

FISHER CENTER 2ND QUARTERLY EQUITY AND INCLUSION REPORT

June 9, 2021

Early this year, the Equity and Inclusion Working Group identified a set of institutional goals and corresponding committees tasked with moving the Fisher Center forward on its journey toward a more equitable and anti-racist future.

Each goal group was asked to state their goal and share progress made for the first half of 2021.

We've had to rethink, redefine, and unlearn. We are committed to this journey, progress has been made, and there is still much to do.

HIRING PROCEDURES

Group goal: Cultivate a staff that is representative of both our local and the greater arts communities, in order to better equip the Fisher Center to meaningfully and equitably collaborate with wider populations of audiences, donors, artists, and students.

Q2 Update: We reevaluated the way in which hiring was conducted in the past and implemented changes in the process for SummerScape hiring, which resulted in the following:

- Auditing of job descriptions and qualifications sought; looking at language with a critical eye.
- Posting opportunities more widely to various channels, in addition to online communities of arts professionals of color.
- Creating a hiring rubric; ensuring more than one person was reviewing applications and speaking with candidates.
- Comparing rates to both within and outside departments to ensure equitable rates for those of similar experience-level and responsibilities.

Anecdotally, this resulted in a more diverse SummerScape team this year. Moving forward, we will be creating an evaluation form to review summer employee performance and solicit Fisher Center experience feedback.

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VALUES STATEMENT

Group goal: Build an accountable environment for all who work in and visit the Fisher Center by creating community and programming standards that articulate anti-racist, inclusive, and equitable institutional values and provides guidance when those standards are not met.

Q2 Update: The Values Statement group has been deeply evaluating the Fisher Center's past and present in relation to how we want to build a future for everyone who participates in our work. On June 9, 2021 we will present our initial draft of a Values Statement and Code of Conduct to the full staff, as a first step toward officially adopting the language and making it public.

LEARNING GROUP

Group goal: Provide ongoing performing arts-specific antiracism training and education opportunities for the entire Fisher Center staff, in order to create a shared language and equip us, both individually and as a collective, to enact antiracist values.

Q2 Update: During April, the Learning Group facilitated a process to have all current staff members participate in a Bystander Intervention Training co-sponsored by **Asian Americans Advancing Justice (AAJC)** and **Hollaback! (ihollaback.org)**, as well as an internal debrief that worked through scenarios specific to the performing arts. Additionally, the Learning Group launched the series FC Connects: Artists & Staff, which introduces staff and lead artists of upcoming programs in order to establish more open and accessible communications. For the seasonal staff hired for the SummerScape season, gaps in training have been identified specific to antiracism, accessibility, and bystander intervention and onboarding trainings are being modified or will be implemented to address them.

PRODUCTION PRACTICES

Group goal: Evaluate and rewrite our "standard practices" within each phase of production and work to eliminate any process that creates inhumane working environments and levels of inequity and disadvantage.

Q2 Update: Work continued on outlining and writing a new production handbook. A working draft will be completed for use during the 2021 SummerScape season.

Bard

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GOVERNANCE

Group goal: Increase transparency by articulating the governance structure of the FC and the advisory board's relationship to the staff and operations, as well as detailing the board members' roles, bios, and affiliations on our website.

Q2 update: We have increased transparency with our full staff around the Fisher Center's financial and operational structure by:

- Producing a succinct internal document that explains the Fisher Center's governance structure and relationship to Bard College.
- Presenting and explaining financial statements at all-staff meetings.
- Sharing Advisory Board meeting agendas at all-staff meetings.

Additionally, we have started to outline a process of growth and diversification for the Advisory Board that will be closely connected to the organization's ongoing equity and inclusion process.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Group goal: Craft a comprehensive implementation plan for the Bard land acknowledgement alongside local Indigenous communities, as well as develop an acknowledgment of the history of enslaved peoples on our campus.

Q2 Update: After a period of research and resource gathering, the Land Acknowledgement group met with members of the Bard College community to better understand the work being done to center the narrative of Indigenous and enslaved people in the region. In May, a draft web page proposal was submitted including a contextual statement linking Bard's Land Acknowledgement to the work of the Fisher Center, our programming at Montgomery Place, and recommended action steps for the Fisher Center. We will now begin a collaboration with the Values Statement group to combine our work into an all-encompassing statement that expresses the Fisher Center's mission, values, and acknowledgement of Native descendant and African-American communities.

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INTERNAL STRUCTURE TRANSPARENCY

Group goal: Articulate the internal structure of the Fisher Center via an organizational chart and include details about roles and responsibilities to understand current staffing, aid in onboarding, and create a structural strategy moving forward.

Q2 Update: An organizational chart was created and is part of on-boarding materials; a department “guide” on what each department and role does is still in creation and will also be included in orientation materials in the future.