Conference 2017 Speakers

**General Session**

**"Creativity and Diversity in Education"**with Essie Childers​  
Blinn College and TCCTA

Community Colleges of the 21st Century continues to offer educational opportunity to all students from many different cultures and backgrounds. As educators, we must meet the challenges of the changing landscape of our classrooms. It is imperative that faculty pause and reflect on the various learning styles of their students and revisit their curriculum selection.  
  
Are we teaching the way we were taught? Can students see themselves in the material you have selected for them to read? Do you offer students a volition in their presentations? This session will answer these questions and more by providing practical suggestions for creating a community of learners to succeed.  
  
We all should know that diversity makes for a rich tapestry, and we must understand that all the threads of the tapestry are equal in value no matter what their color. ~Maya Angelou, Diversity Offering a Place for Everyone

**​Breakout Sessions**

**"Cultural Intelligence: A Skill Educators Must Have”**  
Cruz Imelda Wicks, University of Texas Medical Branch

​“Working in a culturally diverse environment, however, makes it easy to forget that the people you are dealing with have perceptions and perspectives different from yours. Developing a sense of cultural intelligence is important to learn how to deal positively with people from different cultures. Enhancing cultural intelligence is possible and doing so will allow you to become more compassionate and sensitive to other people. Cultural intelligence also plays a huge role in determining cooperation among people from various backgrounds, traditions, nationalities, disciplines, functions and cultures. Cultural intelligence is a crucial skill in today’s world. As we are working and living in a multicultural community, acquiring a different set of perspectives, knowledge and skills is important in order to succeed. You need to be prepared to communicate and work with people from different backgrounds, races and cultures. Gaining knowledge about other cultures is no longer optional. It is necessary in order to learn, understand and deal with different situations competently.” Margo Paz

**“Teaching Acceptance of Differences and Equality across General Education Curricula: Changing Perspectives on Multiculturalism and Social Acceptance through Transformative Learning”**Dr. Merrill Andrea Mayper, University of Phoenix

As the United States becomes more diverse nation, institutions of higher learning continue to promote diversity education on their campuses. The purpose of this study was to go beyond courses designed to teach cultural diversity specifically, and to discover how higher education faculty could include lessons on acceptance of difference and equality in the various disciplines of general education taught in today’s colleges and universities. Faculty could thereby create an opportunity for students to challenge their mental models and, through transformative learning, change their perceptions on how they view the world. Using the Delphi method, this study brought together a panel of 15 experienced general education faculty, who came to an agreement on ten attributes and abilities a faculty must have to incorporate lessons of diversity in a variety of general education classes. The panel also agreed upon ten challenges a faculty member might have with this effort. The results of this study will provide a foundation for faculty development on how to develop these attributes and abilities and overcome the challenges of incorporating diversity lessons in   general education.

**“Working with LGBTQ Students: A Guide for Educators”**  
Cruz Imelda Wicks, University of Texas Medical Branch

Schools are places of learning and a reflection of societies. The climate of a school and classroom has a direct impact on both how well students learn and how well they interact with their classmates. According to recent Human Rights Campaign survey, LGBTQ students report being harassed at school – both verbally and physically – at twice the rate of non-LGBTQ students. With heightened stressors like bullying, harassment and a lack of role models, LGBTQ students are more likely to experience negative educational outcomes. At this workshop you will Page 2 of 2 learn how to develop skills to be an advocate and ally to your LGBTQ student population. Also you will learn how to create a safe zone for LGBTQ students in your campus.