

Statement of Commitment to Diversity and Inclusion

My commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, as demonstrated by my past experiences, remain at the top of my priorities as an educator. As a woman in the arts, I have seen firsthand how the environment can be unwelcoming, unfair and inequitable because of not fitting into a particular gender schema. I am committed to making a difference in ensuring that everyone is given opportunities to excel in their scholarly activities.

At Marymount Manhattan and Cap 21, I am an Adjunct Professor of Dance and Musical Theatre. I have taken an active role to promote diversity in the classroom. One effective way I found is to encourage students to engage in peer discussion. Students learn from each other and gain an appreciation for the diversity they bring to the table. As an instructor, my role is to create and manage an inclusive classroom so that every student feels comfortable to participate in discussion and exercises. To achieve this goal, I usually chose teaching material that interests as many students as possible. I believe that a diverse and cooperative environment in higher education can prepare students to become better professionals. It is my hope that students with diverse backgrounds can find their voices in class, and my gender background allows me the sensitivity I need to relate to them. Thus everyone contributes to discussion, which in turn boosts self-confidence. I believe I can contribute to my students' personal growth and motivate them to achieve their educational goals. I create a safe space in my classroom where the students have their own voice. In addition, I make it a point to cover the history of each dance style especially Tap Dance, because it is rooted in the African American culture. I always expose my students to artists of every culture and ethnicity as part of their learning process. I make sure they are familiar with visionaries such as Gregory Hines, Baayork Lee, Audra McDonald, The Nicholas Brothers, Norm Lewis, and so on.

As an educator, I would propose the following activities in pursuit of a more diverse academic body:

- I would embrace and welcome Latino, African American, gay, and women students into the department with open arms. And strive to obtain more students of diversity for our program.
- I would push to create a widespread support structure and community for all minority students to discuss their needs, struggles and propose plans for improvements and solutions.

- I would provide and educate all faculty and students with important information and organizations such as Broadway Advocacy Coalition, Broadway for Racial Justice, The Broadway Women's Alliance and Black Women on Broadway.

If students and faculty are committed to and engaged in the learning environment and promote the ideals for a diverse workplace, my philosophy is that all students should be given equal opportunity. I will uphold these ideals and lead by example through outreach, promoting, and leading in programs that advance minority representation.