

Greetings and Salutations, Wingate University.

It is my honor and privilege to join the Bulldogs as your vice president and chief diversity officer. I bring with me a sincere passion for justice that has informed my work in diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging for more than 30 years. I have worked to shed light on the needs of those who live their lives at the intersection of one or more underrepresented or underserved identities and to prepare all students to thrive in an increasingly diverse and interconnected world. I believe this work is necessary to prepare students to be competitive and successful in a global labor market. Even after 30 years, I still learn something new every day. And the more I learn, the more I realize how much I still have to learn. I suppose I am a clear example of a lifelong learner.

I hail most recently from Western Carolina University where I served for five years as the director of intercultural affairs, but I was born in Tuskegee, Alabama. I have also worked extensively in residential life, human resources and leadership development as I continued a tradition of formal classroom teaching at every collegiate level, including undergrad, masters and doctoral. While I have worked for several prestigious colleges and universities, it is important for you to know that this role at Wingate University is the pinnacle of my career. I can finally use the knowledge gained over the years to inform the development of more equitable policies and procedures.

It is my goal to contribute to the development of a holistic and inclusive learning environment that is supported by our common commitment to faith, knowledge and service. I believe that I bring insight and tools that, if implemented, can help us to enhance student success including access, inclusion, retention and completion.

I am a very collaborative and visionary leader who welcomes the opportunity to join you in the dynamic work already underway at Wingate. Everyone I have had the pleasure to meet, including faculty, staff, students and administrators, has welcomed me with open arms. I want every person who steps onto our campus to enjoy the warm and welcoming environment that I have experienced at Wingate. I look forward to working with the campus and surrounding communities to enhance student success and make Wingate University the destination location for anyone who longs for an inclusive and intellectually stimulating learning environment.

Words seem insufficient to express how excited I am to be here, so I suppose my actions will just have to speak for themselves. If you happen to see me wandering around on one of my many excursions across our lovely campus, please do come over and say hello. If I have not already done so, I look forward to meeting you and learning more about the magic that makes Wingate so special from your perspective.

Lead with love,

Dana Murray Patterson, Ph.D.
Vice President and Chief Diversity Officer
Wingate University