic experiences exploring important themes and perspectives.

Our film DEIA library is located in the Quiet Room.

We invite you to dive into our growing collection of films and embrace the power of storytelling to foster a more inclusive and equitable world.

DoCS DEIA Events

Register for upcoming DEIA events through docshr.rutgers.edu. Login and click on the training tab to view and register for available sessions.

Volunteer Opportunities

New Brunswick Park Clean Up

Join us for a park clean-up in the City of New Brunswick on June 7th from 2pm-4pm. We are looking for volunteers to assist with one-time clean-up services for trash, recycling, and litter. The service requires a minimum of 10 volunteers and takes 2 hours to complete.

Register

Film Series

We're excited to announce that our film series will continue throughout the summer months! Below, you'll find the upcoming screenings. After each screening, we'll host a brief discussion accompanied by light snacks:

- [May 15th – Bob Marley: One Love \(2024\) - LLC Cinema](#)
- [June 27th – Coco \(2017\) - Mission Showcase - Families Welcome](#)
- [July 17th – Moana \(2016\) - Mission Showcase - Families Welcome](#)
- [August 21st – Barbie \(2023\) - Mission Showcase - Families Welcome](#)

Register

Cultural Tours

Experience the vibrant tapestry of our community's cultural diversity by attending our DEIA Cultural Tours. Immerse yourself in a journey of exploration as we visit various cultural landmarks, engage in enlightening discussions, and celebrate the richness of our collective heritage. Don't miss this opportunity to deepen your understanding and appreciation of diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility.

- [BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Mandir Temple](#) - Families Welcome
 - Date: May 17th
 - Time: 3:45pm-6pm
 - Location: 112 N Main Street, Robbinsville, NJ 08561
 - **RSVP by May 6th**
- [Zimmerli Art Museum](#)
 - Date: May 23rd
 - Time: 3:30pm-4:30pm

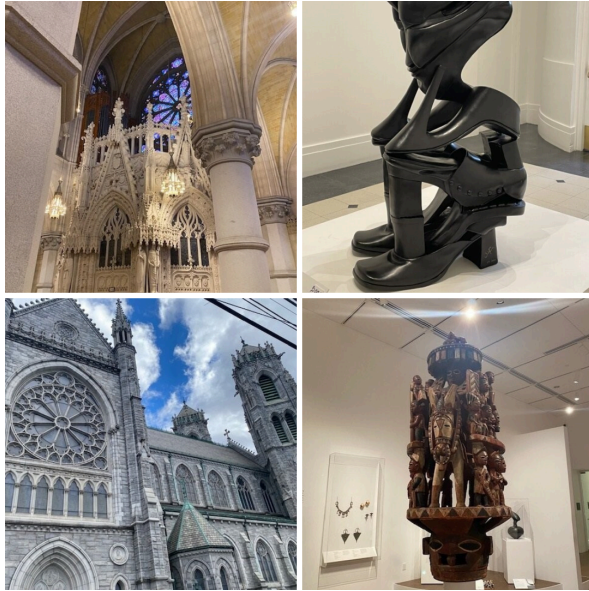
- Location: 71 Hamilton St, New Brunswick, NJ 08901
- **RSVP by May 17th**
- [Cultural Cuisine: Esquina Latina](#)
 - Date: May 23rd
 - Time: 5:30-7:30pm
 - Location: 25 Liberty Street, New Brunswick, NJ
 - **RSVP by May 17th**

Register

Lunch N Learn

Join us for our Lunch n Learn series, where you can indulge in delicious pizza served at 12 pm, followed by workshops beginning at 12:30 pm. Please click here to register.

- [Building Inclusive Communities: Advocacy in Action](#)
 - Date: September 25th
 - Time: 12:30pm – 2pm
 - Location: LLC Room 150
 - Instructor: Darnell Thompson
 - [Building Inclusive Communities: Building Trust Across Identities](#)
 - Date: October 23rd
 - Time: 12:30pm – 2pm
 - Location: LLC Room 150
 - Instructor: Darnell Thompson
 - [Building Inclusive Communities: Learning & Leading in Conflict](#)
 - Date: November 20th
 - Time: 12:30pm – 2pm
 - Location: LLC Room 150
 - Instructor: Darnell Thompson
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DEIA Cultural Tours

In April, we had the privilege of embarking on a private tour through the culturally diverse city of Newark, NJ. Our journey took us to two remarkable destinations: the awe-inspiring Cathedral Basilica of the Sacred Heart and The Newark Museum. At the museum, we explored captivating exhibits, including the Arts of Global Africa and Asia and the enchanting Ballantine House

DEIA Staff Stories

My DEIA Journey: NYC Schools to Rutgers DoCS Leadership

By Shino John

It has been an extraordinary privilege to be part of and work alongside the exceptional leaders on the DoCS DEIA committee. We are a fortunate community for the leadership, vision, and passion these individuals bring to our shared core values. I am grateful for Rosa Salgado-Rodriguez's committee leadership and our friendship, which has brought such joy over the last decade. The committee asked me to share a bit of my story for our newsletter, specifically some of my experiences during the desegregation of one of New York City's most prominent and largest public schools, Tottenville High School, in Staten Island, NY, during the 1990s.

My name is Shino; I was born in Brooklyn, New York, and went through the NYC public school system from K-12. My parents were immigrants trying to make it in the US, and my mom immigrated to the US during the nursing shortage of the 1970s. We didn't have much, but we had enough; it was a complicated time of race relations in Staten Island, a borough of New York City, during the 1990s; it wasn't a diverse community, and I was among a small number of students of color throughout my K-12 experience. I don't remember making it through a single school day without being made fun of or ridiculed for the color of my skin, my culture, my poofy hair, my clothes, or smelling of ethnic food. A daily onslaught of insults and isolation eventually morphed into physical altercations as time passed and I grew. It was unpleasant!

The only reason I survived is the love of an extraordinary mother who told me every day about all the beautiful things she saw in me, to believe in myself, and that my life had a purpose. Her voice somehow drowned out all the other voices. I wouldn't have made it through without

the covering she provided in that season of life; it felt like an impenetrable force field, a place of safety; her voice was my sanctuary. I attended one of the city's largest high schools, a school of 4,500 students; during my sophomore year, the then-mayor implemented a desegregation program at this school on the southernmost tip of the City of New York. The program brought students of color from the other boroughs of NYC by public bus into Tottenville High School. My life changed dramatically; I witnessed race-based violence on an almost daily basis and experienced it personally. NYPD came to speak with me multiple times, and each time, I watched, mortified as my mother, who identifies strongly with her Christian faith, tried to share her worldview with the New York City detectives and that it was only God who allowed me to survive the violence. When my mom offered the detectives tea or coffee, I would whisper don't do it, officer, save yourself, run, but it was to no avail.

A particularly vivid occurrence that stands out in my many experiences highlights the challenges of the DEI efforts in NYC schools during the 1990s. One morning, stepping off the NYC transit bus into the high school courtyard, I witnessed a distressing scene. A young Black student from my bus was suddenly attacked by a group of students who were white. The altercation occurred quickly, leaving everyone around, including myself, stunned and frozen. Security and teachers intervened to break up the fight, but regrettably, they ultimately detained the victim and took him away to the locker room for questioning.

Later that day, during lunch, the same student, clearly disoriented and confused, ran into the cafeteria swinging a bat wildly, eventually making contact with a teacher. This resulted in the student's arrest. As a witness to much violence, I believe there is no place for violence, I also remember saying repeatedly – but he was the victim; I rode the bus in with him; he wasn't at fault. Now, he was being arrested. It was painful and complicated on so many levels. This event was one of many that marked my remaining high school years, which were punctuated by similar traumatic incidents.

These experiences underscored the well-intentioned but flawed implementation of DEI programs to integrate NYC schools. The programs aimed to foster inclusion but often failed to address the deep-seated issues of systemic racism, biases (both conscious and unconscious), and the structural discrimination embedded within the educational system and the Staten Island Community. The DEI programs to integrate my school were filled with good intentions and wrought tremendous pain and difficulty for countless students, including myself. Such initiatives, while aimed at creating unity, frequently led to significant strife and hardship; we needed better and more sensitive approaches. My remaining years in high school were filled with incredibly traumatic events like what I described here. They tried to put everyone together without dealing with the complex underlying structures of systemic racism.

There is so much brokenness in my life from these very early days. My commitment to our shared values of DEIA stems from a childhood filled with strife but also a fundamental belief and hope that each generation of leaders can move the needle of inclusive excellence, each generation of leaders can face the assets of the academy and the assets of our public institutions at eradicating systemic racism and all its parts. We can level the playing field of

inequity and advance the victims left behind. Not every person has someone in their life to drown out the voices of hate, racism, sexism, classism, and all the other "isms." We can be that voice. While we cannot erase a lifetime of pain, we can encapsulate a vision for the future that brings the best of each individual forward so that they can be the best version of themselves and bring their whole self forward.

Today, I am privileged to serve as Co-Chair of DEIA for University Academic Affairs. Currently, more than 260 dedicated professionals from our community are engaged in a three-month intensive DEIA learning journey aimed at cultivating an inclusive academic environment. Together, we are committed to becoming a hallmark of inclusive excellence. We strive to create an academy where everyone feels valued and included, where the historically marginalized voices are heard and pivotal in shaping our collective future, where once minoritized voices are heard and advanced —a truly Beloved Community.

At Rutgers Continuing Studies, inclusivity is at the heart of everything we do; our people are our greatest asset. We are deeply invested in nurturing our team, confident that their growth will lead to a better - stronger Rutgers—an institution poised to profoundly impact our community, our state, our nation, and our world. WHOO-RAH!

University DEIA Events

[Rutgers Tyler Clementi Center for Diversity
Education and Bias Prevention](#)

[Rutgers Division of Diversity, Inclusion, and
Community Engagement](#)

deia.rutgers.edu



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