

# ODEI NEWSLETTER

*March 2024*

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## THE OFFICE OF DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION MESSAGE

*Written by Coordinator of Adams/Wyche Multicultural  
Center at the Lincoln School*

As we welcome March, we want to acknowledge the month's theme, Women's History Month. This newsletter will share interesting facts, upcoming events, and highlights on current students, alums, faculty, staff, and administrators. We challenge you to attend at least one of our events and meet some new people. Who knows, you might find a new friend. Keep an eye out for email announcements about additional programs. Spring break is near. Keep pushing! Remember, if it were easy, everyone would do it.

## DID YOU KNOW ?



Dr. Catherine R. Gira was FSU's 13th president. The focus of her administration was growth in infrastructure, reputation, and diversity despite weathering national economic downturns. Her tenure saw the completion of the Woodward D. Pealer Performing Arts Center (begun in a previous administration), the construction of the Compton Science Center and Edgewood Commons, and the renovation of Gunter Hall, as well as groundwork laid for the Center for Communications and Information Technology, a building named in her honor in 2015. National or international accreditation was achieved the College of Business and the College of Education as well as several individual programs. Additionally, undergraduate and graduate academic programs expanded. Community service initiatives that she nurtured received national recognition and Fund-raising quadrupled.

**Dr. Catherine Russell Gira**  
President Emerita, 1991-2006

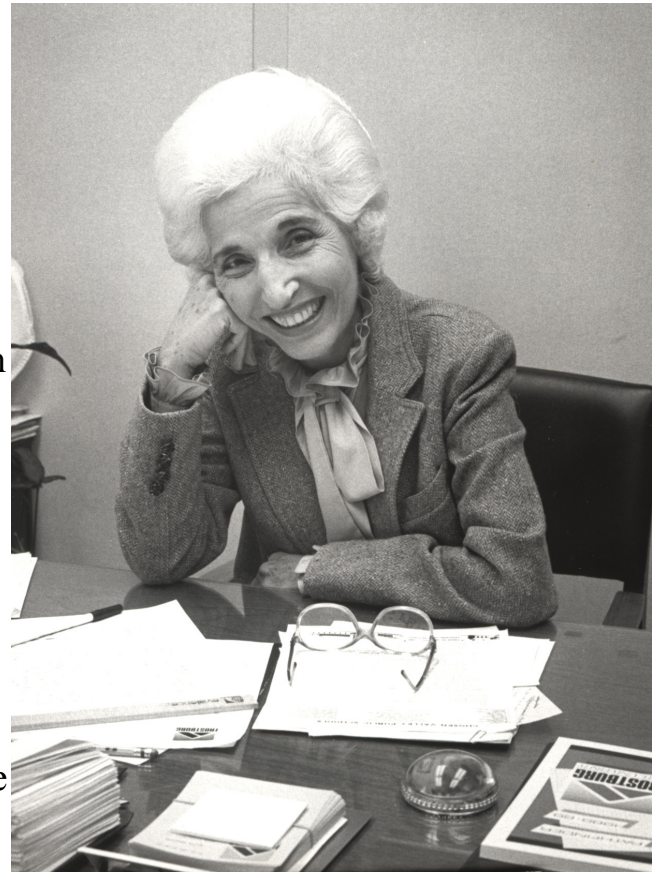
The diversity of the student body grew as well, with minority enrollment rising from 6 percent in 1991 to nearly 20 percent in 2006, a positive trend that has continued and positioned FSU among the most diverse campuses in the University System of Maryland. She was Frostburg's second female president, but when she was hired to lead FSU, she was the only female president in the USM. Dr. Gira was inducted into the Maryland Women's Hall of Fame in 1997. Born in Fayette City, Pa., she earned her bachelor's degree from California State University of Pennsylvania, a master's degree from Johns Hopkins University, and her doctorate from American University.

She began her career as a high school English teacher, later joining the English faculty at the University of Baltimore, ultimately rising to the position of Provost. Her particular academic specialty was the study of the works of William Shakespeare. On the occasion of her retirement, she established the Catherine R. Gira Campus to Community Fund through the FSU Foundation, which supports student experiences that embrace topics of leadership, alum connections, community service, internships, and study abroad.

-Frostburg State University

## DID YOU KNOW ?

Dr. Alice R. Manicur is remembered for many things, including an exceptional professional career in higher education. She is best remembered, however—and celebrated—as a candle, spreading light to thousands of students who benefited from her leadership for nearly five decades and as a mirror, whose undeniable legacy continues to shine today. “The Dean”, as she was affectionately known by students during much of her career at Frostburg State University, was born in McDowell County, West Virginia, one of six children in the Manicur family. A coal miner’s daughter, Alice developed a lifelong respect for learning. To her immigrant father and her first-generation Italian mother, education was the finest opportunity in this country, and they recognized it as the way to improve the lives of their children. Dr. Manicur’s humble background is both a tribute to her indelible belief in the power of human persistence and the enduring benefits which are derived from those who provide consistent encouragement and support. In Alice’s case, she internalized the value of supporting others in the same way she had been supported during her formative years. The end result is that she made an enormous and lasting impact on the lives of generations of students.



**Dean Alice Manicur**  
**Honorary Alumna**  
**FSU Staff - 1960-2007**

Alice Manicur was an accomplished professional, a selfless individual and a tireless advocate of the product of education—students. She was also a spirited example of the extraordinary accomplishments performed by women. Dr. Manicur was the first female president of the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA); additional honors would follow this historic recognition, including NASPA’s naming of the “Alice Manicur Symposium for Women” and its “Pillar of the Profession” award. Closer to home, Frostburg State University named its largest assembly hall, the “Alice R. Manicur Assembly Hall” and in 2012, she was inducted into the Maryland Women’s Hall of Fame. None of these honors were sought by Dr. Manicur; in fact, she bristled at the idea of public recognition, favoring an understated, yet powerfully effective, demeanor. Deliberate, decisive and private, Alice Manicur took her work seriously, but never herself. She was a classic “hands-on” leader who spent as much time at campus events, student meetings and community functions in support of students as she did tending to the administrative details of her position.

**To read more click link:** <https://www.frostburg.edu/foundation/Wall-of-Honor/dean-alice-manicur.php>

-Frostburg State University



## Student Highlight

## Hailey Unger



My name is Hailey Unger, and I am a Junior Psychology major with an emphasis on Child and Family Counseling. My minors are Women's Studies and I/O Psychology. After college, I plan to go to Graduate school. I am still deciding whether to stay on the Psychology path or move on to Student Affairs. I came to Frostburg set on Psychology, and over time, as I became more involved, I became more interested in Student Affairs. I am involved with SGA, EngageFSU, a ULA in the Psychology Department, and the TMA Civic Fellow at Frostburg.

On campus, I enjoy attending teaching kitchens, late nights, going to other organizations' events, the Appalachian Festival, studying at the library, and going to the planetarium when available. I love volunteering opportunities, for instance, being a part of the Food Recovery Network and the MLK Day events. The Organization that impacted me most was the no longer available ECHOSTARS. It taught me everything from time management, leadership, social skills, and handling severe events and topics within our community. ECHOSTARS is now EngageFSU, and I still get to volunteer and help mentor the younger students and show them what it is like to volunteer in the Frostburg/ Cumberland area.

I bring communication and organization strengths to my leadership as Student Body Vice President. In my role, I need to ensure that everyone has what they need and that I support them. It is also accomplished by setting up organizational systems where they can find what they need. A challenge I bring to my leadership as Student Body Vice President is energy use. By that, I struggle with keeping up the energy when I do not have the energy either. It can be challenging to remain that way after a long day. My biggest role model on our campus is Robert Cooper. He is fantastic at what he does and never turns down a discussion with me. As leaders, we need people to confide in and be honest. Coop is that person for me. I have felt so much support and encouragement from him during the most challenging moments I have been through while on this campus.

## Alumni Highlight

## Gianni Jones

My name is Gianni Jones. I graduated this past spring with my bachelor's in social work. I was heavily involved while an undergraduate; I was the president of the Black Student Alliance and a member of Alpha Phi Omega, Phi Sigma Pi, NSLS, ASALAH student membership, Phi Alpha, NCNW, peer mentor, and SSS. I also worked at the Lane Center as a Building Manager while pursuing my bachelor's degree. Since graduating, I have enjoyed what the world offers outside of seeking higher education. This past summer, I got to spend time with family and get experience in event services.



My current job status is Program Management Specialist in the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion on campus. I belong to a primary group that has shaped my identity as a leader in African American women. This identity has helped shape me into a caring, tough, and sincere individual. A strength I bring to my leadership as an African American Woman is my ability to pull through. No matter what life throws at me, I do not let it limit me to being the best version of myself. I firmly believe that people can only help others after they help themselves.

A challenge I bring to my leadership as an African American Woman is being a strong leader without being overbearing and, furthermore, trying not to be taken advantage of for being that laid-back leader, as I do not believe in being that leader who yells and takes control because being a leader is really about being able to train the upcoming leader after you to be the best version of themselves. My hero is my grandfather. He is the reason I never take any situation or opportunity for granted. He raised me to take education seriously because no one can ever take it away from me once it is earned.

## Staff Highlight

## Syully Koroh

My name is Syully Koroh. I am currently a university advisor. I work in the Center for Academic Advising and Retention in Pullen 140. One of my goals when doing my job is to provide guidance and support for students to achieve academic success and reach their full potential. This includes providing advice on classes that complement their educational and career goals. I strive to be a reliable resource for my advisees and help them navigate their personal and academic challenges while studying at FSU.



I believe that maintaining an inclusive environment as a university advisor and academic advisor requires a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. As an academic advisor, I strive to create a safe and supportive environment in my office. I do it by actively listening to students, validating their experiences, and responding with empathy and understanding. I ensure students feel welcome and heard in my office.

My background shaped the person I am today, personally and professionally. I come from a humble background as an immigrant, born and raised in an Eastern culture. To me, every day is a learning experience, even though I have been here for a long time. Despite the different challenges I face every once in a while, I have learned to embrace my background and see it as a strength. Living between two cultures has made me more open-minded and understanding.

I have been so fortunate to have several great role models in my life. My late father always emphasized the importance of empathy and understanding towards others. In my professional life, I am surrounded by people who are incredibly student-oriented and always striving to help students improve themselves. These individuals serve as my role models, and I learn from them daily how to better serve and advise our students here.



## Faculty Highlight

**Dr.Fannia L.Boayue**

**I am Dr. Fannia L. Boayue, originally from Liberia, West Africa. I am an Associate Professor in education, in a variety of programs where we help train well-equipped teachers so that they are ready for their jobs on day one. I am the Coordinator of the Early Childhood/Elementary Program, a combined major in the College of Education and Health & Natural Sciences. I am also the Faculty Advisor to the African Students Association here on campus, which I have been for a while now.**

**I have many goals, but of course, we like to think that the teachers we put out in the college are very high-quality teachers, and that is why I can say that in the first year, our graduates are ready when they get into their classrooms. Another goal is to make students meet and get to know each other. The university should be a community where students interact with other people beyond their dorms or majors.**

**As a professor, I train those young people pre-service teachers to be inclusive and use inclusive practices in their classrooms toward the children. More importantly, this should be directed not just towards the students but also their families. This way, diverse parents or those with guardianship of diverse children continued coming into the educational sphere. Also, it is critical, from a professional standpoint, as we are all broadening our horizons outside of education to be inclusive in the world, meaning in our communities, in our societies, in our countries, and hopefully internationally. A primary group I identify with is African. I was born and raised, went to school, and graduated with my undergraduate degree in Liberia, West Africa. The strength that my identity brings to my leadership is the culture that comes with my African identity. Also, the benefit is adapting to other cultures because I already had to do so when I came to America.**

**A challenge I faced as an African was adjusting to the weather. I am used to being in the tropics, where it is hotter, and the sun is out longer as I am closer to the equator, but here in North America, it is colder, and during the winter, daylight does not last long. Another challenge was the food. I went to the grocery store and thought, wow, my stay would be great because I saw all the fruits and vegetables I knew and loved, but I soon realized that they all did not taste the same as they did back home. I look up to my father as a role model who stressed the meaning of being educated and how you present yourself as an educated person. With his guidance, I am who I am today and where I am today.**

**I am the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs; they are two positions together. As the Provost, I am the faculty leader, and help move faculty forward and continue to develop professionally. As Vice President of Academic Affairs I oversee the academic enterprise of students. A goal of mine is to see more engagement with students and faculty. I would like to see students and faculty doing research, traveling to conferences together, students having more international experiences like studying abroad, and engaging in campus culture.**

**A conversation outreach is needed to maintain an inclusive environment, as an open-door policy is not enough. I walk the campus, eat in the cafeteria, go to the Lane Center, and talk with people, stopping long enough to hear the responses. A group that has shaped my identity is my family. I am one of nine children; my parents loved and committed to all of us, and my siblings were all committed to each other. So, we have generations of love and commitment, and our faith in God is at that center.**

**The strength of being family-oriented impacted my leadership by equipping me to work with multiple people and interact with people from various personalities in my family. Every day, be patient and kind, extend grace, and work with people even when it is difficult. Even when the conversations are hard, I learned to engage respectfully, cool off, and return. It is a natural, innate part of who I am because of my upbringing.**

**My biggest challenge is being hours away from my family, as I often miss them. I am in the mountains without any family, and what helps sustain me is that I love seeing nature and the environment with crisp air. It gives me much peace and solitude, so I like the quiet here and the slower pace. I have to be intentional about etching out time to make sure that I commit to family in relevant, meaningful, helpful, and sustaining ways for me and my family.**

**I look up to my son. He is like a young philosopher. We have gotten to the point, now that he is older, where we can have adult conversations. He is incredibly insightful; I know he is someone who loves me unconditionally, and I know that he is in my corner 100%. He asks me questions when he has questions, but we can really dialogue, be serious, laugh, and still grow together.**



# **March Events**

## **Black Hair Presentation**

**March 6th**

**7pm - 8:30pm**

**A.W.M.C.C**

## **Cultural Conversation: Impact of Being Sexualized in America**

**March 12th**

**5pm - 7pm**

**A.M.W.C.C**

## **Showing of “We should all be feminist”**

**March 26th**

**1pm - 2pm**

**A.W.M.C.C**

**For more information on events contact:**

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