



Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Fall Newsletter | 2026-27 Academic Year

Exploring Power and Equity Together

Power is often associated with authority or position, but it also shapes our everyday experiences—influencing who is heard, whose knowledge is valued, and who has access to opportunities. Equity asks us to recognize these dynamics and ensure everyone has what they need to participate, contribute, and thrive.

Throughout the 2026-27 academic year, the EMU community is invited into dialogue and shared exploration of how power operates in our classrooms, workplaces, relationships, and broader social systems.

This theme invites us to practice power responsibly—by listening across differences, elevating overlooked voices, sharing decision-making, and cultivating greater justice and belonging.

DEI programs, campus events, and grant opportunities will offer spaces for us to learn, reflect, and engage together throughout the year.



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RESOURCE CORNER

Resource Corner with Dawn: CHATS

Connecting Humans and Telling Stories

This summer, Dawn Neil completed facilitator training in CHATS, which stands for Connecting Humans and Telling Stories.



Developed through the Appalachian Center for Civic Life at Emory & Henry University, CHATS uses storytelling and intentional listening to help people connect across different experiences and perspectives.

Storytelling can create opportunities for people to move beyond assumptions, recognize shared humanity, and better understand how identity and experience shape the way we see the world.

During the coming year, the Office of DEI will explore ways CHATS may support conversations with students, campus groups, departments, and teams.

Schedule a Meeting with Dawn today [[click here](#)]



**Learn more through the Emory &
Henry Appalachian Center for Civic Life**

C.H.A.T.S. Facilitator [What is

https://www.emoryhenry.edu/appalachian-center-for-civic-life/resources/?utm_source=chatgpt.com

CHATS]

EMU in the Community: Fall Festivals

EMU will once again join community partners at two of Harrisonburg’s fall celebrations. Students, faculty, and staff will have opportunities to volunteer at the EMU table, greet community members, distribute university information and swag, and show their Royal spirit.



Harrisonburg-Rockingham African American Festival

 Saturday, September 12, 2026 |  12:00 to 6:00 p.m. |  Ralph Sampson Park

The festival celebrates Black culture, history, community, music, food, and local Black-owned businesses.

 Festival information
<https://www.harrisonburgva.gov/hraaf>



Shenandoah Valley Pride Festival

 Sunday, September 20, 2026 |  12:30 to 6:00 p.m. |  Turner Pavilion, downtown Harrisonburg

This free, all-ages celebration includes local vendors, performers, community organizations, and resources.

 Festival information
<https://www.shenandoahvalleypride.org/2026-pride-festival>

Volunteer at the EMU table

EMU Fall DEI Campus Events

Chief Walt Red Hawk Brown

Monday, October 12, 2026 • 10:15 a.m. • Lehman Hall Convocation
<https://www.cheroenhaka-nottoway.org>

Fabian Thorne

November 5, 2026 • 5:00 p.m. • Student Union
<https://www.fabianthorne.com>



Apply Today

for 2026 Inclusive Excellence Grants!

Applications open Sept 3rd

Are you ready to be an Agent of Change?

Scan the QR code to learn more about how you can make a difference on our campus.

Applications Close October 18th!



What are you waiting for?
Scan the code!

Contact Us:

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BELONG TOGETHER

OFFICE OF DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION