



BRYANT UNIVERSITY HR CONNECTIONS—ARCHIVE

OUR VISION

THE HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT STRIVES TO BE A STRATEGIC VALUE-ADDED BUSINESS PARTNER THAT FACILITATES POSITIVE CHANGE, HELPS MANAGEMENT BUILD ORGANIZATION CAPABILITY, AND DEVELOPS THE CHARACTER OF SUCCESS THAT CHALLENGES PEOPLE TO ASPIRE TO ACHIEVE THEIR PERSONAL BEST.

ENTHUSIASTIC PRAISE FOR ADVANCED DIVERSITY EDUCATION: FROM LEARNERS TO LEADERS

Advanced Diversity Education: From Learners to Leaders began its pilot program in November and ran through April. Each of the seven interactive sessions, provides an opportunity to have open dialogue on a different diversity education topic. The topics are: International Diversity at Bryant, Dialogue on Race, Religious Diversity, Allies for Equity: Sexual Orientation Issues on Campus, Personal Leadership – Effective Interventions, Gender Equity and Gender Dynamics on a Male Dominated Classroom, and Ability, Access and Allies – Inclusion for the Differently Abled.



Members of the Diversity Council of Champions and the Staff Development Advisory Group were invited to participate in the pilot offerings, with the goal of achieving a Diversity Level I or Level II certification. Those who attended have offered enthusiastic praise for the program. The overarching theme from everyone interviewed was they learned that they were not alone in their passion for diversity issues, and that attending these sessions allowed for strong connections with other University community members whom they otherwise never would have connected with on campus. Many went into these sessions considering themselves very open minded and diverse, and were surprised to find that by delving below the surface of the subject, they still had a lot to learn.

(Left) This Spring twelve (12) Diversity Champions were certified. (As pictured back left to right) Sam Schultz, Jack Trifts, Kristen Biggins, Melanie Cluley, Kim Turcotte, Linda Lulli, George Coronado. (Front left to right) Tracy Morkunas, Erika Paquette, Solachi Fernandes. Not Shown Linda Norton and Phyllis Schumacher.

Kim Turcotte, Director of Central Services, said, “I can’t say enough good things about the program, it has made a difference to me as an employee and as a human being.” She said that attending the sessions “helped me to become more emotionally invested in Bryant. I realized the importance of being involved and I have begun participating in activities related to diversity outside of my normal work day. I am more involved and therefore I have a greater sense of purpose and belonging here at Bryant.”

Sam Schultz, a student who is President of Bryant Pride, an ICC Office Assistant and a member of Omicron Delta Kappa, wrote that after attending these sessions he felt “empowered as a student” and “more confident expressing my opinion on topics related to the sessions I attended.” Sam recommends the courses to everyone at Bryant – staff, faculty, administration or students. He feels that the sessions “enabled me to step back and analyze my own biases and overcome those in order to be a leader on this campus and educate others about diversity.”

George Coronado, Director of Public Safety, was drawn to the classes in order to bring back information to DPS Officers, who are in close and constant contact with all races/ethnicities on campus. He feels that people are “more accepting of different cultures, religions, philosophies, etc., when they are readily brought to the table for discussion.”



He would recommend these sessions to others because it “is important that we recognize the things that make us different and appreciate how those things make us better.”

Kristin Biggins, Assistant Director of Residence Life, attended all of the sessions, and was most excited about the session on Gender. She learned that it is important to understand and be aware of where we learn our gender role stereotypes – family, culture, school, popular media, religions, siblings, and friends. She also learned how generational differences play into gender identity and gender politics at work and in personal relationships. She said “Aside from the connections I have made with the other people who went through the program, it has given me an important insight into the private realities of our students. It has made me look at Bryant with a more critical eye to see where we have room to improve, and has given me some tools to reach out to students to help them feel that they have allies on campus.”

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Solanchi Fernandez, an Academic Advisor, thought the sessions were a learning experience that helped her with her own diverse background. She said that she “thought she knew things – but through these classes she learned there was much more to the subject matter and the classes offered her a chance to grow.” She was particularly happy about the chance to meet and interact with other members of the Bryant community and felt that the group got to know each other at a personal level and bonded as a group. Through her attendance at the session on Religion she has found an opportunity to work with another person to broaden Bryant’s “thinking on Religion and move towards the concept of Spirituality.”



If these impressions have inspired you stay tuned for more details about future Advanced Diversity sessions, some of which will be offered this fall. As you can see from the positive reactions from those who attended the Pilot sessions, these classes are an opportunity to not only make new connections within the Bryant community, but also a chance to learn something about yourself and grow as a member of the community.