

Unique Perspectives

Celebrating Diversity, Inclusion and Equity in the University of Missouri's School of Medicine | Volume 3, Issue 4

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Contributor's Notes:

Brought to you by the School of Medicine Faculty and Staff Diversity and Inclusion Committees. To be disseminated 5 times per year.

SOM Staff D&I Committee is accepting new members! E-mail [Ami Patel](#) if interested.

To nominate someone for the Spotlight or Give Me 5, or to submit D&I news and events, please e-mail [Amy Folkerts](#) and [Kelly Reeves](#).



To learn more about the University of Missouri School of Medicine's diversity and inclusion efforts, click [here](#).

In the Spotlight: Camila Manrique, MD



Camila Manrique, MD is a faculty member in the Department of Endocrinology, Diabetes and Metabolism.

What is your definition of diversity?

I understand diversity as the practice of including in the conversations people from different social, religious or ethnic backgrounds, and/or different genders and sexual orientations.

From your perspective, how do diversity and inclusion relate to one another?

They are closely related. I think that the ultimate goal of bringing to the table people of diverse backgrounds is to provide them with genuine opportunities of advancing their careers and becoming valued members of the organization.

How do you think your identities as a woman and a Latina affect your career as a physician-scientist?

On one hand, I feel that I have had a relatively successful career as a physician scientist (up to this point anyway) but I also need to acknowledge that being a woman and an ethnic minority in science continues to present with added challenges. In particular, I think that identifying mentors and sponsors

invested in the career development of underrepresented minorities is difficult. I hope that as my career progresses I can serve as a mentor and sponsor to upcoming generations of scientists.

How do you foster an environment that is inclusive and honors the uniqueness of each individual in your department and the School of Medicine?

On a daily basis, I strive to treat all individuals in a respectful and fair manner. In addition, I also try my best and within my means, to present opportunities for career and personal development to the members of our teams.



This year marks the 150th anniversary of the University of Missouri's School of Medicine. Read on to learn about some historical moments in SOM history, then click the "history" link below to discover more.

***1900:** Anna B. Searcy became the first woman to graduate from the University of Missouri with a degree in Medicine.

***1906:** Caroline McGill, a 1905 medical school graduate, becomes the first woman to join the School of Medicine's faculty. She was an instructor of anatomy.

***1953:** Robert J. Smith became the first Black person to graduate from the SOM.

[A history of the MU School of Medicine](#)

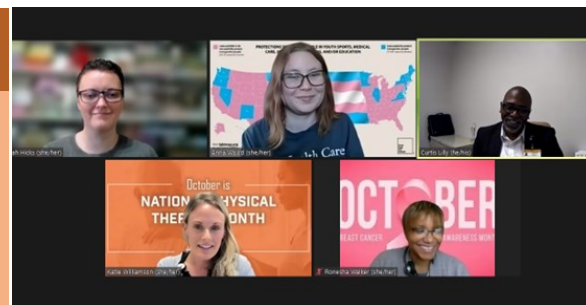
Activity Highlights

Addressing Cultural Bias~ The School of Medicine sponsored a new course for faculty: “Addressing and Reducing Cultural Bias in Medicine.” Over six sessions, the course addressed topics including medical racism, cultural self-awareness, intersectionality, privilege, implicit bias, and microaggressions. Pre-lecture readings educated participants on important diversity, equity and inclusion concepts and the role bias plays in our health care system. For example, in a sociological study, Black women accessing services for Assisted Reproductive Technologies were found to experience dismissive and disrespectful comments from providers and manage an additional burden of seeking out culturally-respectful care. The class provided specific strategies like XYZ: “I feel X when you say Y because Z” by which observers and recipients can productively respond to microaggressions. This valuable course will be offered again in the spring for those who were unable to attend the fall sessions.

Mid-Missouri PrideFest~ MU Health and SOM had a presence again this year at the MidMO PrideFest. The parade went from the North Arts district down Broadway and through campus. There were some impressive rainbow balloon creations and a lot of Mid-Missourians showing their CoMo Pride for themselves, family and friends.



Pictured left is a Pride Flag quilt hanging in the lobby of University Hospital. This beautiful quilt was a collaborative effort made by the Pride and African-American Heritage Employee Resource Groups, WIMMS (Women in Medicine and Medical Sciences) and MU Health Care Staff Council members.



Pictured above are the “Let’s Flip the Script” panel members from the MU Health Care Pride Employee Resource Group (ERG).

Thoughtful Thursdays~ The MU Health Care Pride Employee Resource Group (ERG) presented, “Let’s Flip the Script” via Zoom on October 27. The session began with a video by Janet Mock, Emmy-nominated author, director and transgender rights activist. Janet “flips the script” on a journalist with some intrusive questions that inspired a panel discussion on how one can be more respectful and supportive of the transgender community, specifically, in our interactions. Oftentimes, transgender individuals are asked questions that seem to dehumanize their experiences and feelings, making them feel like a “token” for one’s personal gain or understanding. While it is OK to be curious (reminder: Google is free!) we must stop and ask ourselves, “Would I want to be asked such a personal question?” The assumption of privilege or entitlement is never a reason to belittle or shame someone for simply being their authentic self. The panel also discussed the importance of supporting trans youth early on so they can grow to be confident adults with more positive health outcomes.

Give Me 5!



Will Udo is a graduate student in the Department of Health Management and Informatics, and also a School of Medicine student diversity ambassador. To get to know Will better, we asked him these 5 questions:

1. If you could live anywhere or do anything, where or what would that be?

If I could live anywhere, I would choose Switzerland. The landscape is breathtaking, and I feel the culture is highly unique. It's no surprise that they are consistently reported as one of the happiest countries in the world. If I had the power to do anything, I would ensure that every human has access to nutritionally dense food, clean water, and secure housing. I wholeheartedly believe that if people have their basic needs met, it puts them in a better position to achieve their interpersonal goals.

2. What is your favorite food or restaurant?

Grilled salmon, served with veggies and sweet potatoes. Sometimes I put honey on my salmon to add a little sweetness to the overall flavor.

3. What is your favorite cultural/family tradition you celebrate every year?

Growing up, my favorite family tradition was gardening. The sense of reward that I got from watching a tiny seed transform and bloom into a plant was both fulfilling and instilled in me, the mantra, “you reap what you sow.”

4. Tell us an interesting or fun fact about yourself.

I love to play the piano and find new music to listen to. It's fascinating that we humans have been able to create meaning out of sound and share it with one another. One of my favorite artists is Anderson .Paak.

5. If you could make one change in the world what would it be?

I would make it mandatory for every country to provide residents with free access to all of the land. I also firmly believe that assuring everyone has access to healthcare, regardless of socioeconomic status, would alleviate many health injustices. Additionally, it could encourage and promote more preventive health practices across the globe.

A Look Back...

The month of October is National Disability Employment Month which celebrates the contributions of workers with disabilities past and present. In recognition of this month, we take *A Look Back* at the contributions of Albert Lee Henson III, one of the University of Missouri's champions whose legacy continues to be celebrated on campus.

Lee Henson was born in Detroit, Michigan in 1940. He received a bachelor's degree in English from Brown University in 1962 and a law degree from the University of Missouri-Kansas City in 1974. His life was forever changed after being involved in a bike accident that left him paralyzed from the chest down. Henson was dedicated to helping others, subsequently spending 20 years with the University of Missouri championing campus accessibility and inclusion as the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) coordinator. His responsibilities at the university included communicating benefits and resources to campus, handling informal complaints and concerns and staying abreast of developments in disability law to communicate to campus leadership. Friends and colleagues describe Henson as "witty", having a "great sense of humor" and "absolutely brilliant".

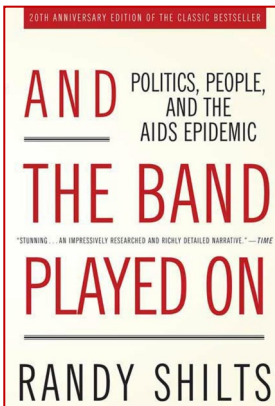
Lee Henson died on August 24, 2013. In 2014, the Lee Henson Award was created in honor of his hard work and dedication in pushing the university forward. This annual award is given to students, faculty and/or staff who have done the following:

- Responded above and beyond to a particular disability, inclusion or accessibility concern or need on campus;
- Championed universal design to make Mizzou a more inclusive place for people with disabilities; and/or
- Demonstrated and modeled a commitment over time to improving the inclusion of people with disabilities or the accessibility of Mizzou's campus and programs.

We acknowledge and celebrate the life and contributions of Albert Lee Henson III whose commitment to disability rights and creating an inclusive environment for those with disabilities on campus continues to live on in the University of Missouri community.



Brain Food



In October, we recognize both LGBTQ+ History Month and AIDS Awareness Month. In 1987, award-winning author and investigative reporter, Randy Shilts, released his second book, "And the Band Played On: Politics, People and the AIDS Epidemic." Shilts was the first openly gay journalist for The San Francisco Chronicle. His book recounts the traumatic evolution of the 1980s AIDS epidemic in the United States. Shilts himself tested positive for HIV while

writing the book and sadly lost his life due to AIDS complications in 1994 at the age of 42. Several heartbreaking stories are uncovered throughout the book from the perspectives of the individuals and communities affected by the virus and the response to it, to the politicians and medical communities competing for treatments, recognition and understanding of the mysterious new virus. The book has been hailed as "one of the most essential reads of our time" and the film by the same name released in 1993, "a public health must-see." Around 35 million people have died worldwide from AIDS complications and close to that number still live with the virus today. Thankfully, we now have several treatment options and more in development that allow people with HIV to manage the virus and live more productive and healthy lives. However, there is still no cure. The book can be found at the Columbia Public Library and the film streamed on HBOMax.

Calendar of Events

Upcoming events on campus and in the Columbia community



*For Native American Heritage Month in November, the MU Student Center presents **Indigenous Mural: Representing Native Lands in Missouri** with artist Yatika Starr Fields **November 8, 5-6:30pm**. Click [here](#) for more details and to learn about additional NAHM events on campus.

*The **MIZ-OUT Faculty and Staff Organization** will have their monthly social **November 18, 4:30-5:30pm** at Top Ten Wines in downtown CoMo.

*The **Food Bank for Central and Northeast Missouri** is seeking volunteers for their annual Partnership Against Hunger Food and Fund Drive **Tuesday, November 22** at select grocery stores in the area. Click [here](#) for more info and to register.

Stay tuned for more details on the following events:

*The **Minority Women in Medicine** will hold their monthly meeting **November 8 from 6-7pm**.

***Thoughtful Thursdays** presented by the Employee Resource Groups (ERG) of MU Health Care are held via Zoom from **12-1pm on the fourth Thursday of each month** (with the exception of Thanksgiving). Details to come in MU Health Today.

Disclaimer: Event dates and times are subject to change. Thank you!

Are you GAME for some Diversity and Inclusion trivia? Be the first to scan the code and submit your answers to win some Diversity and Inclusion Staff Committee items. Contest closes Nov. 11. Winner will be contacted the week of Nov. 14. Good luck!

