

May 13, 2015



#### President's Diversity Award for Faculty - General

**Dr. Mubina Kirmani** is a consistent champion of promoting the value of diversity at Towson University through her teaching, service and scholarship. She helped develop the general education course, EDUC 203: Teaching and Learning in a Diverse Society which is offered through the Department of Early Childhood at College of Education, which now averages enrollment of 375 students from all disciplines with over 15 sections each semester. Dr. Kirmani has offered her services on cross-cultural health issues at the Dowell Health Center, the Counseling Center, and the Department of Disability Services. She co-chaired TU's Multicultural Conference and worked with the Office of Academic Innovation to produce a video documentary highlighting the geographic and economic diversity of Sierra Leone's education. Dr. Kirmani, who was born in Kenya with ancestry from India, brings a unique perspective on diversity in her teaching and writing. Her book, *Bundle of Secrets: Savita Returns Home*, illuminates the long history of the Indian community in Kenya and it received the Africana Best Children's Book Award in 2014. She was honored at the Smithsonian National Museum of African Art. Dr. Kirmani has also appeared as a guest on the Marc Steiner and Anthony McCarthy shows (WEAA-FM Radio) and has been interviewed by journalist Deborah Kalb (NBC), Stephanie Walstron (One Campaign), and the South Africa Times. Dr. Kirmani co-authored a second book, *Wandering Wind*, which promotes diversity among children from different religious backgrounds. Dr. Kirmani continues to impact diversity through outreach with non-profit organizations such as Turning Page and the Open Book Foundation, which distributes books to disadvantaged children in the DC/MD area.



#### President's Diversity Award for Faculty - Research

**Dr. Paz Galupo** is Professor of Psychology and Director of the Sexual and Gender Identity lab at Towson University. Her research interests focus on understanding the intersection of sexual orientation and gender identity as they are negotiated in the context of social and personal relationships, with a particular focus on bisexual and transgender experience. With over 60 publications, Dr. Galupo is a prolific scholar who makes student research development central to her research program – of her 14 journal articles published in the past 2 years all have student co-authors (both undergraduate and graduate). In addition to her research, Dr. Galupo's teaching and service contribute to initiatives and activities that promote and enhance diversity on campus. Her professional commitments include serving as Editor-in-Chief for both the *Journal of GLBT Family Studies* and the *Journal of Bisexuality*. Accepting for Dr. Galupo is one of her graduate students, Ms. Reyn Boyer.



#### President's Diversity Award for Staff

**Dr. Santiago Solis** engages students to make a difference on campus and the surrounding community and utilizes exceptional networking capabilities to identify or create opportunities that support students' growth and development. Dr. Solis is the Chair of the Latino/a Faculty & Staff Advisory Committee, Co-Chair of the Latino/a Faculty & Staff Association, Chair of the Student Work Group, Member of TU's Diversity Action Committee, and served as Co-Chair of TU's 2013 Multicultural Conference. He serves on local committees and boards such as Membership Vice President, Asian Arts & Culture Center Advisory Board; Secretary, Baltimore City Mayor's Hispanic Commission; Co-Chair, and the Baltimore Immigration Summit Planning Committee. Dr. Solis is successful with establishing synergistic relationships and his national

presence is known and respected as he serves as Representative for NASPA Region II Latino/a Knowledge Community and Co-Chair of the Planning Committee for the 2015 Latino/s in Higher Education Institute. Dr. Solis' energy, passion, and conviction is exhibited in his collaboration with the Baltimore American Indian Center to host a Pow Wow and in his commitment to TU student organizations: Students Helping Honduras (ranked as #1 of 60 chapters in national fundraising and volunteerism), Iranian Student Union, Lambda Theta Alpha Sorority, Inc., South Asian Student Association, Hope for Guinea, and the Latin American Student Organization.



#### **President's Diversity Award for Administrative Department**

**Athletics Academic Achievement**, under the current direction of **Mr. Geoff Gordon** and formerly Bobbi Madison, provides an integrated array of academic programs which are complemented by advising, counseling, and tutoring. The Athletics Academic Achievement unit has supported student-athletes' ability to excel in their academic achievement as reflected in retention and graduation rates. Federal graduation rates released in October 2014 showed that TU obtained a graduation rate of 71% - the highest federal graduation rate within USM Division I schools. Equally impressive is

that TU leads USM institutions in graduation rates for African Americans student-athletes (74%) and African American male student-athletes (71%). The 74% graduation rate for all African American student-athletes is also the highest nationally among public NCAA Division I schools. The staff's dedication and their individualized approach through coordinated academic, personal, and social programs continue to be a model for student-athlete success.



#### **President's Diversity Award for Academic Department**

**The Department of Family Studies and Community Development** under the direction of Chair, **Dr. Karen Goldrich Eskow** consistently contributes to a positive campus climate for the recognition, discussion, and understanding of diversity. These attributes are demonstrated through the deliverance of an annual Disabilities Awareness Workshop for eight years. Nearly 1,500 students have registered for the workshops with each event contributing to an environment of diversity awareness for faculty, students, and staff. This event was the basis for a campus visit by Andrew Solomon (Fall 2014), whose contribution to the national discussion of diversity, in many forms, is widely-acclaimed. The

Department of Family Studies and Community Development has implemented undergraduate and graduate courses that strive to prepare students to expect and welcome diversity in human service positions. Multiple faculty in the department have expertise on gay and lesbian families and families of different races and have conducted research that encompasses a variety of diverse topics to include a publication entitled "*A Model of Sexual Minority Identity Development for International Students.*" Faculty have also worked in Baltimore's Cherry Hill community and other school districts throughout several Maryland counties. The Department of Family Studies and Community Development has widened its scope of TU's attention to diversity over many years and on many levels as evidenced by a \$600,000 federal grant to examine the effectiveness of state Autism waivers in which the department chair - Dr. Karen Goldrich Eskow - serves as Principal Investigator.

#### **President's Diversity Award for Student**

**Shane Henise** (photo unavailable) has emerged as an active advocate, mentor and researcher for the LGBTQ community. He is a public speaking intern for the TU Career Center and a teaching assistant within the Department of Psychology. Shane received his first publication in the *Journal of Psychology of Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity* which examined transgender micro-aggressions in the context of friendships, and is already working on future research intended for publication. Shane co-coordinated the university's Pride mentor program and received a special honor last year as one of the cast members of *Laverne Cox Presents: The T Word*. Shane

used this platform to advocate for a more trans-friendly TU environment and as a result, helped effect change with enabling trans students to correct data with regard to identity in areas from ID cards to names on student class rosters. Shane also served as a teacher's assistant and was often an invited guest speaker in various Psychology and Gender Studies courses at TU and area universities. For two years, Shane was a panelist at Gay Lesbian & Straight Education Network (GLSEN) Youth Summit. Shane graduates this month with a Bachelor of Science in Psychology and minor in LGBT studies and has been accepted at Columbia University for graduate school. It is without a doubt that Shane's contributions to the world of psychology and humanity will make a significant impact within the LGBTQ community and beyond.

*Information about the President's Diversity Awards is available at:*  
<http://wwwnew.towson.edu/main/abouttu/comdiv/diversityaward.asp>