



VIMS DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION COMMITTEE

Dive-In Digest

February 2018

IN THIS ISSUE

Introducing the Dive-In Digest

by Communications Subcommittee

The Communications Subcommittee of VIMS' Steering Committee on Diversity and Inclusion is excited to bring you the first issue of our new newsletter! Each quarter we will feature updates on the activities successfully carried out by the Dive-In committee as well as upcoming events, and activities. We hope that you will find this information useful and we welcome any feedback and suggestions for future issues.



A Year in Review Page 2

From our Pop-Up socials to our fall kickoff event, get the low down on all that Dive-In has accomplished during our first year at VIMS!

Moving Forward Page 3

Dive-In has many activities planned for this upcoming spring semester and summer. Find out what we have planned for you!

Black History Month: Acknowledging Black Marine Scientists Page 4

The month of February offers the opportunity to highlight the achievements of Black Marine Scientist. Check out who was featured in our first issue!

A Year in Review

Pop-Up Socials

by Social & Community Building Subcommittee

The Social & Community Building Subcommittee hosted six Pop-Up socials on the VIMS campus over the past year. These Pop-Up socials aimed to increase awareness of the Diversity and Inclusion committee on the VIMS campus as well as foster a more inclusive and interactive environment among faculty, staff, and students on the VIMS campus. Several of the hosted Pop-Up socials also focused on different aspects of diversity, such as statistics on socioeconomic status, which allowed us to collaborate with Toys for Tots.



Communication Outlets & Digital Presence

by Communications Subcommittee

The Communications Subcommittee developed several communication outlets to allow the VIMS community to voice their opinions and make recommendations on how to improve diversity and inclusion on campus. These outlets include a campus climate survey, a bulletin board in Watermen's Hall, a suggestion box (located right underneath the Watermen's Hall Bulletin Board), and the Diversity and Inclusion website, which you can access via www.vims.edu/DiveIn. As a result of a suggestion placed in the suggestion box, staff portraits will now be showcased in close proximity to faculty and student portraits in Watermen's Hall!

Improving Policies & Procedures

by Policy Subcommittee

The Policy Subcommittee recommends development or revision of institutional policies and practices that help to ensure progress towards achievement of diversity and inclusion on the VIMS campus. Specifically, the policy subcommittee reviewed and recommended revisions of the vims-misc posting policy and is recommending changes to search committee procedures to focus on diversity and inclusion. This committee also spoke with Joe Martinez about getting signs for gender-neutral bathrooms around VIMS, and making more bathrooms gender neutral. This committee also held a meeting with Linda Schaffner (ADAS) to discuss what is currently being done and what could be done in the future to promote diversity in the graduate student body and to "Expand Minority Student Recruitment Efforts" (as stated in the VIMS Diversity Action Plan).

Diversity Training

by Training Subcommittee

The Training Subcommittee led efforts to better prepare members of the VIMS community on being more inclusive of diverse communities. Such efforts included working to get security officers bias-incident trained, organizing two lunch and learns with the Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities, and leading and organizing Dive-In's kickoff fall event with invited Speaker Dr. Dijanna Figueroa. This fall event included a well-attended panel discussion with Dr. Figueroa and local experts, a seminar with Dr. Figueroa about diversity in STEM, a movie screening, and student lunch.

SNAPSHOTS OF EVENTS



Summer Pop-Up Social

VIMS faculty, staff, and students gather for one of Dive-In's summer Pop-Up socials

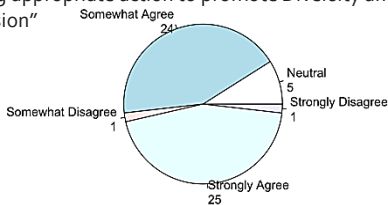


Panel Discussion

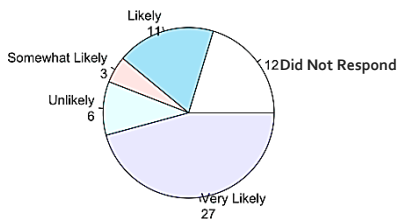
Panel Discussion: "An Honest and Open Discussion of Race and Ethnicity in Higher Education with guest panelists (L to R) Dr. Dijanna Figueroa, Dr. Benjamin Cuker, Dr. Katherine Barko-Alva, Dr. Natoya Haskins, and Dr. S. Kersey Sturdivant .

FAST FACTS: CAMPUS CLIMATE SURVEY

Survey response to the question "I believe VIMS is taking appropriate action to promote Diversity and Inclusion"



Survey response to the question "how likely are you to attend future Dive-In events?"



FOR MORE INFORMATION

Please visit the Diversity and Inclusion Website at: www.vims.edu/DiveIn or reach us at Diversity@vims.edu

Moving Forward

by Dive-In Committee

The various Dive-In subcommittees have many more events and activities planned for this year. Such events and activities include lunch and learns, a student monologue presentation on understanding and appreciating the experiences of others paired with an implicit bias test discussion, a W&M funded IDEA Grant workshop series, opportunities to be featured in future Dive-In Digest issues, and the resurgence of everyone's favorite...Pop-Up socials!

Pop-Up Social Photos



Black History Month: Acknowledging Black Marine Scientists

by Dive-In Committee

Ashanti Johnson, PhD

Dr. Ashanti Johnson's interest in the marine sciences was first piqued at the age of 10 when she watched a television program about underwater explorations. It was during this time, she realized how much was still left to be learned about the ocean and sought out to be one of the scientists that would try and make sense of this seemingly undiscovered world. Dr. Johnson obtained her BS in Marine Science from Texas A&M University-Galveston and her PhD in Oceanography from Texas A&M University. Following her studies, Dr. Johnson has taken on many professional roles including professorships at the University of South Florida, University of Texas at Arlington, University of Texas A&M, and Mercer University. She is also the CEO at Cirrus Academy and the Minorities Striving and Pursuing Higher Degrees of Success (MSPHDS) Professional Institute. In addition to conducting oceanographic research, Dr. Johnson continues to make great strides to increase diversity in the marine sciences. She has been involved in professional development activities that help broaden the participation of underrepresented groups in this field, one of which is the award winning MSPHD Professional Development Program. Dr. Johnson has been presented with numerous awards for her diversity efforts, one of which is the Presidential Award for Excellence in Science, Mathematics, and Engineering Mentoring (awarded in 2010).



Ambrose Jearld, Jr., PhD

Dr. Ambrose Jearld, Jr.'s interest in the marine sciences developed during his childhood, which was partly spent on his family farm in Annapolis, Maryland, and partly in Orrum, North Carolina, where he attended elementary school. These locations allowed Dr. Jearld to be surrounded by natural aquatic systems such as streams and ponds, which increased his interest in the aquatic sciences. He graduated from Maryland State College with a degree in biology in 1965 and went on to obtain both an MS and PhD degree in zoology at Oklahoma State University. Following his studies, he went on to teach at both Howard and Lincoln University before beginning his position as a fisheries biologist at NOAA's Northeast Fisheries Science Center (NERSC) in Woods Hole. Dr. Jearld remained at NOAA's NERCS for the remainder of his career and, in addition to conducting his research, served as the Director of Academic Programs and the Woods Hole Partnership Education Program. Dr. Jearld's work as a scientist and director in Woods Hole has helped make aquatic science research more accessible to a diverse body of students and faculty, especially in Woods Hole. Dr. Jearld's efforts to increase diversity and inclusion in the aquatic sciences has most recently resulted in an annual summer lecture series in Woods Hole, Massachusetts, named in his honor.



Kersey Sturdivant, PhD

Dr. Sturdivant received his BS in Environmental Science at the University of Maryland Eastern Shore and obtained his PhD in Marine Science at the Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS). Following his time at VIMS, he became the research coordinator of Cordell Bank National Sanctuary before moving to a faculty position at Duke University. In 2015, he helped start an environmental consulting company, INSPIRE Environmental, and transitioned his faculty position to adjunct. Presently he is a Principal Scientist at INSPIRE Environmental, Adjunct Assistant Professor at Duke University, Senior Correspondent at SouthernFriedScience.com, and co-creator of Oceanography for Everyone (open-source oceanographic equipment: <http://oceanographyforeveryone.com>). Kersey is a marine ecologist who studies the effects of human disturbance on the seafloor, and develops marine technology to enhance human understanding of the ocean. His goal is to increase the capacity of ocean research through innovative technology, and by making ocean observation tools more cost accessible. He also recently published an empirical book about Getting into Graduate School in the Sciences with Cambridge University Press (www.cambridge.org/9781107420670).

