

## Tuesday, Oct. 17 | 10:45am – 12pm Sessions

### **Track #1 – Transforming Institutions with a Commitment to Diversity**

- Title: Wheaton College: Q&A Regarding the Historical Review Task Force Final Report
  - Speaker: Vanessa Quainoo
  - Co-Presenter: Andrea Scott, Chip Pollard
  - Session: 82
  - Room: Soderquist 110
  - Description: The Task Force—which was first requested by the President and Senior Administrative Cabinet—began its work in October 2021. In fulfilling its commission, the HRTF sought to:
    1. Clarify what we know – and to explore what more can and should be known – about the history of race relations on the campus of Wheaton College;
    2. Understand the impact of past events on present realities, including the experience of ethnic minorities;
    3. Identify ways to make Wheaton’s history of race relations more readily accessible and widely known to all generations of all College constituencies;
    4. Determine – in view of the supremacy of Jesus Christ – what aspects of this history need to be celebrated more intentionally, lamented more deeply, or repented of more specifically.
  
- Title: Bridging the Gap Between Diversity and Community
  - Speaker: Nathaniel Perez
  - Session 75
  - Room: SGH A
  - Description: There is a gap between diversity and community throughout Christian institutions of higher education across America. The gap is a microcosm of a much larger issue: America’s historical racial divide. In the last two decades, many Christian colleges and universities have experienced a steady growth in diversity. This trend has left many institutions with the sense that they are moving in the right direction in relation to race. Numerous reports indicate that there are benefits to having diversity in higher education. However, “diversity in proximity” on Christian college campuses does not equate to racial harmony or community. As some researchers have pointed out, the term “community” has been widely misused. This presentation will focus on bridging the gap between diversity and community and will explore why diversity is only the beginning of the journey towards cultivating authentic reconciling community on our campuses.
  
- Title: Building Bridges Across Difference: Internal and External Approaches
  - Speaker: Brian Herndon
  - Co-Presenters: Trisha Posey, Sara Shady, Ashley Embry, Tina Grace, Carr Harkrader, Rahn Franklin
  - Session 39
  - Room: SGH A

- Description: Bridging the Gap instructs students in the art of active listening, comprehension, effective communication, and finding shared interests for community betterment while upholding personal principles. Participants interact with individuals who hold diverse perspectives, within and/or beyond their campus. As a final exercise, students apply these problem-solving skills on a chosen policy topic. (Adapted from the Bridging the Gap website.)

This presentation features two universities who have utilized BTG in very different ways: externally, between two institutions, and internally, within a campus community.

In the fall of 2022, John Brown University, a CCCU institution, and Philander Smith College, an HBCU institution, collaborated for BTG. Students from both campuses engaged in cross-campus in-person and virtual interactions, learning and applying the BTG curriculum. Students formulated policy statements on criminal justice reform, which they presented to local stakeholders and state-level officials.

Bethel University, a CCCU institution, implemented BTG to foster a multiethnic campus community. The Office of Inclusive Excellence utilized BTG to strengthen bonds among student leaders with plans to extend its implementation into the 2023-24 academic year. BTG serves as a tool to enhance cultural competence following Cultural Intelligence training as well as to educate aspiring leaders in the EdD program

## **Track #2 – Curricular/Co-Curricular Initiatives**

- Title: Sizeism and Fat Phobia: Injustices Diversity Initiatives Can Combat
  - Speaker: Charity Gibson
  - Session 4
  - Room: Walker 233
  - Description: A little explored issue within diversity discussions is overweight people and the ways obesity is met with stigmas and marginalized treatment. Sizeism is discrimination and/or prejudice based on one's size or weight. As African American women are the most likely group to be overweight, the intersectionality of race, gender, and socioeconomics with obesity is noteworthy. Intersectionality awareness, practiced as a lens rather than a worldview, helps note how experiences shape one's interaction with social structures and impact interpersonal relationships, which can help Christians cultivate empathy and initiate action. Institutions of higher learning can work against exclusionary practices toward obese individuals through purposeful furniture offerings and arrangements in classrooms and common areas as well as mindful activity-focused orientations and social gatherings. Furthermore, harmful rhetoric the church and even Christian education uses connecting gluttony to obesity and perceiving being overweight as a moral failing must stop. All body types should be accepted, and obesity should not limit a student's ability to engage in campus life or off-campus travel. However, a glorification of obesity, which some within fat studies foster, may also be harmful if the obesity reduces overall health and quality of life. Institutions of higher learning can also seek to offer partnerships through mentorship, counseling, and health

services for those seeking to improve their health.

- Title: Exploring a New Conceptual Framework: Unearthing Unconscious Biases to Redefine Academic Malpractice Towards Students of Color
  - Speaker: Nannette Glenn
  - Co-Presenter: Tiffanie Jones
  - Session 71
  - Room: Walker 233
  - Description: Undergraduate adult learners apply as new admittees to colleges and universities after having been out of any formal academic setting for many years, and thus present themselves with learning challenges and a lack of academic efficacy. This results in difficulty completing vital tasks, which impacts or hinders their success for college-level work. There is a revolving door in many colleges and universities that coaxes students in, deprives them of needed resources, allows them to fail and incur debt, and then dismisses them. In order to begin addressing this issue, early identification of students who present these challenges is necessary so that appropriate interventions and prescriptive course pathways can be provided to help these students succeed. Institutions must understand and acknowledge the contributions they may be making to this problem—a problem of “academic malpractice.” Interestingly, the term “academic malpractice” is pervasively used to describe the issues pertaining to academic dishonesty amongst students. However, we propose that the term “academic malpractice” is a three-dimensional issue, beyond its current student centrality; the onus is on students and administrators and faculty. Administrators’ unconscious biases regarding perceived intrinsic deficiencies of students of color—biases that help shape the academic culture and influence educators’ perceptions—can create the aforementioned negative outcomes for these students. Therefore, using a Christian worldview, we seek to deconstruct the conceptual definition that centers students within the academic malpractice sphere and re-conceptualize academic malpractice within the context of unconscious racial biases held by administrators and faculty.
  
- Title: Call Me MiSTER: An Initiative to Help Increase Male Minority Teachers
  - Speaker: Kevin Williams
  - Session 53
  - Room: Walker 204
  - Description: All throughout our nation there is a shortage of minority male teachers. By creating strategic initiatives and plans, the university can help to increase the number of Black and brown male educators while also providing students support and encouragement as they matriculate through the institution. This has been done with multiple universities of which Anderson University in South Carolina is a part. The program is known as Call Me Mister.

Clemson University was the pioneer research institution for the Call Me MiSTER program. The program was launched in the year 2000 at three Historically Black Colleges and Universities: Claflin, Morris College, and Benedict College. Later it expanded to become a national program, and to date the program is being run in multiple community colleges, state institutions, private colleges, and Christian colleges.

Students receive scholarship funds, based on their SAT/ACT scores and equivalence to the passing of the Praxis Core. They are provided a mentor, and they meet with that person one on one and as a group, working strategically on the Core tenets:

- Ambassadorship
- Brother's Keeper

- Title: Indispensable yet Forgotten: How Disability Gets Left Out of the Diversity Conversation
  - Speaker: Melissa Norton
  - Co-presenter: Thomas Boehm
  - Session 55
  - Room: Walker 204
  - Description: Disability is the largest minority group in the world, yet it is the minority group that is most often left out of the diversity conversation. From a biblical perspective, disability is a critical part of the diversity of God's Kingdom and indispensable to the Body of Christ. However, instead of flourishing and finding places of belonging in college, students with disabilities have lower graduation and retention rates than those of their peers without disabilities. In addition, faculty and staff continue to be significantly underrepresented in academia and report persistent barriers, both to entry and to accessing the accommodations needed for equal access in the workplace. Leaving disability out of diversity initiatives further marginalizes these students and prevents them from finding places of true belonging. Christian institutions of higher education have a responsibility to foster Kingdom diversity by ensuring that disability is viewed as integral to diversity and vital to the thriving of our campus communities. This begins with engaging in a theological framework of disability, using that lens for honest examination of our communities of practice, and practically thinking about steps we can take to further disability as diversity on our campuses—for the good of our college communities and for God's glory.

### **Track #3: Voices of Our Friends**

- Title: A Biblical Basis and Perspective for DEI in the Christian Learning Community
  - Speaker: Reuben Rubio
  - Session 31
  - Room: Soderquist 241/242
  - Description: Difference or identity, including "race," ethnicity, gender, and culture, does matter to the peoples of the earth and within the Church. A multicultural Christian learning community is to be preferred to a monocultural one. God created one human race, but also human difference as a part of his creation plan. Throughout all of scripture we see repeated references to ethnic (and what humans have termed "racial"), gender, and/or cultural identity that are either quite germane to an account or parable or matter-of-fact yet ancillary. Perhaps that is because many different examples of the definition, encouragement, or application of social justice also appear in the Bible, with God's people or Christians tasked with redressing a cultural wrong that stems from racial/ethnic/gender bias. If some or many within a Christian learning community ignore

human difference and espouse a “colorblind” ideology, whether conceived as race, ethnicity, gender, or culture, it is to the detriment of all the people within it and even counter to scripture. It may be uncomfortable to uncover, discuss, and deal with issues of social justice within society, especially ongoing and systemic ones within a context like critical race theory, but as Christ followers we should never fear such discussion or even necessary action on its behalf. Rather we should seek to understand and identify truth and distortion. Difference—identity—is a gift to our life together within the Christian learning community as different people groups bear God’s image in ways that are inviting and important.

- Title: Collaborative Conversation as a Biblical and Empirical Path
  - Speaker: George Yancey
  - Session 17
  - Room: Soderquist 241/242
  - Description: Empirically many of the efforts to create racial acceptance in social organizations have either been ineffective or have even had negative consequences. However, there are preliminary empirical findings indicating that collaborative conversations offer a great deal of promise for improving the racial climate in those institutions. We can take these lessons and apply them to our campuses. In addition to the empirical promise offered by collaborative conversation techniques, there is a solid biblical basis for the use of productive conversations that produces understanding and accountability across the racial divide. Given this tremendous potential, a research team has begun studying the use of collaborative conversations in Christian settings. Over the course of the next year or so, the team plans to extend this research to Christian college campuses. In this presentation, the research team will offer insights from their findings and an opportunity to participate in this research.

#### **Track #4: Resiliency & Leadership**

- Title: Examples from a Parachurch Ministry on Leaning into Organizational Change
  - Speaker: Jermayne Chapman
  - Co-presenter: Kathy Kurda Petrash, Kai Gibbons
  - Session 42
  - Room: SGH C
  - Description: In this session, the presenters will share examples of how allies engage in Ethnic Focused Communities (communities within Cru focused on reaching/serving BIPOC students), how they have evaluated internal systems to make serving with Cru more accessible to those whom these systems have not traditionally served (support raising models, dedicated scholarship funds), and resources/training they’ve required or made available to local field teams.

#### **Track #5: Emerging Leaders and Career Paths**

- Title: Why DEI Initiatives Are Failing and What We Can Do about It
  - Speaker: Fernando Garzon
  - Co-Presenter: Katrina Maxwell
  - Session 33

- Room: SGH C
- Description: DEI initiatives are meant to transform organizations, yet meta-analytic research suggests they are failing. In response to the need for further programmatic development, this presentation explores psychological and spiritual factors that promote disunity through several lenses: A clinical psychology approach (Acceptance and Commitment Therapy), trauma research, and inter-group contact theory.

Subsequently, these lenses will examine factors that encourage reconciliation in the context of a Christian worldview. More specifically, the biblical meta-narrative, evangelical Christian theological perspectives, and the contemplative Christian tradition will combine with these lenses in the creation of a DEI program more consistent with the current literature on what works to inspire effective change. A preliminary Christ-centered DEI program will be shared.