

OFFICE OF DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

Newsletter

April
2025



In this newsletter you will find:

Latest Announcements, Updates, Real Talk,
Upcoming Campus and National Events, &
DEI Tool of the Month



Updates and Announcements



Office of Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion

ODEI Mission Statement

Saint Mary's College is committed to building a diverse and inclusive workplace and learning environment where systems of oppression and exclusion are actively opposed and dismantled. We believe diversity is one of our greatest strengths; we broadly define diversity to include race, ethnicity, gender identity, gender expression, sex, sexual orientation, disability, nationality, immigration status, physical appearance, religion, age, military status, and socioeconomic status. However, we recognize that diversity without equity is neither sustainable nor morally just. The College commits to creating a safe, respectful, and equitable environment for all community members and does not condone discriminatory or disrespectful behavior, policies, or practices. Saint Mary's, as a college community, works to actively interrupt and transform systems of oppression, including but not limited to white supremacy, xenophobia, ableism, patriarchy, homophobia, transphobia, religious intolerance, and economic inequality, recognizing that these systems manifest at multiple levels - systemic, institutional, ideological, interpersonal, and internalized. We work together to mitigate the impacts of these systems and to build an emotionally supportive community where students, faculty, and staff feel seen and valued and can flourish as their full, authentic selves. We strive to act upon our Lasallian value of 'Respect for all People' in our everyday actions, through continuous individual self-inquiry and improvement, and through regular reviews of our policies, procedures, and systems.

Updates and Announcements



SMC Land Acknowledgment

As the community of Saint Mary's College of California, we acknowledge we are gathered on the ethnohistoric tribal territory of the intermarried Saclan/Jalquin (hal-keen)/Huchiun (hoo-choon)/ancestral Muwekma Bay Miwok and Ohlone Territory.

The present-day Muwekma Ohlone Tribe, with an enrolled Bureau of Indian Affairs documented membership of over 600, is comprised of all of the known surviving Indian lineages aboriginal to the San Francisco Bay region. They trace their Tribe's ancestry through the missionization policies deployed by the Catholic Church in connection to Missions Dolores, San Jose, and Santa Clara, during the expansion of the Hispano-European Empire into Alta California beginning in 1769. Their Muwekma families are the successors and living members of the sovereign, previously Federally Recognized Verona Band of Alameda County, now formally recognized as the Muwekma Ohlone Tribe of the San Francisco Bay Area who would like you to know that they are alive and thriving members of the broader Bay Area communities today.

The Muwekma Ohlone Indian families have never left their aboriginal ancestral homelands of the Bay Area and maintain their identity, traditions, culture and language through the tenacity, strength and legacy of their ancestors and elders. Today, they attempt to repair the sustained ecological, environmental, and cultural devastation to their Tribe wrought by over 254 years of colonial processes of disenfranchisement through the politics of erasure. Their priorities are moved forward through three established entities: the Muwekma Ohlone Tribal Council, Muwekma Ohlone Tribe, Inc. and the Muwekma Ohlone Preservation Foundation.

They respectfully request that the good citizens of St. Mary's College and the Town of Moraga, and surrounding towns strive to be faithful stewards on behalf of the Muwekma Ohlone Tribe by maintaining the bay, freshwater creeks, native plants, animal habitats, and the air we all breathe. We recognize that the De La Salle Brothers of Saint Mary's College and the Lasallian Family, have worked to serve honorably as good stewards of this land since its purchase in 1926.

Watch the full Land Acknowledgment video here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_GDYvbWaeYM

Real Talk

This is a new section for people to freely express their thoughts in a manner that encourages informal community conversations. Be ready when you receive an invite to engage in some "real talk!"

My name is Chameeta Denton, MA Counseling, class of 2010. I am the Director of the High Potential Program and TRIO SSS. I have been in the role as the Director of HP since August 2023. I am a first generation college student, African American woman, and I am from Oakland. Although there aren't many students, faculty, or staff who look similar to me at SMC, I try my best to find a sense of belonging as a minority staff member on campus. What helps me accomplish this goal is by placing my focus on why I come to work every day, which is for the students. Not only students in the High Potential program, but all students at SMC. The reason I aim for this goal is because at the end of the day, we all have our own journeys. As professional faculty and staff we have a better sense of how to navigate this journey called life. Our students, on the other hand, are still trying to figure it out. I strive every day to make sure students at SMC, especially those who need help the most, are getting their needs met. Not just in monetary ways, but in intangible ways as well such as checking in, telling a joke, giving hugs, giving compliments, or going out of my way to put a smile on their face. Although these small acts may seem miniscule, they add up and can make all the difference. I challenge every faculty and staff to strive to do this at least one time every day. Thank you!