

Timeline of Diversity Initiatives and Related Activity at Providence College 2010-2017

June 2010 – The College approves its first Strategic Plan for Diversity.

September 2011 – The College makes permanent a test-optional admissions policy in recognition that standardized test scores are not the strongest predictor of student success at PC, and may also be a deterrent to multicultural students in applying to college. The policy had been test-piloted successfully from 2007-2010.

October 2011 – The Board of Trustees approves the College’s new Strategic Plan for 2011-2015: *Pursuing Truth, Achieving Excellence, Transforming Lives*. “Embracing Diversity” is identified as one of five core values in the plan.

January 2012 – Rafael Zapata is hired as Providence College’s first Chief Diversity Officer. The College creates the Office of Institutional Diversity.

Summer 2012 – The Multicultural Scholars Transition program is expanded to include non-scholar multicultural students, more than doubling the number of participants. In 2015, the program is expanded further to include first-generation college students.

Fall 2012 – The Providence College/Smith Hill Annex is officially opened to foster collaboration and connection between the College and members of the Smith Hill community.

February 2013 – The College’s revised Mission Statement is approved. “Community and Diversity” is included as one of five explicit areas of focus.

Spring 2013 – Providence College becomes an original member of the Creating Connections Consortium (C-3), a Mellon Foundation-funded initiative supporting diversity and institutional change through collaboration within a consortium of highly selective liberal arts colleges.

Spring 2013 – The Promising Scholars Fund to support diversity recruitment and retention is launched with a one-time gift of \$55,000 from a donor.

Spring 2013 – The Division of Student Affairs creates – and Trustees endorse – the “Friar Four Foundation Pillars,” which include “Cultural Agility” (previously referred to as “Cultural Competence.”)

May 8, 2013 – Several high-level campus administrators, including the head of PC’s Office of Safety & Security, attend a training presented by the Governor’s Commission on Prejudice & Bias entitled, “Hate Crimes and Civil Rights: Federal and State Perspectives.”

June 12, 2013 – The Office of Safety & Security holds a half-day professional development training for its entire staff of security officers entitled, “Cultural Awareness & Competency.”

September 2013 – Fr. Shanley announces to the campus community a campus climate focus group study to help assess student, faculty and staff experiences living, studying, teaching and working at the College.

September 2013 – The report of the Committee for Diversity Implementation is unveiled.

Fall 2013 – After a series of conversations with academic departments and program chairs, and the Office of Human Resources, a Faculty Diversity Initiative is launched. The Office of Academic Affairs revises faculty hiring policies and protocols with the goal of enhancing the strength and diversity of applicant pools.

Fall 2013 – The Director of Campus Safety & Security announces the establishment of an official Non-Biased Policing Policy.

October 2013 – The College formally revises its “Non-Discrimination Statement” to include “sexual orientation and gender identity.” Fr. Shanley communicates the changes to the campus via email on October 4, 2013.

October 7, 2013 – The College conducts the campus climate focus groups. There are 16 groups with 129 total participants.

October 17, 2013 – The College adopts an official Bias Response Protocol to better respond to, and support both targets and alleged perpetrators of, bias incidents on campus. Fr. Shanley communicates the information to the campus community the same day.

Winter 2014 – The School of Continuing Education establishes a Hispanic Outreach Initiative involving collaborations with local parishes with significant Hispanic populations, and begins hosting spring events (including a mass, presentations and dinner) which, thus far, have averaged 55 attendees from the city of Providence and surrounding areas.

January 27, 2014 – The College presents the findings from the campus climate focus groups and releases the campus climate report. This leads to the identification of three priority areas of focus: communication, education and awareness, and a policies and practices review.

May 2014 – Tierra Marshall is hired as the first Assistant Director of the Office of Institutional Diversity.

Summer 2014 – The Friar Foundations Program, a five-week summer initiative supporting the academic and social transition for approximately 30 multicultural and first generation entering students, is launched.

Summer 2014 – Providence College is awarded a grant from the consortium on High Achievement and Success to support an ongoing Inclusive Pedagogy Initiative.

September 25, 2014 – PC announces a new partnership initiative with the Community College of Rhode Island called the Guaranteed Admission & Tuition Agreement (GATA) under which eligible CCRI students can transfer to PC’s School of Continuing Education and receive a discount of up to 30% off their tuition.

Fall 2014 – The Office of Institutional Diversity launches a Difficult Dialogues initiative. The initiative includes a variety of components aimed at fostering a culture of dialogue among students, faculty and staff to help create an inclusive and collaborative campus. Components include campus-wide community conversations, professional development workshops and an annual Community Conversation with Fr. Shanley and CDO Zapata.

Fall 2014 – The Office of Admission launches the Pathways to PC Program as part of their outreach to first-generation, multicultural and local students.

Spring 2015 – The Faculty Diversity Initiative yields significant results for the tenure-track faculty cohort beginning in the fall of 2015. Six out of 12 new hires are people of color and six out of 12 are women.

Spring 2015 – A Bias Incident resource folder and webpage are developed to encourage reporting of incidents and to help faculty, staff and students be resources for one another.

March 2015 – A Science & Diversity Task Force is established to critically examine best practices and policies which foster enhanced retention and success among first-generation students and students from underrepresented groups in the sciences.

May 2015 – The Vice President of Student Affairs announces plans for a full external review of the Office of Campus Safety & Security.

Fall 2015 – The College Strategic Plan for Diversity is revised and updated.

October 2015 – The number of multicultural undergraduate students at PC stands at 17%, up from 8% when Fr. Shanley took office as president in 2005. The number of multicultural ordinary (tenured/tenure-track) faculty at PC stands at 14%, up from 8% when Fr. Shanley first took office. Multicultural executives, administrators and managers increased from 7% to 8% during this time period.

November 12, 2015 – Students of color hold a peaceful, midnight march through campus to protest racism at the College. Fr. Shanley and many other high-level College administrators attend and march with the students.

November 13, 2015 – Political Science Professor Dr. Julia Jordan-Zachery posts an open letter to Fr. Shanley on the Faculty Senate list serv about the previous night's march. She alleges that one or more students in the dorms yelled racial epithets at the students while they marched. Two individuals, one of them a non-student, file a formal complaint with the Office of Safety & Security. The Office begins an investigation of that complaint. Dr. Jordan-Zachery's letter also lists six proposals for Fr. Shanley's consideration.

November 19, 2015 - Dr. Jordan-Zachery announces via the Faculty Senate list serv that students are outraged over Fr. Shanley's silence regarding the complaint from November 13th. She announces a student march to Fr. Shanley's house for noon time on this date. Students march and present a list of demands, many of which mirror the proposals offered by Dr. Jordan-Zachery in her 11/13/15 email.

December 2015 – Fr. Shanley tells student protest leaders he will meet with them to discuss their demands on the first day of the spring semester (January 11, 2016).

February 2, 2016 – Five African-American female students at PC allege that they were denied entrance to a PC off-campus party on the weekend of January 30th-31st due to their race. The students claimed they heard racial epithets and that bottles were thrown at them as they walked away from the premises.

February 2, 2016 - The Bias Response Team was convened to assess and recommend a College response to the off-campus incident described above.

February 2, 2016 - AVP/Dean of Students Steve Sears, and AVP/CDO Rafael Zapata call a meeting with students of color and their allies to address their concerns about the Jan. 30-31 incident. The meeting, from 6-10 p.m., is attended by close to 125 students (primarily students of color), including several of the women of color complainants, relatives of one of women of color (mom, brother), Dr. Julia Jordan-Zachery, and, at the invitation of the PC student chapter of the NAACP, Ms. Pilar McCloud of the Providence Branch of the NAACP.

February 3, 2016 – The five female students hold a press conference outside the main gates of the College to publicize the incident from January 30th-31st. The same day, Fr. Shanley sends an email to the campus community assuring a thorough and fair investigation.

February 7, 2016 - Fr. Shanley tells the campus community that the College will hire the Washington, DC-based law firm of Wilmer Cutler Pickering Hale and Dorr to conduct an independent investigation of the incident.

February 16, 2016 – A group of students, many of whom are part of the same group which issued the demands to Fr. Shanley in November, holds a sit-in and occupies the President's office, demanding that Fr. Shanley agree to all their previously-issued demands. The sit-in lasts 13 hours, ending around 9:30 p.m., when Fr. Shanley signs a document saying that he will address each of their demands in 20 days.

February 17, 2016 – Students and faculty sponsor a campus-wide discussion about racism, racial discrimination and academic freedom. About 175 people attend.

March 7, 2016 – Fr. Shanley issues a response to the student demands addressing (but not necessarily agreeing to) each demand, and outlining a series of actions steps. The most significant of these steps is the immediate formation of a Diversity and Inclusion Implementation Committee to be comprised of nine individuals, three students (chosen by the students), three faculty members (chosen by the Faculty Senate) and three administrators (named by Fr. Shanley). The committee is to be chaired by Executive Vice President & Treasurer Fr. Ken Sicard, O.P., and report directly to Fr. Shanley.

April 1, 2016 – Initial meeting of the new Diversity and Inclusion Implementation Committee.

April 22, 2016 – Second meeting of the Diversity and Inclusion Implementation Committee.

May 12, 2016 – Fr. Shanley sends a message to the campus community announcing that the investigation into the January 30th-31st incident involving the off-campus party is complete, and that the final report, which the College received at the end of April, was shared and discussed with the students directly involved.

Fall 2016 - The Diversity & Inclusion Implementation Committee met for three full-day retreats during the summer, and now continues to meet on a bi-weekly basis to develop specific ways in which we can improve our campus climate and become a more diverse and inclusive campus community.

September 9, 2016 – PC hosts the 2016 Black Women and Girls Symposium, which draws regional and national attendees.

September 19, 2016 – The Diversity & Inclusion Implementation Committee issued a comprehensive update to the campus community of all of its summer work.

September 23, 2016 – The College hosted Dr. Clayborne Carson of Stanford University, one of the foremost experts on the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. for a presentation entitled “Martin Luther King, Jr. and Liberal Arts Education.”

October 19, 2016 – About 60 students marched peacefully through campus to protest the latest in a series of articles written by a member of the faculty which they perceived to be hostile to diversity initiatives on campus. Fr. Shanley met with the students for over an hour and listened to their concerns. He then issued a statement to the campus community the following day affirming the professor’s right to free speech, but stating that the professor spoke only for himself and did not represent Fr. Shanley’s views or those of the College in any way.

November 2, 2016 – The Diversity & Inclusion Implementation Committee issues its second update of the fall semester.

November 18, 2016 – PC hosts the 16th Annual Black and Latino Male Conference, sponsored by the Consortium on High Achievement and Success. The conference attracted approximately 150 Black and Latino male-identified college students, faculty, administrators and community members.

November 30, 2016 – Fr. Shanley notified the campus community that he has added his name to a statement published by the Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities (ACCU). The statement affirmed the collective intention of ACCU member institutions with regard to immigrant students in their communities. Fr. Shanley also told the campus community that the College would provide and fund on-campus access to legal experts in the field of immigration and the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program. (The first such program, featuring attorney Deborah Gonzalez, associate clinical professor and director of the Immigration Clinic at Roger Williams University, would take place on campus on December 8th.)

January 30, 2017 – Fr. Shanley wrote to the campus community about President Trump’s Executive Order temporarily suspending entry into the United States for refugees and for nationals from seven predominately Muslim countries. His message emphasized that PC welcomes and embraces people of every nation and faith, and that the College stands in solidarity with all the immigrant and international members of our community, documented or not. He also announced that the College’s Board of Multicultural Student Affairs had organized a Solidarity Walk around campus to support our Muslim, immigrant, and LGBTQ populations, and other marginalized groups, including women and people of color, to take place later that same evening and encouraged people to participate.

February 12, 2017 – Fr. Shanley, several PC faculty members, and members of the administration, represented the College at an Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities conference in Washington, DC on the topic of “Inclusion on Campus: Exploring Diversity as an Expression of God’s Grandeur.” Members of the President’s Cabinet, along with several faculty members, represented the College as panelists at sessions on Mission, Student Affairs, and Shared Governance. Fr. Shanley and Chief Diversity Officer Rafael A. Zapata teamed up with two other college presidents to share their experiences in Presidential Leadership on Diversity.

February 16, 2017 – Fr. Shanley again wrote to the campus community to inform them that he and members of the administration have been meeting with members of the Providence Immigrant Rights Coalition (PIRC), a student-formed group of faculty, administrators, and students to strategize on responses to those who might be affected personally, or whose families might be affected, by President Trump’s executive order.

March 2017 – Fr. Shanley signs a new letter to the Trump administration, this one issued jointly by the American Association of Catholic Colleges & Universities and the American Council on Education. The letter asks President Trump to allow "Dreamer" students to continue working and studying in the United States while his administration and Congress arrive at a permanent solution.

March 22, 2017 – The College hosts a presentation on the future of Jewish-Catholic dialogue, the culminating event in a series of lectures, exhibits, events and presentations celebrating the 50th anniversary of *Nostre Aetate*, a Vatican document which set the stage for Jewish-Catholic dialogue after Vatican II.

April 5, 2017 – The College hosts Maria Castañón-Moats, chief diversity officer for PricewaterhouseCoopers, for a conversation about “Organizational Change for Diversity & Inclusion.”

June 20, 2017 – The Diversity & Inclusion Implementation Committee issues its update for the spring semester.

August 21, 2017 – The College holds a Mass for national reconciliation and healing at noon in St. Dominic Chapel in response to the events that transpired in Charlottesville, VA the previous weekend on the campus of the University of Virginia.

August 2017 – The Office of Alumni Relations, in concert with the Undergraduate Dean’s Office and the Office of Institutional Diversity, announces that the weekend of November 3-5 will be a celebration of multiculturalism at PC. The weekend-long celebration is being chaired by two members of the College’s Board of Trustees, Duane Bouligny ’94 and Andre Owens ’85. A highlight of the weekend is expected to be the official opening of a new campus center focused on the College’s diversity, equity and inclusion efforts, located at Moore Hall. Designed as multipurpose space, the center is expected to foster ongoing engagement with the arts, scholarship and learning, and be a place for authentic dialogue focused on themes of social justice and community.

August 2017 – In their final Class of 2021 profile before Fall classes begin, the Admissions Office reports that the new class of first-year students will include 18.4% students of color, the highest percentage in the College’s history. As noted earlier, the number of multicultural undergraduate students at PC was only 8% when Fr. Shanley took office as president in 2005.