

Equity & Diversity Breakfast

November 15, 2023

OFFICE FOR
EQUITY AND DIVERSITY

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Program

7:45 AM
GALLERY OF EXCELLENCE

A.I. Johnson Room

8:25 AM
BREAKFAST AND PROGRAM

Memorial Hall

FLAG SONG

Spirit Boy (Manido Gwiiwizen)

RISE UP

Thomasina Petrus

WELCOME

DR. NATHANIEL STEWART

Assistant Professor; Carmen Starkson Campbell Endowed Fellow
for Innovation in Teacher Development, CEHD

**JOSIE R. JOHNSON HUMAN RIGHTS AND
SOCIAL JUSTICE AWARDS**

DR. AMELIOUS N. WHYTE, JR.

Assistant Dean for Diversity, Equity & Inclusion and Public Engagement,
College of Liberal Arts

**SCHOLARLY EXCELLENCE IN EQUITY AND
DIVERSITY (SEED) AWARDS**

DR. MALINDA LINDQUIST

Associate Vice President for Institutional Engagement and Education
Justice, Office for Equity and Diversity

DR. MICHAEL RODRIGUEZ

CEHD Dean, Campbell Leadership Chair in Education and Human
Development, and Professor

STUDENT REFLECTION

JALISA SANG

Milton and Danae Andrews SEED Award

Program

**JUSTICE, EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION
(JEDI) AWARD**

DR. RACHEL T.A. CROSON

Executive Vice President and Provost, University of Minnesota

OUTSTANDING UNIT AWARD FOR EQUITY & DIVERSITY

DR. EDGAR ARRIAGA

Faculty Fellow, Office for Equity & Diversity;
Northey Professor of Chemistry, Department of Chemistry

REMARKS

DR. MERCEDES RAMÍREZ FERNÁNDEZ

Vice President for Equity & Diversity, Office for Equity & Diversity;
Professor

KEYNOTE REMARKS

DR. DAVID TREUER

CLOSING

DR. MERCEDES RAMÍREZ FERNÁNDEZ

Josie R. Johnson Human Rights and Social Justice Awards

This award was established in honor of Josie R. Johnson in recognition of her lifelong contributions to human rights and social justice. Her passionate commitment to these causes guided her work as a University of Minnesota regent and senior administrator. The award honors University faculty, staff, and students who, through their principles and practices, exemplify her standard of excellence in creating respectful and inclusive living, learning, and working environments.

LAUREN JONES is a scholar and practitioner, who has been working at the University of Minnesota School of Public Health since 2017. She believes in speaking truth to power and centering the marginalized. She holds degrees from Western Illinois University, Old Dominion University, and is a Ph.D. candidate at U of M CEHD, focused on race, gender, and organizations. Lauren has partnered with other universities, government agencies, and nonprofits to create more equitable and justice oriented policies and practices. She has over 15 years of experience working in higher education institutions and owns a small DEI consulting firm. Lauren is a native Chicagoan and currently lives in North Minneapolis with her partner and their two dogs.

Equity and Diversity Outstanding Unit Award

Presented by the Office for Equity and Diversity, the Equity and Diversity Outstanding Unit Award recognizes a University of Minnesota campus, colleague, department, or unit. The award honors transformational equity and diversity work that both demonstrates outstanding leadership in equity and diversity, and is collaborative, sustainable, and linked to the stated mission and vision of the group.

MECHANICAL ENGINEERING AMBASSADORS, COLLEGE OF SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING

A 2018 Pew Research report identified mechanical engineering as having the lowest inclusion of women, at 8%, with only 10% of mechanical engineers being black or Hispanic. In an effort to increase diversity, the ME Ambassadors Program at the University of Minnesota’s Department of Mechanical Engineering recruits undergraduate students to engage in peer-to-peer interactions with 3rd-4th grade students, a critical time when many students decide to pursue STEM. Ambassadors serve as mentors, design hands-on activities to increase students’ interest in engineering, and light a path to becoming an engineer for students in K-12 schools that have limited STEM resources.

Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (JEDI) Award

Honoring faculty who have done significant research, teaching or service/leadership to advance justice, equity, diversity and inclusion at the University, in the person’s field of study, or in our broader community. This award is made possible through the support of the Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost and the Office for Equity and Diversity.

DOUGLAS KEARNEY has published seven collections, including the National Book Award finalist *Sho* (Wave Books, 2021); the award-winning poetry collection *Buck Studies* (Fence Books, 2016); libretti *Someone Took They Tongues* (Subito, 2016); and criticism *Mess and Mess and* (Noemi Press, 2015). Kearney is the 2021 recipient of OPERA America’s Campbell Opera Librettist Prize. Kearney is a Whiting Writer’s and Foundation for Contemporary Arts Cy Twombly awardee with residencies/fellowships from Cave Canem, The Rauschenberg Foundation, and others. Kearney is a McKnight Presidential Fellow and Associate Professor of Creative Writing/English at the University of Minnesota Twin Cities. Born in Brooklyn, raised in Altadena, CA, he lives in Saint Paul with his family.

DR. SARAH-JANE (SAJE) MATHIEU, is an Associate Professor of History who earned a joint Ph.D. in History and African American Studies from Yale University. She specializes in twentieth century American and African American history with an emphasis on immigration, war, race, globalization, social movements, and political resistance. She is the author of two books and several articles. Prof. Mathieu is also the recipient of several international professional, teaching, and mentoring awards for diversifying, internationalizing, and developing the study of race, war, genocide, and the Black Diaspora.

DR. HESSAM MIRGOLBABAEI, is the Dr. Howard Higholt Endowed Professor in the Department of Mechanical & Industrial Engineering, at the University of Minnesota Duluth. Mirgolbabaei is an unwavering advocate for women and the LGBTQIA+ community in the engineering field, and his remarkable journey is marked by resilience and unwavering determination. Emerging from a minority within a minority group, he has fearlessly navigated substantial challenges while pursuing his aspirations within a traditionally conservative Middle Eastern society. Despite encountering discrimination, harassment, and formidable personal and professional obstacles, Hessam’s dedication, enthusiasm, and tireless efforts shine as a beacon in his relentless pursuit of diversity and equity. Hessam’s unwavering commitment to advancing diversity, equity,

equity, and inclusion within the realm of engineering stands as a resounding testament to his fervent passion for effecting positive transformation within the academic and professional spheres.

DR. MARY OWEN, a member of the Auk Kwaan Tribe of the Tlingit people, serves as the Associate Dean of Native American Health at the University of Minnesota Medical School. After completing her education and family practice residency at the University of Minnesota, she returned to her tribal community in Juneau, Alaska. In 2014, she joined the University of Minnesota Medical School, Duluth, as the Director of the Center of American Indian and Minority Health (CAIMH). Her work involves developing programs to support American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN) students’ entry into medical careers, engaging with Native leaders, teaching medical students and providers about AIAN healthcare, and conducting research on AIAN health disparities. Additionally, she offers clinical care in Duluth and is the immediate Past-President of the Association of American Indian Physicians.

DR. HEATHER J. PETERS, Associate Professor of Psychology, focuses on the development of culturally sensitive interventions and programs that improve the health and wellbeing of people who experience marginalization. On campus her leadership has facilitated the creation of the Human Services Social Justice Major, Equity and Diversity Advocate program, and new Pre-Licensed Alcohol and Drug Counselor program. Beyond campus, Dr. Peters partners with Native and non-Native organizations to create just and equitable environments. Some of Dr. Peters’ awards include the Cesar E. Chavez Award, Horace T. Morse-University of Minnesota Award for Outstanding Contributions to Undergraduate Education, and the Charlotte Striebel Equity Award.

Keynote Speaker

DAVID TREUER, is an Ojibwe Indian from Leech Lake Reservation in northern Minnesota. He is the recipient of a Pushcart Prize, two Minnesota Book Awards, and fellowships from the NEH, Bush Foundation, and the Guggenheim Foundation. His book, *The Heartbeat of Wounded Knee* was a 2019 finalist for both the National Book Award and Carnegie Medal. He divides his time between his home on the Leech Lake Reservation and Los Angeles, where he is a Professor of English at USC. The son of Robert Treuer, an Austrian Jew and Holocaust survivor, and Margaret Seelye Treuer, a tribal court judge, David Treuer grew up on Leech Lake Reservation. After graduating from high school, he attended Princeton University, where he wrote two senior theses—one in anthropology and one in creative writing—and where he worked with Toni Morrison, Paul Muldoon, and Joanna Scott. Treuer graduated in 1992 and published his first novel, *Little*, in 1995. He received his Ph.D. in anthropology and published his second novel, *The Hiawatha*, in 1999. His third novel, *The Translation of Dr. Apelles*, and a book of criticism, *Native American Fiction: A User’s Manual*, appeared in 2006. He published his first major work of nonfiction, *Rez Life*, in 2012. His next novel, *Prudence*, was published by Riverhead Books in 2015.

Artists

SPIRIT BOY (MANIDO GWIIWIZEN) DRUM GROUP

The Spirit Boy “Manido Gwiiwizens” Drum Group is a collaboration of lead singers from the Twin Cities and surrounding areas composed of singers from the Ojibwe, Ho-Chunk, Hidatsa, Dakota and Lakota Nations. They are also parents and working professionals composed of college graduates, educators, language speakers, cultural leaders, teachers and advocates.

THOMASINA PETRUS

Thomasina Petrus is a Twin Cities cabaret and theater veteran whose work includes *Five Points* at Theater Latté Da, *The Color Purple* at Park Square and *Beauty and the Beast* at the Ordway. She has performed *Lady Day* in eight runs, as well as a Holiday club act. She has portrayed lead characters on Penumbra, Park Square, Mixed Blood, Illusion, Guthrie, Capri and Old Arizona Theatre stages.

MILTON AND DANAE ANDREWS SEED AWARD

The Andrews SEED Award was created by Milton and Danae Andrews through the University of Minnesota Foundation to support students demonstrating impressive engagement with and commitment to issues of equity and diversity through outstanding academic achievement and activism.



JALISA SANG is pursuing a double major in the Family Social Science and Youth Studies Department in the College of Education and Human Development on the Twin Cities campus. Jalisa is also minoring in Public Health and expects to graduate in spring 2024.

SUE W. HANCOCK SEEDs OF CHANGE AWARDS

These awards are given to students who are committed to issues of equity and diversity through outstanding academic achievement and activism. These awards are named in honor of Sue W. Hancock, whose 27-year career of service at the U of M inspired her colleagues and students.



RAWAN ALGAHTANI is pursuing Human Resources Development and Global Studies in the Department of Organizational Leadership, Policy and Development and Institute of Global Studies at the College of Education and Human Development and College of Liberal Arts on the Twin Cities Campus is also minoring in Management, Industrial Relations, and Leadership and expects to graduate in Fall 2023.



MARIA PAULA CADENA AMORTEGUI is pursuing a major in the Computer Science Department at the College of Science and Engineering on the Twin Cities Campus. Maria Paula is also minoring in statistics and expects to graduate in Spring 2024.



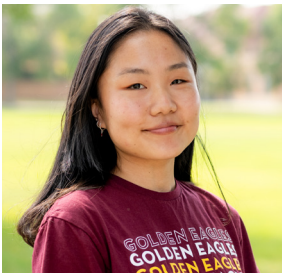
DONGTING CAI is pursuing a Communication, Media & Rhetoric, and Computer Science on the Morris campus. Dongting is also minoring in Data Science & Statistics and expects to graduate in Spring 2024.



LUM CHI is an English major with a Certificate in Editing and Publishing in the English Department at the College of Liberal Arts on the University of Minnesota Twin Cities campus. Lum is also minoring in Creative Writing and expects to graduate in the Spring of 2024.



TSEBAOT GETACHEW is pursuing a major in Health Science at the University of Minnesota Crookston. Tsebaot is also minoring in Chemistry and expects to graduate in Spring 2025.



TSETEN GURUNG is pursuing Information Technology Management in the Math, Science, and Technology Department at University of Minnesota on the Crookston Campus. Tseten is also minoring in Cybersecurity and Information Assurance and expects to graduate in Spring 2024.



YUSRA HASSAN is pursuing a major in Political Science in the College of Liberal Arts on the Twin Cities campus with minors in Global Studies and African and African American Studies. She has been involved in student government, leadership, and research throughout her time on campus.



UYEN NGUYEN is pursuing a Healthcare Management Degree within the Healthcare Management and Economics Department, in the Labovitz School of Business and Economics at University of Minnesota Duluth. Uyen is also minoring in Finance and expects to graduate in Spring of 2024.



MADELEINE SCHNEIDER is pursuing Software Engineering and Information Technology Management degrees in the Math, Science and Technology Department at the U of M Crookston. Madeleine expects to graduate in Spring 2024.



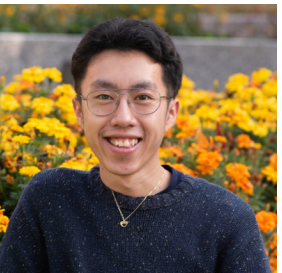
HERMELA SOLOMON is pursuing an Elementary Education degree in the College of Education and Human Development at University of Minnesota on the Twin Cities campus. Hermela is also minoring in Teaching English as a Second Language and expects to graduate in spring of next year.



LAUREN THOMPSON is pursuing a BS in Forest and Natural Resource Management from the Department of Forest Resources at the College of Food, Agricultural, and Natural Resource Sciences on the Saint Paul campus. Lauren is also minoring in Urban and Community Forestry and Environmental Science, Policy and Management.



ARIANNA VANG is pursuing a Business and Marketing Education major from the Department in Organizational Leadership, Policy and Development in the College of Education and Human Development. Arianna Vang is also minoring in Management at the Carlson School of Management and expects to graduate in Fall 2024.



KENG XIONG is pursuing a BA in English in the Department of English and a BIS in Creative Writing, Leadership, and Asian American Studies in the Individualized Degrees Program both in the College of Liberal Arts on the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities campus. Keng is also minoring in Racial Justice in Urban Schooling and has a certificate in Editing and Publishing. He expects to graduate in Spring 2024.

GRADUATE & PROFESSIONAL SEED AWARDS



BRIANA CLIFTON-HASSAN is currently working towards a doctorate of medicine (MD) within the University of Minnesota Twin Cities Medical School and will graduate in 2026. Briana completed their undergraduate studies at the University of Minnesota Twin Cities, majoring in Biology, Society & Environment and Asian & Middle Eastern Studies and minoring in Sociology and Public Health.



CHOU MOUA is currently specializing in Hmong Education and Research at the College of Education and Human Development within the Comparative International Development Education program at the University of Minnesota. Chou completed his undergraduate studies at U of M majoring in Political Science and completed his master's program at Hubert H. Humphrey School of Public Affairs studying International Development Practice.



CUC VU is currently researching the underrepresentation of BIPOC students in STEM fields using a multi-factorial model within STEM Education in the College of Education and Human Development on the Twin Cities campus. She earned her undergraduate degree in Biology from Saint Catherine University and her master's degree in Biological Sciences from the University of Minnesota.

SEED AWARD SELECTION COMMITTEE (UNDERGRADUATE)

Christopher Ehrhart, Director, Diversity, Equity, and Belonging, U of M Crookston

Javier Gutierrez, Associate Vice-Chancellor for Student Success, Engagement, and Equity, U of M Rochester

Susana Pelayo-Woodward, Director, Office of Diversity and Inclusion, U of M Duluth

Fernie Rodriguez, Director, Multicultural Center for Academic Excellence, U of M Twin Cities

Iiz Thomson, Interim Associate Vice Chancellor for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, U of M Morris

Amelious N. Whyte, Jr., Assistant Dean for Diversity, Equity & Inclusion and Public Engagement, College of Liberal Arts, U of M Twin Cities

SEED AWARD SELECTION COMMITTEE (GRADUATE)

Anitra Cottledge, Director, Women's Center, Office for Equity and Diversity

Crystal Esparza Dean, Director of Admissions, Office of Admissions, Medical School

Joel Mixon, Director, Office of Admission and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, School of Dentistry

Judith Pechacek, Clinical Professor; Assistant Dean, Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) Program

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This publication is available in alternative formats upon request.
Contact the Office for Equity and Diversity
at 612-624-0594 or oed@umn.edu.