As the Office of Multicultural Student Life (MSL), we strive to be the familiar face and the comforting embrace that every student at the University of Tennessee can call home. Our office prides itself on being a brave and safe place for students, faculty, and staff alike. The individuals who walk through the doors of the Frieson Black Cultural Center (FBCC) represent different races, religions, sexualities, and identities. However, what they all have in common is that they matter to us, and they belong at the University of Tennessee.

MSL means family, and our departmental theme of S.E.R.V.E.S. is how we as an office work to maintain the big work of making sure every student feels seen, heard, and valued. S.E.R.V.E.S., which stands for supports, educates, respects, values, empowers, and succeeds, is the 2018-2019 departmental theme. If it sounds familiar to you, that is because it is. The office’s theme of S.E.R.V.E.S. was met with tremendous success last year, and we have decided to continue to advance this concept as we promote academic success, leadership development, and equality for all students at the University of Tennessee.

As we prepare for the 2019-2020 academic year, we look forward to joining the University in celebrating the following milestones:

- 225th anniversary of the University of Tennessee
- 65 years since the first Black student received a graduate degree
- 60 years since the first Black student received a doctoral degree
- 55 years since the first Black undergraduate student graduated
- 40 years since the office of Office of Minority Student Affairs/Multicultural Student Life was established
- 35 years since the establishment of the Black Alumni Council
Ashley Simmons

What do you think are the major challenges that students face as part of an underrepresented group on our campus?

Many students have a hard time finding a community on campus which then decreases their ability to develop well academically and socially.

Ronni Williams

What is one Office of Multicultural Student Life achievement that makes you proud?

I am most proud of our student leaders and the leadership skills and talents that they possess and flex on a regular basis through events hosted in conjunction with MSL.

Christopher Mendoza

What motivates you to put forth your greatest effort in improving diversity and inclusion at UT?

Seeing our students light up when they are represented, whether that’s through dancing salsa at Noche de Baile or cooking with AAA at the Taste of Asia, they bring me the motivation to do this important work.

Carmanelette Rawls

What is one way you aid our office’s student organizations?

As the Accounting Specialist I assist student organizations by directing them to university approved vendors for purchasing supplies/food for events, process invoices/contract once they are completed.

Robert Hill

What is the greatest part about being a VOL?

The greatest part about being a VOL is working at MSL and watching the students grow and prosper over the years.

Diane Goble

What is your favorite MSL sponsored event?

Mahogany Soul Café is my favorite MSL sponsored event, as it allows students, faculty, and staff to showcase their creativity.

Jheri Wills

What is your favorite feature about the FBCC?

I love the newly renovated student lounge. It is a comfortable space when I want to relax, eat lunch, or just watch TV. The new look really makes the lounge so inviting.

Shanndor McClain

What does S.E.R.V.E.S. mean to you?

It means being positively involved in the education and personal development of our students.
MEET OUR STU

Asian American Association
Black Cultural Programming Committee
Brothers United for Excellence
Diversity Educators
Latin American Student Organization
Multicultural Mentoring Program
DENT ORGS.

| National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
| Native American Student Association
| Sophisticated Queens Unafraid and Driven
| Strange Fruit Dance Company
The Office of Multicultural Student Life offers a variety of support services:

- Free Tutoring
- Peer-to-Peer Mentoring
- Free Book Loan Program
- First Years Studies Courses
- Living & Learning Community
- Leadership Development
- Diversity Education

For more information about any of these services or to learn more about the office please contact us at multicultural@utk.edu or visit our website at multicultural.utk.edu.

100+ courses offered for tutoring

1,800+ tutoring appointments were made during the 2018-2019 academic year

48 student mentors

142 incoming first-year students participated in our Multicultural Mentoring Program
Students participated in our Living & Learning Community

**133**

Diversity Education Facilitations

MSL Diversity Educators are student volunteers who are dedicated to promoting diversity, multiculturalism, and social justice. This group functions as a proactive educational advocacy group that promotes diversity and acceptance at The University of Tennessee. MSL Diversity Educators help develop and facilitate educational workshops that promote programs on diversity, multiculturalism, and other special topics, to increase awareness of diversity related issues, while creating a dialogue that explores the campus definition and perception of diversity.
The
Cultural
Excursion

"The Cultural Excursion trip opened my eyes to the history that many might not consider throughout their life. Understanding our past history serves an immense importance – we become more culturally competent and diverse.

After the Cultural Excursion to the National Museum of African-American History and Culture in Washington D.C., I returned an overall more conscious individual. This was important because if I want to play an active role in creating meaningful change, I needed to be educated on the important things that have shaped my community as well as the world. The cultural excursion was an invaluable opportunity to add a new dimension to my own perspective."

~ Mustafa M. Ali-Smith

Cultural Excursion to The National Museum of African-American History and Culture in Washington D.C.
October 4 - 7, 2018

27 STUDENTS ATTENDED THE CULTURAL EXCURSION
"The Diversity Dialogue Symposium was an awesome and intentional space to have tough conversations within the Volunteer community. As a Diversity Educator, I frequently have the opportunity to go in to smaller spaces and speak to people about diversity, inclusion, and social justice. However, the Diversity Dialogue series allowed us to have these conversations with the larger UT and Knoxville communities. The Symposium was my favorite Diversity Dialogue of the year, as it allowed us to cover so many relevant and important topics in one day. We had great guest speakers including: alumni from UT, faculty, staff, and community members. We were able to come together as students, staff, and faculty and having a meaningful dialogue to help initiate change. Each topic represented a pressing issue within our nation, and I really enjoyed that I was able to connect with not only my peers, but see the faculty and staff that want to create change."

~ Syd Shelby

The Black Issues Conference is an annual event at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. The conference started in 2005, and now boasts an average of 300 participants. A joint partnership between the Office of Multicultural Student Life and the UTK Chapter of the NAACP, the primary goal of the conference is to offer a forum for research and discussion of issues affecting the African American culture.

This conference features a nationally known keynote speaker; in addition to a diverse set of workshops and panel discussions led by undergraduate and graduate students, faculty, administrators and members of the local, regional and national communities. This year twelve presentations were facilitated, with topics including discussions of black identity, explorations of African Americans in popular culture, and analyses of Black history. The Black Issues Conference is open to students, faculty, staff, and the public. The 15th Annual Black Issues Conference will be held on Saturday, February 1, 2020.
“I found our FSU trip not only greatly enjoyable but also highly insightful. FSU’s AAA equivalent – AASU – functions as a programming board that brings FSU’s Asian American community together through its affiliate program. This allows FSU’s Asian American community to flourish as each club is obligated to support each other through coordinated event planning and encouraging their own members to go to each other’s events. The results are obvious and can be directly observed through the student body where cliques vanish away in the form of diverse dance groups and huge social gatherings. My experience at FSU was amazing and has allowed me to bring back many tools that AASU uses to push our AAA here at UT to greater heights!”

~Ankush Patel

“My experience attending the first ever Southeastern Latinx Student Leadership Conference was eye-opening in a lot of unimaginable ways. Throughout the conference I was able to connect and understand what my fellow Latinx brothers and sisters were enduring at their respective universities. I learned many things I didn’t know about other Latinx cultures such as Afro-Latinx identity. It was a good, deep learning experience and it was great to connect and get to know more of my fellow LASO members at UTK.”

~Antonio Vega
“During the 2018 summer, I had the privilege to attend the Student Social Justice Training Institute in Burlington, Vermont for a week. It was at this training that I began my journey in understanding the full commitment of social justice. This space pushed me to grow in recognizing the power of knowledge as well as the internal commitment we have to subject ourselves to in order to fully create the change we wish to see. I met lifelong friends and created relationships with folx that I otherwise would have never been able to meet, and for that, I will forever be grateful.”

~Caitlin Lloyd

Elexus Franklin, 2018-2019 Chair of Diversity Educators, and Caitlin Lloyd, 2018-2019 Vice Chair of Diversity Educators attended the 2018 Social Justice Training Institute for the Students. This conference was held over a 4 day period at the University of Vermont. Since December of 1998, the Social Justice Training Institute has been providing an opportunity for individuals committed to issues of inclusion to develop their skills in the areas of dialogue and connectedness. Over 500 professional colleagues have participated in this experience to date.

They have now expanded the experience to include an opportunity for students to gather and do some “personal work” related to social justice issues. The institute is open to 50 undergraduate students on college and university campuses in the U.S. and abroad. This advanced experience is for students who have done a fairly significant amount of work on social justice issues. Four to six alumni will join two SJTI faculty to complete the facilitation team.
And the Award Goes to...

Carmanelette Rawls
Student Life
Unsung Hero Award

Robert Hill
Student Life
Service Excellence Award

Shanndor McClain
Commitment to Diversity & Inclusion

Roy B.J. Campbelle
Leadership Award

Tanisha Jenkins
Hardy Liston Jr. Symbol of Hope Award

Anu Kumar
Chancellor’s Citation

Multicultural Student Life at the 2018-2019 Chancellor’s Honors Banquet

LASO
Commitment to Diversity & Inclusion

Shanndor McClain
Small Organization of the Year and Phi Eta Sigma Service to Students Award

Ronni Williams
First Year Studies Instructor of the Year

Carmanelette Rawls
Student Life Unsung Hero Award

Tanisha Jenkins
Hardy Liston Jr. Symbol of Hope Award

Anu Kumar
Chancellor’s Citation
Nikyra Beasley
Leadership to the T Award

Fernando Karg
Leadership to the T Award

Nikyra Beasley
Leadership to the T Award

Dominique Bryson
Leadership to the T Award

Jeylan Dunigan
Brothers United for Excellence
Academic Achievement

Josh Carter
Brothers United for Excellence
Academic Achievement

TyJuan Bohannon
Brothers United for Excellence
Academic Achievement

Noah Dandridge
Brothers United for Excellence
Academic Achievement

DaVeon Douglas
Brothers United for Excellence
Academic Achievement

Trinity Summons
Multicultural Mentoring Program
Academic Achievement

Kayla Tolbert
Coca-Cola Scholarship

Esthela Rios
Leadership to the T Award

Brothers United for Excellence

Academic Achievement

Dr. Marva Rudolph Diversity
and Interculturalism
Unit Excellence Award

Multicultural Student Life

Academic Achievement
Awards and recipients not pictured

Morgan Jeffries - Chancellor’s Citation
Kandice Duncan - Gene Mitchell Gray Pioneer Award
Anu Kumar - Unsung Hero for the Division of Student Life
Savannah Clay - The Office of Multicultural Student Life’s Carl Cowan Scholarship
Hannah Chong - Civic Engagement Award & Commitment to Diversity and Inclusion Award
Abena Otchere-Boateng - The Office of Multicultural Student Life’s Carl Cowan Scholarship
Diversity Dialogue Symposium - Innovative Program of the Year for the Division of Student Life
Asian American Association - Charles R. Burchett Extraordinary Contributions to Student Life Citation
Latin American Student Organization, Lambda Theta Alpha Latin Sorority, Inc. & Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc.
- Southeastern Latinx Student Leadership Conference Collaborative Program of the Year Award
The Multicultural Graduation Celebrations & Recognition Ceremony

Congrats! to our Graduate Research Assistants Jheri and Shanndor!

“The fireworks begin today. Each diploma is a lighted match. Each one of you is a fuse.” —Edward Koch
Caught in the Act
Strange Fruit Dance Company presents their annual showcase every spring semester. At this event, members of Strange Fruit exhibit their talent, training, and dedication by showcasing various genres of dance. A few notable genres from this year’s performance were jazz, modern, contemporary, and hip-hop. In addition to their own performances, the showcase proudly included local African dance teams. The showcase is a wonderful opportunity to watch art in motion. We hope to see you there next spring!

On February 25, 2019, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People hosted an event to discuss the current American criminal justice system and how race and media portrayals helped to shaped its evolution. We chose to focus on the Central Park 5 jogger case of the 1990s; a case that polarized our nation across race and class lines. Yusef Salaam, who was 16 at the time of his arrest, was the keynote speaker.
AUGUST
Caribbean Splash Jam: BCPC
Welcome Back Celebration: MSL
Mahogany Soul Cafe: MSL

SEPTEMBER
Rites of Passage Ceremony: MMP
Legend’s Lecture: BCPC
Diversity Dialogue: MSL & DE
Game Night: MMP
Vol Walk of Life: MMP
Mahogany Soul Cafe: MSL & NAACP

OCTOBER
Washington D.C. Cultural Excursion: MSL
Cultural Movie Night: BCPC
Diversity Dialogue Symposium: MSL & DE
Vol to Vol Feud
Homecoming Comedy Show: BCPC
Mahogany Soul Cafe: MSL
Mr. & Ms. Freshman Pageant: MMP

NOVEMBER
19th Annual SouthEastern Stomp Fest: BCPC
Homecoming Tailgate: BCPC & MSL
Mahogany Soul Cafe: MSL

DECEMBER
Finals Prep: ASU
Late Night Breakfast: MMP

2018 - 2019
Calendar in Review

JANUARY
MLK Day Celebration: BCPC
Tour of Centro Hispano: LASO
Mahogany Soul Cafe: MSL

FEBRUARY
14th Annual Black Issues Conference: MSL & NAACP
Night of the Amazon: LASO
Grocery Night Bingo: MMP
Brazilian Movie Night: LASO
Noche deBaile: MSL & LASO
Interview and Resume Building 101: MMP & BUE
Mahogany Soul Cafe: MSL
Diversity Dialogue: MSL & DE

MARCH
Table Talk Tuesday: SQUAD
UnDocuAlly Workshop: LASO
Mahogany Soul Cafe: MSL & MMP
Diversity Dialogue: MSL & MMP
865 Market: MSL, AAA, & CEB

APRIL
AAA Format: AAA
Young Professionals Lecture Series: BCPC
Cesar Chavez Celebration: LASO
Survivol: BCPC
Multicultural Graduation Celebration & Recognition Ceremony: MSL
Finals Prep: ASU
Late Night Breakfast: MMP
For More Information:

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