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WHAT'S NEXT?
When I began working for USM as the Director of Intercultural Student Engagement, during the summer of 2020, creating a bias response team was one of the first projects I expressed interest in developing. The USM community, especially the students, wanted a transparent and structured system in place for their concerns to be addressed.

Throughout the year, Dr. Idella Glenn (Associate Vice President of Equity, Inclusion & Community Impact), Sarah Holmes (Assistant Dean of Students & Deputy Title IX Coordinator), Erika Lamarre (Director of Community Standards & Mediation), and I constantly met with each other and various campus partners while also attending conferences, reading research, and pilot testing potential protocols to create USM's first Bias Response Team (BRT).

We realized that the BRT had the potential to not only address our students' concerns but to inspire, educate, and connect our community. The BRT is a step forward and the real work begins now.

Sincerely,

William M. Johnson,
Director of Intercultural Student Engagement
The Bias Response Team (BRT) aids in mitigating the effects of reported bias on USM's campuses, through mediations, resource referrals, and campus-wide collaboration.

Based on a restorative justice model, the BRT provides a transparent and just reporting process for all USM students, to help improve the overall student experience.

The BRT will also serve as a consulting resource for faculty, staff, and students, when requested, for best practices and guidance on navigating situations pertaining to diversity, equity, and inclusion.
CORE VALUES

Transparency
All information that can be ethically shared with the members of either party will be released in a responsible manner.

Veracity
All information gathered will be reviewed through an objective lens to best provide an accurate and thorough understanding of the reported event and its surrounding contextual environment.

Empathy/Humility
Each member of the BRT will approach all inquiries and those impacted with empathy and humility, remaining open-minded and responsive throughout the process.

Restorative Justice
The BRT will always seek to provide resolutions centered around healing and understanding.
The USM Restored Project is an initiative that was built into the Bias Response Team proposal. We wanted the BRT inquiry process to utilize restorative practices so that healing and understanding would be the focus. However, restorative practices will not be effective if the education, motivation, and relationships are not there. The USM Restored Project seeks to address this issue.

The full BRT and any interested USM community member will have the opportunity to participate in various trainings, discussions groups, and professional development sessions centered on restorative practice education.

Lastly, sub-committees, chaired by steering committee members, will meet with various campus partners and departments to help them create a strategic plan to both educate themselves on and implement restorative practices in their area.
To most efficiently build the remainder of the BRT over the summer, BRT-SC members will participate in one of the sub-committees below:

**Inquiry Management Protocol (IMP):** The IMP sub-committee will delve into the logistics of how inquiries will go through the intake, exploration, and resolution stages.

**Marketing & Assessment (MA):** The MA sub-committee will create a marketing and assessment plan that will be used to inform the USM community about the BRT and assess itself to ensure the BRT's integrity is being maintained.

**BRT Governance:** The purpose of having a BRT Steering committee was to ensure that the BRT co-chairs weren't operating in a vacuum. The Governance sub-committee will create the governance protocols for the BRT to ensure equity and transparency.
Will holds a Master of Science in Counseling, College Student Personnel from Shippensburg University (PA) and a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from Chestnut Hill College (PA). Will is currently enrolled in a Doctorate of Education program at the University of New England (ME) where he is researching the facets of the social justice movement and its effects on the student experience, including possible solutions to the core issues that the movement seeks to remedy.

Will has worked in Student Affairs at Shippensburg University, Pennsylvania State University and the University of New England. His most recent position were as an Area Coordinator in the Office of Housing & Residential/Commuter Life, as well as, the Founder and Program Director of the Community Assistant Program at the University of New England. The Community Assistant Program focuses on building student leaders while teaching skills and resilience for success at the postsecondary level and the outside world.
Sarah earned her undergraduate degree in history and art history from the University of Southern Maine in 1996, and a master’s in Adult Education, concentrating in Student Affairs in Higher Education, from USM in 2002. In 2019, Sarah earned her PhD from USM in Public Policy and Education Leadership.

As part of the Student Affairs team, Sarah works with students and staff to help ensure a safe and welcoming community at the University.

As Deputy Title IX Coordinator, she receives all reports and disclosures of students who are impacted by sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating/domestic violence, and stalking. She works with those who are reporting parties (students who have experienced one of these incidents), and students who are responding parties (who have been accused in one of these incidents), to make sure that everyone's rights are upheld, that all parties understand their options, and are referred to the support resources that are available to them. Sarah serves as a member of the Assistance and Care Team, providing support to students and helping them navigate systems at the University.
Danielle Letourneau is a neurodivergent mother, artist, and writer who joined the University of Southern Maine in 2007. She first came to USM as a high school student taking early aspiration classes, then proceeded to earn her undergraduate and graduate degrees.

Upon completion of her Master's degree in Creative Writing, Danielle became a USM staff member on the Lewiston campus. Her passions in DEI focus on neurodivergency, motherhood, and disability. In her free time, she administers an online art fair and a charity crafting group.
Joe Lasley, PhD, is an associate professor of Leadership and Organizational Studies at the University of Southern Maine and Founder/Game Master of Gamenamic Leadership Consulting.

He is passionate about social justice and restorative justice with training in both, cultivated in a decade-long career in student affairs working on leadership development and restorative justice with student veterans, fraternities, resident assistants, and student affairs professionals.

Joe's approach integrates Group Relations methodology, an experiential methodology that is used to understand authority, leadership and power in group, organizational, and systems dynamics in both unconscious and conscious awareness.
Being part white as well as part Penobscot and Maliseet, the Native side of Katie’s family is originally from Wabanaki territory now known as Moosehead Lake. She began working for the University of Southern Maine as a Professional Academic Advisor in 2020 in the Portland Advising office.

Katie is a non-traditional, first generation USM alumni and is currently finishing her Masters in Policy, Planning, and Management at the university. She has a TESOL certification and previously taught English as a Second Language throughout Thailand. She is a Nationally Certified Health Education Specialist with previous work experience that includes co-facilitating Native healing circles (restorative justice practices) with incarcerated and formerly incarcerated populations, conducting community engaged research with the Justice Policy Program at Cutler Institute, as well as creating and implementing restorative justice frameworks in a residential college student program setting.

Katie’s volunteer work includes assisting on Non-Violent Communication trainings and leading breathwork and meditation sessions through SKY Campus at USM. As a Bias Response Team Steering Committee member, she plans to assist in addressing and preventing bias related issues as well as encouraging equity, respect, and responsiveness within the USM community.
Kim Turner, Associate Athletic Director at USM since August 2016, earned her Master's Degree in Sports Studies from the University of Massachusetts and a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration from the University of Maine. As a professional working for both the Division of Enrollment and Marketing and the Division of Student Affairs, Kim strives to remain student focused everyday as she serves those engaged in the campus community.
Hello, my name is Koos Mohamed. I am currently a sophomore at the University of Southern Maine. I am majoring in Elementary Education with a concentration in History along with a minor in Race and Ethnic Studies. I am a TRIO ambassador here at USM. I am also a volunteer at a local elementary school in Lewiston.
Libby Bischof is Executive Director of the Osher Map Library and Smith Center for Cartographic Education and Professor of History at USM, where she has taught since 2007-2008.

Bischof is a nineteenth century cultural and visual historian of the United States who explores American History through the lens of society and the lens of a camera. She specializes in the history of the land we now call Maine and the history of photography.

As a public historian, she believes in a site-based, inclusive, hands-on and experiential learning approach to teaching the past, and loves nothing more than exploring diverse landscapes with her students.

An avid reader, photographer, letter writer and postcard nerd, she resides in Gorham with her husband Steve, her son Gus, and her daughter Katie.
I am the Men’s Soccer Coach, a Lecturer in Sport and Exercise Psychology and the Athletics Diversity and Inclusion Designee. I hold the following degrees/certificates: BA - Education (UMF ’85), MS – Physical Education - Sport Psychology Concentration, (UNH ’92), Assistant Principle Certificate (USM ’20). With more than 30 years in higher education as a coach, administrator, teacher, lecturer, advisor, and department head, I have been dedicated to providing an educational environment that is safe, equitable, and inclusive for diverse student populations.

I have represented the athletic department on IDEC/IDAC since 2015. I have served on the Programming Committee, including 2 years as co-chair. This year, I developed and advised the Student-Athlete Diversity, Inclusion, and Equity Committee. I have been a member of the Campus Safety Project and the “Beyond the Pandemic” Organizing Committee. In recent years, I have received the following trainings/education: Racial Equity Institute, Return on Inclusion, USM Anti Racism Summer Institute, Safe Zone, and Maine Boy’s to Men, to name a few.
Nadine Pembele is an asylum seeker born in the Democratic Republic of Congo. She worked as a marketing manager for a US-based micro finance in DRC for 8 years. She has been working as the IDEC/CCD administrative specialist for the past three years at USM/Portland campus.

Nadine is passionate about entrepreneurship and financial literacy. Nadine is a Natural helper alumni, a program coordinator at In Her Presence and in several community works in the Portland/Westbrook area.
My name is Psalms Lovejoy, and I am an undergraduate Chemistry student minoring in Creative Writing at USM. I am pleased to start my journey as a BRT-SC member, and I look forward to being a voice for students. I am currently treasurer of the USM Science Club and enjoy writing poems in my spare time. The thing that I find most valuable is communication. Without communication, there's no dialect that expresses our concerns.
Rachel Casey is an Assistant Professor in the School of Social Work at the University of Southern Maine. Originally from Portland, Oregon, Rachel earned her BA in Human Development at Boston College, and her MSW and PhD at Virginia Commonwealth University.

She engages in scholarship that illuminates the unique experiences of justice-involved women, indigenous people, and people of color, aiming to improve the responsiveness of criminal justice and correctional interventions.

Committed to social justice and anti-oppressive practice, Rachel serves on the Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity Council at USM. She also volunteers in the wider community with the Portland Center for Restorative Justice and Through These Doors.
Professor SeifAllah Salotto-Cristobal has been designing theatre continuously for over a decade. He holds a Bachelors of Arts in Interdisciplinary Humanities from the University of West Florida and a Masters of Fine Arts in Lighting and Projection Design from the University of Missouri-Kansas City where he became one of the first to study projections for performance.

His career has taken him across the country and has allowed him to design for many companies in Opera, Dance, and Theatre. He brings his knowledge and experience to the University of Southern Maine community and helps shape the next generation of theatre professionals focusing on developing complete storytelling. SeifAllah is excited to work with the BRT-SC in helping make USM a leader in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.
Now that the BRT-SC is formed we will begin meeting over the summer to build up the full BRT. During the summer the following deliverables will be achieved:

- Full BRT Protocol Manual
- BRT Marketing and Assessment Plan
- Fall '21 BRT Member Selection Schedule
- Full Training Schedule
- BRT Website
- BRT Email Address/Listserv

Starting in Fall '21, the BRT will be ready to process bias inquiries, act as a DEI consulting group, and oversee the BRT Member selection process.

As the BRT-SC makes progress, more information will be shared with the USM community. If you're interested in being a part of the BRT or any of its sub-committees, stay on the look out for future opportunities we'll be advertising.
QUESTIONS?

Will Johnson
william.major.johnson@maine.edu

Sarah Holmes
Sarah.e.holmes1@maine.edu