CENTER FOR DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION



CELEBRATING BLACK HISTORY MONTH Every February, the U.S. celebrates Black History Month and honors the sacrifices and triumphs of African Americans who have helped shape the nation. The story of Black History Month began in 1915 after the Thirteenth Amendment abolished slavery. This is when Carter G. Woodson and Jesse E. Moorland founded the Association for the Study of African American Life and History and focused on promoting achievements by Black Americans. President Gerald Ford officially recognized Black History Month in 1976. Every year, the ASALH chooses a theme. For 2023, "Black Resistance" is the theme.

The ASALH chose "Black Resistance" as the 2023 theme, stating, "African Americans have resisted historical and ongoing oppression, in all forms, especially the racial terrorism of lynching, racial pogroms, and police killings since our arrival upon these shores. These efforts have been to advocate for a dignified self-determined life in a just democratic society in the United States and beyond the United States political jurisdiction."

WE ARE OHSU

OHSU is a diverse campus with members with different identities. Diversity is one of our core values, and we strive to create an environment of respect and inclusion. We acknowledge that diversity is not always seen, and we want to be intentional. The Center for Diversity and Inclusion started an initiative to highlight OHSU members in an interview series named We Are OHSU. This will go on all year long, where we can uplift and celebrate members of all communities, highlighting their impact on campus and their daily lives and showing everyone the wonderful communities we belong to.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thank you to CDI Diversity Trainer, Briana Nathanielsz, for helping curate thoughtful questions for Black History Month.

WE ARE OHSU JEANINE SMITH

Jeanine Smith is the Practice Manager for family medicine at the South Waterfront. Jeanine has been at OHSU for eight years. In her role, Jeanine supports the doctors, nurses, MAs, and admin staff in her department and manages their \$9 million budget. She feels honored and privileged to get to work with the people who are experts in what they do. She jokes about her role as a band instructor, bringing people together to make a melodious sound.

What do you like most about your position and working at OHSU?

One of the things I love about working here is that there is such a family feel. There is no "You do this because I am the boss," we all work together, teach each other and embrace one another. Right before pandemic, there was a burnout survey, and Family Medicine had one of the lowest rates. They asked us how, and I said the biggest thing for us, is that we listen; it is essential to listen and treat everyone equally.

Moment or project that you are currently working on that makes you proud?

I am a facilitator for the camaraderie project, which is support for practice managers. There is a sixweek session where we get together and share stories and suggestions for practice managers and allowing everyone to be heard. I am

listening and finding ways I can be a resource to others. I am enjoying being a part of this project. I am also part of the leader mentoring program; they will assign me a mentee to mentor. I hope I can be an example to other BIPOC mentees. When I started at OHSU eight years ago, I was one of the few Black practice managers; I really want to encourage, embrace, and empower a mentee and for them to have a person that looks like them in this field and how important it is to have representation in healthcare.

Can you give me an example of where resilience helped you overcome adversity?

There are times when I am the only Black woman in spaces and that sometimes can be difficult. I remember to press through adversities like this and letting my voice be heard. No one ever made mef eel like I did not belong,



but you sometimes feel alone. I am proud of coming in and just being Jeanine and nothing else. I did not try to change who I was, that speaks to the resilience through an adversity.

It was difficult for me to see everything with George Floyd, and it was hard to see and hear everything especially in a very white city. I had to go self-reflect and see past the adversity and asked myself, why are we still here? There was a voice

out there saying we had a long way to go. What helped me was keeping my eyes and ears open to things I could be involved with and focus on the things I could do to make a positive impact within my job and my community.

How does reclaiming the history of resistance help social justice efforts today?

Ensuring we can create a safe space and we can be heard and not muted. That Black people can feel like our lives can be sustained and respected.

How do you celebrate Black joy?

I celebrate me! I celebrate with self-care. I have two daughters, and I love celebrating them, reminding them that they can be who they want to be and that they do not have to be muted and they can embrace themselves. I love Black Girls PDX; they have a lot of events and gatherings. They had a Black girl's brunch and it was amazing to see all the BIPOC women and be with community.



WEARE OHSU JENNIFER LANIER

Jennifer Lanier is a Standardized Patient and Gynecological Teaching Associate Trainer. Her department offers live action simulation in clinical scenarios where patient communication is the primary focus. This type of simulation helps learners build crucial communication soft-skills necessary for patient care while administering medical care. Jennifer works with Standardized Patients to prepare them to portray the roles of the cases given by faculty, prioritizing the well-being of SPs and working alongside faculty to ensure the cases meet the objectives. Jennifer has been at OHSU for almost 14 years and started as a Standardized Patient.

What do you like most about your position and working at OHSU?

I love how collaborative it is. I love working with a group of people and finding everyone's skill set to make a project happen while using all our strengths. That is fun to me and it is a daily occurrence to problem solve here. I really love having a positive effect on learners. I feel very proud to be part of them becoming more open to and accepting of people who are different from them. BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and Peoples of Color) and queer folks have dealt with healthcare inequities and one of my priorities is that their identities are represented in these simulation cases so the future generations of healthcare employees can work towards providing highquality care to everyone.

This year's national Black History Month theme is Black Resistance; why do you think this topic is important?

Resistance is the way things change for people who have been marginalized. We would still be in a country that enslaved people if it had not been for so much resistance. Black people have struggled to stay alive and sane in this country since August 1619. From that beginning, there was resistance. We resisted in so many undercover ways when we were enslaved and during Jim Crow: refusing to accept white people telling us we were not really human, dying instead of accepting one more act of violence, arguing for equal pay and equal treatment even when threatened with bodily harm. We resist by voting for people who love our humanity. We resist by creating amazing

art. We resist by raising our children to be confident and empathetic. It is crucial to our forward progress as people and as Americans. Resistance is the basis of social change; I have seen this happen and flip many scripts in this country.

Do you see resilience as being a quality that someone can learn or develop? If so, how? What small steps do you think you can take toward becoming more resilient?

I believe folks can learn resiliency. For instance, I am allowing more space for rest and joy in my life. This makes it easier to handle difficulties and gives me more space for patience, tolerance and acceptance of the everyday. When I am overwhelmed by racism, sexism or homophobia, I reach out to help quicker or I take a timeout when I can. This

way, intense feelings have somewhere to go instead of building up. I have also learned to speak out when I see these things in my own life as much as I am able and that ability grows every year.

How do you celebrate Black joy?

I love making people laugh. I learned from both sides of my family to make people laugh; since I was a little kid, they both have people who could tell a story, hold your attention, and make you laugh. These stories have stayed with me because of that. This is a family legacy of being able to joyfully go through the world so that people will listen to what I say when it is time for that. I also pay attention to all these amazing Black artists; I think the joy that comes out of

Black artistry is extradentary, and I always want to celebrate that. The acting I get to do with my Shakespeare company, one of the things I try to do is celebrate the fact that I get to be on that stage. I celebrate by showing love and sharing with those around me as often as possible.

Anything you would like to add?

This is a place (stimulation department) that has been working hard to be allies. People are not done yet, but people are doing the work. I would love to give a shoutout to my colleagues for willing to be uncomfortable to learn. That is why I am here because people are willing to go a way out to be allies and prioritize to create a positive impact.



WE ARE OHSU SHAY HAMPTON

For the past four years, Shay Hampton has worked as a Health Unit Coordinator (HUC) and a Certified Nurse Assistant in 5A family medicine. In her role, Shay helps discharge patients and perform non-clinical duties. Shay started as a CNA when she started her journey at OHSU 27 years ago.

Is there an inspirational moment in Black history that has impacted your personal journey?

The quote, "Faith is taking the first step, even when you can't see the staircase," by Martin Luther King Jr resonates with me. My community faces challenges, and MLK reminds me to have faith, move forward, and overcome barriers.

What do you enjoy most about your job at OHSU

I appreciate the commitment that OHSU has for diversity and the strong messaging around there being no tolerance for hate here. I like being here because we have a dedicated team and trust in my department. I love working with the doctors and the nurses; we all have a bond. I look forward to getting up daily and caring for patients and their loved ones. I have faith and trust and believe in myself.

When the pandemic started, visitors were not allowed in the hospital. People were isolated, and I took the time to make sure I talked to folks and ensured they were okay. I must also remind myself not to be discouraged in times like this and remember to trust myself and the people around me. I feel like this is my journey, and I feel like I am exactly where I am supposed to be, taking care of patients at OHSU.

Why is it important that Black people be represented in your field of work?

It is very important for Black people to be represented in healthcare. There are culture differences, and it is crucial to have people taking care of you who share the same identities, make you feel comfortable and understand.

How do you celebrate Black joy?

I like going to programs within my community that celebrate my culture. I love getting together with my community, that is my joy, to come together.



