



VOL. 4 | FALL 2022

DC D&I INSIDE LOOK

Diversity & Inclusion Updates for the Dedman College community at Southern Methodist University



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An Invitation to the Next Generation of Changemakers

Meet the Program Director of the Human Rights Program

I would like to invite any/all students who are interested in social justice, human rights and the pursuit of human dignity for all people (everywhere) to come to the Human Rights program office at 109 Clements Hall, and to chat with our students, staff and faculty members. Human rights is the common thread running through all people regardless of who they are or where they are from.

SMU is one of only 9 institutions of higher learning in the US which offers an undergraduate degree in Human Rights; stop by the office and let's chat about how we can be of assistance to you. There are opportunities for domestic and global travel, and internship and volunteer opportunities with many different human rights agencies in Dallas and beyond. We look forward to meeting and speaking with you!!

Dr. Rick Halperin
Director, SMU Human Rights program
109 Clements Hall
214-768-3284



Student Spotlight

Sipho Dongozi

Contributed Article

Shandon Klein, a first year Ph.D. student in Religious Ethics and a Mustang Fellow, was recently awarded the Louisville Institute Doctoral Fellowship, which recognizes early-stage doctoral candidates who consider theological education as their vocation.

“The Louisville will allow me to really discern the comparable ways that my research can apply to the strengthening of the North American Church, helping to dismantle the oppression that flows from it,” said Klein.

Her research is focused on the ethic of resistance and the ethic of control along with ideologies about “God” that support or oppose them in various cultures. According to Klein, the fellowship application process was critical in developing her research project and articulating its real-world implications. Klein was also awarded an Honorable Mention by the Ford Foundation for her application to the Ford Predoctoral Fellowship.

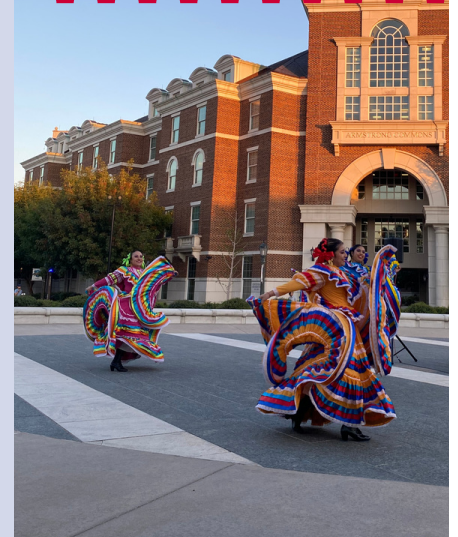


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Hispanic/Latine Heritage Month

Student Initiatives and Events

This year student organizations from across campus have celebrated and honored the contributions of Hispanic/Latine culture and people in the United States. We are absolutely thrilled to feature some of the events that our Dedman College students got the opportunity to participate in.



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Asian Council Family Weekend Games



AC Family Games - October 15

Asian Council organized a day of outdoor games for students in "families" - groups of upper and lower class students who support one another inside and outside the classroom.



Homecoming - October 22

Asian American alumni - Chi Dang (center) and Michael Vuong (right) - returned to the Hilltop for SMU's annual celebration. Pictured with Dr. LaiYee Leong, Chair of AAPASA (AAPI faculty/staff association).

Asian and Asian American Studies Dedman College Research Cluster Speaker Event

October 17

Stephanie Drenka, president of the Dallas Asian American Historical Society, led a session to brainstorm how SMU could take advantage of local resources to inject more Asian American perspectives into teaching, learning, and research. She also encouraged attendees to explore how SMU's own Asian American community members - past and present - have contributed to the university.



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Staff Spotlight

Alexa Taylor

by Jordyn Harrell

Alexa Taylor is the Director of Disability Accommodations & Success Strategies (DASS) and has been with SMU for 21 years.

“I wanted to take a more global and administrative role in helping students with a variety of disabilities, creating clear and consistent policies and procedures for both students and faculty to work from to ensure access for all students,” Taylor said.

Taylor says the role of the DASS office is to identify barriers to the educational experience and determine reasonable accommodations to lessen those barriers so students with disabilities have the same opportunities as all other students.

The office offers academic support and other resources to students as well as faculty.

“We meet with students to better understand the impacts of their condition(s) and determine reasonable accommodations that are appropriate for the setting, whether it is a particular course or a residence hall or a program,” Taylor said. “We guide students to be good self-advocates, and also provide space for them to learn more about their condition and consider ways to be the most effective learner they can be.”

In October, the DASS office partnered with a few other SMU offices to host a [virtual panel discussion](#) about transitioning to the workplace in celebration of Disability Awareness Month.

The DASS office works hard to create a sense of belonging for students who have disabilities. Taylor says students should feel comfortable with coming into the DASS office, talking with the staff, and reaching out for assistance when needed.

“We take pride in leading educational efforts (on and off campus) to increase awareness and understanding of different types of disabilities, which ultimately leads to a more accessible campus community for everyone,” Taylor said.

The office engages with the community on multiple levels. The DASS staff produces [bi-weekly newsletters for DASS students](#) to keep students updated with DASS initiatives and semesterly [faculty newsletters](#) that provide tips to how to effectively work with students with disabilities. The office produces a [parent newsletter](#) as well.

Taylor shares that DASS also provides opportunities for students to connect with each other through the [Students for New Learning](#), a chartered student organization advised by DASS staff advisor David Tylicki, or joining the HDEV 1210 course, which is a section reserved for students with learning and attention disorders.

“This is sometimes a student’s first opportunity to talk with other students with similar issues in a more open and accepting way,” Taylor said.

She is thankful for her team of five staff members, who each brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to the office. Together, the team ensures access to the environment and educational experience.

“We want students to utilize all sorts of academic support, not just accommodations, and part of our role is to guide students to all of the many resources SMU has to offer,” Taylor said.



Disability Awareness Month

Disability: From Undergrad to the Workplace Panel

by Jordyn Harrell

In celebration of Disability Awareness Month, SMU invited four individuals to offer advice about transitioning into the workplace for students with disabilities on Oct. 26. The panel was hosted on Zoom and moderated by Arianna Gonzales, SMU junior and President of the [SMU Disability Connections and Empowerment](#).

"This event [was] virtual in order to provide as much access as possible and is open to the SMU community as well as anyone outside of SMU," said Alexa Taylor, Director of DASS.

The panelists included Melanie Peterman, SMU graduate student and intern at the SMU Disability Office; Dr. Donald Egan, psychiatrist resident at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center; Dylan Rafaty, entrepreneur with a SMU master's degree in dispute resolution; and Denise Gauthier, SMU Director for Access and Equity and ADA/504 Coordinator.

Panelists Peterman, Egan, and Rafaty each shared their experience in navigating the workplace with their disabilities and encouraged the audience to advocate for accommodations. Gauthier provided an overview of employ disability rights.

You can read more about the advice the panelist shared [here](#). The full recording of the panel discussion "Disability from Undergraduate to the Workplace" can be found here on the [SMU DASS Student Resources page](#).

The panel was hosted by the Hegi Family Career and Development Center, the Office of Diversity and Inclusion, Dedman College of Humanities and Sciences, and Disability Accommodations & Success Strategies (DASS).

If you are interested in learning more about college accommodations or about transitional and career resources available to students with disabilities, visit the [SMU DASS resource page](#).



SMU Presented by the Hegi Family Career Development Center, Office of Diversity and Inclusion, Dedman College of Humanities and Sciences, and Disability Accommodations & Success Strategies

DISABILITY: FROM UNDERGRAD TO THE WORKPLACE

DATE October 26, 2022 **TIME** 3:30 - 4:30 PM [REGISTER HERE FOR THIS VIRTUAL PANEL](#)

With a foreword about Employee Disability Rights from






DYLAN RAFATY
Founder and President of the North Texas Disability Chamber

DONALD EGAN, MD, MPH
Psychiatry Resident at UT Southwestern Medical Center and American Psychiatric Association Foundation Diversity Leadership Fellow

MELANIE PETERMAN
Master of Education, SMU 2024
BFA in Theatre, SMU 2022

DENISE GAUTHIER
Director for Access and Equity, Deputy Title IX Coordinator, and ADA/504 Coordinator at Southern Methodist University



Apply To Be A *SMU McNair Scholar*

What is the McNair Scholars Program?

The McNair Scholars Program combines faculty mentoring, undergraduate research, and academic support services to prepare and encourage students to pursue postgraduate studies.



We accept on a rolling basis until all spots are filled.

Application Requirements:

- Completed and signed application form
- Short answer responses
- Resume
- Two recommendations
- Unofficial transcript
- Proof of eligibility documentation, as applicable (e.g. signed income statement)

To request an application please email
mcnairscholars@smu.edu

Program Benefits

- Intensive faculty mentored research experience
- Academic, career, personal, and financial literacy counseling
- Assistance with applying to graduate school
- Research conference & graduate school tour travel opportunities
- Professional and personal development workshops

Eligibility

- Be a U.S. Citizen or Permanent Resident
- Meet at least one of the following federally mandated requirements:
 1. Be a low-income AND first-generation college student according to established guidelines,
 - OR
 2. Be a member of a group underrepresented in graduate education (Alaska Native, American Indian, Black, Hispanic, Native Hawaiian, Native Pacific Islander)

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Student Assistants



Jordyn Harrell

Jordyn Harrell is from DeSoto, Texas, and is double majoring in English with a specialization in Creative Writing and Journalism and minoring in Cultural Anthropology. Contact her at jmharrell@smu.edu



Guadalupe Roman

Guadalupe Roman is from Dallas, Texas, and is triple majoring in Educational Studies, Spanish, and Human Rights. Contact her at groman@smu.edu

Course Spotlights

Offered Spring 2023:

- ARHS 3301: Art & Experience in Inka, Peru
- ENGL 1365: Literature of Minorities
- ANTH 3301: Health, Healing, and Ethics: Cross-Cultural Perspectives on Sickness and Society



Contact Us!

Dallas Hall 222
Have requests for tools?
Ideas for speakers or events?
dedmandiversity@smu.edu
<https://smu.edu/DedmanDiversity>

Dedman College Climate Committee

The [Dedman College Campus Climate Committee](#), established in summer 2020, serves as an advisory committee to the Dean. The committee meets to make recommendations about what Dedman College needs to do to improve climate, access, awareness, and comportment in our classrooms, labs, offices, and everything that comes under our purview.

If you are interested in learning more about the committee, email dedmandiversity@smu.edu.



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