

SEPTEMBER 2021

# TWELVE-MONTH PROGRESS REPORT

It has been a year since Regis College launched its **Institutional Action Plan to Address Systemic Racism**, a community-wide effort to accomplish the goals set forth in the **President's Commitment to Do Better** and serve as the framework for a longer-term Strategic Plan for Inclusive Excellence.

We continue to make progress on the goals we set out for ourselves. This report details how far we've come. As we welcome new students into our community, we know that we still have a lot of work to do for true racial equity. However, we have a stronger foundation upon which we can expand our work to recognize and dismantle systemic racism in our policies and practices.

**PREPARED AND PRESENTED BY**

AUDREY GRACE, VICE PRESIDENT FOR INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE AND CHIEF DIVERSITY OFFICER



**Regis College**

Center for Inclusive Excellence

---

# A LETTER FROM JOE-ANN FERGUS

## **CHAIR OF THE INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE COMMITTEE OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

I am proud to serve as the inaugural chair of the Inclusive Excellence Committee of the Board of Trustees. As a member of the Regis community, a member of the Board of Trustees, a member of the President's Inclusive Excellence Council, I have had the opportunity to meet with students, learn about their current experiences, and hear about what they want Regis to become. The Institutional Action Plan to Address Racism captures much of what our students have been asking of our institution, and has the full support of the board of trustees.

The Inclusive Excellence Committee is responsible for developing policies, guidelines and short- and long-term priorities and aspirations for inclusive excellence that is reflective of Regis College's mission and strategic plan. The Committee is also responsible for ensuring the trustees have a shared understanding of inclusive excellence. We work to identify and implement diversity, equity, and inclusion learning opportunities for all trustees and other community members, incorporate the voices and experiences of students into the work of the trustees, and review the university's policies and practices to ensure we are living up to our mission and the legacy of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Boston.

We understand that racial justice and embedding inclusive excellence in all that we do is an ongoing endeavor. The Inclusive Excellence Committee will work to ensure that the board is equipped to lead Regis into the future in a more racially just way.

---

# SIGNIFICANT ACHIEVEMENTS

We have made significant progress over the past year and since the last progress report published six months ago. For example:

- We hosted a well-attended **monthly lunch & learn series for faculty and staff** centered around diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- **82% of our community has completed an online diversity webinar**, which is also part of onboarding for new faculty and staff.
- We revised our **hiring process guide** to build in frameworks for inclusive searches.
- Applications to join our Alumni Council increased and **50%** of this year's applicants were **Graduates of the Last Decade (GOLD)**.

While we have made progress on several of our goals, many of our efforts were hindered by the lack of student connection over the past year. Many of our goals related to student voice and experience have been delayed because it was difficult to intentionally connect with students while they were mostly remote and experiencing the effects of the pandemic. We are looking forward to this fall and reengaging our students in this work.

## NEXT STEPS

This year, we are embarking on our **institutional strategic planning process**. Over the summer, we identified and agreed upon three strategic priorities that will inform our strategic plan: equity, innovation & investment, and empowerment. As part of the institutional strategic planning process, we will administer a campus climate survey and several targeted focus groups and discussions which will also inform the work of the Inclusive Excellence Council to develop a longer-term strategic plan for inclusive excellence.

---

## GOAL #1 EXPANDED AND REQUIRED LEARNING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

### TWELVE MONTH OUTCOMES

Over the last six months since our last update, we have continued to expand our learning and professional development opportunities for our community under the guidance of Audrey Grace, Vice President for Inclusive Excellence and Chief Diversity Officer:

- **Online diversity webinar** successfully launched to all faculty and staff. The completion rate as of this report is:
  - **100%** of Administrative Council and President's Cabinet
  - **85%** of Full and Half-Time Faculty
  - **44%** of Adjunct Faculty\*
  - **100%** of Staff Supervisors
  - **84%** of Staff\*
- The same online diversity webinar was sent to the Board of Trustees. The completion rate as of this report is **79%**.
- We held a **monthly DE&I lunch & learn series** in Spring 2021. The topics were:
  - The Well is Dry: Issues of Financial Equity
  - Reflections on Kendi's "How to Be an Antiracist"
  - Mentoring Across Difference: Supporting Women and Underrepresented Minorities in Engineering as a White Man
  - Using the Curriculum Rubric (review and brainstorm session)

#### Feedback from the Spring 2021 Lunch & Learn

"I enjoyed the interactive conversations. I found these helpful."

"I like that many different persons, both staff and faculty members--felt free to share their perspectives."

"The opportunity to share knowledge and experiences with my peers and to learn more about DE&I and how I can be more intentional in addressing DE&I in my classroom."

"Excellent conversation among participants."

"Great discussions moving us to important conversations."

\*We have been hiring in all areas and a large group of assignments are due at the end of September. HR will continue to reach out and monitor training progress.

---

## GOAL #1 EXPANDED AND REQUIRED LEARNING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, CONTINUED

### TWELVE MONTH OUTCOMES

- The undergraduate Student Affairs and Enrollment leadership team continued their **racial healing conversations** throughout the year, meeting monthly to discuss racial equity topics.
- We held the racial healing experience with the staff from the Finucane and O'Sullivan Institute for Learning over the summer.
- Twenty-six undergraduate faculty participated in our **Summer Institute on building an equity minded syllabus**, facilitated by diversity, equity, and inclusion expert, Dr. William Lewis. Many participants agreed to facilitate a learning opportunity in the fall to **share what they've learned with others**.

### NEXT STEPS

- Build a **centralized registration and tracking system** for our faculty and staff learning opportunities. While we have been able to track participation in these opportunities, we hope to develop a more streamlined system, which will also help our community be recognized for their efforts towards continued learning and growth.
- Work with Multicultural Student Association, Student Government Association, and Center for Student Engagement to design **learning opportunities for students** - we were unable to implement student leadership training this year, but we hope that this will be part of student leader onboarding moving forward.
- Work with HR to design and implement **retreats for faculty and staff**.
- Continue to work with the **Board of Trustees** and their Inclusive Excellence subcommittee to better engage the trustees in the work on campus.
- Continue to work with the subcommittee volunteers to hold **learning opportunities throughout the year** and offer departmental workshops upon request.

---

## GOAL #2 AFFIRMATIVELY HIRING FOR DIVERSITY

### TWELVE MONTH OUTCOMES

We continue to build inclusive hiring policies and protocols under the leadership of Mary Erina Driscoll, Vice President of Academic Affairs, and Joan D. Sullivan, Associate Vice President of Human Resources, and Audrey Grace.

- Revised our **hiring process guide** to build in frameworks for inclusive searches.
- Designing required **search committee and hiring manager unconscious bias workshops** which we plan to implement over the next year.
- Updating our **demographic data** by encouraging self-identification and reviewing those data to help inform our departmental and school hiring goals.
- STEM is engaged in a **cluster hire** of 4 faculty, with the ads explicitly noting that candidates will be expected to engage with the issues of under-representation in STEM fields and social justice and refers to the Commitment to do Better.

### NEXT STEPS

- Implement **search committee workshops** in collaboration with faculty council.
- **Report hiring and retention by demographic data** for university, school, and program.
- Establish a metric for use of and participation in resources made available to **improve recruitment and retention of diverse faculty and staff**.
- Establish **long-term goals** for diversity and inclusion by program area and measure accordingly.

---

## GOAL #3 REVIEW OF COURSE CONTENT AND OUTCOMES

### TWELVE MONTH OUTCOMES

- **Revised the program annual report of service (PARS)** to include reflection on program progress on DEI and future plans for same.
- **Analyzed websites of each program / major** to determine whether program learning outcomes were listed and whether DEI was reflected there. While all majors and graduate degrees must list program learning outcomes in the catalogue, the outward facing webpages were the focus areas.
- Through Title III grant, nearly 30 faculty were involved in **DEI professional development involving their course syllabi**.
- **Resources for faculty** concerning DEI are being added to the Center for Instructional Innovation (CII) SharePoint site for faculty.
- The joint curriculum and academic policies (CAP) committees have actively discussed **the new course and new program proposal forms** and an updated proposal form and submission cover page, to be reviewed/finalized by CAP in the fall, will include a section on proposed program/course DEI initiatives.
- The joint CAP has also discussed **a possible institutional outcome and a plan for a change** related to this. This may be more difficult as both the institutional learning outcomes met through the majors, and the core curriculum, were created in relation to undergraduate degree programs. Regis does not have a set of universal learning outcomes that apply to all graduate programs; the committees are still discussing what would be the best road to take in this regard.

---

## GOAL #3 REVIEW OF COURSE CONTENT AND OUTCOMES, CONTINUED

### NEXT STEPS

- Continue to work with the Joint CAP on the revisions to revise and finalize the course and program proposal forms.
- A group of faculty will participate in the **Racial and Ethnic Justice Institutes Equity-Minded Teaching and Action Planning** workshop in September led by Bensimon and Associates, from the Center for Urban Education (CUE).
- Continue with ongoing work to:
  - gather and report **data on course and program completion by demographics**,
  - gather and report data on **undergraduate core learning outcome assessment by demographics**,
  - disseminate course and program data as appropriate **so changes can be made** in response to the data, and assessed over time,
  - inventory of current DEI faculty practices,
  - incorporate **CUE syllabi rubric** into CAP and CII processes and faculty development as needed
- Work with respective CAPS to change membership language to **include students on the committees**.



---

## GOAL #4 INCREASE STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN INSTITUTIONAL DECISION-MAKING

### TWELVE MONTH OUTCOMES

Dean of Students, Walt Horner, is working to engage students in the work of ensuring that their voices are a part of our institutional decision-making.

- Completed **catalog of opportunities** for student voice in decision-making.
- Identified 20 existing student involvement / leadership opportunities for students.
- Identified additional opportunities for student involvement in open forum discussions and feedback sessions, including **an anonymous student feedback portal**.
- Publishing the **catalog to Regis website** and other areas, pending final review by SGA.
- Established **draft of evaluation tool and process** to assess existing opportunities and complete assessment in AY 2021/22.

### NEXT STEPS

- Complete **assessment of opportunities** for student voice in decision-making (ongoing and by May 2022).
- **Finalize process to measure equitable and diverse student representation** on committees, elected positions, and other leadership opportunities to ensure presence of underrepresented populations and to assess effectiveness of these positions.
- Create **guidelines and a tool for committees and programs**.
- Create easy-to-understand **metric for tracking progress** on equitable demographic representation in student leadership opportunities.

---

## GOAL #5 DOCUMENT AND MAKE PUBLIC EXPERIENCES OF BLACK STUDENTS AT REGIS

### TWELVE MONTH OUTCOMES

Justyna Szulc-Maziarz, the university Archivist, is also working to reengage students in our efforts to document and make public Black student stories.

- Drafted a Statement of Purpose and A Call for Oral Histories.
- Created a Project-specific Deed of Gift.
- Determined final storage for the collection.
- Discussed with key faculty members how this project can be **incorporated into the curriculum for selective courses.**

### NEXT STEPS

- Create a **list of questions** to be asked during the interviews.
- Create bound transcripts of interviews.
- Determine how to follow up on the stories.
- **Hold a final presentation** of the oral histories.

---

## GOAL #6 UPDATE AND MAKE MORE ACCESSIBLE OUR BIAS RESPONSE PROTOCOLS

### TWELVE MONTH OUTCOMES

Bridget Buoniconti, Associate Dean of Student Affairs and Chief Conduct Officer, has revised our bias reporting system and continues to ensure that the processes are clear:

- Worked on **new language for the bias reporting page** on the website.
- Developed and have begun using a new more **user-friendly bias reporting link**. Through conversations, the language of the bias reporting protocols did not just need to be edited for clarity but needed careful thought and revision. A working group has begun meeting to update the process as a whole.
- Continue to **solicit student feedback** and will be using the RAs an audience for the new reporting link feedback.

### NEXT STEPS

- Gather feedback on these **preliminary changes**, implement all changes on the website, and begin publicity of these changes. RAs will be asked for feedback during RA training.
- Continue to update, change, and hone the **bias response protocols**.

---

## GOAL #7 DIVERSIFY THE ALUMNI COUNCIL AND BUILD ALUMNI AFFINITY GROUP

### TWELVE MONTH OUTCOMES

Under the leadership of Molly Zuccarini, Director of Alumni Relations, the Alumni Council is working to ensure that diversity is an important consideration in their recruitment process:

- Chief Diversity Officer led a session on How to be an Anti-Racist during virtual Reunion Weekend.
- Increased number of Alumni Council applicants (compared to zero in 2020 and 2019). **50% of this year's applicants were GOLD alumni.**
- To ensure a more **fair and equitable evaluation process**, we now use a rubric for evaluating Alumni Council applications, aimed at reducing bias and in group favoritism.

### NEXT STEPS

- Establishing **a mentoring program** for new alumni council members, to connect them with veteran members to help with the transition to the role and the council.
- Improve how we collect and analyze **alumni demographic data**, including alumni council demographic data, continuing to build the GOLD subcommittee, and working to develop alumni affinity groups as participation in the council continues to grow.
- Goal 7 subcommittee and GOLD subcommittee of the Alumni Council to combine and meet bi-monthly.

**All alumni are welcome to join GOLD subcommittee!**



---

## GOAL #8 SUPPORT AND GROW IDENTITY-BASED SPACES FOR STUDENTS

### TWELVE MONTH OUTCOMES

Denise Mashmasarmi, Associate Director of the Center for Inclusive Excellence, is leading the team responsible for benchmarking the design and structure of identity-based spaces at other institutions. Due to the pandemic, student participation in focus groups and overall surveying would have been minimal. Students respond best when you meet them where they are at. The virtual experience has been quite draining, so we wanted to take a step back and better prepare for the fall term.

- **Redecorated the Center for Inclusive Excellence** to create a more welcoming physical space.
- Created **a virtual Thrive Guide** which is a compellation of all of the resources for students.

### NEXT STEPS

- In Fall 2021, we will be joining efforts with the **Campus Climate Survey** group to collaborate in holding focus groups. These focus groups will allow us to collect qualitative data on students overall experience with identity based centers and resources on campus. We will assess students overall sense of belonging, and contributing factors.
- Continue to build out **a SharePoint page**, but also have a larger presence on the forthcoming redesigned student intranet site.



---

# FOUNDERS' DAY 2021



We are excited to be back to engaging all community members in a day of service on **Thursday, September 23rd from 9-3:30 pm.**

We are creating opportunities to engage in service projects both on-campus and off-campus in Boston, Lawrence, and our surrounding communities.

We invite students, faculty, staff, and the Board of Trustees to join us as we celebrate our founders, the Sisters of St. Joseph of Boston, who inspire us and encourage us to “love and serve our dear neighbors without distinction.”

Some of the **service opportunities** include: working at various Catholic Charities sites; assisting at the YMCA of Greater Boston; creating “bags of love” for girls who have been human trafficked; cleaning up various parks and trails in metro west; organizing food and shelves at food banks; sending letters and books to active service personnel; baking goodies to be delivered to area first responders, and much more.

We are delighted that **James Morton**, who serves as the **13th president and CEO of YMCA of Greater Boston** will be our guest speaker in the afternoon. The YMCA of Greater Boston is the largest social services provider in Massachusetts, offering programs and services that nurture the potential of every child and teen, promotes health and well-being, and encourages social responsibility. He also serves on a number of non-profit Boards. Mr. Morton is a graduate of Northeastern University Law School and practiced general law before following his passion of service and social justice. Mr. Morton is of African American and Irish decent and believes his background, life experiences, and commitments drive his work as a servant leader and enable him to forge meaningful collaborative relationships.

---

# MOVING FORWARD

## OVER THE NEXT SIX MONTHS AND BEYOND

- Reestablish connections with current students and alums
- Continue with our progress on the action plan
- Continue to work with the Inclusive Excellence Committee of the Board of Trustees
- Align inclusion and anti-racism efforts with the institution's strategic planning process
- Work with the Inclusive Excellence Council on a strategic plan for inclusive excellence



---

# GET INVOLVED

JOIN ONE OF OUR EXISTING WORKING GROUPS BY CONTACTING THE GOAL LEADER

**AUDREY GRACE**

AUDREY.GRACE  
@REGISCOLLEGE.EDU

LEARNING &  
PROFESSIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT

**MARY ERINA  
DRISCOLL**

MARYERINA.DRISCOLL  
@REGISCOLLEGE.EDU

HIRING & RETENTION

**KATE EDNEY**

KATHRYN.EDNEY  
@REGISCOLLEGE.EDU

COURSE & CURRICULUM  
REVIEW

**WALT HORNER**

WALTER.HORNER  
@REGISCOLLEGE.EDU

STUDENT VOICE IN  
DECISION-MAKING

**JUSTYNA SZULC-  
MAZIARZ**

JUSTYNA.SZULC-MAZIARZ  
@REGISCOLLEGE.EDU

DOCUMENTING STUDENT  
EXPERIENCES

**BRIDGET  
BUONICONTI**

BRIDGET.BUONICONTI  
@REGISCOLLEGE.EDU

BIAS RESPONSE  
PROTOCOLS

**MOLLY  
ZUCCARINI**

MOLLY.ZUCCARINI  
@REGISCOLLEGE.EDU

DIVERSIFY ALUMNI  
COUNCIL

**DENISE  
MASHMASARMI**

DENISE.MASHMASARMI  
@REGISCOLLEGE.EDU

IDENTITY-BASED  
SPACES

**MARY LOU  
JACKSON**

MARYLOU.JACKSON  
@REGISCOLLEGE.EDU

CONTINUING  
FOUNDERS' DAY  
CONVERSATIONS