



## **Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging**

You will note from my cover letter and CV that I have always approached student learning as an inclusive practice. Within the collaborative art form of theatre, many people, perspectives, and personalities join as a team to bring dramatic literature to life.

I appreciate the fundamental need to recognize and provide a space to observe the voices of all populations. As a longtime member (and former board member) of the MSU Gay and Lesbian Faculty and Staff Association, I have created opportunities for underrepresented populations to assemble, share, and influence. For example, as the Chairperson of the Department of Theatre, I connected with a variety of student populations to form the first Student Advisory Board for Diversity and Inclusion (advisory to the chairperson) who support and promote the ideals established by the Michigan State University Office of Institutional Diversity and Inclusion (IDI) and firmly believe our differences are assets. In addition to chairing the MSU College of Arts & Letters' Inclusive Practices Committee, I have received eight different IDI Creating Inclusive Excellence grants with colleagues from across MSU to support various multidisciplinary activities ranging from employing the performing arts for language acquisition to developing sensory-friendly performances for neurodiverse audiences. To strengthen diverse voices, we must first honor and encourage the participation of all voices.

My dedication to advancing inclusive excellence in my undergraduate teaching and creative work is mirrored in my graduate teaching dedicated to preparing well-rounded and practical theatre artists for a career as a professor or administrator at major colleges and universities throughout the United States. I include a DEIB statement in my THR 834: Professional Aspects and ACM 892 Arts, Cultural Management, and Museum Studies Seminar classes to help fulfill their mission. Together, we address how each artist's professional skills, experience, and willingness to engage in creative and scholarly activities can enhance campus diversity and equity efforts and relate to their future as academic professionals.

My experience mentoring diverse students, faculty, and community outreach initiatives can be witnessed throughout my career related to the engagement of student assistants on professional designs and my commitment to outreach and engagement with my THR 492: Senior Seminar students.

In addition to the dozens of different classes that I have taught at MSU (undergraduate and graduate), I have designed nearly 40 MSU productions that engage students from a diverse community of majors and interests to embrace the Department of Theatre's mission to promote drama and theatre as civilizing agents within society. In 2015, this commitment to inclusion and diversity was recognized with an Excellence in Diversity Team Award from the MSU IDI for our production of *60/50 Theatre Project* in connection with Project 60/50 at MSU. In 2021, the Michigan Educational Theatre Association recognized my dedication to inclusive excellence in the arts with the Standing Ovation Award in honor of those who create positive and lasting change by leading with optimism and light, giving unconditionally of themselves, and forever changing each of us.

I continue to promote and advance inclusive excellence as a collaborative endeavor throughout my career. My experiential learning expertise has been an asset to preparing students to be engaged citizen leaders within their chosen careers. My experience in creating curriculum and educational opportunities across departments, colleges, the university, and peer educational and professional institutions has been a resource for others to develop diverse and inclusive practices and activities dedicated to enhancing the undergraduate experience. My ability to connect students, alums, faculty and staff, national/international scholars/artists, and donors has also been a hallmark of my academic career. As an educator, I am dedicated to enriching the undergraduate experience through strategic partnerships and continuously helping others advance inclusive excellence.