

Transforming RIT

The Campaign for **Greatness**



**DIVERSITY, EQUITY
AND INCLUSION**

Enhancing access. Ensuring success.

Pillar One

Attract Exceptional Talent

Human diversity is essential to organizational growth and synergy

RIT is the third largest producer of undergraduate STEM graduates among private universities in the U.S. Included in our student body of nearly 19,000 students are more than 1,200 deaf and hard-of-hearing students enrolled in RIT's National Technical Institute for the Deaf (NTID). Nearly 3,600 students of color—2,000 of whom identify as African American, Latinx and/or Native American (AALANA)—have chosen to study at RIT. Over 2,600 international students from 102 countries complement the campus climate with an entirely different dimension of global and

cultural diversity. Further enriching the RIT landscape are myriad students who differ by gender identity, sexual identity, religious affiliation, first-generation status, socioeconomic status, veteran status, and disability status, among others.

Because we live in a dynamic and rapidly evolving era, Samovar et al (2017) explains, "This global dynamism is characterized by dramatic alterations in technology, increased world travel, many new economic and political institutions, shifts in immigration patterns, growing demographic diversity, and greater population density. These changes have created a world that requires regular interaction with people of different cultural origins—be they next door,

Diversity on college campuses enriches the experience, strengthens innate creativity and lays the groundwork for global engagement as students transition to their chosen careers.

across town, or thousands of miles away” (*Communication between Cultures*, 9th Ed.). These differences may create points of tension that spark alternative viewpoints and ideas and ignite the kindling forces behind creativity and innovation.

At RIT, our goal is to foster living, learning, and working environments that support and incorporate principles of equity, diversity, inclusion, and community. The variety of backgrounds and perspectives represented in the RIT community enriches the learning experience for all. As students and other community members interact on team-based projects, in residences halls, and in day-to-day activities, RIT believes all will be enriched and better prepared for the opportunities and challenges of global interdependence.



Why diversity on college campuses matters

- **Enriches the educational experience and encourages students to think globally**—We all learn from those whose experiences, beliefs, and perspectives are different from our own and these lessons are best taught in a richly diverse environment. Early exposure to a diverse environment lays the foundation for a global perspective and builds the social abilities needed to interact productively with others.
- **Intensifies self-awareness and promotes personal growth**—Diversity challenges stereotyped preconceptions. Diversity encourages critical thinking and helps students learn to communicate effectively with people of varied backgrounds. Engaging with others whose opinions, customs and personal lifestyles differ sharply from others increases one’s self-insight.
- **Expands students’ knowledge base**—Exposure to myriad of diverse perspectives and different life experiences provides many opportunities to explore ideas, problem-solve and define solutions from multiple vantage points. As a result, a single-focus perspective is transformed into multi-focus and students become capable of viewing issues and problems from different angles.
- **Strengthens communities and the workplace**—Education within a diverse setting prepares students to become good citizens in an increasingly complex, pluralistic society. Diversity fosters mutual respect and teamwork. It helps build communities whose members are judged by the quality of their character and their contributions. Students sharpen their socialization skills and their knowledge of issues outside their comfort zone, skills that will help them navigate workplace relationships throughout their careers.
- **Collaboration in diverse settings produces better results**—Research (University of Wisconsin-Madison study) has found that ideas generated by diverse teams are of better quality in terms of feasibility and effectiveness. Diverse teams tend to focus more on facts and remain objective, they tend to process information more carefully demonstrating stronger decision-making abilities, and they tend to be more innovative in their thinking making an organization more competitive.

> Diversity and inclusion are fundamental aspects of RIT's identity as an institution and are intrinsically tied to its historic strength as one of America's most innovative and forward-looking universities. Recognized as a prestigious "Diversity Champion" by *INSIGHT Into Diversity* magazine, RIT takes enormous pride in its continuing diversity, equity and inclusion efforts that advance a welcoming and inclusive environment for all.



Brendan BS '17, MS '17 and Mikaela BS '17 David-John found both purpose and each other through RIT's Future Stewards Program

Brendan was unaware of RIT until the Future Stewards Program (FSP) sponsored a visit his senior year in high school. It was FSP's role in recruiting indigenous students along with the program's role in mentoring, coaching and assisting Native students to succeed in college that really sold Brendan on RIT. Hard work, engagement with his community, and dedication to research defined Brendan's time at RIT, where he earned a bachelor's degree in Computational Mathematics and a master's degree in Computer Science. Today, Brendan is pursuing a doctoral degree in computer science at the University of Florida through a National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship. He plans to become a college professor. Raised in Salamanca, N.Y. on an Indian reservation affiliated with the Seneca Nation of Indians, Brendan hopes to serve as a role model to encourage more Native Americans to pursue graduate degrees in STEM fields.



My goals for giving back stem from the research experience I was fortunate enough to achieve while at RIT and how that research allowed me to pursue creative ways to problem-solve from a Native perspective. Because of that experience, it has become a goal of mine to discover and mentor indigenous students who have interests in computing fields. While the numbers of underrepresented populations in graduate school are rising, the numbers for Native students pursuing computer science degrees is drastically low."

- Brendan Davie-John BS '17, MS '17



Peer support and sense of community are two of my favorite aspects of FSP. I have fond memories of studying and getting assignments done in the library with other FSP students. The support I received during my time at RIT from fellow FSP students and FSP staff is ongoing. We reach out to FSP mentors to this day for guidance and advice.”

– Mikaela David-John BS '17

Mikaela credits the Future Stewards Program (FSP) with providing her the leadership opportunities she desired. Two student-led organizations associated with FSP—the American Indian Science and Engineering Society (AISES) and the Native American Student Association (NASA)—helped her to develop the organizational and event management skills which have been crucial to the success of the AISES chapter she started with Brendan at the University of Florida. These FSP student leadership opportunities at RIT gave Mikaela the assurance and the confidence to know that her indigenous voice mattered. The program also made it possible to connect her to other Native students which encouraged her cultural, social and professional growth. Today, Mikaela is a graduate student at the University of Florida in Family, Youth and Community Sciences. She is from Syracuse, N.Y. and a member of the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Programs

To ensure we can continue to attract a diverse student body and offer a full range of programming that fosters a pluralistic environment and an enriched experience, we ask for your support of diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives.

Division for Diversity and Inclusion (DDI)

The Division of Diversity and Inclusion works collaboratively with the entire RIT community to create an environment that embraces all students, faculty and staff. Respecting different cultures, perspectives and beliefs is important because we believe through thoughtful engagement, we can all learn from our differences.

> **DDI General Support Fund**

Any amount

Diversity Education Programs

Each year, the composition of faculty, staff, and students at RIT changes. This leads to a more complex, richer, and dynamic educational environment in which learning and meaningful interaction can occur. In order to leverage the local, national and global diversity of our campus, it is important that we provide the knowledge and skills to ensure our students, staff, and faculty work toward cultural humility. The Division of Diversity and Inclusion and other university partners offer a variety of educational programs annually, impacting environments that enhance recruiting, retention and overall success of students, staff and faculty. Opportunities for support include:

- > **Endow Diversity Education Program** **\$2,000,000**
- > **Endow Diversity Education Scholarships** **\$50,000**
- > **Endow Diversity Education Student Support** **\$25,000**
- > **Sponsor Cultural Trip(s)** **\$10,000/year or
\$2,000/per trip**

DDI Tutoring Program

The Division of Diversity and Inclusion Tutoring Program focuses on academic success by offering peer to peer tutoring, support and guidance for students who are involved in DDI programs. Support of this critical program will better help to position students for academic success.

> **Endow the tutoring program**

**\$200,000
\$25,000/year**

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Programs

DDI Summer Experience

The DDI Summer Experience is an intensive four-week summer program that consists of two three-credit-hour courses, developmental workshops, academic coaching, and community building. This pre-collegiate program helps first-year students get acclimated to RIT, building confidence and bridges to resources before the school year begins. The program combines both HEOP (20) and MCAS (50) students with the HEOP students being partially funded by their grant. RIT assumes full financial responsibility for the 50 MCAS students.

- > Endow DDI Summer Experience **\$2,500,000**
- > Annual support of DDI Summer Experience **\$120,000**
- > Provide students with laptops **\$70,000 annually or \$1,000/student**

Diversity Theater

Through professional facilitators and performance artists, RIT Diversity Theater uses theater-based methods, initiatives and hands on experiences to engage students, staff and faculty in meaningful experiences to successfully cultivate a community rich in diversity and inclusion. Programming reaches across the RIT campus and is open to students, faculty, and staff. Opportunities for support include:

- > Endow Diversity Theater **\$2,000,000**
- > Annual Support of Diversity Theater **\$100,000**
- > Endow Diversity Theater Workshops **\$25,000**
- > Diversity Theater Individual Workshop Support **\$2,500/each**
- > Brick by Brick Film Completion Fund **\$150,000 or \$37,500/segment**



Expressions of King's Legacy

For 38 years, Expressions of King's Legacy programming has been dedicated to celebrating the life and impact of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. The event is free and open to the public. Past speakers included Andrew Young, Julianne Malveaux, Cornell West, Tara Setmayer, Marc Lamont Hill and Nikki Giovanni. Many other joined in performances, including Ailey II and Borinquen Dance Theatre; THREE MO' TENORS and The Meeting, a play by Jeff Stetson; Garth Fagan Dance Company; Syncopated Ladies; Danielle Ponder and the Tomorrow People and Aeolian. Opportunities to support include:

- > Endow Expressions of King's Legacy Speaker **\$1,000,000**
- > Annual Speaker Sponsorship **\$50,000**
- > Endow Expressions of King's Legacy Performer **\$200,000**
- > Annual Performer Sponsorship **\$10,000**

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Programs



Multicultural Center for Academic Success (MCAS)

The Center is focused on the academic success and personal development of AALANA (African, Latinx, and Native American) students and the programs offered through the Center enrich the overall college experience. The Center offers the following programs in need of support:

- > **Named Multicultural Center for Academic Success** **\$5,000,000**
- > **Endow MCAS Student Research and Conference Support** **\$50,000**
- > **Endow MCAS Student Conference Travel Support** **\$25,000**
- > **Sponsor a Student Research Project or Conference Attendance** **\$2,500/each**
- > **Sponsor a Student's Conference Travel** **\$1,250/each**

MCAS Book Loan Fund

MCAS students in need of textbook resources can participate in the loan program to borrow resources as needed for short intervals. There are more than 160 titles in RIT Libraries for MCAS student use. To maintain a current library of textbooks to loan requires ongoing funding support.

- > **Provide Textbook Support** **Any amount**

MCAS Student Advocates

The MCAS Student Advocates program, in conjunction with the fulltime permanent MCAS Advocates team, plays a critical role in engaging and empowering AALANA (African, Latinx, and Native American) students to successfully graduate from

RIT on time while closing the achievement gap by building community. This program increases the communication and collaboration between MCAS and RIT's academic units. These college-based MCAS Student Advocates, appointed by their respective deans, working with their MCAS staff counterparts, are in positions to influence change in their colleges through programming and directed outreach initiatives.

- > **Endow MCAS Student Advocates Program** **\$200,000**
- > **Annual support of MCAS Student Advocates** **\$10,000**
- > **Individual College Advocate Support Fund** **\$1,000/year each**

Destler/Johnson Rochester City Scholars Emergency Student Support Fund

This fund supports unplanned, emergency-based needs of Destler/Johnson Rochester City Scholars. The Destler/Johnson Rochester City Scholars program is available to graduates of the Rochester City School District who are admitted as freshman to full-time study in baccalaureate programs. The Program covers full tuition to RIT.

- > **Endow Destler/Johnson RCS Staff** **\$2,000,000**
- > **Provide Emergency Support for Students** **Any amount**

MCAS Scholars

This program is designed to enhance the RIT experience through developing intellectual and ethical leadership skills by fostering a desire for educational excellence, and an increased commitment to the learning process. The MCAS Scholars program is uniquely designed for students who not only possess a seriousness of academic purpose, but also desire to become role models in their intellectual abilities, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, and leadership skills. This program offers Scholars academic and career advisement; preferred access to research opportunities; recognition for academic excellence; access to graduate school, professional organizations and conferences; networking opportunities; social activities; and leadership development.

- > **Endow MCAS Scholars Program** **\$100,000**
- > **Annual Program Support** **\$5,000**

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Programs



Men and Women of Color, Honor and Ambition

Men of Color, Honor and Ambition (MOCHA) exists to provide personal, academic, cultural, social, professional, and leadership development to undergraduate males at RIT. MOCHA's goal is to positively impact academic success, increase retention, and develop successful leaders of tomorrow, today. MOCHA participants will achieve academic excellence, graduate from college, and be empowered to become successful leaders and role models in their respective careers and communities. These men are actively engaged in RIT and the local community and will forever be committed to achieving in every phase of human endeavor.

Women of Color, Honor and Ambition (WOCHA) is a one-year initiative open to all students who identify as women or nonbinary, in their second to fifth year of study, with an emphasis on women of color. The program aims to create an inspiring vision of the future by enhancing leadership ability, building sisterhood, and providing access to professional mentoring and networking opportunities.

MOCHA/WOCHA

- > Endow the MOCHA or WOCHA Program **\$2,000,000/each**
- > Support a Year's Worth of Monthly Workshops **\$25,000/each**
- > Professional Clothing Closet **\$10,000/year each**
- > Travel to Conferences **\$7,500/year each**
- > Mentoring Program **\$5,000/year per program**

Unity House

A collaboration of MCAS and Residential Life, Unity House gives student members the opportunity to build long lasting relationships with students and faculty members while focusing on their academic, cultural, personal, and social

needs. Unity House is aimed at finding ways to help AALANA members find their way at RIT.

- > Endow a Room on a Floor **\$150,000**
- > Endow a Student Leader **\$100,000**
- > Sponsor a Student's Room and Board Fees **\$15,000 annually**

Native American Future Stewards Program

This program is committed to nurturing the overall success of its Indigenous Scholars (Native American, Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian, and First Nations) by providing academic support, professional development, and cultural opportunities. Established to increase the success rate of Native scholars in STEM. Student leadership opportunities include:

American Indian Science & Engineering Society (AISES)

The Society's mission is to substantially increase the representation of American Indian and Alaskan Natives in engineering, science, and other related technology disciplines. Student scholars participating in the Society are eligible to attend the AISES National Convention where they are able to benefit from extensive networking opportunities to secure a co-op position and also present their research.

Native American Students Association (NASA)

Open to all members of the RIT community who are interested in Native American, Alaska Native, and First Nation issues and culture. NASA students are eligible to participate in an overnight stay in the long house at the Ganondagan State Historic Site and the annual Native American Heritage Month kickoff event.



Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Programs

Native American Outreach Day

An annual, one-day conference that brings Native American junior and high school students to RIT to explore RIT through an Indigenous lens.

> Endow the Program	\$2,000,000
> Annual Support of Monthly Programming	\$25,000
> Travel to Annual AISES Conference (5 students)	\$7,500
> Native American Heritage Month Keynote and Events	\$5,000
> Native American Outreach Day Activity and Speaker	\$3,500

Grant Funded Programs

The following programs are grant funded and their needs and funding opportunities are different from the programs above. These grant programs would all benefit from additional support to cover unanticipated expenses not covered by the grants.

Upward Bound

Upward Bound offers a college experience for high school students interested in attending college. The program is designed to help first-generation and/or low-income students who are enrolled in the Rochester City School District and other participating school districts. The focus of the program is twofold: 1) RIT works with students in the schools providing coaching, mentoring, advising, cultural activities and college tours; and 2) RIT hosts a six-week immersive program on campus where students take enrichment classes with professors, work on projects and participate in field trips and outings.

> Diversity and Inclusion General Support Fund	Any amount
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Higher Education Opportunity Program

The New York State Arthur O. Eve Higher Education Opportunity Program (HEOP) is committed to the recruitment and academic success of historically disadvantaged students with strong academic potential and personal initiative who would otherwise be excluded from higher education at a private New York State college or university. The program provides financial, academic, and personal



support to maximize student success. HEOP and its activities are supported, in whole or in part, by the New York State Education Department.

> Annual HEOP First Year Student Book Fund	\$10,000
> HEOP Gift Fund	Any amount

McNair/LSAMP

The RIT Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program serves a diverse group of talented RIT second- and third-year students who are interested in pursuing post-baccalaureate education. The RIT McNair Scholars Program provides an enriching scholastic experience that prepares eligible scholars for graduate education, with an emphasis on doctoral studies.

The Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation (LSAMP) is funded by the National Science Foundation. The program's aim is to increase the quantity and quality of STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) graduates from diverse backgrounds. The program serves under-represented minority students enrolled in designated STEM majors. Students may join starting in the spring of their first year at RIT.

> McNair/LSAMP General Support Fund	Any amount
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Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Programs



Veterans Upward Bound

The Veterans Upward Bound (VUB) program assists military service members who want to go back to school. RIT helps in all aspects of the college admissions process, including applying for and understanding financial aid benefits, and providing refresher classes and tutoring to help prepare students for the next step in their education. All VUB classes and supplies are free to qualified veterans. This is a TRIO Program, federally funded through a grant from the U.S. Department of Education.

> Diversity and Inclusion
General Support Fund

Any amount

Office of Faculty Diversity and Recruitment

The Office of Faculty Diversity and Recruitment works across the university to advance the recruitment of talented AALANA and women scholars and artists to enrich our diverse faculty community.

- > Endow Diversity Faculty Chairs **\$2,000,000/each**
- > Endow Diversity Faculty Research **\$1,000,000**
- > Office of Faculty Diversity and Recruitment General Fund **Any amount**



Diversity at RIT is more than a policy.

It is a commitment that the university makes to all students to support their personal, professional, and overall community growth. Diversity programs such as these are critical components of this commitment. Support of these vital programs can ensure that the experience for each student is as rich and productive as possible.

For more information on making a transformative gift of greatness, contact:

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