
CODI Newsletter | November 2019

Committee on Diversity and Inclusion <codi@emu.edu>

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Tue, Nov 19, 2019 at 5:44 PM

**CODI**
Committee on Diversity and Inclusion**November 2019****Upcoming Events****November****is: *Native
American Heritage
Month*****November 19**Human FlowDocumentary (7:30pm)**November 20**

CODI Meeting

(8:30am)

Restorative Justice:
Signs and Symbols of
Movement-
Making (4:00pm)

BSU Meeting (7:00pm)

November 22

LSA Meeting (3:30pm)

December 2Safe Space Meeting
(5:15pm)**December 4**

BSU Meeting (7:00pm)

December 6

LSA Meeting (3:30pm)

Updates from CODI

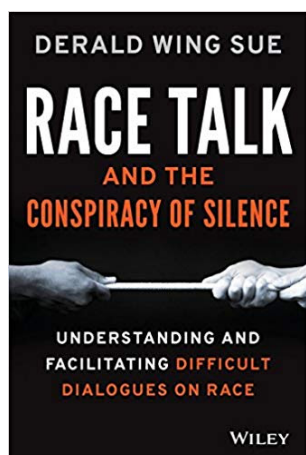
A warm welcome to the first of what will be a monthly newsletter brought to you by the Committee on Diversity and Inclusion (CODI)!

Each installment of the CODI newsletter will include a brief update on the most recent initiatives that CODI is working on and will highlight upcoming events and activities that promote diversity and inclusion on campus or in the local community. We also intend for this to be a source of learning by sharing new resources available in the library and including educational pieces related to diversity, equity, and inclusion. We welcome feedback and suggestions for content and hope that this becomes a helpful resource for EMU.

As co-chairs of CODI, we hope to continue the good work that has gone on before us - promoting initiatives that further EMU's commitment to becoming a campus that is just, equitable, and that fosters a sense of belonging for every student, staff, and faculty member. We are encouraged by the students, staff, and faculty members who have reached out to share ideas, to partner with CODI on initiatives, and to work for a more just and equitable campus. Some things we have worked on recently include:

- Hosting a webinar on supporting first-generation students of color in higher education
- Planning events for educating faculty and staff

Resources



Derald Wing Sue's *Race Talk and the Conspiracy of Silence: Understanding and Facilitating Difficult Dialogues on Race* is now in the Hartzler Library (370.117 S944r 2015). This book is based on research Sue and his team did on what prompts people to talk about race, why it's so hard, and how to have helpful, productive conversations around race. The book provides ways and means of breaking harmful silences, addressing difficult emotions, and moving forward together.

More Resources

If you want to learn more . .

Some excellent reads include: *An Indigenous People's History of the United States* by Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz (970.00497 D899i 2014) or *Braiding Sweetgrass* by Robin Wall Kimmerer (305.897 K496 2013).

- Promoting other events that educate campus community about diversity and equity
- Envisioning and applying the recently approved Diversity and Inclusion Plan passed last year
- Gathering campus data related to diversity and inclusion
- and more.

We are interested in *your* ideas. If you have things that you think would make this a more inclusive and welcoming campus, we want to hear from you. Reach out to us at codi@emu.edu and let us know what you're interested in working on!

With excitement,

Kathy Evans & Erick Camodeca

CODI Co-Chairs

Things We Need to Know

*"Our immigrant plant teachers offer a lot of different models for how not to make themselves welcome on a new continent. Garlic mustard poisons the soil so that native species will die. Tamarisk uses up all the water. Foreign invaders like loosestrife, kudzu, and cheat grass have the colonizing habit of taking over others' homes and growing without regard to limits. But Plantain is not like that. Its strategy was **to be useful, to fit into small places, to coexist with others around the dooryard, to heal wounds**. Plantain is so prevalent, so well integrated, that we think of it as native. It has earned the name bestowed by botanists for plants that have become our own. Plantain is not indigenous but *"naturalized."**

- Robin Wall Kimmerer, *Braiding Sweetgrass*

On October 14, a student-led initiative gathered together students, staff and faculty to discuss ways in which EMU can stand in solidarity with Indigenous Peoples, both with our campus community, regionally, and around the world. The lunch conversation, hosted on Indigenous People's Day, used the Mennonite World Conference's "Declaration of Solidarity with Indigenous Peoples" as inspiration to guide the conversation. The time together generated many [creative and practical ideas](#) for how the EMU community can intentionally center the voices of indigenous people on our campus and ways we can build meaningful and reciprocal relationship with native peoples in our region and beyond.

Tala Bautista and Yasmiene Mabrouk, as well as other students, have been cultivating a relationship between

Both can be found in Hartzler Library!

There are many excellent educational resources on all aspects of American Indian life provided by the [Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian's Native Knowledge](#) feature, the [Newberry Library's interactive Indians of the Midwest](#), and [Scholastic's Native American Heritage](#) lesson plans. Both the [National Park Service](#) and [National Public Radio](#) feature podcasts that deal with national landmarks of importance and current issues in American Indian communities, respectively.

EMU and the Monacan Nation, who are headquartered in Amherst County in the Blue Ridge Mountains and is one of the few American Indian tribes that were not fully displaced from their ancestral homeland. You can learn more about our neighbors to the south by [visiting their website](#) or by paying them a visit.

With that in mind, we want to bring attention to National Native American Heritage month! Since 1990, Congress has designated November as National American Indian Heritage Month which aims to recognize and celebrate Native Americans. Such recognition dates back further with state and organizational recognition of indigenous peoples days and commemorations occurring at the turn of the twentieth century. Dr. Arthur C. Parker, a Seneca Indian and co-founder of the Society of American Indians in 1911, organized American Indian Day beginning in 1915.

As we recognize the importance of this month, may we commit ourselves to an ongoing practice that will deepen conversations within the EMU community to: bring about new ways of understanding, help us understand our limits and our gifts, and to cultivate a presence that heals wounds.

If you would like to be more involved in this work on campus, contact us at codi@emu.edu.

Many centuries ago, perhaps too many to count, the mountains around us rose up and created the Shenandoah Valley which soon became home to a lush and vibrant cacophony of water ways and living beings. And it was good. Many years later groups of humans also made this valley their home, and groups whose descendants were later called Siouan, Monacan, Monahoac, Catawba, and Cherokee all used this land and its streams and rivers, mixing, cooperating, fighting, and intermingling while claiming it as fishing, hunting and food gathering grounds.

About four centuries ago, this land was again claimed, this time by peoples who believed that the land was opened for them by God or that it was their divine right to subjugate all lands and peoples to their will alone - a false belief that still dominates today. Now, as we gather here, let us with humility remember the long and rich history of this place and the shorter history of humanity upon it; let us acknowledge the violence of land taken and used in such a way that indigenous groups could no longer thrive here; and let us choose to honor this land and the Black's Run and larger Shenandoah River watersheds, with the true belief that the earth, and all things on it, are for everyone and everything to share.

Long ago, the universe and all that is within it was brought into being. And it was good. Truth-telling, justice, and reconciliation are needed to help us remember, redeem and restore this goodness for all.

This proposed statement of place was developed by Mark Metzler Sawin and Brian Martin Burkholder

November 8, 2019

[Erick Camodeca](#)- co-chair, staff - cross country/track associate coach
[Kathy Evans](#) - co-chair, faculty -

[Emily Forrer](#), staff, operations coordinator of student life (recorder)
[Christen Peters](#), staff, program associate,

education

[Stefano Colafrancesci](#), faculty - computer science

[Deanna Durham](#), faculty - applied social sciences

[Scott Eyre](#), staff - lead residence director, housing and res life

CJP

[Celeste Thomas](#), staff - director multicultural student services and senior adviser to the president for diversity and inclusion

[Tim Seidel](#), faculty - applied social sciences & CJP

[Marci Frederick](#), faculty - director of libraries



Forward

Committee on Diversity and Inclusion

Eastern Mennonite University

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