



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY-SAN ANTONIO

President's Commission on Equity
and Inclusive Excellence



ANNUAL REPORT

2020-2021

ON A MISSION TO ADVANCE **EQUITY** AND **INCLUSION**

PRESIDENT CYNTHIA TENIENTE-MATSON AT TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY-SAN ANTONIO ESTABLISHED THE PRESIDENT'S COMMISSION ON EQUITY (PCOE) IN 2017 TO PROVIDE A CAMPUS-WIDE REPRESENTATIVE BODY THAT FACILITATES AND ADVISES ON MATTERS RELATIVE TO INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE.



The PCOE has become a safe space for all voices to reject bigotry, racism, sexism, and violent forms of expression. The PCOE further strives to create brave spaces within campus life. Within these spaces, individuals contextualize information from different perspectives while maintaining the humility and mutual respect of meeting people where they are. A&M-San Antonio embraces "diversity within diversity," infusing our campus culture and our culturally responsive education, a key component leading to successful student outcomes.

Beginning in 2019, the University community experienced an unprecedented global pandemic that disproportionately affected students, faculty, and the region's communities of color. PCOE members prioritized equity-mindedness, with a clear focus on how the pandemic was impacting the A&M-San Antonio community in relation to the digital divide, cultural knowledge and understandings, and building visible signs of inclusion.

In the summer of 2021, the PCOE officially became the President's Commission on Equity and Inclusive Excellence or, PCOE².

FROM THE PCOE² STATEMENT ON EQUITY

Our path to equity-mindedness contemplates digital equity and minimizing, if not eliminating, the digital divide. This is especially important for groups whose access to success has been, and continues to be, limited. Through these learning opportunities, we can bridge the historical educational gap and reduce the differences in student success, graduation rates, and inequities in the broader University community.

A&M-San Antonio values the rich diversity and heritage of the community it serves. To support this work, the PCOE² is charged to build "a culture of excellence that values equity and inclusion." Issues surrounding equity and equity-mindedness have evolved. Whether it be through mindful programming or purpose-driven workshops, **WE ARE ON A MISSION!**

BY THE NUMBERS



PCOE² EVENTS

- Four hybrid events
- 84 attendees



SPONSORSHIP AWARDS

- Three funded events
- \$6450 AWARDED**
- 520+ attendees



EQUITY-MINDED ENDORSED EVENTS

- Nine endorsed events
- 414+ attendees



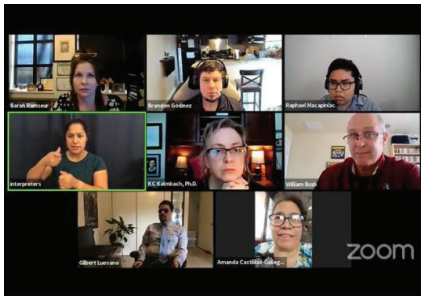
ATTENDEES AT ALL EQUITY-MINDED EVENTS

- Equity-minded events were attended by
- 1,000+ attendees

PCOE² EVENTS

This Annual Report reflects the activities for the 2020-2021 academic year and includes events hosted by the Commission as well as sponsorships and endorsements for equity and inclusive excellence related events.

The PCOE² held four events for the A&M-San Antonio community:

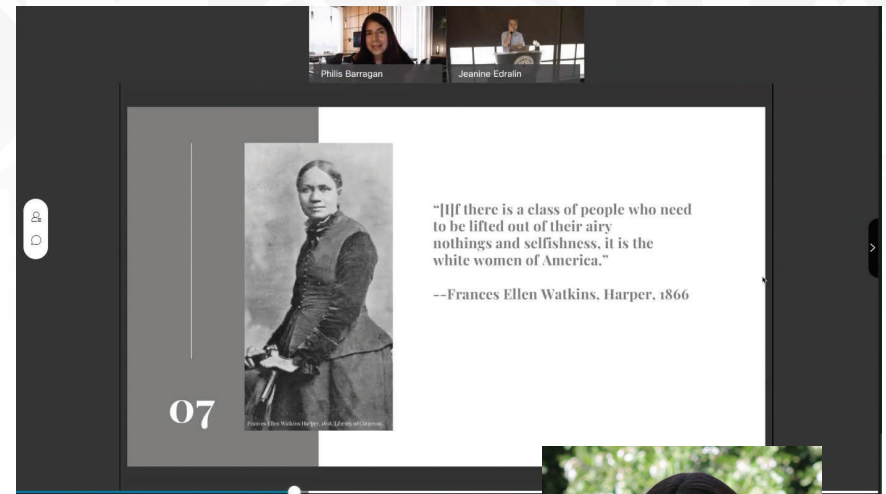
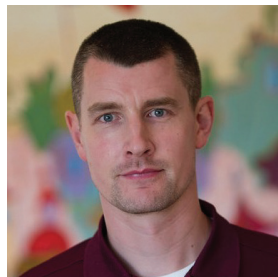


Accessibility and Equity Experiences during a Global Pandemic:

In the midst of a global pandemic, the university quickly adjusted everyday operations. These changes highlighted the inequities faced by individuals within our community.

Equity, Engagements, and Elections:

This event featured a talk on the importance of political engagement and how this engagement influences elections and equity. Students had the opportunity to ask questions during a Q&A following the presentation.



Gender, Race, and Class in the Women’s Suffrage Movement:

“The suffrage movement is always thought of in terms whiteness and middle class values... and that’s because that’s the way it has always been presented.” Dr. Barragán Goetz re-examined the women’s suffrage movement calling attention to points where race and class influenced the discourse, bringing us a new-found understanding of our history.



Conversation Series:

For individuals who find it difficult to talk about topics related to politics and diversity with people who disagree with them, this facilitated conversation helped to dismantle the potentially contentious topic of politics and diversity into manageable frameworks in order to have open and respectful conversations.



PCOE² SPONSORSHIP AWARDS

Each semester the PCOE² makes sponsorship funding available of up to \$2,500 for academic activities or co-curricular events that contribute to the equity-mindedness of the A&M-SA campus and the broader community. The Commission also offers a special one-time event funding of \$500 for expedited application process. In 2020-2021 there were three recipients of sponsorship awards. The awardees included:

Rainbow P.A.W.S Events (Eli McCullen and Rainbow P.A.W.S - \$1450):

- "Transgender Awareness Week,"
- "Transgender Day of Remembrance,"
- "Safe Space Training Workshops," and the
- "Fall 2020 Safe Space Mixer"

A Research Project: Life during COVID: A Survey of Texas A&M University - San Antonio Students Experiencing the Global Pandemic (Drs. Vicky Elias, Shannon Shen, and Sukho Lee - \$2500)

The report compared information on emotional states, food security, diet and exercise. About of the participants was food insecure (27%), including respondents in households with children (12%). Barriers related to seeking food assistance during the pandemic were a desire for students to solve the problem on their own (50%), a concern of being seen as weak or lazy (32%), or feeling embarrassed to ask for food assistance (26%). About 10% of students sampled were recently laid off or furloughed due to Covid-19, and more than a quarter of the sample personally knew someone who had passed away from Covid-19.

Unconscious Bias in the Workplace (Dr. Debra Feakes- \$2,500) Explored how implicit attitudes and socializations impact our decisions and the interactions we have with one another, which led to an understanding of unconscious bias and recognition how bias manifests at the workplace. A second session focusing on recognizing and responding to microaggressions was organized.



PCOE² ENDORSEMENT OF CULTURAL EVENTS

Nine events were endorsed by the PCOE². The endorsements build awareness of equity-minded events held on campus by various constituencies:

- **Real Talk:** Where our stories are shared and our perspectives are challenged – Patty Mendoza, The Cisneros Institute.
- **The Impact of Systemic Racism on Students of Color:** Leveraging Skills to Best Support our Students – Mary Buzzetta, Student Counseling Center
- **The Human Library:** Aida Almanza, University Library
- **Asian American Identity, Mobility, and Assimilation in U.S. Society:** Dr. Claire Nolasco, College of Arts and Sciences
- **Recognizing and Responding to Micro Aggressions:** Dr. Debra Feakes, College of Arts and Sciences
- **'Women Make Policy, Not Coffee':** The Fight for Women's Political Representation – Dr. Phillis Barragán-Goetz, College of Arts and Sciences
- **Mental Illness & the Workplace:** Navigating the Mental Health Epidemic – Dr. Adrian Guardia, College of Business
- **Patriotic Women in Texas:** Jeanine Edralin, University Library
- **The Impact of Systemic Racism on Students of Color:** Student Counseling Center



VISIBLE SIGNS OF INCLUSION

In 2020–21, the Cultural Understandings and Knowledges committee appointed a committee member to be part of the Campus Arts and Grounds Aesthetics Committee. Two visible signs of inclusion were planned and completed:

- Art of Four Gallery – artwork by African American artists – located in the Science and Technology Building
- Rainbow Sidewalk – located between parking lots 2 and 3



PRESIDENT'S COMMISSION ON EQUITY MEMBERSHIP 2020-2021

Office of the President:

Dr. Cynthia Teniente-Matson

College of Arts & Sciences:

Dr. Blake Erickson

Dr. Lizbett Tinoco

College of Business:

Dr. Gilbert Barrera

Dr. Amy Lewis (Vice-chair)

College of Education &

Human Development:

Dr. Tamara Hinojosa

Faculty Senate:

Dr. James Finley

Office of Academic Affairs:

Tim Gritten (Chair)

Tasha Martinez, Diversity

Resident Librarian

Sha Johnson

Division of Student Affairs:

Cristina Dominguez

Julie Eddards

Dr. Mari Fuentes-Martin

Human Resources:

Martha Gonzalez, ex officio

Title IX:

Dr. Joni Baker

Enrollment Management:

Vanessa Quiroga

Student Government Association:

Alyssa Atkinson, President

Campus Activities Board:

Valeria Rodriguez

CONTINUING AND FUTURE INITIATIVES IN 2021-2022

The PCOE² is dedicated to continuing to build equity and equity-mindedness on the A&M-San Antonio campus. To this end, the following initiatives will continue for 2021-22:

- Digital Equity
- Sponsorship Awards
- Visible Signs of Inclusion



THE OFFICE OF EQUITY AND INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE

In 2021 the President's Office of Equity and Inclusive Excellence was established thanks to the efforts of the PCOE² and the strategic planning. The vision for the Office of Equity and Inclusive Excellence is to provide institutional and educational resources to create a just and equitable environment for the Texas A&M-San Antonio community. The Office is currently staffed by:



Dr. Elizabeth Murakami, co-chair (2021-2022), Special Assistant to the President for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

In the Office of Equity and Inclusive Excellence, Dr. Murakami focuses on shared equity leadership as a model to advance PCOE²'s vision. She serves as a key adviser to the President's Cabinet to inform the University's continued commitment to living the core values of an equity-minded campus where each member is accepted and valued.



Dr. Tamara Hinojosa, co-chair (2021-2022), Faculty Fellow for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Dr. Hinojosa is an Associate Professor in the Department of Counseling, Health, and Kinesiology and the first Faculty Fellow for DEI in Texas A&M - San Antonio's history.



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