



Taskforce

Strengthening Diversity in Performing Arts Leadership @ Shenandoah Conservatory and Beyond

CORE VALUES & PRINCIPLES

Our successful progress towards further diversifying our faculty, administration, staff, and visiting artists/scholars (especially in terms of gender and race) certainly fits hand in glove with our commitment to artistic and academic excellence and our University's Strategic Plan, Shenandoah 2025 (including the goal of "creating a world class learning environment"). Even more importantly, our progress towards the above goal is critical to the very integrity of our Conservatory community for at least four reasons:

- 1. it honors (and enables us to strengthen) the diversity in the emerging generation of talented performing artists and scholars;*
- 2. it reinforces and fortifies our character as a welcoming, inclusive, and vibrant center of learning and performance;*
- 3. it engages us with one of the most fundamental and profound challenges facing the performing arts field nationwide; and*
- 4. it strengthens our leadership position within the field of arts training.¹*

MEMBERSHIP for 2016-2017

Membership Makeup: Diverse in gender and race, representing different core areas of the Conservatory, and affirming Conservatory leadership's commitment and investment.

Benjamin DaCosta-Kaufman (Undergraduate Student, Vocal Performance)

Courtney Reilly (Artistic Director of PAL / Mng Director)

Joseph Lovinsky (Faculty, Music Performance)

Karen Walker (Faculty & Assoc Dean / Music Performance)

Hakeem Leonard (Faculty / Academics)

Marjorie Barrow (Doctoral Student, Pedagogy)

Michael Stepniak, Chair (Dean)

Rick Edinger (Faculty / Theatre)

Tiffanie Carson (Faculty / Dance)

¹ Of course strengthening diversity provides multiple additional benefits, including an increase in the very creativity of our work. (See, for example, Katherine Phillips' "How Diversity Makes us Smarter: Being around people who are different from us makes us more creative, more diligent and harder-working", in Scientific American (Oct 1, 2014).)

CHARGE (2016-2017)

Building on our commitment to continually increase the vitality, integrity, profile, creativity, and welcoming quality of our Conservatory community, the Taskforce is charged to (a) **define ways for us to best strengthen the gender and racial diversity of Conservatory faculty and invited guests, and (b) investigate ways for us to engage with educational and industry partners in making a potential difference to the field nationwide.** In support of the above charge, the taskforce will pursue goals such as the below during the 2016-2017 academic year:

- a) develop and refine a set of tactics and strategies by which the Conservatory can successfully pursue the objectives outlined above, and present that proposed strategy for full faculty vote during the Spring semester, and
- b) provide key advice/support to the dean as he works to secure related and needed funding.

To confirm, while it is critical, the work of strengthening the diversity of our student body is more powerfully pursued once progress has been made at the faculty level. Some examples of possible strategy tactics are included below.

Illustrative Only

GOAL 1: Strengthening the presence of a diverse body of scholars/artists for our students

STRATEGY TACTICS MAY INCLUDE:

- 1) Defining and pursuing strategic goals/guidelines within the following frameworks
 - a) PAL Series
 - b) Division and Program Area Masterclasses & Invited Lectures / Lecturers
- 2) Strengthening Faculty Search Protocol/Practice to more robustly include underrepresented populations within that discipline
 - a) Job Advertisement Expectation & Reporting
 - b) Outreach by Search Committee Members or Others & Reporting

GOAL 2: Strengthening the presence of diversity in academia and the mentorship of next generation performing artists nationwide

STRATEGY TACTICS MAY INCLUDE:

- 1) Establishment of a significant and co-sponsored **initiative** (multi-institutional/with partnership from arts companies/organizations). Below are illustrative examples:
 - a) *“The Pipeline Project”*: Two-semester residencies/fellowships within partnering Conservatories/Universities for exceptional emerging MFA dance or theatre artists/scholars and for emerging DMA classical music artists/scholars heralding from underrepresented populations, funded by partnership between select Conservatories/Universities and major arts companies/organizations.
 - b) *“The Arts Leader Project”* (see *The PhD Project*²): Providing fellowships to exceptional emerging classical musical artists from underrepresented populations, for graduate studies in arts management and leadership, funded by partnership between select Conservatories/Universities and major arts companies/organizations for exceptional emerging ABD or recent MFA artists and scholars.

² “The PhD Project was founded [with launching sponsorship from corporations] upon the premise that advancements in workplace diversity could be propelled forward by increasing the diversity of business school faculty. Today, our expansive network of supporters, sponsors and universities helps African-Americans, Hispanic-Americans and Native Americans attain their business PhD and become the business professors who will mentor the next generation of leaders.” <http://www.phdproject.org/>