



THE COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY

DIVISION OF INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE



FY24
2023-2024

ANNUAL REFLECTIONS



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Dear Members of the TCNJ Campus Community & Board of Trustees,

To build a vibrant community, to foster its growth, and to ensure that every member is treated with fairness and respect—this is the core mission of the Division of Inclusive Excellence. These essential tasks are fundamental to The College of New Jersey’s commitment to its scholarly, co-curricular, and workplace goals. In this comprehensive annual report for FY24, you will find detailed accounts of how the Division collaborates across the college to enhance access and success, sustain an inclusive campus climate, and enhance campuswide diversity, equity, and inclusion within our policies.

This report serves as a tool for transparency and accountability. I am particularly proud that it highlights the remarkable contributions of our colleagues, showcasing the breadth of their activities and expertise. Achieving genuine diversity and inclusivity requires unwavering commitment and active participation from every one of us. This report both mirrors our collective efforts and encourages continued collaboration.

I am deeply grateful to all who have played a role in our progress. While our work is ongoing and continuously evolving, it is through our shared dedication and creative approach that we advance. I look forward to sharing these reflections and preparing for the year ahead as we continue this crucial work together.

All the best,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tacquice Wiggan Davis'.

Tacquice Wiggan Davis, Ed.D.
Interim Vice President for Inclusive Excellence



CAMPUS DIVERSITY STATEMENT

The campus community of The College of New Jersey is composed of people with diverse backgrounds, perspectives, and experiences. Given the increasing diversity of the population of the United States and the cultural effects of globalization, we must continually build upon our efforts to ensure that all perspectives can be expressed. Our commitment to inclusiveness means that the campus community will constantly evaluate college policies, procedures and practices to remove those barriers that may affect our ability to be a welcoming and safe environment.

We commit to treating each other with civility and respect, and working together in a spirit of fairness and cooperation. Our individual commitment to inclusiveness requires that each of us becomes aware of our own assumptions about human behaviors, biases, preconceived notions and personal limitations. Collectively, we will have honest, yet respectful, discussions regarding different points of view pertaining to values and cultural issues. In our individual spheres of influence, we will engage in dialogue, activities, gatherings and conversations to ensure that we live out our commitment to inclusiveness. When we inspire those within our circles of influence to promote the importance of inclusiveness, we are poised to influence not only our campus, but also our local, national, and global communities.

[Adopted by the Campus Diversity Council based on campus testimony, April 2018]



PARTNERS IN INCLUSION

MEANINGFUL MENTORING

Mentoring, Retention, and Success Programs (MRSP) have been a key partner of Inclusive Excellence, playing a vital role in advancing our First-Generation Student Success Initiatives. Associate Director Jamal Johnson and Student Support Coordinator Romina Generali have demonstrated an unwavering commitment to the development and success of our students. This year, Ms. Generali, along with Graduate Assistant Kylie Suarez from Inclusive Excellence, elevated the First-Generation Tri Alpha Honor Society to new heights, inducting 78 students and 9 faculty and staff members.

Another major accomplishment this year was TCNJ's application and acceptance into the First Scholars Network, an effort led by Ms. Generali. This acceptance underscores our commitment to first-generation student success, as we engage in monthly workshops, networking, and professional development opportunities, while sharing knowledge and resources within the first-gen community.

NOVEL NURSING RESEARCH

Since 2022, Inclusive Excellence has enjoyed the privilege of conducting research with the School of Nursing and Health Sciences entitled "Assessing the Climate of Inclusivity and Acceptance of Diversity at the School of Nursing and Health Sciences." Using We Are TCNJ: A Strategy for Inclusive Excellence, its aim is to evaluate the extent to which faculty, staff, and students feel welcomed, respected, valued, accepted, and included within an academic department dedicated to healthcare and public health education.

The interdisciplinary team led by Dr. Rahshida Atkins, comprising staff and students from the Division of Inclusive Excellence and faculty from Nursing, Public Health, and Kinesiology and Health Sciences, provided a comprehensive assessment to serve as a model for fostering interprofessional collaboration in healthcare. After two years of intensive study, the team presented at the Eastern Nursing Research Society annual conference in April 2024. They plan to submit for peer review this academic year.

CELEBRATING A HALF CENTURY OF FEMINIST EXCELLENCE

Perhaps the happiest opportunity we have in Inclusive Excellence is to recognize and celebrate the incredible scholarly legacies left by TCNJ's faculty and student bodies. For more than 50 years, the students, faculty, and staff of Women's, Gender & Sexuality Studies (WGSS) have offered an innovative curriculum that centers intersectional, interdisciplinary, transnational approaches to the study of women, gender, and sexuality, and offers extensive learning opportunities outside of the classroom. They have transformed what was a small collection of interested individuals into a well-regarded and influential force for social justice education, both on campus and well beyond. Half a century is always a milestone worth recognizing; but there would be far less to celebrate were it not for the incredible community WGSS has fostered in that time. In other words, we couldn't have done it without you!

WGSS celebrated its half century on April 20, 2024 with a catered reception at Unionville Vineyards in Ringoes, NJ. Over 100 alumni, emeriti, and current students and faculty were in attendance for music, dancing, fundraising, giveaways, and wistful speeches from departmental VIPs. And that support, respect, and love was made tangible: the combined efforts of WGSS and Inclusive Excellence raised over \$10,000 for the WGSS Feminist Scholarship fund. Here's to another 50 years!





HIGHLIGHTED TRAININGS FY24

INTERCULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

Inclusive Excellence continued to offer the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) to staff and students as part of its intercultural competency initiatives. The most widely used and effective cross-culturally valid assessment tool, the IDI measures both one's mindset and skillset which allows individuals and groups to better understand successes and challenges related to their intercultural interactions.

Participation in the IDI can be voluntary for professional development purposes, one component of an employee's performance improvement plan, or as part of a student conduct hearing. It can also be conducted in group setting, such as for an academic department or student organization; in FY24, the IDI was administered to TCNJ's Staff Senate and the incoming transfer class. If you are interested in learning more, email inclusion@tcnj.edu, subject "IDI".

BIAS TRAINING RES ED

During the annual Residential Education and Housing Bias Training, over 130 CAs, SMROs, and CCS student staff members participated in an interactive session designed to deepen their understanding of bias-related incidents and crimes. The training provided both incoming and returning student leaders with a comprehensive review of bias crime, supported by national and NJ-specific statistics and trends. Students engaged with video footage and photographs of real-world bias incidents from the past decade, fostering a deeper sense of empathy and awareness of the issue.

The training further equipped students with the skills to discern whether an incident qualifies as a bias incident, a bias crime, or a federal hate crime, and instructed them on the proper protocols for reporting such incidents. Finally, the training ensured that students understood how to use TCNJ's specific reporting portals to report bias incidents effectively, promoting a safer and more inclusive campus environment.

EEO ONLINE CAMPUSWIDE

As a part of our commitment to creating a workplace that values diversity, equity, and inclusion - as well as compliance with state regulation - Equal Employment Opportunity Programs launched an online training module via Vector/Safe Colleges platform titled Discrimination Awareness in the Workplace. Search your inbox!

The training was designed to provide employees basic awareness and understanding of discrimination. This awareness can help reduce discriminatory behaviors and build a work environment that reflects inclusivity and respect for all. The training itself took about 30 minutes to complete, including successfully passing the required assessment and reviewing TCNJ policies. To date, over 1000 employees across the college have successfully completed the training.

EQUITY AUDIT TRAINING

An equity policy review is a process for analyzing or diagnosing the impact of the design and implementation of policies on underrepresented, minoritized and diverse individuals and groups, and to identify and potentially eliminate barriers. We Are TCNJ: A Strategy for Inclusive Excellence calls for all official college policies to be reviewed from an equity lens by 2027. It is thus essential that campus policyholders be trained on equity review best practices early and often.

Last year, Dr. Clyde Wilson Pickett of the University of Pittsburgh visited campus to conduct the first portion of equity audit training for college administrators. This year's follow up training will delve deeper into specific policy areas on campus, especially those related to free speech and anti-discrimination. Policyholders can expect more info in the coming weeks.



EMPLOYEE AFFINITY GROUPS



TCNJ PRIDE is the premier social group for LGBTQIA+ and allied staff members. Founded in 2019 but with an informal history stretching back over a decade, TCNJ PRIDE sponsors a variety of social justice, professional development, and community-building initiatives and events. Anyone committed to creating a more LGBT-inclusive campus climate is welcome to join.

Dr. Benny Chan, Chair of the Chemistry Department, is the founder and current head of PRIDE. He is best reached at chan@tcnj.edu. To learn more and join, please [visit the Google Group homepage](#).



THE COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY WOMEN'S PROFESSIONAL NETWORK

The TCNJ Women's Professional Network is perhaps the most popular Affinity Group at TCNJ thanks to its wide membership, engaging events and programs, and exceptional leadership. Committed to providing a supportive and encouraging network for employees to advance their skills and leadership potential through connection, mentorship, collaboration, and discussion, the WPN is open to all members of the community and invites all gender identities to join. They host community events, luncheons, panel discussions, professional development, and more.

The WPN is currently co-chaired by Samantha McGraw and Sabrina Arauz. Please visit their [Google Group](#) to join.



The TCNJ Minority Executive Council (MEC) is the first and foremost of TCNJ's affinity groups in terms of longevity, fundraising, and recognition across campus. It served as the prototype for all other affinity groups, and continues its exceptional work today. The Minority Executive Council is committed to supporting and enriching the overall experience and professional development of faculty and staff of color at TCNJ. In accordance with the core belief that the College's cultural, social, and intellectual life are enriched and enlivened by diversity, MEC supports various programs and activities that enhance the quality of the TCNJ experience. Visit mec.tcnj.edu to join or contact Chair Dionne L. Hallback with any questions.



TCNJ Parent Network

The TCNJ Parent Network was established in 2020 to support current (and future) parents at TCNJ. The Parent Network sponsors a variety of professional development, and community-building initiatives and events, including the annual Take Your Child to Work Day each April. Anyone committed to creating a more parent-friendly campus climate is welcome to join.

The Parent Network is currently co-chaired by Mary Lehr Furtado, Matt Middleton, and Michelle Ordini. View past events, meet fellow parents, start a new conversation, and join the Parent Network [at their Google Group](#).



THE COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY ASIAN AND ASIAN AMERICAN PACIFIC ISLANDER COALITION

The Asian & Asian American Pacific Islander Coalition (AAAPIC) is the newest TCNJ affinity group and the first dedicated to a specific cultural/ethnic demographic. AAAPIC, pronounced short as "Aypick", is an employee network, resource, and awareness group. Employees who self-identify as being of East Asian, South Asian, South-East Asian, West Asian, Central Asian, and Pacific Islander heritage are welcome to join. Faculty and Staff whose research, teaching, and personal interests relate to AAAPIC culture and history are welcome to join too!

It is currently chaired by Dr. Yifeng Hu, Dr. Hyun-Binn Cho, and Dr. Satya Shikha Chakraborty. Join the [Coalition's Google Group](#) today!



EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY PROGRAMS

The College of New Jersey is committed to providing its current and prospective employees and students with a workplace/educational environment free from prohibited discrimination or harassment. Prohibited discrimination/harassment undermines the integrity of the academic environment and employment relationship, compromises equal employment opportunity, debilitates morale and interferes with the opportunity for all persons to fully participate in the academic, work and living environment of the College.

To achieve the goal of maintaining a work/educational environment free from discrimination or harassment, the College will not tolerate forms of discrimination or harassment based upon the protected categories listed below. This is a zero tolerance policy. The College reserves the right to take either disciplinary action, if appropriate, or other corrective action, to address any unacceptable conduct that violates this policy, regardless of whether the conduct satisfies the legal definition of discrimination or harassment.

Protected categories include:

Sexual Harassment	Disability	Atypical Hereditary Cellular or Blood Traits
Color	Domestic Partnership Status	Marital /Civil Union Status
Nationality	Familial Status	Age
Retaliation	Ancestry	Gender Identity or Expression
Creed	Liability for Military Service	Race
National Origin	Sex/Gender (including pregnancy)	Affectional/Sexual Orientation
Religion	Genetic Information	N.J. ADMIN. CODE § 4A:7-3.1
		<small>POLICY PROHIBITING DISCRIMINATION IN THE WORKPLACE</small>

BIAS & BIAS INCIDENTS

What is Bias?

Bias is prejudice in favor of or against someone or something. Biases can be conscious or unconscious – explicit or implicit. Biased behaviors or actions can be intentionally or unintentionally directed towards individuals or groups. In addition, bias can be institutionalized into policies, practices and structures.

What is a Bias Incident?

A bias incident is any consciously, unconsciously, explicitly or implicitly expressed act that targets individuals or groups based on perceived or actual identity. Additionally, a bias incident refers to any behavior, action or practice that marginalizes, mocks, demeans, intimidates or threatens individuals or groups based on an actual or perceived protected class. These occurrences impede the cultivation of a healthy and sustainable learning and working environment.

What is Bias Impact?

Bias impact is any physical, psychological and/or emotional response to an incident, behaviors, interactions and/or practices that communicate negative or harmful bias. Bias impact can manifest as:

- a diminished sense of self-worth, for those impacted and affected, for an extended period of time;
- distrust between individuals and/or groups, leading to the erosion of a healthy sense of community;
- feeling isolated, vulnerable, powerless, helpless, fearful and/or unwelcome;
- psychological distress, including stress, anxiety and/or anger;
- interference with an individual’s ability to work, learn or maintain health relationships;
- poor academic performance;
- a desire to leave or withdraw from the community and/or to decrease participation in social activities and programs;
- feeling the need to retaliate against a member of the group represented by the responsible person(s)/group(s).

[Adapted from Xavier University]



BIAS CASELOAD TEAM (BCT)

The Bias Caseload Team (BCT) has the primary responsibility of thoroughly examining all reported incidents of bias to ascertain whether they potentially breach the Student Conduct Code and/or the Policy Prohibiting Discrimination in the Workplace/Educational Environment. The BCT convenes on a weekly basis to carry out this critical task. If an incident falls below the threshold for a potential policy violation, the BCT makes determinations regarding the appropriate referral destination for the incident or the subsequent actions to be taken. The BCT is comprised of the following dedicated campus partners:



TACQUICE WIGGAN DAVIS, ED.D
INTERIM VICE PRESIDENT FOR INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE



TIMOTHY GRANT
CHIEF OF CAMPUS POLICE



CRYSTEL MALDONADO, ED.D
INTERIM ASSOCIATE VICE PRESIDENT OF DIVERSITY & INCLUSION
DIRECTOR OF EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY & WORKPLACE COMPLIANCE

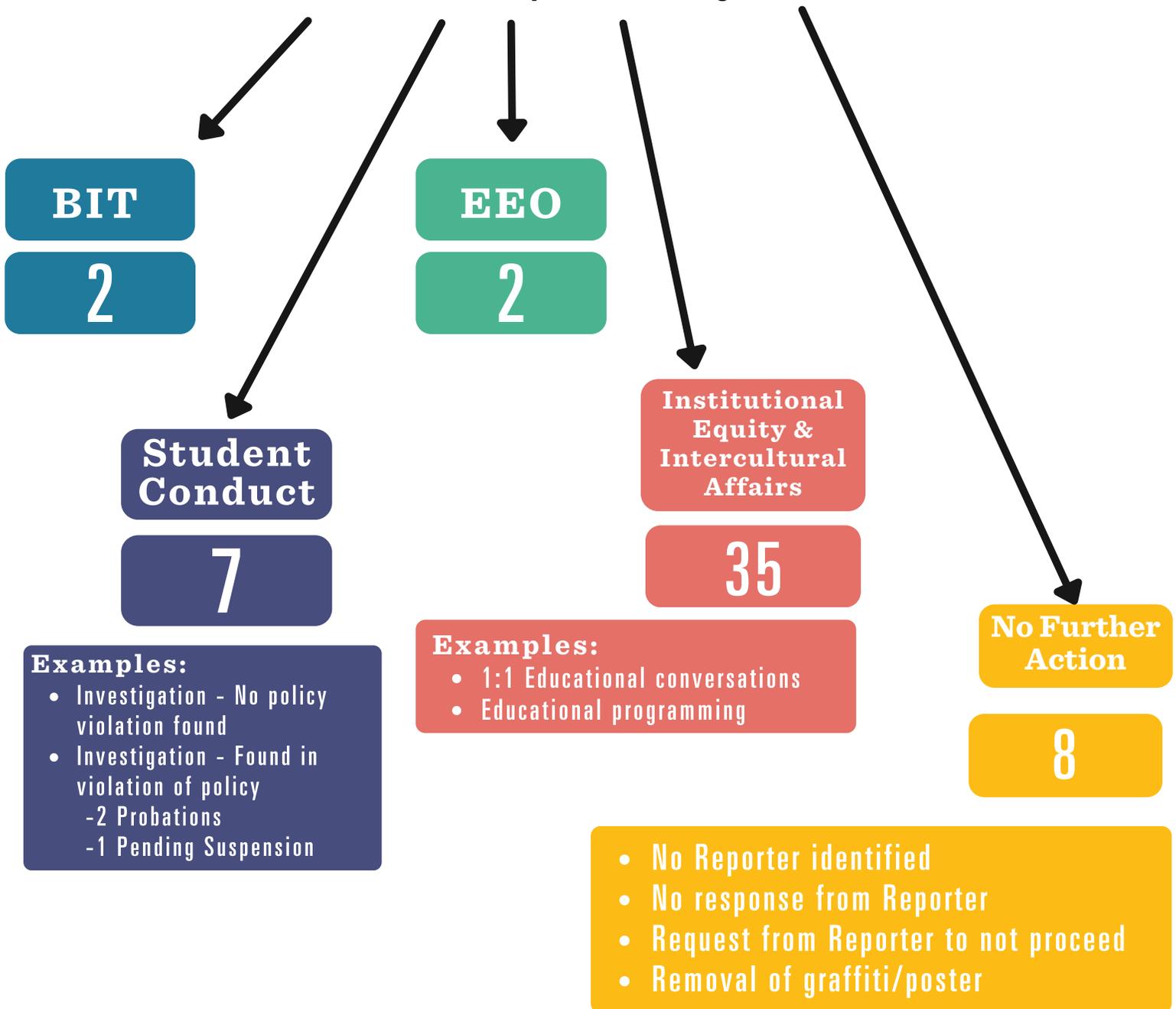


JORDAN RICHAMAN
DIRECTOR OF STUDENT CONDUCT



54 Bias Reports received & reviewed by BCT

Based on the nature of the reports, the cases were then forwarded to/addressed by the following offices:



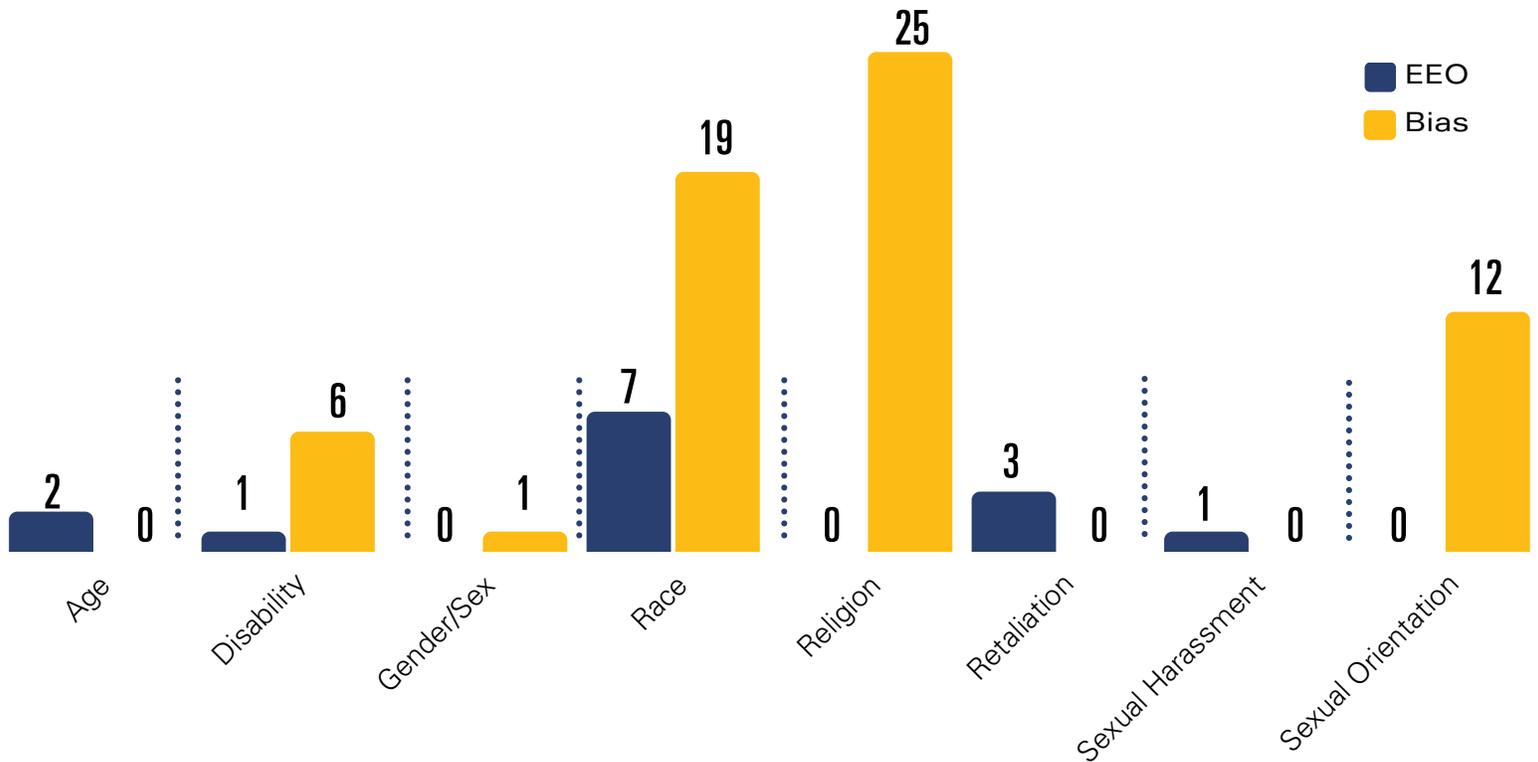


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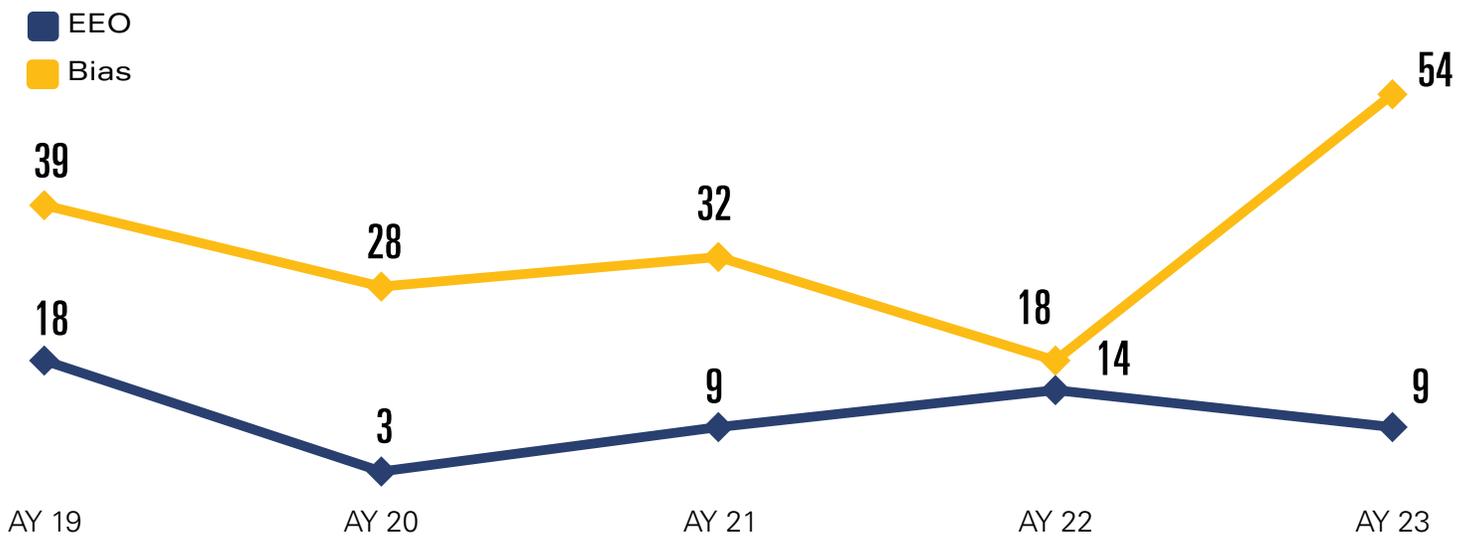
EEO Reports

54

Bias Reports



If an incident/report involved more than one form of Protected Category (e.g. race & class), they are reflected as separate incidents in the data.





ACCESSIBILITY RESOURCES - SPECIALISTS

NEW FACES, SAME EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE

Hundreds of TCNJ students and employees will be making the acquaintance of the new Accessibility Resources team, housed in Roscoe West Hall 222. Bigger and better than ever, this new ARC team could not be more excited to help you get the support you need to thrive. Contact them at arc@tcnj.edu or (609) 771-3199 with inquiries.

KATE AUSTIN

Ever since she was young, Kate knew she wanted to serve others - first as a teacher, then as a school counselor, and now as an Accessibility Specialist! Already excited for the fall weather and football season, she is also thrilled to start her first full year at her alma mater. With over 25 years' experience in disability education and school counseling, and a distinct comfort with discomfort, Kate is ready and eager for anything.



MEGAN GUIRY

Megan believes that you can do difficult things, and will help you believe too! Ever since she was inspired by her college adviser, she has committed herself to making higher education more accessible and equitable. A veteran of academic services and accessibility resources, Megan brings experience, energy, and dedication to the TCNJ community - and to your individual needs. Want to get on her good side? Treat her to some cookie dough ice cream!

CLAIRE GIACOMETTI

Previously a Graduate Assistant for ARC, Claire is now a full-fledged Accessibility Specialist and firm believer that everything happens for a reason. She received her B.S. in Psychology from Drexel University and is working toward earning her Master's degree in Counseling at TCNJ. Her passion for disability support stems from her closest family and friends - and she brings that same commitment to her work for her fellow TCNJ employees and students.



ALLISON LARTHEY

Allison, an alum of TCNJ, has returned to her alma mater to reinvigorate the Lions Plus Program as Learning Support Specialist. Her lifelong commitment to educational equity is matched only by her love of inspirational quotes - expect her to share them regularly! After all, we all inspire her every day. Like one of her heroes, Winnie the Pooh, said: "You are braver than you believe, stronger than you seem, and smarter than you think."

KARTIKA KUMARI

Bringing her fresh perspective to Lions Plus, Kartika joins TCNJ from Queens College CUNY to complete the new ARC team. With her favorite season on the way, Kartika is eager to break out her collection of beanies, brew some fresh coffee, and get to work helping you thrive. Kartika always follows Maya Angelou's advice, and hopes you will too: "Try to be a rainbow in someone's cloud." Stop by and welcome Kartika to TCNJ in Roscoe West 202.





ACCESSIBILITY RESOURCES - SERVICES

LIONS PLUS PROGRAM

Lions Plus is off to a great start with 45 students enrolled for the Fall Semester! Interest has been high enough to require a waitlist. Initial sessions with Kartika and Allison began this week. The new LPP team are establishing goals and focus areas while setting up regular meetings with each Lions Plus student. New this year are group support sessions, which will include both workshop-style practice for tools and strategies and also leisure and peer engagement.

We have had growing interest in the program with over 60 inquiries since Spring 2024, including currently enrolled students, accepted students, prospective students, and education professionals who are supporting students with college preparations. We encourage anyone who is interested in the Lions Plus program to reach out to Kartika Kumari at kumarik@tcnj.edu or Allison Larthey at roessle4@tcnj.edu for more information!

ACCOMMODATION REQUESTS

Requesting accommodations is crucial for students with disabilities or other needs that require special consideration. Accommodations encompass a wide range of support, including extended time on exams, note-taking assistance, accessible housing, and the provision of specialized equipment.

The accommodation process consists of registering with the Accessibility Resource Center (ARC), providing documentation of the disability, and working with assigned Accessibility Specialists to determine the appropriate accommodations. It is essential that accommodations are requested as early as possible, ideally before the start of the semester, to ensure that student needs are met without delay.

Accommodations enable students to fully participate in academic and campus life. They reduce stress and anxiety by ensuring they have the tools needed to succeed. Additionally, accessing accommodations helps empower students to advocate for themselves, a skill that will serve them throughout their life. To learn more about accommodations, please visit us in Roscoe West Hall or at arc.tcnj.edu.

EXAM PROCTORING

Exciting changes have been made to ARC's exam proctoring process! Students with exam accommodations will now be able to book a testing room through their Accommodate portal - faculty will no longer need to place room requests. To book a testing room, go to the module titled "Test Room Booking" to the left-hand side of your home page in Accommodate. Instructions for how to book a room can also be found on our website. Both will be accessible after add/drop on September 4th.

Please remember that we require at least a week's notice to be able to provide a space for exams. There is a limit to how many students we can proctor and the system will not allow you to book if all spaces have been filled, so book early! If you have any questions or encounter any issues, please contact Megan Guiry at guiry@m@tcnj.edu.

ONE-STOP SUPPORT SHOP

Getting the support needed to thrive in college begins with identifying what support would actually help. Easier said than done, this is often where students wind up discouraged, overwhelmed, or outright confused. But the truth is that TCNJ is full of dedicated individuals who want nothing more than to see our students succeed - it's just a matter of finding them! Due to its campuswide nature, ARC has developed uniquely productive relationships with offices and individuals in all areas of the College. Tapping into this network is one of the key benefits of connecting with ARC.

Lynn Ann Cornell is a valuable resource and support system unto herself. The longest serving member of ARC, Lynn can connect you with the specific people and resources you need. She is the first and possibly most important person you'll meet when visiting us in Roscoe West 202. Her extensive knowledge of ARC policies, possibilities, and partners is an enormous benefit to everyone at TCNJ.





INTERCULTURAL AFFAIRS & CENTER

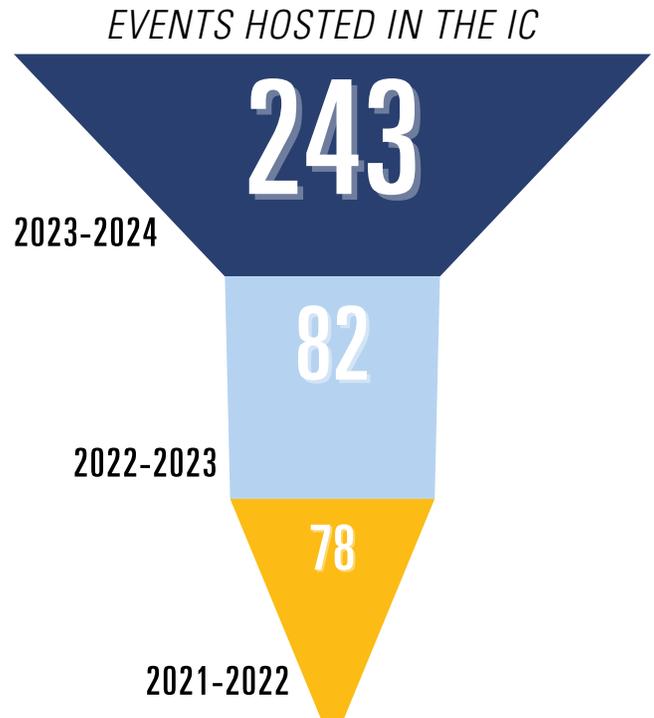
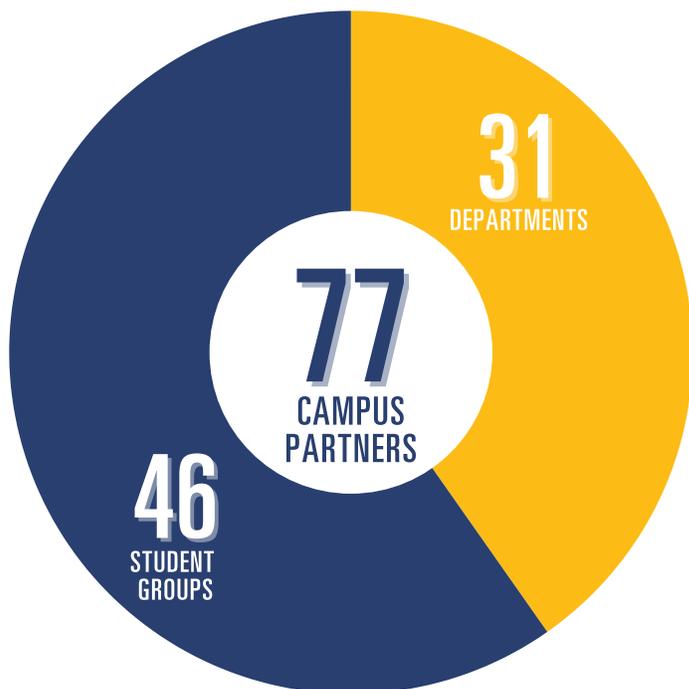
THE INTERCULTURAL CENTER

Since its establishment in 2021, the Intercultural Center’s (IC) popularity has exploded, increasing bookings by 300% over just two years of full operation. We expect this number to continue to grow in FY25 - and plan on making it an even more engaging and accessible space for the community.

Intentional outreach and partnerships with the cultural and identity-based Registered Student Organizations (RSOs) has helped dramatically increase the usage of the IC.

Additionally, our increased usage could be attributed to more monthly recurring meetings, such as the case for groups like the Vietnamese Student Association, Bonner Institute, and Office of Academic Affairs, which all utilized the IC for more frequently assembled meetings.

We have separated the number of student groups and organizations from faculty and staff-related departments. We define “departments” as requests from employees for an audience of students or other employees, and requests with an audience predominantly composed of employees. “Students” are defined as registered or unregistered student groups or organizations.



ENHANCING THE IC EXPERIENCE

The IC is always evolving and improving, with two primary goals for FY25. The first is to standardize operating procedures for the Intercultural Center. Since its founding, our staff has tripled, from only 4 Operations Assistants to 12, with the space usage growing to match. ICA leadership will be meeting throughout the summer and early Fall to outline operations and draft a handbook that will be used to guide the staff’s training going forward.

The second is to create formal assessment system for the IC. All feedback thus far has been gathered informally and anecdotally. Leadership has spoken directly to event organizers where possible, and student staff regularly check in with student organizers to ensure their needs are met. We have enjoyed overwhelmingly positive feedback about the quality of the space, the welcoming environment, the attentiveness of the staff, and its overall aesthetic. Suggested improvements have included more availability for events, faster turnaround time for logistical communication, and a desire to see more people utilizing the space more often.



HIGHLIGHTED ICA PROGRAMS

CULTURAL BLOCK PARTY 2023

Intercultural Affairs (ICA) held its second Cultural Block Party in September 2023. The Block Party is an opportunity to showcase the full extent of TCNJ's incredible cultural and identity-based organizations, while also offering the groups an early-semester platform to recruit new members, promote upcoming events, and build connections and community. ICA first hosted the Cultural Block Party in Fall 2022 after individual students and student groups alike expressed interest in sharing space and learning more about one another's functions and activities. With such good vibes and intentions backing it - and supported by equally good tunes and treats - the Cultural Block Party was an instant success. It has since become one of ICA's key annual events with the express purpose of bringing together as many as possible of our cultural and identity-serving organizations.



Last year's Cultural Block Party was held in September 2023, and proved even livelier despite the unexpected rain. It featured 22 Recognized Student Organizations (RSOs) and 4 student interest groups, an increase of 30% from the year before - all packed into the second floor of Roscoe West Hall! Visitors were treated to numerous performances from arts groups like Kalyani, KOHESION, and AfroRiddim. During the three hour Party, students could speak with reps from dozens of student groups, enjoy delicious food from minority-owned NJ caterers, and express themselves and one another with music, dancing, singing, and more. Though we were proud to have had over 150 visitors in 2023, we hope even more will join us for this year's Block Party!



EDUCATIONAL WORKSHOPS

Another core function of Intercultural Affairs is to provide educational opportunities to the campus community. Our Inclusion Peer Educations (IPEs) are a select team of undergraduate students that have received extensive training to effectively lead difficult discussions around inclusive organizational practices, identifying implicit biases in ourselves and policies, developing counternarratives to pervasive stereotypes, and reflecting on how one's individual lived experiences are impacted by their social identities. These and similar challenging topics are sidelined until they become a crisis, and are usually the root of group misunderstandings, bias incidents, hurt feelings, and disengagement or even dissolution. It often takes a peer to overcome groups' hesitation.

In 2023, IPEs - by request - facilitated workshops for numerous student organizations, including Greek Life, multicultural, and academic groups; first-year seminars; and at campus-wide conferences, such as the Student Org Summit, Fall Leadership Conference, Diversity Summit, and Exit Strategy Week. Overall, ICA and its IPEs conducted 34 trainings throughout in 2023, representing nearly 100 hours of educational effort.





HIGHLIGHTED ICA PROGRAMS

PAA Talks is a TED-style Talk on Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) experiences by TCNJ's AAPI community members. This event is run entirely by students. Planning PAA Talks was ICA intern Neerjah Upreti's primary project for the year, and that dedication showed: everything from the decor to the marketing demonstrated a profoundly unique vision of greenery, creativity, and growth.

Audience attendance also reached its highest number since its inaugural year as a virtual event. While we do not have exact numbers from its first year, estimates had the attendance at just over 100 people. Attendance this year was markedly increased compared to last. Explanations include the event date falling earlier in the semester (as opposed to the last week of classes), increased marketing efforts through social media and printed materials, and stronger co-sponsorship relationships with the Pan-Asian Alliance and other student organizations. We look forward to capitalizing on these successes in FY25! Interested in participating? Reach out at inclusion@tcnj.edu.



This was the first year of Fandom Fest, an event series that celebrates select pop culture fandoms and their sociocultural influences. This year's series featured five signature events that were planned and executed by ICA. We were also able to partner with six student organizations and academic departments to offer smaller scale events throughout February and March 2024.

Fandoms reflect communities - their cultural roots and significance to individuals and groups are worth exploring and connecting to real-life issues. And our guests seemed to agree! Attendees had overwhelmingly positive feedback for their experience, especially for the Drag Brunch with Yuhua Ou, Hip-Hop Feminism with Dr. Joan Morgan, and the Multicultural Multiverse cosplay events.

Another major highlight was the effort and success from our graduate and undergraduate student staff's contributions. The majority of the signature events were planned and executed by Inclusive Excellence Graduate Assistant staff. Each graduate staff member reported positive feedback in their growth and development around several skill sets, such as event planning, budgeting, marketing, public speaking, project management, etc.



MILESTONES & PATHWAYS

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Each February, Inclusive Excellence partners with offices and orgs across campus to offer a robust schedule of Black History events, programs, and presentations. Be it Teach-Ins by African American Studies, Black professional group networking events, table talks and panel discussions, or even a simple movie and discussion night, these events help make real the experiences of Black culture and its visionaries, and help clarify our hopes for a more equitable future.

If nothing else, we hope you will experience this year’s Black History Month luncheon, TCNJ Dining Services’ dynamic (and delicious) Black history-themed menu. Chef Pablo Naughton’s respectful but ambitious selection of dishes for the TCNJ community to sample - the 2024 menu featured culinary cultures affected by the Black Diaspora, from Mozambique and East Africa to the Caribbean and American South. While culture is more than food, it’s always a good start!

ACADEMIC DIVERSITY OFFICERS

In the ever-evolving landscape of higher education, the role of an Academic Diversity Officer (ADO) has become increasingly vital. Charged with the mission of promoting inclusivity and equity within academic institutions, the ADO plays a crucial part in shaping a learning environment that reflects the rich diversity of the student body, faculty, and staff. The ADO’s responsibilities extend beyond mere policy enforcement. They actively engage in the development and implementation of strategies that enhance cultural competency, support underrepresented groups, and ensure that diversity is woven into the fabric of the institution’s academic and social life.

Partnering with Academic Affairs, Inclusive Excellence sponsored 6 faculty ADOs in FY24, who are continuing their projects in FY25: Dr. Marla Jaksch of Women, Gender, & Sexuality Studies, Dr. Glenn Steinberg of English, Dr. Isabel Kentengian of World Languages, Dr. Brandi Diggs of Music, Dr. Dave Marzan of Science, and Dr. Yolanda Nelson of Nursing.

SOCIAL ACTION SUMMIT

The Social Action Summit - a reimagination of past years’ Diversity Summit - will refocus on educating attendees about important reforms needed across sectors such as education, non-profits, government & policy-making, business, etc. In collaboration with on-campus activists and local community partners, Inclusive Excellence intends for the Summit to empower attendees to operationalize existing ideas for social reform, generate new plans and ideas for taking action, and work together with newfound allies to make beneficial change for marginalized groups. This movement for positive change is part of the Division’s strategy to become a role model for higher education expertise, leadership, and action in DEIJ.

The Social Action Summit will take place on Wednesday, November 20th and will be open to all TCNJ community members and guests. Registration information to follow in early Fall.

2023 HEED AWARD RECIPIENT

The Higher Education Excellence in Diversity (HEED) Award annually recognizes colleges and universities that demonstrate an outstanding commitment to diversity and inclusion. Open to all colleges and universities across the U.S. and Canada, HEED measures an institution’s level of achievement and intensity of commitment in regard to broadening diversity and inclusion on campus through initiatives, programs, and outreach; student recruitment, retention, and completion; and hiring practices for faculty and staff.

Inclusive Excellence is thrilled to announce that TCNJ was selected to receive the HEED 2023 award alongside other prestigious institutions. Though far from an end, it is the culmination of over five years’ work in making TCNJ more diverse, inclusive, and equitable.





THE COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY

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2023-2024**

**LINKS AND
RESOURCES**