

The Student Affairs Diversity Council (SADC) strives to cultivate an environment that embraces and promotes the broad scope of diversity within the division.

Reflection: Creating an Inclusive



By Laura Schwartz, Residential Education Coordinator, Housing & Resident

I often find myself asking: Who are the students that I serve? What are their stories? What do they bring to the table? What are their competing and aligned needs? Where can they be connected to the campus community? And, how can I empower them to be successful as a student and person here at the University?

“I tell myself that it is okay to not be a "perfect" social justice advocate – but that I must always be an engaged one.”

around me at times. Then I take a step back and check in with myself. I reflect. I recognize that I am still an advocate and accomplice of social justice principles - I'm just not always perfect at it. I tell myself that it is okay to not be a "perfect" social justice advocate – but

Daily, I work with my team to answer these questions and to provide a safe, healthy, and inclusive environment for our students. Our work can be both immensely challenging and rewarding; because of this, intentionality goes into my interactions with each student as I work to connect with them and their campus experiences. To me, intentionality relates to the extension

of knowledge, compassion, respect, and grace to students, my colleagues, and myself as we strive to support an inclusive campus community.

To be honest, despite my best efforts, I am not always the most socially just individual as I engage in meeting the aforementioned goals. There are times that ugly, ignorant, stereotypical, insert-whatever-ism-you-would-like notions enter my conscious stream of thought. It is in those moments that I am grateful for the diversity trainings that I have sought out and received and for my ability to critically think. In those moments I can challenge myself to check my assumptions, privileges, and societal upbringing to see things for what they really are, people for the complex individuals that they are, and not what I have been taught to see them as. In those moments I also find myself struggling with feelings of shame and guilt; I feel vulnerable in admitting this. It leads me question how I can view myself as an advocate for diverse persons and identities when my subconscious draws such irrational conclusions about the people and world

that I must always be an engaged one. During my reflections of the SADC seminars and my daily interactions, I also reevaluate what it is that I am truly striving for in this justice-seeking process and way of being. I believe that I am striving to unlearn my biases and to

(Continued on page 2)

recognize and validate the true and unique humanity in others so that universal equity can one day exist. I am also striving to understand what being a provider of authentic challenge and support looks like for me as I work with others on this justice-seeking continuum. This is a process that takes time, energy, and a willingness to both listen and learn. It is not always comfortable or easy and it is one of the most important priorities that I have taken on.

“I can challenge myself to check my assumptions, privileges, and societal upbringing to see things for what they really are, people for the complex individuals that they are, and not what I have been taught to see them as.”

enter into difficult dialogues and seek truths for themselves in the realms of power, privilege, and difference.

I know that learning to behave, act, and think in a socially

just way is an ongoing process; I believe that we must all work together to educate ourselves and students about these topics in order to support an inclusive campus community. Specifically, I believe that we must be

I do not think that the struggles I face as I openly educate myself about topics of diversity and social justice are entirely unique. When I think of my work with students, I seek to create a space where they feel safe to share their stories, their identities, their vulnerabilities, and their areas for growth. Our students are coming to us from different places and backgrounds and it is not my role to state how quickly or how they should enact and embrace diversity and social justice principles. My place is to serve as a resource, actively, as others learn to navigate these principles, societal structures and constructs, and take ownership of how they view and treat others. To me, it is important to connect with students as they

willing to engage in difficult conversations, be honest and authentic, and create spaces for all voices of our campus communities to be heard. We must actively challenge perspectives and assumptions when views of privilege and bias are portrayed. We must also care, empathize, and engage with individuals if and when incidents of bias occur against them.

Overall, the SADC Seminars, diversity events, and this reflection have enabled me to revisit my commitments to people, diversity, and social justice and the responsibilities I have taken on to honor those commitments with true respect and integrity.

REFLECTIONS:

“When I go to the SADC Diversity Speakers, sometimes it’s familiar topics and sometimes I’m presented with things I’ve never named before, but I always feel like I’m more at home because the conversations are happening.” Brianne Blanchard, LGBT Resource Center.”



“These trainings have taught me that I need to be more open about discussing issues of diversity and it is appropriate to have teachable moments with others regarding the importance of respecting one another’s diverse backgrounds.” Todd Taylor, Admissions

Michael Kimmel

Wednesday, December 10 | 12 – 1:30pm

[Humanities Building - Carolyn Tanner Irish \(CTIHB\)](#)

[Mars & Venus or Planet Earth: Women and Men in America Today](#)

Michael Kimmel is among the leading researchers and writers on men and masculinity in the world today. He is Distinguished Professor of Sociology and Gender Studies at Stony Brook University, where he directs the Center for the Study of Men and Masculinities. Professor Kimmel is the author of more than 20 books, including his best-seller, “Guyland: The Perilous World Where Boys Become Men”. In this lecture, he will talk about how women’s lives have changed and the ways in which men are responding to that, and how we now need to think about these changes.



REFLECTIONS continued

“I have valued the opportunity to hear from and share with colleagues and students I might not have otherwise known, promoting a stronger sense of connection and understanding than might have otherwise eluded me.” Donna Hawxhurst, Women’s Resource Center



“Taken as a whole, one of the most valuable aspects of Student Affairs Diversity Council programming is that it provides a forum for Student Affairs professionals to share their own experiences.”
Cindy Hottes, Admissions

December Diversity Modules



Module 2: Monday, December 15
1:00-3:00pm, University Guest House

Module 3: Tuesday, December 16
10:00am-Noon, 319 Union

To register, visit:

<http://sadc.utah.edu/events/training.php>

Upcoming Campus and Community Events

Tuesday, December 2

The ‘Body’-Queer & Feminist Reading 7:00pm
Meztizo Coffee House, 641 West North Temple

Wednesday, December 3

Don’t Shoot?: The National Debate Over Police Body Cameras, 7:00—9:00pm, Social Work Auditorium [\[more info\]](#)

Thursday, December 4

Standing on Sacred Ground Film Screenings, 6:00pm, SLC Public Library [\[more info\]](#)

Friday, December 5

Standing on Sacred Ground Film Screenings, 2:00pm, UMFA, U of U Campus [\[more info\]](#)

Wednesday, December 10 **

Mars & Venus or Planet Earth: Women and Men in America Today, Michael Kimmel, 12:00-1:30pm, CTIHB (Humanities Building) Eccles Auditorium (Room 109) [\[more info\]](#)

** counts as SADC Seminar

Wednesday, December 10

Celebrate Human Rights Day, 6:00-8:00pm
Tracy Aviary (589 east 1300 South) [\[more info\]](#)

For information about these and other events, please visit:
www.events.utah.edu.



For more information and resources, please visit:
sadc.utah.edu

Debra Daniels, Co-chair Women’s Resource Center
Kari Ellingson, Co-chair Student Development
Chris Anderson, Housing & Residential Education
Karen Cone-Uemura, Counseling Center
Stephanie Charles, Financial Aid
Branden Dalley, Union Administration
Kris Fenn, Bennion Center
Marci Healy, Conference & Guest Services
Matt McCarthy, Campus Recreation
Nomani Satuala, Orientation / Leadership Development

Kassy Keen, Center for Student Wellness
Chris Macias, TRIO
Carol MacNicholl, Center for Disability Services
Kai Medina-Martinez, LGBT Center
Sana Muller, ASUU
Duane Padilla, Housing & Residential Education
Rachana Patel, Office of Admissions
Valery Pozo, Career Services
Belinda Otukolo Saltiban, Office of Inclusive Excellence
Kegan Walker, HRE, AREC