

The Student Affairs Diversity Council (SADC) strives to cultivate an environment that embraces and promotes the broad scope of diversity within the division.

## The five things I've learned (and am still trying to figure out)

By Neelam Chand, marketing and communications director,  
Office for Equity and Diversity

As I write this, I struggle to identify who my audience is, or should be. Is this for diverse communities? Marketers across campus? Students who are living and breathing social justice work? In situations like these, I can't help but to think about the dichotomy of my work as a diversity marketing and communications director. On the one hand, in order to craft concise messages about our campus, my job is to distill experiences and perspectives into one-line slogans, stock photos, or 11"x 17" posters. On the other hand, a social justice perspective urges me to deconstruct these very ideas and address all their complexities.

Straddling both worlds can be difficult depending on the audience. To some, I may be perceived as too radical or harsh. To others, especially in the world of social justice, I can be seen as not doing enough or as a "sellout." As I continue to navigate these spaces, I've realized that there is no single right way to bridge the gap. And after five years of trial and error, and several mistakes along the way, I'd like to share five things that I've learned in the process.

### 1. Tokenism has become the go-to.

Though well intended, it's common to resort to tokenistic practices, especially when it comes to racial diversity. Once in a while, you'll see an ad with that token person of color strategically placed in a photo because someone realized that the ad was seemingly "too white." And the question that keeps coming up is, "How else would folks outside our campus know we care about diversity?" Or, "How do we recruit diverse students without representing them in our brochures?" However, I've learned that the real question to ask is, "What are the tangible ways we foster diversity on our campus?" This question helps me to facilitate a conversation on how to establish concrete ways of valuing diversity - beyond a photograph.



### 2. Language, people, culture and dynamics are continually evolving.

A lot of people are worried about using incorrect terminology to identify various groups. I, myself, have used problematic jargon in social justice circles and have been called out for it. In order for me to craft messages that resonate with different identities, it is essential that I understand how cultures, language and people are ever-changing. Whether it be by reading blogs, academic publications, and Google or by engaging with students and colleagues, I keep myself learning as much as I can.

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### 3. There's a discrepancy between our perception and reality.

As marketers, it's a part of our job to highlight all the positive things happening at our university. But sometimes the perception of how well we are doing with our diversity efforts doesn't necessarily reflect the experiences of the diverse communities on our campus. I've seen marketing teams with good intentions who get caught up in self-promotion or only address the surface of the problem. I've learned that as we need to continually evolve with our language, etc. we should also constantly be self-assessing the work we do and adjusting according to the feedback we receive. If not, we run the risk of missing the mark, not doing enough, or actually causing more damage.

### 4. Navigating politics sucks, but you've got to pick your battles.

It's a balancing act. When it comes to crafting general

messages for our entire campus, I've got to determine how I'm going to participate. If I push too hard against the grain, I may lose my seat at the table. But if I remain silent while diverse voices are being left out, then I'm part of the problem. What I tend to do is calculate what projects impact institutional change and which ones seem to scratch the surface. The ones that move the needle on our culture and campus climate are the ones worth fighting for. Sometimes a more focused and measured response is where I'm most helpful.

### 5. Social justice work is not perfect and hardly ever done.

Because social justice work is complex and multifaceted, there's never a point where I feel like I've "arrived" or that my work is complete. And there will be plenty of times when I will misstep and be called out by my peers (maybe even for something in this article!). In all the years I've worked in my position, my biggest takeaway is that I must have the ability to learn from my mistakes and continue to grow. This is the nature of the job.

## Recently On NPR



### [Why Is It Still OK To 'Trash' Poor White People?](#)

"White trash" could be called the Swiss army knife of insults. It's deft in its ability to demean multiple groups at once: white people and people of color, poor people and people who "act" like poor people, rural folks and religious folks, and anyone without a college degree.

So why does "white trash" still get thrown around without much pushback? [Listen Online>>](#)



### [When Calling The Po-Po Is A No-No](#)

Michelle Saahene says she realized there was work to be done when she was talking to a group of young white women who had been in Starbucks with her during the arrest. They were marveling at how calm the two men were. "I would have flipped out!" one exclaimed.

"I guess it was my opportunity to have a mini race relations education with them," Saahene chuckled. "I said you would have been able to flip out because you're white! They looked at me and they were like 'you know what, you are absolutely right.'" [Listen Online>>](#)

# Upcoming Training Modules

Are you interested in learning about issues around diversity? Attend our training modules to learn more about issues of diversity in a safe environment, which will be essential to better serve our ever changing student population. Please note, the modules must be taken sequentially.

Date	Module	Location	Time
Mon., Oct. 8	Module 1 - Exploring Self & Others	Union Parlor A	9-11am
Wed., Oct. 10	Module 2 - Exploring Power, Bias, & Values	Union Den	9-11am
Fri., Oct. 12	Module 3 - Putting it all Together: Dialoging About Social Justice	Union Den	9-11am

To register for these upcoming modules, please visit: <http://sadc.utah.edu/events/training.php>.

## TED Talks



### [Neurodiversity – the key that unlocked my world](#)

What do you think about, when you hear the word, “autism”? No diagnostic manual can truly explain the multifaceted experience of autism. It’s a neurological difference with a vast spectrum of representation within its population. It can come with remarkable gifts and skills as well as devastating traits. Autism does not necessarily equal disability and thankfully today, we have a word, that challenges this negative terminology. Neurodiversity. In her talk, Elisabeth communicates how it is to be autistic yet lead an independent and successful everyday life.



### [What it's like to be a transgender dad](#)

LB Hannahs candidly shares the experience of parenting as a genderqueer individual -- and what it can teach us about authenticity and advocacy. "Authenticity doesn't mean 'comfortable.' It means managing and negotiating the discomfort of everyday life," Hannahs says.

**TED**  
Ideas worth spreading



# Upcoming Events

**Sept 4 @ 1-4pm**

**Gender and Sexuality Workshop**

Red Butte Room, Annex Building [[more info](#)]

**Sept 6 @ 4:30-7:30pm**

**Get Out: Film Screening & Panel Discussion**

SW Room 155-A [[more info](#)]

**Sept 10 @ 12-1:30pm**

**American Dream Dialogue Series: What is happening to the American Dream?**

Gardner Commons—Hinckley Caucus Rm [[more info](#)]

**Sept 12 @ 6-8pm**

**How to Love Trans and Femmes While We're Alive**

SW Room 155-B [[more info](#)]

**Sept 16-Dec 31**

**Utah Women in Medicine Exhibit**

Eccles Health Sciences Library [[more info](#)]



**Oct 3 @ 11am-12pm**

**Lean In: Speaking Truth to Power**

380 SSB [[more info](#)]

## Upcoming Seminar

**Multicultural Orientation Framework: Leveraging Cultural Processes to Enhance Interactions**



Karen Tao, Ph.D.  
Assistant Professor,  
Educational Psychology

Date: Wednesday, September 26, 2018

Time: 12-1:30pm

Location: Pano East, Union

[[more information](#)]



**Every Friday @ 3-5pm**

**Fabulous Fridays, LGBT Resource Center Room 409**

**Find More Events:**

- <http://diversity.utah.edu/events/>
- <https://www.utah.edu/events/>



Debra Daniels (Co-chair), Women's Resource Center  
Kari Ellingson (Co-chair), Student Development  
michael bard, Registrar's Office  
Gabriella Blanchard, LGBT Resource Center  
Ella Butler, Career Services  
Jenna Matsumura, Women's Enrollment Initiative  
Branden Dalley, Union Administration  
Tim Davis, Housing & Residential Education  
Jenni Schriener, Housing & Residential Education  
Kyle Ethelbah, TRIO Programs  
Ryan Kirchner, Campus Recreation Services  
Darrah Jones, Center for Student Wellness

Roberto Martinez, Counseling Center  
Chuck Masoka, Assessment, Evaluation, & Research  
Paul Morgan, Veteran Support Center  
Belinda Otukolo Saltiban, Office of Inclusion Excellence  
BobbiJo Kanter, Bennion Community Service Center  
Madalena McNeil, Office of Admissions  
Matthew Plooster, Scholarships & Financial Aid  
Neelam Chand, Office of Equity & Diversity  
Nomani Satuala, Center for New Student & Family Programs  
Jess Turuc, Fraternity & Sorority Life  
Ulysses Tongaonevai, Office of the Dean of Students  
Olivia Harker, Student Development (Committee Support)