



## Next steps in Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders (CSD)

January 2023

With 2023 starting, we want to reflect and summarize our efforts in Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI). As you may know, our UK campus experienced an event in October where a white student physically and verbally assaulted a black student using racial slurs in a residential dorm. The TikTok video that went viral showed behavior that is racist, hateful, and unacceptable. While that white student is permanently banned from UK's campus, this event highlights how much DEI work still needs to be done at UK. Below are some highlights of our DEI efforts over this past year and our upcoming plans.

### OUR PEOPLE

We have allocated \$2000 per academic year in our budget to support graduate students from underrepresented minority (URM) backgrounds.

In spring 2022, we financially supported two graduate students and one doctoral student to attend the National Black Association for Speech-Language and Hearing (NBASLH) convention.

We hired one new faculty member from a diverse background in Summer 2022 and are very pleased to welcome Dr. Keiko Ishikawa, a voice expert and master musician. [Please read about her work here.](#)

### OUR POLICIES

After **implementing holistic admissions in 2021** and eliminating standardized tests, enrollment of students from underrepresented minority backgrounds increased significantly in 2021-22 and 2022-23 in both our Undergraduate and Graduate cohorts.

We know that **mentoring matters** for students from diverse backgrounds (e.g., first generation, underrepresented minority, LGBTQ\*, and/or rural backgrounds). We continue to seek persons who will serve as mentors for our students. Mentors and mentees meet a few times per semester (virtually or in person). If you're interested in participating, please contact Dr. Anne Olson ([aolso2@uky.edu](mailto:aolso2@uky.edu)) so that we can support students entering our profession.

### OUR PROGRAM

In CSD we are undergoing a periodic review. This is one of the requirements for the University's Southern Association of Colleges System (SACS) accreditation. For this review, **our department has elected to complete targeted review related to DEI.** We are completing a self-study about DEI in relation to our people, policies, and programs. We will meet with external and internal reviewers in March 2024 and will share the outcome from this process. If you have any suggestions for our program, please contact Dr. Janine Schmedding-Bartley ([janine.l.s.bartley@uky.edu](mailto:janine.l.s.bartley@uky.edu)).

We continue to participate in the [UK College of Health Sciences Diversity Health Care Initiative Pipeline](#). The purpose of this initiative is to increase awareness among URM high school students to the multiple variety of health care careers. CSD faculty and staff attend ongoing events at Bryan Station during the Fall and Spring semesters for hands on experiences for students of all grade levels.

We launched a new Study Abroad opportunity to Belize over winter break. Aimee Sayre and Mary Beth Allen led 11 students in exploration of the tenets of global disability in regard to the provision of speech- language services to children and adults with disabilities in Belize.

### OUR PLEDGE

We remain committed to doing our very best to work on DEI issues with the goal of creating a more welcoming and inclusive UK CSD environment so that all students feel that they belong.