

A 21st Century Vision for Diversity, Inclusion, Equity and Community
The Center @ Moore Hall: A Center for Arts, Culture, and Social Justice

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As the student body at Providence College becomes increasingly diverse, and our efforts to diversify our faculty and staff gain momentum, it is imperative that we simultaneously develop the organizational infrastructure to foster social, professional, and learning environments that allow *all* members of the campus community to flourish. Moreover, national and international events during the past year reinforce the urgent need for collaborative spaces that foster cross cultural learning and constructive engagement both inside and outside of the classroom.

The Center @ Moore Hall: A Center for Arts, Culture, and Social Justice is envisioned as an innovative multipurpose space built on the principles of [Inclusive Excellence](#) established by the AAC&U.¹ These principles emphasize student social and intellectual development, the connection between diversity and academic excellence, and the development of a welcoming community that engages diversity in its many forms in service of student and organizational learning. Going beyond nominal indicators of diversity (e.g., the number of students on campus; number of programs executed,) these efforts focus on the multifaceted processes through which we foster excellence in teaching and learning; research; student and staff development; cultural agility; local and global community engagement; talent acquisition and workforce development; and more.

There are a number of existing models for centers and institutes on college campuses. Many centers and institutes host events and programs that serve to raise awareness around diversity issues through lectures, films and documentaries, book reads, art exhibits, symposium, professional development, dialogue and discussion series, etc. A number of spaces work to study policy and practices, foster dialogue, embrace reconciliation and restorative justice, and promote cross-cultural engagement. Support for research consistently appears as a means to engage and showcase the expertise of faculty by providing space to cultivate/share new ideas amongst peers and students, research grants, presentation of scholarship, research working groups, and professional development.

The Center @ Moore Hall will build on these existing models, innovatively situating itself as a nexus to 1) convene stakeholders for collaborative action, 2) build access and equity on campus through innovative solution-making, 3) foster an inclusive campus climate and cultural agility, 4) host diversity learning and development opportunities for faculty, staff, and students, 5) advance and promote diversity scholarship and research from our faculty, and 6) facilitate cross-cultural exchange and dialogue through the

¹ Williams, Damon A., Berger, Joseph B., & McClendon, Shederick A. (2005). *Toward a Model of Inclusive Excellence and Change in Postsecondary Institutions*. Washington, DC: Association of American Colleges and Universities.

Difficult Dialogues Initiative.² Together these six elements form a dynamic invitation for our faculty, staff, and students to join us as we work collaboratively to more fully integrate inclusive excellence throughout our community.

Consistent with the mission of the Office of Institutional Diversity and the goals outlined in the Strategic Plan for Diversity and the College Strategic Plan, we envision the Center as a collaborative space that supports and promotes creative diversity initiatives, and convenes stakeholders from across campus, resulting in greater cohesion and coordination of efforts. Possible programs and initiatives include:

- Symposium: *The History and Future of Catholic Education in America*
- [Difficult Dialogues](#): programs and training for students, faculty and staff
- Film Series: [The ESPN 30 for 30 Series](#)
- The [Ten Men](#) Summit, co-sponsored by the [RI Coalition Against Domestic Violence](#) and Providence College
- Collaborations with [Mixed Magic Theater](#) reflecting diverse themes
- Afro-Caribbean drumming and dance workshops
- Symposium: *Best Practices for Enhancing Retention in STEM Majors*
- Faculty Development Workshop: *Inclusive Pedagogy*
- Symposium: *The American Dream in 21st Century America*
- Writing and spoken word workshops

Moore Hall is an ideal space for several reasons. First, it is centrally located on campus, and therefore, easily accessible to the campus community and local community members alike. Second, having served as the long-time home of DWC, Moore Hall enjoys an inextricable connection to our identity as a Catholic and Dominican liberal arts college. Third, the space offers a variety of exciting multipurpose possibilities for innovative programs and initiatives. In addition to classrooms, programming and office space, the Center will accommodate guest lectures, trainings, performances, symposia, and exhibitions that will serve to foster community, personal and professional development, and enrich the academic work of the College. In sum, this initiative would go beyond the symbolic, and represent a bold, unequivocal demonstration of the College's commitment to diversity and excellence.

² Damon A. Williams and Katrina C. Wade-Golden. *The Chief Diversity Officer: Strategy, Structure, and Change Management*, (Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing, 2013), 262.