In recent months, sustained efforts have been made to implement key recommendations from the Principal’s Implementation Committee on Racism, Diversity, and Inclusion (PICRDI) report and ensure that steps are taken to advance positive change across campus. The following outlines examples of new activities, or updates to current initiatives, since my previous PICRDI update to Senate on January 27, 2017.

**Ester Margaret Harrison Estate Gift Creates Bursaries to Support Racialized and First-Generation Students**

Thanks to generous benefactor support, we are taking steps to make a Queen’s education more accessible to students from diverse backgrounds. The university is grateful to be receiving $2.2 million from the estate of the late Ester Margaret (Betty) Harrison, which has enabled us to create new bursaries for first-year Black Canadian students, first-year visible minority and racialized students, and first-year first-generation students. Ms. Harrison was the daughter of Dr. John Featherston Sparks, MD 1905, a Kingston-based physician and professor of Anatomy in the Queen’s Faculty of Medicine.

Approximately 90% of the funds from the gift will support the renewable Ester Margaret Harrison Awards for Black Canadian Students and the renewable Ester Margaret Harrison Awards for Visible Minority/Racialized Students. The remaining 10% will go to the Ester Margaret Harrison Award for First-Generation Students, to students who are the first in their family to attend university and apply to Queen’s through our new First-Generation Admission Pathway. The terms of these awards have been developed by the Division of
Student Affairs, in consultation with the Office of the Provost and the Human Rights and Equity Offices, and are awaiting ratification by the Queen’s Senate Committee on Scholarships and Student Awards.

I will continue to work closely with the Office of Advancement to identify additional opportunities where we can leverage philanthropy to further support efforts to attract a diversity of students to Queen’s.

University Council on Anti-Racism and Equity

Mona Rahman, Sc’93, PhD’01, Coordinator, Research Activities and Communications, Office of the VP (Research), and Stephanie Simpson, Arts’95, Ed’97, MEd’11, Executive Director (Human Rights and Equity Offices) and University Advisor on Equity and Human Rights; have been selected as the first University Council on Anti-Racism and Equity co-chairs. Both Ms. Simpson and Dr. Rahman have a long history at Queen’s. While they were Queen’s students, Ms. Simpson was president of African Caribbean Students’ Association and Dr. Rahman was president of the Queen’s Muslim Students’ Association. Ms. Simpson and Dr. Rahman will hold the position of co-chair until September 2018 to provide the committee with the opportunity to determine how new co-chairs will be elected going forward.

The next UCARE meeting will be held on Monday, March 5 from 5 – 6:30pm in Robert Sutherland, Room 202. All members of the Queen’s community are welcome to attend. For more information on UCARE, please visit the Provost’s website.

Black History Month Activities at Queen’s

The African and Caribbean Students’ Association (ACSA) and the Queen’s Black Academic Society (QBAS) have organized a number of activities in celebration of Black History Month, beginning with an opening ceremony on Sunday, Feb. 4.

The theme of this year’s Black History Month activities at Queen’s is the resilience of black people throughout history, and how that resilience continues today. As part of the activities, ACSA has invited Edward Thomas, Sc’06, MASc’12 to explore his research on the expulsion of black medical students at Queen’s in 1918. QBAS will also hold talks on diversity and mental wellness within the black community, and highlight black students at Queen’s making an impact in the community.

QBAS and ACSA received grants from the Alma Mater Society and the Office of the Provost to help fund this year’s activities. Further information is available in a recent Queen’s Gazette news story.
Alfie Pearce Centre for Racial Equity and Social Justice

Work is ongoing on the establishment of the Alfie Pearce Centre for Racial Equity and Social Justice. I continue to work with stakeholder student groups on the identification of a suitable location that meets programming needs.

Discussions about Inclusivity at Queen’s

I will be hosting a drop-in coffee chat to provide interested students, staff, and faculty an opportunity to discuss how we can make Queen’s a more inclusive community. The gathering will be held on February 14, 2018, from 2:30 – 4:30pm at Ban Righ Hall, Deans of Women Tower Lounge (Room 110).

The meeting is open to all and I look forward to learning from the perspectives, experiences, and ideas of the community.

Data Analysis and Reporting

The university currently collects information on the student body makeup, including race, gender, disability, and sexual identity of students, through the Queen’s student applicant equity census. However, as response rates to the student census are relatively low, the Office of Institutional Research and Planning and the Equity Office are working to enhance data collection mechanisms relating to the diversity of the student population.

The Office of Institutional Research and Planning is also working with available data to provide an overview of the student experience for equity seeking groups, including student academic behavior (retention and degree completion rates) and student engagement ratings (as reported through the National Survey of Student Engagement). Once finalized, these reports will be shared with Senate and the Board of Trustees through the PICRDI implementation reporting process.

Inclusive Community Webpage

University Relations, in collaboration with stakeholders, is in the process of developing a new webpage under the heading Inclusive Community. A first draft of this new site will launch this spring. Once fully deployed, the webpage will outline support services and resources available to students, faculty, and staff from equity seeking groups; house reports on equity and diversity at Queen’s; and provide a timeline of the university’s history of anti-oppression and anti-racism work.
A central objective of this new website is to create greater awareness of equity, diversity, anti-racism, and inclusion initiatives on campus, and meet the associated recommendations of the PICRDI report.

**Ad Hoc Teaching and Learning Strategic Documents Renewal Subcommittee**

As previously announced, a Strategic Documents Review Committee has been established to revise the Teaching and Learning Action Plan and the Teaching and Learning Framework in light of the recommendations of PICRDI and the TRC Task Force.

The intention of this exercise is to ensure that Queen’s teaching and learning strategic documents explicitly include language that anti-racism, diversity, and inclusion are intrinsic and vital parts of the vision and mission of the institution. Creation of this ad hoc subcommittee also presents the opportunity to align revisions with the TRC Task Force Report, which recommends the enhancement and promotion of inclusive learning spaces on campus with respect to indigeneity.

The working group met on January 29, 2018 to review objectives and begin the development of a comprehensive consultation plan.