

# Equity and Inclusion Progress Report

The purpose of this report is to communicate the current progress and background information on equity and inclusion efforts, with the goal of better informing the new Council on Equity and Inclusion as well as the broader St. Olaf College community.

Programs, activities, and changes are organized based on the five recommendation areas outlined in the Working Group on Equity and Inclusion's report: 1) Climate and Community, 2) Sustainability, 3) Access and Inclusion, 4) Scholarship and Learning, and 5) Institutional Commitment.

This report provides a summary across many departments and areas of the college and is not meant to be an exhaustive list of all of our equity and inclusion efforts. It is also a living document that will need to be regularly updated and revised as efforts move forward and evolve.

## Climate And Community

### **Admissions — Recruiting A Diverse Student Body**

In response to the recommendations in the Working Group's report, Dean of Admissions and Financial Aid Chris George sent the following update to President David R. Anderson '74 on May 15, 2018:

David,

The enrollment team is in full support of the Working Group's aim of achieving true equity and inclusion at St. Olaf. Our community is defined by the diversity of stories that students, staff, and faculty bring to campus; the collective story of our community has evolved significantly in the last 25 years. Our team is proud of the increased diversity that has taken place over the past 10 years and our goal is to continue to ensure the college continues to welcome the stories from a diverse group of students from across our country and the world.

**The Enrollment Division has been successfully meeting the diversity goals set forth by the strategic plan.**

The Class of 2022 is currently comprised of 22 percent domestic students of color and 9 percent international students. Our current trajectory shows that our racial and ethnic diversity is approaching our national peer comparison group and meeting [point number 1 of Goal III of the St. Olaf Strategic Plan](#) is within reach.

- St. Olaf is above the median within national peer colleges in the percentage of students who receive a Pell Grant (15 percent for St. Olaf vs. 13 percent for the peer comparison group) and those that receive financial aid (90 percent for St. Olaf vs. 67 percent for the comparison group). Making St. Olaf accessible for low-income students is one of

our continued priorities.

- 18.4 percent of the Class of 2022 identify as a first-generation college student; this is a 4 percent growth over six years.

**St. Olaf Admissions has a strategic plan to meet College goals for recruiting a diverse cohort of students.**

- Recruiting a diverse group of students from around the country and around the world is a team effort. Staff are keenly aware that our goal is to exceed the diversity goal of the previous year.
- Wenie Lado, Assistant Dean of Admissions and Multicultural Recruitment, has been charged with documenting our current multicultural recruitment initiatives and our formal and informal relationships with community-based organizations, and assessing the efficacy of our fall and spring fly-in programs for low-income and/or first-generation college students from around the country.
- All admissions officers are expected to connect with new community-based organizations (CBOs) and maintain current relationships with organizations in their recruitment territory<sup>1</sup>.
- Staff participate in programming focused on college access: Impact Scholars - YES Prep, Chicago Scholars onsite, ACM Pipeline project, Davis New Mexico Case Studies, Yale Young African Scholars program.
- Staff participate in all Minnesota Association of Admission Counselors of Color (MnACC) fall and spring fairs at public schools in Minneapolis and St. Paul.
- St. Olaf hosted the MnACC summer conference in 2015.
- Staff serve on Council of International Schools committees to allow for expanded international recruitment opportunities at a significant savings<sup>2</sup>.
- We have broadened the pool of domestic students of color through the addition of a summer search program targeting students in Minnesota and the upper Midwest. This takes advantage of free ACT/SAT testing provided to high school juniors in Minnesota, Illinois, and Colorado.

**Formal Partnerships with Agreements and/or Sponsorship**

Chicago Scholars (Chicago)	Phoenix Pact (Chicago)
College Possible (Minneapolis/St. Paul) <sup>3</sup>	Posse Foundation (Chicago)
Davis UWC Scholars Program (International) <sup>4</sup>	Pritzker Scholarship (Chicago)

<sup>1</sup> [CBO stats/funnel data for the Class of 2021](#)

<sup>2</sup> Aggregate cost savings over 6 years over \$100,000

<sup>3</sup> St. Olaf College admits and enrolls more students from College Possible than either Macalester or Carleton

<sup>4</sup> St. Olaf College enrolls the 5th highest number of [Davis UWC Scholars](#) out of 95 partner institutions; enrolling 102 total scholars in 2017-18.

ELCA IWL Scholars (International)	YES Prep (Houston)
Mastercard Foundation ALA Scholars (International)	Say Yes to Education (New York)

**Active partnerships without Agreements and/or Sponsorship**

Achieve (Bay Area)	One Voice (LA)
Boys and Girls Clubs (Chicago)	Rainier Scholars (Seattle)
Breakthrough (Twin Cities and Sante Fe)	Simon Scholars (Santa Fe)
Davis NM Scholars (Santa Fe, Albuquerque)	Scholar Match (Bay Area)
High Sight (Chicago)	Schuler Scholars (Chicago)
Learningworks - (Blake School, Minneapolis)	Summer Search (Bay Area)
Minds Matter (Portland)	TORCH (Northfield)
Nicholas Academic Center (LA)	Upward Bound (Multiple Locations)

**St. Olaf has senior leadership with the skills, experience, and expertise to support the strategic plan and provide leadership, training, and support to other members of the staff.**

Cultural Competency is a core value of the Enrollment Leadership Team. The leadership in the enrollment division have graduate degrees with a focus on student development, leadership, and intercultural competency in education.

Enrollment Division team members have a diverse background and skill set. Four current team members were College Possible coaches. All division job descriptions include the following skill:

“Demonstrates cultural competency and regularly participates in opportunities for additional growth. Effectively interacts with a diverse population of students, parents, faculty and staff.” Additionally, job descriptions for Admissions Officers include that “Officers are expected to build diversity among inquiries, applicants, and deposits in their territories.”

The Enrollment Division will continue to invest in training to increase cultural competency for all team members. We have offered and continue to support professional development opportunities for staff focused on multicultural recruitment and inclusion.<sup>5</sup>

### **College Policies, Procedures, and Practices**

We agree that opportunities exist to improve college policies, procedures, and practices to support diverse, first-generation, and low-income students we enroll. To work towards improving the student experience, the Enrollment Division has convened and participated in several initiatives to address these concerns.

**The Enrollment Tracking Group**, which includes student service departments (Housing, Student Accounts, Financial Aid, IR, Admissions, and Registrar), examines policies, practices, and systems that impact retention. Collectively they have accomplished the following this year:

- Removed the barrier of an annual enrollment deposit
- Reduced the initial enrollment deposit to \$300 for new first-year and transfer students
- Automatically reduced the initial enrollment deposit to \$150 for Pell-eligible students and worked individually with a small group of students to reduce it further to \$50.
- Piloting a shared customer service model in 2018-19 for Student Accounts and Financial Aid to improve the experience of aid application and paying for college.

**The International Student Support Interest Group** (Admissions, Financial Aid, IOS, Piper Center, CMIE, Development, Academic Support Center, Alumni and Parent Relations) addresses the unique needs of our growing international student population. Highlights of this past year:

- Formation of an Emergency Fund
- Providing food during breaks when Stav and the Cage are closed
- CPT/OPT proposal to address cost concern

**Should opportunities exist to expand our reach, the Enrollment Division sees opportunities for further partnership and investment to both improve access and retention of a diverse cohort of students.**

### **Future Recruitment Partnerships**

- Explore a second Posse partnership in San Francisco as it is a location that aligns with our strategic priorities.
- Partner with College Horizons, a non-profit dedicated to increasing the number of Native American, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian students.
- Additional expansion of the credit transfer policy and providing a pathway to a St. Olaf degree would remove a barrier for underrepresented students to transfer to St. Olaf.

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<sup>5</sup> Aside from the St. Olaf trainings offered in 2017, the division participated in a retreat focused on diversity and inclusion in our work facilitated by Rhonda Fitzgerald and several staff are attending national trainings in 2018: [Implicit Bias](#) and [Guiding the Way to Inclusion](#).

Community colleges continue to serve large populations of underrepresented students, and our current policy limits our ability to recruit and enroll students who begin their education at a community college.

**Increase Financial Aid Resources to Expand Experiential Learning**

- Every student with financial need participating in a study abroad experience receives additional grant or scholarship from the College, but we currently do not have the resources to meet the increased need of studying abroad. Additionally, the Perkins Loan program, which was a source of funding for study abroad costs, has been federally eliminated. An opportunity exists for St. Olaf to reinvest the initial St. Olaf contribution of the Perkins fund into an expanded and improved institutional loan program.

**Emphasize Strategic Student Communication**

- Navigating the hidden curriculum of college is a retention barrier to many first-generation college students. Adopting both a comprehensive and cross-departmental student communication plan along with integrating texting software to support communication of dates and deadlines would be a step toward communication clarity. We are considering a plan to pilot and test texting communication with current students.

Looking ahead, we are excited to be a part of the ongoing conversation on equity and inclusion and are eager to participate in the campus conversation. We would be happy to participate in campus-wide committees. We would like to continue our work and investment to enroll, retain, and graduate a diverse group of students. We invite continued dialogue about the ways we can continue to improve our work and welcome additional opportunities to share our strategic philosophy around this area.

Sincerely,  
Chris George

**Additional Admissions and Enrollment efforts that have taken place since May 2018**

Dean of Admissions and Financial Aid Chris George notes that since he sent the above letter in May 2018, his team has continued to advance its work:

Wenie Lado has been promoted to Assistant Dean of Admissions and Multicultural Recruitment.

Strategic improvements have been made to the Fall Fly-in Program.

The College is piloting an expanded Connect for Success program for first-generation students (led by college staff members Tara Hupton, Nayeli Trujillo, Kathy Glampe, Damien Parks, Kristi Kehrwald, and Chris George).

Chris George, Kathy Glampe, and Susan Canon have led the formation of the Retention and Student Success Group to focus on ways in which we can impact retention. Other staff and faculty members leading the group are Roz Eaton, Hassel Morrison, Matt Richey, Tom Williamson, Kristi Kehrwald, Ericka Peterson, and Tšooane Molapo.

The College is piloting a joint Financial Aid/Student Accounts Office, led by Director of Financial Aid Carly Eichhorst and Student Accounts Manager Stephanie Ruckel, to better support students.

### **Faculty and Staff Training — Ensure Awareness and Understanding of Diversity and Inclusion**

During the College's Opening Day activities in 2017, an all faculty and staff Sustained Dialogue session was led by Sustained Dialogue Campus Network Managing Director Rhonda Fitzgerald. Rhonda asked faculty and staff members to consider how their interactions with others are framed by their own race and stage in thinking about issues of diversity, and by the college environment. This was followed by facilitated small group discussions. Earlier in the summer of 2017, Rhonda also held a Sustained Dialogue session with staff in Admissions.

Rhonda Fitzgerald returned during the 2017-18 academic year to hold Sustained Dialogue training sessions with students, including a daylong training and group meeting on February 24. Following the daylong training, participants gathered with a small group each week for four weeks to continue their work through active dialogue sessions. The goal of Sustained Dialogue is to foster discussions and relationships focusing on issues of diversity, social justice, politics, and public policy. It eventually moves into action planning with key stakeholders on campus and the larger community.

The College also offered all employees implicit bias training, which helps all of us identify ways in which our work is affected by unconscious or subtle associations that individuals make between groups of people and stereotypes about those groups. An initial workshop was held in May 2017 and another was held in September 2017. The workshops were led by Anne Phibbs, formerly the director of education for the Office of Equity and Diversity at the University of Minnesota and now the founder and president of Strategic Diversity Initiatives, which helps organizations advance their equity, diversity, and inclusion efforts with approaches that are strategic, sustainable, and connected to mission. Faculty had a 2.5-hour session on equity and inclusion with a special focus on situations in the classroom.

In the fall of 2017, all students, staff, and faculty were required to take an online course called DiversityEdu. This one-hour interactive program, created with college environments in mind, covers a broad range of issues related to diversity. Students were required to complete it prior to registering for spring classes. During Week One, first-year students also took part part (as

they did again in the fall of 2018) in additional in-person training sessions, with small-group discussions that follow. All new faculty and staff members are required to take this training as part of their onboarding through the Office of Human Resources.

As a follow-up to the DiversityEdu training, Anne Phibbs returned to campus in April 2018 to lead workshops for faculty and staff titled "What Now? Next Steps After DiversityEdu." In this interactive workshop, faculty and staff were asked to think about and explore how their own social identities impact their work with students (both inside and outside the classroom), colleagues, and the wider community. The workshop acknowledged that creating an inclusive community is a complex and nuanced process, and provided participants with the opportunity to ask questions, build skills, and identify next steps.

During the 2017-18 academic year, there were also faculty-led "learning circles" focused on implicit bias and supporting diverse students and colleagues organized by Associate Professor of Social Work Susie Smalling. The first two learning circle events were lectures: the first was a repeat of the lecture that Professor Smalling offered in the spring of 2017 that focused on providing a general overview of structures of oppression and privilege and cultural identity development. The second lecture offered a more in-depth look at white privilege and racial oppression. At the third learning circle event, participants reviewed some basic skills to facilitate having difficult conversations around issues like oppression and privilege both in and out of the classroom. The final two events featured a repeat of the white privilege and racial oppression lecture (the second time just for faculty and staff) and a discussion where participants shared their own experiences with oppression and privilege. There were approximately 160 attendees among the five learning circles.

During the College's Opening Day activities in 2018, all faculty and staff attended a workshop on *Fostering a Mindset of Discovery: Laugh, Live, Practice* conducted by one of the most renowned improvisational groups in the country, Brave New Workshop. The goal of the workshop was to help faculty and staff discover the role their mindset has on their daily interactions on campus. The Academic Leadership opening meeting on August 29 also featured a workshop led by Anne Phibbs titled "Building Capacity, Starting at Home," that focused on how this group of department chairs, program directors, committee chairs, associate deans, the registrar, and others can be champions for equity and inclusion.

## **Center for Advising and Academic Support Initiatives**

### **Connect for Success**

The Center for Advising and Academic Support (CAAS) piloted a program, Connect for Success, for first-generation students in the spring of 2018. A group of St. Olaf staff members (Kathy Glampe, Chris George, Nayeli Trujillo, Damien Parks, Tara Hupton, and Kristi Kehrwald) are expanding the program and offering it to 50 first-generation students this year.

### **Student Orientation to Academics and Resources (SOAR)**

To ensure that all students have the knowledge to participate fully in the St. Olaf College experience, the Athletics Department, the Center for Advising and Academic Support, and the

Piper Center for Vocation and Career are piloting a series of non-credit-bearing student success workshops, funded by *To Include is To Excel*. Entitled "SOAR" (Student Orientation to Academics and Resources), the workshops address the academic resources available to students, effective methods for working and communicating with faculty, study skills and strategies for building and maintaining a balanced schedule; resources to support mental, physical, emotional, social, and sexual health; privilege and sources of funding to overcome barriers; and vocation and career. The purpose of these workshops is to promote academic success, to increase retention rates, to foster knowledge of college resources and expectations, and to underscore the importance of engaging in high impact practices. The pilot is targeting all first-year varsity athletes, as that group includes students from all backgrounds, supporting the goal of the Mellon grant of full inclusion.

The program began this fall with eight sections for nine sessions overall. There are eight staff leaders, eight sophomore student leaders, and 100 students participating. It is held Monday evenings from 7:30 to 8:30 p.m.

### **Retention and Success Group**

The Retention and Student Success Group (led by Chris George, Kathy Glampe, and Susan Canon) is focused on ways in which St. Olaf can impact retention. Other staff and faculty members leading the group are Roz Eaton, Hassel Morrison, Matt Richey, Tom Williamson, Kristi Kehrwald, Ericka Peterson, and Tšooane Molapo.

### **Other CAAS Initiatives:**

- Mentoring Program for first-year students with disabilities
- Embedded tutoring in Writing 110, Writing 107, and Math 119
- Training on inclusion and equity embedded into CAAS student employee training
- Advising for students on probation
- Participation in International Student Support Interest Group
- Training for advisors on the needs of international students, first-generation students, and multicultural students
- Partnership with the Center for Innovation in the Liberal Arts (CILA) on workshops for faculty on universal design

### **Bias Incident Reporting and Response**

The College has reviewed and updated the procedure for bias incident reporting. The bias incident report form has been revised so that students can report incidents anonymously in the hopes that more victims will step forward when an incident occurs.

The Bias Incident Response Team is looking at how best to integrate restorative justice techniques into its protocol. One member of the team, Pamela McDowell, is among the college staff members who are trained on restorative justice techniques.

The Bias Incident Response Team also distributed a survey to all individuals involved in bias reports in the last year who provided their contact information. Team members are hoping that using this survey will provide helpful feedback on how the process can be improved. To date, it has received minimal response but will be distributed again. The survey questions were:

- Was the Bias Incident Reporting Form easy to find on the college website?



- Did the form enable you to provide complete information about the incident or did you find it limiting?
- Did you receive acknowledgement within a week that the form had been received?
- Did you receive further communication from the college indicating that the incident had been investigated or addressed?
- Please indicate below how satisfied you were with the college's response.  
[Highly Satisfied — Satisfied — Dissatisfied — Highly Dissatisfied]

## **Mentoring Opportunities**

The St. Olaf Piper Center for Vocation and Career and the Office of Alumni and Parent Relations Office have a number of programs underway.

### **The Piper Center Operations**

#### **The Piper Center's Peer Advisor Program**

Each year, the Piper Center employs 25 junior and senior student Peer Advisors who provide frontline support on a wide range of tasks, including review of professional materials, assistance with the job/internship search, and support for projects and the Piper Center's signature events.

Last year, the Piper Center made significant efforts to recruit a peer advising team that fully reflects the breadth of diversity present in the student body. This year's team is comprised of students who reflect diversity of thought, racial/ethnic identity, academic/career interests, gender identity, and co-curricular involvement. Notably, for the first time, the Peer Advisor team is composed of 50 percent students identifying as men and 50 percent identifying as women, outpacing the college as a whole in gender parity. Additionally, throughout the application and interview process students are asked to speak about their experiences engaging with and supporting diversity and inclusion.

Students receive ongoing training that addresses issues of equity and inclusion within their own lives and in their work as Peer Advisors. The Piper Center has developed curriculum for a "Career & Identity" workshop and invites on-campus partners who are engaged with these issues to meet with our Peer Advisors.

### **Events and Programming that Support Equity and Inclusion for Domestic and International Students**

#### **Management of the Johnson Family Opportunity Fund**

The Piper Center has taken on full responsibility for managing the Johnson Family Opportunity Fund, which provides support for low-income students (with a preference given to first-generation students) who are engaging in internships, the graduate school application process, shadowing experiences, and other career-enhancing opportunities. During the 2018 Fiscal Year, \$120,000 in awards was distributed to 66 low-income students.

### **Pathways Leadership and Career Program (first-generation, low-income sophomores)**

A cohort of sophomores who are low-income and first-generation students will engage in monthly workshops, connect with alumni, build leadership and professional skills, and prepare to engage in meaningful summer experiences. This will be the second year of the program and the first year that the program will focus specifically on first generation students.

### **Identity & Career Events**

Two identity and career events were held during 2017-18 academic year, including a Young Alumni of Color Panel and an LGBTQIA+ Alumni Panel. Plans are underway to hold two identity and career events during 2018-19 (slated for April 2019).

### **Northstar STEM Partnership**

Through workshops, events, and 1:1 meetings, the Piper Center has worked to increase the likelihood of success for underrepresented students by educating them about STEM career choices in industry and academia.

### **CodeCamp (sponsored by To Include is To Excel)**

CodeCamp is an opportunity for non-STEM and underrepresented populations to gain skills and exposure to technical problem solving. The project is being led by two female computer science students under the supervision of Professor Olaf Hall-Holt and supported by Kirsten Cahoon in the Piper Center.

### **Connect for Success Program (first-year, first-generation program)**

Piper Center team member Kristi Kehrwald Adair is involved with the planning group for this program, which is focused on enhancing support for first-generation college students at St. Olaf through a variety of programs. Six Piper Center staff members will be mentoring first-year students participating in this program.

## Events, Programming and Partnerships with TRIO Student Support Services (SSS) Students

### **TRIO SSS Partnership**

Engaging with SSS students has been a priority for the Piper Center over the past several years. This partnership includes ongoing collaboration and communication between the SSS and Piper Center staff, regular workshops for SSS students from each class year, a focus on strongly encouraging each SSS student to have 1:1 coaching each semester, and special projects with the the SSS Board of Leaders' Piper Center committee.

### **SSS Summer Bridge**

Each summer, Piper Center coaches meet incoming first-year students who arrive on campus early to take two college courses, learn about campus life, and begin to establish good study habits and supportive relationships. In August 2018, nine Piper Center coaches participated in an introductory workshop, each sharing their personal and professional background, giving basic information about Piper Center services, and welcoming the students to St. Olaf.

### **TRIO McNair Partnership**

Piper Center team members partner on a regular basis with McNair to provide students with workshops on personal statements, resumes/CVs, networking and LinkedIn.

## Events, Programming, Partnerships, and Resources related to International Students

### **Career Coaching**

International students are a common student population in the Piper Center, with 93 percent of international students engaging with the Piper Center during 2017-18. Facing unique barriers to employment, particularly in the U.S., international students are seen by all Piper Center coaches and Peer Advisors, and receive training related to relevant cultural and immigration factors for international students. A general focus of coaching is to help students "interpret" the liberal arts message and articulate the value of this style of education, which is generally unknown outside of North America. International students are part of the Piper Center's student Peer Advisor team, many of whom work to support projects to improve services and resources for

international students.

## **Major Events**

Dinner and Panel for First-Year International Students: Upper-class international students share how they have navigated the academic and career planning process, providing tips, resources, and lessons learned. Topics include leveraging a range of campus advising and coaching relationships, connecting with experiential learning opportunities, garnering funding for experiences, and overcoming obstacles.

Sophomore & Junior Class 'Ask Anything' Check-in Meetings: This is a joint meeting with the Piper Center and International Student Advising staff. Topics covered include CPT/OPT, networking, career and job exploration, job/internship strategies, recruiting timelines, graduate school, looking ahead at St. Olaf, and after graduation.

Optional Practical Training (OPT) Workshop: This is a joint meeting with the Piper Center and International Student Advising staff for international students interested in post-graduate employment in the U.S. A Piper Center representative reviews job search techniques and resources, and shares information about the application process, application materials and costs, deadlines, and responsibilities while working on OPT.

Nuts and Bolts of Networking with Introduction to Curricular Practical Training (CPT): In this workshop, students learn the basics of networking, observe mock networking scenarios, and practice key skills. The workshop connects the practice of networking to landing internships, and introduces Curricular Practical Training (CPT) work authorization for U.S. internships.

Curricular Practical Training (CPT) Workshop: This is a joint meeting with the Piper Center and International Student Advising Staff to provide an overview of Piper Center resources, strategies, and best practices to streamline international students' time and efforts in the search process. The CPT authorization process is covered in greater detail.

## **Resources and Campus Collaborations**

### GoinGlobal

Students can access career and city guides, posted job and internships, employee directories, and information about obtaining work visas and living abroad.

#### Interstride

Interstride, a database of 8,000+ companies that have sponsored H1B visas and green cards, helps international students in the United States boost the job-search experience and career prospects, and overcome challenges in an unfamiliar market.

#### International Student “CPT Database”

Maintained by the Piper Center, this database records all internships conducted by international students in the prior nine years. Fields available to students include: Company/Organization, Category, City, State, Country.

#### St. Olaf College Career Network: International Students and Alumni (LinkedIn Networking Group)

This networking group on LinkedIn provides current and past students a space for sharing career and vocational-related resources and information and to get to know other international Oles.

#### International Student Staff Interest Group

This group develops communication and strategic planning around matters related to international students.

## Recruiting

### **INROADS Partnership**

The Piper Center has developed a new robust recruiting connection with INROADS, a non-profit organization that provides underrepresented students of all types (LGBTQIA+, racial/ethnic minorities, low-income, first-generation, etc.) with well-paid, corporate internships after their first year, sophomore, and/or junior years at Fortune 500 companies located across the United States.

- 4 Oles participated during the summer of 2018
- The Piper Center offered a fall information session and office hours with INROADS, and shared details of the program at the annual Fall Recruiting Showcase (with 199 students in attendance).

### **Diversity Recruiting Partnerships**

The Piper Center has developed smaller diversity recruiting partnerships with organizations like Brandlabs and Urban Scholars, and the Piper Center promotes diversity recruiting events like the UHG Talent Summit.

## Partnership with Alumni and Parent Relations (APR)

### **Center for Multicultural and International Engagement (CMIE) Collaboration: Connections & Community Event for Alumni & Students of Color**

Several Piper Center staff members collaborate with CMIE, APR, and SSS staff to plan and facilitate this annual event, focused on bringing students and alumni together to share their experiences at St. Olaf and beyond, and to create and strengthen connections between community members.

### **Partnership — Alumni and Parent Relations — Alumni Coach/OPN/Affinity Groups**

The Piper Center, through the Associate Director of Alumni Career Services (“Alumni Coach”) is partnering with APR to engage and support St. Olaf alumni throughout their career journey. The Alumni coach is offering individual coaching for alumni and is developing online, virtual programming to provide on-demand support and resources. The Alumni Coach will partner with APR to create, manage, and evaluate the success of the Ole Professional Networks, a new suite of programs and events organized around professional identity, affinity, or interest.

### **Collaboration with the Center for Interdisciplinary Research**

#### **Analyzing Engagement with the Piper Center and Participation in Internships, Research, and Experiential Learning**

During the 2018-19 academic year, the Piper Center is partnering with the Center for Interdisciplinary Research (the “Piper Center/CIR group”) to investigate trends and relationships related to student engagement with the Piper Center; participation in internships, research, and other forms of experiential learning; and first destination outcomes. Drawing from the Piper Center’s data on engagement, self-reporting information submitted through first destination surveys, and student information from the Registrar’s Office, the Piper Center/CIR group will explore the characteristics of students who do — and do not — utilize the Piper Center and engage in internships. The group hopes to analyze engagement and participation as they relate to gender, major (or major group), race/ethnicity, family income, athlete/non-athlete, first-generation status, GPA, and international status. This research will help the Piper Center and others at St. Olaf better support all students in accessing meaningful career services and experiential learning.

### **Residence Life — Enhanced Programing**

St. Olaf continues to implement a Residence Life program that features structured conversations between roommates led by JCs and RAs. Residence Life staff also have one-on-

one conversations with each member of their corridor twice a year and conversations with the staff member and all members in a room twice a year. These also are structured around living in a community.

St. Olaf is also in the second year of having Inclusivity Advocates on each of the College's hall councils. Last year they provided hall programming as well as a week long campus-wide Inclusivity Advocate Week.

### **Center for Multicultural and International Engagement (CMIE) — Transition to Student Life Division, Staffing Structure**

The Center for Multicultural and International Engagement (CMIE) is now part of the Student Life Division.

At the end of August, Dr. Hassel Andre Morrison was named the new Vice President for Student Life. In addition to serving as a member of the President's Leadership Team, he oversees the Dean of Students, Counseling Center, Posse Program, Public Safety, Residence Life, Student Activities, Buntrock Commons, Campus Recreation, Wellness Programs, Student Health Services, and the Center for Multicultural and International Engagement.

Megan Carmes, who had served as Student Immigration and Off-Campus Studies Coordinator in International and Off-Campus Studies, now serves as the Assistant Director of International Student Engagement. Associate Dean of Students Justin Fleming is now supervising CMIE. Hudlin Wagner will continue as Interim Director of CMIE for the fall 2018 semester as the College conducts a search to fill that position.

### **Inclusive Student Events**

Student organizations have been required for the past five years to have the college's non-discrimination clause included in their constitutions. At the Student Government Association (SGA) executive training on August 31, there was a lengthy discussion about being inclusive in event planning. During the student organization financial training on September 13-14, students were also encouraged to be inclusive to all new members. A total of 227 people attended these trainings, representing 153 organizations.

St. Olaf requires attendance tracking at large SGA events such as dances, lectures, large music concerts, etc. The Office of Student Activities uses a software program called Presence to track, manage, and assess the data. This gives staff members the ability to get some general data via Presence (major, academic year, etc.), but they can also download the information and send to the Registrar's Office for demographic data. This provides a general snapshot that they can share back with the sponsoring organization and helps improve efforts for future events.

### **International and Off-Campus Studies**

The Office of International and Off-Campus Studies has taken a number of steps to advance access to and inclusion in its programs. Staff members in the office:

- Evaluated the equity of application fees for off-campus study programs and eliminated application fees beginning with recruitment for 2019-20 in November 2018.
- Created identity pages for various student cohorts, including students of color, female-identified students, LGBTQ students, and international students.
- Partnered with fellowships faculty adviser Heather Campbell and the Financial Aid Office to offer additional advising on external scholarships.
- Attended an American Association of Colleges and Universities Summer Institute on high-impact practices and equity and inclusion along with staff members from Academic Civic Engagement, the Center for Advising and Academic Support, and two faculty members. Upon returning to campus, staff members from all of these areas collaborated to create an event — titled Oles Do! — that highlights all high-impact practices for first- and second-year students. They also created an action plan to advocate for integrating experiential learning into the St. Olaf general education curriculum.

## **Sustainability**

### **Council on Equity and Inclusion**

On August 27, 2018, Larry Stranghoener '76, Chair of the St. Olaf College Board of Regents, and President David R. Anderson '74 announced the formation of a permanent Council on Equity and Inclusion. Their letter to the St. Olaf community is below. Elections and selection for members to the council are currently underway.

August 27, 2018

A Message from Larry Stranghoener '76, Chair of the St. Olaf College Board of Regents, and President David R. Anderson '74:

The [Report of the Working Group on Equity and Inclusion](#), issued last May, recommends the establishment of a St. Olaf Council on Equity and Inclusion.

The Report further recommends that the President and the Chair of the Board of Regents select the Chair of the Council with input from the President's Leadership Team. The Report then recommends that the Chair "help recruit members and put in place the governance structure for any future elections."

We are writing now to name the Council Chair, to establish a process for recruiting other members of the Council, to deliver a charge to the Council, and to invite all members of the community to offer their active support for the Council's work.

The Chair of the Council:

We are happy to report that the Provost and Dean of the College, Marci Sortor, has agreed to serve as Chair of the Council. We thank Marci for taking on this important task. Her areas of



responsibility cross academic departments and disciplines, faculty and staff domains, and directly serve the students at our college. Her calm and experienced leadership, her deep knowledge of so many areas of the College, and her demonstrated commitment to equity and inclusion position her well to lead the Council as it begins its important work.

The Report of the Working Group recommended that the Council be formed in a “transparent and collaborative fashion.” We believe that can best be accomplished in the following manner.

The Membership of the Council:

- A Chair selected by the Chair of the Board of Regents and the President.
- 2 members of the President’s Leadership Team, selected by the PLT.
- 2 faculty members, one elected by the faculty through its established governance process and the other selected by the Dean’s Council.
- 2 members of the staff, one elected by the exempt staff and the other elected by the non-exempt staff.
- 2 students, one elected by the Student Government Association and the other jointly selected by the Council Chair and the President of SGA.
- 1 alumnus/alumna of the College selected by the Alumni Board.

We think it is important for there to be a selection process as well an election process in forming the Council to ensure balance as to gender, race, and ethnicity, among other identities in the Council as a whole.

We leave it to the Council, early in its process, to establish staggered terms for the members of the Council and to consider not only the length of terms of service but also the possibility of renewal of terms up to some limit.

The Charge to the Council:

The Working Group’s Report did not specify a Charge to the Council, so we have done that, quoting directly from the very words of the Report:

To assist in the development and monitoring of the College’s strategic equity and inclusion plans and metrics, advise the administration on the implementation of the recommendations contained in this report, connect disparate efforts across campus, and serve as a resource for academic and administrative departments. The Council should report annually to the President

and Board of Regents.

We urge the parties involved to make their selections for membership on the Council as soon as possible after the academic year begins. The Chair of the Council, Marci Sortor, will oversee and work with them to put the processes in place to do that.

Formation of this Council is an important step forward for the College, and we urge all members of the community to lend the Council their support and good will.

### **The Glenn and Myretta Taylor Center for Equity and Inclusion**

St. Olaf Regent Glenn Taylor '73 and his wife, Myretta Taylor, provided a \$1 million gift to establish the [Glenn and Myretta Taylor Center for Equity and Inclusion](#), which aims to foster an inclusive environment across the intersections of race and identity that students bring to St. Olaf. The College will provide a matching grant from the endowment to support the center.

The Taylor Center will expand and house services currently provided by the Center for Multicultural and International Engagement (CMIE). As part of the College's Student Life Division, it will be a core function of St. Olaf's residential learning, along with Health and Wellness, Student Activities, Public Safety, and Residence Life.

Services will include dedicated programs for students of color and international students, as well as multicultural engagement campus-wide. This engagement will range from speakers and public events to further education, outreach, and training for students, faculty, and staff. St. Olaf Vice President for Student Life Hassel Morrison will work with staff to shape the center's vision and operations, and will hire a new director this year.

## **Access And Inclusion**

### **Recruitment, Retention, and Advancement of Faculty and Staff from Historically Underrepresented Groups**

Provost and Dean of the College Marci Sortor is partnering with Chief Diversity Officer Bruce King and Associate Provost Dan Dressen to develop a diversity statement to be incorporated in the faculty search process. They will then review with the associate deans, who play a significant role in faculty searches.

In addition to this, the College has added diversity-related processes to our full-time term (year-to-year) faculty searches as well. In our first year, the results have been heartening.

St. Olaf is also participating in the ACM-Mellon Faculty Diversity Fellows Program, which has provided course releases and additional development funds to not only the two fellows the college now has, but to three other faculty members of color who are recent hires. The College has also made it possible for a fourth additional recent hire go on a year-long research leave.

In 2017 the St. Olaf Office of Human Resources — in close collaboration with a "Leadership to Legacy" team focused on diversifying staff hiring that was formed by Susan Canon, Roz Eaton, Kathy Glampe, Bruce King, Michael Kyle, and Marci Sortor — undertook a large project that involved revamping all staff job descriptions, including analyzing the qualifications for each job to ensure the College is not excluding people with certain qualifications. In some instances, the College changed a required master's degree to a bachelor's degree, bachelor's degree to associate's degree, and even changed degrees to a high school diploma or equivalent work experience. In the fall of 2016, the Office of Human Resources began training hiring managers on cognitive biases that can impact search committee decisions.

## **Alumni Affinity Groups**

The Alumni and Parent Relations Office has recent and planned events for alumni of color. These programs include:

- Alumni Board Multicultural Committee (formed in 2016)
- Alumni of Color Forum (first held in 2016)
- Community and Connections events focusing on connecting Alumni of Color with Students of Color, hosted in conjunction with CMIE and Piper Center (in both 2017 and 2018)
- Listening sessions with alumni of color in New York City, the Twin Cities, and Chicago. In each session alumni talked about their St. Olaf experience and how to improve the experience for current students, as well as how to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Cultural Union for Black Expression (CUBE) (2017)
- The 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of CUBE Celebration, which was held as part of Reunion Weekend and drew more than 75 alumni of color (the largest gathering in our history), featured a panel discussion and the "Black Reign" art exhibit curated by current student Shaquille Brown '19. (2018)

Upcoming:

- Community and Connections event focusing on connecting alumni of color with students of color. The event was moved to the fall of 2018 to allow students more time to arrange summer internships as well as jobs upon graduation.
- The Alumni Board's Multicultural Committee is planning to hold a forum each spring. They are currently discussing themes and goals for the event and timing.
- Celebrating the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Race and Ethnic Studies as part of Reunion Weekend 2019.
- Planning additional alumni of color meetings as part of the Los Angeles Connections trip.

## **Scholarship And Learning**

### **GE Requirements Update**

The General Education (GE) Task Force is continuing its work. Diversity, both as a topic for study and as a goal in regard to designing a GE that supports and advances an increasingly diverse student body, is a key principle. In the meantime, the faculty teaching courses carrying the "multicultural-domestic" GE attribute are working to update their courses to meet the amended criteria (passed by the faculty about three years ago). This summer, the College

offered the second of two workshops for those working on course revisions to meet the new criteria (the first was offered in the summer of 2016).

### **To Include is To Excel Update**

*To Include is To Excel* is a four-year, \$800,000 initiative funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. In concert with St. Olaf's abiding conviction that access, equity, excellence, and inclusion are inextricably intertwined, the Mellon funding supports the transformation of the college's curriculum and approaches to teaching for a new generation of students. Below is an update that *To Include is To Excel* project directors Mary Carlsen and Maggie Broner provided to the Mellon Foundation on the activities carried out in the first year of this grant and to showcase some of the innovative faculty, staff and student initiatives the grant has funded to date.

## **Narrative Report**

### **Progress made and significant accomplishments**

The mission of *To Include is To Excel* is to enhance faculty expertise and seed curricular and pedagogical innovation to best serve new generations of students. The timing of the award was fortuitous for faculty and academic leaders moved by student protests on racial climate in Spring 2017. This project is faculty driven and its funding activates initiative, enthusiasm and innovation. Our project maintains that excellence, inclusion, and equity ought to be — and indeed are — inextricably entwined. In light of this ambitious vision, we take each of our four goals to frame and describe our progress and accomplishments thus far.

The first year required infrastructure building. The grant has four goals areas:

#### ***Goal 1. Gain a deeper understanding of students and their progress through the general education curricula and major fields of study. Synthesize and enhance current findings reported by our Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness***

Institutional Research and Effectiveness (IR&E) staff are instrumental in aiding us to better understand institutional data we collect and identify data we want to collect. In this first year, we:

- Examined National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) data to determine survey questions to use as pre-post data points to measure the impact of the project. We administered the NSSE in the spring of 2018 and will administer it again in the spring of 2021, coinciding with the end of the grant period.
- Agreed on a timeline for student data going back to the entering Class of 2000, the period of rapid demographic change in our student body. For instance, domestic students of color made up only 6 percent of the incoming student cohort in 2000, and accounted for 20 percent of the incoming class in 2017.
- Invited all departments and programs undergoing 10-year reviews to include assessment of student experience in their self-studies. For example, the Latin American Studies program conducted focus groups with current majors and concentrators to learn what the program does well and where it might improve. The Philosophy Department surveyed

current students and recent alumni about their experiences in Philosophy courses, specifically inviting non-traditional philosophy students, students of color and/or women to share how well their course addressed their lived experiences. They plan to repeat the study after teaching revised, more inclusive courses.

- Posted our first [Primer](#) for the community with terms, definitions, and data points to inform our deep learning about students and their experiences and invite robust discussion on campus.
- Suggested adding the following phrase in a question to the annual report each faculty member completes: “Describe, either here or in the list above, any innovations, new courses, or other improvements to your teaching that you worked on this year, such as exploring uses of instructional technology, developing new units in courses, *supporting diversity or inclusion*, teaching or learning assessment, ACE, and also any CURI or other mentored research projects not listed above”.

These actions help to ensure that common, accurate data underlies faculty reflection on teaching and practice.

### ***Goal 2. Pilot innovative approaches in teaching and curricular design and assess their outcomes***

This goal has driven the most vigorous activity in this first year. Many faculty are eager to learn more about St. Olaf contexts and students and to use these insights to stimulate and sustain curricular, pedagogical, and program improvements. We invited faculty and staff to submit proposals for projects, which were reviewed by a small subgroup of the Advisory Group. Each proposal included a description of activities that address the goals of the grant and a plan for assessing outcomes. Project leaders and IR&E staff guided proposal authors to conceive and measure outcomes. We funded 31 projects submitted by faculty, staff, and students. We were gratified to see the depth, breadth, and creativity of the proposals from our colleagues. Descriptions of the projects can be found on the [To Include is To Excel website](#).

Our 31 mini-grant projects represent 19 academic departments or programs, all five academic divisions, and six administrative departments (Academic Civic Engagement, the Academic Support Center, International and Off-Campus Studies, the Piper Center for Vocation and Career, and TRiO/Student Support Services). The grant funded:

- Faculty work on curricular and/or pedagogical change (15 projects);
- Faculty/staff collaboration on pedagogical and curricular change for student success (8 projects);
- Faculty initiatives on possible changes in college structure to aid inclusion and equity (3 projects);
- Faculty research on pedagogy (2 projects);
- Faculty collaboration with partners on pedagogical and curricular exchange (1 project); and
- Faculty/student creative efforts to raise questions/awareness of inclusion and equity (2 projects).

We hope each of these projects, and those we will fund in the future, result in sustained transformation of our curriculum, both specific to programs and departments and to our general education. When project participants gathered near the end of the Spring semester to track their progress, they learned how their separate efforts coalesce or connect. The buzz of excitement generated feelings of hope and possibility. It was a wonderful event to mark our first year!

**Goal 3. Integrate the findings about student learning and motivations into ongoing curricular review and innovation**

This goal will be fulfilled as discoveries take root in established practices at St. Olaf. Early in the first year we engaged students in Sociology/Anthropology 371: Research Methods to design and administer a campus-wide survey about microaggressions in classrooms. This was a direct response to student unrest and pain about experiences with micro-aggressions. This project helped the campus community to understand social science research that validates anecdotal experiences reported by students. The students disseminated their findings through executive summaries, a presentation and campus [poster session](#). They met with the President's Working Group on Equity and Inclusion, and presented their findings at the Midwest Sociological Society conference.

The findings prompted the following:

- A faculty lunch on strategies to prevent and address microaggressions
- A directive from the provost that departments and programs consider how to address microaggressions
- Numerous references to the findings in meetings of the faculty, academic leaders, committees, and departments
- Consultation with various departments by *To Include Is to Excel* leaders

We believe general education (GE) revision and *To Include is To Excel* need to be integrated. The leaders of both initiatives have met to consider how *To Include is To Excel* can best inform deliberations and decisions about the general education requirements. To this end, St. Olaf's faculty development center, the Center for Innovation in the Liberal Arts, hosted a lunch conversation to consider how race, class, power, diversity, inequality, and intersectionality inform and shape the mission of a St. Olaf education. The general education task force continues its work through 2018-19. As the structure of the general education curriculum emerges, *To Include is To Excel* will seed relevant course development. We expect to report how *To Include is to Excel* influences general education offerings in the remaining years of the grant.

**Goal 4. Share and compare St. Olaf discoveries with colleagues at collaborating institutions**

This fourth goal commits us to share best practices in teaching and learning and learn from others engaged in similar efforts. In this first year, project leaders conferred with counterparts at Vassar College whose project also received Mellon support. The Project Director visited Lewis and Clark College to learn about a student observation program that encourages inclusive pedagogy. We have made additional plans to generate deeper knowledge about our students. We have contracted with a sociology professor from Augsburg to provide an outside in-depth examination of our students' experience. He will conduct a large-scale quantitative and qualitative research project on student experiences with groups such as first generation, low income, international, LGBTQ, varied religious traditions, and/or domestic students of color. We expect to report on those findings in Year 2.

Meetings with key colleagues at institutions from whom we can learn and with whom we will share best practices will continue through the grant period.

**Additional accomplishments**

We proposed three annual teaching summits to engage St. Olaf faculty in tangible curricular or pedagogical enterprises in pursuit of *To Include is to Excel* goals. The summits help us engage various sectors of the faculty in conversation with each other. St. Olaf's faculty members are attuned to the issues and values at stake, are fully engaged, and eager to experiment in the name of equity, inclusion and excellence.

We want the teaching summits to reach and be valuable to faculty of various inclinations. This is why college leaders agreed to schedule the first summit as part of the all-faculty meeting that opened the 2018-19 academic year. We engaged [Brave New Workshop](#), an improvisational theater company, to lead a session on Mindset for the entire faculty. The goal of the workshop was to help faculty and staff discover the role their mindset has on their daily interactions on campus. That session was followed by six smaller workshop sessions, one of which was with a faculty member from the University of Minnesota (Noro Andriamanalina, Ph.D., Director of Academic and Professional Development of the Graduate School Diversity Office). In addition to this workshop, she will provide a series of faculty workshops in fall 2018 on how to promote an inclusive and equitable learning environment and campus climate. These workshops will focus on (1) unearthing academic culture, (2) centering the margins for inclusive practices, and (3) mediating difficult conversations related to privilege and oppression.

Our first summit was met with enthusiasm and active engagement. We are now looking through detailed feedback that we will use for future faculty teaching and learning. Because the Summit intends to include and benefit **all** faculty, it enacts our premise that equity, inclusion and excellence are entwined. We'll likely learn again how difficult and demanding the premise can be.

During this first year, we worked to launch *To Include is to Excel* in ways that establish its credibility and reinforce its promise for faculty, staff and students. In addition to the efforts described previously, we:

- Held regular meetings between grant leadership/staff/college administration
- Implemented Teaching Consultations, private one-to-one conversations initiated by faculty who can discuss anything related to inclusive, equitable teaching
- Engaged Associate Professor Susie Smalling (Social Work) to continue trainings on white privilege and racism she began the previous year
- Videotaped a promotional message about *To Include is to Excel* featuring the project leaders and Provost Marci Sortor. Their brief conversation is available to all campus community members and to subscribers to President Anderson's podcast [From the Desk of PDA](#) (President David Anderson)
- Engaged members of the [Collective for Change on the Hill](#), including those who organized the Spring 2017 protests and the St. Olaf Student Government Association
- Briefed the Working Group on Equity and Inclusion and its predecessor, the Task Force on Institutional Racism, as they completed inquiries and issued reports to the St. Olaf community.
- Met with members of numerous departments, staff in Marketing and Communications, students and alumni curious about *To Include Is to Excel*
- Supported 10 faculty and staff to attend conferences for professional development in 2018, including the AAC&U Conference on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusive Democracy, the Liberal Arts Illuminated, and the Nonprofit Diversity Leadership Conference

When the President announced the Mellon award for *To Include Is to Excel*, grant leaders were immediately front and center. Our colleagues offered us a range of judgments about the project - it was: 1) "the answer to our unrest", 2) "'window-dressing' by administration", 3) "evidence that faculty are ill-prepared to teach the new, diverse students in our classes." *To Include is To Excel* is none of these. But each response illustrated the political risks we are honestly facing. We spend a lot of time listening to all the constituents of the college and look forward to continued efforts to transform our common academic enterprise.



In 2017-18, St. Olaf's Center for Innovation in the Liberal Arts (CILA) offered the following lunch programs as part of an Inclusive Classroom series (in collaboration with To Include is To Excel):

- Strategies for Inclusive Classrooms 9/19/17
- Rising to the Challenge of Diversifying STEM fields 10/10/17
- On Teaching Race, Whiteness, and Modernism 10/19/17
- Promoting Inclusivity in the Classroom using Student Groups 11/29/17
- Strategies for Inclusive Classroom Practice 2/20/18
- Tools for Managing Microaggressions in the Classroom and Beyond 4/11/18

A full list and description of CILA faculty conversations for 2017-18 can be found [here](#).

In 2018-19 CILA will continue to offer lunches in collaboration with To Include is To Excel and/or in support of the college's Equity and Inclusion initiatives. On 10/3/18 CILA offered "To Include is to Excel: One Year So Far," which highlighted the work already undertaken by departments and individual faculty to create more inclusive course content and pedagogies. At least four programs in Spring 2018 will continue to feature new initiatives in curriculum and pedagogy that promote inclusion and equity. A full list and description of CILA faculty conversations for 2018-19 can be found [here](#).

In 2018, in collaboration with the Center for Advising and Academic Support (and with some financial support from To Include is To Excel), CILA is offering a series of four workshops for faculty on inclusive classroom design. The workshops are intended to address all kinds of student diversity by promoting what is called "universal design" in teaching: offering multiple paths for success within a classroom, creating more relevant and diverse course materials and assignments, and other teaching and learning strategies that better serve first-generation and underrepresented students, students with the challenge of a learning disability, and students whose first language is not English.

### **National Science Foundation-Funded dataSTEM Project**

St. Olaf recently received a National Science Foundation (NSF) grant for \$991,596 for a project titled "dataSTEM: Preparing Academically Talented, Low-Income STEM Students for our Data-Intensive World." The initiative — developed by Sharon Lane-Getaz, Julie Legler, Matt Richey, Mary Walczak, and Kathy Glampe — provides scholarships and critical support to 30 low-income students who will augment their STEM majors with advanced skills and capacities in data science and statistics.

The project will recruit students during their first year of college and support them for up to three years. In addition to scholarships of up to \$7,000 per year, a key component is a new course bridging the gap between the traditional, social sciences-based first course in statistics and a first course in statistical modeling. This new course introduces students to statistical computing and the core principles of data science as they access and analyze real data to answer compelling questions they care about. The project also features Supplemental Instruction and extensive tutoring.

DataSTEM coordinates its efforts with St. Olaf's highly regarded TRIO programs, including the McNair Scholars Program. Participating students will also be recruited to join St. Olaf's Center for Interdisciplinary Research, which undertakes quantitative analyses guided by faculty from disciplines outside of the mathematical sciences. An advisory board consisting of individuals from area industries will help identify internship opportunities for dataSTEM participants and will support entry into data-intensive careers after graduation. The project will also assess the effectiveness of instruction and academic support strategies that increase persistence in data-



intensive STEM fields. Its findings will contribute to the national conversation about how best to challenge and support students from underserved backgrounds.

## **Institutional Commitment**

### **Faculty and Staff Development**

For the past three years, the college has offered to pay for the full cost of membership in the National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity (NCFDD), and then subsidize membership for another two years for all new tenure track faculty members of color. Provost and Dean of the College Marci Sortor reaches out personally to faculty members to make them aware of the opportunity.

Provost and Dean of the College Marci Sortor and the Faculty Life Committee supported a Workshop on Access and Equity to Theological Inquiry. Professor of Religion Gregory Walter was the convener.

During the 2017-18 academic year, there were faculty-led "learning circles" focused on implicit bias and supporting diverse students and colleagues organized by Associate Professor of Social Work Susie Smalling. The first two learning circle events were lectures: the first was a repeat of the lecture that Professor Smalling offered in the spring of 2017 that focused on providing a general overview of structures of oppression and privilege and cultural identity development. The second lecture offered a more in-depth look at white privilege and racial oppression. At the third learning circle event, participants reviewed some basic skills to facilitate having difficult conversations around issues like oppression and privilege both in and out of the classroom. The final two events featured a repeat of the white privilege and racial oppression lecture (the second time just for faculty and staff) and a discussion where participants shared their own experiences with oppression and privilege. There were approximately 160 attendees among the five learning circles.

### **Student Development and Capacity Building**

#### **Establishing Let's Talk initiative**

Let's Talk is a program that provides easy access to informal confidential consultations with counselors from the St. Olaf Counseling Center/Boe House. Counselors hold walk-in hours 1:30 to 2:30 p.m., Monday through Friday in Room 306 of Rolvaag Memorial Library. There is no appointment necessary. Appointments are first-come, first-served. Let's Talk is not formal counseling, but is a drop in service where students can have an informal confidential consultation with the counselor. This is a "free" service. (The Let's Talk program is based in part on the Let's Talk program at Cornell University.)

With the ever-increasing demand for counseling services, college and university counseling centers across the country are exploring and implementing creative ways to address the mental

health needs of our students. The Let's Talk outreach program was initiated in an effort address student needs in a new way and to make more effective use of our clinical hours.

The Let's Talk program was first piloted in January 2017. The program was offered just one day a week. From January to May 2017, 21 students used the service. The following year, it was decided to expand the program and Let's Talk was offered five days a week. For the academic year (2017-18), 127 students used the service with 152 sessions occurring. For the current academic year (2018-19), in the first 12 days of classes we have already had 22 students use the service. This outreach program is engaging more students in addressing their mental health concerns.

#### **New staff members/additional service hours**

This past academic year (2017-18), the Counseling Center had two part-time staff and one full-time staff leave their positions at the College. To replace these positions, two new staff were hired this past summer, Saras Bhadri and Nina Mattson. With Saras and Nina joining the Counseling Center, we are able to offer our students a more racially diverse staff.

With the staff turnover, there was a reconfiguration of FTEs, which resulted in the addition of 700 hours per academic year.

#### **Faculty training**

While the Counseling Center has not engaged in specific faculty training as outlined in the Working Group recommendation, there have been faculty trainings related to mental health concerns. An outreach initiative was launched during the 2016-17 academic year to provide a basic overview of the primary mental health issues on campus, teach basic mental health first aid skills, learn about campus resources, and educate those attending on when and how to refer students to resources when they are struggling. A number of faculty departments participated in the training. The training was also presented to a small number of staff and students. The Counseling Center, Student Life Office, and the students involved in the Greater Than campaign collaborated on this effort.