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Office of Equity and Inclusion, East Tennessee State University

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Office of Equity and Inclusion Newsletter

January 12, 2024



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

“Happy New Year!”

Dear Friends,

As the clock strikes midnight and we bid farewell to the past, we stand on the threshold of a brand-new year, filled with infinite possibilities and untapped potential. The 1st of the year marks not just the beginning of a calendar, but a fresh chapter in the book of our lived journeys. This is also a time when we can reflect on the past and assess whether or not we have accomplished what we set out to do during 2023.

Several days ago, I challenged some faculty members to reflect on a few questions that I discovered on higheredjobs.com to put 2023 in perspective. A select few of the questions included the following:

~ continued on page 2 ~



“The prosperity of a country depends, not on the abundance of its revenues, nor on the strength of its fortifications, nor on the beauty of its public buildings; but it consists in the number of its cultivated citizens, in its men of education, enlightenment and character”

~Martin Luther King Jr~

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Continued ~ Message from Dr. Keith Johnson

1. In the past year, what were the things that excited you most about your work?
2. What is one goal that you didn't meet this year? Why not, and how do you feel about it?
3. What skills do you hope to hone or attain in 2024? And, how do they tie into your overarching career goals?
4. How would you rate your happiness and fulfillment in your role on a scale of 1 to 10?
5. How can you contribute to your department's momentum in the next year?
6. How is your work-life balance and mental health right now?

In reflecting on 2023, I am pleased with many of the accomplishments that the university has witnessed in the Equity and Inclusion space, including, but not limited to identifying funds for microgrants, launching the Mr. George Nichols student success initiative, securing position lines to support Navigate and the Office of Equity and Inclusion, hosting the 5th Annual Equity and Inclusion Conference, the progress made with Moon Shot for Equity, to name a few.

The university's accomplishments relative to Equity and Inclusion would not be possible without the assistance of our faculty, staff, and students. Their continued support and commitment have made it possible to continue to shape the campus that we are proud of.

Given this past year's political climate which I suspect will continue into 2024, will present ongoing challenges in the DEI space for higher education. In the tapestry of time, each year presents a unique thread woven into the fabric of our existence. It brings with it a canvas of opportunities, challenges, and the promise of growth. As we embark on this extended journey to close equity gaps and increase persistence and graduation rates at East Tennessee State University, let us carry the lessons learned from the past and the hopes for the future.

This year, let's embrace change with open arms and a resilient spirit. I predict as we venture into 2024, that work in the DEI space will come with a constant ebb and flow, and the 1st of the year is a gentle reminder that we have the power to shape our institution and our culture and have more control of our outcomes. May the coming days and months be filled with accomplishments. Let us strive for understanding, and empathy in our interactions with others. As we set our goals and aspirations, let them be guided by a sense of purpose and a commitment to making a positive impact.

Generally speaking, faculty, staff, and students at ETSU are in pursuit of their dreams in one way or another. Our paths may be different, but our destination is shared. So, let's appreciate the people around us, and find gratitude in the little things.

Here's to new beginnings, to the 1st of the year—a day that invites us to dream, to believe, and to embark on a journey of self-discovery. May this year be a canvas painted with the hues of fulfillment and resilience.

Continued ~ Message from Dr. Keith Johnson

Wishing you a year ahead filled with endless possibilities and boundless accomplishments 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.

Sincerely,

Dr. Keith Johnson

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. - Life Highlights and Contributions to the Civil Rights Movement

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was a notable figure in the advancement of the American civil rights movement. Here are some key facts about him:

Birth and Family

Martin Luther King Jr. born January 15, 1929, in Atlanta, Georgia, USA. Originally named Michael King Jr., both he and his father adopted the name Martin Luther as a tribute to the influential German Protestant figure Martin Luther.

Education

King studied at Morehouse College in Atlanta, graduating with a Bachelor of Arts in sociology. He then continued his education, obtaining a Bachelor of Divinity from Crozer Theological Seminary in Pennsylvania.

Nonviolent Activism

Dr. King played a pivotal role in the American civil rights movement, championing racial equality and the cessation of racial segregation and discrimination. He is best known for his commitment to nonviolent protest inspired by the philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi.



~ continued on page 4 ~

Continued ~ Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Montgomery Bus Boycott

King gained national prominence after leading the Montgomery Bus Boycott in 1955-1956. The boycott aimed to end racial segregation on public transportation.

Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC)

In 1957, King was one of the co-founders of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), an entity dedicated to attaining civil rights through peaceful demonstrations.

March on Washington

One of the standout episodes in King's life involved his leadership during the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom in 1963. This event reached its peak with his renowned "I Have a Dream" speech delivered at the Lincoln Memorial.

Nobel Peace Prize

In 1964, Dr. King received the Nobel Peace Prize in recognition of his nonviolent efforts in the pursuit of civil rights.

Homicide

Tragically, Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated on April 4, 1968, in Memphis, Tennessee.

Legacy

Dr. King's legacy is commemorated annually on Martin Luther King Jr. Day, a federal holiday in the United States, observed on the third Monday of January.

Civil Rights Act and Voting Rights Act

King significantly contributed to the enactment of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965, striving to eradicate racial discrimination in public spaces and safeguard the voting rights of every individual. These represent only a fraction of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s profound impact and involvement in the American civil rights movement.



Read Dr. King's [I have a Dream Speech](#).

ETSU Launches the Nichols Leadership Academy



ETSU's Mary V. Jordan Multicultural Center (MCC) is launching the Captain George Nichols Academy during the Spring 2024 semester. Nichols Academy honors George Nichols who is the first African American male to graduate from ETSU and is a holistic mentoring program designed to improve the recruitment, retention, and graduation rates of historically underserved male students.



ETSU President Dr. Brian Noland and Vice Presidents Dr. Keith Johnson and Dr. Joe Sherlin presented information about campus life and student success with members of the first cohort of Nichols Academy during the kickoff meeting in the MCC last December. Other campus and community leaders discussed strategies for success in college and life and offered their support throughout the students' academic and professional journeys.



Nichols Academy offers students practical experiences to increase their academic, campus, and community engagement and develop their leadership skills. The goals of Nichols Academy are to strengthen recruitment, student engagement, academic progress, intercultural leadership, and career preparation activities and experiences on campus and in the community. The objectives are to connect Nichols Academy students with resources and opportunities to support their success and strengthen relationships with faculty, staff, administrators, and peer mentors. Nichols Academy participants attend bi-weekly meetings and discuss various topics focusing on student life and the college experience throughout the academic year.



Students participating in the mentoring program include:

- Ja'Vair Kilgore
- Samuel Pipeloluwa Adenekan
- Mayoelton Rebero Musana
- Oluwaseun Alaofin
- Estefanos Belay Lemma
- Daniel Kefene

ETSU Honors Dr. Martin Luther King Jr



SAVE THE DATE

Mary V. Jordan Multicultural Center

Martin Luther King, Jr.

Commemoration

“King’s Beloved Community”

Host: Kevin L. Brooks, Ph.D.

Song Selection: ETSU Gospel Choir

Candle Lighting: Sigma Beta Chapter

Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.

Culp Center East TN Room 272

6:00 to 7:30 pm

JAN

16



EAST TENNESSEE STATE
UNIVERSITY

Mary V. Jordan Multicultural Center

For more information, contact 423-439-4844 or etsumc@etsu.edu

“You are not only responsible for what you say, but also for what you do not say”
~Martin Luther King Jr~



Mary V. Jordan Multicultural Center

Martin Luther King, Jr.

Commemorative Events

JAN

15

A Day of Service

Carver Recreation Center

9:00 am to 1:00 pm

JAN

16

MLK Legacy Program

Alumni Bell Tower

Rain location: Burgin Dossett 2nd Floor

11:30 am to 12:30 pm

Cake Cutting Celebration

D.P. Culp Student Center

1st Floor Upper Main Street

1:30 to 2:30 pm



EAST TENNESSEE STATE
UNIVERSITY

Mary V. Jordan Multicultural Center

For more information, contact 423-439-4844 or etsumc@etsu.edu

Upcoming Events

January 2024				
Monday	Jan. 15th	MLK Day of Service	9:00am-2:00pm	Carver Recreation Center
Tuesday	Jan. 16th	MLK Legacy Program	11:30am-12:30pm	Carillon/Alumni Plaza
Tuesday	Jan. 16th	King's Beloved Community	6:00-7:30pm	Culp Center East Tennessee Room
Monday	Jan. 22nd	Strong BRAIN Institute Resilience Presentation Series Becky Haas-Employing a Trauma-Informed Approach in Justice Systems	1:00-2:00pm	Web/Online
Tuesday	Jan. 23rd	Listening Circles Hosted by Black/White Community	9:00am-12:00pm	Wilson Wallis Lobby
Friday	Jan. 26th	Agency Reduction Formation Symposium	9:00am-4:00pm	Culp Center, East Tennessee Room

DR. DARYL A. CARTER
ASSOCIATE DEAN & DIRECTOR, BLACK AMERICAN STUDIES (ESU)

MR. NATHANIEL TADISSE
ASST. DIRECTOR, MARY V. JORDAN MULTICULTURAL CENTER (ESU)

DR. VALERIE HARRISON
VICE PRESIDENT FOR DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION, TEMPLE UNIVERSITY

DR. VALERIE GREM
PROFESSOR OF AFRICAN AMERICAN AND AFRICANA DIASPORA STUDIES, INDIANA UNIVERSITY

DR. DEONTE HOLLOWELL
ASST. PROFESSOR OF HISTORY AND AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES, SEALING UNIVERSITY

DR. KEVIN L. BROOKS
DIRECTOR, MARY V. JORDAN MULTICULTURAL CENTER (ESU)

AGENCY REDUCTION FORMATION SYMPOSIUM

Using the Africana Studies theoretical construction **Agency Reduction Formation** developed by Dr. Michael Tillotson, SUNY Cortland, scholars will examine and interpret a variety of ideational frameworks that they have identified as antithetical to the wellbeing of Africana people in particular and humanity in general. With intentionality, and directed purpose, the symposium will illuminate the agentive power of collectivism and bring forth solution-centered scholarship that can be translated to Africana people and humanity in a digestible form.

JANUARY 26, 2024 **D.P. CULP CENTER EAST TN ROOM 272** **9:00 AM TO 4:00 PM**

For More Information: Email: etsumc@etsu.edu / Call: (423) 439-4844

BLACK AMERICAN STUDIES PROGRAM BLACK AFFAIRS ASSOCIATION MARY V. JORDAN MULTICULTURAL CENTER

The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy.
~Martin Luther King Jr~

ETSU University Compliance

ETSU is committed to a non-discriminatory living, learning, and working environment for the entire campus community. All ETSU employees and students benefit from civil rights education. University Compliance and campus partners work together to ensure the ETSU community has access to in-person and online training opportunities. ETSU provides all employees and new students with the following training:

- Discrimination and Harassment Training for Employees
- Sexual Assault Prevention Training for Students

In addition, University Compliance offers tailored in-person trainings and workshops:

- to departments
- offices or divisions
- to student organizations and clubs
- academic units
- specialized units such as athletics and medical students

They can present your group with information on a variety of topics related to discrimination and harassment:

- Consent
- Stalking
- Sexual assault
- Bystander intervention
- Healthy Relationships
- Service Animals v. Support Animals
- Campus Security Authorities v. Responsible Employees
- Implicit Bias
- Requests for Accommodations under the ADA and FHA
- Alcohol's Role in Sexual Assault
- Safety in Residence Halls
- ETSU Policy & Procedures

[Contact University Compliance](#) to arrange your personalized training session or check ETSU's University Event Calendar for open events.

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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.