



# Loyola University Chicago is Improving Black Student Support and DEI Efforts Across Campus

*Loyola University Chicago has been working with the Black Cultural Center (BCC) and other student organizations to improve Black student support and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) efforts across campus. As part of this work, the BCC put forth a list of ten recommendations in 2020 to guide the university's work to improve Black student life and success. The following recommendations, put forth by the Black Cultural Center, have been adopted by Loyola.*

## 1. Adopted Recommendations

### **A. BLACK MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES**

**Loyola's Wellness Center is enhancing existing mental health referral resources for BIPOC students, provided on an every-day-basis and in times of crisis.**

#### **ACTIONS TAKEN**

- ✓ The BCC has worked with Loyola's Wellness Center to develop an Undergraduate Black Mental Health Group, which will soon be finalized, and a Graduate Black Mental Health Group that is already holding sessions.
- ✓ The Wellness Center established mentorship programs that include Women of Color, Men of Color, Queer & Transgender People of Color, Black & Indigenous People of Color (BIPOC).
- ✓ The Wellness Center expanded and formalized a working relationship with Dr. Andrea Boyd, a Black-identified psychologist hired in January as the Counselor for Diversity, Inclusion, and Social Justice Initiatives.

### **B. MANDATORY DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION MODULE**

**Loyola firmly believes in DEI training and has made it mandatory for all new students. We are also in the process of including an emphasis on anti-racism training as part of our DEI initiatives.**

#### **ACTIONS TAKEN:**

- ✓ Loyola identified and created a training module for students focused on diversity, equity, and inclusion, with our partner, Everfi.
- ✓ The module (UNIV 1010) is required for all new students.
- ✓ The module has been implemented with other organizations and programs, such as Greek Life so non-new students have access.



### **C. INSTITUTION OF BLACK CONGRATULATORY CELEBRATION**

Loyola stands in full support of our Black students and has identified ways to institute specific celebrations to honor their accomplishments during their time on campus. We are planning the Third Annual Black Congratulatory Celebration for Loyola's graduating class of 2021 and look forward to the start of a new legacy in other campus traditions to celebrate our students.

#### **ACTIONS TAKEN**

- ✓ Loyola has identified permanent funding to support end-of-the-year congratulatory celebrations for affinity-based student organizations.
- ✓ Student Diversity and Multicultural Affairs (SDMA), with the support of Student Activities and Greek Affairs (SAGA), will develop the request for funds and provide support to student organizations so planning efforts are successful.
- ✓ Guidelines and process for securing funding are in place.

### **D. INVESTIGATION OF RACIAL BIAS INCIDENT AT STUDENT DIVERSITY MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS (SDMA) EVENT**

Loyola leadership and our entire community remain appalled by the racist actions perpetrated during the SDMA event on June 5, 2020. With the growth of online events as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, this incident was one of 200 separate reports of "Zoom-bombing" released by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) last year.

#### **ACTIONS TAKEN**

- ✓ A thorough investigation was conducted. All evidence collected was also provided to Campus Safety, who facilitated a formal report of the incident to appropriate law enforcement agencies, including the FBI.
- ✓ IP addresses of the individuals were not associated with any current or former Loyola employees or students.
- ✓ After exhausting all available resources at our disposal, Loyola was unable to identify the individual(s) responsible and the investigation was suspended.
- ✓ The OEC and other university resources remain available to support student organizations and others who are planning to host events to avoid any incidents like this from happening again in the future.

## 2. Our Ongoing Work

*Below are programs we continue to work through, in partnership with the BCC.*

### **A. OFFICE OF BLACK STUDENT SUCCESS**

Loyola is in the process of establishing and resourcing an office dedicated to Black student success, under advisement from the Black Student Experience Task Force with students, faculty, staff, and administration.

#### **NEXT STEPS**

- » Loyola will announce the structure and funding for the office at the end of April 2021.
- » We plan to hold the inaugural opening of the office and search for dedicated staff before we begin the Fall 2021 semester.



## **B. BLACK LIVING LEARNING COMMUNITY**

Loyola's Residence Life will provide virtual learning communities to all of our Living Learning Communities, including My Brother's Keeper, a program supporting Black men. We will continue to look at areas of expansion, which are currently limited due to the COVID-19 pandemic preventing in-person community gatherings.

### **NEXT STEPS**

- » Solidify and establish a mentorship program between Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., Theta Chapter, and Loyola's "My Brother's Keeper" Living Learning Community.
- » Continue conversations within Loyola's Department of Residence Life to flesh out a future Black Living Learning Community (as well as other potential ideas).
- » Provide transparency on timelines and action items for these initiatives.

## **C. CAMPUS SAFETY INITIATIVES**

The safety and wellbeing of our students is paramount. Our Campus Safety team values and cares about our students and student organizations, and they recognize our students have to be a part of the solution, particularly as it relates to racism on campus. The State of Illinois' Private College Campus Police Act requires Loyola to work directly with our designated local authority, the Chicago Police Department (CPD). The working relationship with the CPD is vital to ensuring the year-round protection of our students, faculty, staff, and visitors. However, we want to be a partner to our students in building trust with the officers who serve our campus.

### **NEXT STEPS**

- » Continue meeting with the aforementioned individuals to brainstorm new solutions.
- » Attend a roundtable meeting between relevant campus partners and students.
- » Await the efficacy and assessment of the new "integrity card" program started by Campus Safety.
- » Provide transparency and continued communication on updates around this initiative to the Rambler community.

## **D. DISCONTINUATION OF CDP TUITION PROGRAM**

Loyola has discontinued the CPD discounted tuition program effective in the 2021-22 academic year.

## 3. Additional Loyola Initiatives and Programs to Support to BIPOC Students

*Beyond the very helpful recommendations outlined by the BCC, Loyola has approached our work on DEI with a wide lens to identify areas where we can make the largest impact in our community, city, nation, and world. Below are the three key initiatives and programs we have announced as part of this work.*

### **A. FORMATION OF THE INSTITUTE FOR RACIAL JUSTICE (IRJ)**

The Institute for Racial Justice (IRJ) was formed to have direct impact on the lives of our Black students. Among other initiatives that will stem from IRJ, we will bring in diverse research assistants and representation of professors from outside Loyola and commit to bringing student scholars into Loyola, as well as building a bridge to those students in our Rome program.



## **B. DIVERSE FACULTY HIRING AND RETENTION**

**Representation matters, and we are committed to diverse faculty hiring and retention.**

- » **Hiring:** We will seek to recruit from HBCUs so the pool of applicants will be wider and more inclusive.
- » **Retention:** We are focused on the retention of our diverse faculty, specifically those within underrepresented areas, by developing a mentoring program and building a cohort model that creates opportunities for community building, specifically with Black professors.
- » **Pipeline:** We are contributing to the pipeline of racially diverse PhD candidates and seek to recruit students into our PhD programs from underrepresented groups

## **C. HIRING OF A VICE PRESIDENT FOR INSTITUTIONAL DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION**

**We recently announced a new position and immediate search for the Vice President of Institutional Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. Dr. Malik S. Henfield, founding Dean of the Institute for Racial Justice, is serving as Chair of the search committee, which includes student representation. The committee is working with Koya Partners, a nationally recognized search firm, to find the best candidate for the position.**

## 4. Other Areas of Review

*We have made significant progress and appreciate the dialogue we have had this year with the BCC, other students, staff, and faculty. The BCC made three other recommendations which we have discussed together, but are not moving forward with, as presented. We want to share our decision-making process as it relates to these three items.*

### **A. REVIEW OF ETHICS LINE**

Loyola leadership met with students to offer clarification about how reports and complaints should be submitted – and the university’s protocol for response. We remain committed to enhancing and fortifying communications efforts with our students and remaining in dialogue throughout the academic year.

### **B. FINANCIAL COMPENSATION OF DIVERSITY WORK**

We appreciate the BCC for heightening our awareness about the emotional burden this participation potentially creates for our Black students. While it is not possible to apply a university-wide policy, Loyola has worked with faculty leaders and administrators to propose compensation for students that conduct research, provide clerical support, or work within any student work-study profile, regardless of whether that work is DEI-related.

### **C. ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY**

Loyola wholeheartedly agrees it is imperative for the university to maintain its strong prohibition against discrimination in all forms. We want to move Loyola beyond merely prohibiting racism and towards becoming actively anti-racist. However, a “zero-tolerance policy” offers several practical challenges. We will continue to discuss our approach with the new Vice President of Institutional Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in the months ahead.

