

# 2023 Report

## Office for Institutional Equity and Inclusive Culture





## Message from the Vice President and Chief Diversity Officer

The Office for Institutional Equity and Inclusive Culture (EIC) and I are so grateful for another year to serve and partner with the Drexel community. I am lifting the word “partner,” because this year’s EIC Annual Report is centered around the work of the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Partners across the University. You are considered a partner if you are committed to making sure people are heard, seen, valued and given an opportunity to succeed – regardless of whether you formally have “DEI” in your title. We are excited to report on all the ways you are building a culture of inclusion and equity at Drexel University.

We are also excited to share that one of our closest partners – the Center for Inclusive Education and Scholarship (CIES) – has formally joined the Office for Institutional Equity and Inclusive Culture, further strengthening EIC’s outreach and dedication to our students. CIES serves as a conduit to: increase access to higher education for students regardless of race, ethnicity, gender and socioeconomic status; foster an inclusive community of scholars striving to achieve academic excellence; and graduate students empowered to impact change. We look forward to working with our DEI Partners to support Dragons Prep, Liberty Scholars, THRIVE (Students of Color Empowerment Retreat), and all the 11 programs led by CIES.

As I often say, we are on this diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging journey together, at every level of the organization. This collective commitment is reflected at the senior leadership level through the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging Advisory Council that I co-chair with Senior Vice President of Student Success Subir Sahu, with President Fry, Provost Jensen and Executive Vice President Bowman serving as executive sponsors. The council oversees EIC’s strategic leadership towards building an inclusive campus culture and climate through consistent advocacy for integration of DEI efforts within senior levels of leadership, effective allyship to historically marginalized communities at the University, and creative, thoughtful and comprehensive advisement regarding EIC efforts.

Our efforts and partnerships across campus, coupled with this intentional structure and commitment on our journey, led Drexel to receive the 2023 Higher Education Excellence in Diversity (HEED) award from INSIGHT Into Diversity.

We study, teach and work in a microcosm of a world that is faced with incomprehensible challenges. Yet, we find hope and inspiration in the ways that our DEI partnerships bring us together. Let us continue to partner through the challenges and continue to celebrate our achievements towards building institutional equity and inclusive culture in our Drexel University community.

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In this report, we highlight EIC's role in serving the Drexel community to advance the University's mission and strategic goals, and how we are organized to effectively execute this task. We feature our 2023 successes, and opportunities for improvement. We also share some insights about opportunities for next year, and a call to action because it takes all of us to create the University community that we all look forward to learning and working at.



## **Higher Education Excellence in Diversity Award**

We are excited to share that Drexel University is a 2023 recipient of the INSIGHT Into Diversity Higher Education Excellence in Diversity (HEED) award. This award is a testament to the University's commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging, and a recognition of the efforts of the many DEIB partners, faculty, professional staff, and students across campus. THANK YOU for making Drexel University a welcoming campus as we strive to create a climate where everyone, regardless of their identity and background, feels like they too belong here.

## **Office for Institutional Equity and Inclusive Culture's Mission**

The mission of the Office for Institutional Equity and Inclusive Culture (EIC) is to lead and promote Drexel's equity and inclusion imperative with integrity, trust and respect that is grounded in accountability and courageous self-examination. We cultivate a culture of belonging by working in partnership with members of the University community to integrate diversity and inclusion throughout the organization, in our efforts to maintain a people-centered, welcoming, and accessible campus. We strive to develop inclusive culture-builders to foster dialogue across differences, and to inspire holistic learning and growth.

## **Office for Institutional Equity and Inclusive Culture's Vision**

For Drexel to be the premier university for diversity and equity, where everyone performs their best work and thrives because they have a sense of belonging.

## Office for Institutional Equity and Inclusive Culture's Team

**Mariah Adkisson**, Equal Opportunity & Title IX Investigator

**Patience Ajoff-Foster**, PhD, CDE, Assistant Vice President for Inclusive Culture and Belonging

**Alison Berk**, Assistant Director, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

**Aqila Clement**, Operations and Data Analytics Coordinator

**Rae Coleman**, Assistant Director, Center for Black Culture

**Gina Del Rio Gazzo**, Equal Opportunity and Title IX Investigator

**Alison Dougherty**, EdD, Executive Director, Talent Management, and Interim Title IX and EEO Coordinator

**Jennifer Gallagher**, Executive Director, People Operations

**Kim Gholston**, CDE, Vice President and Chief Diversity Officer

**Shardé Johnson**, Executive Director for Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging

**Xavier Johnson**, Director, Labor Relations and Equal Employment Opportunity and HR Business Partner

**MacKenzie Luke**, PhD, Associate Vice President of Student Success and Chief of Staff; Title IX Coordinator

**Bernetta McCall Millonde**, Executive Director, Center for Inclusive Education and Scholarship; Director, Liberty Scholars

**Sandra Petri**, Associate Director, Center for Inclusive Education and Scholarship

**Nora Rossini**, Labor Relations and EEO Generalist

**Tomarra A. Sankara-Kilombo**, Administrative Coordinator

**Roxzine Scott**, Executive Assistant II & Program Manager

**Jennifer Thorndike-Gonzales**, PhD, Associate Director, Student Center for Diversity and Inclusion (SCDI)

**Valeria Tirado**, Equal Opportunity & Title IX Case Manager

**Marco Valverde**, ACT101 Counselor & Academic Coach, Center for Inclusive Education and Scholarship

**Kristin Vitacco**, Assistant Director, Sexual Misconduct Prevention & Education

## How the Office for Institutional Equity and Inclusive Culture is Organized

EIC's work is organized in two key intersecting areas – Inclusive Culture, and Title IX and Equal Opportunity – which aim to foster an inclusive, welcoming, equitable and safe campus environment.

The Inclusive Culture team leads and supports Drexel's culture of inclusion and equity through strategy, partnerships and programming. We also offer physical spaces at our centers highlighted in this report, which inspire student sense of belonging through co-curricular and extra-curricular engagement.

EIC's Title IX and Equal Opportunity team oversees reports and addresses incidents of bias, harassment, discrimination, and sexual misconduct impacting members of the Drexel community.

### How EIC Supports the Drexel Community

EIC works with students, faculty, and professional staff within academic and administrative units by:

- Providing consultation, education, and training throughout campus.
- Offering identity-based physical spaces in the Center for Black Culture, Center for Inclusive Education and Scholarship, Student Center for Diversity and Inclusion, and the James E. Marks Intercultural Center (Spiritual and Religious Life).
- Investigating complaints related to discrimination, harassment, bias prevention, and Title IX.
- Leading the implementation and success monitoring of the University's anti-racism commitments.
- Working in collaboration with the Drexel 2030 team to lead and support the implementation and success monitoring of the Culture of Equity imperative of the University's strategic plan.

## Diversity at Drexel University

**25.5%**

of all undergraduate students are Pell-Grant eligible

**56**

states and territories are represented among our students

**16.8%**

of all undergraduate students are first generation

**124**

nations are represented among all students

**403**

student veterans and about 70 faculty and professional staff are veterans

**2000+**

students and

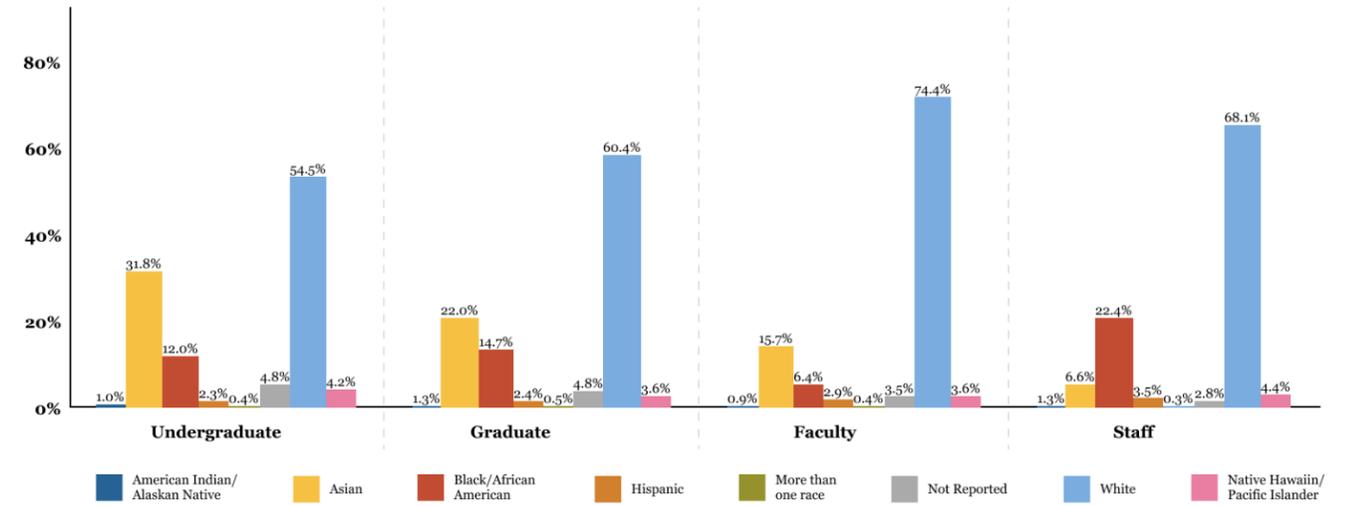
**75**

faculty and professional staff have a documented disability

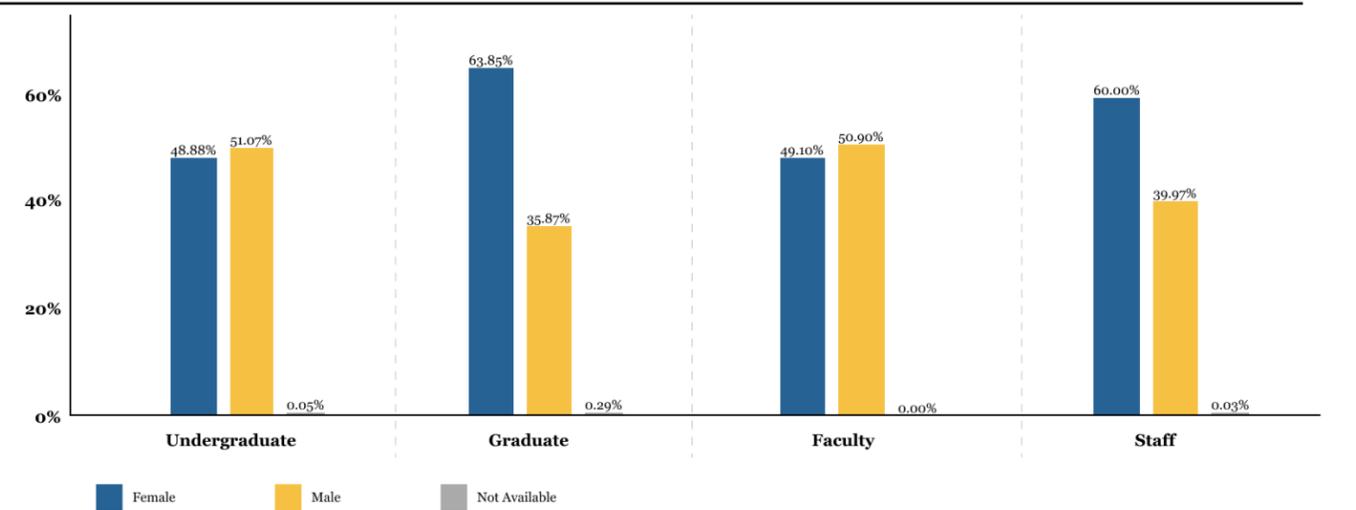
**137+**

students identify as neurodiverse and receive services through the Center for Autism and Neurodiversity

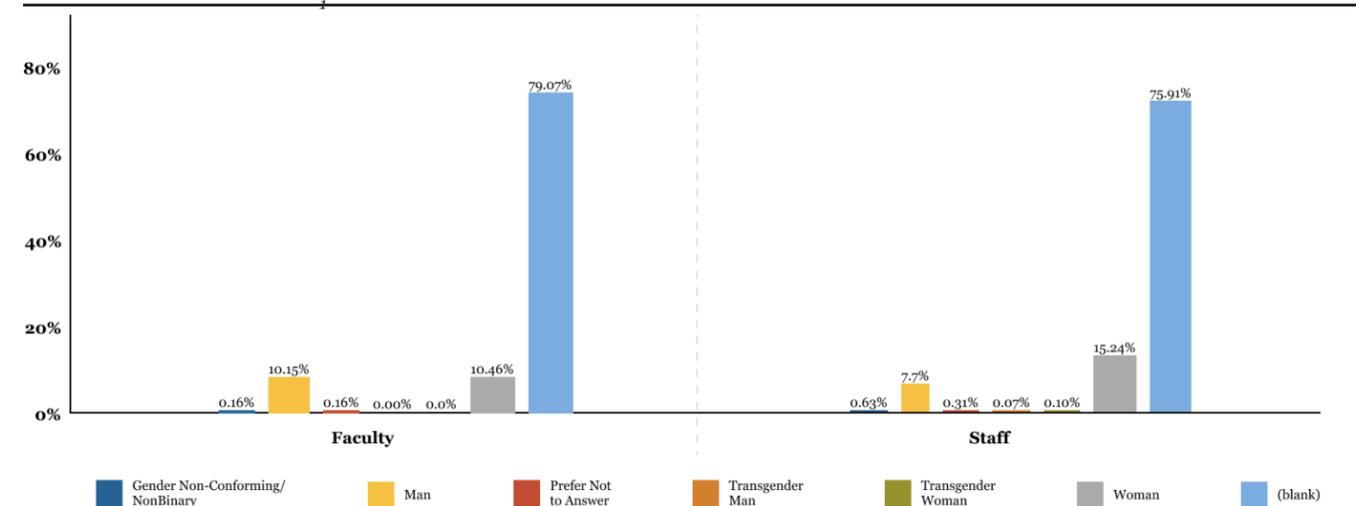
### Race and Ethnicity



### Legal Sex <sup>1</sup>



### Gender Identity



<sup>1</sup> Legal Sex refers to characteristics that are biologically defined. Gender refers to socially constructed roles, behaviors, characteristics, and individual expression. Data were retrieved from Banner.

## Journey Towards Anti-Racism

EIC continues to lead the implementation and success monitoring of the University's anti-racism commitments, derived from the 200+ recommendations of the 2020 Anti-racism Task Force convened by President Fry. In the 2023 anti-racism report, 41 of the University's 43 units reported on their activities towards the University's 64 commitments, up from 32 in the 2022 report. Highlighted in the report were the two commitments, which all units are expected to be working on, in addition to any others that align and advance specific unit goals.

Furthermore, the success monitoring framework developed to monitor progress of anti-racism commitments informed the goals and metrics of demographic representation and culture and climate of the Culture of Equity imperative of the University's strategic plan. The demographic dashboard on EIC's website shows representation data during the five-year period from 2018-2022.

**Anti-racism Pilot Group**  
Formed in the fall of 2022, the anti-racism pilot group consists of representatives from 11 academic and administrative units who serve as a think-tank towards the implementation and integration of the University's anti-racism commitments and diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging efforts.



## Campus Climate



*Drexel Students on campus representing in their Dragon gear.*

According to results from the baseline climate survey administered in the fall 2021 by the Higher Education Data Service Consortium (HEDS), the mean score for satisfaction with overall campus climate was 3.79 on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being very dissatisfied and 5 being very satisfied. When respondents were asked about the extent to which they experienced a sense of belonging at Drexel, the mean was 3.53 for all respondents (N=1,812).

Additionally, the HEDS survey instrument included five open-ended items, and after analyzing 3,245 distinct participant responses through multiple coding cycles, the following overarching themes emerged: Sense of Community (positive, negative, and mixed); Change to Enhance Community (calls for action on DEI commitments, calls for authentic engagement, and calls for inaction); Unsure of Discrimination or Harassment (hard to be certain, unsure of categorization of microaggression, used to it, and confirmed experience); and Did Not Report. In response, EIC continues to take a comprehensive approach to reinforce areas where survey respondents reported feeling a positive sense of community and has been working on areas that were not so favorably reported on.

The next survey will be launched during the winter 2024, and we invite you to share your experiences with us as we continue to work to enhance the climate on our physical and virtual campuses.

## Highlights and Accomplishments

**62**

DEIB sessions and workshops offered

Attended by

**1,779**

members of the Drexel community

**80%**

of participants surveyed are satisfied with content presented

- EIC hosted the inaugural President’s Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging Speaker Series in partnership with the Office of the Vice Provost for DEI.
- Co-Led the 4th Drexel Institute for Inclusive and Equitable Teaching through partnership with the Drexel Teaching and Learning Center. A cohort of 20 faculty from Drexel’s different schools and colleges completed the 6-week synchronous and asynchronous sessions during the Winter 2023. 68 faculty have completed the Institute to date.
- Co-led the monthly fall/winter antiracist pedagogies series for faculty through partnership with Drexel’s Teaching and Learning Center.



*Theaster Gates’ “Monument in Waiting,” 2020 on Drexel Campus*



*President’s DEIB Speaker Series Honoring the Legacy of Katherine Johnson.*

## Land Acknowledgment

Working in close collaboration with Drexel Indigenous Students of the Americas (DISA), EIC led the revision of Drexel University's Land Acknowledgment. This culminated with the installation of a Land Acknowledgment marker located on the University City campus, just off the Korman Quad, between the Korman Center and the Pearlstein Business Learning Center. Drexel is the first institution in the Philadelphia area to have such a land marker installed.

## Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Partners

The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Partners group is a coalition of Drexel community members (faculty, professional staff, students and alumni), who either have a formal role in DEI or are DEI group leaders within their academic and administrative units. Beyond their contributions within their units, this group of about 40 has been instrumental in advancing key priorities including EIC's strategic plan and major University priorities, including the Drexel 2030 Culture of Equity imperative and the anti-racism commitments. Many in the group provided data that was included in the University's HEED award application.

## 6 Colleague Resource Groups (CRGs)

Colleague Resource Groups provide a safe and welcoming space for faculty and professional staff who come from historically underrepresented communities, or who share common experiences and challenges. CRGs also provide opportunities for the diverse population of Drexel University's faculty and professional staff to gather socially and share ideas and similar interests.

This past year, EIC revised the Colleague Resource Group formation process, which facilitated the creation of two new groups: Neurodivergent Employee CRG and the Drexel Asian, Pacific and Middle East CRG.

Current Drexel faculty and professional staff can sign up for any of the six CRGs (Black Employees at Drexel; Bienvenidos; Veteran and Military Connected; Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Allies+; Neurodivergent Employees; and Drexel Asian, Pacific and Middle East) on EIC's website.



## Student Centers and Activities

In this next section, we highlight activities and accomplishments of our student-facing centers, part of Student Life’s intentional partnership with EIC in recognition of the diverse backgrounds of our students and the need for inclusive communities to ensure “that every student feels welcome and supported during their entire time here.” These include the Center for Black Culture, Center for Inclusive Education and Scholarship, Student Center for Diversity, and Inclusion, and Spiritual and Religious Life.



A group of graduating students at the 2023 William Sydney Pittman graduation ceremony

### Center for Black Culture (CBC)

*The Center for Black Culture (CBC) at Drexel University serves as a hub of information, activity, and community for Black students, faculty, professional staff and alumni.*

*The CBC aims to increase knowledge, recognition, and respect of the people, histories and cultures of the African diaspora and its many contributions to the world. All programs and services offered through the CBC are open to members of the Drexel community who want to gain a greater understanding of the Black experience and support a welcoming and wholly inclusive campus environment.*

## A Year in Numbers

2,144

unique holders swiped into the CBC space with

24,499

total swipes.

25

students employed

Hosted

75

student organizations

Awarded grants to

5

student organizations

## Other CBC Highlights

- 100+ participants registered for the inaugural “Black Hair Expo Pride in Your Pattern” event with Professor Wendy Greene as keynote.
- 120 participants attended and engaged in mental health focused initiatives, hosted by Robia Smith-Herman, BIPOC mental health specialist.
- Co-hosted the William Sydney Pittman Graduation Ceremony for about 165 graduating students and their families.
- About 121 participants engaged in Juneteenth event, which included an exhibit of community artists’ work.
- Partnered with Office of Global Engagement to offer Intensive Course Abroad (ICA) in Tanzania for 11 undergraduate and 1 graduate students.



Drexel students and ICA course instructors with Tanzanian students.

“I have been connected to the Center for Black Culture since my sophomore year of college and from then I’ve considered it to be my second home on campus. The space not only serves as a safe haven for black students on campus, but the events that it holds really cater to the black experience. If the Center for Black Culture didn’t exist, I’m not sure I would feel as welcomed as I currently do at Drexel. This place has been a huge part of my Drexel journey and I will continue to advocate for it and promote it throughout my time here”

**Gabrielle Forbes,**

Entrepreneurship and Innovation Management Student

## Student Center for Inclusive Education and Scholarship

Serves **1,100+** students across **11** programs

*The Center for Inclusive Education and Scholarship's (CIES) objective is to empower a community of scholars. We achieve this by providing comprehensive and integrated academic support and resources, leadership development, and academic coaching to positively impact the retention and persistence to graduation for students who are first in their families to attend college (First-Gen), identify as historically underrepresented students of color, may come from lower socioeconomic backgrounds and recently, undocumented or Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA).*



*CIES staff, students, and Drexel administration attend THRIVE: Students of Color Early Move-in Empowerment Retreat in September 2023.*

“I heavily admire the workspace environment and CIES’ overall message, which I interpret as a place for support in any area. CIES is the voice behind the underrepresented minorities, giving them a platform to be open, to seek help, and to feel welcome, seen, and heard.”

**Nina Smith,**  
BS in Psychology '24

Highlighted below are four of the 11 programs CIES oversees:

**ACT 101** is the Pennsylvania Higher Education Equal Opportunity Program that has existed for decades to remove barriers for historically underrepresented students. Qualified students commit to the program annually by signing a Student/Institution Agreement, where Drexel’s academic and financial commitments are communicated to the students, and the students’ educational goals and objectives are shared with the dedicated Act 101 counselor. Through this collaboration with the state, which includes an annual grant managed by CIES, we provide ACT 101 students with loaner textbooks, laptops, graphing and scientific calculators, lab coats, goggles, tutoring, free printing and a dedicated Act 101 counselor and academic coach.

*There were 90 Act 101 students enrolled during the 2022-23 academic year, with 26 students graduating in the Spring 2023.*

**Dragons Prep** is a five-week intensive summer program preparing our newest Dragons for the transition from high school to college and the pace and rigor of Drexel. Centered on the pursuit of academic excellence, participants take up to nine course credits, participate in weekly sessions on outsmarting college, and learn about academic resources on campus and how to navigate Blackboard Learn. Peer mentoring and academic coaching are also a part of the five-week experience, as well as participating in social opportunities and exploring Philadelphia.

*95 students enrolled and completed the program in the summer of 2023.*

**The Drexel Liberty Scholars** Program provides 65 recent high school graduates from across the nation with a renewable scholarship award that covers 100 percent

of tuition and fees. Additionally, the program fosters student success and holistic support through a dedicated faculty or professional staff mentor, and a Living Learning Community in the residence hall.

*At the writing of this report, there are 283 Liberty Scholars across 63 degree programs at Drexel.*

**The Drexel Global Scholar** program is rooted in Drexel’s commitment to support international students. The program offers full tuition and fees scholarships to a select number of incoming international students with exceptional academic achievement and an outstanding commitment to global leadership and international community building. Program participants are actively involved in valuable, peer-based mentorship and leadership development opportunities, as well as team-building activities and civic engagement.

*There are currently 64 Global Scholars enrolled in 33 degree programs.*

### CIES Highlights during the 2022-2023 Academic Year:

- Launched in October 2022, the quarterly Saturday Summit program, a series designed to build community, explore career readiness, engage in academic preparedness, financial literacy, and more hosted about 300 students in its first year.
- Launched the Ascent Peer Mentorship Program, a community of 80 students that facilitates peer mentor learning and engagement.
- Hosted 95 students in the 5-week Dragons Prep program, up from 68 students in 2022.
- Hosted the largest THRIVE: Students of Color Empowerment Retreat serving 68 students including for the first time 13 commuters and 5 transfer students.

## Student Center for Diversity and Inclusion

*The Student Center for Diversity and Inclusion (SCDI) engages Drexel's AHLANA, indigenous, people of color, LGBTQIA+, first generation, immigrants, and undergraduate and graduate international student populations through direct advocacy and intentional identity-based community building, events, and courageous conversations. We are active advocates for student diversity, intersectional social justice, and education on campus. The SCDI is a safe/brave space where you can be who you are or explore who you want to be.*

### A Year in Numbers

Hosted  
**35**  
events.

Awarded grants to  
**3**  
student organizations.

**80**  
students and their families  
participated in LUNA graduation  
celebration.

**200**  
participants attended the annual  
Drag Show.

**150+**  
attended The Ball.

**150+**  
attended interfaith dinner.

### Other SCDI Highlights

- Developed plan and completed remodeling of two new spaces, culminating with the opening of the Large Lounge and Private Flex Space in the fall of 2023.
- Raised the Pride Flag to kick off Pride Month Celebration on campus for the first time.
- Partnered with the Office of the Vice Provost for DEI to organize the inaugural 2023 PRIDE 4 LGBTQ+ forum, during which scholars discussed gender identity, gender expression, and safety on campus.
- Hosted 2023 Drag Show featuring Pandora Boxx and other local queens, attended by 200+ students.
- Over 80 graduating students of Latin American, Indigenous, and Caribbean ancestry and their families participated in the 2023 LUNA graduation.
- Meet and Read Book display library intentionally features diversity and building sense of belonging. SCDI's monthly picks feature topics aligned with the history/heritage celebration to display authors from diverse backgrounds and identities.
- Started the "Toiletries Week" in August 2023, a monthly event during which we provide toiletries and sanitary products for students in addition to groceries.
- We remodeled all the spaces in the SCDI, providing more information and resources for students to use when they are in the space. Now, we have yoga mats, prayer mats, different stress relievers, journals, identity-based coloring pages, coloring pencils, and more that students can use and take home. The spaces are cozier and brighter with new posters and furniture!

“I really appreciate that the Student Center for Diversity and Inclusion exists. Ordinarily, you only meet the small number of Drexel students who happen to be in your classes, and it can be difficult to connect with them outside the classroom. There's a great energy here, it's very welcoming and everyone wants to help you on your journey. And it's easy to get to, pretty much being in the center of campus so it's become an important place.”

**Mackenzie Fusco,**  
'25

## Title IX and Equal Employment Opportunity

The Title IX and Equal Employment Opportunity team in EIC promotes Drexel’s inclusive and welcoming campus climate by overseeing reports and addressing incidents of bias, harassment, discrimination, and sexual misconduct impacting members of the community.

This is accomplished by:

- Providing support and resources for impacted individuals;
- Investigating complaints and holding bad-actors accountable for misconduct;
- Compiling data and assessing trends across our community; and
- Implementing prevention programs to educate community members about their rights and responsibilities as members of the Drexel community.

### Sexual Misconduct Prevention Education



Drexel students on campus.

- 52 educational and/or prevention workshops offered to students and employees
- 23 awareness program initiatives
- 50+ colleagues attended Sexual Violence Workshop facilitated by Women Against Abuse
- 500 t-shirts distributed to Drexel students and employees as part of Sexual Assault Awareness Month in April
- 620 Drexel students and 7 departments donated over 8,500 garments, which were offered to the Philadelphia Sexual Assault Response Center and local domestic violence shelters

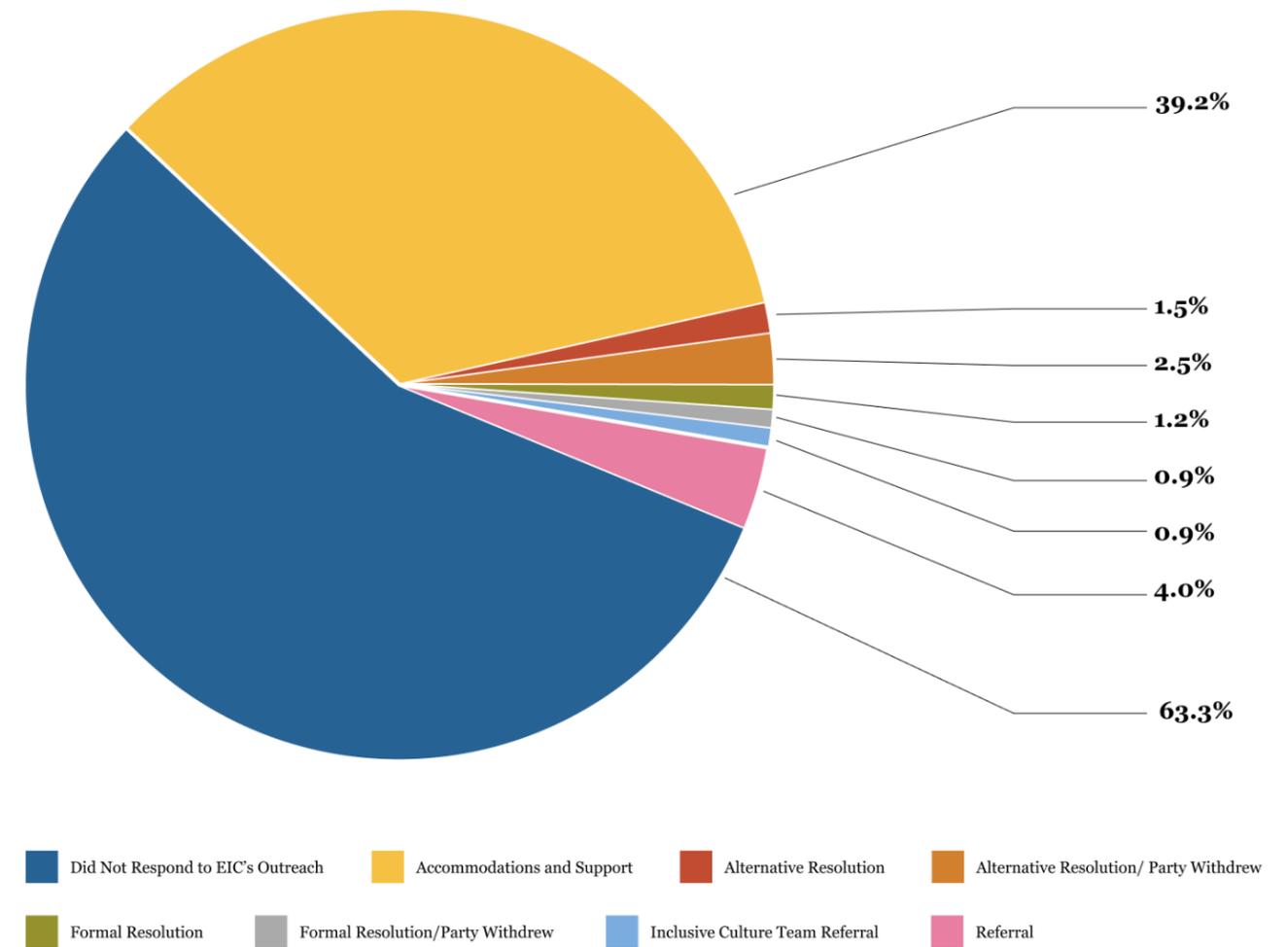
## EIC Complaints During Academic Year 2022-23

There were 350 complaints filed to the Office for Institutional Equity and Inclusive culture during the 2022-2023 academic year, representing a 9-percent increase from the year prior. Of 350 reports, 8 percent, or 28, were reportable offenses under the Jeanne Clery Act (sex offenses, dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking).

### Actions and Sanctions

Of the 350 complaints filed in 2022-23, 98.5 percent or 345 were closed as of August 31, 2023. Of the 345 closed cases, 63.3 percent of complainants did not respond to EIC’s outreach. In 39.2 percent of the cases, accommodations and support were offered to complainants. About 5.8 percent of the cases resulted in alternative or formal resolutions, with parties opting to withdraw from the process in about half of these instances. The chart below shows the distribution by percentage of the outcomes of the 345 closed cases.

### EIC Actions and Sanctions by Percentage (N=345)



## Our Campus Partners

EIC works closely with campus partners who are instrumental in advancing Drexel's Culture of Equity imperative both independently and through their strategic partnership with our office. A special appreciation for Vice Provost for DEI, Leslie Ashburn-Nardo, who is responsible for leading the University's academic DEI mission. We continue to expand our partnerships with academic and other administrative units as we grow our capacity.

**Center for Military and Veteran Services** "...coordinates a campus-wide effort to ensure that student-veterans and military dependents are able to access high-quality campus services with ease."

**Center for Autism and Neurodiversity** (formerly Drexel Autism Support Program) "...a student-centered program for current Drexel students with the goal of promoting academic and social competency, self-advocacy, interpersonal skills, independent living, and social integration."

**Drexel Public Safety** "works diligently to foster and maintain a safe environment for students, faculty, staff and neighbors in the surrounding community."

**Drexel Teaching and Learning Center** "...provides resources, workshops and one-on-one pedagogical support to Drexel University's faculty and teaching assistants. We work with instructors across every school, college, and campus at Drexel."

**Counseling and Health Services** "leads Drexel's commitment to maintaining the emotional, physical, and mental health and safety of all our students."

**Office of Disability Resources** "...Disability Resources empowers individuals who have documented disabilities by working together proactively to provide reasonable accommodations."

**Office of Global Engagement** "works with units across the university to build partnerships with distinguished universities and research institutes and to leverage faculty research collaborations into opportunities for broader mobility."

**Office of Institutional Research, Assessment and Accreditation** "aims to provide timely, accurate and unbiased data and analysis for institutional decision-making, assessment, effective management and strategic planning."

**International Students and Scholar Services** "offers a vast array of programs and services to approximately 3,500+ international students, scholars, and faculty representing 120+ different countries. The ISSS staff works to promote meaningful interaction between United States citizens and nationals of other countries by organizing culturally enriching opportunities for all members of the Drexel community."

**Office of Student Life** "...From our variety of student organizations, sports, Greek life, diversity and inclusion opportunities, and more on- and off-campus options — you can get engaged right now! And we're here to support you through it all."

**Office of the Vice Provost for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion** is "responsible for leading and guiding DEI activity across the Office of the Provost and academic operations," with a "focus on the faculty and student academic experience."

## Get Involved

We all have a role in cultivating an inclusive campus climate that recognizes the diverse members of our community, because this work will not be possible without your ongoing support. As such, we invite you to join us as we continue to strive for inclusion, equity and a sense of belonging for everyone. You can do so in any combination of the ways outlined below.

- Complete the University's climate survey when it is launched during winter 2024
- Apply for EIC's microgrants to support your DEIB activities
- Join a student identity-based group
- Attend any of the many events, lectures, seminars and workshops offered by EIC and our many campus partners
- Request and/or attend programming, workshops and consultations
- Join a colleague resource group
- Partner to offer events and educational programs
- Report incidents of bias and sexual misconduct
- Sign up for EIC Blast, an e-newsletter about upcoming DEIB-related events
- Donate to diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging initiatives

## Acknowledgments

### Project Leads

**Patience Ajoff-Foster**, PhD, CDE®, Assistant Vice President for Inclusive Culture and Belonging

**Roxzine Scott**, Executive Assistant II and Program Manager

### Contributors

**Alison Berk**, Assistant Director, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

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**Bernetta McCall Millonde**, Executive Director, Center for Inclusive Education and Scholarship; Director, Liberty Scholars

**Robia Smith-Herman**, MSS, LCSW, Staff Therapist/Embedded BIPOC Specialist, Counseling Center/Center for Black Culture

**Jennifer Thorndike-Gonzales**, PhD, Associate Director, Student Center for Diversity, and Inclusion (SCDI)

**Kristin Vitacco**, Assistant Director, Sexual Misconduct Prevention & Education

### Editor

**Irene Tsikitas Lin**, Executive Director of Communications, Finance and Administrative Services

**Rachel Natbony**, Assistant Director of Communications, Finance and Administrative Services

### Designer

**Izzy Icolari**, '24, BS in Graphic Design with **Mark Willie**, Associate Program Director & Teaching Professor, serving as faculty advisor.

Photography by Roxzine Scott



Diversity is our Strength.  
Inclusion is our Value.  
Belonging fosters Innovation.  
Equity is Essential.



Drexel University  
Office for Institutional Equity and Inclusive Culture  
James E. Marks Intercultural Center  
3225 Arch Street Suite 011  
Philadelphia, PA 19104

[www.eic.drexel.edu](http://www.eic.drexel.edu)