

# The LIFT Initiative

ASU's commitment to Black students, faculty and staff



Colleen Jennings-Roggensack and  
Jeffrey R. Wilson, PhD

# ASU Charter

ASU is a **comprehensive public research university**, measured not by whom it excludes, but by whom it **includes** and how they **succeed**; advancing research and discovery of **public value**; and assuming **fundamental responsibility** for the **economic, social, cultural and overall health** of the communities it serves.



**This year, there were  
two pandemics.**

# Dr. Crow's email to the ASU Community

From Arizona State University  
Office of the President



To the ASU community:

On June 1, after the murder of George Floyd and as the Black Lives Matter protests refocused the nation's attention on ending systemic racism and violence directed at Black people and communities of color, I reached out to voice ASU's rejection of racism and discrimination and to reaffirm our university pledge to always pursue the highest levels of social inclusion and impact. Now, I am reaching out again, this time after the shooting of Jacob Blake in Kenosha, Wisconsin.

These incidents, and countless others, remind us that we have so much more to do to achieve our common aspiration for social justice in this country. They are also a reminder to turn a mirror on ourselves to identify our own missteps, inadequacies and deficiencies and to acknowledge our institutional responsibility to do more than we ever have before in the fight for equality and social justice.

In order to accelerate meaningful change here at ASU and to contribute to a national agenda for social justice, ASU is committing to the 25 actions listed below. These 25 actions are drawn from your ideas, your expertise, your creativity and your public commentary, and each and every one of them will be launched this year. They will be undertaken with the goal of enhancing diversity, growth and opportunity for Black undergraduate and graduate students, faculty and staff, while also expanding our academic offerings, community services and collaborative relationships to the benefit of all underrepresented groups and individuals at ASU.

I do know this list of actions will be inadequate by itself. I also want to acknowledge that many units across the university have already been hard at work at introspection and planning on how they will address racial injustice. What I want to firmly communicate to you today is that we will work harder, invest more and do more to ensure that Black students, faculty and staff — and other underrepresented groups and individuals — are provided an educational, work and living environment that is welcoming, supportive and empowering to their success, creativity and ability to achieve their personal, educational and professional goals all for the betterment of this university and our nation.



**Listen**  
**Invest**  
**Facilitate**  
**Teach**

# Data

Black faculty and staff at ASU composed **4%** of ASU's total faculty and staff in 2020. By employee grouping, Black faculty represent **3.4%** of ASU's total faculty population, **4.8%** of graduate assistants, and **5.3%** of ASU's non-faculty staff. Black/African American students compose **9%** of ASU's total student population (N = 128,815 in 2020) which is represented in double digit percentages by three groups – white (67%), Hispanic (23%) and Asian (13%).





# The Process

# Action

## Advisory Council on African American Affairs (ACAAA)

The ACAA is lead by Colleen Jennings-Roggensack and Jeffrey R. Wilson, PhD; made up of faculty, staff, and students.



**Vice President of Cultural Affairs, Executive Director of ASU Gammage**

Colleen Jennings-Roggensack



**Professor of Statistics & Biostatistics, Department of Economics**

Jeffrey R. Wilson



A background image of a topographic map with contour lines, covering the left half of the slide.

# **Our Recommendations**

# Listen

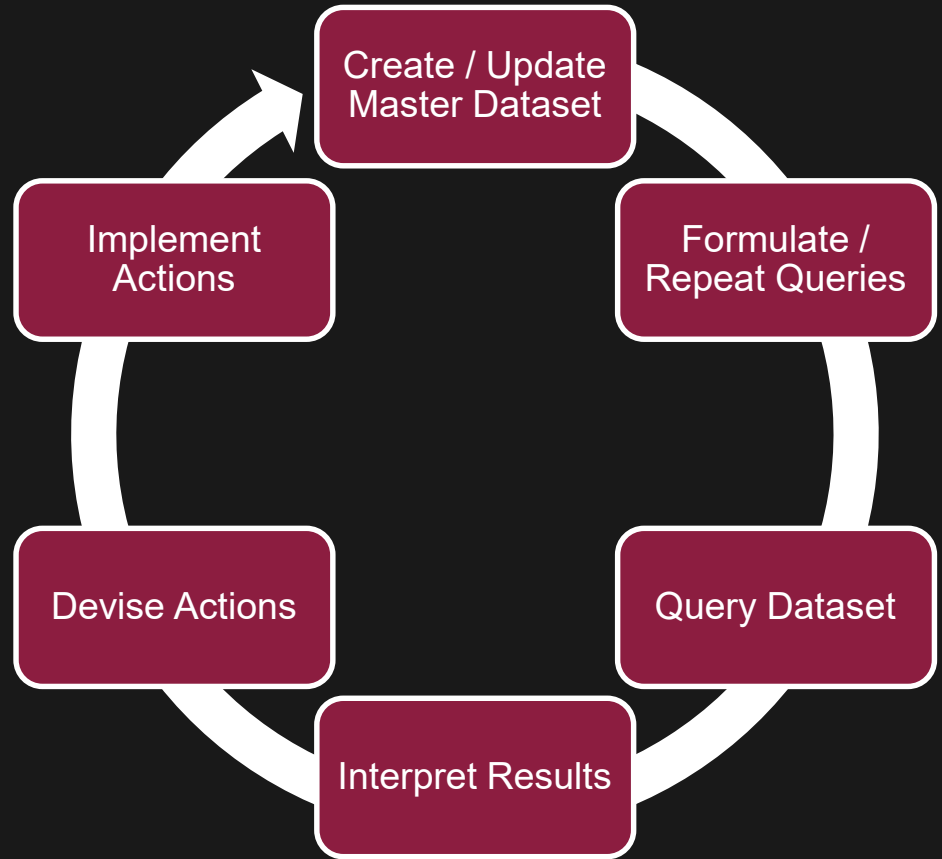
**lis·ten/'lis(ə)n/ verb** make an effort to hear; pay attention; take notice of and act on what someone says

**Faculty Inclusion Research for System Transformation | Advancing a critical conversation about social justice and systematic racism | The LIFT Report: Status of Black and African Americans at Arizona State | Support student organizations and initiatives that assist Black Students | Equity**

**L1** A key element in the listening stage of research is knowing what questions to ask. In addition to the historical study conducted by the Faculty Inclusion Research for System Transformation (FIRST), an annual survey has been developed to be distributed to Black and African American faculty, staff, and students.



# The FIRST Initiative Feedback Loop



# Listen

**lis·ten/'lis(ə)n/ verb** make an effort to hear; pay attention; take notice of and act on what someone says

**L3** An annual survey has been developed to be distributed to Black and African American faculty, staff, and students. The survey results will be used in the production of an annual digital report titled, The LIFT Report: *Status of Black and African Americans at Arizona State*. The report will highlight data including Black faculty and staff members' service and accomplishments, as well as Black students' enrollment, services, accomplishments, and graduation rates.

**L4** In 2020-21, the Black African Coalition (BAC) in collaboration with stakeholders launched the following initiatives: Black Support Circles with EOSS; BAC Scholarship with ASU Foundation; Black Excellence Experience Tour with Admissions; BAC Digital Guidebook with EOSS; increased participation in the annual Sankofa program; CoNext Mentoring program; RISE Leadership Institute and the Black Sun Devil Network to mentor and support students. The goals are to increase the number of Black student organizations within the colleges, increase student involvement and BAC membership. Training and leadership development retreats for BAC faculty and staff advisors and member organizations will be launched in fall of 2021.

# Invest

**in·vest /in' vest/ verb devote time, effort, energy or money to a particular undertaking with expectations of rewarding results**

**Advisory Council on African American Affairs | Establish Multicultural Space on Campus | Community Learning Fellows | Prioritize recruiting and retaining faculty members from underrepresented groups | Best@ASU | Graduate Recruitment Fair**

**12** ASU multicultural spaces will foster leadership, cultural enrichment and enable a more equitable and inclusive future for students of color and other historically underrepresented students. Throughout 2020-21, the University secured spaces for students to access immediately on each of its Phoenix metropolitan campuses. The University will continue to develop and operationalize those spaces for continued use into the new academic year. Multicultural spaces are to be identified at all ASU locations. The next phase of development includes the continued and intentional involvement of students, students of color, underrepresented communities, and intersectional identities. Private funds are to be identified to advance the development, implementation and integration of the Cultural Excellence Scholars program.



# Invest

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**14** Cluster hiring is the process of hiring new faculty members as a group with the intention of attracting a diverse pool of candidates, identifying synergistic connections among candidates, and recruiting a faculty cohort that fosters collaboration through shared experience. To become more competitive in attracting highly qualified minority faculty members, ASU is preparing to implement these collaborative measures across diverse areas of study.

**15** To address the lack of Black faculty and student representation in Barrett, The Honors College, it is imperative that there is a member of the tenured professor faculty that is taking an active role in investing in the recruitment and success of Black students within the College. As a result, the position of Assistant Dean of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at Barrett, The Honors College was created. As a key member of the College leadership team the Assistant Dean's primary responsibility is spearheading BEST@ASU.

BEST@ASU is ASU's innovative approach to entering the space of competitive programs that attract, attain, and elevate high achieving Black students. The program provides high-performing Black/African American students with university and community mentorship activities, assistance with obtaining local and national internships, and preparation for post graduate studies and career pathways.



# Facilitate

**fa·cil·i·tate /fə' silə tāt/ verb assist or make (an action or process) easy or easier**

**Promoting success and well-being of all students of color | Vice Provost for Inclusion and Community Engagement | Faculty and Staff mentorships for all Students | Facilitate continued dialogue on race relations**

**F2** The Office of Inclusion and Community Engagement is a unit within the Office of the University Provost that works to empower and give voice to all members of the university community in the areas of scholarship, teaching, learning, and governance. Led by the Vice Provost for Inclusion and Community Engagement, the office is making efforts to establish diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) officers in each college or center, hosting university-wide DEI training and collaboration events and ensuring that the DEI principles are being integrated into all campus search committees hiring practices. The office is also collaborating with the Undergraduate and Graduate Offices to ensure diversity and inclusion in their recruitment efforts.



# Facilitate

**fa·cil·i·tate /fə' silə tāt/ verb assist or make (an action or process) easy or easier**

**F3** Through the LIFT Initiative, a special emphasis on programs that benefit underrepresented staff and students in reaching their educational/professional career goals has been made. On January 19, 2021 an expansion of SPP 601 was approved by the President's Executive Council and communicated to the entire ASU community. The expansion reflects an increase from 16 to 24 hours of approved release time for all ASU personnel annually and to include participation as a mentor or mentee in university programs. A recommendation has been made to rename SPP 601 to the Release Time for Professional Development Career Development Learning/Mentorship Hours and encourage and incentivize faculty members to mentor more students from underrepresented communities.

**F4** The Center for the Study of Race and Democracy (CSRD) facilitates powerful and informed dialogues, and transformative scholarship about issues related to race and democracy. Through the actions of the LIFT committee, connections have been made with key executives and organizations such as the Vice President of Knowledge Enterprise, the office of the Vice President of Corporate Engagement and Strategic Partnerships and the Breakfast Brainstorm group. As discussions on how to increase awareness and engagement amongst the colleges and how to obtain corporate scholarships continue, the Center's director will be attending the next congressional conference. A strategic plan is being proposed to procure State legislative funding for the CSRD through a lobbyist dedicated to representing the interests of the Center. In order to increase its scope and reach, a recommendation has been made to elevate the Center to directly report to the University Provost.

# Teach

**teach** /tēCH/ *verb* educate; enlighten; instruct; show or explain how to do something

**Establish new postdoctoral fellowships and graduate assistantships for underrepresented students | Partnerships with key Arizona business and community leaders to create post-graduate opportunities | Training to eradicate systematic bias in candidate hiring | To Be Welcoming training for all new and continuing employees and students | Bachelor of Arts in Race, Culture, and Democracy | A campus police force that meets the needs of the ASU community | Foster multicultural solidarity within interdisciplinary academic centers | Community-driven Archives | Interdisciplinary initiatives to help reduce inequity**

**T1** In 2021, ASU established the Presidential Postdoctoral Fellowship Program (PPF) that creates a pathway to tenure-track positions at ASU and thus creating a long-term process to diversify the faculty of the university. Fifteen positions were approved and as of June 30, 2021, four have been filled.



# Teach

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**T2** To better prepare Black students to navigate graduate school and obtain research and teaching assistantships, especially in nontraditional areas, the Presidential Graduate Assistant Program (PGA) was established. Twenty-three of the 50 positions were filled for the 2021-22 incoming class; 11 of the 23 are Black.

\* T1& T2 programs are being developed to include PPF and PGA exclusive programming in conjunction with having the students take full advantage of the existing broader graduate programming. Recruitment efforts are underway to fill the remaining positions in 2022.

**T5** In response to a 2018 racially charged incident in Pennsylvania, Starbucks and ASU created the “To Be Welcoming” (TBW) online diversity, equity, and inclusion training for all Starbucks employees. In June 2020, Starbucks shared the training with the public and ASU took the opportunity to implement the curriculum into the training for faculty, staff, and students. The training is still in development, with a projected rollout of the 2021-22 academic year.



# Teach

teach /tēCH/ *verb* educate; enlighten; instruct; show or explain how to do something

**T6** Conversations regarding race, culture, and democracy and its effect on our nation have been part of the ASU community for quite some time. In line with the responsibility that universities have to the needs of the greater communities they serve and ASU's mission to be on the forefront of education, it is time to establish a Bachelor of Arts degree in Race, Culture and Democracy. Approval for the degree has been given by the Arizona Board of Regents. The implementation of the degree (curriculum and graduation requirements) are being finalized by the CSRD, the Provost's office, and colleges.

**T7** Campus police share responsibility with the University for safety and security which enables the university to carry out its mission of advancing research, discovering public value, and promoting the economic, social, cultural, and overall health of the communities it serves. The conversations surrounding reimagining and reform have been respectful, inclusive, collaborative, and research based. Recommendations have been made and the full proposal titled *Objectives and Principles of a Campus Police Agency* was created and is being presented. The proposal includes improving police organizational, administrative, and operational policies, procedures, education, and practices. It also includes establishing mechanisms to diversify the police force through recruiting and hiring more ethnic minorities, disabled, and LGBTQ people.



# Teach

**teach** /tēCH/ *verb* educate; enlighten; instruct; show or explain how to do something

**T10** In line with the vision that ASU is a leader in social change, in Spring 2021 the University launched the Difference Engine, a university wide center based on combating inequality. The initiative is headed by Ehsan Zaffar, Esq. who previously served as a senior adviser on civil rights during the Obama administration. Based in the Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law, the Difference Engine is an interdisciplinary group of ASU units including The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Ira A. Fulton Schools of Engineering and the W. P. Carey School of Business. The Difference Engine has produced a handful of products including the Women's Power Index, described as a "Yelp for equality" that ranks domestic organizations and corporations on measures of inequality. The Difference Engine also hosts a monthly speaker series called "*Engineering Change*" that facilitates conversations about equity, diversity, and inclusion. With the goal of leveraging and providing resources for other efforts, the Difference Engine endeavors to assist with other LIFT initiatives.



# Evaluation Markers



**Annual report  
and survey from  
LIFT Initiative  
Listen 3**



**Black/African-  
American students  
enrollment and  
graduation rates**



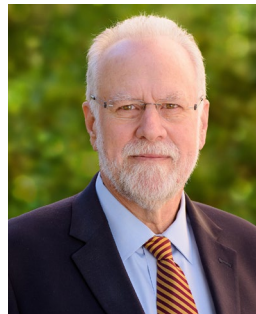
**Growth in the  
faculty and staff**

# President and Cabinet Members



**President of Arizona State University**

Michael M. Crow  
L1



**Executive Vice President and University Provost**

Mark Searle  
L1–3, I3–6, F2–5, T4, T6,  
T8–10



**Executive Vice President and University Provost**

Nancy Gonzales  
L1–3, I3–6, F2–5, T4, T6,  
T8–10



**Senior Vice President and Chief of Staff**

Jim O'Brien  
L2, I1



**Senior Vice President of Educational Outreach and Student Services**

James Rund  
L4, I2, I6, F1, T3



**Executive Vice President, Treasurer and Chief Financial Officer**

Morgan R. Olsen  
F3, T4–5, T7



**Vice President of Student Services**

Joanne Vogel  
L4, I2, I6, F1



**Vice President for Research and Chief Science and Technology Officer**

Neal Woodbury  
T8

# Town Halls

## **November 9, 2020**

Faculty Town Hall  
Staff Town Hall  
Student Town Hall

## **March 1, 2021**

Non tenured Faculty Town Hall  
Tenured Faculty Town Hall

## **March 8, 2021**

Staff Town Hall

## **March 15, 2021**

Black African Coalition Town Hall

## **April 15, 2021**

Alumni Town Hall

## **May 17, 2021**

PhD Candidates Town Hall

# Council Members

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Professor of Economics, W.P. Carey School of Business

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Associate Professor, College of Integrative Sciences and the Arts

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Charles J. Merriam Distinguished Professor of Law, Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law

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School Director and Associate Professor, School of Community Resources and Development

### Dr. Olga Davis

Associate Dean, Barrett, The Honors College and Professor, Hugh Downs School of Human Communication

### Dr. Vernon Morris

School Director and Professor, School of Mathematical and Natural Sciences

### Dr. Maria Rosario Jackson\*

Institute Professor, Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts and Watts College of Public Service and Community Solutions

### Kenneth Shropshire\*

Adidas Distinguished Professor of Global Sport and CEO of Global Sport Institute

### Dr. Ayanna Thompson

Center Director and Professor, Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies

### Dr. Bernard Young

Professor, Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts

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Vice Provost for Academic Alliances, Office of the University Provost

### Dr. Antoinette Farmer-Thompson

Deputy Vice President, Office of Educational Outreach and Student Services

## Students

### Miriam Araya

President, Black Graduate Student Association and Member, Multicultural Solidarity Coalition

### Aniyah Braveboy

President, Black African Coalition

### Cornelius Foxworth\*

Vice President, Black African Coalition

### Kiara Kennedy

Sun Devils United

### Dontá McGilvery

Dean's Fellow & Coordinator for Culture and Access, Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts

### Sarra Tekola

Co-President, Black Graduate Student Association and Member, Multicultural Solidarity Coalition

### **Ex Officio Members**

#### **Jean Boyd**

Deputy Athletic Director/Chief of Staff,  
Sun Devil Athletics

#### **Michelle Johnson**

Executive Assistant, ASU Cultural Affairs

#### **Myles Lynk**

Peter Kiewit Foundation Emeritus Professor of  
Law and the Legal Profession  
Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law

#### **Dr. Tiffany Ana López**

Vice-Provost for Inclusion and Community  
Engagement

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Vice President and Chief Human Resources  
Officer

#### **Hope Sharett Esq.**

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#### **Elizabeth A. Wentz**

Vice Provost and Dean, Graduate College

#### **Suzanne Wilson**

Senior Media Relations Officer, Media Relations  
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### **A Special Thank You To**

#### **Sheila Ainlay**

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Wadell Blackwell

Jamie Burns

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Deana Garner-Smith

Jon Gould

Jenna Graham

Orenda Griffin

Tabia Harper

Mary Hentges

Alonzo (AJ) Jones

Kimberly Jones

Courtnee King

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