

**Subject:** [TEST] NSOE's DEI Newsletter!

**Date:** Monday, February 28, 2022 at 10:27:00 Eastern Standard Time

**From:** Nicki Cagle

**To:** Nicholas Fairbairn

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## DIVERSITY · EQUITY · INCLUSION

*NICHOLAS SCHOOL OF THE ENVIRONMENT · DUKE UNIVERSITY*



### From the Associate Dean of DEI

Dear students, please join me for a community check-in tomorrow March 1st from 2pm-3pm in the Grainger Hall Reading Room (2nd Floor). I will be holding space for sharing, listening and processing. From the challenges of graduate school to painful national and international news, we can get through tough times together.

Below, please find your monthly Nicholas School of the Environment's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion newsletter!

If you would like to add announcements or information to future NSOE DEI newsletters, please email me at [nicolette.cagle@duke.edu](mailto:nicolette.cagle@duke.edu).



Dr. Nicki Cagle,  
NSOE Associate  
Dean of DEI

If you have any feedback about DEI initiatives or issues in the Nicholas School that you'd prefer to leave anonymously, please use this [DEI at NSOE feedback form](#).

## COMMUNICATE

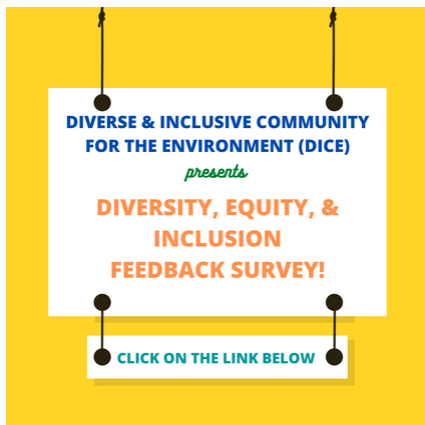
### Mental Health Support: Wellness & Prayer Rooms

- [This map](#) provides locations of meditation and wellness rooms across the Durham campus, including in Grainger Hall (4111).
- Looking for a place to meditate or relax? Complete with massage chairs, aromatherapy and Baoding balls, DuWell's "Oasis West" provides a quiet space to find relief. Oasis West is located in Room 129 on the first floor of the Student Wellness Center. The Oasis is open from 9am-4:30pm M-F.
- At the Duke Marine Lab, there is a Wellness Space in the Library that is dedicated to personal wellness such as meditation, prayer and quiet reflection.
- Dedicated lactation rooms can be found via [maps.duke.edu](https://maps.duke.edu) by clicking on the *Lactation Room* map layer.
- Find a complete list of resources for student, staff and faculty on our [support page](#).



### Funding for Food

Any student experiencing food insecurity can request temporary funds for food through the **Feed Every Devil (FED)** program. FED can be used by any student that is currently enrolled at Duke if they are experiencing food insecurity. FED can be used even if the student does not have a meal plan. Learn more at [fed.oit.duke.edu](https://fed.oit.duke.edu).



## DICE Rolls Out DEI Survey

Last Thursday, the Diverse & Inclusive Community for the Environment (DICE) released its [DEI Feedback Survey](#), which aims to capture specific concerns and feedback on diversity and inclusion in our community. The survey will inform implementation of DICE initiatives that advance DEI at the Nicholas School. Keeping student privacy in mind, any information that you choose to provide is optional. The form is live until this **Friday, March 4th**. Reach out to DICE at [dice-request@nicholas.duke.edu](mailto:dice-request@nicholas.duke.edu) if you have any questions or concerns.

[Take the Survey](#)

## Wellness Resources for Staff

Staff, this one's for you. We put together a list of all the resources available across big Duke to support you with stress management, maternity, disability, mental health and other dimensions of your wellness. Access the Staff Resource List [here](#). Can't find what you're looking for? Please let me know.

## "Pulse Check" Survey Results

Last Fall, PhD and MEM students Sashoy Milton, Madeline Bowers, Annabelle White, Lane Scher, and Nicholas Fairbairn disseminated the "pulse-check" survey to get a sense of students' experiences of belonging, inclusion and cultural awareness at the Nic School. Below I share some preliminary results. Of the students who took the survey...

- Most students do not feel that NSOE is living into its stated diversity values.
- Only 30% of Asian or Asian-American students agreed that their perspective and ideas matter at the Nic School, even if/when [they]

- disagree with prevailing opinions.
- Only **36%** of underrepresented minority (URM) students agreed that my professors are cognizant of, and sensitive towards, various cultural identities.
  - **83.3%** of PhD students agreed or strongly agreed that they consider PhDs to be part of the Nic School community.
  - More than **66%** of respondents felt that their pronouns were respected in the Nic School community.
  - **Most** students reported feeling connected to their peers from different countries.
  - More than **60%** of respondents in our community of all racial identities and sexual orientations felt like they were a part of the Nicholas School community.

## CELEBRATE

### DEI Spotlight: Sandunie Liyanagamage

This month, you nominated Sandunie Liyanagamage for the DEI spotlight! Born in Sri Lanka and raised in Sri Lanka and Abu Dhabi, Sandunie is a 1st year MEM candidate studying Business & Environment. Sandunie is helping foster a more inclusive community through her work with DICE, where she serves as a board member, and through Oceans@Duke. Earlier this year, Sandunie and I collaborated on a D&I training with O@D that "has led to discussions and changes around the way weekly meetings are conducted and ensuring a more inclusive space for all cabinet members to provide input." Sandunie also serves on the Student Advisory Committee to the AD of DEI.

When asked about her contributions, Sandunie emphasizes the collaborative nature of this kind of work and the need to prioritize our mental health.



*"The more I began to see the conversations around racial equity the past few years, the more open I was to explore the importance of equity and inclusion in my own life. It's a constant battle to decide when to get involved in a DEI initiative that matters to you and when to step back in the interest of protecting your own mental health. Bringing attention to behaviors that marginalize students is mentally draining and can lead to frustration and fatigue. Therefore, I think it's necessary that the ongoing DEI work at the Nicholas School ensures that a student does not have to struggle with this notion someday."*

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We asked Sandunie if she might share some of the thought leaders that have inspired her most in this space. Here's what she told us:

*"The first thing that came to mind are my family and friends - from high school, college, cities I've lived in, and now the Nicholas School. They provide a space where we can have healthy discussions around topics that we may not feel comfortable speaking about in a larger setting. This trust results in a sense of comfort when I think of acting for change in any form, knowing that these friends will provide the support that I need. It also allows me to adopt different perspectives that I may not have had before, and I'm always left feeling inspired after conversations with friends who are doing important work in this space."*

**Thank you Sandunie for sharing your story and helping us live into our values!**

### **Nominate a Colleague for the DEI Spotlight**

Each month, I invite you to nominate your colleague(s) for helping foster a kind and inclusive environment. By celebrating Nic School students, faculty and staff each month for these efforts, we can foster a culture of recognition and inspire each other to do better. With your help we can amplify brave actors in the community and spotlight them right here, in this newsletter.

[Nominate a Colleague!](#)

**From the Dean: Nominations Open for the *Lynn Maguire Award***

The Nicholas School of the Environment created the **Lynn Maguire Award for Excellence in Teaching and Mentoring of Professional Students in the Nicholas School of the Environment** to celebrate and honor exemplary teaching, mentoring, and advising that lies at the core of the school. We accept nominations from students currently enrolled in the MEM or MF programs, and can be from individuals or groups. Nominations should be in the form of a single page letter (pdf) sent to the Senior Associate Dean for Academics (**Lori Bennear, [lori.bennear@duke.edu](mailto:lori.bennear@duke.edu)**). Nominations are **due by April 1, 2022**. Nominating letters should speak directly to the four award criteria below. In addition to nomination letters, the Senior Associate Dean for Academics will also consider teaching evaluations. Announcement of the award will be at graduation.

Award criteria:

- Excels as a teacher in and out of the classroom;
- Demonstrates a commitment to effectively mentor and advise students during their time at the Nicholas School;
- Commits to supporting and advancing students' long-term professional development by connecting students to resources, professional opportunities, and local/national/international networks;
- Creates a supportive environment by fostering mutual respect and demonstrating sincere and active interest in the well-being of students.

## EDUCATE

### From the Dean: Anti-Racism Trainings & Survey

Thank you to all who completed our mandatory Anti-Racism Training held in January. As promised, please find the links to the recordings and resources for each session [here](#).

We invite you to share your feedback on your experience. The [survey](#) will take 5-10 minutes of your time. You do not need to include your name, and comments will remain anonymous. You can also enter yourself in the raffle for Nic School swag by completing the survey by **today Monday, February 28**. Winners will be contacted no later than Friday, March 4.



Take the Survey!

## Faculty: Decolonizing the Classroom

Dear faculty, I share your commitment to decolonize the classroom and create more culturally inclusive spaces for learning (and unlearning). I understand you may have some doubts or frustrations along the way. That's why I want to share [this open letter](#) with you from the National Center for Faculty Development & Diversity. The 'mentors' detail why this deep work deserves priority and requires participation from all faculty, not just DEI folks. You'll also learn what it means to “decolonize your syllabi.”

## More Resources

- Interested in learning about intersectionality in the context of social and behavioral sciences? Check out these [reading recs](#) from the **Intersectionality Training Institute**.
- Find inclusive leadership workshops and resources from the **Ivy+ Faculty Advancement Network (FAN)** [here](#), updated regularly.

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*"Belonging is a practice that requires us to be vulnerable, get uncomfortable, and learn how to be present without sacrificing who we are."*

- Brené Brown

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NSOE's DEI Resources

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