HAVERFORD COLLEGE AAAG 2022 REPORT

The Haverford College Antiracism Accountability and Advancement Group (AAAG) is pleased to report on our work for the academic year 2021-22. In this summary we 1) review the initial charge of the group, 2) identify key accomplishments to date, 3) identify our vision moving forward, and 4) make a summary statement.

Initial Charge
The AAAG was established largely in response to the student-led strike of 2020 and the 45 demands presented by students. The group was composed of representatives from the board of managers, faculty, staff, and students as well as four professionals from outside of the Haverford campus with an interest and expertise in antiracism work. The AAAG was charged to:

Formally review, assess, and help accelerate the College’s on-going racial equity work, through the Group’s diverse knowledge, expertise, and perspectives, while providing an additional measure of accountability for Haverford to reach its anti-racism goals and commitments.

As such, the group’s goal continues to focus on holding the college accountable to the agreed upon changes and to determine how these initial changes can serve as a springboard help to transform the college into the future. Our focus is on Haverford College’s commitment to develop awareness, relationships and strategies that allow diverse students to have a quality college experience and to understand that there are avenues to address their needs in true collaboration with the college community. As President Wendy E. Raymond stated in her recent report to the AAAG, diversity, equity, inclusion, and antiracism (DEIA) work is an ongoing, continuous process. The AAAG will continue to monitor Haverford’s progress on these fronts.

Summary of AAAG Work this Year
To date, the committee has focused on
- reviewing, understanding, categorizing, and assessing the 45 student demands,
- monitoring the degree to which the demands have been met,
- meeting stakeholders to gain more understanding of the culture and community more fully on campus, and
- assessing what is working and what continues to be a source of frustration or alienation for students.

Like all institutions of higher education, Haverford currently operates within a VUCA environment, (volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity). We realize that the environment changes with time and we must remain vigilant, flexible, and innovative as we move forward to make Haverford an anti-racist institution.

Meeting Dates and Agenda Items
Included here is a list of meeting dates with the agenda items discussed.
October 18, 2021
Committee members welcomed interim chief diversity officer Norm Jones, who shared these goals for the year:

- Exploring a distributed model of leadership for DEI
- How to have conversations as a Haverford community across a range of the community’s cross-sections
- Prioritizing leadership goals as a part of our DEI work, beginning with each division head’s measurable goals that align with our strategic plan
- Digital accessibility for students with disabilities
- Expanding student representation on the AAAG
- Maximizing the best use of the expertise of the AAAG’s external members

November 5, 2021
Subgroup meeting, to discuss the plan to respond to the community.

- Schedule monthly meetings for spring semester
- Arrange constituency meetings (student, faculty, staff, administration, alumni/ae)
- Issue and end of year report again
- Create subgroups to keep various parts of the committee business moving forward
- Advancement group—to develop the 5-year AAAG plan
- “In the weeds” group—to engage with the campus community in open sessions
- Coordinating group—to ensure we’re staying connected with each other and the institution’s larger efforts on this front
- Ensure leadership and continuity in student representation on the committee

December 6, 2021
Committee meeting with guests Wendy Raymond, Linda Strong-Leek, John McKnight, for an update on the commitments:

- What progress has been made on the commitments?
- What are we seeing and hearing that is outside of those specifics?
- What relationship building has been happening connected to this work?
- Is this method of communication around ongoing work successful?

March 28, 2022
Committee members were joined by representatives from several student affinity groups. These questions framed/began the discussion:

- Have you observed any changes at the College following the strike? Have things improved? Not changed? Gotten worse?
- The College made a range of commitments following the strike(https://www.haverford.edu/antiracism-dei-commitments/report). Have you noticed progress related to these commitments on campus? Are there areas where progress towards commitments is not occurring?
If you were to have the chance to talk to a group of outside DEI/antiracism external consultants, how would you characterize the climate related to race on campus? What things would you want them to know?

April 25, 2022
Committee members were joined by several members of the DEIA Committee of the Board. These questions framed/began the discussion:

- Share the work each group has been doing, progress (or lack thereof) on areas of work
- Discuss the state of DEIA work both in the College and in the Board
- Explore areas where the two groups may work together

This discussion was followed by an update on the restorative justice in the classroom initiative, and a discussion on how the external members might connect with faculty and staff.

May 23, 2022
Agenda set; meeting was rescheduled.

- Debrief on conversations with students and faculty
- Major topics to include in June 2022 AAAG report
- Areas of AAAG advice and counsel to Haverford
- Some suggestions for discussion:
  - Student/faculty dynamics: processes for providing students with a safe and effective avenue to raise antiracism issues that emerge in the classroom or in other student/faculty interactions
  - Issues encountered in the classroom that take into account faculty concerns
  - Campus safety: approaches to aligning campus safety and antiracism objectives
  - Campus climate assessment: comments on how to make Haverford’s plan for more frequent campus climate surveys most effective
  - Building trust: a general category, but thoughts on how the College can build trust among students, faculty, staff, and College leadership
- Steps and responsibilities for preparing draft of AAAG June report

June 1, 2022
Meeting of the committee chairs and external members, who worked from the agenda for meeting originally scheduled May 23.

June 27, 2022
Meeting of the full committee, interim chief diversity officer Norm Jones delivered his end of year report. Topics included:

- A preview of the upcoming end of year letter from President Wendy Raymond, and how this letter might inform the committee’s annual report
- A review of the key dialogic programs run by the Office of Institutional Diversity, Equity, and Access
• Upcoming hires that will expand staffing in IDEA
• Plans for onboarding the incoming vice president for institutional equity and access (VPIEA) Thelathia “Nikki” Young
• How will the upcoming president’s letter incorporate input from the students, faculty, and staff?

July 18, 2022
The committee was joined by President Raymond, who shared her end of year letter to the committee in advance.

Summary of Significant Progress
the AAAG’s work has taken place in tandem to the many advancements on campus, including development of the new Office of Institutional Diversity, Equity, and Access (IDEA) to convene, advance, and track critical conversations around equity and inclusion in the Haverford experience and the hiring of Dr. Thelathia Young to lead the office. A full list of the DEIA commitments and progress can be viewed on the on Antiracism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at https://www.haverford.edu/antiracism-dei-commitments. Progress in each of these areas is updated periodically. The AAAG notes significant progress overall; 31 out of 67 items have been completed, with all others underway or tagged as “immediate.” In our last report, an AAAG concern focused on the tracking of concrete measurable goals, which the website does well.

• Additional evidence of significant progress in a relatively short time (one year) is that every senior staff person has worked with their respective teams to develop 2022-2024 divisional DEI goals which fall into the areas of diversity, equity, and inclusion.
  • Diversity goals: These are focused on cultivating a community that reflects diversity in social identity or identities whether race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, ability, national origin, religious/spiritual practice, or intersectional identities and acknowledges diverse perspectives and experiences.
  • Equity goals: The equity goals represent policy and systems-level work to ensure fair and just access to opportunities and resources, in recognition of the advantages and disadvantages that have historically existed and still exist.
  • Inclusion goals: The inclusion goals identify ways of authentically bringing traditionally excluded individuals and/or groups into processes, activities, and decision/policy making in a way that shares power.

These will be monitored so progress can be tracked throughout the two-year period.

As well, President Raymond should be commended for moving forward in other areas that were top priorities including new pathways for faculty hiring and the new position for director of talent acquisition and workforce development. Haverford’s three new initiatives that fall under Dialogue as DEI Pedagogy have also proved successful based on participation rates, and offer innovative opportunities for deeper understanding among participants, if not agreement. These include Thinking Together, The Challenge Habit, and A Long Talk.

Because campus safety was an important part of the student demands, the Campus Safety team has been engaged in 2022 trainings that focus on Leadership Blind Spots with strategies to address those
issues. Major Ben Brooks, a well-known Pennsylvania DEI consultant who is a graduate of the FBI National Academy and a major with the Pennsylvania State Police for more than 30 years, led the sessions. His consulting firm specializes in human resource issues like leadership, harassment, and dealing with difficult people as well as ethics in law enforcement, understanding diversity and inclusion and change management.

Another concern of students was the institutional memory regarding the strike. The Libraries and Archives have been working with the Multicultural Alumni Action Group (MAAG), Alumni Affairs and BIPOC student colleagues. For example, a student intern was charged with interviewing students involved in the strike to help develop an oral history. The archives collected related materials and asked for participants to turn over social media records of the event if they wanted to include those.

And perhaps most importantly, Dr. Thelathia (Nikki) Young took office August 15 as Vice President for Institutional Equity and Access. She will build upon the work started by Interim Chief Diversity Officer Norm Jones. The Office of Institutional Diversity, Equity, and Access (IDEA) that was established by Jones now has a budget and staff. This includes dedicated funds for DEI programming such as Black History Month. Dr. Young is also appointed to the faculty for Religion and Gender and Sexuality studies.

The AAAG focus on the students’ initial 45 demands will continue to keep our work student focused. By continuing to monitor the College’s progress toward creating a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive campus, we hope to ensure that Haverford realizes its aspiration to enrich the educational experience of all students. The AAAG notes that research has shown that a more diverse campus community results in numerous educational benefits such as:

- introduces students to new ways of thinking through culturally richer social and classroom settings
- provides more opportunities for interactions that challenge stereotypes that results in students becoming more accepting and tolerant of others who are different
- results in higher levels of problem solving, where students take in a larger range of perspectives, which in turn increases collaboration and innovation
- better prepares students for their future participation in the workforce, and
- connects institutions of higher education more closely with the communities where they are located (such as West Philadelphia).

**AAAG Work in the Future**

Moving forward the AAAG intends to:

- Honor the initial reason for this group by maintaining a student focus, always remaining attentive to areas where we can make structural or educational changes that foster an institutional culture that is more responsive to students and their concerns. This includes addressing faculty and staff issues as they relate to the quality of student education and life.
- Identify and carve out appropriate relationships for AAAG with the Board of Managers and the office of Institutional Equity and Access.
- Make sure that diversity in its many forms is not only identified as part of the strategic plan but an integral component.
● Ensure that despite the evidence is of progress on issues like Campus Safety, classroom interactions, and curriculum development, the College continues to do the work that is required to meet our aspirational goals.

● Explore nontraditional ways to communicate with students, letting the students drive that process. Today it may be using TikTok; in the future, students will find other ways to communicate with their peers. It is up to Haverford to remain current in its development of student communication tools as was made clear by the low attendance in Zoom town hall-type meetings this past year.

**AAAG Challenges for 2022-2023**

It is our hope that serving as an external group to hold the institution accountable, over the next year we will address goals stated in part 3, but also will begin to address two larger challenges:

● Challenge traditional relationships between the College and students, particularly students of color, in the hopes that students, administrators, faculty and staff can work collaboratively to continue to foster positive change at Haverford.

● Challenge traditional cultures of old institutions. The task is to determine how to maintain the valued culture of Haverford but integrate new thinking which is at the core of diversity. As was discussed in the AAAG report last year, the work is made more complex by Haverford’s status and history as a highly selective, elite institution. We know that DEIA work can be disruptive to some as disruption and discomfort are inherent in the change process, but that the outcomes can be powerful in the synergistic impact. The goal is to create a dynamic, vibrant college culture that benefits all members of the Haverford community and increases educational success for all students.