

JAMES FARMER MULTICULTURAL CENTER ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

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UMW Welcomes New Associate Provost for Equity and Inclusion/Chief Diversity Officer



Photo courtesy: University Relations
Photo by Dr. Kai Kuang

On January 3, 2022, Dr. Shavonne Shorter began her first official day at the University in her new role as Associate Provost for Equity and Inclusion and Chief Diversity Officer. She also has the title of associate professor in the Department of Communication and Digital Studies. Even though the weather was extremely cold that day, she received a very warm welcome as she joined the UMW family and Fredericksburg community.

Dr. Shorter states that she is “looking forward to working with the campus and local community to continue our pursuit of diversity, equity, and inclusion excellence in all that we do. I am so honored to work with a very special team of hard-

working individuals to carry out this vision through the new Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion which includes the Office of Disability Resources, the Office of Title IX, Safe Zone, and partnerships with the Center for Prevention and Education and the James Farmer Multicultural Center.”

Her dream in serving in this position is “that our student body and workforce reflect the rich diversity of our state. And once welcomed into the UMW family, we must do everything that we can to support people along their way to achieving important milestones such as graduations or promotions.” In addition, we must “continually foster a culture where everyone can thrive... every student must see themselves represented in the content they are learning about in the classroom... continually engage in training to learn about life experiences that are different from ours and how to best honor the humanity of others. That we re-commit ourselves to our ASPIRE values and foster a climate where everyone is welcome, respected, and can be themselves.”

When asked what is she most excited about as she joins the UMW community, Dr. Shorter responded she is “most excited about the opportunity to meet the members of our community. To achieve this vision, it will take the efforts of everyone working together collaboratively. I look forward to meeting others to work with them on identifying how they can play a part in helping us become a better UMW. But more specifically I would love to connect with you, so please feel free to email me at sshorter@umw.edu and let’s transform UMW together!”



Upcoming Events

Human Rights Film Series: Waging Change

Tuesday, March 8 | 6 pm
Capital Room, University Center

WHM Keynote

Wednesday, March 9 | 7 p.m.
Chandler C Ballroom, University Center or
to attend virtually [sign up here](#).

Social Justice Teach-In: International Access to Education

Monday, March 21 | 6 pm
Chandler Ballroom C, University Center

ICC Banquet

Thursday, April 7 | 7 p.m.
Chandler Ballroom C, University Center

32nd Annual Multicultural Fair

Saturday, April 9 | 10 am – 5pm
UMW Fredericksburg Campus

Passover Seder

Tuesday, April 19 | 6 p.m.
Chandler Ballroom C, University Center

For information about upcoming events and programs at the James Farmer Multicultural Center, visit our website at umw.edu/multicultural



Spring Cultural Celebrations Bring Enlightening Keynote Speakers

2022 Black History Month Keynote Program:

Dr. Marceline Catlett



On Wednesday, February 9th at 7:00 pm in the Chandler Ballroom, Dr. Marceline Catlett delivered the keynote address for UMW's annual Black History Month celebration. Dr. Catlett is the first African American Superintendent of Fredericksburg City Public Schools (FCPS), and has over 39 years of experience with FCPS. Dr. Catlett has received multiple awards for her achievements in education, leadership and community service.

In addition, she helped to establish and launch the UMW James Farmer Scholars program in the 1980s. In her keynote address, Dr. Catlett discussed the campus theme of Black History Month this year: "Healing Through History: Recognizing Our Struggles While Celebrating Our Triumphs." Dr. Catlett found this theme to be appropriate given the particularly challenging nature of these times. She noted that Black History Month allows for "healing from the distressing events of our past that continue to haunt us in the present...these opportunities provide us as individuals to lift our spirits and share in the healing process with others as we recognize and learn from our struggles and celebrate the Black, proud, bold, worthy, beautiful, brave and powerful race of people we are!"

Dr. Catlett also reflected on her own history, which she described as "her-story." As a "child of the Civil Rights Movement" and "teenager of the Black Power Revolution," Dr. Catlett emphasized the role of Black history in her own personal development. "As an African-American woman...knowing my history has formulated who I am," she said. "Knowing Black history has molded, equipped, and anchored me in knowledge, self-worth, pride, and confidence!" Dr. Catlett also talked about the importance of being "rooted in fertile soil." "What healed me from the scars and pain of what I viewed as the plight of Blacks in America" said Catlett, "was the love of my family, our faith in God, understanding of the importance of education, an appreciation of family, friends and the community, and serving others."

Dr. Catlett went on to talk about her hopes for the future. "Being here on this campus to see President Obama and witness the first African-American President and first woman Vice President Harris elected ...now that is truly Black History," she said. "Seeing all races of Americans understand why the Black Lives Matter Movement mattered, and on the home front being appointed the first African-American Superintendent ...making history...contributing to our rich and too often untold Black history." Dr. Catlett concluded her speech by reemphasizing the importance of Black history. "My life and experiences are a testament to why it is critical that we continue to heal from the struggles of our past...by being knowledgeable about Black history. We must acknowledge and learn from our struggles and celebrate our accomplishments and triumphs. You, we, and I can never give up the fight for freedom and justice for all. I stand here today because I am rooted in fertile soil and grounded in faith...I have no fear!"

2022 Women's History Month Keynote Speaker:

Marguerite Bennett



Wed., March 9 | 7 p.m.

Chandler Ballroom C,
University Center

To attend this event
virtually, please [register
here](#).

Co-sponsored by the
College of Arts and
Sciences, and the
Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Program, and the
Department of English and Linguistics

UMW alum **Marguerite Bennett ('10)** is a GLAAD-nominated, bestselling comic book writer whose credits include DC Comics' Bombshells, Batwoman, Batgirl, and Supergirl. She's also written for Aftershock Comics, Image Comics, Marvel, and more.

Mark your calendars for UMW's Annual Giving Day



Giving Day is Tuesday, April 5

For 24 hours, the Mary Washington community will be celebrating our commitment to UMW's future through gifts and donations! Your gifts and support are a commitment to raising multicultural and diversity awareness, ensuring the highest quality of programs and services, social justice engagement, and outreach for the campus.

Help us show how we are #TogetherUMW and #TogetherJFMC by helping us spread the word.

Visit us and donate at givingday.umw.edu!