

MACPHAIL CENTER FOR MUSIC

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MacPhail

Hello MacPhail Community,

As Director of School Partnerships for the last three years, I am grateful to work with a community of champions both inside and outside of MacPhail. Through this work, the DEI committee and I have developed an important understanding of what it will take to make MacPhail a leader in inclusive and equitable music education, and I am proud to lead this charge as MacPhail's newly appointed Senior Director of Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI).

As those who know me can attest, my approach to music education is to become truly equitable and inclusive – something that happens intentionally and over time. Most of us who are teaching artists were taught from a Eurocentric lens, however, over the last few years we have worked to actively prioritize the decolonization of the way we approach music education and ensure anti-racism in all that we do.

What this means for the MacPhail community

In no uncertain terms, MacPhail is committed to ensuring the creation of policies, practices, programs, and opportunities to embed diversity, equity, and inclusion throughout the organization.

How this shows up at MacPhail

Be assured this is not a new conversation for MacPhail, but rather, this has been an ongoing priority for us over the last few years. In these conversations, and through what I call an equity-mindedness lens, stakeholders involved in DEI have identified a need to:

- Deepen community relationships
- Create more culturally relevant programs and initiatives
- Increase the diverse representation of faculty, staff, and the board

In July of 2020 we developed 5 action areas to address our community's needs:

Develop & Implement

Develop & Implement **Community Support Initiatives** to Share Resources

Diversify

Diversify MacPhail **Leadership, Board, Faculty, and Staff**

Provide

Provide Resources for **Professional Growth** to Support an Increasingly Diverse Community

Create & Share

Create & Share **Inclusive Music Education Curriculum** for Students of all Backgrounds

Develop, Fund, & Launch

Develop, Fund & Launch **New MacPhail Programs and Initiative**

I am happy to say, that with the support from the board of directors, senior leadership team, and DEI committee, we can continue to provide resources to support our employees and department areas. Learn more about our initiatives [here](#).

As we look to the future we must remember

As with the beginning stages of any change, this can be messy at times. We are committed to being more intentional in highlighting progress to provide an opportunity for ongoing feedback from all our stakeholders. The more aware we are, the more we are building our cultural capacity to understand commonalities and differences and begin having a shared dialogue in our DEI approach.

This is forever work. We are dismantling centuries-long systems of inequities. Yet the conversations and work that have taken place over the past 18 months to intentionally move the organization forward have been transformative. We are dedicated to sustainable and systemic change; in our music education and there is no set deadline as ongoing transformation is the goal.

It is about living in alignment with our core values and mission every single day. We are moving beyond the fear of getting it wrong and are committed to deep-rooted change that pushes beyond any surface-level attempts to appear “diverse”. Missteps will occur, but it is better to take actions, fail, and try again repeatedly than to be so scared of failure that we resort to doing things or not doing things in order to create and maintain a performative illusion of advancing DEI.

There is no better community than MacPhail

Thank you to everyone at MacPhail for sharing in this commitment to the journey of DEI. There will be times where we might not agree on paths. This is normal. Let’s strive for progress, not perfection. MacPhail will continue to recenter to amplify historically excluded and marginalized voices.

Warmest regards,

Roque Diaz, Senior Director of DEI