

Commemorating Disability History & Awareness Month

Dear Hornet Community,

During October, we celebrate **Disability History and Awareness Month**, and National Disability Employment Awareness Month. Throughout the month, and every day, we support disabled individuals' efforts to acquire civil liberties, human rights, and gainful academic and employment opportunities based on their goals, experiences, and aspirations. We recognize that disabled individuals often are excluded from decisions that should be foundational to providing equal access to the same resources and opportunities available to people who are not disabled.

At Sac State, we believe our communities with disabilities should shape inclusion and belonging. To support that, we established the **Office for Disability Justice** within the Division of Inclusive Excellence, through the leadership of Jennifer Murchison, our new executive director for Universal Access and Inclusion. The Office for Disability Justice will systematically and strategically address issues of inaccessibility, ableism, and exclusion, educating our community on ways we can improve our approach and services to meet the needs of our diverse and broad disabled communities.

As we acknowledge the advocacy and activism of these communities, we must work to change statistics that perpetuate and maintain ableist ideologies and practices. Please continue to utilize campus services for students, staff, and faculty with disabilities, such as **Services for Students with Disabilities (SSWD)**. Employees who may need assistance in determining reasonable workplace accommodations can connect with Scott Oleinik in the Benefits Office.

We also encourage you to check out resources such as the [Workforce Recruitment Program](#), a federal initiative designed to help disabled applicants with job placements, and [Vocational Rehabilitation](#), run by the California Department of Rehabilitation, to help disabled individuals find jobs and provide them with tools and resources to acquire job skills and gainful employment. Also, check out the [Job Accommodation Network](#). This resource supports employees and employers to determine essential job requirements, as well as reasonable and appropriate workplace accommodations.

Mary Lee Vance, director of SSWD, and Jennifer Murchison will host two sessions in Riverview Hall's Elderberry Room:

- § 4-5 p.m. Monday, Oct. 17: "Social and Disability Justice." This session connects Sac State's [Antiracism and Inclusive Campus Plan \(AICP\)](#) to writings by noted disability activist Haben Girma, and explores how social justice benefits all people.
- § 11 a.m.-noon Monday, Oct. 31: "Disability Rights are Civil Rights." This session features a video lecture by Paul Grossman, who has helped shape U.S. civil rights legislation.

Both presentations will be accessible and available in person and via zoom.

We are crafting specific goals on anti-ableism and disability justice to be incorporated into the AICP as we continue our work to advance it. We are working with the University Disability Advocacy Committee, in consultation with the [Deaf Crip Mad Faculty and Staff Association](#) and [Deaf Studies](#), to continue breaking down these barriers and designing more inclusive spaces and programs.



In partnership,

**Dr. Mia Settles-Tidwell,
VP for Inclusive Excellence and University Diversity Officer**

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