

11th Annual Student Conference on

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Social Justice

Virtually via WebEx
10:30 a.m. to 4:20 p.m.

[Conference Website](#)

The logo for SUNY Cortland, featuring a stylized red 'C' followed by the text 'SUNY Cortland' in black.

**MULTICULTURAL LIFE
AND DIVERSITY**



Saturday, April 17, 2021

Welcome!

The Multicultural Life and Diversity Office and the conference committee at SUNY Cortland would like to welcome you to our 11th Annual Student Conference on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Social Justice. This student-led conference seeks to promote open-mindedness, celebrate diversity, and promote awareness of divergent views on our college campus and within our communities.

This conference allows participants to problematize, conceptualize, research, and present across a wide range of disciplines. Throughout the conference, prepare to learn new information and be inspired to create and spark change. We hope that you make connections with other students, faculty, staff, administrators, alumni, and community members you may not know.

Thank you all for attending and supporting our conference.

"To be yourself in a world that is constantly trying to make you something else is the greatest accomplishment". -Ralph Waldo Emerson

2021 Conference Committee

If you are experiencing any technological issues during the conference, please contact 347 736-8232 .

Evaluation Form of the overall Conference

Completing this form provides us with feedback on ways to enhance the conference for next year. We appreciate your feedback.



Virtual Diversity Conference Agenda at a Glance

10:30 - 11 a.m.

Welcome and Opening Student Speaker

Lima Maria Stafford

SUNY Cortland
Assistant Director of Multicultural
Life and Diversity Office (MLDO)

C. Gregory Sharer, J.D.

SUNY Cortland
Vice President for Student Affairs

Dr. Erik Bitterbaum

SUNY Cortland
President

Lorraine Lopez-Janove

SUNY Cortland
Chief Diversity Inclusion Officer (CDIO)

Shaneya Simmelkjaer '21

SUNY Cortland –Senior

11:05 a.m. – 12:05 p.m.

Professional Staff Session

11:05 a.m. – 12:05 p.m.

Educational Session I

12:05 – 12:35 p.m.

Lunch Break (on your own)

12:35 – 1 p.m.

Cultural Performances

**Brianna Campbell, Alfred Robertson,
and Rebekah Barrett**

1:05 - 2:05 p.m.

Educational Session II

2:10 – 3:10 p.m.

Keynote Speaker

Dr. Rachael Forester '12 '14

3:15 – 4:15 p.m.

Educational Session III

4:15 – 4:20 p.m.

Closing Remarks/Prize Giveaways

Meet the Committee Chairs

Katrina Hodge



Katrina (she/her/hers) was born and raised in the state of Maryland. In May 2018, she graduated *cum laude* from Chowan University with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Psychology and a minor in Criminal Justice. While at Chowan, she served as a Resident Assistant for three years and spent two summers working for the Summer Session program at Duke University. After graduating from Chowan, Katrina chose to pursue a career in Student Affairs. She accepted a Graduate Assistant position as a Residence Life Coordinator at Elmira College where she earned a Master of Science degree in General Management with a Business concentration in May 2020. While at Elmira, she also served as the advisor of the Black Student Union.

Currently, Katrina is the Residence Hall Director for Dragon Hall at SUNY Cortland. She assists with oversight of the Peer2Peer program and the Annual Diversity Conference. As a first-generation college graduate, Katrina is passionate about creating inclusive environments in higher education along with supporting and empowering all students through their college enrollment. In her free time, Katrina enjoys cooking, traveling, and listening to music.

Analia Gonzalez



Analia (she/her/hers) is the Student Conference Chair for the 2021 Diversity Conference. She is a junior from Amityville, New York and is receiving a Bachelor of Science in Community Health with a Concentration in Allied Health and a Minor in Women and Gender Studies. She is also a first-generation college student and a part of the EOP program on campus. Throughout her time at SUNY Cortland, Analia has been a Resident Assistant, a part of the Peer 2 Peer Mentor Program, the Founder and President of Mind Over Everything (MOE) Club, and Treasurer for Curly Kinky Coily (CKC) Club. She's really happy to be a part of the conference and excited to hear all the presentations.

The Student Conference Committee



Brianna Campbell

- Pronouns: She/Her/Hers
- Hometown: Montgomery, NY
- Year: Senior
- Major: Biology
- Fun fact: I have music released on Spotify, so feel free to check that out!

Shelby Suarez

- Pronouns: She/Her/Hers
- Hometown: Floral Park, NY
- Year: Sophomore
- Major: Criminology
- Fun fact: I enjoy to cook all different types of meals



Sophia Zheng

- Pronouns: She/Her/Hers
- Hometown: Brooklyn, NY
- Year: Sophomore
- Major: Psychology
- Fun fact: I have never forgotten a birthday after being told only once.



Multicultural Life and Diversity Office Staff



AnnaMaria Cirrincione, Director

AnnaMaria attended Utica College and received her Bachelor of Arts Degree in Mathematics in 2010. After working at Utica College for three years, she decided to pursue her master's. In May 2015, she graduated with her Master of Science in Higher Education Administration from Syracuse University, while she worked as one of the Graduate Assistants in the Office of Fraternity and Sorority Affairs. AnnaMaria's goal is to continue to promote equitable educational experiences for all students regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, religion, varying abilities, documentation status and all other aspects of human difference.



Lima Maria Stafford, Assistant Director

Lima was born and raised in Carriacou, Grenada and moved to Brooklyn, New York in 2001. She now lives in Cortland, New York. She received her Bachelor of Science in Physical Education in May 2012. Prior to working in Multicultural Life and Diversity Office, she was a Residence Hall Director at Bishop Hall for two years. She enjoys working with the students and faculty/staff on the campus in various aspects while being inclusive. In her spare time, she enjoys playing sports, traveling and spending time with her son Liam.



Dana Smith, Administrative Assistant

Dana loves being a part of our campus community. Dana first started working with state universities in 2010 at SUNY Upstate. Dana is married to her high school sweetheart, Greg, and has two sons, Alan and Eric. She also has a new granddaughter, Weslyn Mae. Even though her home is her sanctuary, Dana loves to travel to the Caribbean area with her husband. Her prized possession, other than her children, is her Ford Mustang. In her spare time, she loves to drive her mustang. She loves to read books, and garden. She takes every day as a gift.

Opening Student Speaker: Shaneya Simmelkjaer



Shaneya Nyasia Simmelkjaer is a senior at the State University of New York College at Cortland, triple majoring in Criminology, Political Science, and Africana Studies. Shaneya was born and raised in the Bronx, NY, and she is a first-generation college student. Despite all of the obstacles she encountered, Shaneya has committed her entire academic career to achievement and excellence.

Shaneya is also well known for speaking out against racism and systemic inequality through her executive roles in SUNY Cortland's Black Student Union.

“Transforming Consciousness and Transforming Structures: Creating a Social Justice Paradigm for Change”

[WebEx](#) Meeting #: 132 839 3984
Password: diversity2021

Cultural Performances: 12:35 to 1 p.m.



Brianna Campbell

-Year: Senior
-Act: Singing



Alfred "Fredo" Robertson

-Year: Senior
-Act: Rapping



Rebekah Barrett

-Year: Senior
-Act: Singing

[WebEx](#) Meeting #: 132 406 6783
Password: diversity2021

Keynote Speaker: Dr. Rachael Forester '12 M '14, 2:10 p.m.



Dr. Rachael Forester (she/her/hers), founder and CEO of RF Equity Consulting, is a two-time alumni of SUNY Cortland where she received her undergraduate degree in Early Childhood and Childhood Education and her master's degree in English as a Second Language. Rachael has been doing equity work in higher education for about ten years.

Rachael currently works as the Associate Director of the Office of Identity, Equity, and Engagement at UNC Charlotte where she also obtained her doctoral degree in Educational Leadership in Higher Education, focusing on racial equity. She is the founder of Activate! Social Justice Institute and White Consciousness Conversations at UNC Charlotte. Prior to UNC Charlotte, Rachael served as the assistant director for multicultural life and diversity at SUNY Cortland where she developed all-gender housing, all-gender restrooms, and the SAFE ZONE program, a program for LGBTQ+ ally development.

Her research includes understanding and deconstructing whiteness in student affairs to promote racial equity. Rachael recently started a free, international white accountability group to assist white people in doing critical self-work as change agents for racial equity. She also serves on a multi-university research team exploring the experiences of LGBTQ+ identified students' experiences within STEM and has published on the topics of activism, LGBTQ+ experiences, and race.

As a social justice educator, Rachael believes social change occurs through a critical understanding of self as it relates to our dominant and minoritized identities and how those identities are connected to systems of power, privilege, and oppression. Her personal philosophy includes being hard on systems and soft on people as she strives to expand participation on the journey towards collective liberation.

[WebEx Meeting #:](#) 132 908 4005
Password: diversity2021

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#cortlanddiversity2021

Email

multicultural.life@cortland.edu

Website

cortland.edu/multicultural



Breakdown of Schedule with WebEx Links

10:30 - 11 a.m.

Welcome and Opening Student Speaker

“Transforming Consciousness and Transforming Structures: Creating a Social Justice Paradigm for Change”- Shaneya Simmelkjaer '21

11:05 a.m. – 12:05 p.m.

Professional Staff Session

Open to any faculty, staff and administrators.

11:05 a.m. – 12:05 p.m.

Educational Session I

1. [Racial Disparities Against the LGBTQ+ Community](#) - Liane Espino
2. [COVID Impact on Racially Minoritized Groups](#) - Sophia Zheng
3. [Fridays With Pazale](#) - Julian Quaresima
4. [Diversity in Higher Education: The Gap Between Students and Employees](#) - Janeice Lopez
5. [And Don't Call Me Crazy! Loving a Person with Bipolar Disorder](#) - Sherron Brown

12:35 – 1 p.m.

Cultural Performances

Brianna Campbell, Alfred Robertson, and Rebekah Barrett

1:05 - 2:05 p.m.

Educational Session II

1. [A Complicated Figure: A Brief History and Ethical Evaluation of Bartolomé de Las Casas](#) - Andi Bruce
2. ["True Colors" Revisited: Are There Changes in Racism?](#) - Craig Denton, Chance Ubel, Edwin Charles, Maria Klara Izidoro Ventura, Ommar Watson, Eunice VicMarie Simpri, Avery Copeland, and Jon Carlos Banegas
3. [Discovering the Many Uses of Assistive Technology and Universal Design to Enhance the Learning Experience](#) - Nakeesta Langton

2:10 – 3:10 p.m.

Keynote Speaker

“Critical Consciousness: Equity in the Mirror” - Dr. Rachael Forester '12 '14

3:15 – 4:15 p.m.

Educational Session III

1. [Blackness in Latin America](#) - Maria Klara Ventura
2. [Race Related Health Disparities in the United States](#) - Hannah Fitzgerald
3. [Social Justice for All](#) - Erika Smoots
4. ["Our America" and My Hometown: Geographies of Diversity Amidst Segregation in New York: An Illustrated Geographic Presentation](#) - Avery Copeland, Serena Wilk, Craig Denton, Jocelin Carbajal, Orville Ivey, Jon Carlos, and Chance Ubel

4:15 – 4:20 p.m.

Closing Remarks/Prize Giveaways

Professional Staff Session

Facilitated by: AnnaMaria Cirrincione, SUNY Cortland

This session will foster networking and discussion between professionals who attend from multiple institutions about different problems our campuses are facing, how we are addressing those matters, and ways we could share resources or collaborate in the ever-growing effort to support equity and inclusion at our respective institutions. This session would be a great time to ask questions and share ideas.

WebEx Meeting #: 132 298 0686

Password: diversity2021

Educational Session I: 11:05 a.m. to 12:05 p.m.

Title: **Racial Disparities Against the LGBTQ+ Community**

Presenter: Liane Espino **Institution:** SUNY Cortland

WebEx Meeting #: 132 348 2141 **Password:** diversity2021

Faculty/Staff Mentor: Jena Curtis

This presentation will discuss the racial disparities against the LGBTQ+ communities. The history of how minorities struggled to be part of the community, how college students (LGBTQ+) struggled to be themselves, and how still today they are not provided the resources they're supposed to not only on campus but in general.

Title: **COVID Impact on Racially Minoritized Groups**

Presenter: Sophia Zheng **Institution:** SUNY Cortland

WebEx Meeting #: 132 860 0978 **Password:** diversity2021

Faculty/Staff Mentor: Lima Maria Stafford

This presentation will examine the effects and impacts of COVID-19 in racially minoritized groups and to analyze what it means to protect one another in our community.

Title: **Fridays With Pazale**

Presenter: Julian Quaresima **Institution:** Long Island University

WebEx Meeting #: 132 076 0159 **Password:** diversity2021

Faculty/Staff Mentor: Breanna Washington

As a straight white 19-year-old male, he will share his experience coming to college and playing on a collegiate soccer team with players from 14 countries, with 8 languages being spoken in their locker room, and most importantly, their experience of living with their teammate from Senegal, West Africa. He will speak about his culture shock and his experience of xenophobia, islamophobia, and racism in America through his roommate, and how that changed his perspective of the world. He will try to inspire people to go out and experience different cultures because he believes it is the best form of education.

Educational Session I continued: 11:05 a.m. to 12:05 p.m.

Title: **Diversity in Higher Education: The Gap Between Students and Employees**

Presenter: Janeice Lopez

Institution: SUNY Cortland

WebEx Meeting #: 132 101 6156 **Password:** diversity2021

Faculty/Staff Mentor: Marinda Souva

We will be discussing the varying gaps in diversity between students and employees at colleges and Universities. It will also discuss the personal perspectives on this issue from students and employees of SUNY Cortland.

Title: **And Don't Call Me Crazy! Loving a Person with Bipolar Disorder**

Presenter: Sherron Brown

Institution: SUNY Cortland

WebEx Meeting #: 132 912 3423 **Password:** diversity2021

Faculty/Staff Mentor: Lima Stafford

After two years of loving a person with bipolar disorder, Sherron Brown will share success and failures while learning about Bipolar Disorder and mental illness from the woman she fell in love with. She shares her preconceived notions, education journey, intimate conversations, relationship highs and lows, and her feelings of blame and judgment along with emotions, reactions, and resources.

Educational Session II 1:05 p.m. to 2:05 p.m.

Title: A Complicated Figure: A Brief History and Ethical Evaluation of Bartolomé de Las Casas

Presenter: Andi Bruce **Institution:** SUNY Cortland

WebEx Meeting #: 132 652 9215 **Password:** diversity2021

Faculty/Staff Mentor: Sebastian Purcell

A historical analysis of the Spanish conquest in the Americas and an ethical evaluation of Bartolomé de Las Casas and his role in the conquest using principles of harm.

~~**Title: Higher Education and the Criminal Justice System (CANCELLED)**~~

~~**Presenter:** Jackeline Ponce-Mejia **Institution:** SUNY Cortland~~

~~**WebEx Meeting #:** 132 014 5258 **Password:** diversity2021~~

~~**Faculty/Staff Mentor:** AnnaMaria Cirrincione~~

~~This presentation is about creating awareness of the inequities within the criminal justice system and how providing access to higher education can benefit those who are incarcerated or formerly incarcerated. We will also discuss the challenges that those who are incarcerated or formerly incarcerated face when trying to pursue higher education.~~

Educational Session II continued 1:05 p.m. to 2:05 p.m.

Title: "True Colors" Revisited: Are There Changes in Racism?

Presenter(s): Craig Denton, Chance Ubel, Edwin Charles, Maria Klara Izidoro Ventura, Omar Watson, Eunice VicMarie Simpri, Avery Copeland, and Jon Carlos Banegas

Institution: SUNY Cortland

WebEx Meeting #: 132 917 4495 **Password:** diversity2021

Faculty/Staff Mentor: Ibipo Johnston-Anumonwo

About thirty years ago, at the end of the twentieth century, findings based on undercover investigative journalism in St Louis, Missouri revealed many instances of race-based prejudice and discrimination in day-to-day urban activities, shopping, housing, and employment. In this presentation, undergraduate students enrolled in a Geography General Education course conducted their investigative research on contemporary realities about race-ethnicity and place. They examine if any stark instances of racial bias that existed in Kansas City are present or absent two and three decades later in locations across New York state and in three neighboring states. Twenty-first century evidence indicates the need for continued interventions to dismantle racial discrimination to foster social justice and inclusion of the diverse population groups across the US.

Title: Discovering the Many Uses of Assistive Technology and Universal Design to Enhance the Learning Experience

Presenter: Nakeesta Langton **Institution:** SUNY Cortland

WebEx Meeting #: 132 360 9573 **Password:** diversity2021

Faculty/Staff Mentor: Jeremy Zhe-Heimerman

Universal Design and Assistive Technology are for everyone! Knowing what supports are out there and how to use them can empower students to strengthen and enhance their learning experiences. Universal design and assistive technology is another tool that can support and help bridge a student's struggle to success.

Educational Session III: 3:15 p.m. to 4:15 p.m.

Title: Blackness in Latin America

Presenter: Maria Klara Ventura

Institution: SUNY Cortland

WebEx Meeting #: 132 261 3130 **Password:** diversity2021

Faculty/Staff Mentor: Lima Stafford

Blackness in Latin America is about the Afro community in Latin America and its complexity in those areas. Blackness comes in different shades and forms. For centuries the need to erase black people from Latin America has been a serious issue that in recent years Afro-Latinx is fighting to reclaim their power.

Title: Race Related Health Disparities in the United States

Presenter: Hannah Fitzgerald

Institution: SUNY Cortland

WebEx Meeting #: 132 069 7883 **Password:** diversity2021

Faculty/Staff Mentor: Anna Maria Cirrincione

This presentation is to bring awareness towards the staggering race-related health disparities within the United States healthcare system. From research to clinical care, these disparities are clear and overwhelming. These inequalities have been highlighted because of the COVID-19 pandemic, but have been around just as long as modern medicine.

Educational Session III continued: 3:15 p.m. to 4:15 p.m.

Title: **Social Justice for All**

Presenter: Erika Smoots

Institution: Lawrence Township Public Schools

WebEx Meeting #: 132 917 2580 **Password:** diversity2021

Faculty/Staff Mentor: Beverly Bennett-Roberts

Who are you? We will explore identity and how identity shapes who we are and how we see the world. We ALL have bias; we have attitudes towards people or associate stereotypes with them without our conscious knowledge. We will watch a video and take an Implicit Bias Analysis as a way to gauge our own bias. We will discuss the causes and effects of bias and ways to unlearn them and prevent them. Social Justice is the view that everyone deserves equal economic, political, social rights, and opportunities. We will discuss the 4 principles of Social Justice, the biggest Social Justice issues of our time, and ways to promote Social Justice. Lastly, we will understand the importance of teaching Social Justice in all classrooms, from kindergarten to college.

Title: **"Our America" and My Hometown: Geographies of Diversity Amidst Segregation in New York: An Illustrated Geographic Presentation**

Presenter(s): Avery Copeland, Serena Wilk, Craig Denton, Jocelin Carbajal, Orville Ivey, Jon Carlos, Chance Ubel, and Ryan Benedict

Institution: SUNY Cortland

WebEx Meeting #: 132 311 9929 **Password:** diversity2021

Faculty/Staff Mentor: Ibipo Johnston-Anumonwo

Students present information about locations that they studied in a geography course and about their lived experiences in hometowns across New York state. Hometowns featured range from Queens NY-touted as the most diverse city in the United States to Buffalo, NY-considered the fourth most segregated US city in 1990. Using a combination of charts on demographic trends and maps of ethnic and racial residential patterns with observations and documented narratives about their hometowns, presenters describe and explain both change and continuity in diversity and segregation. These findings for towns in New York state match national-level research that shows increasing diversity amidst persistent segregation in the country's largest metropolitan areas such as Chicago or Atlanta.

Special Thank You

Campus Artist and Lecture Series (CALs)
Residence Life and Housing Office
Student Government Association
President's Office
Vice President for Student Affairs
The Institutional Equity and Inclusion Office
The College Store
SUNY Cortland Alumni Association
Campus Activities
Career Services

Colleges/Universities and Organizations in Attendance

1. Aoma
2. Cornell University
3. Earth Citizens Organization
4. Johns Hopkins University and Peabody Institute
5. Kansas State University
6. Lawrence Township Public Schools
7. Le Moyne College
8. Long Island University
9. Oneonta Jobcorps Academy
10. Southern New Hampshire University
11. Stony Brook University
12. SUNY Cobleskill
13. SUNY Corning Community College
14. SUNY Cortland
15. SUNY Delhi
16. SUNY New Paltz
17. SUNY Polytechnic
18. Syracuse University

Save the Date

Saturday, April 9, 2022

The 12th Annual Student Conference on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Social Justice

Presentation Proposal Deadline: March 1, 2022

Early bird registration: March 1, 2022

