

Alfred University alumna Shakima Clency to return to AU as inaugural Diversity Fellow

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Alfred University's Institute for Cultural Unity has announced the appointment of alumna Shakima (McCants) Clency as its inaugural Diversity Fellow, to begin August 2017. The new post-doctoral fellowship position was created as part of a restructured Center for Student Involvement, replacing the previous Coordinator of Diversity Programs position.

Clency's duties will include mentoring student leaders within the Institute, teaching a course as part of the University's new social justice studies minor, and consulting with Residence Life staff on the development of the unity house a living-learning community in the new Moskowitz Hall.

The Institute is a coalition of ten student-run cultural organizations: Poder Latino, Caribbean Student Association, Spectrum (LGBTQ+), Students Advocating of Gender Equality, Newman Club (Catholic), African Student Association, Pangaea (World Cultures), Asians in America, Umoja (Black Student Union), and Drawn to Diversity (social justice + art).

Clency will also serve as an integral part of the Bias Response Team and the President's Committee on Diversity, both with a charge to improve the quality of services and climate for underrepresented students.

Clency returns to Alfred from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, where she is a doctoral candidate in the University's Educational Leadership and Cultural Foundations program. The intention of Alfred's doctoral fellowship is to attract candidates interested in finishing up their dissertation within the Alfred community.

"This fellowship provides a unique opportunity for me to blend my academic interests and professional goals to enhance the student experience at AU," Clency says. "As a doctoral student in the Educational Leadership and Cultural Foundations P.h.D program at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro, I am eager to work collaboratively with others at AU to promote and advance social justice initiatives. Additionally, I am excited to introduce my family to the Alfred community."

Clency currently serves as the Senior Associate Director of UNCG's New Student Transitions & First Year Experience and also has experience as the Associate Director of Learning Communities. Clency received her M.S. in College Student Personnel Administration from Canisius College and received her B.S. in Business Administration / Marketing from Alfred University in 2001. Clency was heavily involved at Alfred University, serving as president of multiple clubs including Shades of Ebony, a support group for women of color.

"Shakima's familiarity with Alfred created an instant connection with our search committee," says Elvira Rodriguez, AU rising senior and student diversity director. "During her interview it was apparent how much she cared about strengthening Alfred."

Rodriguez was one of ten members on a rare student-only search committee.

"It really demonstrated a level of trust for Alfred University to empower us with structuring this position, interviewing candidates, and making the final decision," Rodriguez adds. "We are excited to work with Shakima to prove we made the perfect choice."