

I grew up in a working class family. Neither of my parents graduated from college and they worked hard to make sure that I was able to do so. I am forever grateful for their love and support, and consider myself blessed. Without my parents, who were my first mentors, and a host of other caring and dedicated mentors along the way, I cannot say where I would be today. As such, I recognize how critical it is to have people who believe in you and are invested in your success. I understand what a difference one person can make in another person's life trajectory. I also appreciate that being that person who makes a difference hinges upon being a person who appreciates differences.

I want to be someone who makes a difference. To do that, I acknowledge, explore and value differences of all sorts. I acknowledge that the experiences of my colleagues of color, my students who are members of the LGBTQIA community and my family members with different abilities are not the same as my own. I recognize that I am privileged. I have become comfortable with being uncomfortable as I explore differences, educating myself through something as simple as actively listening to someone's story or as involved as completing a certificate program regarding diversity in the workplace. I know I have a lot to learn and that this will be a lifelong journey. Along the way, I strive to make every person feel that they are valued by recognizing the importance and impact of what makes each of them unique and ensuring that their voices are heard.

As Associate Dean for Physical Therapy, I have the ability and the responsibility to foster diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging within the Program in Physical Therapy. I serve as a Program in Physical Therapy liaison to the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and as an Equity Champion at the Washington University School of Medicine. Specific actions I have taken include implementing training for all employees and all students, ensuring that Program members have a basic awareness of cultural diversity, implicit bias and prejudices, as well as tools to address discrimination and foster inclusion. My own training has included anti-racism workshops, completion of a certificate program on diversity in the workplace, continuing education courses on mentoring diverse trainees, and lots of reading, reflection and discussion. I am grateful for the things students have taught me, and proud to have worked with students to co-found Physical Therapy Inclusion and Diversity (PT ID). PT ID brings together students, faculty and staff who work collaboratively to foster diversity, equity and inclusion within the Washington University Program in Physical Therapy, the broader context of the institution, and the community.