



Daniel Blash, PhD, LPC

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Dr. Daniel Blash is the assistant dean of cultural awareness and staff diversity and an assistant professor of psychiatry at Washington University's School of Medicine. Daniel, a long-time St. Louis resident, is an experienced educator with a proven track record of advocacy in diversity and inclusion. He holds a BA in Psychology, a Masters in Counseling and a PhD in Marriage and Family Therapy. He is a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC), National Board Certified Counselor (NCC) and an Approved Clinical Supervisor (ACS). Dr. Blash worked as a clinical faculty member for nearly two decades prior to his current position at Washington University School of Medicine. His doctoral research focused on the role of religion and spirituality among underrepresented minorities in the academic environment. Dr. Blash was the writer and/or co-writer of two successful grant initiatives that resulted in three diversity and inclusion programs that targeted underrepresented minority students. His research and grant writing efforts have led to an extensive network of clergy-directed efforts that help facilitate tolerance among students, staff, faculty and administrators on and off campus.

Dr. Blash's community involvements are extensive: He is the founder of Blash Counseling Associates, which is one of the leading counseling agencies in the inner city of Old North St. Louis. His agency bridges the gap between mental health and some of St. Louis' underrepresented minority communities. His agency provides free backpacks and school supplies to over 100 under privileged children in the Old North St. Louis school district and funds a free weekly tutoring program for grades k-12. Dr. Blash is a highly sought after speaker and has given educational lectures and presentations in over 30 states and 5 countries. He recently presented in Sacramento, CA on Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and the Neuropsychology of Peace. Dr. Blash has presented on similar topics in Accra, Ghana (West Africa); Okinawa, Japan; Wiesbaden, Germany; Riyadh, Saudi Arabia; and Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. Dr. Blash is a decorated combat veteran of the US Army. He enjoys traveling to military bases around the world although he is partial to Germany. Dr. Blash is also very active in the St. Louis Deaf community. He speaks conversational German and American Sign Language.



Denise DeCou

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Denise DeCou is the director of Diversity and Inclusion, Content Development and Program delivery for Washington University in St. Louis. In her role, Ms. DeCou has developed curriculum designed to engage staff, faculty and students in becoming more aware, more understanding, and more committed to take action toward making the university more warm and welcoming. Ms. DeCou also serves on the Chancellor's Commission on Diversity and Inclusion and Chairs the Training and Academy Work Group. Ms. DeCou has researched unconscious bias as a framework and delivers training, presentations, workshops, serves on search committees, and provides insight into diversity and inclusion related initiatives, events and discussions.

Ms. DeCou has an extensive background in the not-for-profit sector, with more than 25 years in organizational development, curriculum design, and youth programming. As a nationally certified Diversity Trainer, Ms. DeCou has facilitated anti-bias/anti-oppression trainings for children, youth, community-based organizations, community leaders, the workplace, law enforcement, and institutions of higher education here in the United States and abroad. Collectively, Ms. DeCou has trained thousands of adults, including professors at Bar Ilan University in Tel Aviv, Israel, and youth, and has managed more than 100 employees and 200 volunteers over the last fifteen years.

Ms. DeCou also founded Loretta's Work, a diversity and inclusion consulting business, which values diversity and inclusion and provides anti-bias and/or anti-bullying training designed to create allies and develop leaders. Experiential training modules help participants develop greater understanding and empathy across difference. Training is provided for K-12 schools, businesses, universities, and law enforcement in efforts to create more inclusive schools, workplaces, or communities. Ms. DeCou graduated from Fordham University, Rosehill Campus, New York, with degrees in Modern languages and is tri-lingual.



Monica Black Robinson, M.A.

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Based on early career experience in Human Resources with Colgate Palmolive in New York City, Monica felt compelled to improving hiring opportunities for diversity candidates. She applied what she had learned there in an expanded HR role with Edward Jones, where she grew the diversity applicant pool and offered networking and leadership opportunities for minority and female employees. She also began to pursue an avid personal interest in etiquette and secured outside speaking engagements to broaden understanding of cultural differences and promote the benefits of inclusion through the Anti-Defamation League. Notably, her audiences included youngsters and adolescents as well as adults.

Monica's first tenure with Washington University began in 2005 in an Employer Relations role with the Olin Business School's Career Center where she revived an initiative to connect with major employers willing to provide internships and employment opportunities for the school's BSBA and MBA graduates. Because her work involved sharing resources with participating academic institutions nationwide, she achieved prominence in the academic community and came to the attention of The Consortium, a national organization dedicated to maximizing job opportunities for diversity candidates through Fortune 500 and larger corporate partners.

Monica returned to Washington University in 2016 where she now serves as Diversity and Inclusion Leader, a role that she has already made her own. Her work focuses on Unconscious Bias, Emotional and Cultural Intelligence and is essential in positioning Washington University as an employer of choice, attracting an engaged, diverse workforce and embedding diversity and inclusion into the organizational culture. Monica's professional credentials include a Bachelor of Science degree in Organizational Management from Nyack University and a Master of Arts degree in Non-Profit Management with a concentration in Human Resources Management from Washington University.



Rachelle D. Smith, PhD, LPC

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Dr. Rachelle D. Smith is a Diversity & Inclusion leader at Washington University in St. Louis. She holds a PhD in Counselor Education and Supervision with an emphasis in Social Justice, a Masters of Education in Clinical Mental Health, and a Bachelors of Art in Psychology. Dr. Smith's higher education experience encompasses serving as an educator, researcher, clinician, trainer, and administrator at institutions such as Washington University, St. Louis University, University of Missouri – St. Louis, and Webster University. Her true passion in higher education lies in creating a culture in higher education institutions that is attractive, welcoming, and supportive of individuals from underrepresented groups. Throughout her academic career she has had made her passion a reality on the pre-collegiate, undergraduate, and graduate levels.

Dr. Smith's research also emphasizes social justice, diversity, inclusion, and equity. She is currently completing an article entitled, "Ivory Tower-to-Inclusive Community Conversion Experience: The Inclusive Institution Identity Development Model (IIID)." The model proposes stages that both describe the processes of an institution's development into a more inclusive identity, as well as addresses how to mitigate the challenges that are inherent in each stage.

In addition to her work in higher education, Dr. Smith is the owner and clinical director of Imagine Me Counseling, LLC. Her practice specializes in social justice based counseling which emphasizes client self-advocacy and accessibility to resources through providing services within communities that are composed mostly of members from underrepresented groups.

As well as being a professional therapist, educator, and author; Dr. Smith is also a prolific public speaker. She has spoken for various organizations such as: The American Counseling Association, The Association for Counselor Education and Supervision, The YWCA of St. Louis, University of Missouri - St. Louis Bridge Program, Missouri Division of Family Services, Empowerment Zone, and National Association of Black Accountants.