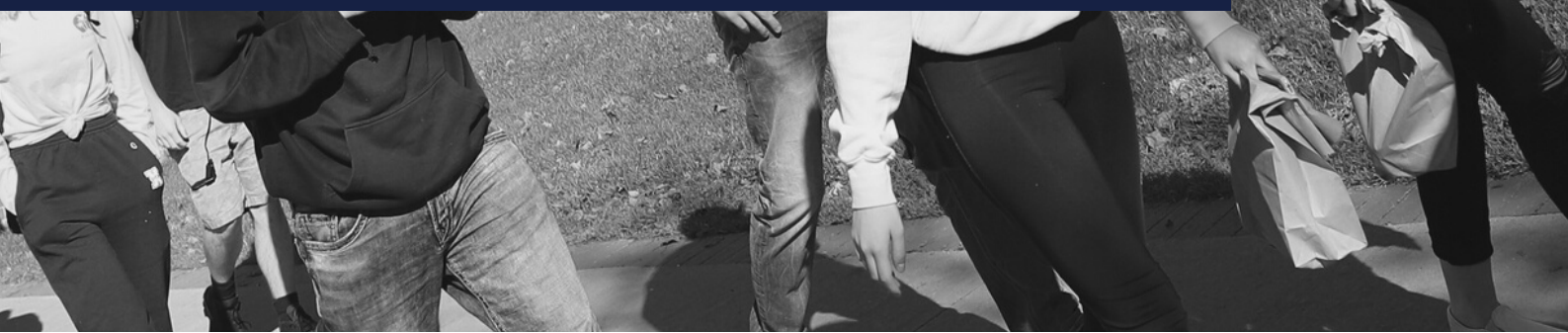




**DIVERSITY ENGAGEMENT TEAM
OFFICE OF HUMAN RIGHTS & EQUITY**

2021-2022 ANNUAL REPORT

**PREPARED BY:
MEGAN FOGARTY
DIRECTOR, HUMAN RIGHTS & EQUITY**



OVERVIEW

The Office of Human Rights and Equity provides human rights and equity programs and services to the StFX community. The work of the Advisors and the Manager, Human Rights and Equity integrates a holistic framework that extends beyond binaries and addresses the intersectionality of individual identities and experiences. This integrative approach grounded in a practice of care and trauma informed practice is woven throughout our team's service delivery.

The 2021-2022 academic year was one of growth and challenge. With COVID-19 disrupting our typical processes and social justice issues continuing to be highly visible on our campus and in the broader community, our team continued to adapt and engage Xaverians in critical conversations related to equity, diversity, inclusion, anti-racism, and belonging.

Further to the COVID 19 variants, the wider, persistent pandemic of systemic racism—including anti-Indigenous, anti-Asian, anti-Black, and anti-Brown systemic racism—continues. The goals of the Centre and the advancement of inclusion and belonging throughout our University have never been more critical.

DEC LOUNGE



Diversity Engagement Centre orientation week Open house Sept 2021

"Over the year I enjoyed meeting up with my friends and connecting with new people in the DEC lounge. I can grab a snack just chill, study, or pop into an event"

"The DEC lounge is where I connect with people, it is a cool place where I always go"

The Diversity Engagement Centre (DEC) Lounge is located on the fourth floor of Bloomfield.

The lounge continues to be a welcoming and relaxing space where Students of African Descent and 2SLGBTQIA+ students can connect with one another. It displays student artwork and serves as a comfortable space to hold community events. It is a welcoming space for students to study, watch tv, socialize, attend events. The lounge also offers a free student snack station, which is continually replenished by advisors, The space will continue to evolve to meet the diverse needs of students.

KIKNU CENTRE



Elder in Residence and President Hakin officially open Kiknu February 2021

"Terena, Kerry, and the Kiknu center impacts us not only academically but mentally/emotionally. I wanted to leave St.FX in the first month, it was a hard transition for me, once I became settled in the Kiknu center I completed my courses, and my GPA went up 10 points. I am happy to say I am going into my fourth year and graduating May 2023"

Meaning 'our home' in English Kiknu StFX's Indigenous Student Centre. Officially opened on campus on Feb. 26, 2021, the centre

Kiknu is a place where peer mentoring and learning happen organically. It is a space where students can find safety and friendship. It is a place of growth, and a place to amplify Mi'kmaq culture in our daily lives.

BLACK STUDENT ADVISING

Working to ensure Black students reach their full potential is the mission of the Black Student Advising Office. This is achieved by listening to the needs of Black Students, promoting self-advocacy, and providing students with supports, resources, and opportunities to thrive and succeed throughout their entire academic careers. The office promotes cultural activities where people of African Descent at StFX are celebrated, ensuring we are building a community that is enriched and fulfilling for everyone.

COVID-19 has increased barriers Black Students face, including the experience of transitioning from high school to university. The office will continue to grow its advocacy work by collaborating with initiatives such as PACAR (President's Action Committee on Anti-Racism

BARBERSHOP TALKS

A major milestone this year was the BSA collaboration with the Nova Scotia Men's Health League (NSMHL) for the Barber Shop Talks. This connection with NSMHL highlights the important steps StFX continues to take in responding to the needs of Black Students. It is important to find innovative ways to understand and promote positive mental health and wellness amongst Black post-secondary students. Barber Shop Talks offers safe spaces for Black men to talk about race and mental health, while receiving free professional hair services. This event was in addition to the free, culturally responsive mental health services to Black students offered by StFX.

FEEDBACK



Student barbers work alongside professional barbers and facilitators to offer services to their peers during the Barbershop Talks Event

Barbershop Talks

"I was a participant in the event as one of the barbers. Being a Black student in our small STFX community as well as the greater community, it has been difficult to find places that offer hair services to black people. Therefore, the need for this event was crucial. Moreover, this event provided a safe space for the group of people that attended to sit down and converse as they got a good trim. Everyone was happy and the people were satisfied, and confident in their appearance at the end of it all"

Culturally Relevant Counselling

"I just wanted to let you know that I was able to access their counseling resources. I had my preliminary meeting with one of their counselors, JJ, and we have a set plan to meet in the mornings every Wednesday starting next week. Thank you for your help with this."

BSA: THRIVING & LEADING FOR THE FUTURE



First year students meet Black Student Advisor Tara Reddick at the Student Showcase event during StFX Orientation week 2021

The office will continue to grow by working collaboratively with on and off campus stakeholders. As always, the office will adapt to the needs of students and address barriers students of African Descent face and create meaningful opportunities for Black Students to lead and thrive. Future goals support the campus vision of inclusivity and addressing the needs of Black students in a holistic way. The Black Student advising office exists to encourage every Black Student at StFX to flourish.



Local student Athlete Dondre Reddick; PACAR Co-Chair Robert Upshaw and B.L.A.C.C Society Executive Jasonique Moss welcome Black students during orientation week 2021



Students get the chance to connect during the Black Student Advising Welcome Barbeque during orientation week at StFX 2021

GENDER & SEXUAL DIVERSITY ADVISING

The Gender and Sexual Diversity Advisor (GSDA) supports 2SLGBTQIA+ Xaverians and celebrates diversity at StFX. The GSDA educates the campus and broader community on 2SLGBTQIA+ identities and issues while creating visibility and safer spaces.

Supporting the 2SLGBTQIA+ community at StFX happens in many ways, such as one-on-one office/virtual support for students, celebrating and promoting queer culture and diversity at StFX and in the local community, referrals to campus and community resources, creating programming, community outreach through education and advocating on behalf of 2SLGBTQIA+ students, staff and faculty.

CREATING COMMUNITY

The goal of the 2021-2022 academic year was to create a true sense of community among 2SLGBTQIA+ students and to show all community members that safety, visibility and acceptance is needed to move beyond the borders of campus. The GSDA continued to advocate for authenticity and respect of our students, staff and faculty. Affirmed names and identities are now being used and honoured in IT systems and regular supports have been identified and established to ensure students feel academically, socially, mentally, and spiritually supported. The GSDA provided a bridge to supports by having services and resources come to the Diversity Engagement Centre to work with the students in a space familiar and comfortable to them. The Qlothing Shoppe received an abundance of donations and people who required gender-affirming clothing were able to do so free of charge.

The GSDA and X-Pride Student Society had a wonderful partnership to create a sense of unconditional support within the community. there were numerous social events such as Spill the Tea, Coffeehouses, Trivia nights, Sexual Health Education and had many events focusing on mental health through art, including button making, painting, colouring and, scratch art. Trans Day of Remembrance was honoured through a candle lit vigil, remembering those who had lost their lives.

The GSDA partnered with the StFX Art Gallery during Pride Month and celebrated and showcased 2SLGBTQIA+ artists in Nova through the Legacies – Pride of Nova Scotia exhibit.

Pride Month events were moved online due to the global pandemic, but was just as successful as students and community were able to join in from all over the world. Many video messages from important people were shared within the community. In addition to social online events, we were honoured to have Dr. Chris Frazer host an online presentation for our Pride Spill the tea event – From X-Pride to Stonewall.

QUEER PROM

The GSDA and X-Pride partnered with Candid Brewery to host the very first Queer Prom in the local area. This event was well received by the entire community both on and off campus. Flags were raised in three areas (Campus, Town and Dr. J.H. Gillis High School) and a Pride March of over 200 people occurred. The X-Pride student society was awarded Society of the Year by the Students' Union in recognition of the positive contribution that was made to the campus community. The work towards visibility and acceptance is moving forward and the GSDA and X-Pride society intend to keep the forward moving trajectory in the upcoming years.



Queer Prom Attendees enjoying the festivities

FEEDBACK

“Knowing Aimee is the highlight of my first year experience. Coming from a place where Being Gay is punishable by death, I had so much fear and internalized homophobia. However, the moment I saw rainbow colours in Fourth floor Bloomfield lounge, I felt safe. I knew the word safe, but I didn’t know how it feels like to feel safe! Aimee is as the same age as my sister, the sister I didn’t feel safe around but Aimee was the sister I could feel safe. I didn’t even know her but there was something in her eyes that was telling me that I can trust her and I did. I cannot be thankful enough for all she did for me this last year. She is a sister, and a mother for me. She is family. The family I chose here at Stfx.”



pride celebrations



X-Pride Celebrating their Society of the Year award

“Without Aimee and the events she hosted, I’m positive that I was not the only student that was reminded that it is possible to come out of the closet and find happiness. Having an out and proud member of the LGBTQIA+ community at X has changed my life, I couldn’t be more grateful for having Aimee in the GSDA office, she is a role model to many and proof to the scared student that it’s possible to be happy and proud of their truest self.”

“Coming to a small school in rural Nova Scotia, I was unsure what to expect about queer life at StFX. What I have found is an incredibly tight-knit community, all of whom actively encourage and support the development of youth and celebrate our diversity. Being able to be seen and valued is an incredibly rewarding part about life at X, and one I feel privileged to have experienced. We still have a long way to go to ensure equality and safety for all, but the community and support at X has made huge strides in accomplishing that, and I look forward to see the new practices and policies created to allow queer students to thrive at X.”



X-Pride at the inaugural flag raising at Dr. John Hugh Gillis Regional High

INDIGENOUS STUDENT ADVISING

The Coordinator of Indigenous Student Affairs works to ensure all Indigenous students succeed and flourish at StFX. The Coordinator provides Indigenous students with the opportunity to engage in cultural events and celebrations. The Coordinator of Indigenous Student Affairs works within Student Services and in partnership with regional Indigenous communities to ensure Indigenous students are supported and connected to their learning environment- academically, culturally and socially. The Coordinator assists Indigenous students in making the transition and adjustment to the challenges of University life while creating an awareness and appreciation of Indigenous culture and history in the greater campus community.

This year, Kiknu also benefited from student support advisor Simon Sylliboy. Simon, a PhD candidate in Education, provided academic and cultural supports, including hosting an NDN taco night, Pumpkin Carving and partnered with Indigenous therapist Andrea Currie to organize a stress management session.

ELDER IN RESIDENCE

Kerry Prosper, StFX's Elder in Residence continues to provide insight and knowledge to our campus. This year, The Elder in residence sat on the Presidents Action Committee on Anti-Racism and facilitated a session with the committee in Paq'tnkek. The Elder in Residence also provided support and presentations to faculty and students on decolonizing best practices.

Kerry enriched students cultural lives by providing sweat lodge ceremonies, and the wiping the tears ceremony, a healing ceremony for those experiencing grief and loss. Kerry also helped non-indigenous students with understanding cultural practices and protocols.

NATIONAL DAY FOR TRUTH & RECONCILIATION

September 30, 2021 marked the first official ceremony honoring the Indian Residential School Survivors at StFX. Mi'kmaw elders, survivors and school descendants were invited to the ceremony, and the huge turnout was heart-warming for our guests; they felt honored and respected. Over 600 people people showed up to honor the day, including many student athletes and coaches, who marched in their orange shirts from the Saputo centre: our guests were so overwhelmed with emotion, a few shed tears. The Coordinator of Indigenous student affairs honored her family through a heartfelt speech. She moved the crowd in a way that made them cry and laugh: the Mi'kmaw way.

Guests and attendees then went to Alumni Plaza to hear more about the statement and art created by Mi'kmaw Elders and Michelle Sylliboy, Michelle explained that the creation was a statement of love and honor for the 215 unmarked graves that were found at a former BC residential school.

Guests were asked to tie orange ribbons to a fence at Alumni plaza. Each ribbon represented the 6000 unmarked graves found at various Indian residential schools. These ribbons represented our awareness of the atrocities and the impacts of intergenerational trauma that survivors and their families, and those that didn't make it back home, had to endure.

FEEDBACK



Coordinator of Indigenous Student Affairs gives the keynote a packed house for the National Day of Truth and Reconciliation

"...Terena is my primary support, I find her every single day I am there. I check in with meaningful conversations whether that is academically or culturally.

Within our education things are incredibly complicated, I take our cultural education, and Western education and when we read questions we do not know how to respond. Our two eyed seeing plays a factor in our low marks, we second guess what lens you want to hear or what is 'correct.' Some professors ... embrace our lens and work with it – others are still working against and assimilating. I always had Terena to help me through the cultural barriers all year. I was frustrated, mad, angry, some days, and others I was incredibly happy and able to celebrate with her as well.

I have seen our male students work with Kerry Prosper, last year because of the pandemic there were some high concerns with some students. I connected with some and saw the dark periods throughout the winter. Kerry took them under his wing and invited them to Sweat that changed their mental health. I was concerned about some students during different periods, having these deep-rooted cultural teachings away from their homes was detrimental to their success. St.FX must honor the elder they have on campus, when I see him as a student you feel the power, softness, and true meaning of being Ilnu (Mi'kmaw)..."



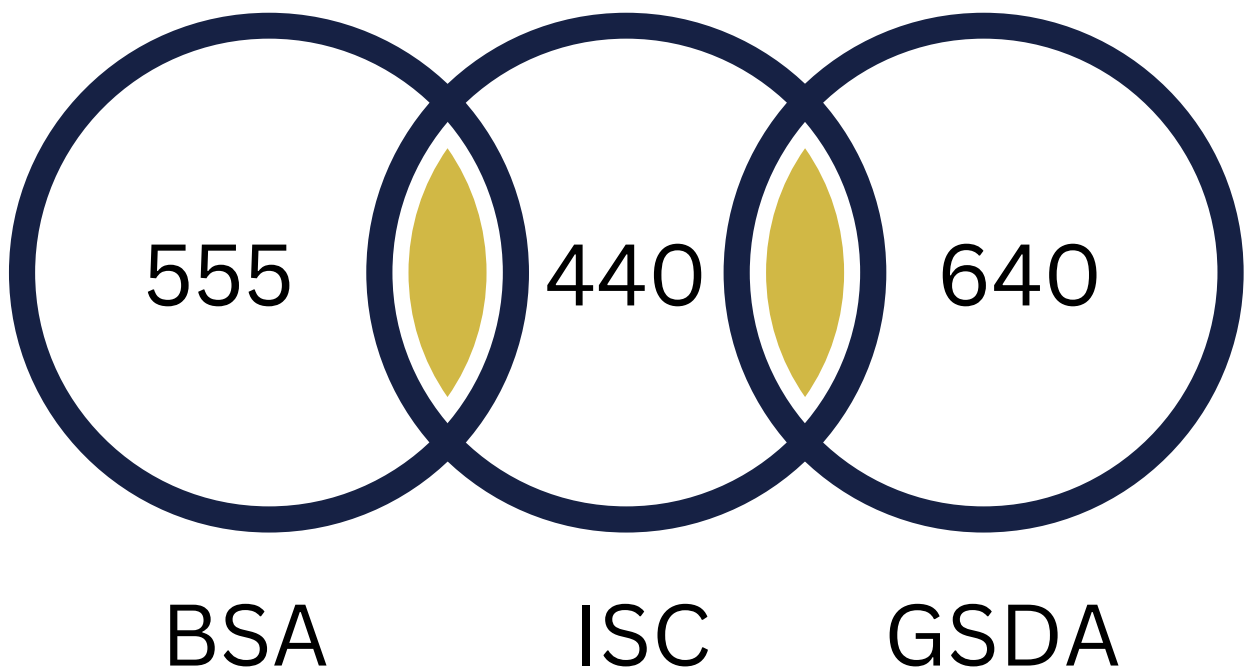
Terena (ISC and Lexany Martin-Googoo getting ready for their exchange trip to Belize

DEC AND KIKNU STATISTICS

Students visit both the DEC and Kinu, the Indigenous Student Centre for a multitude of reasons, and advisors routinely provide the following services:

- information, tools and resources, to help students thrive
- advising on equity rights
- assisting with financial supports through the Deveau fund
- providing gender affirming gear
- referrals to internal and external organizations and services
- providing a place of cultural support and safety

Combined, Advisors had a total of **1635** office visits



TRAINING & EVENTS



Robert facilitating a PACAR session in Paq'tnkek

Advisors celebrated the cultural diversity of our Xaverian community through learning lodges, pottery nights, coffee houses, remembrance vigils, trips to the Mi'kmawey Debert interpretive trail drum making, beading nights, sex education sessions, art nights, queer prom, games nights, paint nights and poetry night

All three offices partnered with the StFX Art Gallery, to promote local artists from their respective communities

Advisors also educated our campus community and community members through a series of Anti-Black Racism sessions, Anti-Indigenous racism sessions and Positive Space Training. Robert Upshaw (Pictured), co-chair of the President's Action Committee on Anti-Racism provided Anti-Black Racism training to over 500 Xaverians this year alone,

2,756 people attended Advisor events

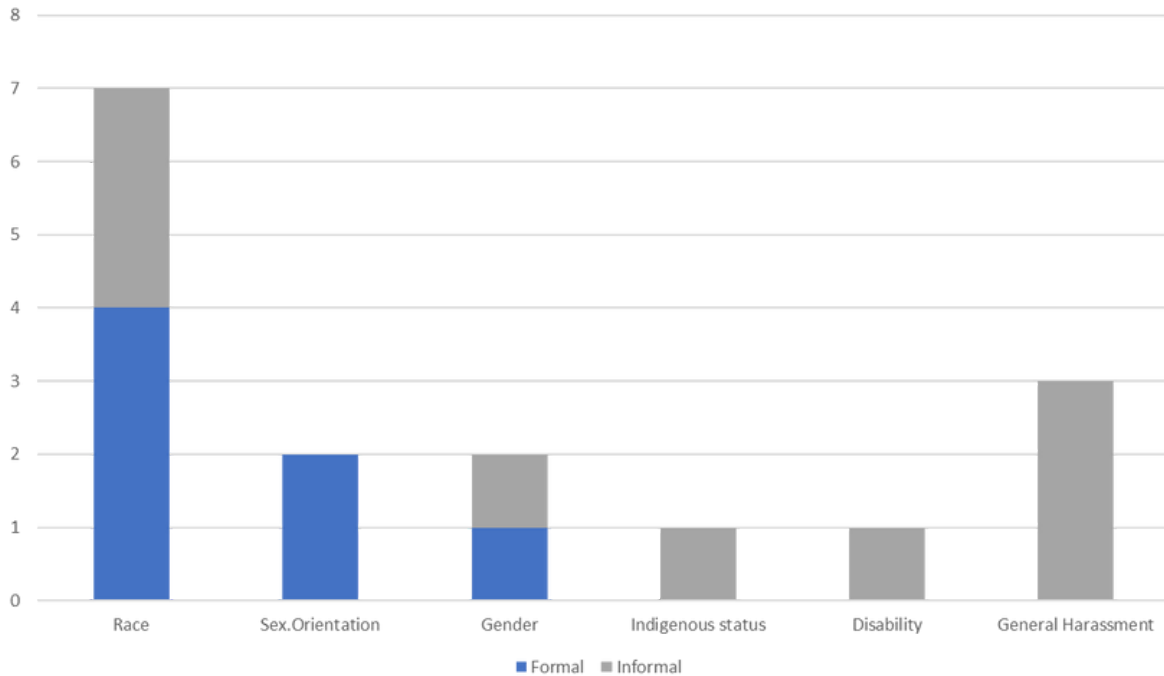
5,867 Xaverians and community members completed Anti-Racism and/or Positive Space Training



Gerald Gloade speaking to Xaverians at the Mi'kmawey Debert site

SUPPORTING XAVERIANS

Formal & Informal Resolutions: H&D Policy



From September 1 2021 to August 31, 2022 there were 7 formal and 9 informal resolutions (investigations) under the Harassment and Discrimination Policy.

Of the 7 formal resolutions, 4 were founded (breach of Policy)



6 formal resolutions too place under the StFX Sexual Violence Policy. of the 6 four were founded (breach of Policy)



9 accommodation requests related to Covid were resolved and 6 family status requests were resolved over the academic year



Megan Fogarty

Manager, Human Rights & Equity
mfogarty@stfx.ca

Tara Reddick

Black Student Advisor
trddick@stfx.ca

Aimee MacDonald

Gender & Sexual Diversity Advisor
amacdona@stfx.ca

Robert Upshaw

Anti-Racism Education
rupshaw@stfx.ca

Terena Francis

Coordinator, Indigenous
Student Affairs
tfrancis@stfx.ca

Kerry Prosper

Elder in Residence
kpropser@stfx.ca

Simon Sylliboy

Kiknu Student Support
ssylliboy@stfx.ca