

NEWSLETTER

#EmbraceEquity

From the PA DEI Committee

Welcome to our Spring newsletter of 2023. As part of our commitment to ensuring that all families at UNIS are included in the DEI journey, the Newsletter is an important tool and means of communication. It provides information and resources to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion for us all.

This edition is dedicated to **Women's Herstory Month**. We are celebrating the phenomenal women in the UNIS parent community and that teach our children. These women **Tell Our Stories** and are teaching us to **Embrace Equity**. We are sure you will enjoy the read.

Shaneke Bains - shaneke.bains@pa.unis.org

To read previous newsletters, go to the UNIS PA website - [CLICK HERE](#)



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PARENTING IS POLITICAL

Educating our Children from a Social Justice Lens

UNIS PA DEI Committee will host a free Interactive & Experiential workshop that will benefit parents and caregivers alike. [Dr. Rani Varghese, LMSW, Ed.D](#) and [Dr. Michael Funk, Ed.D](#) will introduce participants to a social justice approach to having conversations about issues of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion with our children. **Monday, 6th & 13th March 2023 from 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm at UNIS (no recording)**

RSVP HERE

MAR 8

International
Women's
Day

MARCH

WOMEN'S
HISTORY
MONTH

MAR 15

Equal
Pay
Day

APR 8

LGBTQ
Day
of
Silence

Women's Herstory Month

Celebrating Women Who Tell Our Stories

**WOMEN'S
HISTORY
MONTH**

Throughout 2023, the [National Women's History Alliance](https://www.history.com/history/100-100-100) will encourage the recognition of women, past and present, who have been active in all forms of media and storytelling including print, radio, TV, stage, screen, blogs, podcasts, news, and social media. This timely theme honors women in every community who have devoted their lives and talents to producing art and news, pursuing truth and reflecting society decade after decade.

The National Women's History Alliance is credited with the establishment of National Women's History Month in 1980. Women's history is a veritable treasure-trove of unknown stories. While March is Women's History month, there are far too many people who don't know that, let alone celebrate it. What is history other than our collective stories? Our story-telling sisters in the media are essential in making history visible for themselves and their foremothers. Together, we can change the story landscape finally and forever.

As the late Ursula LeGuin said, "We are volcanoes. When we women offer our experience as our truth, all the maps change. There are new mountains. That's what I want — to hear you erupting. You Mount Saint Helens-es who don't know the power in you — I want to hear you... If we don't tell our truth, who will?"

source: [history.com](https://www.history.com), [nwha.org](https://www.nwha.org) [history.com](https://www.history.com)

Treasures: Women Who Tell Our Stories

Explore items in the Polonsky Exhibition of The New York Public Library's Treasures that showcase women storytellers in many forms, from arts and media to advocacy. The women featured include writers, performers, photographers, illustrators, designers, and civil rights campaigners who entertained, inspired, and made history by utilizing their talents and sharing their experiences.



SPOTLIGHT

MS DEI Coordinator - Gina Voskov

I am a 7th grade Advisor and English teacher and a Middle School DEI co-coordinator. I arrived at UNIS in 2008 and have worked in the Middle School ever since. I think it's the best place to be!

It's not easy, but being a middle schooler isn't easy either. I think that's one of the main reasons I wanted to work in DEI.

I joined DEI because of storytelling. I'm a [Moth](#) storyteller and co-created a unit of live storytelling in the 7th grade that lasted for many years. I saw firsthand that when students heard each other's stories, they came to know each other better. And if we know each other well, we aren't as likely to rely on stereotypes and assumptions when we interact. The potential for harm decreases, and feelings of belonging strengthen.

I have also been working with researchers at NYU about listening, which is the other side of the storytelling coin. Through that work, I've developed a curriculum to support community members' work toward replacing judgement/stereotypes with curiosity.

“.. if we know each other well, we aren't as likely to rely on stereotypes and assumptions when we interact. ”



My fundamental belief is that when we are curious about each other's histories, when we learn how to gain access to each other's precious stories, we can belong to each other. This takes time, patience, and a willingness to be vulnerable both in listening and speaking. But I think these ideas and practices are crucial to DEI work, which is crucial to reshaping school culture.

We think a lot about policies and course content--and those are equally valuable places to make change. But if we aren't also looking inward to examine stereotypes we hold, making spaces to listen and question each other about who we are as people within this school community, then I don't think it's possible to make long-lasting cultural change.

BOOK CORNER



For Women's History Month, Barnes & Noble has a list to celebrate the women who have shaped our history, written characters we loved, lived lives we admired and learned from: [25 Must Reads Women's Must Reads for Women's History Month](#).

And here are three lists from the New York Public Library for all ages:

[Essential reads on feminism for adults](#)

[Essential reads on feminism for teens](#)

[Essential read on feminism for kids](#)



#EmbraceEquity

International Women's Day



DigitALL: Innovation and Technology for Gender Equality

Theme IWD March 8, 2023,

For International Women's Day and beyond, let's all fully #EmbraceEquity.

The United Nations Observance of IWD recognizes and celebrates the women and girls who are championing the advancement of transformative technology and digital education. IWD 2023 will explore the impact of the digital gender gap on widening economic and social inequalities. The event will also spotlight the importance of protecting the rights of women and girls in digital spaces and addressing online and ICT-facilitated gender-based violence.

Bringing women and other marginalized groups into technology results in more creative solutions and has greater potential for innovations that meet women's needs and promote gender equality. Their lack of inclusion, by contrast, comes with massive costs: as per [UN Women's Gender Snapshot 2022 report](#), women's exclusion from the digital world has shaved \$1 trillion from the gross domestic product of low- and middle-income countries in the last decade—a loss that will grow to \$1.5 trillion by 2025 without action. Reversing this trend will require tackling the problem of online violence, which a study of 51 countries revealed 38 percent of women had personally experienced.

A gender-responsive approach to innovation, technology and digital education can increase the awareness of women and girls regarding their rights and civic engagement. Advancements in digital technology offer immense opportunities to address development and humanitarian challenges.

NYPL EVENT - Bias is More than a Glitch - Meredith Broussard

MONDAY MARCH 10 - 6:30pm

Meredith Broussard demonstrates how neutrality in tech is a myth and why algorithms need to be held accountable. A data scientist and one of the few Black female researchers in artificial intelligence, Broussard explores facial recognition technology that favors light skin, mortgage-approval algorithms that encourage discriminatory lending, and the dangers of medical diagnostic algorithms trained on insufficiently diverse data.



Meredith Broussard: Bias is More than a Glitch

Mon, Mar 20 | 6:30 PM | Stavros Niarchos Foundation Library (SNFL) & Online



Equality vs. Equity - #EmbraceEquity!

International Women's Day 2023

A focus on gender equity needs to be part of every society's DNA, it's critical to understand the difference between equity and equality. The IWD 2023 campaign theme drives worldwide understanding why Equal opportunities aren't enough!

We can all truly embrace equity. It's not just something we say. It's not just something we write about.

It's something we need to think about, know, value and embrace. Equity means creating an inclusive world. We can all challenge gender stereotypes, call out discrimination, draw attention to bias, and seek out inclusion. Collective activism is what drives change.

Forging gender equity isn't limited to women solely fighting the good fight. Allies are incredibly important for the social, economic, cultural, and political advancement of women. When we embrace equity, we embrace diversity, and we embrace inclusion.

UN EVENT for all - NGO CSW67 Forum

The 67th Session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women is starting this coming Monday, March 6th and will run until March 17th.

Every year, thousands of activists organize educational and awareness-raising events parallel to the CSW that are open to the public.

They are great for students to attend. Some are in person, near the UN and some are online. This year, the main themes are related to gender equality in the digital age, and rural women and girls.

You can [register for free on the NGOCWS platform](#) and find the entire listing of events.



Embrace equity for all women

By Perky Noah-Effik - UNIS Parent

The month of March marks Women's History Month, and the 8th is International Women's Day. It gives us an opportunity to highlight the work that still needs to be done to create a more gender-equal world by empowering and embracing equity for all women.

This occasion each year is a time for the global community to shine a light and elevate the achievements that women have made historically, culturally, politically, socially, and economically in the many communities they live in.

On a personal level, every Woman's History Month I think about what it means to be a woman, a mother, a daughter, sister, wife and friend. I believe it is our job to leave our communities better than how we found them. I like to celebrate those in our community doing an amazing job.

I hold dear the things I learned from my mother and the matriarch of our family around culture and inclusivity. She likes to say "you don't need to be a CEO to make a difference". The notion of passing it forward when we can is something I also strongly believe in. Let's us all #EmbraceEquity!

But how do we embrace Equity? Through projects I help manage, I have seen how innovation and technology are pivotal to reducing gender inequality. My experience has shown me that technology can be harnessed as a force for good to tackle the continued imbalances in representation we see for women, especially as the workplace becomes more automated and digitally focused.

Growing up, Charlie Chaplin's Modern Times movie was one of my favorites. It tackled industrialization in the early 19th century. It also covers the complexity of being human in a world increasingly run by machines. A path we are similarly on today, but within the digital frontier. This creates new pressures, but I am hopeful.



Picture taken by my J3, son Noah

I'm hopeful about the broad impact of technology, but I'm also aware of the negatives. As an example, for women of color, the horizon is not as bright, and for those in developing countries the inequity is even greater given the below-par infrastructures they have to navigate. Let's face it, the data on these groups is hard to miss! Due to a lack of resources, racism, access to technology and of course misogyny. The most depressing datasets I have seen are for women of color in the western hemisphere - who experience greater health risks - like complications with pregnancy and childbirth, similar to those in the diaspora.

"The most depressing datasets I have seen are for women of color in the western hemisphere"

For entrepreneurs the struggle is still evidently real with little to no access to VC funds. For those in the corporate world they struggle to see people that look like them in boardrooms, holding positions of power, receiving equal pay, and in some communities it's as fundamental as access to basic education.

The Black and Brilliant Advocacy Network (B&BAN) is an organization my husband and I founded in 2020. We focus on shining the light on black and brown talent globally, coaching, mentoring and empowering underserved people so they gain the skills and access to top tech jobs in this fast-growing and well-paid space.

We used the power of our networks, and volunteers to connect networks and build allship. We partnered with Codecademy for two years, with two accelerator programs - AI Accelerators and AI Accelerators Africa. Our belief continues to be that we can help trigger a wave of innovation in technology by coaching small groups of ambitious and smart young people here and across the continent, and connecting them to thought leaders in our network.

Our latest project is working with Facebook (Meta), supported by the UK Advertising Association. Where we challenge the perceived lack of Black and Brown talent ready to lead in the world of marketing, media, advertising and creative. We set out to recognize and celebrate Black members of the industry not just working against the odds, but doing extraordinary work in their respective fields with the introduction of an award program called The Changemakers.

Another part of what I do at (B&BAN) is to help organizations diversify their talent pipeline, supply chain, help Black+ groups and Black employee networks to break through the middle of their organizations. A current client is RAND Corporation - a leading think tank on the west coast. Other noteworthy organizations we have worked with are NBCUniversal, BuzzFeed and LinkedIn.

My conclusion is that we can all make a difference in our communities by volunteering, supporting, elevating and celebrating all women. [#EmbraceEquity!](#)

**#BLACK AND
#BRILLIANT**



UNIS PARENT BOOK EVENT

Patriarchy Smasher: Angela Saini TUESDAY, MARCH 14 - 6:30pm

Join our very own JS parent - Angela Saini as she explores the roots of what we call patriarchy, uncovering a complex history of how it first became embedded in societies and spread across the globe from prehistory into the present.

In-person is sold out for this event; however, there is a [live stream link](#).

Angela Saini is an award-winning science journalist whose print and broadcast work has appeared on the BBC and in the Guardian, New Scientist, Wired, The Economist, and Science. A former Knight Science Journalism Fellow at MIT, she won the American Association for the Advancement of Science's Kavli Science Journalism gold award in 2015. Saini has a master's degree in engineering from Oxford University, and she is the author of *Inferior: How Science Got Women Wrong* and the *New Research That's Rewriting the Story* and *Geek Nation: How Indian Science Is Taking Over the World*.



Patriarchy Smasher: Angela Saini

Tues, Mar 14 | 6:30 PM | Stephen A. Schwarzman Building & Online

T3 IB ENGLISH - Ava DuVernay

By Mr. Braccino

Throughout this unit, T3 Language & Literature students consider the films of Ava DuVernay through the lens of semiotics and cultural commentary. We explore several of her pieces, including her Netflix series *When They See Us*, the award-winning film *Selma*, and Duvernay's film adaptation of *A Wrinkle in Time*. While there is plenty of focus on learning the conventions of film as a text type and analyzing the patterns and textual features consistent in Duvernay's form, the unit allows for rich conversation on some of the themes essential to Duvernay's work: the evolution of Black identity in the United States, the power and vitality of women in society, and the legacy of injustice and inequality in the US justice system.

To balance those two objectives, students accomplish two assessment tasks: one is an IB-style comparative analysis of two scenes from two separate Duvernay works; the second task is a creative project that asks students to transform Duvernay's work into a different text type or emulate her style by shooting an original short film that explores similar themes or features similar formal conventions.

I've taught the unit for 3 years now and it remains a highlight for many students. The depth of discussion I feel is rooted in the prescience and relevance of Duvernay's work to issues and challenges the students see in the news and on social media today, and many students go on to use Duvernay's work on their IB Individual Oral in their T4 year, which is focused on global issues.

“The depth of discussion I feel is rooted in the prescience and relevance of Duvernay's work to issues and challenges the students see in the news and on social media today”



Ava Marie DuVernay

American filmmaker and former film publicist. Recipient of a Primetime Emmy Award, a NAACP Image Award, a BAFTA Film Award and a BAFTA TV Award, as well as a nominee of an Academy Award and Golden Globe. After making her directorial debut, *I Will Follow*, DuVernay won the directing award in the U.S.



SPOTLIGHT

JS DEI Coordinator - Truike Boekholt

I was born in a totally white “farmer village” (however my parents were both educators) in the Netherlands. I was always drawn to trying to understand the marginalized people and the misunderstandings and judgements they encountered. There was lots of discrimination and segregation between White, Moroccan and Suriname immigrants. I always stood up for the “underdog” and this continues to be the case in my day to day life.

Having had a partner (the father of my twins) from Guyana, and twins that are multi-racial as well as my current husband from India, I have experienced many uncomfortable situations that encompassed micro aggression as well as blatant discrimination. I am finding ways to deal with and educate myself through reading, studying articles, and conversations with others.

I do not shy away from difficult and uncomfortable situations and always seek to understand rather than to judge. I am aware that DEI is a vast area and that it is important to stay in touch with current happenings in our society. I am truly committed to making the world a better place and this begins with me and the communities around me (including UNIS).

As a DEI coordinator I:

- Started and implemented a leadership board (EIB) for J3/J4 students with the focus on DEI activities, as I believe that our young students can be problem solvers. It runs from November through May.
- I incorporate part of the program that I have developed in my PeaceKeeper program.
- I organized the MLK assembly and celebrated diversity in its many forms.
- I attend all DEI meetings, and pursue professional development opportunities

Last year I organized a “Peaceful Vigil for Ukraine” in Mamaroneck, attended by many politicians with Ukrainian families and held a successful fundraiser.



- Recently I have spearheaded the Earthquake relief “bake and art sale”.
- I am a Full time Music specialist to students in JS (2003-present).
- I am an active Member of CTAUN, (2020-present).
- I am the Founder of Children of the Ganges (501 © 3) A school for underprivileged local children in India. <http://www.childrenoftheganges.com> (2011- present)
- I worked at CORE -Congress of Racial Equality in NYC, assisting in organization MLK Day, and day to day affairs.

AWARDS:

- ECIS Award for the Promotion of International Education (2012)
- CTAUN Excellence in Education Award (Committee of Teaching about the United Nations, for my volunteer work as a UNIS PeaceKeeper (2020) <https://teachun.org/award/2020-winners/>
- CTAUN Excellence in Education Award for being the Founder and President of Children of the Ganges (2017)

My Special interests are yoga, organizing, meditating, traveling, research in traditional Global music and gardening.

DEI highlights with Ms. Boekholt



The faculty had a chance to discuss a couple of situations that have occurred within our school, how to always use empathy as an approach and to stand up for what our school's mission stands for. This is a work of progress and will be continued.

For Friendship Day in the spirit of friendship, support and empathy, the Junior School made “hearts of hope and support” written with our Turkish and Syrian families in mind.



Faculty members made Turkish evil eye bracelets as well as many other artifacts that were sold during the bake sale with proceeds to UNICEF in Syria and Turkey.

Music faculty serenaded all volunteers with a Traditional Arabic song as a support for our UNIS families that have lost family members.

The JS DEI members held an assembly where they presented the “birthday boxes” outcome and UNICEF representative Joe Barnes explained how UNICEF has a similar way of giving support to victims and impoverished families with a concept called “school in a box”



The JS was featured in THE WEEK Junior

Your turn

Editor's note

There were quite a few major moments in US sports in the past week. Our cover features one of them: LeBron James of the Los Angeles Lakers became the National Basketball Association's all-time leading scorer (41,994). The previous record holder was Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, another Lakers legend, who scored 38,387 points in his career—a number so high that it was considered for nearly 50 years. It was exciting to see James score his 38,388th point—written on Abdul-Jabbar's commemorative coin on the court afterward. Also this week, the Super Bowl featured two black starting quarterbacks and two brothers playing on opposing teams for the first time in National Football League history (49ers, 40ers). Congratulations to the Philadelphia Eagles and the Kansas City Chiefs on their great seasons and to the Chiefs on their championship title!

Anissa Barabach
Editor-in-Chief

CHARITY OF THE WEEK

CARE

CARE, which stands for Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere, works to fight poverty. It works with people, groups, and local governments in more than 100 countries to prevent hunger, help girls get an education, provide emergency response relief, and more. It is currently raising funds to help people affected by the earthquake in Turkey and Syria. Find out more at care.org.

Providing birthday fun for others

At my school, I am part of the Equity and Inclusion Board, and we are doing a volunteer project for Black History Month. Martin Luther King inspired us to do service. We invited students to make birthday boxes filled with goodies such as cake mix, balloons, toys, and birthday cards and then decorate the boxes! Over 230 boxes were delivered to a shelter for disadvantaged children and families in Queens in New York City. Some many children will have a nice birthday when they open up a special box with surprises!!

Rea, 8, 8th Grade, with her mom, 8, and brother, 10, New York

READER RECOMMENDS

Vote for your favorite books!

Have you read any books you're engaged so much you wish all kids knew about them? Contribute to our 50 Books Kids Love list for 2023! The reading list, with quotes from readers, will be published in The Week Junior in June. We're looking for about 100 kids to fill out our survey form. If you'd like to vote, have an adult email us at adults@theweekjunior.com with Book Kids Love in the subject line, and we'll send the form to you. Happy reading!

Teacher of the Week

Teacher's Name: Ms. Masood
School: Lincoln Elementary School

"I love being in Ms. Masood's class because she is a very nice person and always puts her students first. She fits in all the curriculum that we need to do, but she also lets us do fun activities. I love how she gives us brain breaks after we do really hard work. And she loves to tell jokes and stories!"

James, 9, 4th Grade

Nominate your teacher for Teacher of the Week! Send your reason for the nomination, a photo of your teacher, and your school's name and address to teachers@theweekjunior.com.

Puzzle answers (from page 26)

Word search: Round robin, hope, ship, with, because, to, but, a, only, look, at, up.

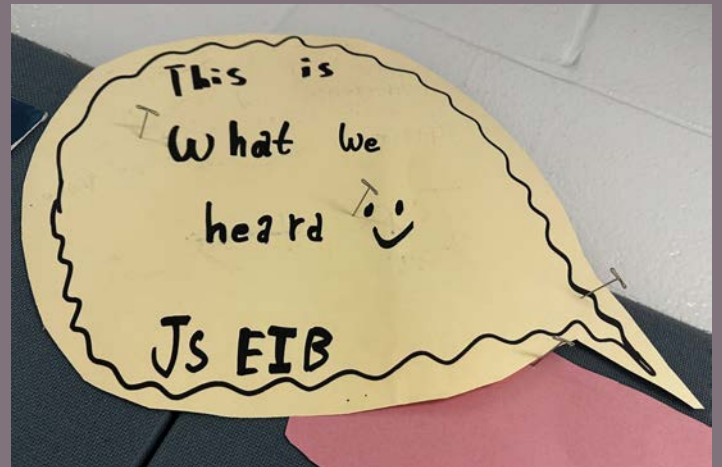
Fill-in-the-blanks: I lost, that, I think, about, never, could, find.

Quick answers (from page 30): 1. 6 (Lemon-lime), 2. 10 (Peach), 3. 4 (Apple), 4. 10 (Peach), 5. 10 (Peach), 6. 10 (Peach), 7. 10 (Peach), 8. 10 (Peach), 9. 10 (Peach), 10. 10 (Peach).

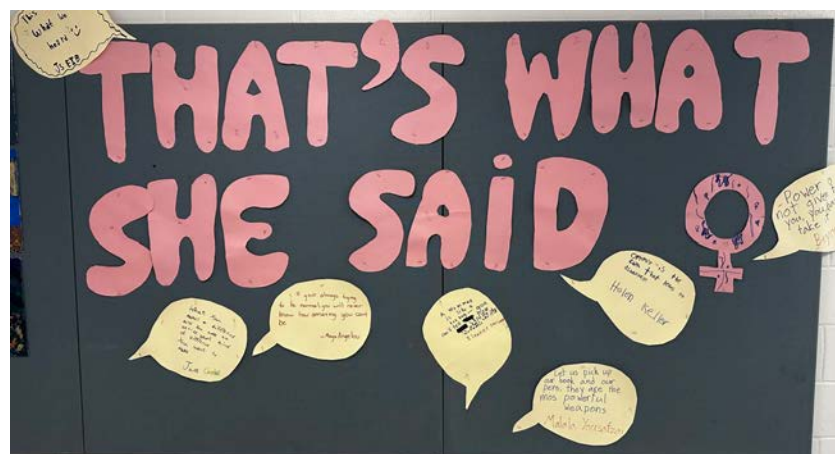
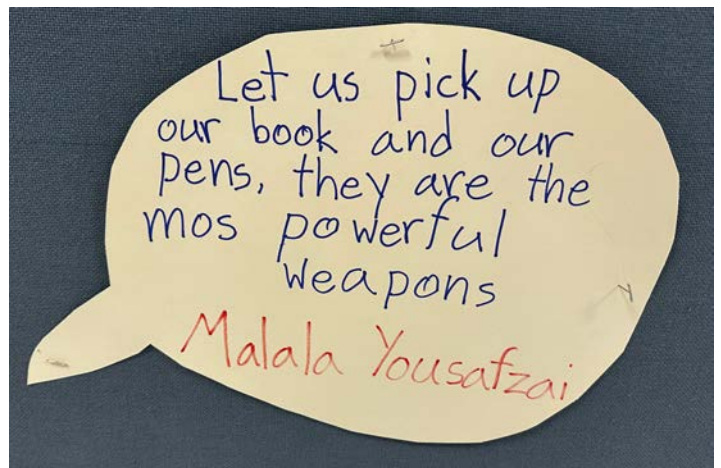
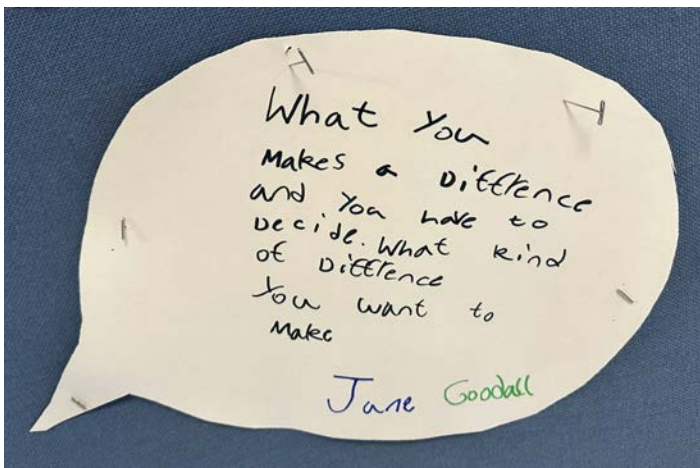
IT'S YOUR TURN Email your news, views, and photos to ask@theweekjunior.com.

The Week Junior - February 24, 2023

February 24, 2023 - The Week Junior



The JS making a bulletin board for Women's History Month



SPOTLIGHT

UNIS PARENT - Amanda Dubois

Amanda Dubois is a Tony Award winning Broadway producer of plays and musicals. She is also a proud J4 and M4 UNIS parent.

Why did you decide to enroll your children at UNIS?

I grew up in Costa Rica with a Swiss father and an American mother and went to an international school. UNIS felt like right to me. My husband and I have multi-national backgrounds. We very much wanted our children to be in an outward-facing, culturally diverse community, in a school that will prepare them to be global citizens.

What does DEI mean to you?

I think it means creating space for many different perspectives and opinions to be voiced, heard and considered.

How do you "tell our stories" through your work?

Theater has a unique ability to normalize humanity. Through live performance, audiences connect to the characters and the story being told on stage. It's personal, and it deepens our understanding of people, places and ideas we may never have encountered. Likewise, experiences, feelings and emotions we have never known. I hope to tell stories that celebrate, elevate or move the conversation forward.



"It's personal, and it deepens our understanding of people, places and ideas we may never have encountered."

What do you hope UNIS students learn about telling their stories?

I hope UNIS students develop the confidence to share their stories as well as the empathy to listen.

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***The world's largest collection of books, toys and movies
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UPCOMING EVENT

In-Person/Virtual

The Civil Rights Queen – Why All Women Owe Her A Debt of Gratitude

Wednesday, March 29, 2023, 5:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

Program Fee: There is no fee to attend, please sign in to register. Please be sure to select either an In-Person or Virtual option.

To those who are Joining Virtual, Please Note: A final confirmation containing the Zoom link and Access Code to join the event will be sent to ALL registrants 2 hours prior to the start of the event.

To commemorate Women's History Month, the New York Chapter of the National Association of Women Judges will host a program honoring and celebrating the life of Constance Baker Motley, "The Civil Rights Queen – Why All Women Owe Her A Debt of Gratitude." The title of the program encapsulates our view that Judge Motley's work inside and outside the courtroom has failed to receive the recognition that it deserves. This program is in partnership with the Franklin H. Williams Judicial Commission.

REGISTER TODAY

In-Person

Rising Anti-Semitism in NYC and What is Being Done Legally & Legislatively to Combat the Trend

Wednesday, March 15, 2023, 5:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

Program Fee: There is no fee to attend, please sign in to register. Please be sure to select either an In-Person or Virtual option.

At a time of surging anti-Semitism and anti-Semitic attacks throughout the NYC area, the City Bar's Office for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging, with the help of the Simon Wiesenthal Center, will host a critical forum on the legal and legislative impact of these challenging times having on our city.

[LEARN MORE](#)

About the PA DEI Committee at UNIS

“The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Committee was formed during the 2020-2021 academic year to collaborate on efforts across the school community in support of the fundamental UNIS principle that acknowledging, understanding, respecting, and accepting diverse beliefs, ethnicities, cultures, and lifestyles are critical underpinnings of a successful education.

This committee will work vigorously towards equal access for all community members to participate fully in the life of the school, particularly to better involve Black American families at the school and to bring to light current events related to racism in the U.S. and globally.”



MORE DEI at UNIS



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LatinX Student Union
 Equity & Inclusion Board - [unis.org/eib](#)
 Jewish Student Union
 Black Student Union
 Black at UNIS
 SAGA (Sexuality and Gender Awareness) Club



About UNIS - Diversity Equity Inclusion

To join the PA DEI Committee