

# BC3 creates Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Council

Successes follow college president's call to action

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Dr. Nichol Zaginaylo, left, and Dr. Josh Novak are co-chairs of Butler County Community College's new Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Council. Zaginaylo is BC3's associate dean of humanities and social science and Novak, the college's dean of student development. They are shown Dec. 17, 2020, in the upper lobby of BC3's Student Success Center.

(Butler, PA) Butler County Community College's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Council, formed in response to Dr. Nick Neupauer's presidential pledge during a year of social unrest, will initiate opportunities for dialogue and action, the panel's co-chairs said, and prepare a student body for living and working in an increasingly changing world.

The council's administrators and faculty met virtually and for the first time in October, co-chairs Dr. Josh Novak and Dr. Nichol Zaginaylo said. The formation of the 17-member panel is among

BC3's successes related to diversity, equity and inclusion following Neupauer's June 2 email to college employees.

"Join me in emphasizing a personal commitment to diversity, inclusion and equity," Neupauer wrote. "As president, I pledge that our college will continue to model these values each and every day in the communities we serve."

"In preparation for a new academic year, I will seek input on ways we can draw further attention to this important conversation. I will work to move this important dialogue forward and will be sure to include the voice of BC3's most important asset – our students."

Neupauer's presidential call to action during BC3's virtual convocation Aug. 20 was also to "further the dialogue on diversity, equity and inclusion."

BC3 responded by furthering that dialogue at a part-time faculty virtual conference and orientation, at the college's professional day, at a virtual diversity dialogue and through staff members attending a national virtual colloquium. The college will also further that dialogue through a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Council that met again virtually in November and that will meet virtually every three weeks beginning in January, Novak and Zaginaylo said.

## Members of BC3's first DEI Council are ...

Novak, dean of student development; and Zaginaylo, associate dean of humanities and social science; are joined on the leadership of the council by Neupauer and co-advisers Dr. Belinda Richardson, vice president for academic affairs; and Dr. Case Willoughby, vice president for student affairs and enrollment management.

Council representatives are Lauren Buchanan, director of BC3 @ LindenPointe; Kate Buza, assistant director of human resources; Ivory Dunlap, academic counselor, retention specialist and associate professor; Jennifer Loue, coordinator of access and disability resources; and Stephen Mayfield, associate professor, science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

Also serving as council representatives are Kelly McKissick, coordinator of professional education and certificate programs; Morgan Rizzardi, associate director of admissions; Aaron Schlott, instructor, nursing and allied health; Dr. Steven Shaffer, instructor, humanities and social science; Dr. Karen Stubenbort, associate professor, humanities and social science; and Laura Wiest, instructor, business.

Patty Colosimo, secretary, vice president for student affairs and enrollment management, serves as council support.

## Prepare students for "increasingly diverse world"

Of the known ethnicity of BC3 students in fall 2020, 90 percent identified as being white. Three percent identified as being African-American, 2.6 percent as being Hispanic or Latino, 1.8 percent as being of two or more races and 1.2 percent as being Asian.

Nearly 6 percent of Butler County residents in July 2019 identified as being a race other than white, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. Those percentages were 19 percent in Pennsylvania and 24 percent nationwide.

“Our students will be living and working in an increasingly diverse world,” Novak said. “Just like it is important to teach them skills about how to write and think and learn, it is important for us to teach them skills about how to effectively and consciously interact, and not be biased and not be prejudiced against individuals in a world they want to go work in.”

High on the council’s list of goals is for BC3 to conduct a campus assessment, Novak and Zaginaylo said.

The council is studying other institutions nationwide that have longstanding diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives to determine factors that can be used in a campus equity assessment, Novak said.

“There are lots of different (factors) we can choose from,” Novak said. “What we are doing is trying to create a list of markers and measures that will help us to understand whether we are truly living out our mission of supporting a diverse campus environment and creating equitable outcomes for everyone who is associated with BC3.”

Mining data, Zaginaylo said in describing those markers and measures.

“When you collect the data, when you collect college racial data and all other types of supporting data surrounding that, you can make more informed decisions as a group,” Zaginaylo said, referencing a presentation at the national colloquium.

“And you have very grounded decisions and grounded information as you move forward,” Zaginaylo said. “That helps to make those conversations not so difficult if you know where you stand as an institution before you have those conversations.

“That’s why we want to start with the data collection and also look at what other institutions have already done and have been very successful at doing.”

Other goals include opportunities for dialogue, opportunities for personal growth and leading action for campus growth.

## Initial virtual discussion “opened some eyes”

Students will recognize that BC3 is taking more intentional steps to address diversity, equity and inclusion, Novak and Zaginaylo said.

A Nov. 19 “Virtual Diversity Dialogue” presented by Rho Phi, BC3’s chapter of Phi Theta Kappa, an international academic honor society, drew the participation of 50.

The virtual presentation was organized by Rho Phi officers Abby Bastaja, Jaysa Ditty, Olivia Girdwood, Mahuri Govindu and Alyssa Mainhart following a September discussion with Neupauer, Novak said.

“It really opened some eyes,” Zaginaylo said.

Messages from students in a chatbox during the virtual presentation “were just so overwhelmingly positive,” Zaginaylo said. “There were a lot of messages of ‘Thank you.’ They were just so thankful for the opportunity to share their thoughts.

“And I am sure they will appreciate those opportunities in the future.”

## Diversity, equity, inclusion focus of conferences

Dunlap spoke about “Creating Safe Spaces by Supporting Diversity and Equity from the Faculty Perspective” during the college’s fall part-time faculty virtual conference and orientation Aug. 13.

BC3 employees Oct. 6 could choose from professional day webinars that included “Addressing Implicit Bias and Microaggressions to Create an Inclusive Classroom and Campus Community”; “Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices: How to Create an Inclusive Climate”; “Strategies to Foster LGBTQ-plus Inclusion in the College Classroom”; and “Advising Diverse Populations: How to be Inclusive Using Appreciative Advising.”

## BC3 staffers attend, present at national colloquium

More than two dozen BC3 employees were scheduled to attend a Strategic Horizon Network virtual colloquium Nov. 9-10. Neupauer was among community college presidents to speak at the colloquium, and Dunlap and Stubenbort presented a session titled “Teaching Diversity in a Predominantly White, Rural Institution.”

Joining Neupauer, Dunlap and Stubenbort as BC3 Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Council members scheduled to attend the virtual colloquium were Buchanan, Buza, Loue, Mayfield, McKissick, Novak, Richardson, Rizzardi, Schlott, Shaffer, Wiest, Willoughby and Zaginaylo.

Also among those scheduled to attend were Dr. Patty Annear, Rebecca Bennett, Lisa Campbell, Christina Fleeger, Bill Foley, Steve Joseph, Matt Kovac, Dr. Jill Martin Rend, Jess Matonak, Ann McCandless, Ruth Purcell and Kim Smith.

Annear is dean of BC3's Shaffer School of Nursing and Allied Health; Bennitt is coordinator of digital and social content; Campbell is dean of Workforce Development; Fleegeer is executive director of human resources and Equal Opportunity compliance officer; Foley is coordinator of news and media content; and Joseph is dean of humanities and social science.

Kovac is dean of science, technology, engineering and mathematics; Rend is director of BC3 @ Brockway; Matonak is executive director of communications and marketing; McCandless is dean of educational technology; Purcell is executive director of the BC3 Education Foundation; and Smith is assistant director of records and registration.

## “We have a role to play”

McKissick said she was “fascinated” by a keynote address from Dr. Jennifer Eberhardt about Eberhardt's book “Biased: Uncover the Hidden Prejudice that Shapes What We See, Think & Do.”



“The studies presented provided very thought-provoking data on racial bias across systems,” McKissick said. “This opened my eyes and helped me gain a better understanding of how we are vulnerable to bias but are not ‘doomed.’ As a community college, we have a role to play to create friction and increase accountability, training and positive contact.”

From left, Matt Kovac, Kelly McKissick and Kim Smith were among Butler County Community College employees who attended a Strategic Horizon Network virtual colloquium Nov. 9-10. Kovac is BC3's dean of science, technology, engineering and mathematics; McKissick, the college's coordinator of professional education and certificate programs; and Smith, BC3's assistant director of records and registration.

Among the insights he gained from the conference, Kovac said, were that “an individual who is anti-racist can still have unrecognized biases. These biases, once identified, can and should be corrected if an individual desires to truly become nonracist as well.”

Additionally, Kovac said, “There is a vital role that community colleges located in areas that are largely nondiverse can play to help move internal and external constituencies toward becoming more inclusive.”

“You have to recognize bias in yourself,” Smith said she learned, “before you can work on not being prejudiced.”

Jennifer Sarabok, associate professor, humanities and social science, will discuss “Supporting Differences in Students’ Gender Identity and Expression” during a part-time faculty virtual conference and orientation Jan. 7.