



Division of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

2022 Annual Report





Message from Chia Youyee Vang, PhD

It has been a year of navigating the new normal on many fronts. As I reflect on what we have accomplished, I am reminded that much work is left to do. Many throughout our communities continue to face inequities and patterns of discrimination. That is why our work to reshape our educational system and society is essential. We must acknowledge and reward achievement for everyone, not just those with access to certain resources and opportunities. We must also ensure people from all backgrounds feel welcome and included and can be successful. UWM's commitment to recognizing these injustices and doing what we can to eliminate inequitable systems and processes that perpetuate disparities is what motivates me to serve the campus in this role.

This division report highlights initiatives we are undertaking, some of our events and programs and key updates. We have taken some important steps toward unifying DEI efforts across the university, and more are underway. It is my firm belief that the work of advancing DEI is everyone's responsibility. I am grateful for the contributions that so many colleagues have made to this demanding work. That is why I am pleased to announce the establishment of a DEI Champion Award to recognize individuals who go above and beyond what is expected to create a more inclusive and welcoming community for all. There is much to look forward to in the coming year as we strive to better serve our students, colleagues, alumni, and the greater community.

Chia Youyee Vang

Vice Chancellor for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

January 2023

DIVISION OF DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

Statement on DEI

UWM celebrates, values, and promotes the diverse voices and experiences of its students and employees and our community partners. We believe diversity enriches and strengthens our institution. UWM is committed to providing equitable access to opportunities for students and employees from every background. We aspire to create a campus climate that is welcoming to all.

Mission

The UWM Division of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion's mission is to facilitate the university's efforts to advance diversity, equity, inclusion, and a sense of belonging for all members of the campus community through education, advocacy, and support.

Vision

We envision UWM as an institution that is fully and intentionally diverse, equitable, and inclusive for all its stakeholders and in service to the community.

Division Overview

This past year the division benefitted from the investment that campus leadership made to strengthen numerous campus-wide efforts. Dr. Liz Drame (Professor, School of Education--Teaching and Learning) and Dr. Joe Rodriguez (Professor, College of Letters & Science--History) served as Special Assistants to the Vice Chancellor for DEI to strengthen initiatives focusing on racial justice, climate, and culture. Dr. Becky Freer (Associate Dean of Students) and Dr. Wilkistar Otieno (Associate Professor and Department Chair, College of Engineering & Applied Science--Industrial and Manufacturing Engineering) were Special Assistants to the Chancellor and Vice Chancellor for DEI for 2030 DEI Issues. Drs. Freer and Otieno led the development of workshops and tools for campus units to conduct self-assessments and identify actionable strategies to be more inclusive and welcoming. Prasenjit Guptasarma (Professor, Physics; Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, CEAS) was Special Assistant for STEM Diversity. He led the self-study funded by the Howard Hughes Medical Institute Driving Change Initiative. The division includes the following programs/offices:

- American Indian Student Center (AISC)
- Black Student Cultural Center (BSCC)
- Equity/Diversity Services (EDS)/Title IX
- Roberto Hernández Center (RHC)
- Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program
- Southeast Asian American Student Center (SEAASC)
- Student Parent Success Program (SPSP)
- WiscAMP STEM-Inspire Program

Staff members from these programs/offices play an important role in campus recruitment, retention, and student success through coordinated efforts within the division, strategic partnerships across campus and with external communities. Many serve on committees and bring diverse perspectives and ideas to the table. Others provide training and consultative services to academic and administrative departments on a wide range of diversity and climate issues. The work that we collectively carry out is informed by the focus areas outlined in our DEI Framework.

FOCUS AREAS

STUDENT SUCCESS

All students have access to equitable resources and experiences to help them thrive.

DIVERSE TALENT

Innovative strategies are implemented to recruit, develop, retain, and promote employees with diverse backgrounds and perspectives.

CLIMATE & CULTURE

All members are responsible for helping to build an inclusive campus community where everyone is valued and has a sense of belonging.

COMMUNITY IMPACT

As an integral part of the local and global communities, the university is responsible for co-creating a shared, equitable future on campus and beyond.

CAMPUS-WIDE EFFORTS

Climate and Culture Change

A number of academic and administrative units have either established diversity committees or developed strategic plans that include DEI components. Our DEI Action Plan launched in 2021 included two goals related to equity mindedness, which entailed assessing and aligning campus-level DEI efforts and providing on-going professional development to employees.

Unit-level Culture and Climate Technical Assistance consultations

Groups and individuals invite us to facilitate equity-mindedness conversations on an on-going basis. Some of the topics include empowering teaching assistants in leading conversations about race; strategies for managing interpersonal conflicts around difference; overcoming challenges with adopting diversity statements; addressing student barriers resulting from inequitable processes and beliefs; and steps to ensure search and screen processes are inclusive by examining data. These consultations are geared towards building unit-level capacity, disposition and skills to support diverse students and staff.

DEI Action Planning Institute

To assist schools/colleges/departments to develop action plans, our leadership team developed resources and tools to help guide unit heads and department chairs. In 2022, we worked with 12 units to develop DEI action plans. Six took part in the Spring 2022 DEI Action Planning Institute: Educational Psychology (SOE), Facilities Planning and Management (FAA), College of Health Sciences-Equity Alliance Committee, Graduate School, Criminal Justice & Criminology, and Lubar College of Business. This is an on-going process that requires commitment from many stakeholders. We anticipate the number of units will grow as we expand our capacity to work with more groups. Detailed tools and resources are available for any unit to access on our website.

Racial Justice and Equity Program

As part of UWM's commitment to promote a more inclusive work environment, DEI and the Department of Human Resources initially launched our foundational Racial Justice and Equity Program (RJEP) on the eWorkflow system in Spring 2021 in two formats, self-paced and cohort-based. It was assigned to all employees with an 85% completion rate. RJEP 2.0 was redesigned on Canvas with the support of instructional designers and launched with new employees in Spring 2022 as a self-paced professional development program. A third iteration of the program, which included a new module focused on Indigenous History was launched with new employees in Fall 2022. Since the initial launch in 2021, the RJEP has been completed by over 3,000 people. We will continue to update the content in future revisions and HR will assign it to new employees each fall and spring semester.



Becky Freer discussing DEI Action Planning Institute roadmap.

Periodic Professional Development Opportunities

We continued to offer in-person professional development opportunities focused on topics, such as allyship and implicit bias. One such offering was in collaboration with Academic Affairs. Liz Drame and Suzanne Boyd (Associate Professor, Mathematical Sciences and Special Assistant to the Provost) co-led a DEI Book Club. Campus community members were invited to read *Whistling Vivaldi: How stereotypes affect us and what we can do* by Claude M. Steele and joined deeper, facilitated discussions via Teams. In addition, we offered tailored professional development trainings on racial justice and equity, as well as pedagogy for neurodiverse students upon request.

Strategic Faculty Hiring Fund

In partnership with the Office of the Provost, DEI led the creation of the Strategic Faculty Hiring Fund, which is intended to help diversify the faculty. Beginning in 2022, the program will provide bridge funding for three faculty hires per year for the next five years. For fiscal year 2023, hires were made in the Peck School of the Arts, College of Letters and Science, and College of Health Sciences.

CAMPUS-WIDE EFFORTS

Community Building and Support

A sense of belonging in an inclusive community where all may reach their full potential is instrumental both in terms of recruitment and retention of a diverse workforce. The DEI leadership team is committed to helping to create an environment where employees from diverse backgrounds have opportunities, feel valued, and are recognized. We allocated funding to support coalition building among three affinity groups: African Diaspora Council, Asian Faculty and Staff Association, and Latinx Staff and Faculty Association. Indigenous staff and faculty are invited to join all gatherings. The coalition held its Growing Community event in Spring 2022 and Harvesting Community event in Fall 2022.

Mosaic Network

Our *Mosaic Network* (previously called Faculty of Color Mosaic) had for many years focused on supporting faculty of color with tenure and promotion. In our efforts to be more inclusive, Mosaic Network now welcomes campus members from all employee categories. DEI senior leaders plan and implement a series of events and activities throughout the year that are designed to engage employees who self-identify as Black, Indigenous, Asian and Latinx in discussions about recruitment, retention, promotion and climate issues on campus. Monthly drop-in sessions take place where those at the table set the agenda for discussion. We participated in efforts that other campus units led focusing on mentoring of faculty and staff (e.g., Multicultural Scholars Collaborative, Graduate School, CETL).



October 20 Mosaic Network Reception

Diversity History Book

This new book captures the many ways in which diverse groups have contributed to the university. *Telling Our Stories* was edited by Vice Chancellor Vang and Dr. David Pate (Associate Professor, Social Work) and involved twenty other current and former UWM employees. In addition to highlighting Indigenous, Black, Asian and Latino contributions, the volume included chapters on women, LGBTQ+, disability awareness and accessibility, international perspectives, and veteran and military-related experiences.



September 27 Celebration of Diversity Book at Golda Meir Library

(from left to right): Margaret Noodin, Joe Rodriguez, William Velez, Michael Doynen, Jen Murray, Joan Prince, Mark Mone (back), David Pate, Jonathan Broskowski, Victoria Pryor, Gwynne Kennedy, Virginia Stoffel, Heidi Plach, Jason Anderson, Linda Huang, and Adrian Chan

Community Building and Support

Mosaic Leadership Academy (MLA)

Formal and informal networks are essential for career advancement. The Mosaic Leadership Academy is designed to create community and leverage campus resources to foster the knowledge, skills, and networks of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) staff and faculty. The overall goal of this academy is to support the promotion and retention of diverse members of UWM's community by identifying pathways to administrative and academic leadership positions. This goal directly aligns with and furthers UWM's pledge as the first four-year public institution to sign on to the Metropolitan Milwaukee Association of Commerce Region of Choice to significantly increase the representation of talented, qualified employees and leaders of color at UWM. MLA is a pilot program consisting of a series of workshops, peer networking, and coaching sessions. The 2022-2023 Fellows are Sunny Brysch (Clinical Assistant Professor, Director, American Sign Language Studies), Dr. Crystal Carter (Clinical Associate Professor/Social Work Field Liaison, Helen Bader School of Social Welfare), Sheng Chang (Program Manager, Southeast Asian American Student Center), Tima Guled (Case Manager, Dean of Students Office), Alanna Harris (Senior Lecturer, English Education Department), Alberto Maldonado (Director, Roberto Hernandez Center), Yvette Torres Alicea-Reed (HR Manager/HR Business Partner Supervisor, Shared Services), Dr. Aki Roberts (Associate Professor, Sociology), Dr. Denise Ross-Page (Associate Professor, Teaching and Learning and Director, Institute on Urban Education), and Dr. Paru Shah (Professor, Political Science).

The Academy would not be possible without the ten colleagues who graciously carved time out of their busy schedule to mentor the fellows. They are Dr. Liz Drame (Professor, Teaching and Learning and Special Assistant to the Vice Chancellor for DEI), Dr. Anne Basting (Professor, English and Director, Center for 21st Century Studies), Dr. Tina Freiburger (Dean, Helen Bader School of Social Welfare and School of Education and Interim Dean, School of Information Studies), Dr. Prasenjit Guptasarma (Professor, Physics and Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, College of Engineering & Applied Science), Robin Jens (Assistant Dean of Student Services, College of Nursing), Dr. Hope Longwell-Grice (Associate Professor and Senior Associate Dean, Teaching and Learning), Joan Nesbitt (Vice Chancellor for University Advancement), Nicole Palasz (Program Manager, Institute of World Affairs, Center for International Education), Sue Weslow (Chief of Staff, Office of the Chancellor), and Marc Young (Executive Director, Office of Undergraduate Admissions).

Lifting Our Colleagues

The DEI leadership team supports the Chancellor in coordinating nominations for awards outside of UWM that recognizes our colleagues. In 2022, two colleagues were honored by the UW System. Dr. Wilkistar Otieno was an Outstanding Women of Color in Education honoree while Luke Olsen (Registration Services Supervisor, School of Continuing Education) was the recipient of the Dr. P. B. Poorman Award for Outstanding Achievement on Behalf of LGBTQ+ People. They along with more than a half dozen colleagues attended the ceremony at UW-Madison on November 10.

(from left to right) Lizeth Ortiz Reyes, Becky Freer, Scott Gronert, Chia Youyee Vang, Luke Olsen, Wilkistar Otieno, Mark Mone, Anique Ruiz, Lisa McGovern, and Anye Ngwa



In collaboration with Dr. Kaushal Chari (Dean, Lubar College of Business), Dr. Belle Rose Ragins (University Distinguished Professor, Lubar College of Business) was nominated for the State Council on Affirmative Action 2022 Lifetime of Service award. She received the award and was honored by Governor Tony Evers on October 21.

PROGRAM UPDATES AND HIGHLIGHTS

Our student support staff are taking many intentional actions to ensure students have positive experiences in and outside of the classroom. In addition to welcoming the McNair Scholars Program, we also integrated Title IX services into the Office of Equity/Diversity Services that will further enhance our training and investigative capacity. Given the significant expansion of the division over the past few years, it was important to bring leaders of each office/program together. We held a leadership retreat in Summer 2022 to align our individual and collective mission, vision, and goals. An update from each program/office follows.

*Sharity Bassett (l) and Anique (r)
brainstorming together*



Equity/Diversity Services

This was a year of significant change for the Office of Equity/Diversity Services (EDS). In February 2022, EDS was given overall responsibility for UWM's Title IX function; the Director of EDS now serves as the university's Title IX Coordinator, and EDS now conducts all sexual violence-related investigations, including those involving UWM students. In order to conduct these additional investigations, EDS' staff was expanded to include a dedicated Equal Opportunity/Title IX Investigator, and we were very excited to have Rupneet Sidhu join our team in this capacity in July 2022. Rupneet was previously employed as an Equal Rights Officer with the Wisconsin Equal Rights Division for 12 years and brings significant experience investigating and resolving complaints of discrimination.

In addition to investigatory work, EDS staff members have conducted a number of Title IX-related trainings in 2022. These trainings included over a dozen presentations to families of incoming students during New Student Orientation and Transfer Student Orientation in Summer 2022, as well as presentations to the Academic Services & Advising Leadership Council (ASALC), to the physicians in UWM Athletics, to new resident assistants, and to department chairs and associate deans. This year has also seen change in EDS' work preparing the university's annual affirmative action plan (AAP). The overhaul of job titles and job families caused by UW System's Title and Total Compensation project meant that significant recalibration of the job groups used to prepare our AAP was needed, and EDS staff worked closely with our partners in the Department of Human Resources to sort the new titles into revised job groups, as well as to reconfigure the availability metrics used to perform the various analyses that are part of the AAP. We have also continued our work in more directly supporting search and screen committees in their efforts to attract demographically diverse applicant pools, particularly in searches for faculty and instructional staff positions. This work includes close review of previous searches to identify the best sources of referrals, as well as analysis of recent graduation data in relevant disciplines to aid search committees in targeting their recruitment efforts.



Rupneet Sidhu

McNair Scholars Program

The Ronald E. McNair Postbaccalaureate Achievement Program is a federally funded TRIO program designed to increase the number of students from underrepresented backgrounds who enter graduate studies leading to the doctorate. It was initiated by the U.S. Department of Education in 1989 and UWM is proud to be one of the first of fourteen university programs across the nation to receive funding. Over its 33-year history, the program has served hundreds of scholars, with sixteen students joining the 2022 cohort. We are excited that UWM's program has been awarded another five years (2022-2027) of funding from the U.S. Department of Education. The grant paved the way for this year's theme, "Bridging the Gap," and ushered in several new changes in Fall semester.

Over the summer McNair Scholars were paired with faculty mentors and performed research on topics such as community engagement, early childhood education, urban planning, and information science and technology. McNair faculty mentors and teaching staff worked tirelessly to help students succeed in research. We thank the instructors and faculty mentors for their efforts during the Summer Research Experience:

- *Seminar Instructors:* James Peoples Jr. (Research Methods), Kyla Esguerra and Dana Baldwin (Transitions), Tamara McKinney (Transitions Research Visuals), Deanna Wesolowski (GRE Verbal/Written Acuity), Bart Adrian (Quantitative Acuity)
- *Faculty Mentors:* Lindsay McHenry, Maria Novotny, James Peoples Jr., Robert Baker III, Nadine Kozak, Claire De La Cova, Jennifer T. Fink, Shawn Cahill, Paru Shah, Prasenjit Guptasarma, Jennifer Kibicho, Priyatha Premnath, Yaidi Cancel Martinez, Maggie Barlett, Aaron Schultz, and Swarnjit Arora.

With the departure of Dr. Patricia Najera in September, the program then welcomed two new staff members—Interim Program Manager Dr. Sonya Martin, Interim Assistant Program Manager Anique Ruiz. Following the conclusion of a search for the new permanent program leader, we are excited to welcome Dr. Sonya Martin in this role. She has a doctoral degree in Leadership for the Advancement of Learning & Science in Higher Education and has served as a senior advisor in UWM's Pathway Advising. We thank McNair Advisor Kao Zoua Yang and Anique Ruiz for leading recruitment and outreach efforts. Dana Baldwin had served as McNair Program Coordinator for the last few years and played an important role in maintaining continuity. We look forward to continuing to collaborate with her in her role as AOP Diversity & Inclusion Coordinator in the Graduate School. The program continued its support of current scholars by helping them complete eight graduate school applications, receive fourteen graduate school application fee waivers, and prepare six scholars for graduation in December. We highlight two of our scholars below.



Dr. Sonya Martin



Isabella Cosentino, a senior majoring in Architecture. This summer, Isabella's research paved the way for her to receive funding to compete at the NOMAS Design Competition in Nashville, TN.



Cheyenne Koran, who is currently attending UW-Madison as a first year PhD student in Geoscience. As the first in her family to graduate from college and pursue a PhD, she is blazing trails for other Indigenous women like her to major in STEM and excel in research.

Multicultural Student Centers (MSC)

UWM's MSCs have a rich history of serving historically underrepresented students and families. What are now the American Indian Student Center, Black Student Cultural Center, and Roberto Hernández Center were founded in 1970 while initiatives that resulted in the Southeast Asian American Student Center commenced in the mid-1980s. Collectively, they engage in collaborative relationships with campus and community partners to improve recruitment, retention, and graduation of students from multicultural backgrounds. In 2022, 4,169 students were assigned to the centers. The Multicultural Student Success Coordinators (also referred to as success coaches) share information with students who are on their caseloads and offer support when needed. Students are not required to meet with their success coaches as they are with their academic advisors. Overall, 1434 distinct students had at least one formal coaching appointment with their assigned success coach. Since the centers offer other services in addition to one-on-one coaching, many more students seek support from them. Altogether, 6969 visits were made to the centers during 2022 by 2171 distinct students. Reasons for their visits include academic planning, navigating non-academic issues, workshop attendance, cultural support, and using space to study.

The centers collaborate with many campus partners, in particular the Office of Undergraduate Admissions, TRIO & Pre-college Programs, the Lubar Entrepreneurship Center, and academic advisors. As a result of the relationship with students who access their resources, the centers support academic departments and researchers who wish to connect with these student populations on an ongoing basis. A partnership that has had profound impact on students from diverse backgrounds is DEI's involvement with UWM's Center for Community-Based Learning Leadership and Research (CCBLR) in the Division of Enrollment Management and Student Success to design and implement the Student Success and Talent Pipeline Initiative (SSTPI). Students from diverse backgrounds are provided early career experiences that included placement in paid internships with corporations in the Milwaukee area. Three multicultural student success coordinators provide recruitment and success coaching to SSTPI participants: Pachoua Lor, Monica Olague, and Monique Alcantar.

It has been a few years since staff in the centers were given the role of "success coordinators." In addition to developing workshops and events that promote student success and foster a sense of belonging, staff were charged with providing "success coaching" for those assigned to them. They have implemented innovative, culturally relevant strategies to guide students. There was, however, a need to better distinguish these roles with the work of academic advisors. Dave Clark, Vice Provost for Student Success, and Vice Chancellor Vang charged the centers to explore best practices with coaching in higher education. Led by Gaby Dorantes (RHC), the research team included Sheng Chang (SEAASC), Celeste Clarke (AISC), and Derrick Langston (BSCC).

American Indian Student Center (AISC)

At the AISC, the educational success and wholistic wellbeing of Indigenous students are our primary focus, with a secondary focus on developing cultural competency among the UWM campus and beyond, recognizing how this secondary goal supports our primary goal. In 2022, 287 students were assigned to AISC. AISC was visited 499 times by 164 distinct students, which including 1:1 coaching and other reasons previously outlined. This year, AISC worked diligently to serve American Indian students, their families, communities, and tribal nations. Dr. Sharity Bassett joined as the AISC Manager in August, and we welcomed a third staff member, recent UWM graduate, Sam Krueger, as DEI Student Services Coordinator in November. Along with our student employee, Colin Fengier, the AISC staff offers an enthusiastic, fun, knowledgeable space for American Indian students to seek academic success coaching, and, with the addition of Dr. Bassett, and in collaboration with the Electa Quinney Institute for American Indian Education (EQI), includes work as research assistants.



Dr. Sharity Bassett

In the fall, the AISC joined EQI in a move from Bolton Hall to Merrill Hall, near the EQI Fire Circle, that boasts a beautiful student lounge. We continue to work to make sure students know how to find our new location. Each event we have held has brought new and familiar faces to their space. We hosted several meals for students, including a fall potluck, AlterNative Meal, and holiday gathering. We worked with EQI to create a several semester Artists in Residency program with Indigenous artists and are thrilled to have been awarded a \$4500 grant by the Wisconsin Arts Board.

AISC staff worked together with new officers to revitalize the American Indian Student Association (AISA). The new AISA officers collaborated with the AISC on the 43rd annual Powwow, held in October in front of Merrill Hall, near the EQI Fire Circle. The officers also planned their first event together.

Stephanie Fones (Ojibwe) has been working with Dr. Bassett as an undergraduate research assistant on a historical maps project, involving the Oglala Lakota Nation. Stephanie will join Dr. Bassett and two of her colleagues from South Dakota State University as we present our findings at the Pine Ridge Tribal Nation meeting during the second week of January. Stephanie and Dr. Bassett will be joined by a second undergraduate research assistant, Audrey Cleary-De La Cruz (Guatemalan) in January and through the spring semester. Audrey's travel funding was awarded through the Office of Undergraduate Research and Stephanie's is through EQI. We have all been asked to present on our trip and work at the American Geographic Society Library in March.



Sam Krueger

In 2023, AISC will Sam Krueger will focus on a weekly newsletter to students, monthly events, updating social media, and building campus partnerships toward larger events. As an undergraduate student, she made many connections with offices across campus. She will work with campus partners such as the Women's Resource Center and the LGBTQ+ Resource Center to collaborate on events such as Denim Day and help the AISC host trainings for our staff, as well as others in EQI and the multicultural student centers.

Black Student Cultural Center (BSCC)

The BSCC focused on reconnecting students to campus and introducing new students to the wealth of resources that UWM has to offer. It kicked off 2022 by hosting the Meet & Greet with new students, the Fall Welcome, the Multicultural Open House, and the Student Involvement Fair. During 2022, 1,258 students were assigned to the BSCC, and 2,377 visits were made to the center by 671 distinct students. BSCC staff contributed significantly to Black History Month programming in collaboration with Sociocultural Programming and the Black Student Union. The 2022 calendar celebrated past and current contributions of African/African Americans and featured, the first female Black Student Union president, Anita Sparks, and the current 2022 president, Tanasia Golden-Shaw. BSCC partnered with Versiti on a Multicultural Blood Drive and hosted an innovative exhibit LifeLine: The Ultimate Bond. This exhibit depicted inspiring personal testimonies of organ and tissue donation by Milwaukee Divine Nine Members (Black Greek Organizations).

In March, we hosted the two-day 7th Annual Black Male Summit after a couple of years of hiatus due to the pandemic. Approximately 600 middle and high school students participated over the course of two days in workshops focused on preparation for college entry.



Summit participants



Monique Alcantar (left) with volunteers welcoming students to summit.

BSCC staff member Derrick Langston collaborated with several Black faculty and staff to establish the Brother to Brother support group, which brings together students, faculty, staff and alumni/community members to discuss the importance of providing space for UWM Black male students to connect. This mentorship initiative is providing a safe space for Black male students that will foster a sense of belonging and contribute to their academic success. BSCC's commitment to connecting students with role models on and off campus is also illustrated by hosting workshops and presentations. One example is the Black Feminist Symposium, "Sojourning Songs: The Underground Sounds of Black Masculinities" by Dr. Derrick Williams.



Brother to Brother Support Group

Another example was an event co-hosted by the Women's Resource Center and Lubar Entrepreneurship Center, "Sisters Conquer Like Me: Intimate Conversations with Inspiring UWM Alumni women leaders" led by Marquayla Ellison, Ariam Kesete, and Oby Nwabuzor. These leaders were recognized in 2022 by the "Milwaukee Business Journal 40 Under 40." Providing academic support and professional development workshops and organizing social events are important functions for the BSCC. Staff also advised several student organizations: Black Student Union, National Society of Black Engineers, and the Black Graduate Student Association. The center celebrated student success by hosting African/African American Graduation events at the end of each semester.



Anime night in the BSCC attracts diverse

Roberto Hernandez Center (RHC)

For the RHC, the year 2022 was one that was full of meaningful interactions with students and campus and community partners. We had several important accomplishments. We are proud of the RHC team's student centric work and the support to their families. We began the year with the return to in-person of the Bilingual Open House, "Casa Abierta", for prospective and admitted students and their families. This first in-person event since the beginning of the pandemic welcomed 250 guests to the UWM campus. Later in the semester we had a chance to celebrate the largest of group of more than 500 Latinx graduates at the Annual PALM Graduation Gala. Aside from honoring our recent graduates at this sold-out event, we were able to raise \$25,000 for the RHC Emergency Scholarship fund. This fund supported more than 50 students throughout the year to stay in school and continue their studies.

As part of UWM's effort to become a Hispanic Serving Institution, a new set of benchmarks and strategic goals were completed for 2022-26. Many of the activities that support our endeavors are led by the RHC staff and have yielded positive student persistence and growth in enrollment. Events like "Bienvenida" and the "Spanish Orientation" for parents are factors that influence student success. In the fall, we hosted several events tied to Latinx Heritage Month that recognized and celebrated community leaders and increased cultural awareness for campus. The Latinx Month Award on October 14 celebrated the life of community leader and activist Ernesto Chacon. We also hosted the first "Family Day" for Latinx families at UWM, which brought more than 60 families to the RHC.



PALM Graduation Gala at UWM Union Ballroom celebrated families and graduates.



Fall 2022 "Bienvenida" for new Latinx students

In Fall, UWM welcomed the largest incoming Latinx class ever, with over 700 freshman and transfer students combined, increasing the total students assigned to the RHC to 2033. During 2022, the Center space was visited 3317 times by 1047 distinct students. This year the RHC received several recognitions for the outstanding work on behalf of Latino students at UWM and for the service to the community. The Center was recognized twice during Hispanic Heritage Month, first by the Milwaukee County Supervisors Board and Chairwoman Marcelia Nicholson and secondly by the Milwaukee Brewers during the opening ceremony prior to the game. RHC and director Alberto Maldonado were also profiled by Milwaukee Journal Sentinel and highlighted by WUWM 91.7FM for their Oral History podcast project. Finally, the RHC, Alberto Maldonado and senior student Javier Retana (civil engineering) were asked to be part of a round table of leaders to speak with Vice President Kamala Harris during her September 29 visit to UWM.



Alberto Maldonado meeting Vice President Harris with Javier Retana

From the outset, research had been a part of the RHC’s mission. In collaboration with the UWM Libraries, the RHC received a \$10,000 grant from Wisconsin Humanities, which will be used to produce a two-episode podcast on Latino activism history at UWM and the formation of the Spanish Speaking Outreach Institute, now RHC. This project will be in partnership with two local high schools and their students. Thanks to a \$9,000 grant from American Family Insurance Dream Fund, we have been able to support many efforts and graduate students. The RHC was actively engaged in the community. In collaboration with the Office of Undergraduate Admissions and community partners, we coordinated numerous recruitment and outreach efforts at events such as Puerto Rican Family Festival, Mexican Fiesta, and the Annual Educational Forum. The festivals were attended by 100,000 people and many stopped by our table. We visited five target high schools and hosted the Carmen Schools College Sign in Day on our campus. The event was attended by 2400 people.

Southeast Asian American Student Center (SEAASC)

SEAASC coordinated socio-cultural and academic programs, administered scholarships and grants, engaged in recruitment efforts and community events, and held one-on-one coaching appointments with Southeast Asian American students. In 2022, 591 students were assigned to SEAASC. A total of 776 visits were made to the Center by 289 distinct students.

Staff collaborated with various campus partners to host over 15 programs and events. Some of the programs focused on students’ well-being and social interactions. For example, the center began the spring semester with *Bahn Mi & Bowling* retention event, which attracted 71 students. SEAASC held its popular series, *Mindful Midterms*, where students participated in de-stressing activities, such as line dancing, painting, bead-making, and playing board games. The annual *SEAASC Kickoff* during the fall semester introduced students to our services and staff.



Icebreakers during the SEAASC Kickoff

SEAASC staff also planned culturally relevant programs. In April, we collaborated with the UWM Planetarium, Hmong Diaspora Studies Program at UWM, and South Division High School to put together cultural performances and a planetarium show called *Asian Universe*. Later that month, we collaborated with the Lubar Entrepreneurship Center and the Institute of World Affairs to bring the co-founders of Tuk Tuk Box for a 3-day programming that focused on AAPI healing and entrepreneurship. The speakers led an AAPI healing circle with UWM students, gave a talk on building a business to UWM students, and made a presentation about entrepreneurship to high school students at Hmong American Peace Academy. During the fall semester, we collaborated with the Women’s Resource Center and the Inclusive Excellence Center to create a series called Feminist Fiber Arts, and the first couple of activities focused on Hmong embroidery (Hmong flower cloth).



SEAASC staff with South Division staff and students at Asia Universe performance

In addition to sociocultural programs, SEAASC planned academic support events, such as workshops focusing on resume preparation and journaling to boost productivity. Recognizing student interest in career guidance, the center started a series called Careers & Conversations, where professionals from various fields were invited to speak to UWM students. During fall semester, we collaborated with the LGBTQ+ Resource Center to create our first book club. We chose *Last Night at the Telegraph Club* by Malinda Lo. This historical novel is set in 1950s San Francisco Chinatown during the Red Scare. To celebrate students’ academic achievement, we held the SEAASC Graduation Celebration in May and invited those who graduated in Fall 2021, Winter 2022, Spring 2022, and Summer 2022 to attend. During this in-person ceremony, we recognized former SEAASC manager and advisor, Dao Vang, for his dedication to Southeast Asian American students during his time at UWM. SEAASC is proud to support students through scholarships and emergency grants that it administers. In spring, we awarded one student the Wisconsin OCA Scholarship, and over the summer, one student received the Hmong Advancement Scholarship. During the fall semester, 15 students received support from the Hmong Advancement Emergency Grant.

SEAASC continues to contribute to recruitment efforts and enhance our involvement in the Southeast Asian community. This year, we strengthened our partnership with Hmong American Peace Academy (HAPA), a charter school that mainly serves Hmong American students. Our staff participated at HAPA’s college fair and we organized a UWM student panel during HAPA’s visit to UWM. We expanded our community engagement by tabling at the Hmong American Friendship Association career fair and at the Milwaukee Hmong New Year. For the HAPA career fair and the Milwaukee Hmong New Year, we partnered with the Office of Undergraduate Admissions. Several recruiters were present to share information about UWM. With Pachoua Lor moving on to another position at UWM, we welcomed Chutharat Soukhaphon to the center in mid-December. Chutharat has worked in education, research and community-based organizations in the Milwaukee area and in Thailand.



Recruiting at HAPA’s College Fair with Office of Undergraduate Admissions



Chutharat Soukhaphon

Student Parent Success Program (SPSP)

SPSP provides parenting students holistic support designed to empower them and improve their families' overall economic and social success. 2022 was an outstanding year for SPSP. Since this program is primarily grant funded, we are grateful for the investments that enabled us to make significant impact on the lives of our parenting students. While we receive support from a few community foundations, the UW Credit Union is our major funder. In March 2022, SPSP was awarded another \$50,000, which enabled us to continue services. A major event we held early in the year was the 2nd annual Diaper Drive. With the support of staff, faculty, and community members we collected over 3,000 individual diapers that directly supported over 20 student parent families. Some of our in-person events during spring semester included a Family Game Night in partnership with the Lubar Entrepreneurship Center, a viewing party of the family movie Encanto with the Union Cinema, the return of our annual International Baby Shower with the Center for International Education, and our parenting workshop series with the Children's Learning Center.

SPSP program manager, Rachel Kubczak, played an important role by serving as co-lead (with Stephanie Rytlahti from UW-Madison) of the UW System Student Caregiver Taskforce. In April 2022, the taskforce hosted a Student Caregiver Symposium for staff, faculty, and students within UW System. Over 100 people attended the virtual symposium, which focused on research and data-informed strategies to advance policy and system-level changes benefitting student caregivers. Topics panelists addressed include experiences of non-traditional college students, parent success strategies, family-friendly campus initiatives, and equity and educational civil rights for student caregivers.

In September 2022, SPSP moved to be co-located in the Children's Learning Center (CLC). Operating out of the same space provided an opportunity for SPSP and CLC staff to take a 2Gen (whole family) approach to supporting UWM's parenting students and their families. They were able to jointly coordinate equitable access to programming, support, and services necessary for students with children. After the move, SPSP returned to hosting events and programming solely in person for the first time since 2020. Some highlights from the Fall 2022 semester include an evening with the Urban Ecology Center to celebrate the Fall Equinox with UWM families, a Student Parent Welcome as part of Family and Friends Weekend in October, Family Bowling in the UWM Union Rec Center, and in-person parenting workshops. The workshops were held in CLC, with childcare and dinner was provided. To better understand the needs and interests of student parents, SPSP administered a "Student Caregivers in Higher Education" survey. We anticipate that the results will be available in early 2023 and the findings will inform the university's services to our caregiving population on campus.



*Urban Ecology Center event
in October*

SPSP is excited that after a two-year wait, UWM's Food Center and Pantry is now a partner of the Milwaukee Diaper Mission. SPSP spearheaded this initiative in order provide consistent diapers to the UWM Food Center and Pantry, which was something that had been lacking. SPSP Staff along with staff from the Dean of Students office picked up the first donation of diapers on Giving Tuesday (November 22). As a result of this partnership, the UWM Food Center and Pantry is eligible to receive up to 4,000 diapers per month.



*Rachel Kubczak and Allie Dorshorst, basic needs
coordinator in the Dean of Students Office*

WiscAMP STEM-Inspire Program

The WiscAMP STEM-Inspire program at UWM helps underrepresented minority (URM) undergraduate students majoring in STEM fields to persist in their degree program and graduate with their first bachelor's degree. Supported by National Science Foundation Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation (LSAMP), the program served 54 students in 2022 with academic, research, and other program activities designed to help them succeed and grow.

The year began with Spring Orientation, and featured events co-sponsored by McNair Scholars Program, S.T.E.M. Club, StudentSuccess and Talent Pipeline Initiative, and DiversITy8. Of particular importance in Spring semester was a two-part program co-sponsored by the Preparing Engineering and Computer Scientists (PECS) program, entitled Bringing Your Tools to the Table: A STEM Learning Dialogue, led by Dr. Vanessa Hill, who is a math professor and STEM educator at Springfield Technical Community College. Together with faculty mentor and Chair of Industrial & Manufacturing Engineering, Dr. Wilkistar Otieno, WiscAMP staff convened STEM faculty for a lunchtime conversation about retention, followed by a stimulating workshop with about 40 students and STEM faculty. The semester ended with Spring 2022 Graduation Night, featuring WiscAMP alumna Omoshalewa Bamkole, Health Scientist at the Center for Disease Control.



F. Fones with F.M. Shaefer in Houghton, MI in May

In summer, WiscAMP funded four students to perform research, and subsequently welcomed 28 new scholars in August at its all-day Fall Orientation, complete with preparatory courses in Calculus, Organic Chemistry and Physics, taught by STEM faculty. The program thanks Drs. Rebecca Bourn, Mohamed Ayoub, Prasenjit Guptasarma and John Berges for their instruction along with the Dean of Students Office, Accessibility Resource Center and University Counseling Services for sharing valuable resources with scholars. The Fall semester was a busy one for WiscAMP. In addition to moving into a spacious new office—co-located with the McNair Scholars Program—students met bi-weekly at Library Study Hall with their peer mentor to work on persistence goals between meeting with their faculty mentors once per month. With feedback from faculty, students were asked to complete a “Student Involvement Log” in September to assist with time management, and an “Academic Progress Form” in October to discuss with their faculty mentor prior to midterm exams.

WiscAMP sponsored seventeen STEM students to attend and/or present at several national conferences. In all, this has been a fantastic year for WiscAMP, thanks to its program leadership, staff, and the following dedicated faculty and research mentors: Brian Armstrong, CEAS; Mohamed Ayoub, Chemistry; John Berges, Biological Sciences; Anja Flecking, Chemistry; Suzanne Boyd, Math; Christine Cheng, CEAS; Dyanna Czeck, Geosciences; Mahsa Dabagh, CEAS; Jennifer Gutzman, Biological Sciences; Lindsay McHenry, Geosciences; Shama Mirza, Chemistry; Kristen Murphy, Chemistry; Wilkistar Otieno, CEAS; Ionel Popa, Physics; Scott Schaefer, Geosciences; Arijit Sen, Architecture; Thalia Williams, Social Welfare; Jian Zhao, CEAS.



Faculty mentor Dr. Mahsa Dabagh (right) shared positive experience working with mentee Andrea Alonso (left) at December 8 WiscAMP graduation event.



WiscAMP scholars and staff with Eaton engineers on November 11

A Snapshot of Our Community Engagement



Congratulations to Twyla McGhee (left) for more than three decades of service to UWM! We wish you a joyful retirement as you join fellow retirees, Brenda Cullin (right), and Ray Fikes (June 2022, Milwaukee)



Hosting African disability delegation on June 27.



Participating in Mexican Fiesta, August



Welcoming Latin American education delegation on April 11



Hosting Taiwan-U.S. Business Forum in the Midwest on November 14

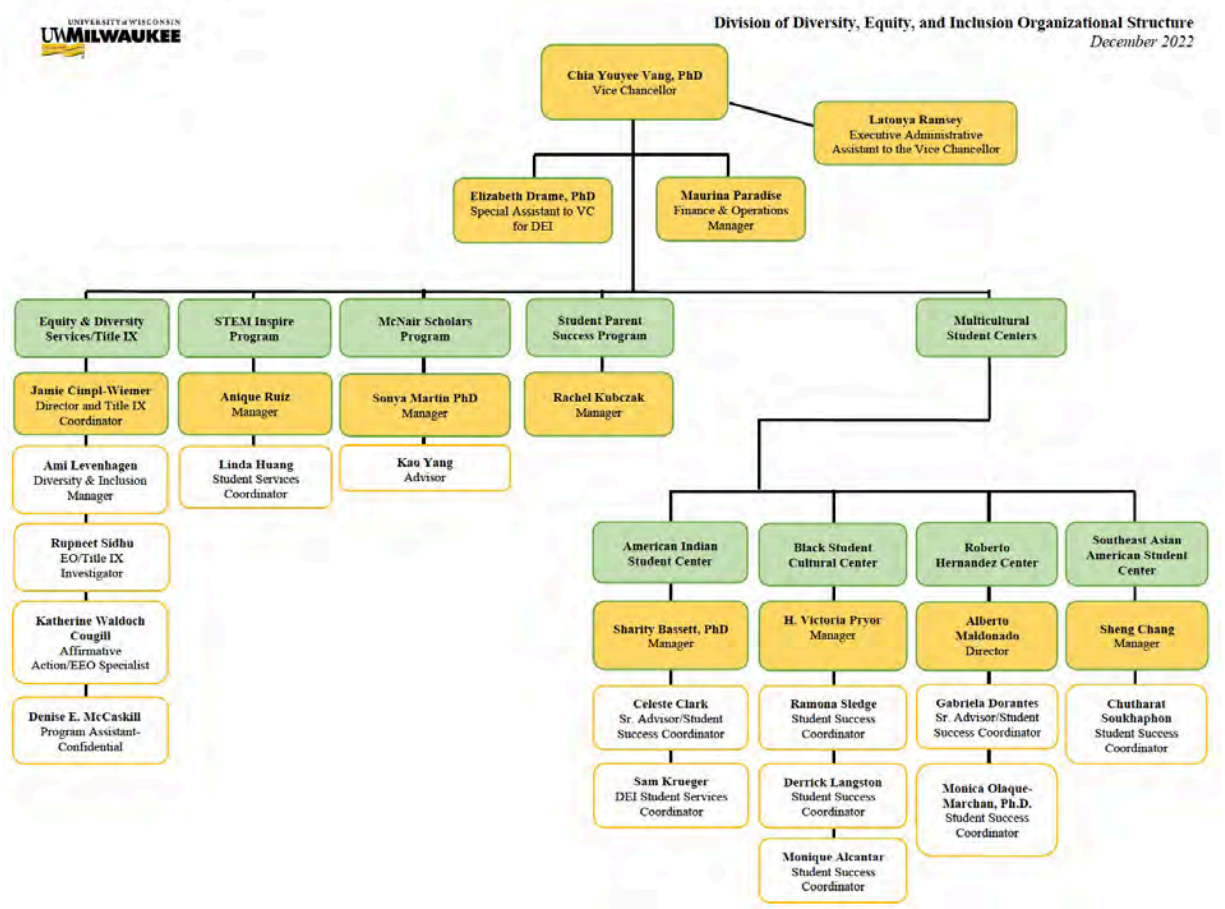


COMMUNITY HEALING CELEBRATION

“Thriving in the Midst of a Pandemic: A Panel Discussion with UWM Alumni” (April 14, 2022)
(l to r): Marquayla Ellison, Chantala Kommanivanh, Juan Carlos Viruet and Wade Fernandez



Who We Are



**Special projects staff and student workers not listed.*



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