

**2020 2021:**  
**THE YEAR IN DIVERSITY, EQUITY,  
AND INCLUSION**

**THE MACAULAY DIVERSITY TASK FORCE**

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## MESSAGE FROM THE TASK FORCE

In this historic year, Macaulay saw an unprecedented level of activity aimed at providing a more equitable learning and professional environment for its staff and students. We made real, positive change within the college for which we can all be proud.

People in our community found the inspiration and courage to tell their truths and document structural inequities that they experienced—or witnessed others experiencing. We discussed, we questioned, we explored, and we worked. New leaders emerged during this exciting time, people who rallied us to move forward through adversity.

Employee activism was an important force for change in 2020-2021. Staff came together, informally working across departments and hierarchies, to have difficult discussions examining the structures that we collectively support, and to then collaborate in finding solutions.

At the same time, students formed their own groups to espouse the values of Black Lives Matter, CUNY for Abolition, and other wider movements to advocate for change at Macaulay. We are particularly grateful for their activism and the catalyst that it provided.

These shared efforts produced many firsts for Macaulay that grow our organization in the right direction. Presenting the work into a single document for our community both recognizes past efforts and sets a precedent for accountability. The advancements described here are points along a continuum for Macaulay. Every achievement was built on the efforts of others, and in turn must be evaluated, grown, revised, and expanded—and sometimes even abandoned as we respond to the needs of our organization.

We look forward to continuing this work for Macaulay and every member of its growing community

Submitted,



Vanessa K. Valdés,  
*Interim Dean*

and

Gianina Chrisman, Will Lung, Georgia Southern-Penn, Kristina Gowin, Kathryn Lineberger,  
and Ben Ross.

*Macaulay Diversity Task Force*

**MACAULAY.CUNY.EDU**

## OVERVIEW

This report includes measurable activities that took place throughout many functional areas of the college, and provides data wherever possible.

- ACADEMICS
- COMMUNICATIONS
- CUNY PARTNERSHIPS
- ENROLLMENT
- EVENTS
- GROUPS, COMMITTEES, COUNCILS, CLUBS
- HIRING
- STAFF TRAINING
- STUDENT VOICE
- STUDENT PROGRAMMING

In addition, the report captures important drivers of the work that are not as quantifiable.

- ACCOUNTABILITY
- APATHY
- AUTHENTICITY
- COMMUNITY
- DIALOG
- EMPATHY
- INHERENT BIAS
- PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
- RESPONSIBILITY
- STRUCTURAL RACISM

The document was compiled with the task force's values in mind: inclusivity, amplifying diverse voices and accomplishments, acknowledging earlier work, and providing a seat at the table whenever possible.

## UNTIL NOW

The values of diversity, equity, and inclusion have long been part of the fabric of Macaulay, but only recently entered the vocabulary as explicitly stated goals. Some nascent plans and strategies were already in place as of 2020, and these past efforts had positioned the college for the growth we experienced in 2020-2021.

The 2012-15 Strategic Plan<sup>1</sup> indicated that Macaulay would “...grow and further diversify the Macaulay community” by focusing on new hires and enrollment. At that time the college committed to:

- Increase the number of underrepresented minority students who graduate from Macaulay.
- Develop enrollment and retention plans for specific student demographics and implement a plan for admitting transfer students.
- Recruit and retain a competitive and diverse staff by focusing on employee satisfaction, and setting retention benchmarks.

In 2015, a 25-member task force that included staff, students, alumni, advisors, and students, was convened. This group issued a series of recommendations around recruiting, marketing and communication, student experience, and career services. (Appendix A). Later, the college heightened its commitment to diversity in alignment with CUNY Chancellor’s stated goals. The change is reflected in the 2020-2025 strategic plan, that names inclusion as one of its core values<sup>2</sup>.

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1 [https://macaulay.cuny.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Macaulay-Strategic-Plan-2012\\_2015.pdf](https://macaulay.cuny.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Macaulay-Strategic-Plan-2012_2015.pdf)

2 [https://macaulay.cuny.edu/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/mhc\\_strategic\\_plan\\_2019\\_1021-1.pdf](https://macaulay.cuny.edu/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/mhc_strategic_plan_2019_1021-1.pdf)

## GROUPS

Today, Macaulay has several internal groups dedicated to the issues of diversity, equity, inclusion. They are listed below. Understanding their missions and their workflow may explain how DEI work is conceptualized and implemented at Macaulay. Their similar labels has led to confusion among Macaulay leadership and group members themselves about their various roles and missions.

Macaulay's diversity groups have traditionally focused on the student body in two ways: recruiting a more diverse class, and providing supportive programming for them while they are at Macaulay.

This year was the first in which staff were included in the DEI evaluations and strategizing, an important step forward. Our organization will be better equipped to build an antiracist environment for students if it provides the same for staff.

### CUNY GRADUATE CENTER COMPLIANCE AND DIVERSITY OFFICE

This year, Macaulay forged a new relationship with Pinar Ozgu, the Graduate Center's Interim Vice President of Institutional Equity. Ms. Ozgu offered invaluable guidance and has begun evaluating the 2021 staff climate survey results. She hosted staff discussion events this summer to further understand the sentiment behind the data, and plans to provide the dean with recommendations in the fall.

Ms. Ozgu's office also provides training for staff in microaggressions, return to work policy, professional development, and other areas impacting diversity, equity, and inclusion.

The group's site: <https://gc.cuny.edu/About-the-GC/Administrative-Services/Compliance-and-Diversity>

### MACAULAY OFFICE OF INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

Without data, we cannot credibly tell our story. The office has—despite significant resource challenges—provided invaluable leadership, guidance and support for the college's DEI work.

**Key person:** Diane Phillips

The group's site: <https://macaulay.cuny.edu/about-macaulay/institutional-effectiveness/>

## MACAULAY DIVERSITY TASK FORCE

This group began in August with a directive from the dean to identify a DEI consultant to work with Macaulay staff. The committee developed the following guiding principles for its work, recognizing that:

- Macaulay cannot truly realize its mission of providing an inclusive experience to our students without examining our internal culture for remnants of white supremacy.
- A sustained effort by leadership, staff, and each individual is needed to correct internal inequities.
- We do not yet have adequate representation or inclusion of minority identities within our leadership or other staff.
- We need a more thorough understanding of how this disparity limits our decisions, policies and services.

The group identified, hired, and managed the relationship with the consultant, hosted consultant events, provided guidance on new hire process, formed new CUNY alliances, advocated for a staff climate survey, and offered critical guidance to the college's communication practice.

**Key members:** Gianina Chrisman, Kathryn Lineberger, Georgia Southern-Penn, Ben Ross, Will Lung, Kristina Gowin. With: Anthony Bowles, Marianne Booufall-Tynan.

## SPECIAL INITIATIVE DIVERSITY COMMITTEE

This group is a collaboration between students, alumni, and staff. It meets 4 times per academic year to discuss ways to support Macaulay students of color, specifically focusing on Black and Latinx students. Strong relationships were forged between Macaulay Diversity Initiative and Macaulay Administration, allowing for open dialogue, and cross consultation for hearing student concerns.

The committee provided a solid mechanism to filter student concerns around diversity, equity, and inclusion, as things were directed to student advocates in Macaulay Diversity Initiative to then be raised among staff and the dean.

Key members: Dean Pearl, Chelsea Alterman, Veronica Maldonado, Marianne Booufall-Tynan, Gianina Chrisman, Brianne Donnelly, and students from Macaulay Diversity Initiative, Macaulay Scholars Council, and a Macaulay graduate.

The group's site: <https://macaulay.cuny.edu/student-life/student-activities/special-initiative-committees/>

Survey results from the group's membership: [https://docs.google.com/document/d/1YiG\\_3Lu1duKDIYffGGEdf2GyjvmlrQuUDRcT2hX3gOY/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1YiG_3Lu1duKDIYffGGEdf2GyjvmlrQuUDRcT2hX3gOY/edit?usp=sharing)

## MACAULAY DIVERSITY INITIATIVE

This is a student-led group founded in 2018 or 19 and traditionally has hosted a welcome events for incoming students. This year it expanded its role significantly under the direction of Co-President Marie Elise Milius '22: attending diversity meetings to provide insight on student sentiment, offering feedback on student programming, pushing for accountability from the college, designing and implementing a key enrollment event and more.

**Other key members:** Devjani Paul, Keren Shilla

The group's site: <https://macaulay.campusgroups.com/mdi/home/>

## GRADUATE CENTER PRESIDENT'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

The committee released a climate study in the fall based on data collected in 2018. The activities were curtailed this year by the pandemic and with no notable new activity.

**Key members:** Sara Mazes and Pinar Ozgu

The group's site: <https://www.gc.cuny.edu/News/All-News/Detail?id=58486>

## INFORMAL GROUPS

Anti-Racist Intersections and Diversity Task Force are two open Slack channels in which staff members share resources, news, reading lists, event notifications and other information.

## STUDENT GROUPS

In addition to the Macaulay Diversity Initiative, student led groups Macaulay Queer Alliance, Macaulay Service Initiative, and Macaulay Feminist Society are dedicated to inclusivity. 11 additional clubs pledged their solidarity in confronting issues of diversity via the open letter.



# BIG WINS 2020-2021 NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENTS

## STAFF CLIMATE SURVEY<sup>3</sup>

It became clear early in the year that the college needed to better understand staff perceptions about diversity, equity and inclusion. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness designed an assessment to identify areas of strength and improvement, gathering information on staff demographics and perceptions of campus climate, belonging, and access to opportunities, and discriminatory behavior, and other issues.

## OPEN LETTER FROM STUDENTS<sup>4</sup>

External pressure can be a very effective incentive to drive change. Macaulay students provided this in their open letter document, a demand for accountability and change at their college. The letter motivated senior leadership in a way that internal requests alone could not.

“To resolve the lack of diversity in the Macaulay Student Body,” they wrote, “and to enact the structural change that is necessary in order to make steps towards being an anti-racist institution, we, the Macaulay Student Body, demand...” antiracist training for students, curriculum changes, admissions and demographic transparency, greater staff diversity, and more.

## JUSTICE & EQUITY HONORS NETWORK ESTABLISHED

In partnership with the honors college at Arizona State University, Macaulay launched the Justice and Equity Honors Network. This a certificate program will engage honors students from both universities in an interdisciplinary exploration of issues related to justice and equity. To earn the certificate, students must complete at least 6 credits of coursework, participate in a weekly online synthesis session with their counterparts from ASU, and present their work at a culminating conference over the summer.

## INCREASED APPLICANT DIVERSITY

Online innovation drove Macaulay's recruitment efforts to achieve a record-breaking 15% increase in applications. We quickly pivoted in response to the pandemic to expand our digital marketing efforts and conduct a variety of recruitment events via Zoom at more than 155 high schools and community-based organizations, that attracted more prospective students, from a greater range of high schools, and answered more of their questions than ever before. By the December 8th deadline, we received over 7,300

3 <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1eXvHJul88L-kDGoCOZYDeQVFBBehW37fQBUQBVKcXLuE/edit?usp=sharing>

4 [https://docs.google.com/document/d/1IMJc4gKn-ibHJmVYKZIHdOIL-\\_Ylp3YkCeGZZ8NYsT4/edit](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1IMJc4gKn-ibHJmVYKZIHdOIL-_Ylp3YkCeGZZ8NYsT4/edit)

applications for just 520 available first-year seats. Our applicants came from over 900 high schools, with 30% of the students identifying as Black and/or Latinx.

### **BRIDGE SCHOLARS TRANSFER PROGRAM EXPANDED**

Funded by a \$200K grant from GS Humane Corp, Macaulay recruited a second cohort of Bridge Scholars in partnership with the College of Staten Island. This pilot initiative identifies high-achieving community college students and provides them with a pathway to honors education. As one clear sign of the program's success, three Bridge Scholars from the first cohort graduated more than a semester early, earning their Bachelors degrees from Macaulay at Lehman College. Petrie Foundation will consider a proposal for a third cohort.

### **HIRING NEW STAFF MEMBERS**

The Macaulay employee roster grew more diverse with a new dean and new hires in Academic Affairs, Advising, and Mental Health and Wellness. DEI principles were included in the rubrics and hiring committees worked closely with the Graduate Center's Diversity Office. Lehman College and City College Macaulay programs also have new Directors, albeit not hired by us.

### **CUNY FACULTY CONFERENCE PANEL PRESENTATION<sup>5</sup>**

Members of the Diversity Task Force and Academic Affairs collaborated to present "Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at Macaulay." The presentation offered an in-depth and candid discussion of the challenges and successes of the ongoing reforms, inviting feedback and reflections from participants. This was the first time Macaulay participated in this conference.

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<sup>5</sup> [https://www.cuny.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/media-assets/Faculty\\_Diversity\\_Brochure\\_2021\\_FINAL\\_04.pdf](https://www.cuny.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/media-assets/Faculty_Diversity_Brochure_2021_FINAL_04.pdf)

# STRIDES FORWARD 2020-2021 NOTABLE CONTRIBUTIONS

## ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

Curriculum Committee of the Macaulay College Council finalized a process of updating seminar course descriptions. BIPOC points of view, consequences of settler colonialism, naming people left out of the historical record (and much more) are now officially part of our seminar curricula.

## ADVISING

To prepare for greater diversity in the Class of 2025, Macaulay convened for a summer retreat to focus on best practices.

## COMMUNICATION

- Updated the language on our website to emphasize the importance of diversity, equity, inclusion to Macaulay.
- A new incident reporting form was launched to make it easier for students to get assistance after incidents of bias, hate speech, or discrimination.
- A new name change interface allows students to more easily be called by their preferred name and pronouns, centralized.
- Institutional research area of the site was adjusted more information in a clearer format.

## CONSULTING SERVICES

Macaulay worked with Dr. Damon A. Williams and his team to design DEI programming for staff.

## ENROLLMENT AND RECRUITMENT MARKETING

- Essay prompts were updated, swapping a quote from Voltaire with one from James Baldwin.
- An additional requirement was added to the application package: a character reference letter.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> <https://macaulay.cuny.edu/admissions/applying-to-macaulay/character-reference-letter/>

- Macaulay achieved a 24% increase in the number of high schools from which students applied.
- New peer-led recruiting program launched (Appendix B)
- New accepted students events including one co-produced by the Macaulay Diversity Initiative.

## EQUITY ACTIONS

A new content section called Equity Actions was added to the Dean's weekly letter. This new messaging created a channel for college leadership to provide regular reporting on DEI achievements and invite dialog. [VIEW ARCHIVE](#)

## FROM THE OFFICE OF THE CHIEF DIVERSITY OFFICER

Added Pinar Ozgu to our public web directory

Shared the annual Affirmative Action Plan, the CUNY Graduate Center's annual report on employees who identify as minorities and women, individuals with disabilities, and protected veterans.

## EVENTS

- Macaulay Diversity Reception, 9/20
- **Town Hall With Dean Pearl**, Macaulay Diversity Initiative and Macaulay Scholars Council 10/14/20. This event was a response to the open letter from students (above).<sup>7</sup>
- **Supporting Excellence Conference: Navigating the Virtual World: Student Advocacy, Activism, and Social Media**, 11/19/20<sup>8</sup>
- **Diversity Through Hair** co-hosted by the Macaulay Diversity Initiative, 4/19/21 with 83 attendees.<sup>9</sup>
- **The Importance of Juneteenth in Higher Education**, Dara Byrne and Ted Widmer, 6/29/21<sup>10</sup>
- **@Macaulay Author Series** featuring the publications of alumni featured diverse voices.<sup>11</sup>

7 Details and recording: <https://macaulay.cuny.edu/calendar-of-events/town-hall-for-students-with-dean-pearl/>

8 Details and recordings: <https://macaulay.cuny.edu/calendar-of-events/supporting-excellence-2/>

9 More information: <https://macaulay.cuny.edu/calendar-of-events/macaulay-diversity-initiative-diversity-through-hair-event/>

10 View recording: <https://macaulay.cuny.edu/calendar-of-events/macaulay-community-event-the-importance-of-juneteenth-in-higher-education/>

11 View series details: <https://macaulay.cuny.edu/news-events/macaulay-events/>

## NEW CONNECTIONS

Macaulay's new and strengthened connections created a reliable community of allies willing to share their expertise and guide our decisions.

- **Philip Berry**, independent corporate DEI practitioner and CUNY Trustee
- **Anthony Brown**, Brooklyn College Chief Diversity Officer
- **Diana Cuzzo**, City College Chief Diversity Officer
- **John T. Rose**, Hunter College Dean for Diversity and Compliance and Title IX Coordinator
- **Harmony Osei**, member of the Coalition to Undo Racism at Baruch and former Macaulay Baruch Advisor
- **Pinar Ozgu** (see above)

## ORIENTATION CONTENT

Topics covered in orientation included privilege, diversity, and microaggressions.

## STRATEGIC PLAN

Macaulay's Director of Institutional Effectiveness led an update to the college's strategic plan along with board member Yosef Ibrahim, Su Ng (lead), Gianina Chrisman, and students.

## STUDENT GOVERNMENT

The Macaulay Scholars Council took an active role in representing student concerns. Their representation helped staff to understand student sentiment and the changes they wanted to see for Macaulay. One of their contributions was a student survey.<sup>12</sup>

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12 [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1KyTQRVsD1GR4IsN6d\\_O9cAS7-KMYDwdl/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1KyTQRVsD1GR4IsN6d_O9cAS7-KMYDwdl/view?usp=sharing)

## **TRAININGS**

Macaulay staff had access to a variety of trainings throughout the year, hosted by the task force and GC Diversity Office:

- Best Practices for Diverse Employee Recruitment and Retention Efforts facilitated by CSDLSI in May
- CUNY LGBTQ+ Hub Training led by Macaulay's representative on the CUNY Council
- Disability Awareness
- Hollaback bystander training
- Leadership Session with Dean and Cabinet only, facilitated by CSDLSI
- Why so Much Talk of Change? facilitated by CSDLSI in March

## **ZOOM BOMBING STUDENT SUPPORT**

Special guidance and assistance was offered to student group the Macaulay Diversity Initiative, after their Black History Event, Diversity Through Hair, was interrupted by racist posts and outbursts.

## THE FUTURE AT MACAULAY

In creating a mission for our group, the Diversity Task Force identified the following as goals for Macaulay. We add them here as a reference in looking toward the future.

- Define existing strengths and weaknesses regarding D&I for Macaulay Honors College
- Assess opportunities for optimizing strengths and overcoming weaknesses specific to organizational structure, mission and strategic plan.
- Develop an organizational inclusion and diversity statement.
- Develop recommendations for recognizing D&I efforts through the annual Macaulay Honors College Leadership Awards program.
- Develop recommendations to initiate D&I oversight and direction within Macaulay.
- Make initial specific recommendations for Macaulay Honors College's short term 2020 D&I activities, including accountability and ownership
- Develop long term goals to guide the trajectory of Macaulay Honors College's ongoing D&I initiatives

The bar continues to rise on inclusiveness and belonging for all. Macaulay is committed to moving forward intentionally and inclusively for our students, staff and faculty, and the wider academic community.

## THE FUTURE AT CUNY

There are a number of initiatives that campuses across the City University of New York system have implemented over the decades, particularly in light of the uprisings that took place nationally in the summer of 2020. We welcome every opportunity to continue the dialog around these important issues, and look forward to deepening our relationships, not only with our eight consortium colleges of Baruch, Brooklyn, City , the College of Staten Island, Hunter, John Jay, Lehman, and Queens, and not only with the associate degree colleges with whom we already have relationships due to our Bridge Program – Borough of Manhattan and Bronx Community Colleges and the College of Staten Island – but indeed with all of the schools throughout the system. We are eager to continue our participation in CUNY-wide programming such as the CUNY Diversity Conference, as well as in proposals from our fellow schools that will be scaled up across the twenty-five campuses.

# APPENDIX A

## DIVERSITY TASK FORCE FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS (May 29, 2015)

### 1. Pipeline: Increase the diversity of the pipeline of talented high school students with credentials for, and interest in, Macaulay.

A. Encourage campuses to make applications SAT-optional.

Committee members in agreement. Institutional Research to supply white paper.

B. Create an on-ramp to Macaulay for CUNY students who excel in their first and second years, including summer offerings of the Macaulay seminars.

i. Create a path for outstanding first year students at the consortial colleges.

ii. Create a path for outstanding community college graduates.

Possibly a 2+2 program for second year students. Students could begin taking Macaulay classes in their second year. Macaulay can share the curriculum. There may be an opportunity to tap funding through the Complete NYC grant.

Pilot program with ASAP (Bronx CC and BMCC) to determine Pathways and transfer credit articulation.

Logistical costs to consider - tuition, laptop, Opps fund.

C. Build deep partnerships and strategies (including using visits with current URM Macaulay grads and alums) with charter schools, CUNY STEP, and other prep programs, to generate applications.

Marianne Booufall-Tynan will lead out as part of recruitment process. Lena Tuck will work with Marianne. MBT has already begun the list of partners; we will also invite other programs to work with MHC.

### 2. Admissions and Enrollment: Increase the diversity of the cohort of students accepted to and enrolled by Macaulay:

A. Develop a strategy to communicate more effectively the distinctive advantages of a Macaulay education.

Highlight the non-financial benefits: events, courses, at-home NYC benefits, immersive learning, alumni, and multicultural campus.

For those candidates for whom Macaulay is not a first choice: Expand



information on campuses, dorms, communities, meal plans; send 'Thanksgiving' note.

B. Develop a more effective and considerate nomenclature for diverse students.

This is more appropriate under the Student Experience category.

C. Expand the rubric of key attributes for admissions.

Use essays and look at life dimensions of candidates.

### **3. Student Experience: Create a supportive and welcoming environment for all throughout the college years:**

A. Support student-driven discussions about diversity collectively and at each campus.

Encourage discussion at Scholars Council and provide support for their efforts.

B. Create module for facilitated discussions about race and class issues designed to be part of City Seminar 2, The Peopling of New York.

Spin off group in discussion.

C. Support peer mentoring and counseling program.

Peer counselor program in development; student founders are recruiting other students. All student participants will receive training.

MHC still making efforts to hire part-time psychologist.

D. Include diversity issues in Orientation.

Topic will need a dedicated meeting and the Orientation schedule is already packed. Outward Bound activities may be able to touch on some issues.

Establish guidelines on respect and awareness; examples of activities: Privilege Walk.

E. Conduct formal surveys in the sophomore and senior years to gauge campus climate for diversity, to inform student programming.

Institutional Research will develop surveys.

#### **4. Post-graduate Placement and Experience: Ensure outstanding career outcomes and fulfilling and productive roles for all alumni.**

A. Create Alumni events for diverse students.

Some such events are occurring this spring: Business Club networking event with alumni, Pre-Health Students event.

B. Create panel discussions and facilitate alumni mentors to encourage diverse students to consider a broad range of employment and careers.

Work with Brianne, Assistant Director of Alumni Relations and Development, to encourage and expand events with alumni.

C. Monitor post-graduate outcomes for URM alumni through regular post-grad surveys; use to recruit applicants.

Institutional Research will develop post-grad surveys.

# APPENDIX B

## MACAULAY PANEL PRESENTATION AT CUNY DIVERSITY CONFERENCE

**Title:** Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at Macaulay

**Format:** Panel Presentation with Q&A

### ABSTRACT:

In 2020, amidst rising national tensions regarding race, and facing pressure from our student community, Macaulay Honors College embarked on an effort to understand and confront racism within the college's hierarchy, policies, and curricula. The Dean of the College convened a task force to hire an independent diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) consultant. Simultaneously, faculty are bringing DEI principles into our required seminars as well as our upper-division courses. These reforms are being undertaken with the growing understanding that we, however well-informed and well-intentioned, are limited in our capacity to ask the right questions, perceive solutions for our unique and complex college structure, or implement interventions with far-reaching effects. Our presentation will offer an in-depth and candid discussion of the challenges and successes of this ongoing process, inviting feedback and reflections from participants.

### PRESENTERS:

**Lisa A. Brundage, PhD** - Director of Teaching, Learning, and Technology

**Gianina Chrisman** - Associate Director of Career Development

**William Lung** - Academic Advisor

**Kelly O'Donnell, PhD** - Director of Science Forward

**Elizabeth Reis** - Professor

**Benjamin Ross** - Honors Advisor Liaison

From the causes championed by the Black Lives Matter movement, to the inequities exposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, 2020 has shown that institutions must evaluate themselves honestly, and act on those evaluations, to create meaningful change for Black and Indigenous People of Color (BIPOC). This session will present and discuss some of the ways Macaulay Honors College is undertaking this high-priority endeavor.

We will examine efforts taken to create change from two vantage points. The first is

the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Task Force, charged by Mary Pearl, Dean of the College, to hire a third-party consultant to assist the college in examining our racial culture and implementing necessary changes. The second is the Curriculum Committee of Macaulay faculty, who are reworking the college's 1st and 2nd year seminars, and upper-division courses.

Participants will hear from members of the DEI task force, composed of staff from Mental Health and Wellness, Advising, Career Development, and Communications. We will provide an overview of challenges inherent to our unique structure. For instance, aspects of our policy-making are shared with the eight senior CUNY colleges in our consortium, and with the Graduate Center, who oversees our Human Resources.

We are hiring a DEI consultant for the first time. Two essential goals emerged for the work ahead: (1) that any interventions regarding staff also regard students, whom our positions ultimately serve, and (2) that changes be long-lasting, sustainable, and significantly benefit our community. We researched the most valuable attributes for consultants: evidence-based practice, being comfortable with resistance, and experience in higher education. These and more were assembled into custom rubrics, which were used to narrow 26 prospects down to four finalists, to one top choice. We will share samples of the rubrics and methods used in this process.

With pandemic-related austerity measures in place, the budget for the consultant, while large by our standards, is small to consultants who also work in the private sector. DEI training is not a part of Macaulay's operating budget, nor does it fit neatly into any of the college's functional areas. The college saw its tax levy operating budget drastically slashed so that only employee salaries remained. Other necessary expenses are now covered by the Macaulay Honors College Foundation. The Dean's office had discretionary foundation funds designated for hosting events such as congratulatory receptions for students, but she offered to reallocate 100% of the money for this purpose. With further budget pressures expected, future DEI funding would rely on donor support.

The next speakers will represent the Macaulay Curriculum Committee. Descriptions of the four seminars, each examining New York City from a different disciplinary lens, are being updated to reflect the perspectives, experiences, and achievements of BIPOC. These changes must then be implemented across sections of seminars taught across all eight CUNY campuses in our consortium, by professors from widely varying disciplinary backgrounds and teaching styles.

The upper-division seminars are specifically designed to be broad and integrated, offering students interdisciplinary content that might not be available in traditional

campus departments. Our next speaker, a professor who teaches several different classes on Medical Ethics, will offer strategies for centering race and racism in topics often considered solely from a philosophical perspective. She will explore how we can change our discussions, for example, of informed consent; of truth-telling in medicine; or about patients' decisional capacity by including an analysis of the history of racism in healthcare settings and its debilitating contemporary legacy in every arena.

The final speaker will discuss assessment and next steps. Staff and student climate surveys will be distributed in early 2021, with the intent to better understand all college employees' experiences regarding race. The DEI consultant would help analyze and draw conclusions from this data. Questions related to curriculum changes will also be implemented in regularly used annual assessments of students. With related but often siloed initiatives among staff, faculty, and students co-occurring in this arena, we propose working groups be established based on shared interest in a task, with all stakeholders represented, and the voices of people of color heard and amplified.

Essential questions will be discussed: How can we address these disparities without undermining the institution? How will change be sustainable and not superficial? With a frank discussion of our experiences in this unfamiliar and fraught territory, we believe both participants and panelists will benefit greatly from the exchange of ideas.

# APPENDIX C

## PEER TO PEER RECRUITING PROJECT

### BACKGROUND

In August 2020, the student-led Macaulay Diversity Initiative approached the college with an idea. They wanted to “make more Black and Latinx high school students aware of Macaulay Honors College,” and proposed an outreach program. At the same time, the External Relations team was exploring ways to work more efficiently, reach a greater number of prospective students through digital technology, and diversify the college’s enrolled students. Dean Pearl established a partnership between students and ER. Together, we kicked off a novel project that paired current Macaulay students with high school guidance staff.

### OBJECTIVES

External Relations recognized the potential of such a program, and sought to explore the following features.

**UNDERSTAND** the benefits and risks of enlisting current students as untrained representatives.

**INCREASE** our reach and reputation among high school students.

**STRENGTHEN** our bond with high school counselors.

**DIVERSIFY** Macaulay applicants.

### PROCESS

**LAUNCH:** Over 5,000 New York State high school counselors received [email invitations](#) to participate.

**RECRUIT:** External Relations and the Diversity Initiative recruited current Macaulay students through email announcements and direct outreach.

**CONNECT:** Students were paired with counselors and introduced via email. They worked independently to schedule virtual events for high school students. Macaulay provided basic material and minimal support.

**FOLLOW UP:** A survey instrument collected [feedback](#) from all participants. Macaulay students received community service hours for participation.

## ESTIMATED PARTICIPANTS

15	365+	25	8+	8
Macaulay Students	High School Students	Counselors	Meetings or Events	New High Schools

## OUTCOMES

Overall, the program had a positive impact with some limitations. Macaulay expanded its network of high schools slightly, and counselors were enthusiastic and grateful for the opportunity to make authentic connections for their students. Macaulay students were attracted by the chance to “give back,” and felt comfortable representing the college.

Together, the participants gave the program an average rating of 4.7 out of 5 stars and offered strong suggestions for improvement, including moving the timing to earlier in the admissions cycle, and making it more widely available. They overwhelmingly reported that the program met its objective of connecting students of color.

This program doesn't provide Macaulay with direct access to high school students, so we're unable to survey their intent to apply, collect feedback about the presentations they attended or understand their sentiment toward Macaulay.

Although the program required significant staff oversight and input, the framework and communication pieces are now in place for future iterations.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

With such high interest, it would be a lost opportunity not to continue this program, with some modifications. Peer to peer outreach could be very impactful for accepted students during the spring yield period.

## ADDITIONAL INFO

This project was piloted by:

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On 10/29/20 the counselor invitation went to 5,342 recipients on Macaulay's list of counselors in New York State. 3034 opened and 130 clicked. Subject line was "Empowering BIPOC Honors Students." Interestingly, the most-clicked link led to more information about the Macaulay Diversity Initiative. <https://mailchi.mp/macaulay.cuny.edu/empowering-bipoc-honors-students>

## **SURVEY**

The survey was created in SurveyMonkey and can be seen here:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/PGYCP8B>

## **HIGH SCHOOLS**

8 new connections were generated with these high schools and counselors: Lackawanna High School, Green Meadow Waldorf School, Al Mamoor School, Civic Leadership Academy, Khalil Gibran International Academy, Mount St. Ursula, Repertory Company High School for Theatre Arts, NYC Mission Society Learning at Emma Lazarus High School for English Language Scholars

We reinforced 13 pre-existing connections with the high schools: Martin Van Buren High School, Early College Program and CUNY Explorers, Manhattan Hunter Science High, International High School at Prospect Heights, Frank Sinatra School of the Arts, Westbury High School, High School for Law Enforcement and Public Safety, Unity Center for Urban Technologies, Academy of Finance and Enterprise, Francis Lewis High School, Stuyvesant High School Black Students League, NYU College Advising Corps El Puente Academy for Peace and Justice.