DIVERSITY REPORT
2021

A true mosaic of people who contribute daily to create a dynamic and rewarding learning environment

Cuyahoga Community College
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Cuyahoga Community College (Tri-C®) is Ohio’s oldest and largest public community college. Since its inception in 1963, Tri-C has provided high-quality, affordable education and rewarding employment opportunities for more than 900,000 members of the Northeast Ohio community.

VISION STATEMENT
Cuyahoga Community College will be recognized as an exemplary teaching and learning community that fosters service and student success. The College will be a valued resource and leader in academic quality, cultural enrichment and economic development characterized by continuous improvement, innovation and community responsiveness.

MISSION STATEMENT
To provide high-quality, accessible and affordable educational opportunities and services — including university transfer, technical and lifelong learning programs — that promote individual development and improve the overall quality of life in a multicultural community.

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION STATEMENT
Cuyahoga Community College is fortunate to have a true mosaic of people who contribute daily to create a dynamic and rewarding learning environment. Tri-C stands with the belief that diversity enriches not only the institution but society as a whole and is therefore committed to appreciating diverse perspectives and valuing the collective differences and similarities that make Tri-C a leading community organization.
Message from College President Alex Johnson

A year ago, society was in the depths of the worst global pandemic in a century. The death of George Floyd created a tipping point in our country’s collective acknowledgement of racial injustice. America was in a place of volatility and uncertainty.

While the intervening year has not entirely calmed the waters, progress has been made. A widespread vaccination campaign has allowed us to take steps toward regaining normalcy. New conversations about racial injustice have sparked change. Though much work remains on both fronts, this progress allows us to face the future with a renewed focus.

At Cuyahoga Community College (Tri-C®), diversity and inclusion initiatives are a big part of that renewed focus. We were on the front lines as COVID-19 took a massive toll on those in our region who lack equity in finances and resources — particularly people of color. We have seen the high cost of systemic racial injustice firsthand.

Taking the lessons of the past year to heart, we have been active in spearheading discussions about racial justice and social equity, and we have acted in those areas.

Through the programming you will read about in this report — such as the Stand for Racial Justice alliance, Advancing Women in Equity and Inclusion, Let’s Talk About It and the annual Black Diamonds Women’s Conference — we are increasing access to resources, advancing dialogue and creating networking opportunities for women and people of color throughout the region.

In addition, the College’s Black American Council, Hispanic Council, Sexual Orientation and Gender Equality Council, Veteran Services Initiative and Women in Transition program work to advance diversity and inclusion at Tri-C and beyond.

Tri-C’s mission is to serve all Northeast Ohioans, and we recognize the work we must do to ensure all people have the opportunity to pursue a better life — regardless of race, ethnicity, sexual orientation or gender identity.

We have made great strides in carrying out that mission, and we are committed to seeing it through.

Alex Johnson, Ph.D.
President, Cuyahoga Community College

Message from Magda Gómez, Executive Director, Diversity and Inclusion

What lessons did we learn during the 2020-2021 academic year? At Cuyahoga Community College, we learned that we are capable of remaining resilient in the face of adversity while ensuring the safety and well-being of our students, faculty and staff.

Furthermore, during one of the most distressful times in our nation’s history, Tri-C is committed to affirming and engaging students, employees and community members of all social identities in initiatives aimed at educating others on race and social justice issues. Examples include Stand for Racial Justice alliance programming; calls to action, including a partnership with the YWCA 21-Day Racial Equity Challenge; the inaugural Women’s Summit, which was delivered virtually; and a neighborhood beautification project.

Collegewide, program staff have remained steadfast in engaging students in virtual conversations about diversity, equity, race and social justice through the Let’s Talk About It series. Additionally, our employee resource groups participated in programs that exposed members to diverse ideas through critical academic, professional and social development.

I believe that Tri-C, as an institution that practices diversity, equity and inclusion, will continue to be a catalyst for change and healing on our campuses and within our communities. I am confident that we will continue to rise to the occasion by creating impactful change.

Magda Gómez, Ed.D.
Executive Director, Diversity and Inclusion
Cuyahoga Community College
Stand for Racial Justice Alliance

In the wake of the murder of George Floyd at the hands of a Minneapolis police officer in May 2020, Tri-C President Alex Johnson decided that the College should take a public stance against systemic racism and social injustice in America. This resulted in the formation of the Stand for Racial Justice (SRJ) alliance. SRJ is a task force made up of faculty, staff, students and community members who work together to enhance and further develop the College’s work in the areas of training and education; College policies and practices; Collegewide events and activities; advocacy and calls to action, including voter registration campaigns and efforts to support local minority-owned and operated businesses; and community-based initiatives and events, such as hosting or sponsoring public forums and debates featuring diverse perspectives on matters pertaining to racial justice and social policy.

View the Stand for Racial Justice Playbook at tri-c.edu/racialjustice.

2020-2021 Highlights

• A Community Conversation with Tim Wise, one of America’s leading racial justice educators. A panel of local business leaders, moderated by WKYC-TV anchor Leon Bibb, also discussed how their organizations promote equity in hiring, in services, and in support of the neighborhoods in which their consumers reside.

• Uprising! — A lecture on the necessity of social justice movements and rebellions in pursuit of democracy in America. Presented by Melissa Soto-Schwartz, associate professor of history and women’s studies at Tri-C.

• The Color of Law: Race, Racism and Public Policy in America — Historian and best-selling author of The Color of Law, Richard Rothstein, discussed the ways in which government policies created and reinforced racial segregation in America well into the 20th century.

• The Color of Health: Examining Racism as a Public Health Crisis — A panel of public health experts explored how systemic racism impacts health equity through social determinants such as housing, education and employment.

• Stand for Racial Justice High School Essay Contest — Nearly 200 Northeast Ohio teens weighed in on a question: What is racism, and what should we do about it? Winning essays received cash prizes along with a scholarship to Tri-C’s Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Scholars Academy.

• Health Disparities: A Case for Closing the Gap — Local public health experts from Care Alliance and the Cleveland Department of Public Health discussed and shared strategies for addressing the chronic diseases striking Northeast Ohio’s underserved populations at higher rates and why Black babies die at a significantly higher rate than white babies in the Greater Cleveland area.

• The Legacy of George Floyd — George Floyd’s aunt and uncle reflected on his life, the international movement caused by his death, and how the attitudes of society and the actions of law enforcement must change to help improve race relations in America.
Advancing Women in Equity and Inclusion

Formed in early 2019, the goal of the Advancing Women in Equity and Inclusion (AWEI) task force is to provide students, faculty and staff of all gender identities with information, services, programming and gender equity training that address matters of particular concern to women. This includes the development of a Virtual Women’s Center and an annual Women’s Summit.

Visit our New Virtual Women’s Center at tri-c.edu/advancingwomen.

2021-2022 Highlights

AWEI First Annual Women’s Summit — Tri-C created this event to inspire, motivate and empower women in their daily lives. The March 26 event garnered more than 960 unique program views and included conference sessions focused on topics such as balancing priorities, building emotional well-being and creating educational and occupational opportunities. Presenters comprised more than a dozen female executives from throughout the community. Jerry Sue Thornton, president emeritus of Tri-C, delivered the opening address.

The Men’s Group Subcommittee leads and engages men at the College regarding methods for advancing women in equity and inclusion, including changing behaviors; learning about and understanding issues that hold women back in society and the workplace; addressing communication issues among faculty, staff and students; and identifying and engaging key male staff and faculty to serve as mentors.

Gender equity training promotes a better understanding of gender within the College as well as in society. Activities and exercises encourage participants to reflect on their own personal experiences and observations. The training is designed to impart knowledge and skills by starting at a basic level and moving on to more complex and thought-provoking issues.

The Classroom and Curriculum Subcommittee provided a list of gender-related courses and recommended Early Learning Outcomes (ELOs) to allow for gender inclusion in curriculum, including civic responsibility, critical/creative thinking, and cultural sensitivity. Committee members also prepared the following syllabus statement to help faculty promote inclusivity in the classroom: All students will be treated equitably under syllabus policies without regard to race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, immigration status, sexual orientation, gender identity, student status, economic status or ideological preference.

Gender Glossary — A list of gender-related terms that serves as basic guidance toward a more thoughtful and respectful climate at Tri-C.
Common Reading Program

The 2020-2021 Common Reading Program examined the novel *There, There* by Tommy Orange. The book highlights the plight of the urban Native American — grappling with a complex and painful history, with an inheritance of beauty and spirituality, communion, sacrifice and heroism.

2020-2021 Highlights

- In early fall 2020, students responded to a call for submissions from the (re) imaginings team to “reimagine” sections from Orange’s text for inclusion in a virtual art gallery. Submissions were voted on, and awards were presented at a virtual ceremony.

- In spring 2021, the Common Read Committee partnered with the Office of Diversity and Inclusion to host a panel discussion featuring Native American activists Madonna Thunderhawk and Melissa Gilbert, featured in the documentary *Women Warrior*.

Let’s Talk About It

Let’s Talk About It (LTAI) is a student-focused, virtual facilitated conversation series that explores racial justice and equity topics including privilege, protest and antiracism. Assistant professor Johnie Reed founded LTAI during summer 2020; the idea forming out of a sense of urgency following the death of George Floyd.

During academic year 2020-2021, LTAI hosted 29 sessions and engaged more than 600 individuals through multidisciplinary topics. Session titles included *The Rhetorical Power of Advocacy in African American Literature*, *My Journey: White Privilege*, *Analyzing Racist Representations in Video Games*, and *Undersign the Redline*.

**Vision**

Let’s Talk About It provides a platform for constructive discussions on race from multidisciplinary perspectives.

**Mission**

Let’s Talk About It is a student-focused, facilitated conversation series that explores racial justice and equity topics including privilege, protest, antiracism and more.
Black American Council

Cuyahoga Community College’s Black American Council (BAC) was founded as the Black Caucus in 1969 with a mission to support and encourage students, faculty and staff of color to achieve their academic and professional goals. Though the Black Caucus became the Black American Council in 2015, the focus remains on equity and inclusive excellence, particularly as it applies to Tri-C’s students, faculty and staff of color.

BAC takes pride in their hands-on approach to meeting the needs of students, faculty and staff. The BAC mentoring program served more than 200 minority students College-wide, with 165 active faculty and staff serving as mentors. Council members greatly impacted students’ lives amid the pandemic through increased virtual check-ins, reminders, programming and outreach initiatives that encouraged and supported academic performance.

BAC celebrated the graduation of 62 students in the 2020-2021 academic year and awarded nearly $50,000 in Success and Completion, merit, honors and essay scholarships at the 31st Annual Frances M. Franklin Scholarship and Protégé Luncheon, held virtually in May. These numbers speak to the success of our mentoring programs and the dedication of our mentors.

2020-2021 Highlights

This year’s programming focused on topics ranging from virtual etiquette, police interaction and understanding microaggressions to student engagement and success.

• **BAC Minority Women’s Leadership Initiative** presented *Etiquette in a Remote Environment* in September. The session included tips on professional appearance, discussion and dialogue.

• Partnered with the **Conflict Resolution and Peace Studies program** in October to host a conversation with writer and activist David Ragland of The Truth Telling Project.

• Collaborated with the **Public Safety** department in October to present **STOP: Safety Tips for Operating with Police**.

• **Black Scholars Academy and Minority Male Leadership Academy** held virtual “barbershops” every third Wednesday of the month featuring open discussion and dialogue on various topics affecting males. The groups also successfully collaborated with the College’s **Hispanic Council** to host the **Black and Brown Male Summit**, which attracted more than 100 attendees.

• **The African American Read-In** celebrated eight years promoting community literacy through the legacy of African American authors. BAC collaborates with the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) and the Eastern Campus Liberal Arts and Student Engagement departments on this event each year.

• Collaborated with **Thurgood Marshall Oratorical Debate (TMOD) Education Project** in February, engaging more than 100 students from public and private middle and high schools in a virtual debate called **Politics and Democracy: ARE WE THERE YET?** The discussion centered around Princeton University professor and author Eddie Glaude Jr.’s book Democracy in Black.

• Hosted a virtual **Juneteenth Celebration** and historical reflection on the Black family via social media in June. Hashtag campaign #TriCJuneteenth encouraged students, employees and community members to post videos and pictures of family, graduations, major milestones and other accomplishments.
Black Diamonds Conference

The mission of Black Diamonds is to create a systemic support structure that provides access to information and resources for African American women and girls. A core focus of the Black Diamonds initiative is to expand access and participation among women of color in careers that offer sustainable pay, security, personal satisfaction and upward economic mobility. Participating colleges and universities include Cleveland State University, Cuyahoga Community College, Kent State University, Mott Community College, Owens Community College and The University of Akron.

The Black Diamonds Women’s Conference, created by assistant professor and counselor Linda Lanier to empower young women of color, hosted its fourth annual event virtually in October. The event brought together 829 young women, 70 workshops, 48 speakers and 23 resource fair vendors. Additional activities included an Executive Suite Mini-Conference, Zumba classes and mental health workshops.

Black Diamonds also hosted 12 webinars and 18 workshops in the 2020-2021 academic year.
Hispanic Council

The Hispanic Council has been an integral part of Tri-C’s equity agenda and inclusive excellence goals for more than 25 years. Created in 1992, the Hispanic Council facilitates the implementation of initiatives to benefit Tri-C students and the Hispanic community, advises the College on Hispanic issues and serves as a liaison between the College and the Greater Cleveland Hispanic community.

The Hispanic Council offers bilingual assistance with admissions, registration, financial aid and career advising and connects students with Tri-C programs, services, and faculty and staff who can address specific academic and student support needs. Hispanic Council staff interact with students in person, by phone and through one-on-one coaching. Students receive a monthly e-newsletter to keep them updated on College deadlines, internship opportunities, scholarships and community events.

The council’s unique case management approach provides students with a caring advocate at the College, a sense of belonging and wraparound support services. In addition to student services and events, the council maintains an affinity group of Hispanic employees who serve as volunteers for community events and help plan cultural events for the College.

The Annual Hispanic Scholarship Luncheon recognizes scholarship recipients, promotes academic success and completion and allows students to share their stories. This year, 115 Hispanic students were awarded $70,000 in scholarships.

2020-2021 Highlights

• Collaborated with Unidos Subiendo (Hispanic ERG) and the Office of Diversity and Inclusion to host Hispanics/Latinx in the United States: A Cultural Competency Virtual Workshop. Victor Leandry, executive director of El Centro de Servicios Sociales in Lorain, Ohio, discussed the multiple identities among Hispanic/Latinx individuals. He also provided information on Hispanic/Latinx educational attainment in the United States and the challenges and barriers these students face when assimilating to new culture.

• Collaborated with the Black American Council to host the Black and Brown Male Summit in April, which attracted more than 100 attendees.
Veteran Services Initiative

For more than 55 years, Cuyahoga Community College has demonstrated its commitment to the men and women of the U.S. Armed Forces by providing access to affordable education and workforce training programs that enable them to successfully transition from military to civilian life.

Tri-C has been designated as a Military Friendly School by GI Jobs Magazine for 12 consecutive years, consistently ranking among the Top 10 in the nation in service to veterans and military families among the 700 community colleges surveyed.

The College’s Veteran Services Initiative (VSI) provides services to approximately 7,000 veterans annually and serves a diverse veteran student and community base (73% male, 27% female and 48% minority). In addition, the VSI offers academic assessments and guidance for developing academic and career plans and connects veterans with fast-track certificate and degree programs.

The VSI also supports service members and their families as they transition into higher education, including access to military education benefits and wraparound services. This was particularly vital during the pandemic, as staff helped connect veterans to resources that ensured access to household necessities.

2020-2021 Highlights

- VSI coordinated with Computers and People (CAP) to provide refurbished computers to students along with information regarding benefit changes that occurred due to remote learning. In all, VSI provided approximately 9,000 services to Tri-C’s veteran and military-connected students.
- More than $95,000 in scholarships was distributed to 112 veterans and their dependents thanks to the Cuyahoga Community College Foundation. This funding is critically important for those veterans whose benefits have expired.
- Tri-C’s annual Veterans Day Commemoration took place virtually and featured performances of “Reveille” and “Taps” by former Tri-C student and accomplished musician Dominick Farinacci. The event also included an address by College President Alex Johnson, reflections of Tri-C staff on their time in the service, and a recognition of Tri-C’s Student Veteran of the Year, Olivia Rodriguez.
- Tri-C’s annual Memorial Day Commemoration also took place virtually this year. Welcoming remarks, provided by Dr. Johnson, included a historical connection of the Western Campus to veteran health. Dr. Brian Cmolik, chief medical officer at the VA Northeast Ohio Healthcare System, also provided remarks. In lieu of the traditional “Planting of the Poppies” event, Tri-C employees posed with bouquets of poppies as part of a visual montage while local talent Virgil Dominic read In Flanders Field.
- The Metro Veteran Resource Center was refurbished through generous funding from PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC). The grant provided new tables and chairs for the veterans classroom, including a pneumatic table that adjusts for use by students who require motorized wheelchairs. It also allowed for a refurbished welcoming area with upholstered chairs and a sofa where students can relax and socialize.
Women in Transition Program

The Women in Transition (WIT) program works to equip women in our community during a period of transformation by empowering them through their pursuit of education, training and a career. WIT at Tri-C is the premier college and community program focused on the growth and development of women throughout Northeast Ohio.

2020-2021 Highlights

- Successfully served 208 participants in a virtual environment and celebrated 124 women during virtual fall and spring graduation ceremonies.
- Twenty-six WIT alumnae earned a combined total of 32 degrees and certificates in AY21, with a combined average GPA of 3.4.
- Piloted community-based programs with the City of East Cleveland and Rainbow Terrace, as well as through the Tri-C Access Centers.
- Hosted a book club led by WIT student advisor Jessica Buckland. Burnout by sisters Emily and Amelia Nagoski was selected in an effort to help end the cycle of feeling overwhelmed and exhausted. Instead of ignoring the obstacles and societal pressures that stand between women and well-being, the authors explain with compassion and optimism what we’re up against and show us how to fight back.

WIT Graduate Success Stories

- Claudia Longo came to the United States from Uruguay. After completing WIT, she began networking and was hired through Catholic Charities as a vaccination coordinator, helping set vaccination clinics and develop Spanish communication strategies to reach the Cleveland’s Hispanic community. Longo also wrote an article for La Mega Cleveland magazine and was contracted by Esperanza to provide translation to bring WIT to the Tri-C Access Center there.
- Eva Kelley, a Euclid resident and mother of four, graduated with honors in spring 2021. She served as a combat medic in the Army and as a pararescue specialist in the Air Force. After leaving the military, she worked as an LPN for more than 20 years. When the job began to take a toll on her body, Kelley started to think about a career change. In 2015, she joined Tri-C’s WIT program. It helped put the College on her radar. “WIT really helped me,” she said. “I thought, when I go back to school, it’s going to be at Tri-C.”
- Laura Stasik has always had jobs — secretary, data entry, restaurant work — but she’s never had what she would call a career. “I spent most of my life saying I don’t know what I what to be when I grow up,” she said. Stasik, a WIT graduate who completed the Captioning and Court Reporting program at Tri-C, is ready to change that. She recently accepted a job at Parise & Associates Court Reporters in Cleveland. According to Stasik, “WIT covers so many things that are lacking in education,” she said. “I would recommend it for anybody who is on the fence about anything in their life.”
The Tri-C Reach Scholars program connects students who have experienced foster care with mentors to provide encouragement, connection to college resources and emotional support to ensure that each scholar makes progress toward degree and certificate completion. Staff and faculty mentors represent various areas of the College including financial aid, enrollment, counseling, student life and TRIO.

In addition to one-on-one and group mentoring opportunities, Reach Scholars provides an array of services including triage around financial aid and emergency support for books, transportation, food and housing insecurity. Staff work closely with College and community partners to address these needs. While AY 20-21 presented unique challenges due to the pandemic, it provided opportunities to connect with Reach Scholars in new and innovative ways.

**2020-2021 Highlights**

- In collaboration with Cleveland State University and other colleges and universities from around the state, Tri-C participated in a series of online “fireside chats.” These events enabled scholars to stay connected as they shared experiences with students from other institutions and learned about resources for their academic and personal success.

- The Ohio Department of Higher Education extended funding to support short-term workforce certificates for in-demand jobs such as 911 dispatch, EMT and information technology. Completion of these short-term certificates provides opportunities for Reach Scholars to earn family-sustaining wages while completing a degree. Tri-C will continue to promote these scholarships in the coming academic year.

- Enrolled 65 Reach Scholars and graduated seven.

- Increased collaboration with the Black American Council; Student Life, Counseling and Financial Aid offices, TRIO programs and external partners at the local and state levels.

- The Reach Scholars Team participated in quarterly calls with the Ohio Chancellor’s Office.
Student Accessibility Services

Tri-C serves more than **1,800 students and visitors with disabilities annually**. Students who choose Tri-C do so because of its continued commitment to serving their needs. Founded in 1979, Tri-C’s **Student Accessibility Services (SAS) program** supports students with disabilities at any campus, site or location, including online students. Common disability types include learning disabilities, sensory limitations, psychiatric conditions, physical mobility conditions and chronic health issues. All matters related to a person’s disability are kept confidential.

**College Partnership With Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities**

College2Careers (C2C) at Tri-C offers additional resources to students with disabilities. Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD) is the state agency that helps individuals with physical, intellectual and sensory disabilities, as well as mental health disorders, get and keep careers. Mary Hennessey, our OOD vocational rehabilitation counselor, has worked with more than 50 students since program inception. Mary visits every campus and collaborates with SAS advisors to support students by providing access to job training, resume development and other job-related needs.

**Student Success Stories**

**Polly Dudek** is a 2019 graduate of the Aspire program. Having started a family at an early age, she chose to discontinue high school to focus on her home life.

Dudek and her spouse supported their family as traveling entertainers; unfortunately, major health issues eventually halted her singing career. That’s when she decided to pursue her lifelong goal of earning her GED.

Dudek hopes to graduate from Tri-C with an Associate of Arts degree by 2022. She attributes her success to her wonderful instructors and, of course, SAS.

**Sarah Bullington** is completely blind, but she doesn’t let that fact discourage her from achieving her dreams — whether that’s making jewelry or getting a college degree.

Bullington enrolled at Tri-C in 2018 to study accounting, but she soon decided to switch to business management. Upon completing her program, she plans to pursue a bachelor’s degree in nonprofit management. She hopes to either join a existing nonprofit or start one of her own.

**Molly Buckner** earned an Associate of Arts degree from Tri-C in summer 2021. Buckner, who has cerebral palsy, began her college career at Kent State University but dropped out after experiencing some personal challenges.

When a counselor at a job agency for individuals with disabilities told her she wasn’t qualified for any of their opportunities, she knew that her only option was to get a college degree.

At Tri-C, Buckner found the support she needed. She says that her instructors and SAS staff gave her the confidence she needed as a student and as a person. This fall, she will enter Cleveland State University’s social work program. She hopes to work with people with disabilities and/or people in the LGBTQ+ community.
Jackson Schwoebel was born with retinopathy of prematurity (ROP), a condition where the eyes do not fully develop at birth, leaving a person blind or visually impaired. After several unsuccessful eye surgeries, Schwoebel felt lost and uncertain about his ability to live independently. After high school, he attended a training center for the blind where he learned independent living skills, how to read braille, how to use assistive technology, and more.

Schwoebel wanted to start his college career at Tri-C because of the affordability, transportation, multiple campuses and fantastic staff. Upon graduating from Tri-C with an Associate of Arts degree, he will transfer to Cleveland State University to major in communications and English. He then plans to obtain a master’s degree from Louisiana Tech University to prepare for a career as an orientation and mobility instructor, teaching blind and visually impaired people how to use a cane and navigate from place to place.

He thanks his outstanding professors and SAS staff for providing him with assistive technology and accessible books and for motivating him to continue his education.

Employee Resource Groups (ERGs)

Sexual Orientation and Gender Equality Council

Established in summer 2015, the Sexual Orientation and Gender Equality (SOGE) Council strives to educate, advocate, support and create a safe space for all forms of sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression. During the AY 20-21, SOGE continued to build on its long-term strategic plan to expand its role at the College. Moving online, SOGE continued to grow its membership. Ongoing collaboration with the Safe Zone program, Lambda GSA groups and the Office of Diversity and Inclusion focused on the College’s goals of creating a more inclusive and supportive environment for LGBTQ+ employees and students.

2020-2021 Highlights

- Fall 2020 was the first appearance of “Pride stoles” at graduation — the first step in the establishment of Lavender Graduation at Tri-C.
- Worked alongside the Black American Council, Hispanic Council, Unidos Subiendo and Military and Veteran ERGs to form a Joint ERG Council at Tri-C.
- Supported Lambda GSAs in the creation of virtual Coming Out Week programming, resulting in a Collegewide roster of live and asynchronous events.
- Participated in program planning discussions for each of the College’s new Multicultural Centers and in the revision of the Centers’ mission to reflect the true diversity of the Tri-C community.
- Collaborated with the Cleveland International Film Festival to host a discussion with Todd Stephens, a Northeast Ohio filmmaker and queer cinema pioneer.
Lambda Gender-Sexuality Alliance

Established in 2004, the Lambda Gender-Sexuality Alliance (GSA) is a student-led group that works to educate the College community on gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and straight ally issues. Its mission is to create an accepting environment on campus and in the broader community in which everyone can feel comfortable and supported.

2020-2021 Highlights

• Moving monthly meetings fully online allowed students from all campuses to join in.
• GSA students created videos and other online materials for Tri-C’s YouTube channel in celebration of National Coming Out Day, Trans Day of Remembrance and Pride Month.
• GSA members and SOGE represented Tri-C at the Pride in the CLE Pride Ride on June 5.

Safe Zone Ally Training

An estimated 1,200 employees and students have attended Safe Zone training since its inception in 2004.

2020-2021 Highlights

• Launched an online version of Safe Zone Ally training in fall 2020, training 111 employees and students.
• Worked with the instructional design team to create a more interactive, fully online training for students and employees, which will launch in fall 2021.
• Conducted online training for Northeast Ohio Adoption Services staff, continuing to deepen our community partnerships by offering no-cost Safe Zone training to outside organizations.
• Released the 11th edition of the Rainbow Connection newsletter, updating employees and Lambda GSA student leaders on Safe Zone, SOGE Council and Lambda GSA activities as well as local and national news relevant to the LGBTQ+ community.
Tri-C Network of Women

Tri-C Network of Women is an ERG for women employees that provides a space for professional development, advancement, work-life balance and networking at all levels. The Network of Women works to align the College with similar-sized institutions offering ERGs in order to remain an employer of choice with strong recruitment and retention practices.

Mission
Create a forum for women to grow personally and professionally through the power of networking, collaboration, discussion and professional development.

Vision
To foster a culture of inclusive excellence in which women feel welcomed, supported, celebrated and empowered to reach their personal and professional potential. We aim to attract and retain a talented workforce that supports and contributes to student success and completion.

2020-2021 Highlights

• **Fall Workshop: Transformative Leadership in Higher Education**
This workshop introduced participants to the concept of transformative leadership, including an alternative approach to problem-solving, open communication, assembling an effective leadership team, promoting collaboration, aligning resources with goals, and embracing multiple frames and perspectives. Participants also learned how to assess their personal leadership style and how to address complex challenges by relying on influence rather than positional authority.

• **Spring/Summer Workshops: Coping Strategies During COVD (Parts I, II and III)**
The women’s ERGs at Tri-C and Columbus State Community College collaborated on a series of virtual workshops for College employees during the pandemic, as institutions prepared for a transition to the post-pandemic workplace. Sessions provided resources, support and a safe space to express concerns, challenges and uncertainty. Participants discussed remote work and work/life balance while learning critical coping strategies from expert researchers and clinicians.

![Transformative Leadership in Higher Education](image)

**Wednesday, Sept. 23 | 2-3 p.m.**
Brought to you by the Tri-C® Network of Women and Speakers Bureau

Register in TEC to receive a link to the virtual event.
Unidos Subiendo

Mission
Unidos Subiendo (“Together we rise”) is Tri-C’s Hispanic ERG. Its mission is to attract, develop, retain and promote advancement for Hispanic and Latino employees while raising cultural awareness in the workplace.

Vision
To be recognized as a leading employee resource group that champions and promotes an environment of leadership and inclusive excellence, whereby all Hispanic and Latino employees feel welcomed, valued and empowered to rise to their fullest potential.

Objectives
Provide learning and sharing opportunities for Hispanic/Latino employee advancement and assist with their retention at the College.

• Create a sense of belonging among Hispanic/Latino employees through networking and mentoring opportunities.
• Connect Hispanic/Latino community members to career opportunities at the College.
• Leverage community partnerships for mutual support while helping to facilitate positive change through education.

2020-2021 Highlights
• The Unidos Subiendo (US) virtual launch in June 2020 featured Marcia Moreno, president and founder of AmMore Consulting, who offered an insightful presentation on educational and career attainment among Latinx/Hispanics in the United and the power of the Hispanic ERG to exercise voice, organizational change and advancement within an organization.
• Hosted a virtual career exploration workshop, Expanding Our Reach, in February 2021. Adam Zambetti, associate professor of counseling, presented a pre-assessment survey to assist US members as they seek their career destinations.
• In April 2021, US members were invited to view and discuss a 20-minute Ted Talk: What Being Hispanic and Latinx Means in the United States by Fernanda Ponce.
• In May 2021, US hosted Victoria Marron, associate vice president of retention and transition services at Lee College in Baytown, Texas. Marron shared her experience and journey, including the steps that led her to become a higher education professional.
Military and Veterans ERG

The Military and Veterans (MAV) ERG was developed in response to a survey of veteran employees that indicated a desire for networking, professional development and mentoring opportunities among military peers.

Mission
To create a forum for veteran and military-connected employees to grow personally and professionally through the power of networking, collaboration, discussion and professional development.

Vision
To foster a culture of inclusive excellence in which veteran and military-connected employees feel welcomed, supported, celebrated and empowered to reach their personal and professional potential.

MAV Offers:
- Support and camaraderie
- Leadership and professional development opportunities
- Mentoring support for employees and students
- Opportunities to dispel myths around the military experience while elevating Tri-C’s brand as a veteran-friendly employer

2020-2021 Highlights
- MAV’s inaugural meeting took place in July 2020, with guest presenter Maryam Fazl from Hyland Software’s veteran ERG.
- Representatives from Cleveland Veterans Benefits Administration delivered a benefit update at a virtual Lunch and Learn session in March 2021.
- MAV members volunteered for Earth Day tree planting at Cuyahoga Valley National Park through the Cleveland branch of The Mission Continues in April 2021.
- In May 2021, all military affiliated students, faculty and staff were invited to a virtual discussion on the rise of domestic extremism and the U.S. military and veterans, presented by associate professors from Tri-C’s Western Campus.
- MAV members volunteered for the Boys and Girls Club Race for Kids at the Cleveland Metroparks Zoo through the Cleveland branch of The Mission Continues in June 2021.
Tri-C is committed to providing a workplace and educational environment — as well as other benefits, programs and activities — that are free from discrimination, harassment, sexual misconduct and retaliation. These commitments are moral imperatives consistent with an intellectual community that celebrates individual differences, diversity and meaningful individual freedom to pursue professional and educational goals.

To ensure compliance with federal and state civil rights laws and regulations, and to affirm its commitment to promoting the goals of fairness and equity in all aspects of the College community, Tri-C has developed internal policies and procedures that provide a prompt, fair and impartial process for those involved in allegations of discrimination or harassment on the basis of protected class status.

The College prohibits discrimination against students, employees and others based on race, color, religion, sex (including sexual harassment, sexual violence, sexual assault, sexual exploitation, relationship violence, domestic abuse and stalking), pregnancy, national origin, ancestry, physical or mental disability, age, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity and/or expression, veteran status, military status, genetic information, participation in protected activity (retaliation) and/or any other statuses protected by state or federal law, including Title II, Title VI, Title VII, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

Complaints can be made to the Office of Institutional Equity, which will promptly, thoroughly and equitably investigate and resolve allegations to stop, remediate and prevent discrimination, harassment, sexual misconduct, retaliation and Title IX violations.

**Title IX**

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 states: “No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.”

Tri-C does not discriminate on the basis of sex in any of its education programs or activities, including admission and employment. Inquiries about the application of Title IX may be referred to the College’s Title IX coordinator, who also serves as director of Institutional Equity.

Any person may report sex discrimination, including sexual harassment (whether or not the person reporting is the person alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute sex discrimination or sexual harassment) in person, by mail, by phone or by email to the Office of Institutional Equity.

The full Discrimination, Harassment, Sexual Misconduct, Retaliation and Title IX policy and procedure is available at [tri-c.edu/policies-and-procedures](http://tri-c.edu/policies-and-procedures).

Visit [tri-c.edu/OIE](http://tri-c.edu/OIE) for more information.
Diversity and Inclusion Award

The Tri-C Diversity and Inclusion Award recognizes the achievements of College employees who advance equity, diversity and inclusion — above and beyond their scope of work — through outstanding dedication and excellence in providing services for diverse populations, fostering an inclusive work environment (both in and out of the classroom) and/or addressing equity.

The following employees have made meaningful contributions toward diversity and inclusion at Tri-C.

Congratulations to our 2021 Diversity and Inclusion Award recipients:

Amanda Fronek  
Assistant Dean,  
Access and Completion,  
Westshore Campus

Sylvia Royle  
Coordinator,  
Hispanic Council,  
Western Campus

Past recipients:

Lisa Belcher-Nelson  
Phyllis Dukes  
Michael Flatt  
Susan Lohwater

Cory Molner  
Mick Munoz  
Michelle Nicopolis  
Johnie Reed

Jacques Smith  
Monica Starks

Diversity Recruitment and Retention

The College remains diligent in its efforts to recruit and retain ethnically, racially and gender-diverse instructional faculty, utilizing more than 45 diversity-related sources to post administrative, faculty and staff positions. Collegewide relationships established by faculty, staff and ERGs also help to recruit a talented and inclusive team of employees.

The concepts of diversity and inclusion are also discussed with faculty and staff members at New Employee Orientation.

Diversity and Inclusion Training

The College fosters professional development by offering a plethora of face-to-face and online training opportunities for administrators, faculty, staff and students. These include:

- Unconscious Bias and You
- Employee Essentials
- Civility in the Workplace
- Disability Awareness Training
- Gender Equity Training
- Safe Zone Ally Training
- Microaggressions
- Title IX
- Sustained Dialogue
- Conflict Resolution and Peace Studies
Supplier Diversity

Tri-C is committed to supporting the Greater Cleveland economy by giving suppliers equitable opportunities to provide goods and services. As such, all suppliers — including small business enterprises, women, minority, LGBTQ+ and veteran owned businesses — are invited and encouraged to do business with us. We recognize our suppliers as a key source of knowledge and rely on them to help us improve the quality and value of services provided to our students.

The College completed its first five-year Inclusive Excellence Development Plan that outlines strategies and tactics to aid in increasing Tri-C’s diverse professional relationships and integrating those relationships into day-to-day operations. A new five-year Economic Inclusion Plan is in development for FY2022-2026 and will be released in the fall.

- A goal of 28% spend with diverse suppliers was set with the implementation of the capital bond-funded Phase II Facilities Master Plan – as of the third quarter of FY21 this goal has been surpassed with more than $100 million spent (48%) with diverse suppliers (tier 1 and tier 2).
- During FY2017-2021 the College spent an additional $52 million with diverse firms and suppliers, bringing the total diverse spend for this period to $152 million.
- The number of diverse suppliers with purchase orders increased 85% from FY16 to FY20.
- A goal of 45% was set for local workforce, completed construction projects have achieved 46% Cuyahoga County labor.
- Minority workforce goals were set at 15%; completed construction projects have attained 15%.
- FY17 direct spend for all tier I diverse suppliers was $15 million; FY18 was $18 million; FY19 was $25 million; and FY20 was $15 million. (Diverse spend has decreased with the completion of capital bond construction projects and due to COVID-19, which impacted spending overall).
- Of the $6.6 million FY21 tier I diverse spend, $3.2 million (48%) was with MBE and WBE suppliers.

Diversity Categories

MBE – Minority Business Enterprise
WBE – Women-Owned Business Enterprise
VBE – Veteran-Owned Business
SBE/CSB/SDBE – Small Business Enterprise/Cleveland Small Business/Small Disadvantaged Business Enterprise

College Awards

- Received 2020 Best in Class Award for Board Diversity from Commission on Economic Inclusion. (Also received the 2018 Hall of Fame Award in the Senior Management Diversity/Large Nonprofit Government/Public Entity category.
- Received 2020 Higher Education Excellence in Diversity (HEED) Award.
- Northcoast 99 “Best Places to Work” Award 2020 and 2021
Demographics

Employee Demographics by Gender

- Female: 42%
- Male: 58%

Employee Demographics by Ethnicity

- White/Caucasian: 23%
- African American/Black: 3%
- Asian American: 2%
- Hispanic/Latino: 4%
- Multiracial: 3%
- Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander: 5%
- Unknown: 5%

Student Demographics by Gender

- Female: 39%
- Male: 61%

Student Demographics by Ethnicity

- White/Caucasian: 22%
- African American/Black: 7%
- Asian: 5%
- Hispanic/Latino: 5%
- Multiracial: 3%
- Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander: 5%
- Unknown: 5%

Student Demographics by Gender (Based on Fall 2020 full-time enrollment)