

university
of utah student affairs

diversity council

greetings from the SADC

Welcome to our first monthly newsletter! The Student Affairs Diversity Council (SADC) is proud to officially be a part of the University of Utah Student Affairs division. We hope that this newsletter will be a great avenue for the Council to share important events and speakers which address diversity issues, including our upcoming monthly Appreciating Diversity Series. We also hope that you will find the articles and personal stories in here to be valuable food for thought.

This Council was formed just one year ago with the intention of increasing the skills, knowledge and awareness of the Student Affairs Staff on issues that impact our students. Our Mission Statement is simple to remember and, hopefully, achievable!

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

Please enjoy, and if you have any questions or would like to know more about how to get involved with the Diversity Council please contact Debra Daniels or Kari Ellingson, Co-Chairs of SADC.

it's hard to hate someone whose story you know: stories of growth and change

This column will feature stories by Student Affairs professionals who would like to share an experience (event, book, speaker, etc) which promoted growth, a change in perspective, an awareness of another, or when some knowledge that was previously missing slipped into place. To start the inaugural column, the co-chairs of Student Affairs Diversity Council share a conversation they had several years ago.

Debra Daniels, Director of the Women's Resource Center

As a professional, talking about race and gender has always been a part of my work. After years of working in the private non-profit world, I found myself in Higher Ed and that was somewhat of a different environment and culture. I thought I would find a broad acceptance for difference and open conversations about diversity. It reaffirmed what I had experienced time and time again. Talking about race, class, gender, sexual orientation, religion

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We're excited to share the first edition of the Student Affairs Diversity Council Newsletter with you! Our commitment to diversity dialogues and programs has never been stronger and we invite you to be a part of this critical campus conversation. Through all of our efforts, we can make the University of Utah a more welcoming community.

-Barb Snyder
Vice President, Student Affairs



mission statement

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

calendar

Tuesday, October 5, 2010
6:00pm-8:00pm

395 S 1500 East, Rm 155

Social Justice Lecture Series

Tools for Radical Resilience: Unconventional Wisdom on Cultural Competence and Emotional Intelligence in Just Social Work Practice

October 18-22, 2010

LGBT Resource Center

PRIDE: Shades of Queer

Connecting Through Difference.

Learn more by visiting <http://www.sa.utah.edu/lgbt/events/Uprideweek.htm>

October 20, 2010

12:00pm-1:30pm

Parlor A, Union Building

SADC's Understanding Diversity Series

"Who 'Counts' as LGBT? The Breadth and Diversity of Sexual-Minority Populations". Lisa Diamond, Associate Professor, Department of Psychology

October 22, 2010

2010 Utah NASPA Conference

U of U Union Building

"Be the Future: Vision, Access & Innovation in Higher Education". Learn more at www.utahnaspa.org

etc. isn't easy and we don't usually have those conversations in 'mixed company'.

I had been on campus for about three years, Kari Ellingson is my direct supervisor. We had built a good relationship and had a number of conversations surrounding various issues. When it came to issues of race I was always a bit cautious. I had also felt support and wanted to push the relationship further. This would allow me to be completely myself. I recall running into Kari on my way to my office after listening to a panel where the conversation focused on race and equity. We stopped for a quick hello and began to chat. It turned into a relationship altering experience between me and my supervisor.



After explaining the panel I just attended, Kari said to me, "I recently heard someone say, 'I think about race everyday', who thinks about race everyday?!" with a tone that indicated this statement was outrageous and couldn't possibly be true. This was my opportunity to question her statement, insert my experience and to support what I know to be the experience of most conscious people of color. I say conscious because I think we are often ridiculed and dismissed for

bringing race into spaces that are established for and by predominately white people and, for me, that has been nearly every place I have been in outside of my family circle. I responded to her comment... "I do, I think about race everyday, everyday in one way or another." She looked at me, surprised. She listened while I shared the many difficult ways I am forced to think about race and the very proud, loving and honored ways I think about race. As a mother, I think she was touched as she heard me talk about raising young black men, I have two sons, and how I have to prepare them to deal with a world where racism... all of the "isms"... are alive and well. Their safety and survival depends on it.

This led to many, many more conversations and a commitment to advance a culture in Student Affairs that would continue addressing issues of equity and inclusion on a broad level creating a safe and respectful environment for all students and staff.

"Recognizing that race impacts all of us each and every day is something we have to learn...and then learn more deeply...again and again."

Kari Ellingson,
Associate Vice President for Student Development

"Who thinks about race every day?!" It was a rhetorical question in the middle of a conversation. One I didn't think much about before I asked it and one for which I'm sure I didn't expect an

answer. But it was met with... silence...more silence...and, then, a quiet "I do." This exchange took place about five years ago and those

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brief moments changed many things for me. Obviously, I'd rather be writing a piece about how wise and culturally aware I am and have always been.



However, for most of us who are white, who were raised by white parents in a white environment, recognizing that race impacts all of us each and every day is something we have to learn...and then learn more deeply...again and again.

After the initial flush of embarrassment and the "How could I have said something so stupid!" finished passing through my mind, the insight remained. Yes, of course she thinks about it everyday. Deb, at the time, was the relatively new Director of the Women's Resource Center. Fortunately for me, she was able to hear my thoughtless ignorance, recognize it as just that, and help me find another way to see the world. Although I thought I knew about privilege, about racism, about discrimination, what followed was a conversation that allowed me to see that my question, 'who thinks about race everyday?', was deeply rooted in my whiteness. Being white, I am able to not think about race everyday because I don't experience being asked for ID simply because of my race, of wondering whether the traffic stop is due to the color of my skin, of being expected to speak for the "white" experience in class because I'm the only member of that particular group. Clearly, race impacts me countless times every day because my whiteness affords

me privileges I never have to think about!

Deb didn't have to speak. She could have let that moment pass, but she was willing to take the risk that I would hear her perspective and respect it. That gift turned out to be of value beyond measure. Not only did it allow me to grow through learning of some else's life experience, but it led to many deep discussions where we are both able to ask questions and learn from each other. Deb didn't need to help me learn by sharing her experiences with racism. She didn't need to take that risk. But I'm reminded every day of how grateful I am that she did.



Do you have suggestions? Comments? Responses to the articles? Ideas for speakers? We welcome all of your feedback. Please contact Nicole Miranda at nmiranda@sa.utah.edu or 5-1998.

student affairs diversity council

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| Debra Daniels, Co-chair | Women's Resource Center |
| Kari Ellingson, Co-chair | Student Affairs, Student Development |
| Maria Baldwin | Educational Opportunity Programs |
| Michael Bard | Registrar's Office |
| Arlyn Bradshaw | Dean of Students |
| Karen Cone-Uemura | Counseling Center |
| Holly M. Cox | Student Recruitment & High School Services |
| Branden Dalley | Union |
| Christoph Dressler | International Center |
| Gwen Fears | Orientation/Leadership Development |
| Adrienne Howell | Educational Opportunity Programs |
| Scott Jensen | Housing & Residential Education |
| Suzanne Jones | Registrar's Office |
| Carol MacNicholl | Center for Disability Services |
| Cathy Martinez | LGBT Center |
| Susan Miller | Campus Recreation |
| Nicole Miranda | Student Recruitment & High School Services |
| Casy Poe | Study Abroad |
| Cynthia Powell | Student Health Center |
| Erica Rojas | Financial Aid & Scholarships |
| Nick Rothacher | Bennion Center |
| Claudia Snow | Network Support |
| Nancy Trevino | Admissions Office |
| Jim White | Career Services |