

Goldey-Beacom College Finds its Place in the Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Conversation

BY JANINE G. SORBELLO

» Many people will agree that it takes a few uncomfortable conversations to open a dialogue about diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) as well as centuries-long injustices suffered because of race, gender, sexual orientation and much more. However, I believe this is exactly what civil rights leader and Georgia's U.S. House of Representative member John Lewis meant when he referred to "getting into good trouble."

As business, government, nonprofit and education leaders work to systematize a message of DEI into our culture, it is clear that some organizations must start from the beginning. Goldey-Beacom College was no exception, and it is still a work in progress.

Last fall, the College launched a strategic planning process with Credo, a firm specializing in strategic planning for higher education. Among hundreds of suggestions and requests for new initiatives, an overwhelming majority of the campus community expressed the need for focus on diversity, equity and inclusion.

First, we had to ask ourselves – what is diversity, equity and inclusion, and what does it mean for the College? Every business and organization should ask these questions and align the answers with its own vision, mission stakeholders and customers. For GBC, the Doctor of Business Administration program provided the catalyst to start a formal conversation.

When the DBA program was launched in fall 2018, a strong DEI component



was built into the program. "It was my personal and professional goal to create the most diverse DBA program in the region, not only from the perspective of the students but the professors as well," said Dr. Dan Young, director of the DBA program.

As part of the curriculum, the DBA program partners with local and national companies to problem solve complex business issues. While a group of individuals can solve problems, it takes diversity as well as experience and knowledge to create effective and lasting change. This is why diversity is a major focus for recruiting students and professors. As a result, of the 42 people in the DBA program, approximately 16 are of African-American descent and 12 are international students.

The College also created BRAVE

Conversations, a Zoom series designed to provide a safe space for all employees and students to join an open conversation with guest speakers who share their personal experiences. Recent guests included: U.S. Representative Lisa Blunt-Rochester, the Honorable Joshua W. Martin III, senior counsel at Potter Anderson Corroon LLP, and Dr. Tony Allen, president of Delaware State University.

Each guest took us on an amazing journey. We listened intently, sometimes with jaws dropped, to the injustices they endured. They made us laugh and cry. But the common theme among all – they all willingly share their stories to provide a message of hope for the future. Jocelyn Moses, director of residence and student life, and Dr. Dan Young lead the BRAVE Conversations series.

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Goldey-Beacom College also recently created a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Taskforce, a Black Student Union (BSU), and a chapter of the National Association of Black Accountants (NABA). Moving forward, the College plans to expand its course offering to create COM 351 – Hip Hop, Culture and Society. Next on the horizon, we will explore Black fraternities and sororities.

As we continue our journey toward a diverse, equitable and inclusive environment for all students and employees, we will listen with open ears and love with open hearts. And this is how we will make an impact on future generations.



Janine Sorbello is director of external affairs at Goldey-Beacom College.

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Part of that, was providing convenient delivery options to help customers shop safely and friction-free. This included contact-free curbside pickup or buy online and pick-up at the Macy's closest to home.

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