Tia McNair: Hello! Welcome AAC&U’s webinar, A Vision for Equity: Campus Based Strategies for Committing to Equity and Inclusive Excellence. We are going to wait a few minutes to make sure that everyone is able to join. Thank you for being with us this afternoon.

Tia McNair: Alright, we’re going to go ahead and get started. Welcome. I’m Tia McNair, the Vice President for Diversity Equity and Student Success at AAC&U. And just a couple of housekeeping notes before we get started this afternoon. If you want to submit a question, there is a Q and A box as part of this webinar. If you can actually use the Q and A that would be very helpful to us. The Q and A will be downloaded and posted online as well as a recording of this webinar this afternoon. Also please remember that if you have any IT issues, please submit those in our chat box so that we can respond to those directly. Thank you very much. Next slide, please.

Tia McNair: I first want to start off by thanking our partners in this effort. This was a three-year effort that was funded by Strada Education Network, and specifically our partner, Doctor Lorenzo Esters, who is the Vice President for Philanthropy at Strada. Thank you for joining us and being part of this effort and being our advocate. We appreciate you greatly for that. And then also our partner, Great Lakes Higher Education Corporation. We thank you for being part of this and for funding, specifically our culminating project meeting and the work with Cartridge and the publication. Thank you so much for doing that with us.

Tia McNair: I also want to say a special thank you to Lindsey Malcolm from the Center for Urban Education at the University of Southern California for being our partner throughout this entire process and the three years that we've been working together from the Equity Academy that we started three years ago in Florida to actually working with us throughout the publication, and through our work today and with our culminating meeting that we just had in San Diego. Thank you so much for that. Next slide, please.

Tia McNair: A special thank you to the AAC&U team here. To Vida Rivera, our Program Coordinator in the office, who has been my right hand throughout this effort and working with us to shepherd through all of the wonderful work that the campuses that are part of this project have completed and they are aspiring to continue to expand and to scale up on their campuses, and also to Jacinta Saffold, who’s our Associate Director in this office, who worked with us on the publication. So, thank you very much for that.

Tia McNair: And a special, special thank you ... they're in the room ... you can't see them right now ... to our AAC&U Communications and Web Services team for their support throughout this project, but also particularly on the publication and through this webinar today. Next slide, please.

Tia McNair: Many of the campuses have joined us on this webinar today. Unfortunately, because of limitation of time you can't hear from all of them. We are featuring four of the campuses today, but just so that you know who they are, we have
thirteen campuses that submitted to apply to work with us for these past three years. You can see the diversity of the institutional types that are listed here. They all have different stories, different things that worked for them, things that didn’t, some different various challenges, but they all work to advance and to commit to equity and inclusive excellence in student success on their particular campuses. So, we're excited to be able to share some of those stories with you but encourage you to read the publication in full, *A Vision for Equity*, that we will provide the link for you at the end of this webinar. Next slide, please.

**Tia McNair:** Before we get started, just to give you the four overarching goals of this particular project. These are the goals that were put forth based on our member survey from AAC&U. Some areas that we needed to help work with our campuses on building institutional capacity. As I mentioned, the campuses today will focus on various aspects of these project goals, but here they are. Of course, I think there's no surprise that we're focusing on increased access and participation to high-impact practices, as well as completion and retention in graduation rates for minoritized students. And of course, increasing achievement of learning outcomes for underserved students using direct assessment measures. And of course, increasing student awareness and understanding of the value of guided learning pathways. Basically, using the terminology … and you'll hear more from this from our colleague, Lorenzo Esters, focused on completion with a purpose for workforce preparation and engaged citizenship.

**Tia McNair:** It is now my pleasure to introduce our panelists this afternoon. Next slide, please. You'll see their pictures here. So, as I mentioned, Lorenzo Esters, who is the Vice President of Philanthropy for Strada Education Network. Michael Gavin, who serves as the Vice President for Learning at Anne Arundel Community College. Sheree Meyer, who's the Dean of the College of Arts and Letters at California State University, Sacramento, commonly known as SAC State. And Aurélio Manuel Valente, who is the Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students at Governors State University. And closing us out this afternoon is Solomon Alao, who is the Assistant Vice President for Outcome Assessment at Morgan State University. Thank you all for being with us this afternoon. Lorenzo, I'm going to turn it over to you.

**Lorenzo Esters:** Thank you, Tia, and hello everyone. I'm so pleased to be here on behalf of Strada Education Network. First of all, let me say that Strada is so pleased and excited to partner with AAC&U on this very important project. I would like to commend Doctor Tia McNair and the thirteen institutional partners. So, a virtual shout-out if you will to Tia and the team. I've had the pleasure of observing their progress since 2015 when we began this work. Next slide, please.

**Lorenzo Esters:** So, for my remarks I'd like to answer three fundamental questions. Who is Strada Education Network? On what are we focused? And why do we think it's so important to partner with AAC&U on making an impact on higher education equity? So, first of all, Strada is a national non-profit organization. We're headquartered in Indianapolis, Indiana, and we are truly focused on this
promising pathway and connecting education and employment for students. So, we are focused on completion with a purpose, not just focused on the attainment of a degree or credential, but the impact that that degree or credential has on the lives of those who earn the degree or credential. Next slide.

Lorenzo Esters: So, in terms of Strada Education Network, we do carry out our work in three fundamental ways. First, through philanthropy. Secondly, through research and insights. And third, through our mission-aligned affiliates. As it relates to philanthropy, we are guided by our student life cycle, which you see here on the slide. And you'll notice that we view the student life cycle as circular and not linear because we believe students enter and exit at key points along the continuum. There are three areas on which we focus in philanthropy. The first is education and career planning, and this is really focused on readiness, ensuring that students begin with the end in mind, if you will ... ensuring that they have been made informed ... they have information they need to make informed decisions about major and about career pathways.

Lorenzo Esters: Secondly, we're focused on student success and support systems to provide students the resources they need to succeed in the classroom. And that's really the area that we're focused on with this project with AAC&U; supporting students so that they complete what they began. And finally, career and workforce transitions. In this area we're focused on connecting, if you will, the relationship between employers and education providers, ensuring that students have the skills and the competencies they need to be successful in the workplace. Next slide.

Lorenzo Esters: As it relates to research and insights, we began a wonderful partnership with Gallup, the national polling organization, in 2016. It is a first of its kind survey where we survey about three hundred and fifty individuals per day about their higher education experience. So, since June of 2016 we've interviewed nearly two hundred and seventy thousand adults from more than three thousand post-secondary institutions about their education experience. We've published several reports, which you can find on our website. But I'd like to share just one tidbit of information that we're finding from this research. Next slide

Lorenzo Esters: There is one survey where we surveyed about thirty-two thousand currently enrolled students at forty-three randomly selected institutions. Of those thirty-two thousand students that were surveyed, eighty-eight percent of the freshmen say the reason that they chose to go to college was to get a good job, and that's the reason why we think it's so important to connect education and employment. In a different survey where fifty-five thousand U.S. adults who had completed higher education various levels, only twenty-seven percent of those individuals reported having a good job once they completed graduation, and we know that good is relative. Next slide.

Lorenzo Esters: This is what we're really focused on. So, if you view this bridge as connecting education and employment and imagine in the middle of this are students
falling through the cracks. Our goal is to ensure that no student falls through and that they complete what they start. Next slide. And the third and final area on which we are focused is our mission aligned affiliates. These are six organizations that are in partnership with Strada Education Network. They're focused on solutions; working with institutions of higher learning to actually support our overarching mission ... help students connect education and employment. Next slide.

Lorenzo Esters: So, a fundamental question: why are we partnering with AAC&U? So, we chose to partner with AAC&U and the thirteen institutional partners because we realize that addressing equity gaps in post-secondary education is not just about degree attainment. It really is also about helping all individuals and families to get out of poverty, to launch a rewarding career, and lead fulfilling lives. Because we realize that equity gaps in higher education actually spill over to equity gaps in other areas.

Lorenzo Esters: So, we're so pleased with this progress of this partnership and I look forward, as do each of you, to learning more about the progress from our institutional partners. Thank you for having me. And now ... next slide ... I'd like to introduce my colleague, Michael Gavin, Vice President for Learning Anne Arundel Community College.

Michael Gavin: Thank you, Lorenzo. Next slide, please. This is Mike Gavin, Vice President for Learning at Anne Arundel Community College. I am here mainly to tell you the story of a transformation that has occurred at our college as a result of our involvement with AAC&U and the Equity Project that Doctor McNair has led. In the context of the completion agenda, we had many great ideas coming at us in terms of what to do and in order to ensure that students could achieve the goals that Lorenzo was talking about earlier in getting good jobs and or transfer from a community college to a four-year institution.

Michael Gavin: We had ... you may have felt at your institution even ... that it looks something like this. We found, however, that equity was a common theme and a foundation for us to rally around and subsequently provide direction, structure, and communication for us in order to transform our institution. And really what happened was ... what I can tell you was a story of how data can move people and how that at the very basic level, trusting our good people on campus to find the ways to have an institution change, as well as address equity gaps, can pay back benefits beyond what you would foresee. Next slide, please.

Michael Gavin: Prior to getting involved in the project, we had some pretty tough conversations at the leadership level. And I do want to be very honest about that because I think that if an institution is truly going to be involved in the work of what we actually ended up calling "eradicating all achievement gaps at all levels," as a goal for our strategic plan, there has to be significant buy-in at the upper levels of the administration where resources can follow the values that one sets forth. There also has to be a very well-defined definition of what equity is so that one
has an answer to the question when one is out on the road trying to give an explanation for new projects to forward with.

Michael Gavin: And "high-impact practices" is a good buzzword that's been used across the nation, given the completion agenda ... but there's a lot of value in letting faculty and staff define what those are for one's institution and having administration-set goals so that people figure out what the high-impact practices to make students reach those goals are. So, a couple of the next slides that I want to talk about is how we got people to follow our lead. Next slide, please.

Michael Gavin: The first thing we did ... and this was the actual slide that we used in terms of trying to think of a new strategic plan ... and you can see how crude it was. We were not very sophisticated in terms of the graphics or even how to communicate where equity gaps lied. This is cohort data, so it's not necessarily percentage of students that are completing, but one can see that we were able to use data to show that our African-American students and our Hispanic students were not completing at the same clip as any other students on campus. It was heartening to see that this data alone moved our campus.

Michael Gavin: Let me just tell you a story of how that happened. In the context of the completion agenda and in the context of us telling the story that we have significant equity gaps, we put a call to action out. We had many different ... we went on a road show, if you will, with this data. It was the first time that our campus was honest about data in terms of showing this kind of desegregation. We said that this was not how we wanted our student experience to be. We asked for people to join what we called a "strategic planning team." We were expecting about fifty to sixty people to join. We had three hundred full time faculty and staff join, respond to the call to effort. We had to split them up onto twenty different teams to think of ways in which to eradicate achievement gaps. Some of those were to do what many other colleges are doing, such as meta-major work, requiting orientation and alike.

Michael Gavin: But it also ... and this is the most important point to me ... it moved the culture of the institution. When you look at data like this, one can argue that to not do anything is to perpetuate what is institutional racism. And so, we decided that that was not what we were going to ... we were not going to accept that there would be any achievement gaps at the end of our strategic plan. One of the things that we had to do in order to move the needle on that was to also move people's mindset from thinking that, "Well, we just need an extra program for this population of students." What this showed to us was a deficit in our college. So, we needed to suggest to our people and they did accept ... next slide, please ... the notion that if there are achievement gaps, that's because we weren't ready for the students.

Michael Gavin: To borrow from Doctor McNair's well-said statement, our colleges were not ready for certain students. It wasn't that the students were not ready for college. And so what we did through the Equity Project that Doctor McNair led
... and with the help of Doctor Bensimon ... we started to build new data tables and also to allow data to be shown to all employees on campus. And we built these ... these data show equity gaps. I know we have just a moment of time here. But here you see on the orange line that this is aggregate level, core success of students in all classes. You'll see in the blue lines, that is how well each demographic of student is doing relative to that aggregate level of core success. So, you can see, for instance, there's a nine-point-five achievement gap of African-American students at the aggregate level. On the dropdown boxes on the upper hand side, you can drill down into how each course is doing.

Michael Gavin: And so, we do this for all levels of different kinds of elements. But to the point of making sure that there was some movement on this, we put together for core success a cohort of faculty and high-enrollment, low success courses, such as Psychology 101, Biology 101, and now we have fifteen different courses being taught inclusivity practices for all sections of all courses so that every single professor who’s teaching any of those courses is thinking about how to be inclusive in the teaching. But we don't tell them how to be inclusive.

Michael Gavin: So, when they get the training, at the end of the year after receiving training, they come up with what they define for each discipline high-impact practices of how to eradicate achievement gaps at the course level. And for developmental math already we've eradicated achievement gaps in one year. We've only been doing that for one year but we hope to see the same kind of element happen. And one of the ways that we did this ... next slide, please ... do you remember the slide at the very beginning of this ... we've moved from moving in all directions to a cyclical assessment pattern. The most important element of this is we use data, ask people how to see where there are problems in achievement for students, and then they can ask for resources based on that data and they're talking to each other.

Michael Gavin: To that end, in two years we've attributed two million dollars to equity-based practices, which had not existed before. Meaning we didn't have a mechanism to even do that before two years ago. So, in two years two million dollars to equity-based practices, and we have either moved the needle on or eradicated achievement gaps at the course levels. As a result of some of the recommendations to come from those courses, to include adding more advisors to our institution. With that I'll close because I know we're on short time. Thank you.

Tia McNair: Great. Thank you, Michael, for that. We'll just go ahead and move on to Sheree Meyer, the Dean of College of Arts and Letters at California State University, Sacramento. And, Michael, just so you know, there are a number of questions that were submitted during your session. If you can start answering those that would be wonderful. Thank you so much. Sheree.

Sheree L. Meyer: Thank you, Tia and AAC&U for including Sacramento State and our sister college in Northridge in this project. Thank you, Michael. We've titled ours "Project Launch." Launch actually is an acronym for learning that advances underserved
communities in higher education. And then our subtitle, "From can't do to can do," I think explains a good deal of a change in culture. To give you a very brief example, we have often thought of remediation and placement into math and english in terms of what students can't do. We are trying very hard to move that needle to what not individuals can't do but what the university can do.

Sheree L. Meyer: I should explain that Sacramento State is part of the twenty-three campus CSU system. All of us are currently facing a 2025 deadline to eradicate the graduation achievement gap for various underrepresented minorities. But also for those who are Pell eligible. So, a couple of things that I'd like to go over today are the ways in which faculty hiring and development contribute to achieving our goals, the way in which that also feeds into improving student success, the way we explored how LEAP outcomes through high-impact practices can actually be measured in terms of learning here at Sac State. Throughout you'll hear me talking about achieving shared language and improving our use of data, and then hopefully you'll hear a couple of things from me that indicate some of the lessons learned and the next step. I chose the particular image you see before you with our graduation caps and the identifier that miracles happen because clearly it's not about a miracle. It's about what the institution can do, both from the top down and the bottom up, and how we can make equity, inclusion, and diversity a reality. Next slide, please.

Sheree L. Meyer: So, one of the things that this project funded ... and I'm really grateful to AAC&U for funding it and for its funders as well ... is that we launched a professional learning community. Professional learning communities look a great deal like faculty learning communities. These have syllabi, they happen over a year's time. And I should, by the way, also thank my colleagues over in the Center for Teaching and Learning. During their Summer institute prior to the 16-17 learning community, they discussed and prepared many of our faculty for the actual Equity and Student Success Inclusive Learning for Diverse Learners Program, that happened.

Sheree L. Meyer: One of the interesting things we learned from setting up professional learning communities is that the faculty need the same kinds of high-impact practices that many of us have observed our students need. And the professional learning community provides that. It is, again, a learning community, they have collaborative assignments and projects, they had either an action research or another kind of scholarship of teaching research that they were expected to do. There were many programs about diversity and global learning and intercultural literacy. And finally, not unlike our students, they all had Capstone projects that they needed to present. You can start with a small of engaged faculty and begin to train the trainers outward.

Sheree L. Meyer: Probably my best example of how we've been successful ... and again, this isn't just about our AAC&U project, but it also involves some of our other programming ... is that we have ties to that initial professional learning community. We have an equity and scholarship with teaching and learning community that's forming for Spring 18, Fall 18. We've also taken a really hard
look at the way in which our peer programs are collaborating for equity. And those last year ... and this year we specifically tried to have learning communities that focused on how we use our data analytics, how we do the lessons learned to disaggregate that data, so you don't just have some monolithic underrepresented minority group and fail to look at some of those particular elements.

Sheree L. Meyer: What we did for student success in addition to having each faculty member responsible for changing his or her course, is that we mounted a couple of specific research projects in gateway courses such as our first criminal justice course and our first psych course. Those are both impacted programs. So, there's a high-risk level in terms of that success. But we really gave the funding to the instructor to mount the kind of embedded tutoring and interventions and then to analyze and write up their research. Another nice side product of that was that it involved undergraduate students and graduate students in that research program, so that all of us become engaged in the research of equity, inclusion, and diversity.

Sheree L. Meyer: Last on this slide, I'd be remiss if I didn't say that our president a couple of years ago made an announcement at his Fall gathering ... and Tia was there ... that we were going to be establishing an Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion. We mounted that with an interim Executive Director, Robin Carter. We now have a permanent Director, Diana Tate Vermeire. And one of the things that she likes to emphasize is that we're moving beyond compliance. And in particular we're looking at faculty hiring and retention because again, their success will then help our students to be successful as well. Next slide, please.

Sheree L. Meyer: In terms of evaluating learning outcomes, we wanted to move beyond their data related to retention, persistence, and graduation. So, we're looking at two of our high-impact practices. Our first-year seminar and our Writing Partners at Sac State. Writing Partners at Sacramento State is a service learning project that many of our first-year seminars adopt. It pairs up our students with students in elementary schools. They exchange letters on what it means to be an educated person. And then we invite those elementary school students as a form of outreach and education to the campus to meet with their college student partners.

Sheree L. Meyer: What we wanted to know though is whether or not the outcomes for first-year seminar and for Writing Partners at Sac State were really happening. And so, we designed rubrics in first-year seminar. We took the AAC&U rubric for intercultural literacy, for information literacy. We also looked at ways in which they were integrated their learning, and we were also particular interested in the ways in which their lifelong learning were being enhanced. That, of course, moved us from an assessment of multiple assignments to a recognition of the need for a signature assignment, which was now built with backwards design from those learning outcomes.
Sheree L. Meyer: Then for Writing Partners they wanted to look at the rhetorical outcome, whether or not students understood that writing to a very authentic audience was something that they had learned from. We wanted to make sure that their service learning and community outcome were being accomplished. And last but not least, that they too were integrating what they were learning in their classes with the Writing Partners project.

Sheree L. Meyer: Conclusions were interesting. In addition to seeing where our students met those standards or didn't meet those standards, we had conclusions about the need to more firmly embed additional high-impact practices in our first-year seminar. As we probably suspect, add-ons without full integration do not move that needle. With Writing Partners, they learned as much about the assessment process and are going back to it now to correct both the way they collect data and the way in which their students respond. You can also see that banner in the picture of our first-year students, class of 2020. Again, all of this is about making sure that we are achieving our gradation goals, both our campus goals and our system-wide goals. And part of that is by asserting that they can indeed be part of that four-year graduating class. Next slide, please.

Sheree L. Meyer: There's always a bottom line and as we are all learning, even though one of the things that's been very impressive about both our AAC&U grant, and we also have a DHSI, a Developing HSI Institution grant, is that we have been forced to ... and with great pleasure ... are pleased to see that data is being disaggregated. So, I’m going to finish up with just a couple of things that we’re actually rather proud of and everyone at Sacramento State takes credit for moving from that can't do to can do.

Sheree L. Meyer: Our six-year graduation rate for Hispanic students compared to white students, we have now reduced the gap by seven percentage points. And again, this is the graduation gap. It's now a zero-point-five percentage point difference, and we hope to take that down to zero. Our four-year graduation rate comparing Hispanic students and white students, we've reduced the gap by five percentage points, again bringing that down to a one-point-seven percentage point difference in 2017. Aiming for that zero percentage gap. And then the next one will take us back to that can't do and can do. One of the things that folks often say about many different ethnic groups and economic groups is that they can't take fifteen units and be successful. We're saying they can. Not only can they take it, but we can be successful with them.

Sheree L. Meyer: So, what you see before you are our latest numbers. In Fall 16 you can see that even our white students went from a thirty-six-point-four percent success rate in fifteen units, credit hours. In Fall 17 they're at forty-nine-point-six. Hispanic, we've brought up from twenty-nine-point-zero to forty-one-point-three. And again, these aren't just taking the fifteen units. This is being successful in those fifteen units. Asian students from thirty-five-point-one to forty-two-point-six. And then I'll finish where we still need to do the greatest amount of work, and that is our African American students who started out at a low of nineteen-
point-two percent being successful in their fifteen credit hours in Fall of 16 are now at thirty-four-point-three percent.

Sheree L. Meyer: Still a lot of work to do. We can't do it as a single program. But the wonderful thing about the AAC&U project was that it allowed us to drill down and in collaboration with the university programs, find ways in which we can begin to speak the same language, and aim of the same goals. So, thank you very much for this opportunity and I'm going to turn it over now to Aurélio Manuel Valente from Governors State. Hello, Aurélio.

Aurélio Manuel: Hello. Thank you, Sheree, for sharing your work with us. My name is Aurélio, as we mentioned. I have the distinct honor of serving as the team leader for our campus. Before I go into the details in the next slide, you will see ... I wanted to share some findings from a recent study exploring African-American student success by the Education Trust. In their study, they clearly demonstrate that institutions who choose to tackle equity gaps can make significant progress towards those goals. Conversely, institutions who don't unintentionally contribute to a national epidemic of racial inequality in student outcomes, and racial injustice embedded in our education systems.

Aurélio Manuel: I'm looking at the recommendations. And as a minority-serving institution, GSU's contributions to closing the gap for African-American students, rests squarely in the third front, given more than a third of our undergraduate students are African-American. This call to action served as the impetus for our work and created a sense of urgency for our campus planning team. In the next slide we provide institutional context for our project. Please note that on our project website listed on the bottom right of our slides you will find resources, information, and specific details about our project. In addition, we encourage you to use our hashtag if you are using social media during this presentation.

Aurélio Manuel: Governors State is a public university located thirty miles south of Chicago. Our undergraduate population mirrors that of what has been called the "New Majority Student Population." Fifty-one percent of our students are students of color. Fifty-six percent receive Pell grants. Forty-two percent are first-generation. It's been said that in 2042 the U.S. is expected to be a majority minority country. For GSU 2018 is 2042. Given our designation as a completion college enrolling the vast majority of undergraduates as transfer students, we focus on goals of faculty development for teaching diverse populations and eliminating equity gaps for the retention of African-American transfer students.

Aurélio Manuel: In the next slide you'll see strategies that drove our work with this initiative. Given our institutional profile and student characteristics, we intentionally align our campus based project with AAC&U goals, which you saw earlier. We framed our work with transfer students within the context of the junior year to help mitigate stigma that transfer students may feel and leveraged the creation of our new and innovative Center for the Junior Year and our newly launched junior seminars as vehicles for our work.
Aurélio Manuel: Since transfer students largely enroll in major based coursework, we prioritize funding to faculty development and faculty resources in discipline-based courses rather than general education, as is usually the case when focusing on first-year students. We utilized equity-minded practices from the Center for Urban Education as our approach changes in curriculum, classroom instruction, and delivery of student success interventions. If you haven't already done so, I strongly recommend that every webinar participant explore this framework for advancing this work in your institution.

Aurélio Manuel: Lastly, we utilized equity scorecards to identify gaps across race, gender, and socioeconomic class, both at the institutional level and at the program level, to highlight exemplary programs and identify departments in which further work needs to be focused. In the next slide you will explore two of our campus goals and their outcomes. Our first goal was to implement equity-minded practices to close success gaps for African-American transfer students. Our project aims to increase retention for all students, but also aims to close the gap by 2020. Since this project began we have reduced the equity gap for African-American student retention from five-point-one to three-point-seven in just three years.

Aurélio Manuel: This significant accomplishment is attributed to the adoption of the principles of equity-minded practice, which encompasses five specific practices that include one, being race conscious, two, being institutionally-focused, being three, evidence based, four, being systemically aware, and five and most importantly, being action-oriented. Our second goal was to develop and offer quality high-impact practices in the junior year. GSU sponsored faculty development workshops to plan and organize high-impact practices in the junior seminar and in support services for junior students.

Aurélio Manuel: To share information about our project, we hosted workshops to promote these four goals. In total, fifty-six faculty members and academic support staff participated. As a result, the many grant recipients have reached nearly sixty-five percent of our undergraduate population. In evaluating our workshops, seventy-three percent of faculty reported that they plan to adopt equity-minded practices in their classroom. In the next slide you'll see our last two goals. Our third goal was to create and assess signature learning assignments, focused on social responsibility.

Aurélio Manuel: Consistent with GSU's mission to build an institution that is socially responsible, we utilize grant funds to create and assess signature learning assignments. Seventy-six percent of the many grant recipients addressed this project goal. Overall, instructors who participated in this project found the utilization of service and signature assignments to assess learning outcomes as a valuable experience. Our fourth and final goal included developing pathways for internships and workforce preparation. The Center for Junior Year visited twenty-one junior seminars and connected with nearly four hundred students. Their presentations focus on using purpose to design a field of study that brings together their goals, which make them marketable for the hidden market.
Aurélio Manuel: In addition, the Center also saw success from institutionalizing many grant outcomes for our internships and workforce preparation. Seventy-one percent of the many grant participants addressed this project goal. In our last slide we would like to share lessons learned and future directions for our work. First, after we introduced the concept of equity-minded practices, it became very clear that faculty and academic professionals operate under the premise that you should treat everyone equally to mitigate bias, claims of bias. As a result, shifting to equitable outcomes caused a great deal of tension, particularly around minority-serving institutions with majority white faculty and staff.

Aurélio Manuel: Deeper conversations were needed in the many grant workshops to address this concern. We’ve re-designed our program, sponsored Deep Dives, focusing specifically on equity-minded practices. As a result, the number of mini-grants that address equity went from fifty percent the first year, eighty-five percent the second year. Now in our final year, a hundred percent of the mini-grants were addressing equity issues in a classroom. We also found a good point to apply an intersectional lens when looking at equity-minded practices. Adopting equity score cards was a significant step in actualizing these practices. Initially we looked at racial dimensions discreetly. It was not only under we examined the gaps more carefully that we realized that simply focusing on African American students was insufficient. We needed to focus more, specifically supporting African American adult learners, given the intersecting nature of social groups, identities, such as race, gender, and class, on the overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination.

Aurélio Manuel: This observation changes both the direction and the intervention of our efforts from solely focusing on mentoring to also looking at connecting students to social services. In addition to many grants supporting this project titled, “An Appreciative Study of African-American Women Who Successfully Navigate The Junior Year.” A tweet from the undergraduate research team’s presentation is on this slide. Lastly, given the project has concluded through AAC&U, the campus planning team is focused on sustaining this project by integrating the work of our goals with other campus interconnected initiatives. Considering social justice and student outcomes are key institutional values.

Aurélio Manuel: The campus planning team is collecting equity efforts more intentionally without student success initiatives, funded by Title three federal grant. A male success initiative funded by the Foundation, and a new state-wide initiative titled, “The Partnership For College Completion” here in Illinois. That concludes my presentation and I’d like to transition to our next presenter, Solomon from Morgan State.

Solomon Alao: Thank you for that introduction. I am Solomon Alao from Morgan State University. Morgan State University is a historically black college and university, HBCU, here in Baltimore, Maryland. We strongly believe in equity and academic excellence. The focus today is on increasing access to high-impact practices of undergraduate students. Next slide, please.
Solomon Alao: The goals of the Inclusive Excellence Project, you've already heard about it from Doctor McNair, and they're listed there. But for today my focus is on increasing student access to and participation in high-impact practices. Next slide, please. High-impact practices we're all familiar with... they're different areas of high-impact practice. For instance, first-year experience, common intellectual, learning community, all the way down to capstone and courses. If you want more information on this, obviously you can look at the references that are there on the screen. But the importance here is that high-impact practices actively engage students in the teaching and learning process and we have a better chance of academic excellence and success as we do this from the freshmen to the senior year. So, we have a concept called longitudinal infusion, which means that high-impact practice does not end after the sophomore year when students stop taking gen ed. It goes all the way to the end and even beyond. Next slide, please.

Solomon Alao: So, here's the first data I wanted to share with the audience or the participants... is that professional development is very, very important in increasing participation in high-impact practices. As you can see, in Fall 2015 we found out that a lot of our general education faculty members were not really familiar with high-impact practices. We engaged in professional development opportunities, not only at the general education level but at the university level. The focus here is obviously on the gen ed and you can see the data in the Fall of 2017 that we have engaged more faculty members to be more intentional. So, what you're looking at is an intentional data and you can see that we've increased that by nineteen more faculty in the gen ed track.

Solomon Alao: The second part is the high-impact practices by faculty teaching freshmen and sophomores... second general education courses. You can see there that again we've increased the number of faculty who are implementing signature assignment, projects that have to do with high-impact practices and VALUE rubrics. Next slide, please. When we talk about redesigning of courses, we're not talking about it in the general sense. Here is more of the infusion of the high-impact practices into courses using technology, using signature assignments and projects. You can see there that we've redesigned from Fall 2016 to Fall 2017, we redesigned twenty-four different courses. You can see the different areas on the left there and you can see some of the sample high-impact practices in the middle and you can see the total impact we've had with impact over two thousand one hundred students. There are more, of course, if we would have counted the ones for Spring of 18, but you know, right now we think we're moving north and we're heading in the right direction. Next slide, please.

Solomon Alao: We also looked at core success rates, and when we talk about core success rates, we're defining them as the number of students with grades of A, B, and C in those courses that were redesigned. You can see in the beginning of the project a benchmark was seventy percent. And you can see since the beginning of the project to Fall after the Spring of 2016, that we've actually exceeded the seventy percent that we set for ourself. So, we believe we are, again, headed in
the right direction. The signature assignments are going to be graded with the VALUE rubrics and as we get that data we will share it with our peers. Next slide, please.

Solomon Alao: Sustainability planning. Yes, we really believe in inclusive and academic excellence. I mentioned we used monthly meetings and reports, we've improved dissemination of the data of the outcomes at different levels, and we were successful at acquiring a five-year, two million dollar grant from United Negro College Fund, UNCF, on guided learning pathways. That is already ... not will but is already incorporating high-impact practices for the work preparation and it's now university-wide and that's another thing that we're proud of as far as participating in this project.

Solomon Alao: And of course, elements again of the UNC grant include improving undergraduate curriculum from the freshman through the senior year, infusion of twenty-first-century skills in the curriculum, problem solving, critical thinking, collaboration and team work, self-determination, decision making, and of course, improving commitment to equity and inclusive excellence. Next slide, please.

Solomon Alao: Some of the key promises and practices that we have found have to do with professional development. We've talked about that. Monthly progress report to AAC&U and to our Morgan State University community. That held us accountable and we appreciate that too. Even though we really had to work to make sure that we meet those monthly deadlines. We use data to develop action plans in equity, inclusive excellence. We aligned the project goals to the strategic goal of the university. We used the established committees that we already had to make sure that there's a seamless transition. So, we are a University Assessment Committee general education. Use of technology, obviously to collect, analyze, and distribute data on the project. And of course, we had support from the beginning ... from the president, provost, vice president, deans, chairs, faculty, and so forth.

Solomon Alao: And of course, we'd like to thank AAC&U for giving us the opportunity to be able to publish and present the results to our peers country-wide. That is the conclusion of my presentation. Next slide, please. I would now like to turn it back over to Doctor McNair.

Tia McNair: Thank you. Thank you, Solomon. Thank you, everyone, for sharing your stories with us and your progress that you've made as part of this effort. I just want to remind everyone that the slides will be posted as well as the recording after the webinar is complete, and also the Q and A. And if you pay attention to what's going on in the Q and A, our panelists have been answering your questions. They're wonderful. There are a few of them ... a few of the questions that we want to open up to the whole group to make sure that we address at a larger scale and so that we get multiple comments from them.
Tia McNair: One of the questions ... we have had lots of questions about incentivizing faculty to do this work. And what are some of the strategies that you've utilized in order to incentivize faculty to engage in commitment to equity and inclusive excellence and transforming their courses and embedding high-impact practices. A number of you can probably answer that but if someone wants to jump in that would be wonderful.

Solomon Alao: I'd like to comment on that. We have several incentives for the faculty members. For the faculty members we had them develop signature assignments. So, for every faculty member that wanted to develop the signature assignments, we had a stipend of two hundred and fifty dollars for them to have to be able to develop that. If they wanted to develop more than one signature assignment, they could, you know, the money increased. So, that was one way that we incentivized.

Solomon Alao: Another way that we did that was faculty members had opportunity to go to conferences. So, in other words if they participated and they were interested in this, they did that on their own. Of course, the academic affairs and provost also gave opportunities for faculty members to engage in learning how to improve their pedagogy this Summer, and each of those faculty members received a thousand dollars, not only to participate in opportunities but also to work with our Director for Teaching and Learning to learn how to engage students more actively in the teaching and learning process and improve assessments.

Solomon Alao: And of course, as we acquire the new grant from UNCF, some of the faculty members also had opportunities to write grants and then to improve the internship process. But if they wanted to improve their courses, that is actually campus-wide. Those are some of the examples of how we incentivized at Morgan State University.

Tia McNair: Great. Does anyone else want to add?

Sheree L. Meyer: Well, this is Sheree. I think one of the things that I am pleased that we have done ... with the professional learning community ... and this isn't just for the AAC&U community but all of them ... upon completion and dissemination ... and I think that's a key right? They go through the entire program, they have a set of deliverables, and then we typically provide funding in faculty development funds and how they use those faculty development funds is up to them. So, there's this sense of completion, there's this sense of dissemination, and then we really are respectful of the ways in which our faculty would use the funding that they've been provided.

Tia McNair: Great. Thank you. Another question that we had is about the support from the executive administration and leadership and engaging the in this process and having accountability for the work that's going forward. Does anyone want to spend a few minutes talking about that and how that was approached as part of this work?
Michael Gavin: I’d be happy to answer part of that. Actually that’s sort of the cornerstone of the work for us is ... as Vice President I sit with the President and the other two Vice Presidents at our college and there’s two elements that make us accountable. One is that we’ve established institutional KPIs to look at how well students are progressing. All of those KPIs are disaggregated by ... I should have also mentioned during my presentation they’re disaggregated also by gender and different ways that weren't appearing on one slide there.

Michael Gavin: But the other way we did establish accountability was ... I mentioned that we had twenty different teams that were established for our strategic plan. They had to submit up to three-year plans to implement different projects associated with our high-impact practices for the institution. They had to have quarterly deliverables and we track those on a system that is through our research office. We check how well each of those are being ... how the progress of each is doing each quarter. And so, there's accountability at that level as well.

Tia McNair: Great, thank you. Anyone else want to add to that?

Solomon Alao: Yes. Here at Morgan State University we did it through monthly progress reports. From the beginning of the project, of course the president was involved and of course the provost was involved. So, every month we report to the University Assessment Committee on our progress. As you know, that’s a representative of every different college and school on there, we do that. Then we also reported to the General Education Committee every month. We reported to our Board on a quarterly basis. So, on a monthly basis the progress report was shared campus-wide and of course, with AAC&U with their monthly progress report. So, we ... progress report was the main vehicle that we used at Morgan State University.

Tia McNair: Great. Thank you. Here’s a question I think that you all can answer. How do you get past initiative fatigue?

Sheree L. Meyer: I think you have to work ... part of what was exciting here at Sac State ... and I think initiative fatigue is very real ... is that we began to align various programs with each other. So, for example we have lots of different kinds of peer mentor and peer support programs. All of us were creating our own training and all of us were creating our own guidelines. One of the things that the DHSI grant helped us do was to bring those people together. So, again, they had a community and they weren't working in isolated and feeling like they carried their own small programs solely on their own shoulders. So, I think one of the ways that you work on ... you know, against that fatigue ... is by making sure there's intersections among those initiatives.
Tia McNair: Great. Thank you. Here's another question. The tips for conducting an equity audit at the beginning of this process ... do you have any tips on how you went about that? Aurélio, do you want to take that one?

Aurélio Manuel: Absolutely. I can't begin to tell you how critical the use of equity scorecards were for us. Not only as a tool to assess institutional data but then break that out for programs. Not only were we able to identify programs that we can support, but we found that within our programs, some excelled, they were exemplary and assessed. So, that allowed us to leverage not only external resources but tap into our programs. For example, nursing and business administration, they outperformed our equity goals for both African-American students and Latino students.

Tia McNair: Great. Thank you. Anyone else want to add to that? Good. I think that was wonderful. Thank you. What about some examples of professional development workshops that you incorporated as part of this program? Aurélio, do you want to take that too?

Aurélio Manuel: Absolutely. Happy to. Obviously faculty had to participate in the workshops that was two hours and I'm happy to share both the agenda and the presentation for that. But in addition to that we offer meetings and support for the faculty too at the program. In some cases, it was about programming. They might have been doing a mentoring program and they weren't able to secure rooms or funding. Our support staff, Lisa Cara, who's absolutely fantastic for example, in supporting our faculty ... many cases they talk to her more than they did to me. So, on-going communication throughout the program. I heard Solomon talk, for example, monthly meetings as critically important.

Tia McNair: Great. Thank you. There's a question about did you investigate how many instructors were already utilizing high-impact practices in their classes successfully at the beginning of the project before you established your equity gaps.

Solomon Alao: Yes. At Morgan State University ... if you'll remember, Tia ... we actually had a survey that was distributed to faculty members ... to understand how well they were doing with high-impact practices and using VALUE rubrics and active engagement of student in the classroom. And what we found out was that there was a need campus-wide. There were very few faculty members ... I will say about twenty percent ... that were actually doing what we want to be done. So, using that data we then use that data to start to understand exactly the differentiating needs of the faculty members. Some faculty members said the reason that they need more time to be able to deliver this.

Solomon Alao: Some faculty members talked about they didn't have enough competence, they didn't have enough knowledge. And so, that gave us an opportunity to bring in experts, especially ... as a matter of fact, one from AAC&U last Fall. We have something called the Faculty Institute. So, we have somebody from AAC&U come in and talk about high-impact practices and inclusive excellence. Over
three hundred members of the faculty members participated in that. But that all stemmed from the fact that we knew that we needed to give the faculty member more education on the process.

Tia McNair: Great. Thank you. Lorenzo, this is a question for you. People are asking about funding for these types of initiatives and securing ... what partners did we have in funding for securing our work and the potential work going forward. Will we have another grant? Were you funding similar grants? And as I said, that's always a good question. We want to hear this answer. Everyone wants to hear this answer.

Lorenzo Esters: Well, Tia, I'm wondering ... did you plant that question actually?

Tia McNair: I did not! I did not!

Lorenzo Esters: It's a really good question. I will tell you that we continue our conversation with AAC&U and Tia in particular, about the next phase of our investment with AAC&U. We have not settled as to whether or not it'll be focused on this particular ... on equity. Or we will move to some other project. I will share with the audience that we are planning to release a request for proposals in June of this year that will focus on the three areas of our funding strategy, which I shared at the beginning of the webinar.

Lorenzo Esters: We only fund collaborative efforts. So, we do not fund individual institutions except through RFP. So, if you have the interest in that please continue to watch our website, Strada Education dot org. And stay tuned as it relates to AAC&U.

Tia McNair: Thank you. Thank you. Our last question before we wrap up. There's been lots of interest ... we've talked a lot about faculty and what happens in the classroom. But a lot of questions about professional staff and student affairs educators. What type ... how they have been involved in this work that we've done? Does someone want to address that and the importance of having all educators on campus participate in a commitment and a drive for equity and student success?

Sheree L. Meyer: Well, again. Mine is fairly brief. It's why we shifted for this particular activity from a faculty learning community to a professional learning community. And the professional learning community included folks from IRT, for example, and student affairs. Many of these projects are cross-divisional. And so, I think that's a really good question and I think that's why you have to expand those circles to include those staff members as well.

Tia McNair: Great. Thank you. Aurélio, you were going ...

Aurélio Manuel: Absolutely. Our equity planning team was half student affairs and half academic affairs, professionalism and faculty. This intra-cultural student affairs, Robert Clague, was instrumental with helping navigate particularly faculty that were
nervous about addressing equity issues in their classroom. Our event planning team really supported the faculty in executing initiatives outside of the classroom. So, obviously I'm biased here but I think student affairs folks are critical in successful implementing a program campus-wide.

Tia McNair: Great. Thank you all so much for joining us this afternoon and being part of this panel and participating in this webinar. Thank you to all of the attendees who participated with us virtually. We appreciate your attendance and your engagement with our topic today, "A Vision for Equity." Here is the link to the publication where you can read about all of the campuses and their work. And please download ... there's a free PDF on our website. As I mentioned before, the recording from this webinar will be posted on our website along with a transcript of the Q and A. And also, I think a copy of the slides will be posted as well. So, thank you all for joining us this afternoon and we hope you have a wonderful evening.