

**TIS  
COLLEGE  
OF  
ART  
AND  
DESIGN**



# **DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION**

**PROGRESS REPORT • 2021–22**

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## Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: Our Progress and Sustained Commitment

Otis College of Art and Design works continuously to develop and sustain programs and initiatives in support of our diverse community of artists and designers. This work does not happen in a vacuum. It takes thoughtful and intentional strategic planning to interrogate our systems and integrate newer ones grounded in inclusion.

It is our commitment to keep our leadership accountable as we work toward our goal of a greater sense of belonging. The Otis Community has a deep commitment to shared governance as we work across all constituent groups, fostering a more collaborative spirit among committees, staff, faculty, students, alumnx, and academic leadership.

The information that follows is a progress report of where we stand related to diversity, equity, and inclusion practices and data points. This *Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Progress Report* should serve as a foundational source of information for us to reflect on what we have accomplished thus far, but more importantly, address what we must improve upon in order to meet our goals of fostering a truly inclusive community.

**Most Sincerely,**

**Charles Hirschhorn**  
President

**Jiseon Lee Isbara**  
Provost

**Nick Negrete, Ed.D.**  
Associate Vice President  
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion



# Otis's Ten Points: Standing Up for Equity

**1** **WE DO NOT TOLERATE RACISM**  
or any other form of violence  
or discrimination from anyone.

**2** **WE EXPECT ALL OTIS** community members to  
work toward dismantling  
systems of oppression.

**3** WE RECOGNIZE THE COLLEGE'S HISTORICAL STRUGGLES AROUND **EQUITY**  
and the ways those reflect struggle IN U.S. culture and beyond.

**4** **WE RECOGNIZE DIVERSITY**  
as a reality, a responsibility, and a resource.

**5** We commit to treating EVERY PERSON'S IDENTITY  
WITH DIGNITY AND RESPECT.

We commit to practicing  
**6** **INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSIBILITY**  
to redress unjust histories.

We commit to an ongoing systemic and  
structural approach in correcting inequities:  
**7** **THIS WORK IS COLLECTIVE**  
NOT INDIVIDUAL

**8** We commit to hold ourselves and one  
another accountable to our collective  
effort to create an inclusive campus

**INVIGORATED  
BY DIFFERENCE.**

WE COMMIT TO  
**9** **HONESTY, VULNERABILITY, AND OPENNESS**  
as we dialogue across differences.

We commit to an intersectional and  
**10** **JUSTICE-ORIENTED**  
APPROACH.

Read our full DEI Statement here: [otis.edu/dei-statement](https://otis.edu/dei-statement)

Designed by Leslie Ross-Robertson, 2021, Otis Printmaking & Otis Laboratory Press.

Revised, with permission, from original print design



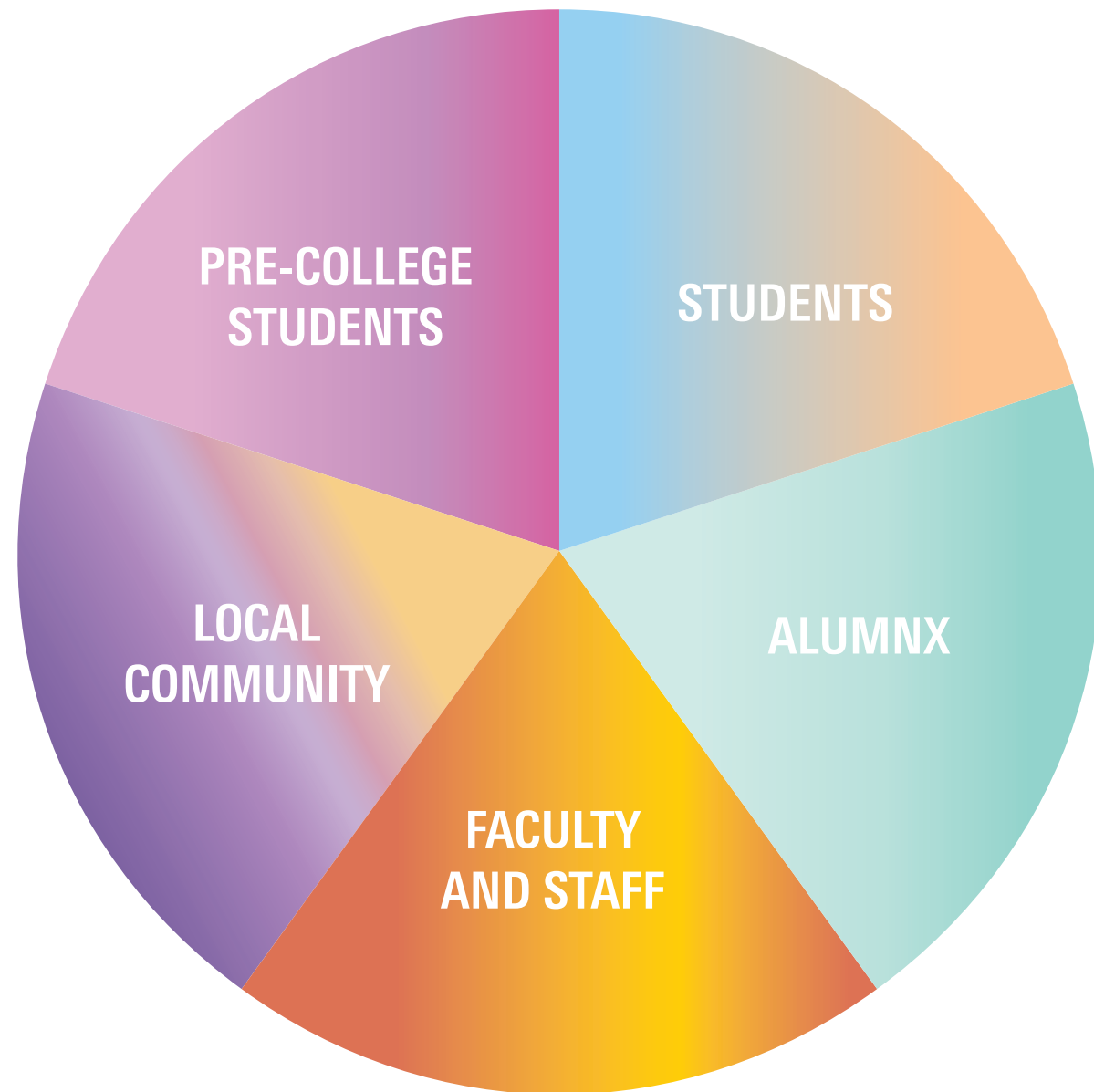
Creative Action and Integrated Learning (CAIL) course



# Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

## Current DEI Programs and Initiatives

Our Commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion requires a comprehensive approach with many key constituents at the center of this work. The following information outlines the variety of initiatives we have engaged in or are continuing to engage in as we work toward building an inclusive and affirming campus environment.



President Charles Hirschhorn



**Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion are essential to our support of students, staff, faculty, and alumnx.**

— Charles Hirschhorn, President



Jason Bolden speaking with Summer of Style students



This program changed my perspective in introducing me to different forms of design and helping me explore different sections of design.

— 2021 Summer of Style Participant

## Commitments to Pre-College Students

### Meta College Program

- In partnership with The Metaphor Club, Otis College launched this program in 2021 to expand upon outreach and recruitment of students from underrepresented communities who have a desire to attend an art and design college.

### Summer of Art

- Scholarships are granted in collaboration with local community organizations to support underrepresented youth and provide an opportunity to develop their creative passions during this pre-college summer program for students ages 12-18 years with a four week residential experience.

### Summer Language Program (SLP)

- Students who do not meet Admission's Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) requirements may be conditionally admitted to Otis College pending successful completion of the Otis College Summer Language Program, which provides a strong foundation to start their BFA studies.
- In addition to improving language abilities, students have the opportunity to engage in a studio elective course and connect with other Otis College students before the start of the Fall semester. More information about SLP here: [otis.edu/summer-language-program](https://otis.edu/summer-language-program)

### Summer of Style

- Supported and sponsored by celebrity stylist Jason Bolden, this six-day program for high school students of color introduces them to the worlds of fashion, product, and interior design, in an effort to widen the pipeline to these creative industries for underrepresented youth.



## Commitments to Students

### BIPOC Student Summit

- Launched in January 2021, this one day summit focuses on creating a community space for Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) students to connect around shared or similar identity(ies), while addressing the realities of being a person of color within the creative industry.
- This program is meant to uplift and empower BIPOC student voices through dialogue on topics of personal development, professional growth, and opportunities beyond graduation.
- More information about this program here: [otis.edu/bipoc-student-summit](https://otis.edu/bipoc-student-summit)

### Black Creatives Institute

- Launched in August 2020, this three day program builds community among incoming Black-identified creatives by providing holistic support of their personal growth, identity formation, cultural development, and career development to create a stronger sense of belonging within the Otis College community.
- Eight out of the nine initial students who participated in the inaugural year of this program returned in their second year, yielding an 88.8% first to second year retention rate.
- More information about the program is here: [otis.edu/black-creatives-institute](https://otis.edu/black-creatives-institute)



2021 Black Creatives Institute, community building session

**The Black Creatives Institute has impacted me deeply. I feel more open to exploring and being more proud of my Black identity. It also was very inspiring to see and meet other people of color doing the things I have always dreamed of doing and seeing that it is possible.**

**— 2021 Black Creatives Institute Participant**

## Commitments to Students (cont'd)

### Charles White Scholarship

- This is a full-tuition scholarship up to four years, available to underrepresented young artists and designers from Los Angeles and beyond. Priority is given to students who identify as Black/African American; Latinx; Asian; Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander; American Indian or Alaska Native; or students who identify as bi- or multiracial.
- The Scholarship will be awarded to an incoming first-year or transfer art and design student from an underrepresented community in Los Angeles County in Spring 2022 for a Fall 2022 start.
- Beginning in 2023, the Charles White Art and Design Scholarship will expand to include one recipient annually from Los Angeles County, and one from anywhere in the United States.
- More information can be found here: [otis.edu/charles-white-scholarship](https://otis.edu/charles-white-scholarship)

### DEI Education and Engagement

- All incoming new students, both undergraduate and graduate, are required to complete a DEI and Belonging course, providing foundational knowledge of diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- The First-Year Experience program, Take FLIGHT, centers DEI discussion as a part of its six core modules.



Charles White Scholarship billboard

**The Charles White Art and Design Scholarship is an important step taken by Otis College to say that not only are we creating a space for BIPOC students to explore their passion, but we are providing the financial support for them to thrive. The hope is that this scholarship helps aspiring BIPOC artists and designers to see themselves in Charles White and be inspired to create their own path.**

**— Sam Kim, Dean of Enrollment Management**



## Commitments to Students (cont'd)

### Preferred Name and Pronouns

- The College has a Pronoun and Preferred Name Policy that enables any student to use the pronoun they desire and name they prefer, and incorporates this within our class rosters, platforms, and other college systems.
- Preferred name and pronoun education sessions have been launched to various faculty and staff groups, including a student panel education session.

### Student Leadership Training

- All student leaders engage in a deep understanding and education around DEI issues across campus, with comprehensive training on how to work with students across differences, and support inclusive efforts to empower our student population.

### Veterans Student Support

- Otis College has a long-standing veterans student support group that is centered around community engagement and visibility of our veterans, allowing them to connect and engage with each other around their unique experiences returning to college.
- Sustained financial support from the Ahmanson Foundation has allowed Otis College to fund programs and initiatives to enhance the veteran student experiences
- We participate in the Yellow Ribbon Program, which helps finance college education for veterans, in addition to providing a privately-named scholarship funded through the Ahmanson Foundation.



2019 Veterans Day luncheon event





Provost Jiseon Lee Isbara

**I am grateful that our faculty continues putting efforts into adding voices to existing debate, and empowering students to share their knowledge, experiences, and cultural proficiency.**

**— Jiseon Lee Isbara, Provost**

## Commitments to Faculty and Staff

### Accessibility Committee

- Committee focused on developing resources for faculty to engage in best practices and learning opportunities on accessibility and student experiences around disability and neurodiversity.
- Small learning sessions have been launched to help faculty connect and share resources to better support the student experience.

### AICAD BIPOC Academic Leadership Institute

- The Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion sponsored seven faculty and staff to participate in the second annual Association of Independent Colleges of Art and Design (AICAD) BIPOC Academic Leadership Institute, providing professional development and mentoring opportunities.

### Diversity in the Curriculum

- Support faculty development through grants to encourage infusing diversity in the curriculum. Additionally, the DEI Curriculum Subcommittee continues to work toward the goal of creating an inclusive curriculum and approaches to pedagogy that is culturally responsive.
- DEI PechaKucha-style presentations are infused in Academic Assembly to provide faculty with a variety of examples on how to integrate and leverage DEI practices related to curriculum development and pedagogy.
- Revision of course evaluations to include DEI assessment as an accountability measure for faculty to work toward developing, improving, and/or enhancing their current practices in the classroom.

## Commitments to Faculty and Staff (cont'd)

### Implicit Bias Training

- Inclusive practices training for all faculty and staff who serve on hiring committees in order to mitigate bias in the hiring process.

### LGBTQIA+ Inclusion Committee

- Committee focused on policies and practices toward an inclusive climate for our LGBTQIA+ community members.
- This committee developed a progress report that was reviewed and assessed by the Campus Pride Index, awarding Otis College 4 out of 5 stars on our effort to create a supportive community. The Campus Pride Index Ranking can be reviewed here: [campusprideindex.org/campuses/details/5497?campus=otis-college-of-art-and-design](https://campusprideindex.org/campuses/details/5497?campus=otis-college-of-art-and-design)

### Teaching and Learning Center Resources

- Resources and training developed for faculty to be able to engage in Universal Design for Learning (UDL) efforts in order to optimize classroom accessibility for students.
- Teaching and learning resources provided on Anti-Racism, Black Lives Matter, and Gender Identity and Expression.



Dr. Laura Kiralla, Vice President of Campus Life

Engaging in the Campus Pride Index was transformational for Otis College, as it brought to light the areas of great success where we currently support our LGBTQIA+ students, faculty, and staff. The Index also allowed the College to see areas for improvement, and the assessment has given the College a clear foundation from which to build new initiatives, programs, and support.

— Laura Kiralla, Vice President of Campus Life





Hazel Mandujano, Director of Alumnx Relations (BFA '03, MFA '10)

**Creating community and building relationships towards long-term and meaningful partnerships has been paramount in my vision of what our Alumnx Relations area could be. Being able to support alumnx who are invested in bringing their voice and perspectives is a large part of community building.**

**— Hazel Mandujano  
(’03 BFA Fine Arts, ’10 MFA Graphic Design),  
Director of Alumnx Relations**

## **Commitments to Alumnx\***

### **Black Alumnx Engagement**

- Ongoing engagement between Black alumnx and senior administrators, in which critical feedback was shared in an effort to improve the experiences of our Black students and alumnx.
- Specific engagement opportunities included focus groups, hosted discussions with the President and Provost, and social engagements to strengthen relationships with our alumnx.

### **Alumnx Exploration Series**

- Partnership with faculty alumnx Marsha Hopkins ('97 BFA Fine Arts, '02 MFA Writing) on Black History Month programming to host speakers Emory Douglas, Michael D. McCarthy, and a discussion group surrounding the history of Black entrepreneurs in Los Angeles.

### **Community Museum Visits**

- Partnership between the Office of DEI and Student Activities to offer complimentary entries to alumnx and members of the on-campus community to DEI-focused exhibitions throughout Los Angeles.

\*The term alumnx reflects both singular and plural, and it can be used to refer to one or all alumnx. This decision was made to move toward a more inclusive vernacular, acknowledging that gender is fluid, and to move away from gendered terminology.

## Commitments to Alumnx (cont'd)

### Alumnx Representation on the DEI Council and DEI-focused Committees

- Alumnx representation on the college-wide DEI Council.
- Alumnx Relations representation on Indigenous Community Committee, LGBTQIA+ Inclusion Committee, and the BIPOC Student Summit planning team.

### Introduction of the term “Alumnx”

- Introduction of gender-inclusive term “alumnx” to the Otis Community, moving forward with a college-wide adoption of this term.



Daniel Flores Estrella ('10 BFA Communication Arts)

Otis alumnx represent the histories and culture of the College; they instantiate the Otis education and experience beyond the institution's campus. They not only illuminate and manifest the impact of an Otis education, but realize its true potential in the greater world. Alumnx representation on the DEI Council and other committees not only exhibits a care for meaningful partnerships, but an honest desire to invigorate change and create opportunities for meaningful accountability.

— Daniel Flores Estrella  
( '10 BFA Communication Arts)





Dr. Nick Negrete, Associate Vice President of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

I want our college to be one that students experience as open, affirming, empowering, identity-conscious, and one that allows for the possibilities to run wild. I want our sense of belonging to be revolutionary and impactful, and to foster a sense of joy.

— Dr. Nick Negrete,  
Associate Vice President of  
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

## Commitments Moving Forward

While we have made progress in our DEI work, there is much more to be done. These initiatives and ideas are not an exhaustive list of future goals we hope to accomplish, rather a beginning that will serve as a launchpad, as various constituent groups contribute to a strategic planning process, including our DEI Council.

### **Affinity-Focused Programming**

Similar to our Black Creatives Institute, research and develop future programs that would benefit our students from various historically-marginalized communities and implement programs/services that are right-sized and focused on their student success pathway.

### **DEI Strategic Planning**

A comprehensive strategy on how we enact diversity, equity, and inclusion on this campus must be developed with a three-to-five year goal-setting structure. This will entail faculty, staff, students, and alumna to participate in a strategic planning process in order to engage all voices.

### **DEI Engagement and Education for Faculty and Staff**

The DEI Council has established an Engagement and Education Subcommittee, one of four standing subcommittees, whose focus is to provide expertise and guidance to the AVP, DEI on a multilayered engagement program on DEI topics, including a focus on anti-racism, community building, and inclusion practices.

### **Enhance Student Education and Engagement with DEI**

Work collaboratively with Academic Affairs, Campus Life, and Student Affairs to increase our efforts on how students interact with diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives, in addition to the online education program. This includes understanding and education of implicit bias, identity development, and introduction to DEI topics in tandem with their creative practices.

### **Faculty Development**

Develop and implement a comprehensive and continuous faculty development program for teaching and critiquing diverse students.

### **Recruitment and Hiring**

In partnership with Human Resources and Development, work on improving the College's recruitment and hiring practices in order to ensure diverse candidate pools for faculty and staff positions, and enhancing our application process to leverage the importance of DEI.

## Appendices

### Appendix A: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Council

The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Council formed in early 2020 with representatives from throughout the Otis Community, including students, faculty, and staff. The members of the Council share a passionate commitment and a breadth and depth of knowledge related to diversity, equity, and inclusion. With various representatives from all corners of the campus and beyond, the Council shares an amazing knowledge base and serves as a resource for the College. You can read more about our DEI Council here: [otis.edu/diversity-equity-inclusion-council](https://otis.edu/diversity-equity-inclusion-council)



Francarlo Resto, Director of Student Activities

**I believe that the work of the DEI Council comes from a place of community—understanding who our community is, identifying what our community needs, and dialoguing around topics that impact the lived experiences of our students, faculty, and staff. As a member of this Council, I have a responsibility to represent and uplift the voices and narratives of those within our community to work towards a more equitable institution.**

**— Francarlo Resto,  
Director of Student Activities**



# Appendix B: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Council DEI Council Members



Laura Salazar  
'22 Communication Arts Student



Michele Jaquis  
Associate Professor & Director  
Interdisciplinary Studies & the Artists Community Teaching Program



Cole James  
Assistant Professor  
Foundation



Joanne Mitchell  
Assistant Provost  
Assessment and Accreditation



Dr. Carol Branch  
Assistant Dean  
Student Affairs



Valerie Diaz  
Interim Assistant Director  
Admissions



Gigi Eassa  
'24 Fashion Design Student



Dr. Nick Negrete  
AVP, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion  
DEI Council Chair



Jeffrey Perkins  
AVP, Communication  
and External Relations



Francarlo Resto  
Director  
Student Activities



Daniel Flores Estrella  
'10 BFA Communication Arts Alumnx



Karen Hill  
Vice President, Human Resources  
and Development



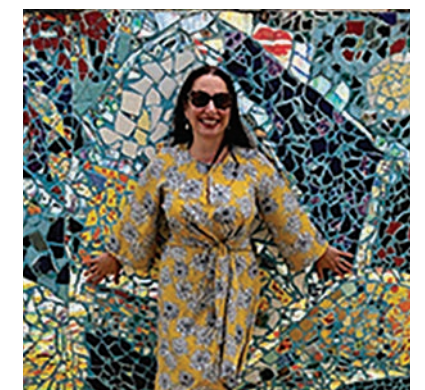
Jen Hofer  
Adjunct Professor  
Liberal Arts and Sciences



Matt Shilling  
'24 Digital Media Student



JoAnn Staten  
Assistant Chair  
Liberal Arts and Sciences



Heather Joseph Witham  
Associate Professor  
Liberal Arts and Sciences





Maddie Davis, Communication Arts '23 — Campus Activities Board (CAB) Diversity Chair

**Programming at Otis College is designed to teach students to appreciate and celebrate the various backgrounds and cultures existing within the campus community, while also providing a safe space for students to express and discover their own identities so that no matter what makes you unique, you can feel that you belong in every aspect of who you are.**

**— Maddie Davis  
(’23 Communication Arts),  
Campus Activities Board Diversity Chair**

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# **2022 BIPOC STUDENT SUMMIT**

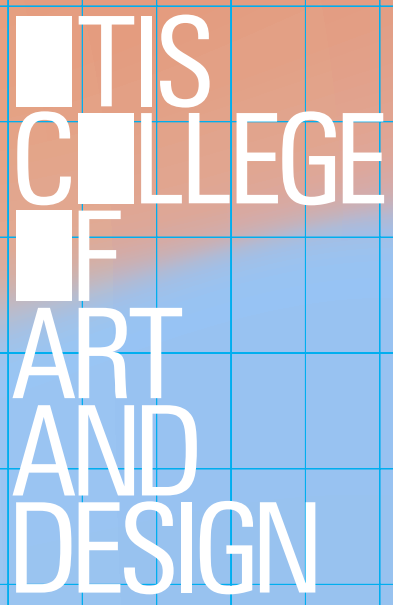


2022 BIPOC Student Summit Invitation

**I’m a transfer student, and we never had anything like this at my previous college, so walking into the BIPOC Summit was a cool experience. It made me reflect on past art pieces and scenarios that I wouldn’t have considered as part of ‘my narrative’ and going forward, I’m going to try and tell my story more openly.**

**— 2021 BIPOC Student Summit Participant**



The logo for Otis College of Art and Design is positioned in the lower-left corner of the page. It features the text "OTIS COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN" in a white, sans-serif font. The letters "O", "C", and "O" in "OTIS COLLEGE" are partially obscured by white squares. The background of the entire page is a grid of thin blue lines, with a color gradient transitioning from orange at the top to light blue at the bottom.

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