Dear all,

Welcome back to most of you, who have either recently returned to campus after working from home or returned from the summer break!

Please see some of the upcoming events/news you may be interested in below.

**LGBT+ Wellbeing Group for students**

A chance for all LGBT+ students, or those with initial questions about sexuality or gender identity, to gather online via Zoom and address some of the specific issues that are impacting their wellbeing and to feel heard.

The group will run every week at the same time and will be facilitated by LGBT+ identifying members of staff and facilitators. The group aims to provide a safe space for students to discuss some of their problems and share ways of coping during ever-changing uncertain times.

This will be a supportive and non-judgmental atmosphere and topics raised by the group will be sensitively held by the group. We ask for confidentiality in the group, you don’t have to be ‘out’ or claim an identity to attend. The webpage can be viewed here where students can also book their place online.

**Inclusion Planner**

The Equality team is delighted to share the new Inclusion Planer 2021/22 (formerly Diversity Calendar) which is now available for download from the University website! For the first time, the calendar is also available as an Outlook calendar as well as a pdf version featuring images from the Doctoral College Images of Research Competition. To subscribe to the Outlook calendar, simply click here or go to our Inclusion Planner webpage to download a pdf version along with more tools to help you in planning your work activities in an inclusive way.

**Athena SWAN**
It is a great pleasure to announce the Business School was successful in gaining an Athena Swan Bronze award! There is plenty of good work to continue with realising the action plan and ensuring the school reap the benefits of what they have done thus far. The Head of School thanks everyone for their involvement, and particularly those academic and professional services staff who supported the process and application writing and reviewing. Special thanks to Katie Angliss who led the production of the successful final submission. This is a significant achievement for us all, and great news to start the academic year.

Educational Development and Decolonising the Curriculum
A brief introduction to decolonisation and relevant structures at UoP can be found [here](#) and [here](#). Please find links to the case studies to help raise the profile of the work that’s going on across the Faculty.

Decolonising identity: today, world, I’m playing the part of...
Click [here](#) to listen to the podcasts from Sukhi Kainth, Senior Advisor, Advance HE is joined by Dr. Jason Arday, Associate Professor in Sociology at the Department of Sociology and the Deputy Executive Dean for People and Culture in the Faculty of Social Sciences and Health, Durham University and Gary Loke, Director of Knowledge, Innovation and Delivery, Advance HE who share their views on the different masks worn by people of colour when navigating predominantly white spaces within higher education.

Race Equality Charter
The Race Equality Charter (REC) Submission Assessment Team (SAT) has been continually working towards the anticipated submission date; July 2022. The SAT has been led by Ann Bentley and Kamran Ali and they have established sub-teams for each section of the submission.

Each meeting is working to identify and self-reflect on institutional and cultural barriers standing in the way of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff and students, which will develop initiatives and solutions for action.

Women’s Network
The [Women’s Mentoring Scheme](#) is looking for new mentors. The scheme was instigated through the Women’s network in 2015 and its aim is to enable women to realise their potential here at the University of Plymouth and beyond. If you are interested in becoming a mentor, please complete a short bio, no more than 1 side of A4 that aims to outline your career and personal highlights that you can offer/share with a potential mentee, and return this to Staff Development. There is no template
for this so use any format that you feel comfortable with - it's not about it being a CV but more of an overview of you, so potential mentees get a sense of who you are.

**Advance HE’s Senior Women’s Leadership Network**
This women-only network will appeal to senior women in leadership roles in higher education. It is also aimed at alumni of our Senior Women Leadership Development Programme, our senior and executive programmes, and those working at a senior level to support women’s leadership in HE. Find out more about the inaugural meeting and register your interest [here](#).

**Black History Month – October**

Many events and podcasts, webinars will be taking place throughout the year, particularly in October for Black History month, which can be viewed on the [Black History Month webpage](#) and the [University events page](#). If staff wish to share any information about their event or any relevant case studies, materials, a brief contextualisation on work related to this, please email [AHBEqualityandDiversity@plymouth.ac.uk](mailto:AHBEqualityandDiversity@plymouth.ac.uk) so we can feature it in October's faculty EDI newsletter and/or future newsletters.

Many events include having external guest speakers, please see the relevant documents below for guidance:

- [University of Plymouth external speakers policy](#)
- [Guidance for external speakers](#)
- [External Speaker Notification form](#)

The Arts Institute programme holds many events throughout the year also, click [here](#) to keep up with all the events!

**Poem: ‘Aunt Jemima’ by Lucille Clifton.**
The Poem below is presented by Russell Evans, Associate Lecturer from the School of Society and Culture:

*aunt jemima*

white folks say i remind them
of home i who have been homeless
all my life except for their
kitchen cabinets.
i who have made the best
of everything
pancakes batter for chicken
my life

the shelf on which i sit
between the flour and cornmeal
is thick with dreams
oh how i long for

my own syrup
rich as blood
my true nephews my nieces
my kitchen my family
my home

Aunt Jemima is a well-known brand of food in the USA. But the face used to sell the product came to embody the racist tropes in American home life of the African-American female housekeeper. The face used on the products changed over time but was initially a former slave, Nancy Green. The image used from then on with various models perpetuated the idea of the Black motherly housekeeper figure looking after a white family who was forced to see little of her own children. Green perhaps embodies something of history of African-American women housekeepers – she died in 1923 and was buried in a pauper’s grave in Chicago. She was forgotten for nearly a century until researchers told her story. Lawsuits against Quaker Oats, the company which owns the Aunt Jemima brand, failed in efforts to fund a headstone, as the company erased the images of successive Aunt Jemima’s. Green was required in a binding lifetime contract to visit American towns to advertise the brand but perhaps she cleverly managed to get what she could from the company’s exploitation of her, according to Romi Crawford, who researches African American visual imagery at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. “That is absolutely the irony, that she is playing a role: a derogatory type and caricature of Black women,” she told Katherine Nagasawa at National Public Radio. “In actuality, this is a Black woman who was moving around the country and, in a way, the world.” The Aunt Jemima brand was only ‘retired’ by Quaker two days before ‘Juneteenth’ in 2020. In September 2020, the brand of rice products Uncle Ben’s also changed its name to ‘Ben’s Originals’ by Mars, the brand’s owner, citing awareness of the racist stereotypes the figure of Uncle Ben perpetuated.

The original Aunt Jemima:
Biography:
Lucille Clifton was born in Depew, New York, on June 27, 1936. Her first book of poems, *Good Times*, was rated one of the best books of the year by the *New York Times*. During a rich career, she was elected a Chancellor of the Academy of American Poets. She served as Poet Laureate for the State of Maryland and Distinguished Professor of Humanities at St. Mary's College of Maryland. Lucille Clifton died on February 13, 2010, at the age of 73.

E-Learning training and New Training Courses
Sign up for a range of training courses organised by the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Team here. As a university that is committed to equality, diversity and inclusion, the University of Plymouth provides training throughout the year to ensure staff is always equipped to deliver a service that works for everyone. You will find information on our training courses (eg. Understanding Privilege and Bias, Trans Awareness Training, Antisemitism) as well as the University’s agreed definitions and terminology to help facilitate conversations on sometimes challenging topics.

You may wish to attend ‘What is Anti-Jewish Racism?’ training which starts up again on 5th October (with dates through to June 2022).

It’s hosted by author and expert speaker, Ben M Freeman and covers:
- History of antisemitism
- Antisemitism and anti-Jewish racism today
• Zionism and antizionism
• Examples of antisemitism in Higher Education
• Tools to recognise and report anti-Jewish racism

As this is an external speaker we are contracted to a set number of sessions and cannot book in anymore so I recommend staff sign up as soon as they can to get a place. Staff can book via iTrent on this link: https://bit.ly/3tyxkBx

**Checking your blind spot - Recognising and unravelling our unconscious bias**

Whether we are fully aware of them or not, we all have unconscious or implicit biases. They aren't always a force for ill but, how do they manifest and what are the long-term effects on the creative sector if they continue to go unchecked?

A Cultivator Inclusion and Innovation strand webinar explored these questions and discussed how we can begin to unlearn unconscious biases and what we can do within our sphere of influence to change the status quo and support others in their unlearning.

Register here to playback the webinar which took place in April, with panellists Sonya Barlow, Independent Diversity Consultant, and 2020 winner of the Most Influential Women in Tech UK, and Jack Morrison, Project Manager at Feast Cornwall. Cultivator is a creative business support programme for creative businesses and SMEs in Cornwall. The project is run by Creative Skills and funded by the European Social Fund, the European Regional Development Fund, the European Structural and Investment Fund, Arts Council England and Cornwall Council.

If there are any further EDI training you wish you know more about, then please email AHBEqualityandDiversity@plymouth.ac.uk

Kind regards,

*Kelly & Stacey*

**Senior Administrators – Equality and Diversity Support**

You may receive this email outside of your normal office hours. Please be assured that there is no expectation to reply outside of your normal working hours.