

Madison Access

OFFICE OF DISABILITY SERVICES

SPRING/SUMMER 2019



BEYOND OPENING THE DOORS: *Accessibility in Action*



This year the Office of Disability Services (ODS) celebrated the 10th Annual Disability Awareness Week (DAW)!

This year's theme, *Beyond Opening the Doors: Accessibility in Action*, focuses on going beyond simply giving access, to creating a community where inclusion of individuals with disabilities is infused into the culture. Our goal is to engage members of our community in conversations about disability, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility.

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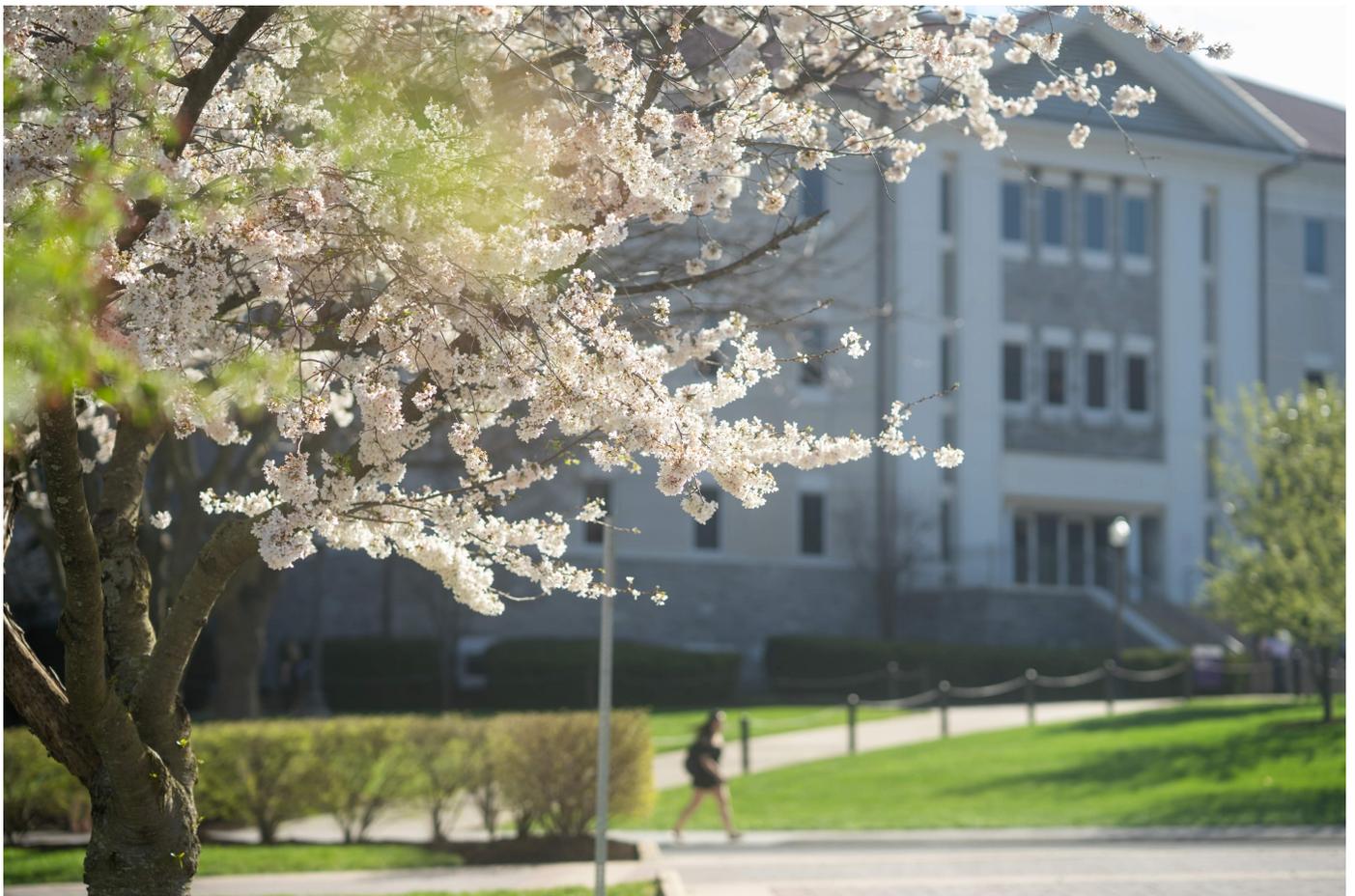
Top Center: The James Madison University Office of Disability Services Staff

Bottom Left: ODS Peer Access Advocates Cassie Donahue, Ashley Harris, and Sydney Sharp introducing the Keynote Speaker during Disability Awareness Week 2019

Bottom Right: Dr. Alex Lubet, Disability Awareness Week 2019 Keynote Speaker

Photo from pg. 2: A view of Wilson Hall with the mountains in the background

Photo from pg. 3 (below): A spring tree in bloom with Burrus Hall and a student walking in the background



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Dr. Lubet hosted an Adaptive Instruments Lecture where he informed participants about adaptive techniques used by a variety of musicians. He discussed issues of instrument choice, genre, and economics, and provided a short performance demonstration using the mountain dulcimer.

Dr. Lubet also participated in a Disability and Bioethics Roundtable for faculty and staff. This roundtable was a collaboration between ODS and the Center for Faculty Innovation. Participants explored the implications of disability studies and bioethics in teaching. In addition to his position as Professor of Music at the University of Minnesota, Dr. Lubet is an affiliate faculty member in the U of M Center for Bioethics, where he offers courses in *Disability Ethics* and *Music, Disability, and Society*.



*Audience, captionist,
and ASL interpreters
at Dr. Alex Lubet's
Keynote Address*

*Dr. Alex Lubet and
ODS Director,
Valerie Schoolcraft
at the ODS Open
House event*

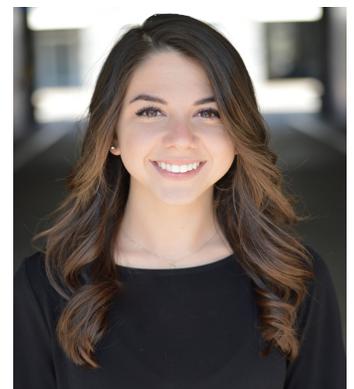


Disability Studies and Music Education Symposium

The James Madison University Center for Inclusive Music Engagement, in partnership with the JMU Office of Disability Services, hosted the "Disability Studies and Music Education Symposium". This symposium, the first of its kind, afforded researcher-practitioners an opportunity to share their disability studies-related work and discuss potential uses of disability studies theorization for their future scholarship and teaching. The symposium featured a keynote presentation by Dr. Lubet of the University of Minnesota. Music education scholars using disability studies frames shared their work. These scholars included Dr. Adam Patrick Bell (University of Calgary, Canada), Dr. Elizabeth Cassidy Parker (Temple University, U.S.) sharing her work with Dr. Bridget Sweet (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, U.S.), Dr. Warren Churchill (NYU Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates), and Dr. Jesse Rathgeber (James Madison University, U.S.). Attendees took part in facilitated discussions in order to develop projects to explore additional uses of disability studies literature and theories in music education research and practice. ASL Interpretation was provided in partnership with the JMU Office of Access and Inclusion and the Office of Cross Disciplinary Studies and Diversity Engagement. The symposium concluded with a drum circle held outside. The next symposium will be held at JMU in 2021.

A Student's Perspective on the Symposium

Emily Veramessa, a senior Music Education major, provided her perspective on the symposium and what it meant to attend as a student.



*Emily Veramessa,
JMU '19*



Presentation: Guiding Principle of Loving Engagement



Presentation: Taking a Narrative Turn for Inclusive Music Education: Disability, Empathy, and Anti-Ableism



Drum Circle

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Why was the Disability Studies & Music Education Symposium important?

This symposium created a space for educators and researchers to share their experiences and studies. Participants were able to gain understanding, to bounce ideas off of each other, and to pose new questions about the field. I learned so much about persons with disabilities and the different ways music is experienced. More pre-professionals attending events like this could create a ripple effect of inclusion and adaptation as they go out and teach music.

At the Disability Studies & Music Education Symposium, ASL interpreters and CART services (i.e. real-time captioning) were present. Individuals were also able to access the symposium digitally. Why was it important that the symposium went beyond opening the doors by making the event so accessible?

There's a lot of ableism woven into the model of higher education. To have an event centered around disability studies that didn't critically analyze those elements of exclusion would be pretty ironic. The efforts made at this symposium immediately created an atmosphere of safety, accessibility, and open-mindedness.

The symposium concluded with a drum circle in which you played a crucial role. Can you describe that activity and its significance?

After the conference, we circled up outside with buckets and drumsticks for a drum circle led by the wonderful, radical music educator Martin Urbach. I love that drum circles are a financially and musically accessible way for people to come together for a shared purpose, whether that be social or political activism, celebration, meditation, or just experimentation.

During the drum circle, you reflected on the slogan, "Nothing about us without us is for us." Can you again share your thoughts on the slogan?

The slogan caught my eye on a handout at the symposium. I later learned that it was a mantra for Disability Rights movements in the 20th century. It communicates the idea that no policies or practices should be implemented if those affected aren't a part of the decision-making process. When we assume that marginalized groups have a "problem" that needs "fixing," we're looking at their reality through our own limited perspective. True inclusion can't be accomplished that way.

What do you hope to see over the next 5 years at JMU in terms of infusing culture with inclusion of individuals with disabilities?

Everyone has their own unique, fluid culture, but gentrification and globalization only favor or value certain aspects of culture, and we're left with a distilled set of expectations and norms that generalize and exclude. I hope that JMU continues to make efforts to blur those lines and break down misconceptions about people with disabilities. I think this could happen through shared experiences and meaningful conversation.

The Musical Tapestry: Inclusion in Music

By Dr. Jesse Rathgeber, Assistant Professor of Music, Associate Director of the Center for Inclusive Music Engagement, and Coordinator of the Music and Human Services Minor

What is the Center for Inclusive Music Engagement (CIME)?

The Center for Inclusive Music Engagement (CIME) is a new academic center at JMU, chartered in December of 2018, with the mission to “facilitate musicking opportunities for all persons to create, perform, respond, and connect with, in, through, and around music in ways that are meaningful and add richness to individuals' lives and our broader communities” through research, collaboration, education, and information dissemination projects. The chartering of the CIME was championed by College of Visual and Performing (CVPA) Arts Dean George Sparks and Provost Heather Coltman, and is grounded within the CVPA’s “Arts for the Real World” initiative, Provost Coltman’s call for innovation (i.e., “disrupting norms and assumptions by embracing an experimental and collaborative mindset in an ever-evolving ecosystem”) on campus, as well as the university’s strategic plan and overall dedication to engagement. Although relatively new to campus, the CIME facilitates a number of projects and events including, but not limited to: JMUke (a community-based participatory music project), EMIC (a vernacular musicking group for persons with disabilities), Stories and Songs (storytelling and songwriting project with marginalized individuals), sessions at Disability Awareness Week, and the first Disability Studies and Music Education Symposium. The CIME is led by Dr. David Stringham (Director), myself (Associate Director), and eight undergraduate student leaders (Innovation Leaders) who facilitate existing projects/grants and plan their own.

How did the partnership between the Center for Inclusive Music Engagement and the Office of Disability Services (ODS) during Disability Awareness Week go beyond opening the doors?

The partnership for this year’s Disability Awareness Week between ODS and CIME addressed the ethics of relational inclusion and meaningful participation related to persons of disability on JMU’s campus. It is one thing to open doors—to extend a gesture of welcome—and it is another thing to be inclusive—to ensure that what is inside the doors is inclusive and encourages persons with disabilities to meaningfully participate in the happenings therein.

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“In my own teaching in music education, I infuse issues related to disability studies, inclusion, and empathy throughout the curricula...”

- Dr. Jesse Rathgeber



Dr. Jesse Rathgeber

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With a focus on music making via Dr. Lubet's residency, our partnership allowed people to consider how to open doors, countering barriers that might keep persons with disabilities out of musicking spaces, and how to engage with their ways of musicking so that all can learn, grow, and create together.

How does the CIME contribute to the goal of infusing the culture and curriculum with inclusion of individuals with disabilities?

One of the central foci of the CIME is to foster inclusive spaces, places, curricula, practices, and relationship for all people to come to know themselves, others, and their world in, through, and around music. In this way, our established projects and the projects in development by the Innovation Leaders attempt to identify and level barriers to inclusive music engagement. Some of our projects specifically address issues of disability such as:

1. Adaptive instrument partnerships between engineers and music students who create adaptive instruments for and with persons with disabilities in the Harrisonburg area,
2. The EMIC project which provides a space for adults with disabilities to develop their musicianship and creative musicking abilities in small bands who focus on vernacular forms of music making.
3. Engaging community members here and abroad in addressing issues of inclusion and disability through scholarship at the Disability Studies and Music Education Symposium.

In my own teaching in music education, I infuse issues related to disability studies, inclusion, and empathy throughout the curricula, often extending from or touching on the projects of the CIME.

What do you hope to see over the next 5 years at JMU in terms of infusing culture and curriculum with inclusion of individuals with disabilities?

In general, I hope that the JMU community can continue to become more open to and embraceful of persons with disabilities, embraceful of the stories and songs they possess which might add additional texture to the musical tapestry that is JMU.



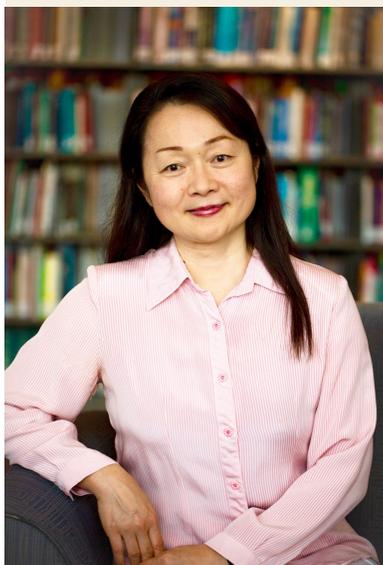
Dr. Jesse Rathgeber introducing Dr. Alex Lubet at the Master Class event



Dr. Alex Lubet and Dr. Jesse Rathgeber

"The encouragement of informed risk-taking from ODS and the University Student Affairs leadership helped establish the confidence in this design Integration in student learning as well as in the growing confidence in an environment with respect to academic freedom. "

-Dr. J. Christie Liu



Dr. J. Christie Liu

Access Through the Lens of the Students

By Dr. J. Christie Liu, Assistant Professor/Senior Instructional Designer, JMU Libraries

What is PhotoVoice?

Photovoice is an emerging methodology of data collection and analysis for program evaluation (Campbell, Adams, & Patterson, 2008; Hannay, Dudley, Milan, & Leibovitz, 2013; Krutt, Dyer, Arora, Rollman, & Jozkowski, 2018). Involving participatory effort from a group of people of shared characteristics in a local context, Photovoice is usually accompanied with direct observations, interviews, picture taken and sharing, annotations, discussion, and reflection.

Photovoice has three main goals: to enable people to record and reflect their community's strengths and concerns; to promote critical dialogue and knowledge about personal and community issues through large and small group discussions of photographs; and to reach policy makers. Photovoice is highly flexible and can be adapted to specific participatory goals (such as needs assessment, asset mapping, and evaluation), different groups and communities, and distinct policy and public health issues.

How has the PhotoVoice project gone "beyond opening the doors" in the JMU community?

The PhotoVoice project enables an interdisciplinary learning activity across a variety of curriculum. Since its inception of planning, the design, development and pilot, and the experimentation at DAW 2019, it has been a collaborative partnership led by Office of Disability Services, in collaboration with faculty members from Music Education, Libraries, Justice Studies, Occupational Therapy, Ethical Reasoning in Action, Disability Studies, and other programs at JMU. The goal is to engage students in meaningful participatory learning and evaluation of the one-week long Disability Awareness Week. The awareness reflected through the lens of students with their group decisions of media creation and selection through ThingLink is anticipated to be inclusive, innovative, and insightful. It is expected to open the doors of cross-discipline learning opportunities.

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How is the project infusing the JMU culture and curriculum with inclusion of individuals with disabilities?

The project uses the JMU signature 8 Key Questions as the guide and criteria to gear the ethical decisions that students need to make when capturing media and presenting their learning products. This is also in alignment with the JMU mission of "commitment to preparing students to be educated and enlightened citizens who lead productive and meaningful lives" and the goal of "fostering an environment of collaboration across colleges, schools, and departments". The group work and multiple formats of presentation with image, audio, and text in Thinglink reflects the respect and inclusion of individuals with disabilities.

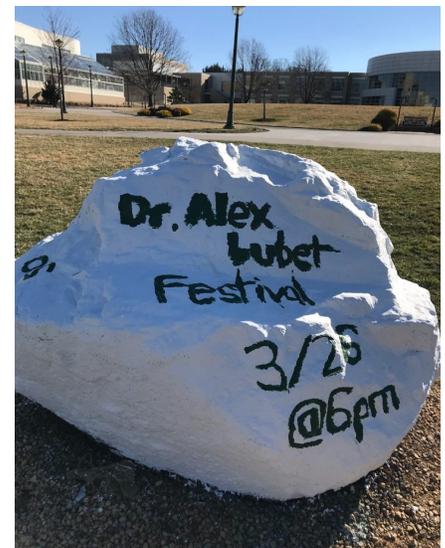
What are some of the outcomes that you have seen from this project?

It helped me shape an innovative design utilizing the participatory evaluation model of PhotoVoice in an interdisciplinary learning activity. This helps achieve the professional and scholarship outcomes in design-based research, cross-curriculum collaboration, and initial pilot of the Universal Design project. It also raised my awareness of considering accessibility in my own design and in the graduate classes that I teach. The encouragement of informed risk-taking from ODS and the University Student Affairs leadership helped establish the confidence in this design Integration in student learning as well as in the growing confidence in an environment with respect to academic freedom.

Disability Awareness Week Highlight



In honor of Disability Awareness Week 2019, the Spirit Rock (photos right and left) was painted by Social Work Intern, Kenner Carmody, and the Peer Access Advocates: Cassie Donahue, Ashley Harris, and Sydney Sharp.



D.E.E.P Impact Dialogue: Accessibility in Action

Students engaged in a panel and dialogue discussion hosted by DEEP Impact and ODS, which explored accessibility on campus and how it affects our community.

Student Reflections

"I'm thrilled by how many people showed up to the event and I think we need more events like this which educate, challenge and motivate into action. I think the event created a unique atmosphere which helped to promote the culture of infusion and respect we've been longing for.

I was nervous about sharing my experiences at first because opportunities to share don't come along, but it was clear everyone in the audience was there because they wanted to be there. I anticipated feeling judged, but instead felt accepted and respected. While just a few students can't speak for all students with disabilities, each of our stories do matter. The exposure the panel provided was crucial; when students don't have to consider things such as accessibility issues or encountering ableism, it's easy to forget they exist and the effects they have on every day lives.

I would like to see Dukes on campus and JMU as an institution use a Universal Design approach in all areas. This means rather than addressing things as they become an issue of accessibility, intentionally designing them to be accessible from the start. As a Duke, this looks like having respect for one another, celebrating differences, trying to learn from each other's experiences, and being considerate of your actions. As an institution, I would like JMU to ensure all new buildings are accessible, prioritize resolving existing accessibility barriers, and most importantly- be a visible ally. The purpose of this year's theme was in part to demonstrate that legal and institutional accommodations aren't enough. There is plenty I think JMU can and should do, but the most impactful would be the energy they put into being allies and advocates. We can all appreciate better buildings, but that energy would transcend the entire community and encourage the social change which we are in need of right now."

-Ashley Harris, ODS Presenter/Student Panelist



D.E.E.P. Impact Dialogue

"I hope my participation in the panel allowed some students who are able-bodied to see that not all people who have a disability ARE disabled and their actions both on and off campus following the panel reflected such. In the next 5 years, I hope to see JMU include ASL in the curriculum as a foreign language rather than discrediting the rich culture and history behind both Deaf culture and ASL. Although I do not fully identify with the Deaf culture as a hearing impaired person, I know this is a concern for deaf students, Deaf students, and hearing impaired students like me."

-Megan T. Horsley, Student Panelist

Inclusion is Everybody

Interview with Dr. Johnathan Walker, Assistant Professor of Geography, Department of Interdisciplinary Liberal Studies



Dr. Johnathan Walker

When asked about how he creates an inclusive environment in his classroom and teaching, Dr. Walker spoke about his own willingness to be open about his ADHD. He shared that he usually makes a disclosure early on in his courses about his diagnosis and simultaneously encourages students to talk to him if they feel that things are not going as they expected. He stated that he appreciates when students come to talk to him about their needs because it helps him support his students and teach his course more effectively.

When students come to him and report that they have a disability, he stated that he asks if they are using their accommodations and checks in to see what they need from him to help make their accommodations happen in his course. Dr. Walker stated that, "inclusion is everybody". He wants to see every student given the opportunity to perform at their absolute best, and an essential component of that is for faculty to do their part in leveling the playing field.

In the next five years at JMU, Dr. Walker stated that he would like to see more trainings and disability awareness raising efforts for faculty members. He also advocates for having more resources for the students who have disabilities at JMU and for the Office of Disability Services itself.

Disability Awareness Week Highlights

Voices of Faculty with Disabilities: Faculty Breakfast and Panel

A faculty breakfast and panel discussion was hosted by ODS, CIME, and the Center for Civic Engagement. The topic of discussion was working at and navigating academia as a faculty member with a disability.

Institutional Web Accessibility Seminar

ODS hosted a presentation by Cyndi Rowland, Ph.D., Executive Director of WebAIM. Faculty and staff were invited to explore best practices for institutional web accessibility at JMU. An open discussion followed.

C.A.M.M.O. (Creating Accessible Materials in Microsoft Office) Training

ODS and the IT Training Department held a 90 minute training that explained how Microsoft Office can be used to create accessible materials.

Beyond What We Know

Interview with Dr. Rhonda Zingraff, Associate Dean, JMU College of Health and Behavioral Studies (CHBS)

How did the creation of the film, *Let the Wave Say*, come about?

Within the last 3 years, the Dean of CHBS, Dr. Sharon Lovell, asked the CHBS Diversity Council to explore the best practices for advising, supporting, and accommodating students with disabilities. The goal was to foster a better understanding with our faculty but to also create something that could make a difference across the institution. The film was a collaboration between the Health Education Design Group (HEDG) at IHHS, ODS, and the CHBS Diversity Council, which I chair. The end result is an informative film that can be used broadly across colleges and even outside of JMU. The film can be viewed at the following link: <https://vimeo.com/325726667>

How does the film go beyond opening the doors?

The more I learned about not just the challenges involved, but the inspirational solutions that are within reach, the more I realized that my peers and I, as a whole, were barely scratching the surface in what we understood. I say that as having been a professor for over three decades. I felt pretty confident about how infrequently your average faculty member has time to study the disability landscape. Unless you have a teaching or research concern with it, there is a tendency to stay in your discipline. What that implies is that people won't be opening doors if they are insufficiently aware of what is across the threshold of what there is to know. The faculty member now knows there's a door but doesn't know that they need to go through it, and that represents a missed opportunity.

What do you hope to see over the next 5 years at JMU in terms of infusing culture and curriculum with inclusion of individuals with disabilities?

It stunned me when I started to learn more. Not only was it really informative, but it was distressing for me to realize how much we (the teaching faculty at any institution) do not know about developments, especially since the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Our antennae are not sufficiently tuned into this large and growing body of policy and practices.

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*"The film, *Let the Wave Say*, is a step beyond because it is an invitation to think about how you may need to motivate yourself to go beyond opening the doors in your own classroom.*

-Dr. Rhonda Zingraff



Dr. Rhonda Zingraff

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Therefore, I hope that we see the development of a more informed peer culture among faculty where we will share with one another and encourage one another with a stronger awareness of how we can collectively get better.

Disability Awareness Week Highlight

Capturing Grace Movie Screening

During Disability Awareness Week this year, we hosted an event where the documentary "Capturing Grace" was shown. The film documents participants in the first Dance for Parkinson's Disease program in Brooklyn, as they prepared for a public performance and reflected on the transformative power of art in the face of life challenges. A discussion followed regarding JMU's Dance for Parkinson's program and the meaning of the film. This event was made possible during DAW through the collaboration of ODS and JMU's School of Theatre and Dance and College of Visual and Performing Arts.

The Joy of Movement

Interview with Professor Kate Trammell, JMU School of Theater & Dance

The Beginning of JMU's Dance for Parkinson's program

Professor Kate Trammell shared that she has been aware of the Dance for Parkinson's program for years. When she had two friends diagnosed with Parkinson's Disorder (PD), she decided to become a certified teacher of Dance for Parkinson's. Along the way she got interested in pulling students in, and they have gotten deeply involved. Additionally, Dean George Sparks supported music majors and dance majors to go and study Dance for Parkinson's in Brooklyn, New York and Toronto, Canada. Two Occupational Therapy graduate students have also gotten very involved.

The core group of students leading the JMU Dance for Parkinson's program are:

- Dance: Leah Abrams (Sophomore), Ashton Clevenger (Sophomore), Chloe Conway (Sophomore), & Kelsey Nhill (Freshman)
- Music: Thomas Hassett (Sophomore) & Abby Wiegand (Sophomore)
- Occupational Therapy: Olivia Garcia (1st year graduate student) & Caroline Puglia (1st year graduate student)

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Professor Kate Trammell

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*Photos above: JMU
Dance for PD
participants dancing
together*

Photo credit pgs. 16:
Richard Finkelstein

Participants from Sunnyside Retirement Community, the Virginia Mennonite Retirement Community, and from throughout the Harrisonburg/Shenandoah Valley community have come to classes at JMU's Forbes Center for the Performing Arts for eight Saturdays during the 2019 Spring semester. Professor Trammell shared that a strong community has emerged and these sessions provide a time each week when they can get together with people and they don't have to explain what the situation is. It's a time when they don't have to be focused on Parkinson's, but on the joy of movement. While other appointments might focus on their symptoms, in the dance program the participants can just focus on the joy of movement, while simultaneously helping the symptoms.

Dance for Parkinson's goes beyond opening the doors at JMU and in the community

Professor Trammell stated that this has a lot to do with the distinction between inclusion and integration. Inclusion means that the door is open and you can come in if you want. Integration asks if we can create something that uses differences as a jumping off point for a creative process where something new emerges. It means that you look deeper into what it is and how it can be enhanced by difference and how everyone grows. With the JMU Dance for Parkinson's program, Professor Trammell and the students seek feedback from the participants as they go. They build in opportunities for the community members to share what they would like more of or less of. They have done many dances, some themed around Broadway Musicals such as *Hamilton* and *West Side Story*.

Professor Trammell stated, "[our participants] are the experts on Parkinson's. I can study it, but they are the people who are living it. They bring their expertise to the table and I bring mine to the table and we look at it. It's excellent for the students because they get to witness over time and they get to go beyond what their preconceptions have been. They learn from the participants and there's a nice mutuality about it. The participants like having the students involved and are interested in their learning and are patient with [everyone] involved. They are willing to share and help the students grow and I think it surprises the students."

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The Vision for Dance for Parkinson's

Professor Trammell is hopeful that they can keep building a community that supports people who are facing something very challenging like PD, and that provides a creative way of responding. This includes not only who have PD, but their care partner and family. There are Physical Therapists and Occupational Therapists and Musicians in this area who are gifted and knowledgeable in PD and Professor Trammell's vision is that they can continue to create a network and gather resources for people who are impacted by PD.

Professor Trammell's hope is that the strong relationships with the participants, their care partners, and the students that have formed will be enhanced as the program continues. Quoting *Capturing Grace* she said, "In this program, there are no patients. There are only dancers."

Disability Awareness Week Highlights

Employment Accessibility

The Office of Disability Services and Career and Academic Planning collaborated to invite JMU community members to discuss how to make the workplace more accessible and respectful. Participants were provided case studies dealing with the various steps of employment and how having a disability could impact those steps.



DAW Employment Accessibility presenters Aimee Stright, Danielle Brooks, Tonya Schoenbeck and Brittany Dioszeghy

JMUke Strum and Sing

ODS and CIME collaborated together with JMUke to invite the public to learn to play the ukulele and then jam and sing to popular songs with fellow community members! 30 ukuleles were available to borrow for the duration of the event, or participants were allowed to bring their own.



JMUke teaching the group chords for the songs that they would play together

Making the Change

Interview with Dr. Lori Britt Associate Professor Communication Studies, Director of the Institute for Constructive Advocacy and Dialogue/4C Initiative

To make an effective change, Dr. Britt suggests having meetings with various people and departments who could have an impact or be impacted by changes. This will ensure that the right people are in the room.



Dr. Lori Britt

We recently had the pleasure of sitting down with Dr. Lori Britt to discuss how she championed for change around the final exams for the SCOM general education classes. Approximately 2,500 students are enrolled in these SCOM classes each semester. On average, 5% of those students are registered with the Office of Disability Services for accommodations for additional time. This equates to about 125 students each semester.

Dr. Britt's concern for her students led her to looking for solutions that would allow students needing testing accommodations for extended time to continue to test within the SCOM community of learners and allow those students the same opportunities for questions during the exam as their peers.

In the Fall 2018 semester, Dr. Britt approached her department after setting a goal to have the extended testing accommodation completed by the department instead of ODS. This would reduce the burden of administrative paperwork, lower anxiety for students, and students would take the exams in their general education section. This would also allow for faster scoring of exams. After additional meetings with the right people in the room, the decision was made to allow SCOM general education students to take their final exams with their class in the Assessment & Testing Center, located in the basement of Ashby Hall.

Students are now divided up by time needs in the lab and the test is proctored by Graduate Teaching Assistants and Dr. Britt. The GTAs and Dr. Britt are able to respond to questions that students may have in real time, they are among their fellow students in their learning community, and time and anxiety is reduced for the students.

Dr. Britt goes beyond opening the doors at JMU by looking for thoughtful and well-developed solutions like this that create positive change for all of her students and for her colleagues.

Disability Awareness Week Highlights

Self Care Workshop

The Office of Disability Services and the Counseling Center collaborated to invite all individuals to come and practice self-care strategies. The workshop included a guided group meditation and mindfulness activity, followed by open stations. These stations included biofeedback, button-making, aromatherapy, coloring, kinetic sand, and a therapy dog station.



Participants learning about aromatherapy



Participants with therapy dog



Participants coloring

Sensory Yoga

JMU students, faculty, and staff were invited to attend this special edition yoga class, Sensory Yoga! Individuals experienced yoga that required focusing on your body's movements without utilizing sight, causing you to rely on your other senses. Participants had the option of utilizing a blindfold during the session, possibly increasing focus by reducing comparison with other participants and allowing further activation of your mind, muscles, and balance. This yoga event was not constructed as a simulation exercise. It was designed as a yoga experience that focused more on using aural receptive skills and senses other than sight.



Sensory Yoga class

Tactile Math: Beyond the Status Quo

Interview with Dr. Elizabeth "Ben" Ward, Assistant Professor, JMU Mathematics and Statistics

"I really like the fact that we've been able to [make so many materials accessible] that now many of my students know about the tactile plots. They have experienced it and gotten to touch it and interact with it..."

Dr. Elizabeth
"Ben" Ward



Dr. Elizabeth "Ben" Ward

Q: Can you describe the accessibility project that you're doing?

A: One of them is that I want to make software so that teachers of the Visually Impaired can create their own custom statistical graphics for their students using the software. I'm planning to make a "Shiny" app which is an online app where you would point and click or upload data to make a scatter plot, box plot, etc.

Q: What inspired you to pursue this as a personal project?

A: I had a student who I thought this would be useful for. I could see that she was really good at statistics, but didn't have accessibility to *all* of the things that we needed to do. I have an uncle who's blind, and I have watched him struggle to interact with software, and he could also have continued in some sort of career, I think, if he had more accessible media. The third reason is that when I was an undergrad, my brother had a friend who was a professor and that professor had a student who was blind. She introduced the blind student to my brother so that he could be a mentor to her. I got to know her and she wanted to be a math major, but by the time her freshman year was over, they had basically stopped being able to provide her with materials in math. So, she ended up being a philosophy major, which I mean, it's fine, but it's also kind of sad because she loved math and want to be a math major.

Q: Could you describe how this project goes beyond just opening the doors?

A: Opening the door would just be making sure the student had the right materials. That would be the basics. But I actually would prefer it if we had something that we could give back to the community, and also something that students could use themselves so that I don't have to provide them the material.

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That seems a little silly for somebody who should be able to do their own data analysis. Also, I really like the fact that we've been able to [make so many materials accessible] that now many of my students know about the tactile plots. They have experienced it and gotten to touch it and interact with it, and I think that's cool too. Pretty much everybody in my department now knows about all of this, so it's also raising more awareness.

Q: How do you think this project contributes to the goal of infusing the culture or the curriculum with inclusion of individuals with disabilities?

A: I found a way to produce statistical documents in HTML, and it's called "R-markdown". It's a popular software, and I've started having all my students use it. It would be one thing if I was having all the other students do things on paper, and one student doing things using whatever input method, but now if I have *all* my students produce HTML, then my one student who can *only* use HTML can also access their stuff, which is kind of cool. When I started at the beginning, everybody thought that I was crazy, but now I think it's really good. Because *all* my students are producing documents that I consider acceptable as accessible. I decided we should do it for one person, and I was like, "well, let's make everybody do it". So I think that's good. I think it benefits them in the end too, because it's really good for them to be able to make HTML and PDF documents and to be able to write "R" code to generate all this stuff and present things to *everyone* and not just write it down on a piece of paper.

Q: What do you hope to see over the next 5 years at JMU in terms of infusing culture and curriculum with inclusion of individuals with disabilities?

A: Interesting question. It's a bit complicated. I have super mixed feelings because I think that there's a lot of really talented people out there who aren't getting as good

of an education as they could if they could find a place like this where people are willing to support them. And so if they came here, I think that'd be great because then we could support people and we could have some really talented people who otherwise aren't getting a supportive education. I would like to see JMU not just be inclusive, but also really welcome people and do outreach to underserved students who could benefit from a good college education. That would be one of my hopes.



*Braille Math Questions created by
Dr. Elizabeth "Ben" Ward*

"[Susan] is
an advocate
for
individuals
who have
disabilities..."

- ODS Staff



*Susan Wheeler at the
2019 ODS Open House
wearing a zebra print
ribbon to raise aware-
ness about Ehlers-
Danlos Syndrome*

A Thank You to Susan Wheeler,

*University Counsel and Special Assistant
Attorney General*

By the ODS Staff

Susan is a good friend of ODS;

Our staff, faculty, and students benefit from her best.

She is an advocate for individuals who have
disabilities,

And her involvement and authenticity consistently
come with ease.

We have appreciated her wit year after year,

When we seek her guidance, her humor helps us
persevere.

Susan is always there for us with her knowledge and
her spunkiness,

Even when our questions have an air of funkiness.

There's not enough we could write to express our
gratitude,

So we will simply say, there is no one like Susan - we
know that with certitude.

- ODS Staff



Susan Wheeler

Quality of Experience

Interview with Dr. Timothy M. Miller, Vice President for Student Affairs

Dr. Miller recently sat down to discuss what “Going Beyond Opening the Doors” means at JMU. Dr. Miller stated that students may have varying experiences at James Madison University, but all students should have the same quality of experience. This experience is a result of creating an inclusive community that helps guide and support students to be their best possible selves.

Dr. Miller supports that Universal Design should be integrated across the JMU campus for students, faculty, and staff. Dr. Miller stated that by using Universal Design in scheduling meetings and trainings, there is an additive value for all that are present in the meeting. Using Universal Design reflects an investment in all individuals. He hopes that everyone will see using Universal Design as not just a way to include people with disabilities, but as an integrative part of the JMU community.

There are seven principles of Universal Design. They are equitable use, flexibility in use, simple and intuitive use, perceptible information, tolerance for error, low physical effort and size and space for approach and use. Additional information on Universal Design can be viewed by visiting the Center for Applied Special Technology (CAST) at <https://bit.ly/2Vqj1kO> and on The National Center on Disability and Access to Education (NCDAAE) at <http://ncdae.org/resources/cheatsheets/>

Over the next 5 years, Dr. Miller sees JMU as being a university where those with disabilities do not feel as though they have to fit into the JMU culture. Rather, they will know that their diversity belongs at JMU and shapes the JMU culture. Dr. Miller stated that every student with a disability should feel comfortable with all faculty and staff. Their success as a student is a collaborative effort of faculty, staff and other students.



Dr. Tim Miller



Dr. Tim Miller at the 2019 ODS Open House wearing a puzzle piece ribbon holding a sign that says: “I chose this awareness ribbon to raise awareness because of our responsibility to support all students at JMU!”

Staff and Student Farewells

My time as Exam Accommodations Assistant in ODS has been extremely rewarding by giving me the chance to work with so many students, faculty and staff. Being able to work with the same students from year to year has been an incredible experience and I have loved being a part of their college experience. I will take with me everything that my coworkers have taught me and use it for years to come. I am grateful for all of the opportunities I have had during my time here and I will miss being a part of ODS.

Rebecca MacIntosh, Exam Proctoring Accommodation Assistant

As I reflect on my time here at ODS, I can't help but smile. This Office is more than just a job to me. It's a sort of family that I have had the privilege of being part of for the last two years. ODS, Valerie, and Kathryn have provided me with opportunities that I would not have been exposed to in any other setting. For the last two years, Kathryn has allowed me to explore any avenue that interested me—and I don't think that I could be more thankful for a boss as much as I am thankful of her. I have learned so much about Disability Services during my time here, and I'd like to think that I am more conscientious about disability related issues now. I am so appreciative of the relationships I have forged in my time here. ODS is a community that I am sad to leave, but I am so proud to have been a part of.

Cassandra Donahue, Peer Access Advocate

ODS opened up so many doors for me. It diversified my experiences at JMU and allowed me to take new perspectives. The people I have worked with and met at my time in ODS were absolutely amazing, hard-working, and genuinely love what they do. It is very inspiring for me as I go on to pursue a career in healthcare. Working with these students also motivated me to keep going even through hard times. I am going to miss this job and the people so much but I am glad I got to work at this awesome place for most of my college experience. :)

Haley Coursen, Office Assistant

I started working at ODS spring semester of my junior year because I knew of an OA that graduated last year, Courtney. I was looking for an on campus job and ODS seemed like a great fit. Working at the front desk is a new adventure every time you come in. What makes working at ODS enjoyable are the people in the office. Working underneath Amy and Sandra has been amazing. They are always in great spirits and make coming in to work every day a pleasure. I feel connected with everyone in the office and it's a feeling that I have yet to experience in the workplace. All of the potlucks and food definitely boosted moral and made work fun. I've really enjoyed my time here at ODS.

Santia Ramos, Office Assistant

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Being a part of the notes and exams team during this year has been a great experience. I have learned so much about the wonderful work that ODS does over the course of my time here, and I am appreciative of this opportunity and the ability to work with everyone at ODS. It is a bittersweet feeling as I finish out my graduate degree and reflect on my time at JMU, but working at ODS will definitely be one of the memories I look back upon fondly!

*Christine Carman,
Accommodations Graduate Student Assistant*

I'm so grateful for all the opportunities working in LSI has brought me since sophomore year! Not only have I learned lots about being a peer educator along the way, but I've become part of such a dynamic team I have the pleasure of working with. It is so rewarding being able to help fellow Dukes and I'm excited to continue to do so next fall as the LSI GA!

*Iliana Ioannides,
Learning Strategies Peer Educator*

Working at ODS has not only made me a more conscious individual, but has made me feel empowered to help make the world universally accessible. I'm excited to continue my path with JMU as a graduate student, but will be sad to leave the incredible environment that comes with the office.

Rafiqah Haji, Office Assistant

Joining the LSI team has been one of the most positive and rewarding experiences I've had over my time at JMU! The ODS staff is filled with caring, motivated, and passionate individuals all striving to make JMU the best it can be for fellow dukes. I am so thankful to be a part of such a unique team of individuals that have a passion for helping others just as I do!

*Taylor Beckel,
Learning Strategies Peer Educator*

*"Never let it be said
that to dream is a
waste of one's time,
for dreams are our
realities in waiting. In
dreams, we plant
the seeds of our
future." — Unknown*



Students in their grad caps

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Joy Martin
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Kenner Carmody

CSPA Practicum Student

Keanté Epps

Disability Awareness Week Highlight

ODS Open House

During the 2019 Disability Awareness Open House, attendees were able to select an awareness ribbon that signifies a disability they wanted to raise awareness about.



Student looking at the different disabilities represented at JMU.



Rafiqah Haji wearing a green ribbon representing mental health and holding a sign that says: "I chose this awareness ribbon to raise awareness because mental health is just as important as physical health".

2019 Disability Awareness Week Partners

Thank you to our partners for helping to remove barriers and build capacity to ensure inclusion and equity for people with disabilities. Your time, effort, encouragement, and collaboration during the 10th Annual Disability Awareness Week helped to ensure that it was a success!

- JMU Libraries
- University Recreation Center
- Center for Faculty Innovation
- Career and Academic Planning
- Center for Civic Engagement
- School of Theatre and Dance
- Counseling Center
- College of Health and Behavioral Studies
- IT Training
- Aramark
- Disability Studies Faculty
- Center for Multicultural Student Services
- Center for Inclusive Music Engagement
- JMU Human Resources, Benefits and Recruitment
- University Legal Services

Madison Access

OFFICE OF DISABILITY SERVICES

SPRING/SUMMER 2019



Ribbons representing a multitude of different disabilities represented at JMU



Ashley Harris speaking at the Keynote

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