

Diversity Statement
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My entire personal and professional life has been about understanding and appreciating the value of diversity.

- African American male from the South who was the first in his family to attend college
- Educated in public schools where I was often the only African American in advanced high school classes like physics and calculus
- First African American associate attorney at my law firm
- Conduct academic legal research on Critical Race Theory and Tax
- First African American Dean at University of Kentucky College of Law

Diversity has defined me and I it. Thus, writing this statement is difficult – not because I don't believe in diversity or understand diversity. Rather, writing this statement is difficult because it's almost like being asked to sum up my life in a single document – lest that document be a book length novel! With that, I will highlight a few items focusing primarily on my academic and professional activities and not my personal life.

In terms of academic activities, I would point to two areas that provide some clue as to my views about diversity – my research and my conference organizing. As a legal researcher, my focus is on the intersection of race and tax law. Specifically, I write about the intersection of critical race theory and laws that impact tax exempt charities. This interest originated from a United States Supreme Court case decided in 1983 called Bob Jones v. United States in which a private tax-exempt university lost its federal tax-exempt status because it discriminated against African Americans in its admissions process. For example, my research has resulted in articles about the impact on tax exempt charities of civil rights statutes that apply to recipients of federal financial assistance and the extent to which tax-exempt entities that engage in race-based affirmative action are affected by Supreme Court decisions that limit affirmative action by public entities. This interest also prompted me to write a book chapter about Feminist Legal Theory – opining about the impact from a feminist perspective of Bob Jones University's decision to make decisions about admissions based on who women choose to date or marry. My interest in this area also was the impetus for me engaging in related academic conference organizing, such as my role in organizing a series of critical tax theory conference and my involvement in convening a national people of color legal scholarship conference. Thus, my academic interest in issues of diversity is rather clear.

In terms of professional activity, my various roles as an academic administrator and accreditor also demonstrate my strong interest in issues of diversity. As Deputy Director at the Association of American Law Schools and as chair of accreditation site teams for law schools (for the American Bar Association) and universities (for Southern Association of Colleges and schools), my primary role is to apply diversity related accreditation standards. For example, in law school accreditation, law schools must show that they maintain appropriate affirmative

action and nondiscrimination policies for admission of students, recruitment of faculty and employment of staff. Also, as law school dean, almost everything I did was influenced by my strong interest in diversity. For example, in terms of resource allocation, I created a new position at my college that was focused on diversity, equity and inclusion called “Assistant Dean for Diversity and Community Engagement.” I also secured funding from private donors for several new diversity scholarships, including one named in honor of the first African American graduate of the College. Our college also invested in diversity initiatives, including creating pro bono service opportunities through which students use classroom skills to serve those least privileged in our community. When the Provost asked me to chair a university committee on how to allocate millions in new funds to five professional colleges, our committee used diversity metrics (e.g., diverse student offers/ admittances; diverse faculty offers/ hires) as a primary means of allocating the funds. For all these diversity measures – whether at the College or University – we instituted both qualitative and quantitative mechanisms to measure success at achieving stated goals. Finally, since stepping down as Dean, I work with former and sitting Deans to mentor new minority law school deans. Thus, from an administrative/professional perspective, diversity is keenly critical.

As I said, these are just a few examples of what I have done in terms of academic and professional activities that demonstrate my strong interest in diversity. I trust that this information is useful for the committee.