

TAKING ACTION

The Office of
Institutional Diversity

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Oregon State
University



In this issue:

- 4 THE OUTDOORS CALLED TO HER.**
Now she's helping others explore them for the first time.
- 6 HE LEADS WITH EMPATHY.**
And personal experiences drive his desire to create change.
- 8 MENTORING AND THE MICROBIOME:**
Maude David creates a productive atmosphere for student growth.
- 9 BARRIERS DON'T STOP TREVOR DENNING.**
He rolls over them.
- 10 DR. LAWRENCE GRIGGS CENTER FOR BLACK AND INDIGENOUS STUDENT SUCCESS:**
Welcoming students with academics, guidance and community, all in one place.
- 12 ERIKA MCCALPINE REPRESENTS FIRSTS.**
And her work is leading to lasting change.
- 14 UNITED AND STRONG:**
Kaku-Ixt Mana Ina Haws brings together Indigenous communities.
- 15 OUR GARDENS TELL A STORY.**
And honor the root of who we are.
- 16 THE MOST IMPACTFUL CHANGE-MAKERS LEAD BY EXAMPLE.**

ON THE COVER:

Youngjoon Hong, who earned his bachelor's degree in Chemical Engineering in 2019, is now pursuing his master's and working as a research assistant with a focus on atomic layer deposition systems.

Photo by Frank Miller.



Mark your calendars for Dam Proud Day 2022!

On April 27, Beavers everywhere will come together for Dam Proud Day: 24 hours to celebrate and champion the accomplishments of the Oregon State University community.

You can participate by supporting actions that enhance diversity, equity and inclusion across the university and advance OSU's [Diversity Strategic Plan](#). From improving the retention and success of underrepresented students and employees, to ensuring every OSU community member has access to innovative and transformative learning experiences, to integrating and embedding inclusive excellence in all parts of the university, our work continues every day.

Your contribution to the university's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion fund supports efforts like the [Pre-Doctoral Scholars Program](#), a collaboration between the Office of the Provost, Office of Faculty Affairs, the Office of Institutional Diversity and OSU's colleges. The program aims to recruit talented tenure-track faculty from underrepresented communities by introducing them to research, teaching and mentorship opportunities at OSU.

Contributions from the Oregon State community also help support the annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration, a weeklong event that explores Dr. King's contributions and lasting impacts and honors members of the Oregon State community working for peace and justice.

Faculty, staff and student leaders from across the university are leading efforts to advance DEI initiatives. Some of these stories are featured in this magazine. But we know "We Have Work To Do," and you can contribute by taking action with a gift to support Dam Proud Day in 2022.

Make your gift online at beav.es/wrK.

DEAR OSU COMMUNITY:

I am honored to welcome you to the Spring 2022 edition of Taking Action, the biannual magazine from the Office of Institutional Diversity at Oregon State University.

This issue outlines a slice of the ongoing work at Oregon State to advance diversity, equity and inclusion. You will find stories that feature an OSU alumna and a current student working to make the outdoors more inclusive and accessible, highlight a faculty member connecting inclusive mentorship to research, and dig into an effort to grow a culture of belonging within the OSU Master Gardener program. This issue will also introduce you to the new Dr. Lawrence Griggs Center for Black and Indigenous Student Success and the newly renamed Kaku-Ixt Mana Ina Haws, which provide spaces for students to succeed academically and explore their identities.

We are glad to introduce and welcome Miguel Arellano to the team as our new assistant director of outreach. Miguel is a "double Beaver," having received two degrees from Oregon State, and most recently served as the basic needs navigator in the Human Services Resource Center (soon to be renamed the OSU Basic Needs Center). Miguel is a compassionate and skilled educator, and we're glad to have him on the team.



This issue includes a profile of Erika McCalpine, executive director of strategic diversity initiatives at OSU-Cascades in Bend, and the first OSU-Cascades faculty member and Black woman to serve as president of the OSU Faculty Senate. Erika's work to advance diversity, equity and inclusion in Bend, Corvallis and throughout OSU is making real change.

Finally, I gratefully acknowledge the ongoing efforts of so many students, faculty, staff and community members who have worked for justice over the last two years. The world changed profoundly in March 2020 at the outset of the COVID-19 pandemic, and then again in the summer of 2020 with the killings of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery and so many others. The "twin pandemics" of health inequity and racialized violence have resurfaced injustices that undergird American society. And abroad, violence

in Myanmar, Afghanistan and Ukraine has negatively impacted students and employees in profound ways.

And yet, we continue to show up for each other in ways big and small. Through overwhelming challenges, the OSU community has moved forward. We have sustained our community through a commitment to difficult dialogue, learning, collaboration, adaptation and actions that resonate with our shared values.

Our motto in the Office of Institutional Diversity is "We Have Work To Do." It's with this in mind that we step into spring 2022.

Very sincerely,

Scott A. Vignos, J.D.
Interim Vice President and Chief Diversity Officer

THE OUTDOORS CALLED TO HER. Now she's helping others explore them for the first time.

Every person should be able to see themselves at a national park — to explore places they've never been, learn something new and see something extraordinary. But historically, these locations haven't felt welcoming to everyone. Anna Le is working to change that — by educating park visitors, opening dialogues and empowering all communities to connect with nature.

A 2019 Oregon State fisheries and wildlife sciences alumna, Le is an aquatic ecologist and environmental educator. Not only does she teach students and the public about the vital parts of our ecosystems, she also emphasizes the need to listen to different perspectives and voices in efforts to preserve and protect these natural resources.

As a student, Le noticed many ecology books focused on just one perspective — they were missing thoughts and ideas from people of

color. This realization inspired her to pursue a career in fish and wildlife science and scientific education and communication.

BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS

Using that knowledge, Le is opening doors to new experiences for all. In her role as an outdoor educator, she has guided several different groups through Yellowstone National Park, sharing her expertise on the connections between macroscopic (visible to the naked eye) and large animals, and introducing them to incredible views of geysers, hot springs and bison.

Recently, she partnered with Luz Lutima, a good friend and co-founder of Latinxhikers, to show communities of color that they too belong in the outdoors. Coordinated through social media, the two organized an eight-hour tour of Yellowstone that Le guided. A total of 24 people from across the U.S. participated. Many of the

attendees included parents in their 60s and 70s with their adult children and grandchildren, and it was the first time they had ever visited Yellowstone.

Their efforts caught the attention of Columbia Sportswear, which offered to provide buses, backpacks, tents, hats and other gear for everyone who attended.

"My favorite part of that job was being able to connect with people from all over and realize that I would be in their memories five to 10 years later," Le says.

FINDING BEAUTY IN THE SMALL THINGS

Le says she has many incredible memories of the people she's met throughout her career so far. But one of her favorite moments was with a

group of young, diverse artists from Pittsburgh. During their tour of Yellowstone, several artists mentioned they had never before seen a truly dark sky illuminated by stars — and they were mesmerized by how expansive it was. Le says she understood how important this moment was, because she had also grown up in a city where artificial light blurs the night sky. And it made her want to share this experience again and again.

CHANGING THE NARRATIVE

So how can we all work together to make the outdoors more inclusive? Le says it starts with discussions — especially the ones that make us uncomfortable.

"History can be ugly, but facing it head-on and actually acknowledging it can lead to further discussion," she says. "As long as we continue learning, we can push for personal growth and become better humans."

In addition to these conversations, Le says we can also strive to improve equitable access for everyone by

lowering the cost of entrance fees and outdoor gear, providing transportation options and creating safe spaces for diverse communities.

THE NEXT CHAPTER

Having accomplished so much so early in her career, Le says she plans to grow her platform of education and advocacy by continuing to do her own learning and seeking out additional opportunities for community engagement and outreach.

Much of her story is yet to be written. But that's what makes it so exciting.



To see Anna Le in action, visit bit.ly/3gdP2EM to view "Beyond the Scope," a film by The Outbound Collective.

HE LEADS WITH EMPATHY. And personal experiences drive his desire to create change.

Miguel Arellano Sanchez's Oregon State journey began in 2008, when he started his studies in human development and family sciences. After earning his bachelor's degree, he continued along his OSU path, earning a master's degree in college student services administration. He has worked in the [Student Experience and Engagement Center](#) and served as a basic needs navigator for the [Human Services Resource Center](#). Now, he's taking on new challenges and opportunities as assistant director of outreach in the Office of Institutional Diversity. Read on to hear more about his story.



Photo by Julian McFadden.

Q How has your career evolved and changed since first coming to Oregon State?

A As a first-generation immigrant that grew up low-income, I became keenly aware — from an early age — of the inequality around us and the negative physical, mental and material manifestations it had on people and communities. Because of this, I always knew I wanted to help people — and shape a better future. It was evident in my academic interest, employment choices, involvement and volunteer opportunities. While what I do professionally has changed, the goal to shape a better future has always remained.

Q Could you describe your role as assistant director of outreach? What do you hope to accomplish within this role?

A There are three main components to my role. The first is supporting bias response efforts as part of the Bias Response Team. The second is leading signature universitywide OID outreach initiatives and events. And lastly, helping to codesign educational programming for faculty, staff and students on diversity learning.

I am really looking forward to collaborating with partners across the university who are making strides in creating a campus, in all its functions, that aligns with our highest aspiration of a welcoming and affirming university. Part of my hope is to recognize, celebrate and amplify the successes and strides that Oregon State is taking to make this vision a reality.

Q How did your previous role as basic needs coordinator help to lessen student financial stress?

A In its essence, my role on campus was to help students access and use available resources to alleviate stress so they may focus on their success in school and life — and less about how they will pay for their rent or other basic necessities. This translated into helping students navigate red tape, policies, appeals and eligibility criteria for community, state and federal resources, but it also included helping students navigate the confusing maze of higher education.

The success I had in this position influenced the passage of HB 2835, a legislative bill that provides funding for basic needs navigators at all public colleges and universities. During the lobbying for the bill, one big appeal to state senators and representatives was the narrative around return on investment. During my time in this role, I helped students access more than a \$1.5 million in federal and state resources and helped many avoid unintended breaks in their education due to financial stress. The bill overwhelmingly passed in the Oregon House of Representatives and the Senate.

Q How can Oregon State create better access and support for traditionally underrepresented students? Is there anything the university is doing well so far?

A While we have work to do, I must underscore the great things OSU is doing. Programs like TRIO, Educational Opportunities Programs, College Assistance Migrant Program, Human Service Resource Center, STEM Leaders, Diversity and Cultural Engagement, to name a few, are doing phenomenal work in supporting and creating access for historically marginalized students. The reason these programs are successful is because of their incredibly loving and dedicated staff. They are the key to these programs' success, and these programs are key to the success of OSU. Successfully providing support and access for students cannot be separated from also doing the same for our marginalized faculty and staff.

Q As a first-generation Oregon State graduate, what does supporting other first-generation students and watching them succeed mean to you?

A Being the first in your family to go to college, often with little financial resources, is not easy. I often feel personally invested in the success of students because I see parts of myself in their journey and struggle.

Higher education was transformative, and if it wasn't for my mentors, supervisors, and programs like EOP, I am not sure I would have had the same experience. Now I get to play that role for students — and watching them succeed means the world to me!



MENTORING AND THE MICROBIOME: Maude David creates a productive atmosphere for student growth.

“It was a no-brainer,” says microbiology Ph.D. student Grace Deitzler of her decision to join Assistant Professor Maude David’s lab. “I knew that Maude would be the optimal mentor for me during my Ph.D.”

She has been. Inspiring students with an inclusive, welcoming learning environment, David was among the honorees for the 2020 [Breaking Barriers Awards](#). An initiative from the President’s Commission on the Status of Women, the award honors teaching and mentoring that promotes gender equity in higher education. Deitzler and fellow graduate student Alex Phillips nominated David for the award.

CREATING AN IDEAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

David’s mentoring approach centers on “creating a safe space for students before they go out into the world,” she says. Within the [David Lab](#), her four graduate students and five undergraduates are free to take risks, make mistakes and branch out in unexpected directions.

“She is really letting students take the reins,” Deitzler says. “She is dedicated to intentionally building a lab that gives young women researchers the chance to grow and succeed in our field and has been immensely supportive of our diverse intersecting identities.”

David’s students have received National Science Foundation fellowships, presented their work at international conferences and published journal articles. But that is not her only measure of their success.

“The number of papers a student publishes is not a correlation of how happy they are,” David says. Knowing the challenges of a career in science, particularly for women and other underrepresented groups, David encourages them to find a balance between well-being and accomplishment. “The students work so hard,” she says. “I have to tell them to take time off!”

A VIBRANT, INCLUSIVE LAB ATMOSPHERE

David believes in giving students at every level the opportunity to make a meaningful contribution to research. This increases their motivation and retention, so they will “start with science and stay,” she says.

For computer science undergraduate Temi Adewunmi, David’s leadership in the lab has made a strong impression. “She encouraged us to share our experiences about life on campus, things we felt were going well, as well as what wasn’t so great,” Adewunmi says. “That meant a lot to me as an international student from Nigeria, and I felt really heard and welcomed.”

With research interests that span computational biology, microbial ecology and the gut-brain axis, David recognizes the value of creativity and versatility in science. Embracing diverse perspectives, learning styles and problem-solving skills is essential to the success of the lab team. In one example, students got so creative in using a bit of code David gave them for an experiment that they actually broke it.

ONGOING RESEARCH ON THE GUT MICROBIOME AND AUTISM

Students in the David Lab are investigating the gut microbiome from a variety of angles, including meta-analysis of existing public data, behavioral experiments with mice and honeybees, and research linking the human gut microbiome and autism spectrum disorder.

David and her colleagues recently [published results](#) from their crowdsourced study on microbial markers in the gut microbiome of young children with and without autism. While they found significant differences between the two groups, David says the connections between the microbiome and human behavior are incredibly complex, and much more research is needed to bridge the gap between association and causality.

That research will continue. As will David’s mentoring of the next generation of scientists.

BARRIERS DON’T STOP TREVOR DENNING. He rolls over them.

Trevor Denning uses a wheelchair and loves the outdoors. But sometimes, those realities aren’t compatible. He wants to change that.

Denning is on a mission to make the outdoors more accessible to those with physical disabilities. Most of the time, he says, the people making decisions about accessibility are not disabled and have no firsthand knowledge on how to make a state, local or national park accessible.

“I believe there needs to be more people who are disabled in these positions because they are the ones with the real-world experience and know what needs to change,” he says. “On many occasions, I have visited an area that is deemed ‘accessible,’ when in fact, it is not.”

Denning is pursuing his bachelor’s degree in [tourism, recreation and adventure leadership](#) with a double minor in [natural resources](#) and [leadership](#). He chose OSU for this unique program, along with the welcoming community and college town feel of Corvallis.

“One of the best things about OSU is meeting so many students who come from diverse backgrounds, folks with the same passion I have for the outdoors and plenty of students with disabilities,” Denning says. “OSU is very welcoming to all students.”

Denning has been in a wheelchair since 2011, after a spinal injury when he was 15. For nearly 10 years, he could not do the things he loved in the outdoors. But through a community fundraising

effort, he received a ReActive Adaptations off-road handcycle in 2019. The custom-built handcycle includes an electric assist that can support Denning as he explores previously inaccessible areas.

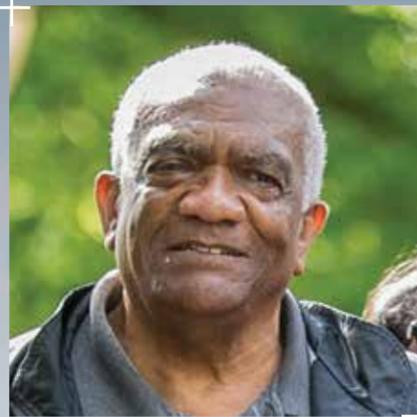
“My favorite part is I can do so much more by myself now,” he says. “When I want to explore a new area, I can go over, down and around terrain that I am not able to with my wheelchair. It is such a freeing experience.”

After graduation, Denning hopes to work for a federal agency such as the Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service or the Army Corps of Engineers, helping give people with physical disabilities greater access to the outdoors.

“Navigating a nondisabled world is tough,” he says. “Restaurants, grocery stores, bookstores, classrooms and housing are some of the many things that need to be made more accessible. The first step is having people who are disabled in a position to make these changes. I want to be one of those people.”



DR. LAWRENCE GRIGGS CENTER FOR BLACK AND INDIGENOUS STUDENT SUCCESS: Welcoming students with academics, guidance and community, all in one place.



Walk along the mezzanine level of the Memorial Union, and in the northeast corner, a new community is taking shape.

The [Dr. Lawrence Griggs Center for Black and Indigenous Student Success](#) aims to be a one-stop place where students can find tutoring and peer support, help with financial aid and other questions, and even things to do around Corvallis. According to center director Dorian Smith, the aim is to offer holistic support, centralize services and create a comfortable, welcoming environment.

“They have a place to study, a place to relax. They have academic and personal and social support,” Smith says. “For just about any question, they can get it answered. Or if we can’t find the answer, we will go out and find somebody who knows.”

Although students of color make up 28% of all students at Oregon State, Black and Indigenous students — which includes Native American, Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islanders — number less than 1,000. The Griggs Center, which opened in fall 2021, is part of a five-year effort in the [Division of Student Affairs](#) to reverse a decline in the number of Black and Indigenous students applying to, enrolling at and graduating from Oregon State. That requires focusing on those students’ specific issues and delivering culturally relevant support, Smith says. One small, but visible way to do that is by featuring art created by Black and Indigenous students on the walls, something Smith is currently working on.

Along with Smith and Christy Jones, who works with Indigenous students, the Griggs Center has six student employees, two who are tutors and four who are academic coaches. The center also partners with colleges and the Academic Success Center to provide tutoring, supplemental instruction and peer academic coaching.

Specific academic support is currently available in engineering, math and

chemistry, and Smith is working to bring in more resources and partners, including the Writing Center, Career Development Center and Human Services Resource Center. Instructors from Oregon State’s [Educational Opportunities Program](#) have held office hours in the Griggs Center, and Smith welcomes other OSU faculty and academic advisors to join them.

“We’d love to work with you, to find ways to support what you’re doing in your courses to support our students,” Smith says.

Other partners include the [Lonnie B. Harris Black Cultural Center](#), [Kaku-Ixt Mana Ina Haws](#) and two living-learning communities, [Nia Black Scholar](#) and [munk-skukum Indigenous](#). Smith says they offer cultural programming and events that complement the academic services offered in the Griggs Center, and he envisions more collaborations across the university.

“It can’t just be the Griggs Center and EOP doing the work,” Smith says. “It’s a whole university that believes this matters, and we can all collaborate to be more intentional in supporting students. I think we can really help make OSU more welcoming to everyone and more supportive of all our students. So this is a giant step.”

Smith credits Jesse Nelson, formerly associate provost for academic achievement, Janet Nishihara, executive director of EOP, Dan Larson, vice provost for student affairs, and Deb

Mott, director of the Memorial Union, for their commitment to Black and Indigenous student success and for championing the Griggs Center. And its location in the Memorial Union is more than just the “good logistics of being in the center of campus where it’s easy for anybody to get to,” he says.

“There’s a symbolic statement too. Putting the Griggs Center in the MU shows that it is a priority, that these concerns matter because we’re putting it in a building that so many people use,” Smith says. “It’s increasing the visibility of our support for Black and Indigenous students.”

The center is named for Lawrence Griggs, who started working in the Educational Opportunities Program as a Ph.D. student in 1972 and served as its director from 1986 until his retirement in 2008. Smith says Griggs, who [died](#) in 2020, is responsible for thousands of students coming to Oregon State, staying and graduating, encouraging them to “just give me one more term” when they faced difficult times.

“Whether it was buying diapers for students or finding scholarships out of thin air, he was always going above and beyond,” Smith says. Griggs was always honest with students, giving them “that real message that they needed to finish school, or to make them not just think about it, but actually to go on to grad school.”

“He did what this center intends to do. It’s his legacy.”

ERIKA MCCALPINE REPRESENTS FIRSTS. And her work is leading to lasting change.

Erika McCalpine came to OSU-Cascades in 2019 wanting to be “a great business instructor” and “a person trying to make a difference,” she says.

She’s accomplished both. And quickly.

McCalpine started her year-long term as Oregon State’s Faculty Senate president in January, the first Black woman to hold the position as well as the first from OSU-Cascades. At the Bend campus, she is the executive director of strategic diversity initiatives and leads the [Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Laboratory](#). She also serves as the [Search Advocate Program](#) liaison and teaches classes in business and human resources. Off campus, McCalpine is co-founder of Love Your Neighbor, a grassroots effort to promote social justice and increase visibility for communities of color in Central Oregon.

McCalpine has several goals as Faculty Senate president, including recruiting more faculty and staff of color to Corvallis and Bend, strengthening the onboarding process for all new faculty, building relationships between the Senate and university leadership, and highlighting the strengths of OSU-Cascades’ academic programs.

MAKING EVERYONE FEEL WELCOME

For years, McCalpine was the only Black employee at OSU-Cascades, and

she acknowledges “there’s a certain level of pressure that comes with that” to prove her worth. She believes representation is important and wants to demonstrate “that a person of color, a woman, can have success at OSU and OSU-Cascades.”

Two recruiting barriers to overcome are Oregon’s challenging history with race and demographics. “While we can’t change the past, we can certainly broadcast that the past does not control our present,” McCalpine says. She also rejects a common refrain that there’s no diversity in Oregon. “There are people of color who are successful, who are living good lives right here in Oregon,” she says. “We are part of the community, and we want to be included.”

Creating a sense of belonging is essential to onboarding employees, and McCalpine believes the retention process starts as soon as an employee is hired.

“It’s one thing to say that we are welcoming. But people have to feel it,” she says. “That environment, that inclusive place where regardless of what the demographics look like, people feel like their presence here is valued. I think that we could do a little bit better job by making sure that everyone’s voice is heard, and then people feel like they belong here.”

COMMITTING TO SHARED GOVERNANCE, QUALITY EDUCATION

McCalpine says one reason she originally ran for Faculty Senate and then for president was to build better relationships, including a renewed emphasis on shared governance between faculty and OSU administration. “We do better together than we do at odds with each other,” she says.

McCalpine also believes her election and the appointment of Interim President Becky Johnson have raised the profile of OSU-Cascades in Corvallis.

“We do have to be scrappy as a startup institution,” she says. “But we are very committed to quality education. We are very committed to the student experience.” Curriculum decisions made by the Faculty Senate impact academic programs at OSU-Cascades, and McCalpine welcomes more collaboration from colleges and departments in Corvallis with their colleagues in Bend.

PREPARING STUDENTS FOR THE REAL WORLD

McCalpine continues to teach two courses, and her lessons are informed in part by more than 15 years of experience working for companies like AT&T and Fidelity Information Services before earning her master’s from the University of Alabama.

She says students value the industry experience faculty have had that add to what they’ve read or what research might say about a business topic. She’s also found the business community in Bend and Central Oregon is entrepreneurial and eager to work with students on specific projects, giving them practical work experience that sets them up for success.

We are shaping them as professionals, to be people who will go out into the world,” McCalpine says. “That is the part I love.”

MEETING A STRONG DEMAND FOR DEI TRAINING

It was McCalpine’s frequent partnerships with the local business community that led to the creation of the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Laboratory at OSU-Cascades in September 2020. She completed several DEI trainings that led to more and more requests for consulting work.

Funded in part by a gift from John Teller and Amy Tykeson, the DEI Lab advises businesses, government agencies and nonprofits on hiring practices, unconscious bias and other issues. McCalpine’s work has since expanded beyond Central Oregon, and the DEI Lab now has clients in Portland and statewide.

McCalpine says she is grateful for the receptive environment she has found in Oregon. “People are thirsty for knowledge around diversity, equity and inclusion,” she says. “People want to do better. It’s not just people like me doing this work. Regular, everyday citizens want to see Oregon be a different and better place, and that’s inspiring.”

HAVING SOMETHING TO OFFER

Although people of color make up about 12% of the population in Central Oregon, McCalpine knew there wouldn’t be many who looked like her when she came to Bend. Her new colleagues at OSU-Cascades were

welcoming, but she still felt isolated at times. Having her children make the move with her was both a help and a motivation. She wanted them to see her work hard and accomplish goals. Her daughter, having earned her bachelor’s degree at OSU-Cascades, is now in the Master of Arts in Teaching program, while her son is a junior in high school. “They are my biggest cheerleaders,” McCalpine says.

McCalpine also draws from another source of strength. “I am a woman of faith and believe I’ve been placed in these positions because I have something to offer,” she says. “People trust me to give objective, educational advice on social justice. My faith keeps me grounded and allows me to meet people where they are. It also allows me to keep going when the weight of this work gets heavy. The goal of reaching liberation is something all of us can work toward. I’m a vessel that is used to help lead us there.”



UNITED AND STRONG: Kaku-Ixt Mana Ina Haws brings together Indigenous communities.

Oregon State University’s cultural center for Indigenous communities has a new name that reflects Indigenous languages and includes input from a variety of stakeholders. Announced in September 2021, [Kaku-Ixt Mana Ina Haws](#) means “unified strength of the Beaver House” in a combination of [Chinuk Wawa](#) and Polynesian languages.

Established in 1973 as the Native American Longhouse in a surplus Quonset hut, the name Eena Haws — Chinuk Wawa for Beaver House — was added when the longhouse moved into its current building in 2013.

Starting in fall 2019, a series of student discussions focused on the name evolving to better reflect the center’s mission and the needs of the community. This led to a process to collect stakeholder input and consider the potential for a name incorporating more than one language. Stakeholders also researched and discussed the history of the center’s name.

According to Luhui Whitebear, the center director and an assistant professor in the School of Language, Culture and Society, there was a strong desire to keep Eena Haws as part of the name. Another consideration was to use language from Pacific Islanders to ensure those communities, which are included in the center’s mission and purpose, are represented as well.

Kaku-Ixt, which means “unified” in Chinuk Wawa, was chosen to highlight unity. Mana, a word that’s used across several Polynesian languages, was chosen to highlight strength. Eena was a phonetic spelling, so it was changed to Ina, the correct spelling for beaver in Chinuk Wawa.

Chinuk Wawa is one of the languages that were spoken by Indigenous people who lived on the [land](#) where Oregon State is located. Among their descendants, the [Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde Community of Oregon](#) maintains educational resources for Chinuk Wawa. Whitebear says the center consulted with the Grand Ronde language program to ensure spelling, syntax, meaning and the inclusion of a Polynesian word was appropriate.

Native Hawaiian elders and language instructors were similarly consulted.

“There was a lot of thought that went into the name and even the arrangement of the name,” Whitebear says. “There is internal strength within the community. We have strength when we are together.”

Whitebear emphasizes that while the name is new, Kaku-Ixt Mana Ina Haws remains a student-focused space that reflects their needs and celebrates their Indigenous identities.

“The spirit of the center is the same.”

KAKU-IXT MANA INA HAWS

WHAT IT MEANS:

Kaku-Ixt Mana Ina Haws is a combination of Chinuk Wawa and Polynesian languages.

- Kaku-Ixt means “unified” in Chinuk Wawa.
- Mana means “internal power/strength” in several Polynesian languages.
- Ina Haws means “beaver house” in Chinuk Wawa.

Together, Kaku-Ixt Mana Ina Haws celebrates the “unified strength of the Beaver House.”

HOW TO SAY IT:

- Kaku-Ixt: Kah-goo EE-hxt (the x makes more of an h sound)
- Mana: Mah-nuh
- Ina: EE-nuh
- Haws: house

Hear the pronunciation guide at the [Kaku-Ixt Mana Ina Haws website](#).

OUR GARDENS TELL A STORY. And honor the root of who we are.

Gardening provides a safe space for reflection, a connection to heritage and a celebration of identity. But popular culture has historically left many voices out. That’s why the [Culture of Gardening](#) is creating a space for all to feel seen and heard — and share the experiences that mean the most to them.

Created in April 2021 through the OSU Extension Master Gardener DEI Taskforce, the Culture of Gardening is a collection of personal stories gathered through interviews by a small team of Master Gardener faculty and volunteers, presented as an OSU Extension blog. Each story is shared in the interviewee’s exact words to preserve authenticity.

Storytellers include several people affiliated with Oregon State as well as community members. Topics include gardening as a source of healing, foods passed on from generation to generation, family history and more. The blog is part of the Master Gardener Taskforce, which includes curriculum planning, DEI trainings and events like movie nights and panel discussions.

LeAnn Locher, Oregon State’s statewide Master Gardener outreach coordinator, says the main goal of this project is to show that gardening is for everyone — and that representation matters.

“For many people from underinvested communities, it’s easy to feel like we’re invisible, like certain aspects of our lives are not mainstream,” she says. “And when our whole selves can be witnessed, and our stories valued, it creates some really special moments.”

NOT JUST A HOBBY, A JOURNEY

Each gardener’s story is inspiring in its own way. Marissa Madrigal, a gardener in Portland, uncovered a new connection to her Indigenous roots through growing maize. This sacred Indigenous crop is nourishing, comforting and helped her ancestors’ civilization flourish. Maize is the piece that holds other ingredients together in many Mexican/Chicanx recipes, like tacos, posole (soup), esquites (a toasted corn snack) and elote (corn on the cob with spices). Some of Madrigal’s favorite homemade recipes include garden salsa and fresh corn salad.

Athen Zachary has found belonging and a connection to the queer and trans community through gardening. He enjoys caring for his many pollinating plants, reflecting and meeting others in the community garden behind his Portland home. Zachary adds that he enjoys gardening because it’s something that constantly changes and evolves — and it’s an activity everyone can participate in, regardless of their level of gardening experience.

THERE’S SO MUCH MORE TO COME

While the Culture of Gardening has brought many stories to the forefront, there are more to be told. Locher says she hopes to see the number of stories on the blog double or triple, as the idea is shared by word of mouth through the OSU community and beyond.

And with these stories, our knowledge and celebration of one another can continue to grow.

If you have a gardening experience to share, or know of someone who does, contact LeAnn Locher at leann.locher@oregonstate.edu. Discover more about the project at blogs.oregonstate.edu/cultureofgardening.

THE MOST IMPACTFUL CHANGE-MAKERS LEAD BY EXAMPLE.

Five Oregon State community members were recognized for their efforts toward ending injustice and building community. This January, they were presented with a [legacy award](#) at the annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration. Each of the 2022 honorees supports and stands up for marginalized communities in their daily work, driven to make a difference.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION ALUMNI LEGACY AWARD

Eric Knox, '89

A mentor to marginalized communities for more than 30 years, Knox has helped countless youth find their voice, reimagine their worth and own their futures. He not only serves as a guide, but an inspiration — someone they can look up to for years to come. Knox is the founder and executive director of HOLLA, a nonprofit mentoring organization. In 2022, HOLLA will launch a culturally responsive public charter school in East Portland that centers around youth of color.

Knox is also head coach for the women's basketball team at Benson High School in Portland. He led the team to a state championship in 2019 — and his starting five players all earned scholarships to play in college.

OSCAR HUMBERTO MONTEMAYOR AWARD

Cazandra Aporbo

Aporbo, a biology student at OSU-Cascades, is described as a humble leader. She founded At Your Pace, a student club that connects undergraduate mentors with high school students. The club's mission is to increase college and career readiness and provide all students with a support system. Aporbo

is also a mentor for the TRIO program, which provides mentoring to low-income and first-generation students, as well as students with disabilities. Through her mentoring, Aporbo has connected students with internships, research opportunities and more.

FRANCES DANCY HOOKS AWARD

Tarron Anderson

Anderson, an equity associate in the Office of Equal Opportunity and Access, is dedicated to building inclusivity at Oregon State and is always willing to stand up for others in the face of injustice. He regularly collaborates with Oregon State's cultural centers and provides mentoring through programs like the President's Commission on the Status of Black Faculty and Staff Affairs and the Distinguished Scholars Initiative. Through his interactions, daily work and participation in groups and committees across campus, Anderson speaks out about the importance of the Black Lives Matter movement and issues like systemic inequity.

Mateo Olmos

Olmos, a senior studying human development and family sciences, doesn't just hope for change — he takes action. In 2020, he was vice president of the NAACP OSU branch and participated in the March

on Washington, D.C. He is also a member of DAM Change, a campaign created by student-athletes to build awareness around systemic racism, and serves as director of communications for Oregon State's Black Student Union. In addition, he builds community through the Distinguished Scholars Initiative — an Oregon State program for men of color, focused on building community through mentoring and fellowship. More than anything, Olmos is dedicated to building equality on campus and beyond.

PHYLLIS S. LEE AWARD

Samantha Chisholm Hatfield

Chisholm Hatfield always makes time for connection — with students, colleagues and others. An instructor in the Department of Agricultural Education and Agricultural Sciences, she specializes in traditional ecological knowledge perspectives and Indigenous culture issues. And her dedication to these topics is evident in her interactions. She attends and helps to plan events celebrating Indigenous culture, inspires students to learn about science and spends many evenings and weekends providing support to Indigenous students and their families. Chisholm Hatfield is an educator many look up to, one who teaches with compassion, patience and pride.

