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Equity is Part of the Equation

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Equity is Part of the Equation

Terry Calaway

Abstract

President of Johnson County Community College, Terry Calaway, writes a forward emphasizing the importance of equity in the mission of the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

KEYWORDS: equity



EQUITY IS PART OF THE EQUATION

Diversity isn't the only focus of the new Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. As the name says, "equity" is part of the equation here – meaning freedom from bias or favoritism. In addition to an appreciation of our differences and similarities, part of the office's mission is to address important questions of stereotyping and bias in the classroom and the curriculum.

Community colleges themselves contribute to equity in education, in that almost half of this country's undergraduate students are enrolled in one. Indeed, community colleges are the choice of a majority of minority, immigrant and first-generation students. As open-admission institutions, we serve students who have a variety of experiences, learning styles and educational history; it's up to us to be flexible and supportive as we prepare these students for the workforce or four-year schools.

To do that well means we should ensure all students are treated equally. Do we pay attention to all our students or are some favored at the expense of others? Are all students encouraged to learn and to lead? Does our curriculum represent the contributions of all people, such as women, people of color, or people of different faiths? The same considerations apply to our faculty and staff. Do all groups feel comfortable in the workplace? Are all groups treated equitably? Is it safe to raise issues?

By building a culture of equity for our students, faculty and staff, we can help to build a culture of equity in our community, one that our students will not only benefit from, but help to create and sustain.



Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Terry A. Calaway". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Terry Calaway
President
Johnson County Community College