

Message from the CODRE Chair

Wow, it is the end of another academic year! It has been a year of ups and downs for many, but with COVID-19 behind us, it has been a year of more ups than downs. It has been busy, I agree, but we have been able to see each other in-person, mostly, even if we were masked. Once we were able to be unmasked, it was good to see each other face-to-face. This year in addition to the annual Presidential Exemplary Multi-Cultural Awards that went to **Cynthia Ganote** for Teaching and **Shirley Wu** for Staff, we have had the pleasure of presenting awards to our Commissioner of the Year, **Maria Tinnell**, and our School's Diversity Leaders **Jason Deakings**, **Abbas Ratanni**, and **Brianna Williams**. Congratulations to our research award winners as well. We look forward to seeing your presentations during the year. I want to also recognize CODRE Commissioners who will be leaving us at the end of this academic year as they roll of CODRE after serving the Commission for 3-6 years. Thank you so much for all you did for CODRE this year and what you will continue to do, to further the University's Anti-Racism Agenda where you are. Whether you are member of CODRE or not, your voice at the table is critical. Continue to use it! Thank you to our active Commissioners for your dedication to CODRE over the last year. I look forward to the next year as we help to steer this "ship" to make our campus one of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. There is much for us to do! Have a wonderful and well-deserved break this summer. Go CARDS! Go CODRE!



Muriel Harris,
Chair CODRE

Recognizing our Graduating Students

Tradition has it, that the Academy recognizes its students who have successfully completed the requirements for their degree, with pump and circumstance! This year we get to recognize our students again, and I want to take this opportunity to say CONGRATULATIONS, to all students, but a special shout-out to our Students of Color, who, in addition to the challenges of the Academy, have weathered the storms surrounding the death of Breanna Taylor among others, and the calls for racial justice in 2020. Despite it all, you HAVE succeeded! You have again shown the world that you are hardworking, you are resilient, and you WILL be successful. **Tamekka Cornelius**, a CODRE Commissioner and a colleague in the Graduate School said this of graduating PhD students, *"we know that completing a doctorate is no small feat! The entire process is an experience like no other. A terminal degree, the highest level of scholarship that can be achieved in academia, comes with as many challenges as it does rewards."* Indeed, it does, so to our students who will from Saturday May 14th, 2022, be able to wear the title of Doctor! Congratulations! YOU MAKE US PROUD!

DIVERSITY PROGRAMS

Greetings and Salutations, we used our entire budget (and then some) sponsoring over 10 programs this past year. This month we actually had to close the request for programming.

We had 10 applications for Undergraduate and Graduate Research Funding, and we selected the following recipients:

- **Jada Harris** "Youth and Youth Workers of Color Responses to Racial Inequities and COVID-19"
- **Kriss-Ann Gayle** "Race and Gender: Children's Perception of Warmth and Competence"
- **Idoia Meaza Isusi** "Investigating the Effects of Particulate Hexavalent Chromium Binding to Centrosome-associated Protein E"

We look forward to our scholars presenting their work and research at a future CODRE meeting.

This is, unfortunately, my last entry as the Diversity Programming Co-Chair. I accepted a position at University of Kentucky and May 2 was my last day of University of Louisville.

CODRE introduced the University of Louisville (I was appointed a commissioner within my first month of employment) and discover new friends and some much-needed safe places to vent on campus. I have worked at a variety of universities and CODRE, unfortunately, is an anomaly at most institutions of higher education.

I hope all of us who have served on CODRE will work to create entities at our future schools.

Peace and Love until we meet again

J'Lissabeth Faughn



THE COMMISSION ON DIVERSITY AND RACIAL EQUALITY (CODRE) WAS ESTABLISHED IN 1998 BY UNIVERSITY OF LOUISVILLE PRESIDENT JOHN SHUMAKER, TO PROMOTE A CAMPUS CULTURE OF INCLUSION AND ENGAGEMENT.

The Commission's role in diversity-related activities includes:

- To serve as the president's policy advisor on issues of diversity at the University of Louisville.
- To make recommendations to the president for the development or revision of initiatives to make the university a more inclusive community, and to report the progress of these initiatives.
- To develop strategic and tactical actions in cooperation with the Commission on the Status of Women (COSW) to improve the learning and working environments at the University of Louisville.
- To support crucial dialog and efforts to promote cultural values and diverse perspectives that characterize the United States that must be reflected in our university.
- To serve as a resource to members of the president's staff, executive cabinet, and individual units that seek assistance and advice with diversity and inclusion initiatives.
- To recognize and support staff and faculty who have made outstanding contributions in advancing diversity.
- To develop and support programming to augment student learning and research.

PRESIDENT'S CHARGE

Developed by the Executive Committee of the Commission on Diversity and Racial Equality | April 4, 2017



Time to Move Out of My Old Kentucky Home

Submitted by **Dewey M. Clayton, Ph.D.** Professor of Political Science, UofL

In 2020, in an email to Louisville mayor Greg Fischer, I applauded Louisville *Courier-Journal* columnist Joseph Gerth's article titled "'My Old Kentucky Home' should have been COVID-19's next victim." To many whites, the song represents tradition and heritage. However, to African Americans, the song represents an act of racism that harkens back to and glorifies the pre-Civil War South when enslaving human beings was legal. It is time to retire the glorification of this racist song. I am reminded of one of Dr. Martin L. King's sayings: "It is always the right time to do the right thing."

And now, is the time to do away with another relic that romanticizes the antebellum South, where African Americans were falsely depicted as happy to be enslaved and eager to serve their master. This song should no longer be played at college football and basketball games, nor at the Kentucky Derby – it is controversial, and it is divisive. At a time when Americans are reaching for racial reconciliation, it is time for the Commonwealth of Kentucky to do the right thing and move out of "My Old Kentucky Home."

Recently, the *Washington Post* newspaper published a review by Rebecca Bell Howell of a new book titled "My Old Kentucky Home: the Astonishing Life and Reckoning of an Iconic American Song" written by Emily Bingham. Bingham is a historian and member of the influential Bingham family who owned and published the state's largest newspaper for almost 70 years, the *Louisville Courier-Journal*. According to Howell, Bingham notes that Stephen Foster, who wrote the song, came from a family of Confederate defenders and that people who enjoy the song today, including crowds at the Kentucky Derby, are unaware that Foster first wrote the song in "baffooning dialect" and this earlier version was called "Poor Uncle Tom, Good Night." Bingham argues the song depicts a singing enslaved person whose song assured listeners that the plantation was happy and a place where Black people belonged.

In 2020, in response to the death of Breonna Taylor by Louisville police officers earlier in the year, Black Lives Matter activists asked Churchill Downs not to use the song on Derby Day, in honor of Taylor – the request was denied. However, the stadium presented the song by bugle, with a moment of silence afterward. This year the University of Louisville band and choir will play and sing the song. According to Howell, a spokesperson for Churchill Downs responding to a question about the organizations' plans for the song at this year's Derby, referenced a quote by Frederick Douglass, in which he says the song "awakened the sympathies for the slave, in which anti-slavery principles take root, grow, and flourish." Howell asserts the quote does not acknowledge that Douglass placed this song next to other sad minstrel songs he despised where whites performed in blackface portraying Blacks as simple-minded and childish creatures.

Churchill Downs is a business and has the right to continue playing "My Old Kentucky Home" each year at the Derby. However, the University of Louisville is a public university supported by taxpayer dollars of the state. Many of its tax paying citizens, particularly African Americans, are offended by this song which is a relic of the past and the University of Louisville, in its goal to be a premier, anti-racist metropolitan research institution, should no longer participate in a racist song that glorifies a racist past.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

2022 ExxonMobil LOFT Fellowship Program

Application deadline May 15, 2022, @11:59 p.m EDT.

ExxonMobil LOFT Fellowship

ExxonMobil Corporation, the largest publicly traded international energy company, has partnered with the Hispanic Heritage Foundation (HHF) to create fellowship opportunities in the STEM fields (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) **for Hispanic college students**. Through HHF's Latinos On Fast Track (LOFT) program, ExxonMobil seeks to nurture motivated college students across the country, with a passion for Engineering and Science.

Selected students will be exposed to a top-quality company by participating in this signature mentoring program. Each student will be paired up with an ExxonMobil professional to learn how their knowledge and skills are applied in a corporate setting.

Fellowship Components

The Fellowship consists of five 1-hour meetings with a mentor (virtual or in person), participation in the Harvard-certified ExxonMobil mentee program (on-line), an exclusive curriculum to introduce Fellows to ExxonMobil and career opportunities, and a **\$1,000 educational grant**. In addition, there exists the possibility to interview for ExxonMobil positions (internships/full-time) upon successful completion of the Fellowship.

Fellowship Requirements

This opportunity is highly competitive and **open to rising sophomores, juniors, Seniors, and Graduate Students attending a 4-year college or university**.

Fellowship applicants with the following majors will be given priority:

- Civil Engineering
- Chemical Engineering
- Computer Engineering
- Electrical Engineering
- Geoscience
- Material Science and Engineering
- Mechanical Engineering

Applicants with these majors will be considered also: Chemistry, Computer Science Environmental Engineering, Industrial Engineering, Mathematics, Petroleum Engineering, and Physics.

Other Requirements:

- Must plan to pursue a career in the fields/majors listed above
- Have a GPA of 3.5 or higher
- Be a U.S. citizen or legal permanent resident of the United States with a valid Social Security Number at the time of application. All legal permanent residents must submit a copy of their valid permanent resident card or passport stamped I-551 (not expired).

Apply Here For Fellowship Application

For questions, please contact Julian@hispanicheritage.org. Please use "ExxonMobil LOFT Fellowship" in the subject line.

This opportunity available through the LOFT program are for Hispanic students. Others interested should contact the company's website directly.

COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING



Campus-Wide Listening Session

The Spring listening sessions have been completed, with the last sessions topic **“Student Voices; Is Anyone Listening?”**, and **“Paying for School; Obstacles, Barriers and Resources”**. This is what we heard; International students want to be treated like any other student on campus. Some ideas that came out of the conversation were a need for a better on boarding experience for international students; having

faculty and staff to become more knowledgeable about where to send students for certain needs or problems and perhaps having a learning cafe on how best to help students when approached. Housing seems to be one of the biggest hurdles. With over sixty percent of students in the MSBA programs being international students, it might be a great idea to have a dorm for international students on campus. The other topic of discussion on paying for school brought up these recommendation; a centralized location for scholarships and financial resources that includes resources for graduate and international students. To read more, the full thematic report is available on the [CODRE webpage](#).

Listening sessions will resume in the fall starting back up in September so if you have a topic you would like considered please send to CODRE@louisville.edu.

NEW COMMISSIONER NOMINATIONS

CODRE is soliciting nominations of both faculty and staff for appointment consideration to the commission. Visit the CODRE website for detailed information about what who the commission is. Term begins July 1, 2022. To self-nominate, individuals should complete [the new CODRE interest form](#) **before May 20**. For more information, email Maria Tinnell.

EX-OFFICIO REPORTS

Note from Heather Fox, Chair COSW

The Board of Trustees unanimously voted on April 21 to remove the 12-month waiting period for parental leave, for both faculty and staff, effective immediately. Thank you.

RECOGNITION

Commissioner **Dr. Jason Jagers** was invited to visit and collaborate with a world-renowned research group in the world on exercise with HIV patients . The interdisciplinary team is led by Dr. Paulo Silva Dantas, who has been conducting clinical exercise research with HIV patients for the past 10 years at the Federal University of Rio Grande do Norte located in the city of Natal in Brazil. Dr. Jagers will spend part of his sabbatical year in Brazil. Congratulations Dr. Jagers!

Congratulations to commissioner **Dr. Daniela Terson de Paleville** who won the 2022 TILL Teaching Innovation Award for her active learning course activities centered around her flipped classroom and team-based assignments with immediate feedback. Your commitment to student engagement and learning deserves to be recognized.

DIVERSITY IN THE MEDIA

A University Rethinks DEI Work - Inside Higher ED



“Too often the offices themselves are not adequately resourced to provide a broad range of change that an institution wants or expects,”

Taking a Stand -Inside Higher ED

I want to share this article about grad assistants, postdocs, and other students protesting for better pay and benefits.

In solidarity,
Connie

The Washington Post

My Old Kentucky Home by Emily Bingham
book review - The Washington Post

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