



WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY  
**VANCOUVER**

# Council on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

## Annual Report 2021-2022

# Intro

## Charter

The Council of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion is made up of WSU Vancouver faculty, staff, administrators and students. The council promotes diversity awareness, supports diversity-related programming and works to enhance the campus climate for diversity in the broadest sense—as a range of ever-changing differences, thinking and personal self-identification practices, rather than any one difference or self-identification. The entire campus represents diversity.

We strive to facilitate interaction, understanding and civil discourse within the campus community, where persons of all cultures, abilities, identities and world views can be embraced and appreciated.

The Council of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion provides organizational and financial support for events and activities that promote diversity on campus. This includes:

- Encouraging faculty and students to develop research and curriculum on diversity issues
- Supporting programs that help prepare and recruit students from underrepresented communities to attend WSU Vancouver.
- Sponsoring cultural and academic events to foster an intellectual and social environment that celebrates diversity on our campus.
- Gauging the campus climate and attitudes toward diversity.

# Members of the Council on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

## **Felix Braffith**

## **Renny Christopher**

Renny Christopher has served as Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs at WSU Vancouver since 2013. Her research focuses on issues of race, class and gender in U.S. literature and culture. Her memoir, *A Carpenter's Daughter: A Working-Class Woman in Higher Education* (Sense Publishers, 2009), addresses her experience as the first in her family to attend college. She has taught at several universities in California and was a Fulbright scholar in Spain in 2000. Before earning her doctorate, Christopher worked as a printing press operator, typesetter, carpenter and horse wrangler.



## **Fabiana Ferracina**

Fabiana Ferracina is a graduate student in the Department of Mathematics and Statistics at WSU Vancouver. She has a wide set of research interests and is focused primarily on statistics. She also enjoys teaching and is a teaching assistant for introductory mathematics courses taken by students across disciplines. She is committed to the promotion of equity, inclusion and diversity throughout campus, as well as to the advocacy of minorities and women in mathematics and statistics.



## **Obie Ford III (Advisor)**

Obie Ford III delivers proactive leadership to WSU Vancouver. He serves to advance and realize the university's strategic goal to promote an ethical and socially just society through an intentional commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion. Obie is a member of the Chancellor's cabinet, and the inaugural campus director of equity and diversity at WSU Vancouver.



## Steve Fountain

Steve Fountain teaches courses in early American, Native American and environmental history. His research involves Native American history and culture, and the intersection with colonial ideologies and environmental change. He was a 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 Diversity Council Faculty Fellow and continues to coordinate Native American programs and outreach at WSU Vancouver. He is currently working on curriculum projects to bring local history and culture into the public schools and continues to advise the WSU Vancouver Native American History and Culture Symposia.



## Luz María Gordillo

Luz María Gordillo is Associate Professor and Program Leader in the Department of Critical Culture, Gender and Race Studies at WSU Vancouver. She's the author of *Mexican Women and the Other Side of Immigration: Engendering Transnational Ties* and collaborated with Linda Heidenreich in publishing *Three Decades of Engendering History: Selected Works of Antonia I. Castañeda*. Gordillo co-directed and co-produced the film *Antonia: A Chicana Story*. Gordillo is currently addressing the Age of Eugenics during the tenure of the Eugenics Record Office in Cold Spring Harbor, NY with an emphasis on the women who were involved: patients, philanthropists and fieldworkers.



## Desiree Hellegers

Desiree Hellegers has been teaching at WSU Vancouver since 1993 and was a founding co-director of the Collective for Social and Environmental Justice. Her books include *No Room of Her Own: Women's Stories of Homelessness, Life, Death and Resistance* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2011) and *Handmaid to Divinity, Natural Philosophy, Poetry and Gender in Seventeenth Century England* (University of Oklahoma 2000). Her research interests include environmental justice literature and cultural politics, social movements and civil liberties. She is board member of Portland Peace and Justice Works, and a member of the Old Mole Variety Hour collective on Portland's KBOO radio.



### **Bonnie Hewlett**

Bonnie Hewlett worked as a registered nurse before obtaining her PhD degree in anthropology at Washington State University. She has conducted research in Gabon, Republic of Congo, Central African Republic, and more recently Ethiopia, where she was a Fulbright scholar in 2010-2011. Her research interests include: bio-cultural contexts of infectious diseases, hunter-gatherers, adolescent development, the health and experiences of Ethiopian orphans, and reasons for relinquishment and abandonment by birthmothers and fathers. She is the author of *Listen, Here is a Story: Ethnographic Life Narratives from Aka and Ngandu Women of the Congo Basin*; *Women in the African Forest: Anthropology of Culture, Evolution and Development* ( a Japanese translated edition of *Listen, Here is a Story*); editor of *Adolescent Identity: Evolutionary, Developmental and Cultural Perspectives*; and the *Secret Lives of Anthropologists: Lessons From the Field*; and co-author with Barry Hewlett of *Ebola, Culture, Politics: The Anthropology of an Emerging Disease*.



### **Katrina Leupp**

Katrina Leupp is an Assistant Professor of Sociology. Her research focuses on employment and well-being, with special attention to how gender dynamics and family care responsibilities contribute to inequalities in employment and health outcomes. Other current research projects examine the effects of education trends on gender differences in mental health, and the implications of police contact and neighborhood presence for Black mothers' health. Her courses include Gender & Work, the Family, and Research Methods. She obtained her Ph.D. in Sociology with a minor in Social Statistics from the University of Washington.



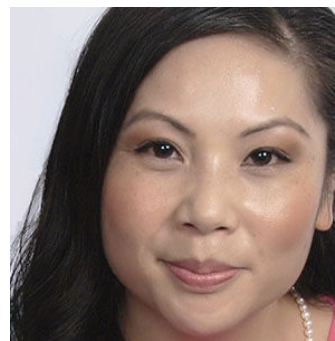
### **Julie Mercado**

Julie Mercado is a recent graduate from WSU Vancouver. Julie earned a Bachelor of Science in Psychology with a minor in Human Development and is currently working towards her master's degree on Postsecondary Adult and Continuing Education. Julie works as Recruitment Coordinator for the Office of Admissions at WSU Vancouver. During her time as a student, Julie had the opportunity to serve enrolled students, prospective students and their families, and

community members through a variety of position such as Lead Ambassador, Latino/Hispanic Student Outreach and Success Committee member, Accessibility Council member and as an Impact Volunteer at WSU Vancouver Student Diversity Center.

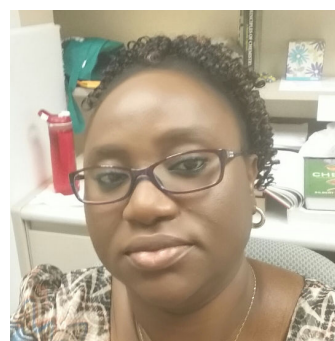
### **Connie Kim Yen Nguyen-Truong**

Connie Kim Yen Nguyen-Truong is an Assistant Professor in the College of Nursing. Her program of research focuses on academic and community-engaged research justice with communities of color including immigrants across the lifespan. This includes the Vietnamese, Chinese, Korean, and Micronesian Islander communities. Her scholarly lines of inquiry include cancer control and prevention, the intersection of learning and healthcare systems, and diversity and inclusion in health-assistive artificial intelligence (smart home). She is the Faculty Advisor of the Vietnamese Students' Association. Nguyen-Truong practices as an Intermediate Care RN (IMCU) at Legacy Good Samaritan Medical Center and community and population health nursing through her research partnerships with culturally diverse social services and health center. She is an elected member on the Immigrant & Refugee Community Organization (IRCO) Board of Directors, an elected Board Chair of IRCO Asian Family Center Advisory Board, and an appointed Senior Advisor on the Steering Committee of API-CLI. Connie is engaged in mentoring of faculty, students, and community members to build team capacity to conduct culturally safe research.



### **Adenike Otoikhian**

Adenike Otoikhian received a Ph.D. in Chemistry from Portland State University and completed her postdoctoral fellowship at Oregon Health and Science University. She is a published author of a number of scientific articles which have been well cited by scientists around the world. For the past 5 academic years, she has taught general and organic chemistry to a diverse student population at Washington State University Vancouver. She serves as a faculty mentor for the Critical Literacy Achievement and Success Program (CLASP). As a faculty mentor, she helps to support the retention of low-income, first generation and underrepresented students through one-on-one mentoring.





### **Luz Rocío Sotomayor (Chair)**

L. Rocío Sotomayor teaches math and probability classes in the Department of Mathematics and Statistics and has been involved in Latino educational and health services since 2012. At WSU Vancouver, Sotomayor has served in different organizing committees at the Student Diversity Center and has collaborated with the Latinx Student Association. Sotomayor holds a Ph.D. in Mathematical Finance from the University of Alberta in Canada, a master's degree in Mathematics from IMPA in Brazil, and a bachelor's degree in Mathematics from PUCP in Perú.



### **U. N. Umesh**

U. N. Umesh is Professor of Marketing at Washington State University Vancouver. His research and teaching cover a broad spectrum of business areas including innovation, patents, marketing models, entrepreneurship, data analytics and operations management. He obtained his Ph.D. in Business Administration from the University of Washington, MBA in Marketing Management and an M.S. in Operations Research from the University of Rochester. His undergraduate degree is in Mechanical Engineering from the Indian Institute of Technology, Madras, India. He has also taught at The Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, the University of Texas at Austin, University of Washington, and Washington State University Pullman.



### **Jose Vazquez**

Jose Vazquez was born in rural Oaxaca Mexico and educated in Mexico City where he completed a B.Sc. in Condensed Matter at Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana (Azcapotzalco) and M.Sc in High Energy Physics at CINVESTAV, then granted a scholarship to pursue a Ph.D. in London UK in Research Techniques in Physics (1992). Vazquez spent time as a postdoc in Rio de Janeiro (Brazil), and after residing in San Juan (Puerto Rico) teaching in public and private universities, Vazquez came to the Northwest where he has been teaching physics. Vazquez is currently working on observational astronomy and is an instructor of Physics and Astronomy at WSU Vancouver.



## **Nolan Yaws-Gonzalez**

Nolan Yaws-Gonzalez is the Assistant Manager of the Student Resource Center. He oversees Career Services and New Student Programs at WSU Vancouver. Throughout his time at WSU Vancouver, Nolan has worked closely with initiatives related to diversity, equity and inclusion, including serving on the Presidential Commission for Gender Identity/Expression and Sexual Orientation, advising Cougar Pride Club, and serving on the Building a Culture of Equity training development committee. Prior to becoming a VanCoug in January 2015, Nolan worked in Housing and Residence Life on other university campuses, leading social justice and identity-based programs and trainings for residents and student staff members.



## **CEDI Working Groups**

CEDI members recognized two main areas of interest for working groups: Student Resources, and Cultural Awareness and Engagement.

### **Student Resources Working Group**

The group looked into availability of student resources on campus and in the community, as well as how to strength partnerships with community groups. Areas of interest were food insecurity and transportation to campus.

### **Cultural Awareness and Engagement Working Group**

The group looked into possible ways to make campus more welcoming, including increasing visibility of cultural diversity on campus (visual displays, signage, event calendars, directory).

## **Transportation Survey**

As part of the work of the Student Resources Working Group, CEDI designed and distributed a 6-question transportation survey among the WSU Vancouver community with the goal of collecting stories of our community members in connection to using (or not using) public transportation to campus. The survey had 151 responses from different members of our community (students, faculty and staff).



## **Awarded Diversity Mini-Grants**

The Council on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion awarded their Diversity mini grants to the following proposals for the academic year 2021-2022:

### **CSEJ Missing and Murdered Indigenous Persons Event**

Desiree Hellegers, in collaboration with CSEJ  
English/CSEJ

### **Photos-Elicited Narratives of Spanish-Speaking In-Home Childcare Providers During Covid-19**

Elizabeth Soliday & Maria Galindo Cordova, Cassandra Gulam, Harrison Higgs  
Arts/Human Development

### **Performing an Equity Audit in First-Year Composition at WSU Vancouver**

Wendy Olson, in collaboration with ESOC.  
English/Composition

### **Visiting Writers Series and Creative Writers Speaker Series**

Chelsea Ratzlaff  
English

### **Science Student Study and Success Workshop**

Adenike Otoikhian, in collaboration with Thabiti Lewis  
Sciences/Academic Affairs

### **Speaker Series on Race, Sexuality, and Women's Rights**

Laurie Mercier  
History

### **Digitizing and Preserving Audio and Visual Material**

Carol Fisher & Mark Hasse  
Library

### **Thin Green Line is People Book Manuscript**

Desiree Hellegers, in collaboration with Roben White  
CSEJ/English

# CEDI Town Hall 2022

The Council on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion hosted their annual Town Hall on March 30<sup>th</sup>, 2022, focusing on topics of covid, food insecurity, transportation and access to student resources.

## Panelists:

1. Renny Christopher, Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs
2. Domanic Thomas, Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs & Enrollment
3. Ashley Gaffney, Outreach & Syringe Services Program Manager SHARE Vancouver

## In attendance too:

4. Obie Ford III, Associate Vice Chancellor for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion
5. Felix Braffith, Assistant Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs and Equitable Learning
6. Eric Scott, Director of Student Development
7. Tianna Jones, Student Resource Navigator
8. Sawyer Barragan, Interim Campus Director of CILA

The Town Hall brought information to students, staff and faculty in attendance about the various resources offered by the different units at WSU Vancouver, as well as resources in the community. In particular, the representative of SHARE Vancouver presented about their outreach program and talked about how to navigate local resources for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness. Students also gathered information on ways to engage with DEI initiatives on campus (e.g. participation in councils, answering surveys, participating in the public transportation initiative). Questions and comments were submitted in advance and during the event, and remote access was provided for participants.

