The Division for Diversity & Inclusion has redesigned and restructured Tapestry, our campus' diversity newsletter. Tapestry now attempts to meaningfully connect articles directly to RIT's Inclusive Excellence Framework.

Inclusive Excellence is a framework designed to help campuses integrate diversity and quality efforts. As a model, Inclusive Excellence assimilates diversity efforts into the core of institutional functioning to realize the educational benefits of diversity. Applying inclusive Excellence concepts leads to infusing diversity into an institution’s recruiting, admissions, and hiring processes; into its curriculum and co-curriculum; and into its administrative structures and practices. Inclusive Excellence means an institution has adopted means for the cohesive, coherent and collaborative integration of diversity and inclusion into the institutional pursuit of excellence.

The model for Inclusive Excellence at RIT has four dimensions:

1. Access and Success
2. Campus Climate and Intergroup Relations
3. Education and Scholarship
4. Institutional Infrastructure

If you have a diversity story to share or would like to be featured in an upcoming issue of Tapestry, please send us your story idea at www.rit.edu/diversity/contact. Tapestry is a community publication that is published once per semester and an opportunity to showcase campus-wide efforts that further diversity and inclusion among students, faculty, and staff, alumni, and local community members.

We hope you enjoy our publication.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CAMPUS CLIMATE & INTERGROUP RELATIONS ......................................................... 4
EDUCATION & SCHOLARSHIPS ........................................................................ 8
INSTITUTIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE .................................................................. 10
DIFFERENCE MAKERS ...................................................................................... 12
ALUMNI NEWSMAKERS ................................................................................ 14
UPCOMING EVENTS ......................................................................................... 16
UNIVERSITY PROGRAMS FOR WOMEN & MINETT PROFESSOR PROFILE .... 17
Soledad O’Brien, the award-winning former anchor and special correspondent for CNN, was the keynote speaker for the 2015 Expressions of King’s Legacy event at Rochester Institute of Technology. The event took place at noon on Thursday, Jan. 29, in RIT’s Gordon Field House and Activities Center.

Soledad O’Brien is a respected journalist, documentarian, news anchor and producer. At the forefront of the biggest breaking news stories of the past two decades, O’Brien delivered a talk entitled “Diversity on TV, Behind the Scenes and in our Lives.”

In June 2013, O’Brien launched Starfish Media Group, a multi-platform media production and distribution company dedicated to uncovering and producing empowering stories. Under Soledad’s leadership, the company reports on divisive, but complex, issues of race, class, wealth and poverty, as well as opportunities available through personal stories. She was the originator of the CNN documentary series “Black in America” and “Latino in America,” now produced by Starfish Media Group. In the wake of Hurricane Katrina, O’Brien and her husband, Brad Raymond, created The Starfish Foundation to help disadvantaged young women successfully pursue college educations. This year they will award scholarships to 25 deserving young women.

Earlier in her career, O’Brien co-anchored for NBC’s “Weekend Today” and contributed to segments on “The Today Show” and “NBC Nightly News.” In 2003, she transitioned to CNN, where she was the face of its morning news shows for many years. She has won numerous Emmy Awards for reporting on topics such as children and race, and the 2012 presidential election.

O’Brien was joined by internationally renowned violinist Kelly Hall-Tompkins, renowned pianist Craig Ketter and champion slam poets Dominique Christina and Denice Frohman. All artists participated at the noontime Expressions ceremony, as well as in separate performances later that same evening. They were featured in “An Evening of Music and Poetry,” at 7 p.m. in the Al Davis Cafeteria in RIT’s Student Alumni Union.

Kelly Hall-Tompkins’ orchestral career includes performances in Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center and with the New York Philharmonic. She also has held the prestigious role as co-concertmaster of the Philadelphia-based Black Pearl Chamber Orchestra and, in 2007, concertmaster of the Chamber Orchestra of New York. She founded and directs Music Kitchen—Food for the Soul, which brings chamber music performances to New York City homeless shelters.

American pianist Craig Ketter is rapidly distinguishing himself as a leading pianist of his generation, performing as soloist and chamber musician throughout the world. Critically acclaimed for “transporting the listeners to extraordinary heights” and “into a world beyond time and space,” Mr. Ketter is known for playing with powerhouse sonority combined with long-lined, dulcet lyricism. He performs frequently in the United States, Canada, South America, and Europe as both soloist and collaborative musician.

Dominique Christina and Denice Frohman performed as Sister Outsider Poetry, and their current national tour marks the first time the two Women of the World Poetry Slam champions have joined up.

More than 2,000 people attended the event, which is the longest running diversity program at RIT campus and a chance for the local community to continue to celebrate and honor the life of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

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This year marks the first anniversary of the MOSAIC Center. The founding mission of the center was to create a student-centered inclusive environment that enriches the RIT experience.

One year later, MOSAIC (Making Our Space An Inclusive Community) has blossomed into a center for diversity education and collaboration on RIT’s campus. The Center is committed to empowering all campus constituents to be socially aware and responsible members of our community. The center is a birthplace of diversity and social justice programs, ideas, and curriculum. Thus, the Center affirms students’ multiple identities by addressing the needs of all members of the campus community.

“The MOSAIC Center serves as an important component of RIT’s efforts to create a welcoming, and inclusive campus community by providing students, faculty and staff with a comfortable space for community building, individual expression, and the exchange of ideas through collaborative cultural, educational, and social experiences in the MOSAIC,” said Stephanie Paredes, manager of multicultural programs for RIT’s Division for Diversity and Inclusion. Visit the MOSAIC Center to take a break, attend one of our multicultural events, study alone or within a group. We are located on the 2nd floor of the SAU, Room 2510.

To make a reservation or for additional information please contact 475-6444 or Stephanie Paredes at sxpnsc@rit.edu.

The first-ever Young Professionals in Higher Education Conference took place on March 27 at RIT. The half-day conference aimed to provide local young professionals with an opportunity to build skills, network and plan for the next step in their careers.

Hosted by the RIT Young Professionals, the conference was geared toward professionals working in higher education who are around 40 years old and younger (and those young at heart).

“Many people new to the workplace are looking for ways to market themselves and get their superiors to notice them,” said James Macchiano, chair of the RIT Young Professionals and Director of reunions and affinity programs for RIT Alumni Relations. “We hope this event helped RIT’s young professionals build the confidence to create a plan for where their careers will go next.”

The event included workshops and presentations from respected professionals in higher education. In addition to stories and lessons from presenters, talks revolved around career development, promoting personal leadership skills, negotiation, transitions in supervisory roles, and knowing when to take the next step in your career.

Dawn Soufleris, Associate Vice President of residential education and community standards at RIT, closed the conference with a keynote. Her talk, entitled, “Millennials in the Workplace,” was provided as a Center for Professional Development course and opened to the public.

With more than 200 faculty and staff members, the RIT Young Professionals group aims to support the growth and development of RIT employees 40 and under. The group’s goal is to promote an individual career growth plan, provide young professionals the opportunity to engage with the community and to build community among young professionals at RIT. Check out http://rityp.tumblr.com for more information.
The Office of Diversity and Inclusion, in partnership with the RIT Leadership Institute, initiated a trip to Washington, DC, as an experiential educational opportunity by which the student participants could immerse themselves in the culture and climate of the nation’s capital, while also examining the historic and current trends regarding diversity and the social change model. From January 20–23, 2015, 32 students and four staff members were able to visit seventeen national museums and other sites which enriched themes of democratic freedoms, oppression and reform. Visits included the Museum of the American Indian, the African American Civil War Museum and monument, the Holocaust Museum, the Franklin D. Roosevelt Memorial, The Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial, and the Lincoln Memorial. The trip’s highlight was a visit to the office of Congressman Louise Slaughter, whose staff conducted personal tours of the capital, including a visit to the Gallery for the House of Representatives where the most recent version of the proposed immigration policy was being reviewed. Students were asked to journal their thoughts throughout the trip to enhance their reflections regarding the program’s learning objectives from the tour. Elizabeth was recognized by faculty and staff for her leadership in the Liberal Science (LSAMP) and Cell, Animal, Plant and Microbe (CAPM) to support gender diversity. Her level of service increased when she was appointed Faculty Associate in the Provost for Female Faculty to the Faculty Council for Women. Previously, she served as the Director of Women in Technology (DWT) Service related to pluses for Elizabeth extended beyond RIT and into the community. She annually engages with student groups from the Bachelor City School District, Fairport School District’s Single Gender Technology program, and the inner Philadelphia City School District’s All-Girls Inner City School District, Fairport School District’s Single Gender Technology program, and the inner Philadelphia City School District’s All-Girls Center for Women and Gender, and will be serving her very non-conformist “What Matters to Me and Why” session. Within the first week of being on campus, it was evident Sri was dedicated towards building relationships with students and officers on campus. She immediately began building bridges with deaf students and wanted to take ASL classes to be more interactive on campus. She immediately began building bridges with deaf students and wanted to take ASL classes to be more interactive on campus. She immediately began building bridges with deaf students and wanted to take ASL classes to be more interactive on campus. She immediately began building bridges with deaf students and wanted to take ASL classes to be more interactive on campus. She immediately began building bridges with deaf students and wanted to take ASL classes to be more interactive on campus.
The Division for Diversity and Inclusion wins prestigious Higher Education Excellence Award

Rochester Institute of Technology’s Division for Diversity and Inclusion received the 2014 Higher Education Excellence in Diversity award from INSIGHT Into Diversity magazine. RIT was selected based on its diversity and inclusion initiatives, and ability to embrace a broad definition of diversity on the campus. This is the first time RIT has been named as a HEED Award recipient.

A national honor recognizing U.S. colleges and universities that demonstrate outstanding commitment to diversity and inclusion, RIT’s Division for Diversity and Inclusion will be featured along with the other recipients in INSIGHT Into Diversity magazine’s November 2014 issue. The magazine is the oldest and largest diversity-focused publication in higher education.

“We are honored to have received this level of recognition,” said Kevin McDonald, vice president and associate provost for diversity and inclusion at RIT. “This award affirms the groundwork of organizational support for diversity and inclusion at RIT. It also affirms the groundwork of organizational support for diversity and inclusion at RIT. The plan, titled “Greatness Through Difference,” is designed to intentionally develop practices, opportunities, and programs that harness the power of difference to drive creative solutions, innovative combinations, and productive collaborations.

“RIT will become an internationally distinguished university by exploiting its differences and better meeting the needs of a rapidly shrinking world,” said RIT President Bill Destler. “RIT will achieve greatness through difference. We belong in the category of the world’s great universities, not because we seek to replicate the great universities of the 20th century, but because we are already practicing what future universities must provide.”

To review the entire strategic plan, go to http://www.rit.edu/president/plan2025/. Or, pick up a complimentary copy of the 30-page booklet that contains the plan, as well as wonderful photography and design, at the Office for Diversity and Inclusion, 1120 George Eastman Hall.
Outside RIT Doug has worked closely with Rochester City School District (RCSD) to promote STEM disciplines related to a crime scene investigation, building a robotic device and a weather balloon launch and data collection. All of the projects are designed to promote college readiness. Doug was the co-Principal Investigator, with Monroe Community College, for a “Bridges to the Baccalaureate” grant from the National Institute of Health. The purpose of the program was to promote the creation of a pipeline for minority students from high school to MCC, to RIT. The grant was in place from 2004-2007.

Last summer, RCSD Superintendent Bolgen Vargas, Ed.D. tapped Doug to design a Summer Bridges program for students earlier on in their schooling in order to be effective. From his work and research with Bridges to the Baccalaureate, Doug discovered that intervening in senior year is too late. Once the students who participated in the program graduated and went on to college, many were still not college-ready. Doug began working with middle school and early high school level students in the RCSD where he identified interventions that were most needed. He became an Advisory Board member, Rochester STEM High School with the task of planning a New York State Education Department Mathematics and Science Partnership grant entitled Focus on Inquiry—Improving Science Education in Rochester. He and others on the board developed a series of workshops for middle school science teachers.

As an outcome, Doug and others began working with Bridges to the Baccalaureate to design and implement a Summer Bridges program for middle school students. In collaboration with Bridges to the Baccalaureate he designed a Summer Bridges program which was implemented in 2010 with a grant of $204,500 from the National Institute of Health. The program focused on learning math and English principles related to health sciences, engineering and technology. Students were provided hands-on learning experiences related to a crime scene investigation, building robotic devices and a weather balloon launch and data collection. All of the students who participated in the Summer Bridges program are performing much better than the student who did not.

The grant ran from 2010-2013. After the grant ended, Doug began working with middle school and early high school level students in Rochester where he identified interventions that were most needed. He became an Advisory Board member, Rochester STEM High School with the task of pursuing a New York State Education Department Mathematics and Science Partnership grant entitled Focus on Inquiry—Improving Science Education in Rochester. He and others on the board developed a series of workshops for middle school science teachers.

Doug was initially drawn to support minority students back at RIT who were struggling and clearly not prepared for college. "I am very much dedicated to K-12, particularly urban minority and other activities designed to promote college readiness. Students were provided hands-on learning experiences related to a crime scene investigation, building robotic devices and a weather balloon launch and data collection. All of the students who participated in the Summer Bridges program are performing much better than the student who did not.

What is so compelling about his story is that it is a success story. It is apparent that these presentation awardees are still on the road to successful careers in science.”

"I never would have had the successes I’ve experienced at RIT without the help of the supportive staff in TRiO,” said Barajas.

TRiO is a federally funded program through the Department of Education serving low income, first generation and disabled college students. The TRiO staff is dedicated to working with such qualified and accepted student to achieve higher goals. Check out our website which lists all of our programs and services: http://www.rit.edu/diversity/triosss/index.php. Please contact us for more information about the program and how we can meet your needs. 孙红

Barajas' high school years were not without great difficulties. Some of the complications and challenges he faced included language barriers, gang activity, family expectations, and financial hardships. He successfully led three cohorts, along with faculty from MCC and RIT. His summer program focused on learning math and English principles related to health sciences, engineering and technology. Students were provided hands-on learning experiences related to a crime scene investigation, building robotic devices and a weather balloon launch and data collection. All of the students who participated in the Summer Bridges program are performing much better than the student who did not.

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We are pleased to spotlight alumna David Benitez, the Assistant Director of Community Initiatives & Rochester City Scholars program, in MCAS (Multicultural Center for Academic Success. Joining RIT in October 2014, Benitez maintains a caseload of approximately 85 students. He serves as a liaison, working collaboratively with all units of the university and members of the local community to establish, maintain and enhance services for the benefit of the Rochester City Scholars.

Benitez is a graduate of RIT’s College of Business, where he earned his Bachelor of Science in Business Administration with a minor in Finance. Born, raised and educated in Rochester, NY, David graduated from Benjamin Franklin H.S. and then attended RIT, as a HEOP student in the summer of 1980, where he participated in the 4-week summer bridge program. After graduation from RIT, Benitez entered a career of Law Enforcement with the Rochester Police Department. He spent 20 years serving the Rochester community in the capacity of a uniformed officer his first four years, and then as a member of the Special Investigation Section for the rest of his 16 years of service.

Upon completion of his career with the police department, David worked at Monroe Community College, where his passion for working with college students was ignited. As a result, he decided to pursue a Masters of Science in Higher Education Administration from the University of Rochester, which eventually led him to his new family at MCAS.

Featured on the front cover of Winds of Change magazine, RIT civil engineering technology graduate, Jacob Connors lands a position with the Civil Forest Service. For Connors, St. Regis Mohawk, the Forest Service has been a fantastic place to grow professionally. It has provided him with great opportunities and invaluable job experience throughout his immediate post-college career.

“I think the Forest Service is on the right track with diversity programs in terms of hiring Native Americans,” said Connors.


Kadre Roberts, RIT and HEOP graduate class of 2014, recently joined GE Oil & Gas as a Cyber Security Leader in Houston, Texas. She will be working on developing critical asset protection strategy and architecture security. Her new position requires frequent international travel to Florence, Italy and Budapest, Hungary.

“I enjoy traveling both domestic and abroad and demonstrating the real-world problem solving skills I acquired while studying at RIT,” said Kadre. “I am truly thankful and forever indebted to HEOP for the guidance and genuine interest in my success. I am a testament that HEOP works!”

While working for GE, Kadre is pursuing my MBA with a concentration in IT Management and Data analytics from Indiana University. Previously, she worked at GE Aviation as an IT Project Manager and a global team to deliver enhanced analytics software offerings.
UPCOMING EVENTS

APRIL

11
HEOP Community Service
9:00 am – 12:00 pm Foodlink

21
A Tale of 5 Cities: Portraits of Gay/Bisexual Identified Men in Black Greek-Lettered Fraternities
12:00 pm-1:30 pm RIT Vignelli Center, Building 7A, Booth Hall

25
WDXX Women for Women: Up Close and Personal
12:00 pm Bank of America Penthouse

27
Partnerships in Pluralism Annual Luncheon
12:00 pm Bamboo Room (Campus Center Room 2650)

28
MCAS STAR Awards
5:00 pm-7:00 pm University Gallery

MAY

2
Imagine RIT
Native American Future Stewards Program (FSP) will be exhibiting.
10:00 am – 5:00 pm

4
HEOP Recognition Banquet
5:00 pm—7:00 pm University Gallery

14
FSP & CSTEP Pancake Breakfast
The McKenzie Commons in COLA

15
FSP Graduation Dinner and Honor Ceremony Crossroads- River Room (Global Village)

22
RIT 2015 Commencement

UNIVERSITY LINKS

D.I.V.A.S. at RIT

Since the fall of 2005, the Determined Individuals Victoriously Achieving Success (D.I.V.A.S.) Program has provided a variety of social, educational, and service activities to a small group of multicultural women at RIT. Specifically, the D.I.V.A.S. program was designed to achieve two interlocked objectives: to foster a support network for building multicultural women at RIT and to increase the retention of female students through mentorship, personal development, and academic academic progress.

Over the past three years, the D.I.V.A.S. program has grown to meet the needs of the campus community and members in the program by seeking to increase gender diversity at RIT and by supporting female students majoring in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics). The program helps successful academic progress and development. To get more information on the program and the application process, contact Dr. Candace Baldwin, Senior Director for Academic Success for Multicultural Center for Academic Success (MCCAS), at cbaldwin@rit.edu or 585-475-5453.

W.O.C.H.A. at RIT

Women of Color, Honor and Ambition, a new program sponsored by RIT’s Office for Diversity and Inclusion, is open to all female students who are in their second- through fifth-years of study at the university, with an emphasis on woman of color. It is a one-year initiative developed for historically underrepresented women in a predominantly technical university to enhance leadership ability, build camaraderie, access mentorship and open networking opportunities.

The program will consist of a series of monthly workshops offered by faculty, staff and community professionals focusing on leadership development, healthy lifestyles, financial literacy, Self-E (self-esteem and empowerment), and community engagement. The WOCHA program aims to create an inspiring vision of the future by developing a quality education and lifelong learning where women will explore, develop and share their skills, experiences and resources.

At the end of their participation, students will be invited to participate in a career fair beginning on May 9th at 9 AM. For more information, visit https://www.rit.edu/diversity/wocha-women-color-honor-and-ambition.

Distinguished Professionals Make Lasting Contributions to the University

RIT’s Minett Professorship begins and ends in the city of Rochester. Established in 1991, the Minett Professorship brings distinguished Rochester area, multi-cultural, professional leaders to campus to share their professional experiences at RIT for one academic year. Emphasizing the pivotal connections between education and industry, the professorship also highlights the value of diversity within academia and business.

Minett Professors have come from politics, law enforcement, health care, media, finance, technology and the arts. But all of them have one thing in common; they come to the position wanting to make a difference at RIT and for the city of Rochester.

The program is as much about what those prominent professionals share with RIT as it is about how they remain connected to the university when they complete their appointments.

To read more of this article, please click here: https://www.rit.edu/news/athenaeum_story.php?id=51679