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Day of Understanding

10-7-2021

Bryant University Day of Understanding, Justice Begins With Us

Office of Institutional Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

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BRYANT UNIVERSITY
Office of Institutional
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Bryant
DAY OF
UNDERSTANDING

10.7.21

*Justice
Begins With Us*



BRYANT UNIVERSITY

1150 Douglas Pike • Smithfield, RI 02917

[Scan image or click here for Registration](#)

Welcome



It is my pleasure to introduce Bryant University's 2021 Day of Understanding, a day to reaffirm our strong commitment to a campus community that learns from each other's experiences and perspectives and that collectively builds diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging. Our theme for this year, Justice Starts with Us, is a reminder of the important role every individual has in contributing to a learning environment where all individuals feel valued and safe- regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation or class.

This day has been planned with the goal of developing greater shared understanding among us. Assistant Vice President for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Kevin Martins, Ed.D., and the dedicated staff team in the Office of Institutional Diversity, Equity and Inclusion have worked hard to create a full program of keynote sessions, panel discussions, workshops and exhibitions. Please join me in thanking them for their dedication to providing this important opportunity for personal growth. We also thank our speakers and panelists for their participation.

Our hope for this second annual Day of Understanding is that we will keep building on the strength of our community as we listen and learn from each other and our presenters. I know that the participants share my desire for a Bryant community in which we are all open, empathetic and supportive of each other. I look forward to the discussions we will have on October 7, and to the important follow-up these discussions will lead us to.

In the first year of my presidency, the Bryant community worked together and addressed many difficult challenges. Now, as we look to the future and engage in community discussions about our Vision 2030 strategic plan and priority areas of focus including DEI, we must continue our collective commitment.

We have set aside this day without classes because open conversations and improved understanding are essential for our community and our success as a university and important for the success for each of us individually. I look forward to student, faculty and staff participation in the day and your continued engagement.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Ross Gittell". The signature is fluid and cursive, written on a white background.

President Ross Gittell, Ph.D.



To the Bryant University Community:

I am thrilled to present the second annual Day of Understanding. Our team has worked incredibly hard to coordinate a full day of opportunities to explore this year's theme, Justice Starts with Us. The institutional commitment to dedicate a day without classes to this event is an important step towards centering inclusivity into our collective university experience. We hope that all members of our community including faculty, staff, students, and alumni take advantage of the shared learning environment.

For our students, the Day of Understanding explores big problems that require innovative solutions. Regardless of major, minor, or concentration, justice will play large roles in both personal and professional endeavors. I encourage you to seek topics that offer new information and a diversity of perspectives. As you attend the sessions, keep an open mind and reflect on your values. Each session is an opportunity to challenge your beliefs and develop a broader understanding of your role as a global citizen in the 21st century.

To my faculty and staff colleagues, the Day of Understanding offers space to share knowledge and learn from others. I hope you view the sessions as valuable professional development opportunities and I encourage your active participation and feedback. As stewards of the student experience your engagement is important and appreciated.

There are many ways to engage with this year's Day of Understanding. Take your time exploring the program book and learn about the various speakers, panels, workshops, exhibits and entertainment options. As you plan your day, make time to stop by the volunteer fair to meet with local service organizations. And between sessions, stop by the main campus flagpole to observe a veteran's wreath alongside photos of the 13 American service members who recently lost their lives fighting for liberty and justice in Kabul.

Thank you to our presenters, partners, organizers, and volunteers for your efforts to make the second annual Day of Understanding a rare and special opportunity for us all.

Sincerely,

Kevin K. Martins

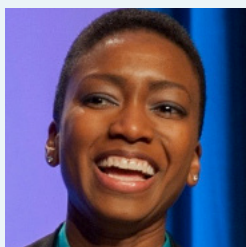
Kevin K. Martins, Ed.D.

Assistant Vice President for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

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Keynote Sessions



Talila A. Lewis



Dr. Mona Hanna-Attisha



Martin Schoeller



Keith Knight

Day Of Understanding Opening Remarks

by President Ross Gittell and

Kevin K. Martins, AVP for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

8:30am – 9:00am

Location: Chace Wellness Center, MAC

*Refreshments Provided

Intertwined Struggles: No Justice Without Disability Justice

Presenter: Talila "TL" Lewis, J.D.

9:00am – 10:00am

Location: Chace Wellness Center, MAC

Presented in Partnership with: Student Affairs and Academic Affairs

Disability is a natural part of the human experience. Histories of ableism shape how disability uniquely lives in the bodyminds of the present, but those histories are rarely unearthed. Expanding understandings of disability and ableism increase ways to implement practices of Disability Justice to increase solidarity between more people and movements.

What the Eyes Don't See: Stories from the Frontlines of the Flint Water Crisis (Virtual)

Presenter: Dr. Mona Hanna-Attisha

Moderators: Logan O'Donnell, '22
and Emma McGovern, '23

12:00pm – 1:00pm

Location: Zoom

Presented in Partnership with: The Honors Program and The Center for Health and Behavioral Science

A student led conversation with Dr. Mona Hanna-Attisha who delivers a personal account of her research and activism to expose and mitigate the effects of the Flint water crisis. Her dramatic story, from how she used science to prove that Flint children were affected by lead to the brutal backlash she faced after courageously going public with her findings, inspires audiences to safeguard their own communities by speaking truth to power.

Death Row Exonerees Panel

Presenters: Martin Schoeller, Kwame Ajamu, Ray Krone, and Derrick Jamison

3:30pm – 5:00pm

Location: Chace Wellness Center, MAC

Presented in Partnership with: University Student Government and Witness to Innocence, Inc.

Death Row Exonerees is an exhibit by world renowned photographer Martin Schoeller in collaboration with the non-profit organization Witness to Innocence. The exhibit uses moving portraits to detail the stories of formerly incarcerated people on death row. The panel will consist of Martin Schoeller and three exonerees who will share their experiences in the criminal justice system.

Red, White, Black & Blue: A Cartoonist Addresses America's Racial Illiteracy

Presenter: Keith Knight

6:00pm – 7:30pm

Location: Chace Wellness Center, MAC

Presented in Partnership with: Multicultural Student Union

Keith Knight is many things to many people—rapper, activist, father, and educator among them. He is also one of the funniest and most highly regarded cartoonists in America and the creator of three popular comic strips: *the Knight Life*, *(th)ink*, and *the K Chronicles*. The trippy new Hulu comedy *Woke* is inspired by his life experiences. In this keynote, Keith discusses one of America's biggest problems; its inability to have an honest discussion about race.

Panels and Speakers

The Definition of Insanity

Presenters: Cindy Schwartz and Justin Volpe,
Miami-Dade Criminal Mental Health Project

10:00am – 12:00pm

Location: Fisher Student Center, Heritage

Untreated mental illness and addiction are ongoing crises across America. One Miami based court is bucking the criminal justice system to lead the nation in decriminalization and support. "Definition of Insanity" demonstrates a novel approach to solving the mental health crisis that could be the model to tackle the much larger epidemic throughout America. A discussion with Cindy Schwartz and Justin Volpe will follow the 45-minute screening of the documentary.

Y.C. Hong: Advocate for Chinese-American Inclusion



Presenter: Li Wei Yang,
The Huntington Library
and Arts Museum

10:00am - 11:00am

Location: Academic Innovation Center,
119

Presented in Partnership with: International Affairs

This exhibit and lecture detail the contributions of You Chung ("Y.C.") Hong, an extraordinary figure in Chinese-American history, through a display of historical documents, correspondence, photographs, maps, and ledgers. As one of the first Chinese Americans admitted to the State Bar of California, Y.C. Hong was a major figure during the period of the Chinese Exclusion Act, a federal law that prohibited the immigration of Chinese laborers. In his lifetime, he worked on at least 7,000 immigration cases.

Liberty and Justice for All:

The Bryant Veteran Student Experience

Presenters: Danielle Joyce '23, Robert Bressan '23,
Robert McFadden '23, and Jason Vongratsamy '23,

Moderator: Kenneth J. Sousa, Ph.D.

10:00am - 11:00am

Location: Koffler Center Lower Level, Military Lounge

Servicemembers join the military for various reasons, yet for many of them the reintegration to civilian life can be challenging. The transition into the classroom can be especially difficult. Bryant student veterans talk about their motivation to serve our country, and the challenges they face as a result. Learn about the ongoing obstacles they contend with, as well as their continued contributions to our community.

How to Be a Leader in a Diverse Supply Chain

(Students only)

Presenters: Michael Gravier, Ph.D. and Teresa McCarthy, Ph.D.

10:00am – 11:00am

Location: Academic Innovation Center, 130

What is it like to be the white boss in a warehouse full of Hispanic or Black workers? How do you respond when your delivery driver is threatened because of his race? Why should companies consider sourcing from minority-owned businesses? This panel of supply chain industry leaders and a world-renowned academic explores genuine leadership strategies and stories to inspire ALL workers in the supply chain and includes discussion on mentorship programs, training, and organizational culture.

Understanding the First-Generation College Student Experience

Presenters: Rebecca Senna and Nicole Craig, '22

10:00am – 11:00am

Location: Fisher Student Center, 2C

If education is known as the great equalizer, then access to quality education is a fundamental pathway for prosperity. With this lens, we can explore how access to education is a tenet of a socially just community. First-generation college students often experience various challenges as they navigate the journey toward higher education. This panel with Alpha Alpha Alpha will allow attendees to learn about and empathize with the experiences of Bryant University first-generation students.

White Anti-Racism and Allyship Learning Circle

(Faculty and Staff only)

Presenters: Kelly Boutin, Robin Warde, Amy Ames, Angie Phillips, Ph.D., Kathleen Brown, Terri Hasseler, Ph.D., Stephanie Carter, Karen Maguire, and Amanda Caron
10:00am – 11:00am

Location: Academic Innovation Center, 118

In 2020, a small group of white Bryant employees came together to engage around anti-racism and allyship. Committed to racial justice, the group focused the ways our world has systemically been unjust to BIPOC communities and the roles we play in those systems. The group will share their experiences of formation and the profound learning and processing that took place and engage with attendees who seek to engage in their own anti-racism journey.



Improv Comedy and Social Justice

Presenter: Melissa Bowler
11:00am – 12:00pm
Location: Academic Innovation Center
Innovation Forum

Melissa Bowler is an Improv Comedian and Advocate whose passion is teaching people to be better humans through comedy. Her workshops and keynotes have taken her around the country working with universities, corporations, and conferences in a variety of professional fields. This session will use improv comedy to guide learners through uncovering biases and how to apply this to affect social change.

Islamophobia and Asian-Americans

Presenter: Amer F. Ahmed, Ed.D.
11:00am – 12:00pm

Location: Academic Innovation Center, 236

The post-9/11 era in the U.S. has exposed and enhanced prejudice and bigotry towards Muslims and people perceived as Muslim. There is little critical conversation regarding the implications of Islamophobia in relationship to the broader APIA community who are increasingly subject to racism, profiling and violence that results from it. This session will explore how communities can better address this ongoing issue on our campuses and throughout American society.

Social Justice: The Role of Mathematics

Presenters: Rick Gorvett, Ph.D., Alicia Lamere, Ph.D., William Zywiak, Ph.D., and Gao Niu, Ph.D.

11:00am – 12:00pm

Location: Academic Innovation Center, 212

In our technologically driven world, data and mathematics play a large role in decision making in both public and private life. Numerous examples of math being applied to social issues include determining whether bias exists in certain processes, preventing political gerrymandering, and analyzing potential social inequities in artificial intelligence algorithms. This panel will discuss ways in which mathematics can help to measure and enhance social justice and promote additional resources for under-served communities.

Universal Design for Learning as Social and Educational Justice

(Faculty only)

Presenters: Ilisabeth Bornstein, J.D., Marie Saddlemire, Ph.D., and Ryan Marnane, Ph.D.

11:00am – 12:00pm

Location: Academic Innovation Center, 237

This panel examines Universal Design for Learning's (UDL) relationship to empathy, compassion, inclusion, equity, and justice, particularly in light of COVID-related learning challenges. We will explore how UDL has been implemented in curriculum across disciplines and will demonstrate ways to incorporate UDL principles into your courses.

Coping Through COVID: Exploring the Mental Health Impact on the Bryant Community

Presenters: Robert Richards and Kady Piloto

11:00am - 12:00pm

Location: Academic Innovation Center, 222

A moderated panel discussion about the impact of the pandemic and socio/political events of the past several years. This discussion will explore how these events have impacted the mental health and wellbeing of different community members, oftentimes differently based on individual identities and privileges.



Yoga, Henna and Sweatshops: Cultural Appropriation, Exploitation, and the Commodification of South Asian Culture

Presenter: Amer F. Ahmed, Ed.D.

1:00pm – 2:15pm

Location: Academic Innovation Center, 236

Presented in Partnership with International Affairs

As South Asian cultural and spiritual practices continue to proliferate throughout Western society; the consumption of the sacred transformed into billion-dollar industries. Interest in Yoga, for example, has translated into numerous studios and ancillary businesses that profit from the fervor. This session will expose participants to the dangers of cultural appropriation and the perils of exploitation inherent in the consumption of South Asian culture.

One Day at a Time – Justin Volpe's Story

Presenter: Justin Volpe, Miami-Dade Criminal Mental Health Project

1:00pm – 2:00pm

Location: Academic Innovation Center Innovation Forum

Justin Volpe is an internationally renowned Certified Recovery Peer Specialist working for Miami-Dade County's 11th Judicial Criminal Mental Health Project Jail Diversion Program. He's helped over 1000 people with mental illness get out of jail and into treatment and helped train over 2500 law enforcement officers. Justin will share his story involving battles with mental health and addiction.

An Interactive Discussion and Networking on Diversity, Equity & Inclusion in the Workplace

Presenters: Stefanie Boyer, Ph.D. and Robin Warde

1:00pm – 2:00pm

Location: Virtual

Participants enjoy a flexible hybrid environment to explore challenges and best practices in improving diversity, equity, and inclusion in the workplace. Topics may include finding, recruiting, hiring, onboarding and retaining talent. If you are working to diversify your talent pool, this session is for you. Join us for an opportunity to network and learn from each other during interactive breakout sessions on worst and best strategies.

The United Nations' Principles of Responsible Management Education Sustainable Development Goals in Business Courses, Research and Service

Presenters: Michael Gravier, Ph.D. and Eileen Kwesiga, Ph.D.

1:00pm – 2:00pm

Location: Academic Innovation Center, 119

Bryant University recently joined other global-minded schools to implement sustainability in curriculum by adhering to the principles of the United Nations' Principles of Responsible Management Education (PRME). This session will showcase how PRME's Sustainable Development Goals are being implemented into Bryant's business courses, faculty scholarship in sustainability, and industry experts who are integrating sustainable solutions into business operations. The presentation will be informative for students interested in responsible management topics and for faculty seeking inspiration.

Religious Worship in Times of COVID-19

Presenter: Katayoun Alidadi, Ph.D.

1:00pm – 2:00pm

Location: Interfaith Center

How has COVID-19 and the legal restrictions in Rhode Island affected religious communities and their ability to support their members? What are the experiences of everyday people with worship in these unprecedented times? In this session the preliminary results of a project entitled 'Religious Worship in the Age of Social Distancing' will be presented through a poster exhibit. The second part of the session will be an open discussion for the campus community.

Does America Need a Third Reconstruction?

Presenters: Antoine Joseph, Ph.D., Nicole Freiner, Ph.D., and Kathleen Daly, Ph.D.

1:00pm - 2:00pm

Location: Academic Innovation Center, 237

What is needed for African-Americans and other minorities to achieve equal rights in the United States? The issue of restorative justice is at the heart of each Reconstruction. This panel will consider whether America is in need of a third Reconstruction while exploring reparations as a critical component.



Introduction to Disability Justice

Presenter: Talila "TL" Lewis

1:30pm – 2:30pm

Location: Fisher Student Center, Heritage

Presented in Partnership with: Student Affairs and Academic Affairs

An exploration of the past and present nexus between racism, classism, ableism, and structural inequity. This session seeks to expand collective understanding of disability and how disability-based oppressions are implicated in and central to all social systems. We will discover how ableism in tandem with other oppressions continues to form and inform all social systems, including the criminal legal system.

Employers, Diversity, & Inclusion – It's More Than just a Mission Statement!

Presenters: Patricia Miernicki and Kevin Gaw, Ph.D.

1:30pm – 2:30pm

Location: Academic Innovation Center, 118

A more diverse and inclusive workplace can help companies access and retain top talent, grow into new markets, develop creative and innovative products and services, and create equal opportunities for all employees. This panel discussion by top Bryant University employers will discuss why D&I is important to their values and mission and how they incorporate it into their daily operations, policies, and practices.

Exploring Social Justice Blindspots: A Reflection on the AAPI Experience

Presenters: Jeff Cabusao, Ph.D., Kaoru Paganelli,

Gao Niu, Ph.D., and Katie Phung

Moderator: Mailee Kue, Ph.D.

2:30pm - 3:30pm

Location: Academic Innovation Center, 223

After a year of anti-Asian attacks across America, AAPI staff and faculty members of Bryant came together to reflect, process, and support one another. For many, the events of 2020 are a reminder of a long history where anti-Asian racism is sustained by hundreds of years of exclusion and invisibility. Join a panel of AAPI faculty and staff members as they share and reflect about this moment and how their daily lives are shaped by stereotypes.

Understanding Students with Disabilities

Presenters: Delta Alpha Pi Honor Society, **Advisors:** Marie Saddlemire, Ph.D. and Ryan Marnane, Ph.D.

2:30pm - 3:30pm

Location: Academic Innovation Center, 222

The student members of the Bryant Chapter of the Delta Alpha Pi International Honor Society strive to break stigma and negative stereotypes associated with disabilities. This panel will focus on the experiences of students with learning differences and explain the concepts of equity (equal access) and inclusion for students using accommodations.

Climate Change and Justice: Impacts on Individuals, Communities, and Nations

Presenters: Hong Yang, Ph.D., Eileen Kwesiga, Ph.D., and Gaytha Langlois, Ph.D.

2:30pm - 3:30pm

Location: Academic Innovation Center, 212

The current rate of climate change is a monumental crisis, and the unprecedented changes have and will result in unmatched impacts on almost every aspect of our lives. Climate change exacerbates existing social issues including injustice and inequality. This session brings together faculty, staff and students to discuss new scientific evidence and justice related issues. Participants will also explore the implications of social, governmental, and higher education's roles in addressing climate change.

Justice in the Hebrew Bible and Judaism

Presenter: Rabbi Steven Jablow

2:30pm – 3:30pm

Location: Uniststructure, MRC3

Many of our current conceptions of justice have roots in religious scripture. This session provides an examination of numerous Hebrew Bible (Old Testament) texts as the basis for present day views and values in Judaism for justice, equity, and social justice.

The Constitution and Social Fairness

Presenter: Ronald Washburn, J.D.

5:00pm – 6:00pm

Location: Academic Innovation Center, 236

To truly understand justice, one must understand how courts apply the U.S. Constitution when hearing cases dealing with race, color, religion, ethnicity, orientation, etc. Centering the conversation on the 14th amendment and the judicial standards of strict scrutiny, intermediate scrutiny, and the rational relations test to show how such cases are decided.

Bravely Expressing Who You Are at School and Work (Students Only)

Presenters: Veronica Stewart, Amy Ames and Nicolle Potvin

5:00pm – 6:00pm

Location: Fisher Student Center, 2C

Each facet of your identity adds diversity and value to your school and your workplace. In turn, you hope that organizations will show respect and caring for what makes you unique. In this session, we will practice ways to teach others who don't know us well about our identities, our needs and expectations, in an effort to advocate for a more just school and work environment.

A Reliance on Sacrifice Zones - A Tale of Two Cities

Presenters: Paul A. Roselli and Dinalyn Spears, Narragansett Indian Tribe

5:00pm - 6:00pm

Location: Academic Innovation Center, 119

Wherever you live, the forces of big power demand the taking of land, resources and human lives to foster sacrifice zones and "business as usual" practices. Environmental Justice is worked into Rhode Island's and Federal spending programs. This conversation discusses how these spending practices are implemented when legislators are divisive, and impacted citizens struggle to make ends meet.

Justice in International Business (Students Only)

Presenters: Jacqueline Saslawski, J.D., MPIA, Robert Massoud, MBA, PMP, and Christopher Ratcliffe, MBA

5:00pm - 6:00pm

Location: Uniststructure, MRC3

This session will use actual events and cases to discuss justice in global business. It will feature a discussion on how individuals in an organization participate in decisions on justice - looking at the management and leadership aspects, different global perspectives, and the legal environment, norms, and business ethics informing how we act on justice issues. Beyond global corporate social responsibility, participants are prompted to think about their own role in the world of business.

Active Workshops

Just Cause: The Experience

(Faculty only)

Presenter: Ed Kairiss, Ph.D.

10:00am – 12:00pm

Location: Academic Innovation Center, 223

Presented in Partnership with: The Center for Teaching Excellence

Participants in this session will view Just Cause: The Experience, a simulated court case about discrimination where participants act as the jury and subsequently facilitate a discussion of issues explored in the experience, including racial and gender biases. Through performance and discussion, this experience encourages participants to examine their own views of important diversity and inclusion issues facing us in our everyday lives. Virtual participation will be enabled for this event but registration is required.

Creating a Culture of Inclusion and Challenging Bias and Hate

Presenters: Mailee Kue, Ph.D. and Chris Morse, Ph.D.

10:00am-11:00am

Location: Fisher Student Center, 2AB

In collaboration with various offices and departments, the Bias Incident Committee has implemented the ADL's model for responding to hate and bias. The Hate|UnCycled resources and programs prepare administrators, faculty, staff, and students to become leaders in challenging bias in individuals and systems. Key points from 2021 Summer trainings, steps on how Bryant can prevent, prepare, respond, heal, and educate about bias and, the Hate|UnCycled toolkit providing group activities will be shared with participants.

Body Mapping: Embodying our Stories, Embracing our Differences

Presenters: Joan Zaretti, Ph.D. and Valerie Carrigan, MFA

11:00am - 1:00pm, Drop-In Workshop

(no registration required)

Location: Interfaith Center, DeGasperi Room

Body mapping is a vibrant representational technique where individuals express their identity, explore social issues, and give voice to personal experience. In these life-size painted images, individuals examine meaning in their relationships with others in the world and communicate these ideas in vivid visual and textual form. Created by students, the exhibition will explore themes of community and home, friendship, health and body, environment, and social activism. Drop-in workshop allows for creativity and exploration.



Standing on Sacred Ground: Eight Cultures - One Fight

Presenters: Maura Coughlin, Ph.D. and Laura Kohl

11:00am – 2:00pm,

Location: Unistrukture, M36, Drop-In

Workshop (no registration required)

An interactive art workshop where participants will respond to the social and environmental justice themes while segments of the documentary Standing on Sacred Ground: Eight Cultures - One Fight inspires creative work. "Around the world, indigenous people stand up for their traditional sacred lands in defense of cultural survival, human rights and the environment. Watch them stand against industrial mega-projects, consumer culture, resource extraction, competing religions, tourists, and climate change. All materials will be provided for participants.



Beyond Binaries: Identity and Sexuality – How do we assign labels to our complicated experiences of identity?

Presenter: Robyn Ochs

10:30am – 12:00pm; 2:00pm – 3:30pm

Location: Unistrukture, MRC4

Presented in Partnership with: The Bryant Pride Center

This session explores the sexuality landscape, conducting a thought-provoking anonymous survey of those present, and look together at the data. How do we identify, privately and publicly? Where do we locate ourselves on the sexuality and gender continua? How old were we when we came to our identities? How a[sexual] are we? How well do our friends/family members understand us? This program will change the way you think about labels and deconstruct binary systems of identity.

Safe Zone

Presenter: Kelly Boutin

1:30pm – 3:30pm

Location: Fisher Student Center, 2B

Join the Bryant Pride Center and PwC Center for Diversity and Inclusion for Safe Zone. During this workshop, participants will be guided through conversations and activities relating to identity and privilege, and oppression. Additionally, Safe Zone will dive into the concepts of biological sex, gender identity, gender expression, and attraction. Finally, participants will consider concrete ways they can show up as allies to the LGBTQ+ community.



Community Based Behavioral Health Services:

A Bridge to the Possible

Presenter: Cindy Schwartz,
Miami-Dade Criminal Mental
Health Project

2:30pm – 3:30pm

Location: Academic Innovation Center, 130

This workshop utilizes the Eight Principles of Community-based Behavioral Health Services for Justice-Involved Individuals to explore how behavioral health and criminal justice stakeholders can work together and across systems to improve the lives of individuals with mental illnesses and substance use disorders involved in the criminal justice system.

Exploring Labels That Define Our Identity

(Students only)

Presenter: Esther Kalajian

2:30pm - 3:30pm

Location: Fisher Student Center, 2C

Our culture shapes the way we work and play, and it influences our values and view. This session will explore how we see ourselves and how generalizations may influence how others see us. This interactive session will also examine the many facets of identity and how these components impact our choices. Activities in this session such as creating an identity chart helps to see others through multiple perspectives.

Diversity Circle - Engaging in the Conversation

(Students only)

Presenter: Haedy Liu, Ph.D.

5:00pm – 6:00pm

Location: Unistrukture, MRC4

In order to build the capacity of our students to engage in thoughtful discussions and action in issues of justice, we must first understand their perspectives and their understanding of issues like diversity. Participants in this session will engage in an activity that cultivates exploration into a question about diversity. Participants will have opportunities to share their own and learn from others' experiences with diversity on campus in a respectful context.

Exhibitions

Death Row Exonerees (Photography Exhibit)

Presenter: Martin Schoeller

October 7-14, 2021

9:00am - 9:00pm

Location: Bello Grand Hall

An exhibit by world renowned photographer Martin Schoeller in collaboration with the non-profit organization Witness to Innocence. The exhibit uses moving portraits to detail the stories of formerly incarcerated people on death row. Keynote and panel with Martin Schoeller and three exonerees who will share their experiences in the criminal justice system at 3:30pm in Chace Wellness Center: MAC.

Body Mapping: Embodying our Stories, Embracing our Differences (Student Art Exhibit)

Presenters: Joan Zaretti, Ph.D and Valerie Carrigan, MFA

10:00am - 2:00pm

Location: Interfaith Center, DeGasperis Room

Body mapping is a vibrant representational technique where individuals express their identity, explore social issues, and give voice to personal experience. In these life-size painted images, individuals examine meaning in their relationships with others in the world and communicate these ideas in vivid visual and textual form. Created by students, the exhibition will explore themes of community and home, friendship, health and body, environment, and social activism. Drop-in workshop for creative exploration from 11:00am to 1:00pm.

Y.C. Hong: Advocate for Chinese-American Inclusion (Historical Documents Exhibit) – Li Wei Yang, The Huntington Library and Arts Museum

October 7, 2021 – November 19, 2021

11:00am – 9:00pm

Location: The Krupp Library

Presented in Partnership with: International Affairs and The Krupp Library

This exhibit details the contributions of You Chung ("Y.C.") Hong, an extraordinary figure in Chinese-American history, through a display of historical documents, correspondence, photographs, maps, and ledgers. As one of the first Chinese Americans admitted to the State Bar of California, Hong was a major figure during the period of the Chinese Exclusion Act, a federal law that prohibited the immigration of Chinese laborers and worked on at least 7,000 immigration cases. Illustrative presentation by Li Wei Yang at 11:00am.

Religious Worship in Times of COVID-19 (Poster Exhibit)

Presenter: Katayoun Alidadi, Ph.D.

October 7-10, 2021

1:00pm – 9:00pm

Location: Interfaith Center

How has COVID-19 and the legal restrictions in Rhode Island affected religious communities and their ability to support their members? What are the experiences of everyday people with worship in these unprecedented times? The preliminary results of a project entitled 'Religious Worship in the Age of Social Distancing' will be presented through a poster exhibit. Presentation and open discussion at 1:00pm.

Other Engagement Opportunities

A Chance to Give Back: Non-Profit Volunteer Fair

9:00am – 12:00pm

Location: Unistructure, Rotunda Upper Level

Presented in Partnership with: Human Resources

Studies indicate that the very act of giving back to the community boosts your happiness, health, and sense of well-being.

Non-profit organizations from local communities will be present to provide information to faculty, staff and students about opportunities to give back through service.

Veterans Memorial Wreath

9:00am – 9:00 pm

Main Bryant Flag Pole – Between Unistructure and Chace Wellness Center

Presented in Partnership with the Bryant Veterans Professional Network

In honor of the 13 service members killed in Kabul, a veteran's wreath and photos will be stationed at the main Bryant flagpole. All members of the community are invited to stop by throughout the Day of Understanding for a moment of reflection on the sacrifices made to advance liberty and justice.

Dress for Success Closet

Presenter: Kelley Tiarks

10:00am – 4:00pm

Location: ACE Workshop Room

The Centers for Student Success strive to provide all students with the resources needed to be successful during their time at Bryant. In collaboration with Student Affairs, the Dress for Success Closet was created with the goal to provide students in need of professional attire with free, gently used and/or new professional clothing for class presentations, interviews, and career fairs. Donations for the closet will be accepted as well in the Rotunda between 9am-12pm.

Sweet Justice Café

11:00am – 1:00pm

Location: Fisher Student Center 1st Floor

Presented in Partnership with: Fisher Student Center Operations

Stop by the first floor of the Fisher Student Center to grab a free snack and take a seat by the fireplace. Enjoy the streaming presentation of the noon keynote conversation with Dr. Mona Hanna-Attisha.

Bryant University Department of Public Safety Serves You a Scoop

Presenter: Department Of Public Safety

1:00pm – 3:00pm

Location: Fisher Student Center 1st Floor

Presented in Partnership with: Sodexo Catering

Join us for a free scoop of ice cream served by our very own Bryant DPS officers. Take the time to chat and get to know the officers that support our campus community. A special thank you to Sodexo Dining for their Day of Understanding ice cream donation.



Ability not Disability

Presenters: Angela LeBel, '22 and Lauren Mederios, '22

1:00pm – 4:00pm

Location: Fisher Student Center, 1st floor

Presented in Partnership with: Best Buddies

Members of Bryant Best Buddies and the Student Ambassador team invite faculty, staff, students, and alumni to stop by and tie dye a t-shirt while learning about the history of disability advocacy. Meet some of the Bryant buddies, enjoy a creative activity and grab a snack.

Food Truck Village

1:00pm - 4:00pm and 5:00pm – 8:00pm

Locations: Fisher Student Center and

Academic Innovation Center

Presented in Partnership with: The International Student Organization

Enjoy a variety of options from some of our favorite food trucks! Available throughout the day for faculty, staff, and students who attend Day of Understanding sessions.

Bryant Alumni Networking Mixer

5:00 pm – 6:00pm

*Presented in Partnership with University Alumni
and Parent Engagement*

Bryant alumni and invited student organization representatives come together for an informal hour of networking and meet and greet with keynote speaker Keith Knight. This is an opportunity to mix and mingle with alumni who are passionate about DEI and strengthening the ties between students and our graduates. For more information and to RSVP contact Robin Warde, Alumni/Parent Engagement rwarde@bryant.edu.

Vibes Café

Presenters: Music By: Cam Bells, Walt Pearson Jr., Mike Rollins, Seth Woodruff, Jowell Robinson, and Karna Touze Poetry By: Bienveni Loua, Ariella, RudyRu, and LouieTheBee

7:30pm – 9:30pm

Location: Fisher Student Center, Papitto

Presented in Partnership with: University Student Government

Enjoy a live band play a collection of carefully curated songs that served as a backdrop for liberation around the world. Spoken word artists will perform original pieces intended to inspire deep thought and reflection.



In the Heights (Movie Screening)

7:30pm – 9:30pm

Location: Fisher Student Center, 2AB

*Presented in Partnership with: The
Association of Latino Professionals
for America*

A screening of the film version of the award-winning Broadway musical. In Washington Heights, N.Y., the scent of warm coffee hangs in the air just outside of the 181st St. subway stop, where a kaleidoscope of dreams rallies a vibrant and tight-knit community. At the intersection of it all is a likable and magnetic bodega owner who hopes, imagines and sings about a better life. Movie theater snacks will be provided!

Featured Speaker Biographies

Talila A. Lewis

Talila A. Lewis (TL) is an abolitionist community lawyer, educator, and organizer whose work reveals and addresses the inextricable links between ableism, racism, classism, and all forms of systemic oppression and structural inequity. Recognized as a 2015 White House Champion of Change and one of Pacific Standard Magazine's Top 30 Thinkers Under 30, Lewis engineers innovative and intersectional social justice efforts that address grave interconnected injustices within education, medical, and legal systems that have gone unaddressed for generations. Lewis's advocacy primarily focuses on harm and violence reduction and interruption, advocacy with people affected by incarceration/institutionalization, and abolition of all forms of incarceration/institutionalization.

Dr. Mona Hanna-Attisha

Mona Hanna-Attisha, MD, MPH, FAAP, is founder and director of the Michigan State University and Hurley Children's Hospital Pediatric Public Health Initiative, an innovative and model public health program in Flint, Michigan. A pediatrician, scientist, activist, and author, Dr. Hanna-Attisha has testified four times before the United States Congress and was awarded the Freedom of Expression Courage Award by PEN America. She was named one of Time magazine's 100 Most Influential People in the World and recognized as one of USA Today's Women of the Century for her role in uncovering the Flint water crisis and leading recovery efforts, and most recently, received the 2020 CDC Foundation's Fries Prize for Improving Health.

Martin Schoeller

Martin Schoeller is one of the world's preeminent contemporary portrait photographers. He is most known for his extreme-close up portraits, a series in which familiar faces are treated with the same scrutiny as the unfamous. The stylistic consistency of this work creates a democratic platform for comparison between his subjects, challenging a viewer's existing notions of celebrity, value and honesty. Producing portraits of people he met on the street, his work soon gained recognition for its strong visual impact and since 1998 he has contributed to publications such as *National Geographic*, *The New Yorker*, *Vanity Fair*, *TIME*, *The New York Times Magazine*, *Rolling Stone* and *GQ*, among others. Martin's print and motion work has appeared in many major advertising campaigns ranging from pharmaceuticals, cars and entertainment. Schoeller's portraits are exhibited and collected internationally, appearing in solo exhibitions in Europe and the United

States, as well as part of the permanent collection of the National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC. Martin lives and works in New York City.

Kwame Ajamu

Kwame Ajamu is a death row exoneree from Ohio who served 28 years in prison for a crime he did not commit. He was exonerated after 39 years and has become focused on abolishing the death penalty all over the world and fighting for criminal justice reform. Kwame now lives in Ohio with his wife and serves as Chairman of the Board of Witness to Innocence.

Ray Krone

Ray Krone co-founded Witness to Innocence (WTI) with Sister Helen Prejean in 2003. Before his exoneration in 2002, Ray spent more than 10 years in Arizona prisons, including nearly three years on death row, for a murder he did not commit. He continues to be an active member of WTI, speaking across the nation and urging states to abolish the death penalty.

Derrick Jamison

Derrick Jamison spent 20 years on Ohio's death row for a crime he did not commit. He now works for Witness to Innocence as a Peer Specialist, supporting his fellow exonerated death row survivors as they navigate life after exoneration and continue their fight for abolition. Derrick is devoted to the work of ending the death penalty, not only for the wrongfully incarcerated, but because he believes it is wrong to kill any human being.

Keith Knight

Keith Knight is many things to many people—rapper, social activist, father and educator among them. He's also one of the funniest and most highly regarded cartoonists in America, and the creator of three popular comic strips: *the Knight Life*, *(th)ink*, and *the K Chronicles*. The trippy new Hulu comedy *Woke* is inspired by his life experiences. For nearly two decades, this multi-award-winning artist has brought the funny back to the funny pages with a uniquely personal style that's a cross between Calvin & Hobbes, MAD, and underground comix. Keith Knight is part of a generation of African American artists who were raised on hip-hop, and infuse their work with urgency, edge, humor, satire, politics and race. His art has appeared in various publications worldwide, including the Washington Post, Daily KOS, San Francisco Chronicle, Medium.com, Ebony, ESPN the Magazine, L.A. Weekly, MAD Magazine, and the Funny Times.

Cindy Schwartz

Cindy Schwartz currently serves as the Project Director of the Eleventh Judicial Circuit of Florida Criminal Mental Health Project-Jail Diversion Program. Her career goals have been focused on promoting system transformation, community integration and recovery for individuals who experience serious mental illnesses. Cindy has a master's degree in Rehabilitation Counseling from the State University of New York at Buffalo and a master's degree in Business Administration from Nova Southeastern University. She is a certified Mental Health First Aid Instructor, an Advanced WRAP (Wellness Recovery Action Plan) facilitator, Instructor of How Being Trauma Informed Improves Criminal Justice Responses, Certified Court Manager, Consultant for the SAMHSA SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access, and Recovery (SOAR) Technical Assistance (SOAR TA) Center and consultant for the SAMHSA GAINS Center. Cindy is also actively involved in her community and serves on a variety of professional organizations, boards and committees.

Justin Volpe

Justin Volpe works for Miami-Dade County's 11th Judicial Criminal Mental Health Project, Jail Diversion Program through Community Health of South Florida as a Certified Recovery Peer Specialist. The program's mission is to divert people with mental health diagnoses that have low level felony and misdemeanor charges out of jail and get them treatment in the community. They link them to treatment and provide recommendations based on evidence-based assessment tools and experience in the field. Jail Diversion is a team of social workers and peer specialists that provide support through the length of the client's court case so that they can successfully complete their program. Justin's role as a peer is to provide support for these clients involved with court and to build relationships with providers in the community. This support includes a variety of approaches that promote recovery for all the people he serves, but most of all acting as a role model to let people know they too can recover. Justin's goal at any job is to improve the lives of people around him while maintaining his own health and wellness. He is a firm believer in holistic approach toward treatment as well as addressing trauma. There is no "One size fits all" when it comes to recovery. Through his experience in the field, Justin is an excellent speaker, trainer, and consultant. Justin has travelled nationally sharing his message of inspiration and hope to organizations since 2011.

Li Wei Yang

Li Wei Yang has curated The Huntington's Pacific Rim collections since 2015. Prior to that, he was an assistant curator of Western American history and institutional archivist and a project archivist at the Library. Yang completed the M.Sc. in history at the University of Edinburgh and the M.L.I.S. at San José State University. His research interests include Asian American history, migration, and East Asian rare books. In 2015, Yang curated The Huntington Library's first exhibition on Chinese American history, Y.C. Hong: Advocate for Chinese-American Inclusion.

Melissa Bowler

Melissa Bowler has traveled across the country with her workshop "Connecting Through Comedy", a tutorial designed to train professionals in teamwork, open communication, and creative problem solving. "Connecting Through Comedy" won the 2014 Pi Sigma Epsilon Best Practices in Teaching Award. It was the subject of a research project focusing on empathy and stress management in Rhode Island and written about in various medical publications. By combining a passion for comedy with her professional experience in communication skills training, Melissa has reached over 5,000 learners through various institutions, companies, and conferences including Bryant University, Tufts University, and AT&T. Melissa also works as a simulation actor, using improv in role-play simulations with various medical students and professionals. She has worked closely with Women & Infants Hospital, Rhode Island Hospital, Brown University and Rhode Island College in Providence teaching empathy, interpersonal skills, and stress management and performs regularly with Providence Improv Guild.

Dr. Amer Ahmed

Dr. Amer F. Ahmed is an organizational strategist who helps institutions and leaders address diversity and inclusion, equity, race, and intercultural development through consulting, coaching, group facilitation, and keynote speeches. A frequently requested speaker nationwide, Dr. Ahmed's approach is grounded in a commitment to inclusive community and excellence. He brings his identity as the son of Indian Muslim immigrants and extensive years as an intercultural and diversity consultant as the sources of a pivotal understanding of the depth of equity and inclusion work. Throughout his career, Dr. Ahmed has worked with large organizations, higher education institutions, nonprofit agencies, schools, and community groups to create understanding and change among key constituents and institutional leaders.

Dr. Ahmed is the Founder and CEO of AFA Diversity Consulting, LLC, a consulting practice dedicated to enhancing the development of organizations through efforts around leadership, professional development, assessment, and strategic change. In addition to his consulting work, Dr. Ahmed currently serves as Vice Provost for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and Faculty in the Higher Education and Student Affairs Administration program in the College of Education and Social Services at University of Vermont.

Robyn Ochs

Robyn Ochs is an educator, speaker, grassroots activist, and editor of *Bi Women Quarterly* and two anthologies: the 42-country collection *Getting Bi: Voices of Bisexuals Around the World* and *RECOGNIZE: The Voices of Bisexual Men*. Her writings have been published in numerous bi, women's studies, multicultural, and LGBTQ+ anthologies, and she has taught courses on LGBTQ+ history & politics in the United States and Canada, the politics of sexual orientation, & the experiences of those who transgress the binary categories of gay/straight, masculine/feminine, black/white and/or male/female. Robyn is deeply committed to intersectional and sustainable activism, to working with others to build coalitions across identities and across social movements, to supporting emerging leaders, and to learning and growing. An activist for 50 years (so far), she is in it for the long haul.

Land Acknowledgement

The land on which we gather is the original homeland of the Nipmuc and Narragansett Indian Nations. Their presence and their stories of creation continue to exist and persist. The Bryant University land acknowledgment recognizes the distinct linguistic, cultural, and historical relationships that exist between Indigenous Peoples and their ancestral homelands that continue despite colonization. We acknowledge the painful history of genocide and removal from this territory, and we honor and respect the many diverse Indigenous people still connected to this land. In addition, this land acknowledgment is part of Bryant University's efforts to enact social justice and inclusive practice and we hope to encourage all of you to be cognizant of the ancestral homelands of Indigenous Peoples' land that we occupy in our daily lives.

Committee Members

A special thank you to members of the Day of Understanding Planning Committee:

Constanza Bartholomae, Nicole Beauregard, Carolina Bogaert, Kelly Boutin, Stefanie Boyer, Amanda Caron, Melanie Cluley, Erica Lebrun, Cindi Lewis, Kellie Mackisey, Connor Mathis, Ryan Marnane, Kevin K. Martins, Robin Richardson, Amy Steere, Meaghan Trayner, and Robin Warde.