



OFFICE OF EQUITY AND INCLUSION

THE VOICE NEWSLETTER

UNIVERSITY OF LYNCHBURG

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DR. BOSCO BAE REFLECTS ON THE IMPORTANCE OF DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

SAFE SPACE



This symbol identifies someone who is sensitive and supportive to lesbian, gay, bi and trans people as well as those questioning their sexual orientation.

Diversity and Inclusion can be coined as the very pillar of humanity; curating a sense of commonality and unity amongst all, an experience Dr. Bosco Bae is all too familiar with.

Dr. Bae's journey has been nothing short of adventures, more importantly insightful. Born in Korea, not only has Dr. Bae travelled and lived in several countries, while holding several professional occupations, he grounds himself in the value of visibility, understanding/respecting perspectives, and an openness to learn and educate his peers on the necessity of inclusive environments.

Dr. Bae's first year as Director of Student Diversity and Belonging has not only been exciting, but it seems to provide him "insight into DEI work within an PWI" and town. Dr. Bae encourages the challenge of "change" with his new position. As there is "a lot involved in terms of organizing and planning while staying on top of any expectations and concerns a campus like Lynchburg may have with such an office" Dr. Bae says, he believes it will be a campus changing experience.



Dr. Bosco Bae, PhD, Director of Student Diversity and Student Belonging

The Office of Equity and Inclusion's reputable stride towards an inclusive community has made Dr. Bae curious, how can one enhance the impact of cross-cultural programs on campus?

With this upcoming year, Dr. Bae is fully prepared to coordinate and assist cross-cultural organizations towards a better environment that fosters justice, equity, diversity, inclusion, and cultivates a greater sense of belonging and student support.

by Markus Herbert, Editor/Writer for OEI Newsletter

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BLACK STUDENT ASSOCIATION LEADERS SHARE THEIR THOUGHTS ON CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM & LEADERSHIP

This Fall semester at the University of Lynchburg, student leaders discover and explore the relationship between constructive criticism and leadership. As The Black Student Association's President, Christian Otero '23, and Vice President, Donzailya Berg '23, seek to reshape the organization into its fullest potential, they understand and are open to forms of criticism; ways in which they can curate change to ensure that the organization is still fulfilling its mission to "aspire and establish inclusive and diverse environments, while informing people on the topics of black history, culture, and educational influences", while making a stronger impact



Christian Otero '23
President of Black Student Association

As BSA President, Otero aspires to "gain the perspective of other students, faculty, and staff coming from different controversial issues" across the campus diaspora, as he seeks to bring more unity and inclusion. While this task is challenging, and students' interest in affinity groups continuously fluctuates, Otero understands the need for constructive criticism to not only better the organization, but the University at large.

Otero has valued the organization's guidance, as it has taught him "The best way to make an impact is to inspire others". Moreover, he yearns to go against the status quo, while continuing to learn exciting and educational ways to keep students engaged and intrigued in the Black Student Association.

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by Markus Herbert, Editor/Writer for OEI Newsletter

Vice President, Donzailya Berg has long understood the importance of students of color and leadership within an inclusive environment. Since her tenure at the University, Berg has been curating ways to ensure students of color feel safe and welcomed on campus. While, Berg gives credit to Darian Geddis and D'Andria Alston-Thomas; two former students who were "really influential in advocating for the black community here on campus," she still finds herself advocating for inclusive changes that aid in the support and success of students of color.

With excitement for the first Black Alumni Weekend, Berg says " this will be good for current students to see how other black alumni are perceived," and she hoped this would offer an opportunity to have an open dialouge about ways alumni could assist "current students in tackling the lack of representation throughout the University".



Donzailya Berg '23
Vice President of Black Student Association

Graduating this upcoming May, Berg shares that obtaining her degree will not only be a tremendous milestone as a first generation graduate, but also she will be filled with gratitude as she found an inclusive community that helped her perservere through her academic journey. Berg leaves us with some inspirational words from former Student Government Association President, Davion Washington '21, "Humility only got us so far as a community, and now is the most opportune time to make good trouble and for it to result into a good problem". Washington provides this statement as a "call to action", encouraging students of color to unite and advocate for their beliefs and to strive for academic excellence.

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THE SIGNIFICANCE OF FAITH AND RELIGION AMONG AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDENTS

Similarities are what connects us; a sense of commonality, the creation of friendships. But, those connections established with religion at the core form a connection so strong it creates a spiritual bond; family.

As a student of color, I believe a community of faith is vital towards the success of a satisfying college experience. Campus Outreach is a Christian-organization that involves like-minded and receptive Christians who want to start and or continue their path with the word of God.



Miles Taylor '25 Student-
Athlete



Cee Jay Williams '21
University of Lynchburg's Minister

Q: How has Christianity motivated you in life?

Miles Taylor: I realized that by following my religion, it has given me more appreciation for God's love. Learning how quickly life can be taken away, I understand that everything is a privilege. I have always knew I believed in God and wanted to find my purpose in my life and why I'm here. I think Christianity in my life has developed slowly, but surely.

Cee Jay Williams: What motivated me about Christianity is that Jesus used his willingness to save me from my unwashed sins. It has also surprised me in which his commitment has motivated me to love others by following his calling.

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Q: How would you describe your experience so far following the word of God?

Miles Taylor: I frequently ask God if his words can be received in my heart and can cure any vague sign. I walked into CO's Retreat event, and my Christian knowledge was questioned as soon as I sat down. The Retreat was about the relationship of God, but a lot of people failed to realize that Jesus is the bridge towards salvation. Once you know that, someone will always be by your side.

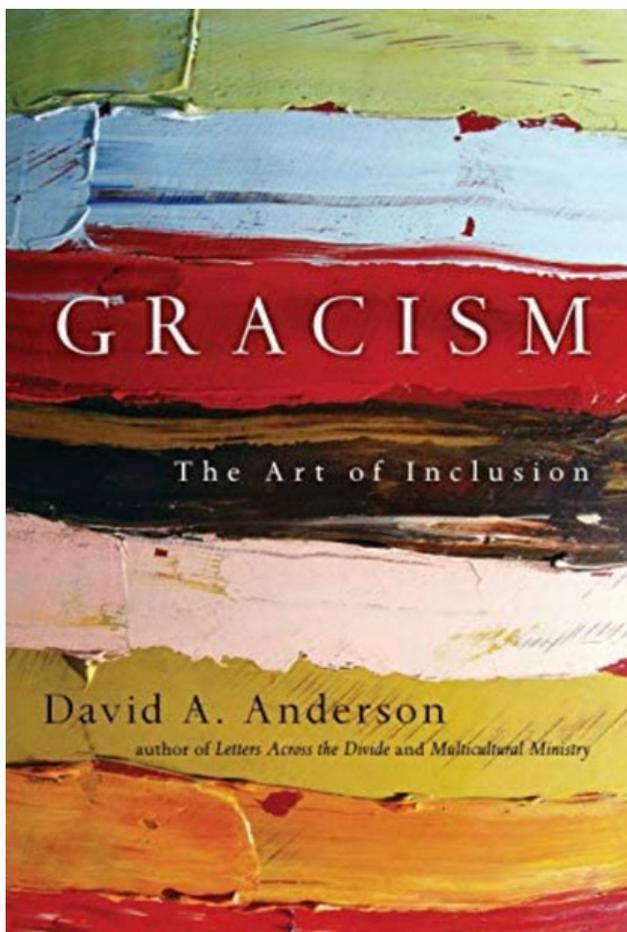
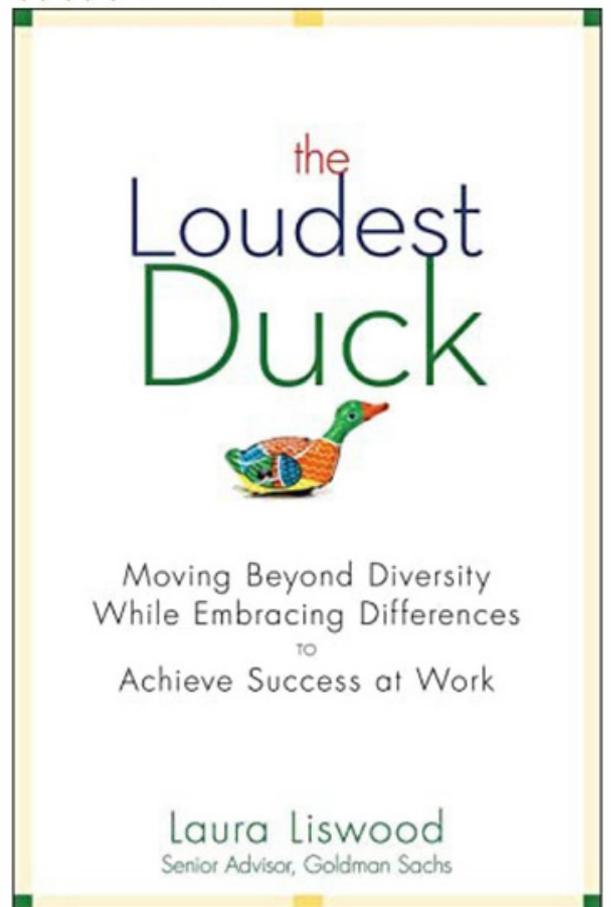
Cee Jay Williams: My life following the word of God has had its ups and downs which has created a paradox. All of it has given me the opportunity to be closer to God, as it has proven myself to be more faithful. No matter what, I wouldn't have changed anything.

Q: Any advice to any underclassmen who either want to be more involved with Christianity and Campus Outreach or wants to learn better ways to survive college (specifically black students)?

Miles Taylor: Advice I'll give is that you've already taken a risk by being at a PWI, so you'll know the tribulations that are going to come, but never change who you are for someone's happiness. Treat others how you want to be treated. We think we're often going to be. We have to stop waiting and have to take a step towards inclusion here on campus.

Cee Jay Williams: My number one advice for anyone who wants to be more involved within Christianity is that you do not know Christ more than you think you do. You also need to get involved within a Church to be part of the family. For Campus Outreach, we want to be a part of a student's life so having the courage to ask for our service as we will pray for you.

RECOMMENDED READINGS



MEET OUR TEAM



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Vice President for Inclusive Excellence



Dr. Bosco Bae, PhD,
Director of Student Diversity and Student Belonging
Assistant Professor of Religious Studies



Jennifer Reichard
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Cory Schutter
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