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College of Education and Human Development

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Three members of CEHD community shine in 2018 excellence in diversity awards

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KALAMAZOO, Mich.—Western Michigan University’s Excellence in Diversity Awards Selection Committee is honoring three individuals and an organization associated with the College of Education and Human Development (CEHD): Dr. Donna Talbot, Marcy L. Peake, and Dawnielle Simmons and the Student Assembly for Racial Equity and Cultural Inclusion (SAREC).

TALBOT

Dr. Donna Talbot

Dr. Talbot, Chair of the Educational Leadership, Research and Technology department and Professor of Educational Leadership, Research and Technology in Higher Education, is the recipient of the Excellence in Diversity Award. Talbot has always been committed to diversity and inclusion and with her elevation to leadership positions at WMU, her positive impact has expanded. Recently, she has refocused her department’s goals and mission on diversity and inclusion, supported the hiring of a more diverse faculty, aided the development of retention and
support initiatives for international students, created new graduate programs focused on global issues, and started a Ph.D. program in the Dominican Republic. She has co-facilitated training for “Everyone Counts Learning Communities,” and served on several committees dedicated to bringing and including diverse individuals to the WMU community. Her scholarship covers topics including race, gender, multiculturalism, Asian American students, multicultural competencies, LGBT issues, international populations, intersectionality and identity development.

Marcy L. Peake, Director of Diversity and Community Outreach Initiatives for CEHD and faculty member in the Department of Family and Consumer Sciences, is the recipient of the Trailblazer for Diversity Award. Peake’s career has focused on youth development and public education and her last six years have been spent at WMU. She coordinates CEHD’s diversity and community outreach initiatives and has helped the Diversity and Inclusion Committee revise its bylaws, has revamped the college’s diversity and inclusion plan, and is pursuing initiatives aimed at increasing diversity. Peake is a former Kalamazoo Public School Board of Education Trustee; author of the book "Please Understand;" and a State of Michigan Licensed Professional Counselor, National Certified Counselor and Certified Family Life Educator. She bridges her
past work in youth development with her current work at WMU through the Future Educators program which recruits students from underrepresented, socioeconomically disadvantaged, and educationally at-risk families in Kalamazoo to become teachers for Kalamazoo Public Schools. She has helped coordinate the past three years of the CEHD Multicultural Meet and Greet, and serves as the faculty advisor for the CEHD Funding the Advancement of Minorities in Education (FAME) scholars and to the Student Assembly for Racial Equity & Cultural Inclusion. Peake is committed to keeping herself educated on issues of equity and to sharing her knowledge with colleagues.

**SIMMONS**

Dawnielle Simmons, and Student Assembly for Racial Equity and Cultural Inclusion (SAREC) are the recipients of the Rising Star in Diversity Award. Simmons is a doctoral student in the Counselor Education and Counseling Psychology program and she serves as a doctoral student representative for the CEHD Inclusion and Diversity Committee (IDC). She works for racial inclusion and diversity for the WMU campus, students of colors and broadening awareness for non-marginalized students. The student representatives of the IDC founded SAREC just over a year ago to address racial inequity, encourage anti-racism initiatives and training, and foster a community of culturally competent students, faculty and staff in the College of Education and Human Development. The organization holds race talk panels around campus to share narratives on race. Simmons is working to make the panels a regular part of First Year Experience classrooms so that the program is sustainable after she completes her doctorate degree. SAREC also runs The Critical Race Incident Report System which gives individuals another source on
campus for making race incident reports and helps ensure these incidents are taken seriously and handled properly.

The University’s Excellence in Diversity Awards Selection Committee sought nominations of groups or individuals of employees, students or WMU community members who exemplify the importance of diversity and inclusion. The selected recipients will be recognized at the 2018 Spring Convocation Recognition of Discovery, Diversity, and Global Engagement on Friday, February 23, 2018. Faculty, staff, students, and community members are invited to attend and congratulate the awardees.

Visit the Excellence in Diversity Awards webpage for more information, including past recipients.