JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY
TASK FORCE ON RACIAL EQUITY

ACADEMIC & PROFESSIONAL FACULTY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
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Recommendation Title: (Lack of a) Centralized DEI Events Website

Problem Statement/Issue:

JMU staff, faculty, and students cannot easily locate diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) focused professional development and other events. Specifically, the **Events** tabs on the JMU home page and the JMU Faculty and Staff home page do not consistently feature DEI events.

General information about diversity is available through a centralized diversity page ([Access and Inclusion](#)) which provides information about all the programs and events of that office, with links to university resources for diversity through drop-down navigation. This is useful for general reference and information about their programs, but details about other efforts across campus are publicized to local/departmental sites and The *Beacon,* which is provided by Access and Inclusion by "collecting" DEI events and information. The [Office of Equal Opportunity](#) website has a subpage that highlights campus diversity and inclusion initiatives, including the Diversity Conference, but not other events.

[The Beacon](#) is accessible through both the Access and Inclusion and Office of Equal Opportunity sites but is dependent on people knowing to look for it. Individuals who hope to attend events and professional development related to DEI must continuously "scan" the JMU site for such content. Some tagging exists within the JMU website program to support funneling of things to other places, but Diversity related tags do not seem to exist.

Recommendation, Rationale and Success Measures follow on next pages

WORKING GROUP LEADERSHIP

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A&P Faculty WG—CENTRALIZED DEI EVENT WEBSITE

RECOMMENDATION:

This recommendation includes 3 separate actions: tagging; visibility; and a centralized webpage. The assumption is that event tags, whether input to Cascade or the Event Management System (EMS), are accessed by the jmu.edu website.

1. **TAGS:** Immediately update JMU's events page (https://www.jmu.edu/events/) to add a category/space for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) events that are populated from existing and new Cascade tagging capabilities.

    a) Increase use of current/new tagging within Cascade to ensure that **all** events related to DEI are tagged as Diversity & Inclusion through an education campaign with/for Cascade website creators.

    b) Determine the EMS connection to Cascade and if appropriate link DEI events from EMS to the jmu.edu website.

    c) Enhance current Cascade/EMS training to include tagging for DEI.

    d) Establish on-going monitoring of the use of tagging by areas which have DEI professional development events/workshops (include all areas from all divisions that sponsor events and professional development).

2. **VISIBILITY:** Increase the visibility of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) on exiting webpages, including on the [Access & Inclusion](#) page.

    a) Add "Diversity" to the top navigation on the JMU.edu homepage and link to either the updated Access and Inclusion page or the newly created centralized page (recommendation 3.)

    b) Place a link on the JMU Faculty and Staff page for it with the word "Diversity" added in the label (this could be a separate banner link like the Engagement bar, or a listing under Services).

    c) Move the "read more" option under events (must scroll down to see it) to the top of the tab to increase use of the option (See graphic A on page 3).

    d) Consider adding a line that explains the ability to be 'notified' of interests (rather than having to search or check the page) when "read more" is clicked. Another option is training people to use the feature.

    e) Add Diversity (or DEI) on the Events page as an "Event by Category." (See Graphic B on page 3)

    f) Upgrade existing [Access and Inclusion](#) webpage **AND/OR** [Office of Equal Opportunity](#) webpage to further showcase "tiles" highlighting DEI events that link to the hosting entities' webpage. Both webpages should have side panels that list DEI content directly from the JMU events page.

    g) If a centralized page for DEI is established (#3), add the link to that page to the JMU Events page as well as the Access and Inclusion and Office of Equal Opportunity webpages.

Graphic A:
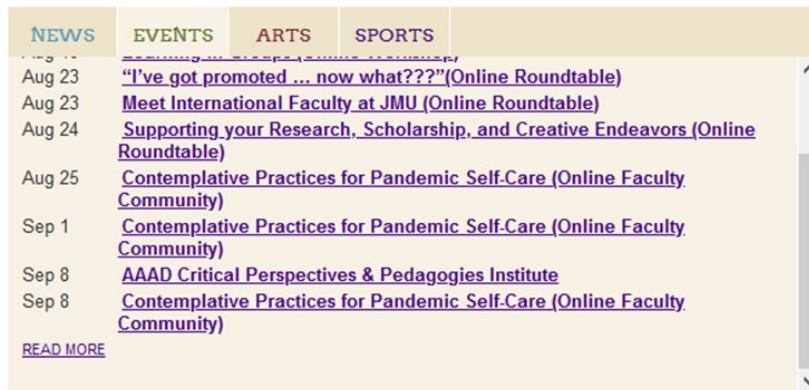
Graphic B:

3. CENTRALIZED WEBPAGE: The working sub-group believes in the value of a centralized page that lists a wide array of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) professional development initiatives, resources, personnel, and other content for Faculty and Staff. Whether or not this centralized webpage is outward facing (to include students [current and potential], families, and the community) or simply inward facing (for use by Faculty and Staff), the working sub-group agrees that such a centralized webpage must be managed at a global level and not assigned to (though they will be linked to it) offices "traditionally" thought of as having responsibility for DEI (Access and Inclusion and Office of Equal Opportunity. While not common among peer institutions, those institutions that have elevated Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) to be a primary point on their website (rather than a collection of sites by separate departments) are clearly showing the importance to their institution of DEI.

    a) The working sub-group suggests that such a centralized webpage should be the responsibility of and managed by the area that maintains the JMU homepage, and the Faculty and Staff page. Location, responsibility, and staffing to maintain such a page are factors for leadership to decide. In so deciding, care should be given to avoid the inadvertent creation of new functional silos and disjointed processes.

    b) Many departments have Diversity related pages (e.g., Talent Development has a page devoted to its Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Competency) but the navigation to these pages appear to be layered in navigation panels. The sub-group recommends that "tiles" or links to individual departmental pages be shown on the centralized webpage.

    c) The sub-group understands that a "DEI Personnel" page is in development and recommends that this page be part of central

    d) The sub-group encourages looking at other universities' display of DEI-related content and events. (Example: https://diversity.utah.edu/initiatives/udac/)

    e) A marketing and awareness campaign should be created to inform the campus community of the creation of the centralized DEI events website.

Rationale and Success on following page

RATIONALE

- Given that JMU is a predominantly white organization, it is imperative that white people and other community members at JMU support efforts that ensure racial equity, can understand the key issues, and can help respond in ways to help overcome obstacles to success.

- This recommendation. along with the steps/interventions associated are important because there are simply not enough people of color to get the work done without the assistance of a cadre of allies for racial equity. The steps include the use of an advisory group to help ensure greater buy-in for any approach that might be recommended or undertaken.

- This recommendation is a long-term solution because the problem of enhancing racial equity will be with us for a long time and we will forever have new community members and employees arriving who could benefit from the learning suggested by the recommendation.

SUCCESS

We will have achieved success if:

1) An implementation champion creates training, coaching opportunities, and other resources to assist allies for racial equity.

2) Racial equity allies describe a greater level of confidence, knowledge, skill, and ability dealing with challenges, difficult conversations and discussions related to racial equity at JMU.

3) There is active participation in the learning programs created for allies for racial equity.