

DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION (DEI) COLLOQUIUM

Dr. Ashlee Bird
Dr. Keith J. Bowman
Dr. Zaneta Rago-Craft
Ms. Jirassaya Uttarapong

Wednesday, March 27, 2024



**NEWARK COLLEGE
OF ENGINEERING**

Moshe Kam, *Dean*
 Newark College of Engineering
 and the
 Chemical and Materials Engineering Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Committee
 request the honor of your presence
 at the

DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION (DEI) COLLOQUIUM

Queer Advocacy and Leadership in Academia

Dr. Ashlee Bird

*Assistant Professor
of American Studies,
University of Notre Dame*

Dr. Zaneta Rago-Craft

*Advisor to the President for Diversity and Inclusion,
and Director of the Intercultural Center
Monmouth University*

Keith J. Bowman (FACerS)

*Constellation Professor of
Mechanical Engineering
University of Maryland Baltimore County
(UMBC)
(On leave at Rowan University)*

Ms. Jirassaya Uttarapong

*UX Research Associate
B.S. Information Technology
NJIT*

Wednesday, March 27, 2024

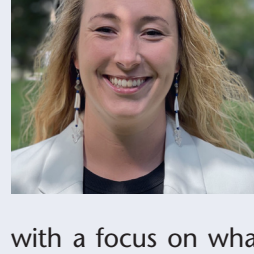
2:30 PM

Central King Building
Room L-70 (Agile Strategy Lab)

RSVP to cme.dei@njit.edu
by March 13, 2024

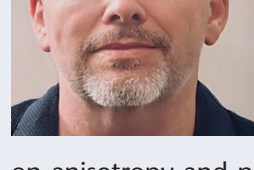


ASHLEE BIRD, PH.D.



Ashlee Bird is a Native American game designer and Ph.D. in Native American Studies. Her work theorizes digital sovereignty, drawing on Native American studies, media studies, and game studies to address representations of Native American characters in video games. Bird analyzes specific colonial methodologies being replicated within game spaces in order to then replace these with decolonial methods of game design being undertaken by herself and fellow Native game designers with a focus on what she terms “synthetic Indigenous identity,” oriented around promoting Indigenous futures. Beyond her academic writing, she has created three artworks, publicly exhibited seven times in group and solo exhibitions, and has curated one show. Among these are two of her original video games, *One Small Step* and *Full of Birds*, which have been featured in the InDigital Space at the ImagineNATIVE Film & Media Festival in 2018 and 2019 respectively. She is currently working on a book manuscript titled *Red Dead Redemption* that explores the complex relationships that different players have with games and undertakes an exploration of the *Red Dead Redemption* series and what the games have offered (or not offered) to their player bases.

KEITH J. BOWMAN, PH.D.



Keith J. Bowman is a materials scientist who has served for the past six years as Constellation Professor and Dean of the University of Maryland, Baltimore County College of Engineering and Information Technology. As a member of 500 Queer Scientists, a visibility campaign for LGBTQ+ people working in the sciences, Bowman has worked extensively to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion across engineering disciplines and the STEM pipeline. He is internationally recognized for his research on anisotropy and preferred orientation in ceramics and ceramic composites, and is a Fellow of the American Ceramic Society. Throughout his career, he has received numerous teaching awards including Purdue’s highest teaching award, the Charles Murphy Undergraduate Teaching Award and the Purdue College of Engineering Mentoring Award.

ZANETA RAGO-CRAFT, Ed.D.



Zaneta Rago-Craft, Ed.D., is the Advisor to the President for Diversity and Inclusion and Director of the Intercultural Center at Monmouth University. Originally from Long Branch, she holds a B.A. in history and women and gender studies from Ramapo College, an M.A. from NYU in higher education and student affairs administration, and an Ed.D. in education, culture and society from Rutgers University.

She has worked in identity-focused campus support for over a decade, including previous roles with the Rutgers Center for Social Justice Education and LGBT Communities, NYU’s LGBTQ Student Center and their Center for Multicultural Education and Programs, and Ramapo College’s Women’s Center and the campus Educational Opportunity Fund program. She also previously served on the board for the National Consortium of LGBT Resource Professionals in Higher Education.

JIRASSAYA UTTARAPONG



Jirassaya (Jira) Uttarapong (they/she/he) recently graduated from NJIT receiving a Bachelors of Science in Information Technology with a concentration in Game Development. As a member of the LBGTQIA+ community themselves, Jira is a strong advocate for LGBTQ+ rights, notably in STEM and gaming spaces. During their time as a student at NJIT, they were the President of Spectrum as well as co-founder and President of NJIT Esports. They are currently working at NJIT as a UX Research Associate, studying content moderation. Extremely passionate about online communities, mental health and sexuality, Uttarapong aims their focus on the intersectionalities of these topics in video games and game-adjacent spaces. They look to research and understand user behaviors to develop solutions towards improving user experiences for marginalized peoples online.



ABOUT THE DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION COMMITTEE

The DEI Colloquium brings key voices in the fields of diversity, equity and inclusion to New Jersey Institute of Technology on an annual basis, with the goals of educating our community and motivating institutional change toward a more inclusive environment for all. The DEI Colloquium is an initiative begun by the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee of the Otto H. York Department of Chemical and Materials Engineering.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION COMMITTEE

MISSION

To foster a sense of belonging, engagement and community for all students, staff and faculty within Newark College of Engineering and the broader university by creating an environment and culture where people from all backgrounds feel valued, engaged and empowered to succeed and thrive.

Our goals are to:

- Advocate for institutional change toward a more inclusive environment for all
- Support organizations that focus on URM, LGBTQ+, religious and economic disparities, and disabilities
- Raise awareness about inequalities/injustices faced by the university community
- Provide resources for students, staff and faculty to:
 - report incidences of bias or harassment within the NJIT community
 - train individuals to identify and mitigate incidences of bias
 - stimulate and strengthen relevant networks within and outside of the NJIT community

CORE VALUES

- **DIVERSITY:** We embrace, recognize, respect and value all people from different social and ethnic backgrounds, gender identities, ages, races, religions, disabilities and sexual orientations.
- **EQUITY:** We recognize that each person has different circumstances and will move to design systems to fairly allocate resources and opportunities needed to ensure that each faculty, staff or student has equal outcome or probability of success.
- **INCLUSION:** We practice and develop policies to provide equal access to opportunities and resources to eliminate discrimination, intolerance and other social barriers. We promote a culture or atmosphere where everyone can feel safe, comfortable and confident to be themselves to effectively succeed.
- **BELONGING:** We foster an environment where all individuals gain acceptance, importance, attention and assistance, leading to long-lasting relationships. We create a space to recognize unique contributions, connect to co-workers and students and engage in daily work and professional development.