

COMMITMENT

ACTION

IMPACT

# ACTION PLAN TO ADDRESS ANTI-BLACK RACISM

First Annual Report / 2020 - 2021



McGill

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## Acknowledgement of Traditional Territory

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*McGill University is located on land which long served as a site of meeting and exchange amongst Indigenous peoples, including the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabeg nations. We acknowledge and thank the diverse Indigenous people whose footsteps have marked this territory on which peoples of the world now gather.*



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## Message from Prof. Christopher P. Manfredi Provost & Vice-Principal (Academic)

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In September 2020, McGill's Principal & Vice-Chancellor, Professor Suzanne Fortier, presented McGill's [Action Plan to Address Anti-Black Racism \(Action Plan\)](#). The Action Plan was developed over just three months, pursuant to a process of extensive consultations that I led with members of the McGill community, notably, with Black faculty, students, staff, and alumni. While this tight timeframe required intensive work, it was unavoidable, given the need to act with a sense of urgency to address the multiple, complex, and deep-rooted factors and harms associated with anti-Black racism.

Since the presentation of the Action Plan just over one year ago, the McGill community has heeded its calls to action. Units across our campuses worked to build an understanding of anti-Black racism and develop sustainable and targeted operational measures to counter it. We have endeavored to update this work through town halls, meetings, and an online [tracker](#), with plans for a website to be developed in the year ahead. I am inspired by colleagues and students across McGill who have demonstrated serious engagement with the Action Plan's commitments, not just through words and statements, but also through work and action. The latter are evidenced throughout this report. The University has sprung to action to develop and deliver a range of exciting initiatives tethered to the Action Plan. While these are only getting started, they hold the promise of institutional change at McGill. Through the efforts and actions described here – alongside those described in First Annual Report of [McGill's Strategic EDI Plan](#) – which accompanies the present report – we are well on our way to building a campus community that better reflects our wider societies. This will also be a campus community that understands, and is willing to take up the hard, often uncomfortable work necessary to address, social oppressions in all its forms, including anti-Black Racism.

This inaugural report on the Action Plan seeks to share with all University stakeholders information about the progress of its implementation. For the sake of clarity and consistency, this report's structure tracks that of the Action Plan itself. Through it, I hope that readers will see how our community has taken up in earnest our institutional commitments to address anti-Black racism even while recognizing the long road that remains for us to travel before we will have achieved our goals.

Last, I thank those who have led the lion's share of the efforts mapped out here, many of whom have shouldered work to address anti-Black racism at McGill that long predates the Action Plan:

- The members of the ABR Working Group led by Professor Terri Givens: Karen Diop, Camille Georges, Kimberley Lee-Lewis, Charlene Lewis-Sutherland, Shondra Mings, Antoine-Samuel Mauffette Alavo, Cynthia Nkamicaniye, Sara Pierre, and Shanice Yarde.
- Our Black students, particularly those who played active leadership positions within the [Black Students Network](#) and the [McGill African Students' Society](#) and met regularly with members of the Provost's Office over AY2020/21: Heleena De Oliveira, Aisha Mannah, Iyanu Soyeye, and Risann Wright
- The [Dr Kenneth Melville McGill Black Faculty and Staff Caucus](#), members of whom were vital to developing the Action Plan and play leadership roles related to its implementation. Caucus members have long supported and advocated for Black faculty, students, and staff at McGill, work that must be recognized for its crucial contributions over time.\*

**Professor Christopher P. Manfredi**  
Provost & Vice-Principal (Academic)

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\* See Appendix to this Report, which includes references to the Caucus' Statements.



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## Message from Richmond Yeboah

### Report Co-Author & PhD Candidate in the School of Information Studies

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Working on this report as a Black Student of African origin who has experienced several instances of discrimination from classmates during my studies at McGill, it excites me to discover the efforts various units across the university are putting into making the vision of the Action Plan to Address Anti-Black Racism (ABR) a reality. To mention but few, the workshops on microaggression and effects of racism, coupled with the mandatory module on systemic racism to be included in myCourses are excellent achievements. Although this is just the first year of the 5-year Plan, I can reliably say that much has been initiated to improve the campus experience of Black students, faculty, and staff. I am hope that this commitment will continue and perhaps increase in subsequent years, with more individuals across the University joining this work I would however like to emphasize that more efforts are needed to publicize the various supports available to Black and racialized students, because most of us have no idea of the support available and sometimes are afraid of the consequences of owning up, leaving us no choice than to endure or quit. I have benefited from working on this project by discovering various associations and supports available to me as a Black student of which I had not previously been aware. A good way to promote these initiatives is to include information about them at student orientations. Special thanks to all who are working tirelessly to make the vision of the university to eradicate racial discrimination a success.

**Richmond B. Yeboah**  
Report Co-Author and PhD Candidate  
McGill School of Information Studies



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## Message from Karen Diop

### Program Manager: Anti-Black Racism Action Plan

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The Action Plan on Anti-Black Racism provides a transversal opportunity for stakeholders to act better, think better, and institutionalize better. We face many uncomfortable and difficult challenges when it comes to institutional change; the Action Plan contributes to a radically different horizon when it comes to our institution.

**Karen Diop**  
Program Manager, McGill Anti-Black Racism Action Plan

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## How to Read this Report

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This annual report reflects the structure of the Action Plan to Address Anti-Black Racism, which tracks the [five priorities](#) that McGill's Principal & Vice Chancellor, Professor Suzanne Fortier, has named for McGill during her leadership: students, research, outreach, workforce, and space. These five priorities also find reflection in the themes around which McGill's [Strategic EDI Plan](#) is organized.

This annual report tracks McGill's first year of work on the Action Plan. The focus is largely on setting out the actions undertaken across our campuses over this year to initiate the complex, extensive work that will be necessary for our community to understand and meaningfully address anti-Black racism.

As is true of the first annual report on McGill's Strategic EDI Plan, which is simultaneously submitted to the McGill community, this report seeks to document as fully as possible progress to-date on the Action Plan's commitments. Quantitative data is provided where that is possible. The balance of the information is descriptive. We have aimed also to elicit the voices various members of McGill's Black community, so that this annual report can directly share their perspectives. Quotes from students, faculty, and staff integrated throughout this annual report do not purport to be representative, but rather offer insight into various perspectives from McGill's Black community as to the relevance of the Action Plan and McGill's work in its regard thus far. What emerges is a sense, shared also by McGill's leadership, that the Action Plan has allowed us to do some critical work, but it must continue and be taken up with even greater energy in the years ahead if we are to realize the aspirations our university has set for itself in regard to addressing anti-Black racism.

This report concludes with some reflections and indications on the areas that will be prioritized for Year 2 of work taken up pursuant to the Action Plan.



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## Background and Context

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While this Action Plan is anchored to McGill's overarching EDI commitments, notably as set out in its Strategic EDI Plan, it is also distinct in its rationale and aspirations.

Notably, the Action Plan seeks to initiate a process of acknowledgement of our university's historic connections to the transatlantic slave trade and its enduring legacies. The trade in African persons between Europe and the Americas endured more than 400 years. It resulted in the enslavement of 10 to 12 million persons of African descent and cost millions of others their lives. Slavery in the Americas reached into all institutions established during colonial settlement, including Canadian universities.

The legacies of transatlantic slavery find reflection in ongoing racial subordination and systemic anti-Blackness as witnessed through persistent pejorative stereotypes about African and Black persons, as well as their stark underrepresentation in the workforce, in leadership positions, and in higher education across the country.

As McGill embarks on its third century as a world-class institution of higher education, it has both the responsibility and the opportunity to address these barriers that have deprived Black persons of full access to opportunities – or that have limited their capacity to flourish – on our campuses. This work will allow us to do better in our express commitment, set out within our University's mission, to the principles of equity and inclusiveness. It is against this background, and within this context, that work under Action Plan is taken up at McGill.

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## Introduction

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We begin this inaugural report on our progress of the [Action Plan to Address Anti-Black Racism](#) with reflections in its regard from esteemed members of the McGill professoriate:



*While the adaptive unconscious has kept us alive, thanks to McGill, we have an exciting process that goes beyond cognitive biases or heuristics.*

**Dr Fackson Mwale, PhD, FIOR**  
**Graduate Program Director, Experimental Surgery**  
**Professor of Surgery, McGill University**  
**Fellow of International Orthopaedic Research (FIOR)**  
**Co-Director of Clinical Innovation**  
**Senior Investigator, Lady Davis Institute**



*The Action Plan on Anti-Black Racism has the potential to position McGill as a leader in the development, facilitation, support, and resonance of Black genius in Canada and North America. In particular, our work to bring Black Studies to McGill – an initiative with antecedents dating back to the 1960s – is an exercise in world-building; that is, creating the kind of institutional and intellectual space necessary for students, faculty, staff, and the broader community not just to understand how this world came to be, but to imagine a radically different one.*

**Professor Debra Thompson,**  
**Department of Political Science**  
**Canada Research Chair in Racial Inequality**  
**in Democratic Societies**



*The Action Plan signals that the relationship between the University and society has flipped. Society used to look to the University for leadership on progressive issues; now society pushes the University for change. While I have private doubts that our strategy will produce racial equity in society, the Plan has already changed the public conversations we have every day at the University about community, policy, teaching, and research.*

**Professor David Theodore**  
**Peter Guo-hua Fu of the School of Architecture.**  
**Canada Research Chair in Architecture, Health, and Computation**

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## Key Accomplishments 2020 – 2021

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1. **Professor Terri Givens** is recruited to the Department of Political Science as a Full Professor and appointed as the Provost's Academic Lead and Advisor (PALA) on the Action Plan. As PALA, Professor Givens will have a key role overseeing Black faculty recruitment, retention, and mentoring, with a view to meeting the ambitious targets set for Black representation within the tenure stream professoriate at McGill.
2. A **Provostial hiring initiative** is launched tied to the Action Plan. The initiative is premised on the active recruitment of exceptional scholars working in diverse disciplines. At the same time, all academic search and senior leadership advisory committees receive equity training that encourages committee members to work proactively to identify outstanding prospective candidates who are also members of underrepresented groups and invite their applications to McGill. In the result, in AY2020/2021 **15 outstanding Black faculty** were appointed to McGill's the tenure-stream, across varied disciplinary fields and all ranks of the professoriate. Each of these colleagues was hired on the basis of their excellence.
3. The **Dr Charles R. Drew Graduate Fellowships** are launched, honouring McGill's illustrious alumnus, Dr Charles R. Drew (MDCM '33) – "the Father of Blood Banking" – who as an African-American in the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, confronted courage and resilience multiple instances of institutional racism, ultimately becoming a hero of modern medicine.

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*At the Desautels Faculty of Management, we care deeply about issues related to anti-Black racism and dismantling all forms of discrimination, and have formally committed to making these matters strategic Faculty priorities. We strongly endorse McGill's Action Plan to Address Anti-Black Racism and we will be working in alignment with the University to address these issues.*

*Through our Faculty's own Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) working group, we are undergoing a careful systematic approach to understand specific contexts at Desautels and create an EDI strategy that addresses existing challenges in our community. Our goal is to develop and apply solutions that will make a lasting difference for Black students, faculty and staff, and any member of our community who has experienced any form of racism or discrimination.*

*It is a shared responsibility among us all to stand up against unacceptable behaviour and contribute to a culture that respectfully encourages continuous growth for all. Our power to change lies in us all working together.*

**Yolande E. Chan**  
**Dean and James McGill Professor**  
**Desautels Faculty of Management at McGill University**

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4. A new **Anti-Black Racism Working Group** includes six new administrative and support staff positions as well as current staff working within the Equity Team and other parts of the University. The Working Group commits to oversight of the implementation of the Action Plan. Members of the Working Group hold positions across various McGill units including the Equity Team, Student Services, Enrolment Services, the Dean of Students' Office, and Teaching and Learning Services.
5. **Faculties** across the University initiated their own equity and anti-racism initiatives, which included a range of initiatives that include the appointment of an Assistant Dean, (Inclusion – Black & Indigenous Flourishing) (Law), the creation of a **Black Candidate Pathway Program for admissions (Medicine & Health Sciences)**, and other internal and community programs.
6. The **HR Working Group to Address Anti-Black Racism** is launched, as a collaborative initiative between the Equity Team and Human Resources, to support the recruitment and advancement of Black administrative and support staff at the University.

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## Detailed Actions 2020 – 2021

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### THEME 1: STUDENT EXPERIENCE

In this first year of the Action Plan's implementation, McGill sought to continue to listen to the experiences of Black students and respond to their needs, notably through regular engagement with the Black Students' Network (BSN) and the McGill African Students' Society (MASS). Through these efforts, we sought to address the challenges of anti-Black racism and build and strengthen campus resources to meet to the needs of racialized students. Our goal has been to ensure that these students can find a more friendly way to raise concerns without feeling intimidated or isolated. We took this path given that we had heard from our students, both in the development of the Action Plan and its initial phases of implementation, that they often experience isolation due to the underrepresentation of Black faculty and administrative leadership, and because curricula in most programs do not reflect demographic diversity, notably the work of Black scholars. We know also that Black students have experienced microaggressions inflicted by peers, instructors, and staff, and this can have a profound negative impact on students' well-being.

Accordingly, McGill undertook the following commitments and steps:

#### 1/ Student Demographic Survey

##### COMMITMENT

Understand and analyze its student demographic landscape through conducting a student demographic survey. Survey data will be disaggregated to be able to discern the representativeness of specific racialized and ethnic groups (e.g., Black students). Analyses will be undertaken with reference to population data for Montreal, Quebec, and Canada. Informed by these analyses, measures will be designed and deployed to enhance outreach and support for student applicants from McGill's most underrepresented student populations.

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*As president of the **Black Students Network (BSN) of McGill** I am often in direct communications with the Provost's office discussing items pertaining to the Black student experience and the progress of implementing all aspects of the Plan to Address Anti-Black Racism. It is always a pleasure to interact with the members of the office, especially **the Black Student Affairs Liaison Antoine-Samuel Mauffette Alavo**, who has been a blessing to many black students, including myself, in helping us to apply for scholarships and internships like the Biology research internship which I took part in summer 2021, as well as being ever present to provide support to students who experience racism and discrimination on and off campus.*

**Adenrele Orimalade**  
**BSc(Pharm) U3 & President, BSN**

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**ACTIONS:**

Data collection began in 2020 and is expected to continue through Fall 2021. A [preliminary report](#) on the census was delivered to Senate in May 2021, however conclusions were not drawn from the preliminary report as the data collected was not yet representative of McGill's population.

## 2/ Expand Institutional Supports for Racialized Students

**COMMITMENT**

Expand institutional supports for racialized students. Specific measures will include:

- Appointment of at least one Wellness Advisor or Counsellor in Student Services with expertise in connection with the psychological impacts of racism, including systemic and anti-Black racism.
- Appointment of a Black Student Affairs Liaison to facilitate the sharing of student concerns and questions with McGill's administration and to provide Black students with guidance and information about resources and supports on and off campus.
- Extension of administrative support and budget for: Black Grad, Black History Month, Youth Day.



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*When I read through McGill's Anti-Racism Plan, I felt that Athletics – the student-athletes in particular – had not been taken into consideration. After discussions with colleagues on the subject, we reached out to the University's Ethics Department, who subsequently provided human resources and promised financial support to assist Athletics and Recreation (A&R) with the development and implementation of a plan. The work has been long and often slow in producing results, but the effort remains consistent. Piece by piece we have built a team filled with passionate individuals like **Antoine-Samuel Mauffette Alavo, Cynthia Nkamaniye**, who were supported in the first year of the Action Plan's implementation by consultant **Khan Boubou Dalambaye**.*

*The team continues to share their expertise and guidance. With the addition of **Dr Terri Givens** as the newly appointed Provost's Academic Lead and Advisor (PALA) on McGill's Action Plan to Address Anti-Black Racism, I am confident that we will create a more diverse, equal and inclusive experience for our student-athletes.*

**Ryan Thorne**  
**Head Basketball Coach**  
**McGill Athletics**

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## **ACTIONS:**

- **Melissa Cobbler** was appointed in January 2021 to the role of Local Wellness Advisor in the Student Wellness Hub to address the psychological impacts of racism, including systemic and anti-Black racism. She has provided services thus far to over 120 students, including to some who reported experiences of discrimination, anti-Blackness, and exclusion in their programs or departments. Some students have filed a formal complaint, and others have decided to move forward and focus on graduation.

Various units and associations (e.g., First People's House, Our Shared Spaces, the WELL Office, Faculty of Science, School of Social Work, OSVSRE, Being Black at McGill (BBM), PGSS, the Black Law Students' Association) have consulted Melissa about how to better support racialized and Indigenous students.

The workload in this area is already growing, and questions about the sustainability of having just one LWA for all racialized students have arisen. Dedicated space for these services is also important.

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*As president of the **Black Students Network (BSN) of McGill** I am often in direct communications with the Provost's office discussing items pertaining to the Black student experience and the progress of implementing all aspects of the Plan to Address Anti-Black Racism. It is always a pleasure to interact with the members of the office, especially the **Black Student Affairs Liaison Antoine-Samuel Mauffette Alavo**, who has been a blessing to many black students, including myself, in helping us to apply for scholarships and internships like the Biology research internship which I took part in summer 2021, as well as being ever present to provide support to students who experience racism and discrimination on and off campus.*

**Adenrele Orimalade**  
**BSc(Pharm) U3 & President, BSN**

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- **Cynthia Nkamianiye** was appointed EDI Advisor as EDI Advisor to Student Services (S2). In this role, Cynthia works to integrate action-oriented EDI approaches into all aspects of S2 work. Cynthia also guides and supports the S2 team as it strengthens its services for McGill's diverse student body. Cynthia also leads implementation of [S2's Anti-Black Racism Plan](#) (see [2021 Update on Implementation](#)) and guides S2's backing of the [McGill EDI Strategic Plan](#).
- **Professor Terri Givens**, recently appointed as the Provost's Academic Lead and Advisor (PALA) on the Action Plan is working with McGill's Varsity Athletics staff to lead workshops with a view to building a stronger, more inclusive climate for all of our student athletes, notably those who might experience racism or other forms of social oppression.

- **Antoine-Samuel Mauffette Alavo** was appointed to the role of Black Student Affairs Liaison (BSAL) as of January 2021. He is in ongoing contact and consultation with the Black Students' Network & the McGill African Students' Society to support their members and initiatives. The BSAL has also supported many other Black student associations on campus. These points of connection have led to successful collaboration on events such as the Black Grad and Black History Month.

Since he was appointed, Antoine has:

- advised more than 40 Black students on individual challenges and questions.
- worked with Faculties and academic units to create internship opportunities for Black students in diverse fields, such as Biology, Neuroscience, and the Arts and Humanities. He has also established an internship partnership with DESTA Black Youth Network.
- worked with Athletics & Recreation to create the Black Varsity Association and MAEDIC (McGill Athletics EDI Committee) to support Black student athletes.
- collaborated with the Schulich School of Music to create a new community engagement program for Black students.
- partnered with CAPS (Career Planning Service) to develop and deliver a Black student Career Readiness workshop.

Most importantly, as student testimonials demonstrate, McGill's BSAL role is becoming a trusted site for student advice and connections to opportunities for Black students.



Black Student Affairs Liaison  
Antoine-Samuel Mauffette Alavo (left)  
with MPP student  
Munesuishe Mafusire (BA'21)

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*In my first months as Black Student Liaison, I have already started to identify areas with solid potential to concretely improve the Black student experience. I have been impressed by students' resilience and commitment to change and encouraged by the participation of various Faculties and the buy-in and support from faculty and staff. Although I have received some strenuous testimonials of what students have been going through, I have been relieved to provide them with not only adequate resources and support but a promise to thoroughly follow through and address the issues they encountered. There is much work to be done but we are on a solid path forward and the Plan to Address Anti-Black Racism's elements of accountability and commitments have provided solid building blocks to start to implement much needed change.*

**Antoine-Samuel Mauffette Alavo**

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### 3/ Student Leadership Program

#### COMMITMENT

Develop a Student Leadership Program through which current McGill students who self-identify as members of equity-seeking groups – particularly Black and Indigenous students – will be recruited, selected, and funded to lead outreach initiatives with high schools and Cégeps across the Montreal area that have strong Black and/or Indigenous student representation.

McGill students selected to take part in this Program will receive an honorarium/stipend and leadership training focused on: effective communication, setting and reaching goals, overcoming adversity, empathy, and empowerment.

#### ACTIONS:

- **Camille Georges** was appointed as Black Community Outreach Associate in Enrolment Services in April 2021. Her role is focused on the planning, execution, and continuous improvement of McGill's outreach and recruitment endeavors to Black youth. Camille's role is also focused on developing relationships with Black communities and on working with and delivering mentorship programming to secondary school and CEGEP students, as well as other young adults, with a goal of increasing access to higher education for Black youth. There are opportunities here also to explore connecting these young people with opportunities supported by public funding agencies, such as [NSERC's PromoScience program](#).

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*My first experience of this inclusion started in my communication with **Antoine [-Samuel Mauffette Alavo]**. Antoine was extremely quick and responsive when it came to discussing the position and how I can create new connections through the opportunity. He was also incredibly supportive of me pursuing the opportunity past the obstacles that I have run into as a young African American male. My family does not have a broad background in health sciences, and as I have grown, I have noticed that there is a surprisingly dwindling number of Black individuals in Health care from the areas that I grew up and even the clinical settings that I have worked in while in university. Over the school year I even discussed the lack of Black influence (advertisements in the program with Black individuals and focuses on the differences in representation of injuries in people with darker skin) within my own program with the director.*

*When I was given this opportunity, the focus on finding a Black individual to take the job spoke out to me. It was a clear opportunity for me to contribute to that number of Black Health Care Practitioners and promote this route of work to those in my own communities who look like me. By diversifying programs and seeking out ways to destroy the society induced under representations of colored peoples you directly contribute to a more equitable, inclusive world. Acts like this open opportunities and allow ambitious Black peoples, like me, to make the connections necessary to live out our passions. I am thankful for this opportunity, and I am excited to see how it influences my future and the future of others just like me.*

**Robert Royston**  
**U4 BSc(N)**

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- The Student Leadership Program: **Pick Your Path!** has been developed, and recruitment of McGill students who will participate in it will begin in Fall 2021, as planned.
- Additionally, through Enrolment Services, the following innovative initiatives have been put in place to support the leadership growth of McGill students while also engaging in outreach with underserved communities across Montreal, with a view to promoting and supporting access to higher education:

COMMUNITY OUTREACH PROGRAM	PROGRESS TO-DATE
<b>1/ Pick Your Path! for Black Youth</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Design of program in progress</li> <li>▪ Outreach to community organizations and schools to share with black high school students and their families in progress</li> <li>▪ Recruitment of participants in September</li> <li>▪ Recruitment of McGill student leaders in September</li> <li>▪ Recruitment of Black students and McGill's Alumni as mentors</li> <li>▪ Program starts in October 2021</li> </ul>
<b>2/ McGill Monday</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Design of program in progress</li> <li>▪ Outreach to High schools (Beurling Academy and Lasalle Community Comprehensive High School)</li> <li>▪ Partnerships with <i>Cégeps</i> (Dawson and John Abbott Colleges) in progress</li> <li>▪ Recruitment of McGill student leaders in September</li> <li>▪ Program starts in Winter 2022</li> </ul>
<b>3/ Black Student Resource Guide</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A pamphlet to be distributed to welcome black students on campus. A pdf version could also be featured on the ABRP website.</li> <li>▪ Allow students to explore MTL and connect with the local black community. The guide will focus on what black people want to know.</li> <li>▪ Will be ready in Fall 2021</li> </ul>
<b>4/ Black to School</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ This event was planned to welcome black students back to school, create a space for them to exchange meet and hear about the opportunities and activities for the school year.</li> <li>▪ Planning occurred in collaboration with the Black Student Affairs Liaison and student associations</li> <li>▪ Event was to take place first weekend of September, but canceled on account of COVID-19</li> </ul>
<b>5/ Black Culture Fair</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ An event bringing together community members, students, and professionals of the Montreal Black community for a full day of knowledge sharing and networking. This event is designed to offer to students an opportunity to connect with the broader Montreal black community, meet recruiters from different companies and organizations and celebrate/promote black talent of Montreal.</li> <li>▪ Developed in collaboration with the Black Student Affairs Liaison and student associations</li> <li>▪ Event to take place in March 2022</li> </ul>

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← Tweet



Nancy Mugisha  
@nancy\_mugisha

...

I just want to say, I had my first meeting with @mcgillu's Black Student Affairs Liaison and I have never felt more understood and it's only been 2 days but I think about it everyday. I am so grateful he is there. Every uni/college needs this person/position STAT

10:01 am · 9 Apr 2021 · Twitter Web App

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## 4/ Online Learning Module on Systemic Racism

### COMMITMENT

Develop an online learning module on systemic racism, modeled on the University's *It Takes All of Us* sexual violence learning program. This module will be mandatory for all members of the University community. It will aim to broaden and deepen our collective understanding of what systemic racism is, and how it can impact the experiences of racialized members of our communities.

### ACTIONS:

- The Equity Team led consultations with student associations in 2020 to hear what students believed the module should address. The Team also led an environmental scan to explore what other universities in North America have done in terms of online anti-racism education and determine what “best-in-class” ought to look like in this field.
- Since Spring 2021, McGill's Equity Team, Teaching and Learning Services, and Communications & External Relations units have collaborated to integrate the content to an online platform accessible to all members of the McGill community.
- A first version of the module will be ready for viewing by key stakeholders in early 2022, with the rollout of the module expected shortly thereafter.
- The online module is only part of the sustained training that is offered through the Equity Team, which continues to be strengthened, on equity and anti-racism, which is led principally by **Shanice Yarde** in her role as [Senior Advisor: Anti-Racism and Equity Education](#). This position's mandate includes leading consultations with racialized, and especially Black, faculty and staff, supporting the retention of racialized and Black faculty and staff through community events and anti-racism trainings, and creating and maintaining community outreach.

## 5/ Enhance Capacity Within Teaching and Learning Services (TLS)

### COMMITMENT

Enhance capacity within Teaching and Learning Services (TLS) to support the development of inclusive pedagogies and curricular approaches that foster the learning and development of our diverse community and a sense of belonging for all students, without interfering with the freedom of individual instructors to determine the content of their courses. This will occur through facilitated training and other resources for instructors and teaching assistants and through [SKILLS21](#) programming within TLS.

### ACTIONS:

- **Charlene Lewis Sutherland** has been appointed to the role of Senior Advisor: Equity and Anti-Racism, Teaching and Learning, a role focused on building and enhancing instructor capacity to develop equitable and inclusive learning environments for students.

Charlene oversees the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Working group of Teaching and Learning Services and sits on the Anti-Black Racism Action Plan Working Group as a contributing member, offering consultation and direction on behalf of Teaching and Learning Services. She is also part of the leadership team at Teaching and Learning Services, contributing to its future planning from a perspective that centres EDI.

Within TLS, Charlene is collaborating with sub-units to bring an EDI lens to their work and operations, as well as organizing anti-racist and equity-minded professional development opportunities.

Within the campus community, Charlene has:

- offered equity training to student orientation leaders.
- worked with faculty to support their work toward developing equity-minded pedagogies; this has allowed colleagues across units to connect and support each other's work.
- taken initial steps toward the development, with the Equity Team, of a Community of Practice, which will launch in Winter 2022, on equity-centred teaching and learning.
- collaborated with Faculties to develop training for incoming students.
- connected with peer institutions as part of an environmental scan on equity and anti-racism work led within the Canadian University Centers for Teaching.
- curated and communicated resources on pedagogies that centre equity and anti-racism.
- developed, with TLS colleagues, a workshop for instructors entitled: "Examining the Classroom: Attending to Microaggressions Before, During and After They Occur", to be offered twice this Fall.

## THEME 2: RESEARCH & KNOWLEDGE

Through the Action Plan, McGill has undertaken to research its own research its history in a manner that engages transparently with our institutional connections to the transatlantic slave trade, and which brings to light the contributions of McGill's Black community members over time. At the same time, the Action Plan acknowledges the importance of establishing sites and programs of research that will allow Black and African studies, and Black scholars and students, to flourish.

Accordingly, McGill undertook the following commitments and steps:

### 1/ Expanded McGill History Project

#### COMMITMENT

Undertake an expanded McGill history project that will investigate McGill's connections with the transatlantic slave trade. The project will engage a research team led by one or more historians with the requisite expertise to carry out this work. While ensuring that the project team enjoys the full measure of independence and academic freedom in conducting its work, methods of engagement with the Black communities of McGill and Montreal will be established to ensure that the contemporary meaning of the history is well understood. The project will result in a public report setting out historic findings, which will inform further work to address anti-Black racism. This project will complement work currently pursued by McGill's *Provostial Research Scholars in Institutional Histories, Slavery, and Colonialism*.

#### ACTIONS:

- **Melissa N. Shaw** and **Joana Joachim** have been appointed as Provostial Research Scholars pursuing postdoctoral fellowships funded by the Provost's Office that investigate McGill's connections to transatlantic slavery and colonialism.

Dr Shaw completed her PhD in History at Queen's University. Her postdoctoral research will conduct archival work to assess how Blackness, Indigeneity, and whiteness informed McGill's development from the 1800s into the twentieth century. As a scholar of Black Canadian history, Dr Shaw is deeply concerned with the role of historical contingency when dealing with weaponized racial identities.

Dr Joachim earned her PhD in the Department of [Art History and Communication Studies](#) and the [Institute for Gender, Sexuality and Feminist Studies](#) at McGill University. Dr Joachim will lead a project to better understand the lives led by the women enslaved in the McGill household, an approach she hopes will deepen our knowledge of how Canadian slavery and Black-Indigenous relationships can serve towards anti-racist and decolonial work in contemporary society.

- Plans for a wider McGill History Project have been developed in collaboration with the [Dr Kenneth Melville McGill Black Faculty & Staff Caucus](#). These discussions are ongoing, and the hope is to finalize the Terms of Reference and constitute the research team that will carry out the project beginning in Fall 2021. This project will seek to contribute to broader efforts that foster the development of the history and contributions of African and Indigenous Canadians.

## 2/ USS Membership

### COMMITMENT

Become a member institution of the Universities Studying Slavery ([USS](#)) network. In so doing, McGill will join institutions from around the world committed to earnest and open studies of their past with a view to addressing contemporary inequities. Membership and engagement with the USS network will broaden McGill's networks with institutions undertaking these critical explorations, opening prospective research opportunities and partnerships.

### ACTIONS:

- The USS consortium at the University of Virginia represents a multi-institutional network focused on sharing best practices and guiding principles about truth-telling projects that seek to address enslavement and racism in institutional histories.

McGill's application for membership was accepted in 2020. This network provides access to important initiatives, information, and opportunities in which McGill community members can take part.

- [Professor Terri Givens](#), who has been appointed as the Provost's Academic Lead and Advisor (PALA) on the Action Plan, is the McGill liaison to this network. As such, Professor Givens will connect with member institutions to explore potential collaborative and networking opportunities that support the study of the transatlantic slave trade and its legacies in our institutions of higher education.

## 3/ Provostial Visiting Fellowship

### COMMITMENT

Establish a Provostial Visiting Fellowship-in-Residence on Black Life and History. This initiative will welcome to McGill, each year, a leading Black scholar whose research focuses on Black life and the Black experience, whether historically or in contemporary society. Application and selection oversight will occur through a collaborative process that involves the Office of the Provost & Vice-Principal (Academic) and the Dr Kenneth Melville McGill Black Faculty Caucus. Fellows may be selected from any discipline and will be welcomed within the Faculty most closely related to their discipline for one or two academic terms. Fellows will give a keynote lecture during their time at the University.

### ACTIONS:

- Professor Terri Givens, the Provost's Academic Lead and Advisor (PALA) on the Action Plan has been appointed to oversee the establishment of this Visiting Fellowship-in-Residence.
- Terms of reference are being prepared for consultation with the [Dr. Kenneth Melville McGill Black Faculty and Staff Caucus](#).
- The University plans to welcome its first Visiting Fellow-in-Residence on Black Life and History in Winter 2022.

## 4/ African and Black Canadian Studies Program:

### COMMITMENT:

Enhance support for our African Studies Program, notably through:

- Provision of an annual budget to fund guest speakers, workshops, and student-led activities
- Provision of an annual budget to Uhuru: The McGill Journal of African Studies
- Creation of a Working Group on African and Black Studies to explore options for the expansion of the Program's scope to include African diasporic/Black studies and to build its research capacity, including through the creation of associated graduate programs
- Support of research innovation and excellence in the domains of African and Black Studies in the context of federal and provincial research funding programs, including the Canada Research Chairs (CRC) and, where applicable, the Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI) Programs

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*I am encouraged to see the University take a collaborative approach to addressing anti-Black Racism. Online tracking of progress achieved for each identified action underscores a commitment to transparency, an essential ingredient for success. As we tackle these challenges collaboratively, the administration will find inspiration in early successes but remain open to effect timely course-correction inspired by likely setbacks along the road. The research endeavours outlined in this plan present exciting opportunities for the University to contribute, proactively and significantly, to the body of knowledge in the history and genealogy of African and Indigenous Canadians. I look forward to the fruits of promising initiatives such as the Charles Drew Fellowship. In my capacity as Special Advisor to the Vice-Principal, Research & Innovation, leaning on my experience with Federal Granting agencies, I look forward to supporting and mentoring faculty as they pursue their research goals.*

**Jean St-Vil**  
**Special Advisor to the VP-RI**

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### ACTIONS:

- Budgetary commitments to the Program were upheld.

An African and Black Studies Working Group (ABSWG) was struck, the terms of reference for which were developed in close consultation with [Dr. Kenneth Melville McGill Black Faculty and Staff Caucus](#). The ABSWG Chairs are **Professors Khalid Medani and Debra Thompson**, both of the Faculty of Arts. The working group has held several discussions about the vision for African and Black Studies, the priorities it seeks to address, and potential institutional frameworks.

Since beginning its mandate in April 2021 work the ABSWG has carried out includes: robust data collection, research on Black Studies programs across peer institutions in Canada and the United States, a review of McGill's African Studies program, consultations with several experts in relevant disciplines, and a student survey.

Over Fall 2021, the ABSWG will conduct further outreach to faculty (especially the [Dr. Kenneth Melville McGill Black Faculty and Staff Caucus](#)), staff, students, and other stakeholders, including alumni.

The ABSWG intends to submit its final report to the Provost in December 2021.



## THEME 3: OUTREACH

Achieving McGill's commitments to addressing anti-Black racism requires work beyond the geographic bounds of our campus. Accordingly, aligned with the Action Plan, concerted efforts are being made to connect actively with local communities, so that our campuses can better reflect the city's strong demographic diversity. Core to this work has been the development of concrete strategies to enhance Black student access to McGill, notably through collaborations with local high schools and Cégeps that have strong Black representation. McGill's work in this area has also aimed to strengthen networking opportunities for McGill's Black alumni.

Accordingly, McGill undertook the following commitments and steps:

### 1/ Scholarships and Student Aid:

#### COMMITMENT:

- Work, through University Advancement, with our alumni and donor communities to increase scholarships and student aid opportunities that will enhance supports for students – at the undergraduate, Master's and doctoral levels – from McGill's most underrepresented student demographic groups.
- Create a fund earmarked to support Faculty-level initiatives tied to recruitment, outreach, and engagement focused on widening demographic representation within McGill's student body.

#### ACTIONS:

- Work with University Advancement hit the ground running in 2020, with a view to developing philanthropic opportunities designed to support students from underrepresented groups, including Black students. EDI has become a central interest to our donor and alumni community, many members of which are keen to support McGill's efforts in this domain.



*Dr Charles R. Drew  
(MDCM '33)*

In 2021, McGill established the **Dr Charles R. Drew Graduate Fellowships**, named in honour of McGill alumnus Dr Charles R. Drew (MDCM '33), the "Father of Blood Banking." These fellowships will support graduates of Historically Black Colleges and Universities who pursue graduate work at McGill. At the launch of the Fellowships in June 2021, McGill's leadership welcomed the President and Provost of Howard University, several public dignitaries, students from both McGill and Howard, and Dr Charlene Drew Jarvis, daughter of Dr Drew. The event also celebrated the naming of [Asia Blackman as the inaugural Drew Graduate Fellow](#). A graduate of Howard University, Asia has just begun a Master's degree in Epidemiology this Fall.

- A fund has been established to support Faculty-based efforts that are tied the Action Plan's commitments. This commitment translates to \$25K/an over 5 years to support local initiatives tied to recruitment, outreach, and engagement.

## 2/ McGill Black Alumni Association (MBAA)

### COMMITMENT

Support the McGill Black Alumni Association, through a fixed annual budget, to develop a mentorship program for Black students that would allow the MBAA to:

- Develop and maintain its website
- Host events centred on mentorship that match current students and alumni
- Support events for Black alumni, especially during Homecoming celebrations

### ACTIONS:

- Budgetary commitments to the MBAA were upheld, so as to support the Association's activities.
- In partnership between the McGill Alumni Association (MAA), the McGill Black Alumni Association (MBAA), and McGill's Subcommittee on Racialized and Ethnic Persons (SCREP), the McGill Black Mentorship program was launched in January of 2021, providing Black students the opportunity to explore their academic/personal/professional goals with the guidance of Black mentors, who share their experiences, knowledge, and advice. The Program runs for 8 months (one academic cycle), pairing students (both undergraduate and graduate level) with an alumnus/alumna or a faculty/staff mentor. Toolkits outlining program expectations are provided to participants. The pilot resulted in over 100 matches. A second round will be launched in January 2022.
- **Antoine-Samuel Mauffette Alavo**, McGill's Black Student Affairs Liaison is a mentor and supports promotion of the mentorship program. He further supports MBAA events and meets with the MBAA monthly to develop initiatives including planning initiatives in connection with the Bicentennial calendar and Homecoming.

## 3/ Advisory Panel on Black Student Life

### COMMITMENT

Create an Advisory Panel on Black Student Life, with a mandate to advise on decision-making with University leadership on key areas affecting Black students at McGill, including community outreach and support. Membership will include Black faculty, students, and staff, as well as representation from the McGill Black Alumni Association and the Black anglophone and francophone communities of Montreal and Quebec.

### ACTIONS:

- The Terms of Reference setting out the panel's mandate, which has been reframed as an *Advisory and Accountability* Panel, and its composition have been finalized.
- Professor Terri Givens and Antoine-Samuel Mauffette Alavo will chair the Advisory Panel.

- Invitations to prospective members of the Advisory Panel have been sent, and 80% have confirmed acceptance; we await responses from the others.
- The Advisory Panel is projected to start its work in Fall 2021.

## 4/ Partnership and Exchange Opportunities

### COMMITMENT:

Explore partnership and exchange opportunities with:

- Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU)
- Institutions of higher education in the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), notably the University of the West Indies (UWI)
- Institutions of higher education in Africa

### ACTIONS:

- Collaboration with the Howard University and other Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) have begun, notably through the establishment of McGill's [Charles R Drew Graduate Fellowship](#). Further possibilities for collaboration will be explored.
- In 2021, McGill established a partnership with the University of West Indies (UWI) that will allow for the further exploration and expansion of current collaborative McGill-UWI projects as well as the development of new opportunities, such as a partnership with McGill's School of Continuing Studies (SCS) for a parliamentary training program in Trinidad and Tobago. In addition, the McGill-UWI MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) will foster McGill's goal of establishing partnerships with institutions of higher education in the Caribbean Community (CARICOM).
- This MOU also expands opportunities for undergraduate student exchanges. As McGill's only Caribbean exchange partner, UWI has welcomed McGill students since 2011. UWI students, under the umbrella of this agreement, have also benefited from the Government of Canada's CARICOM scholarship program to study at McGill.
- The MOU strengthens specific projects of collaboration between McGill and UWI. Notably, UWI is a supporting partner in the School of Population and Global Health's Queen Elizabeth Scholars (QES) project, "Climate Adaptation and Resilient Development: Policy, Research and Practice," funded by Universities Canada. The program will contribute to developing a community of young, engaged leaders and to advancing policy, practice, and research to confront the pressing challenges of climate change. This theme was proposed by the UWI to strengthen the public health, social, and economic development analysis within their ongoing, cross-departmental work on Climate Smart and Resilient Development. The project involves sending twenty McGill students to the UWI to carry out 3-month internships, as well as receiving twenty UWI students at McGill as Graduate Research Trainees for 3-month periods.

- Several activities with African institutions are ongoing to facilitate students' transitions and impact in the workforce. These are primarily as part of the McGill [Mastercard Foundation \(MCF\) Transitions Project](#).
- McGill also has several MOUs with African institutions, such as:
  - [Ashesi University \(Ghana\)](#), a Mastercard Foundation (MCF) partner
  - [University of Ghana \(UG\)](#)
  - [Ghana Civil Aviation Authority Training Academy \(GATA\)](#) (MOU focused on delivering McGill's Diploma in Integrated Aviation Management)

MOU development efforts are ongoing with the following:

- [Université Joseph KI-Zerbo \(UJKZ\)](#), Burkina Faso, as part of the new QES "Netlinks" project with McGill and UG
- [Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology \(KNUST\)](#) (Ghana), a Mastercard Foundation (MCF) partner

Additionally, McGill is developing the following:

- [McGill Alumni Africa Network](#), for mentorship and partnership project opportunities to MCF Scholars/Alums, with plans to scale broadly to McGill students who engage with Africa
- Agreements of Cooperation (AOCs) with non-academic partners to support students' transition to the workforce. Examples for business and international development policy:
  - [Canada-Africa Chamber of Business](#)
  - United Nations Association in Canada (UNAC): <https://www.unac.org/>
- [Internship opportunities](#) with multiple organizations in Canada and Africa, in collaboration with SCS

## THEME 4: WORKFORCE

Like Black students, Black faculty and staff can struggle with experiences of isolation given their low representation within McGill's workforce. Although McGill has developed strong employment equity protocols, these did not integrate strategies focused on recruitment of Black academic and administrative and support staff. Recognizing that existing employment equity strategies did not address issues of representation and equity for Black faculty and staff, the Action Plan set out a series of action items that aimed to boost the recruitment, representation, retention, wellbeing, and success of Black members of the McGill workforce within all employee groups and across all ranks.

Accordingly, McGill undertook the following commitments and steps:

### 1/ Black Tenure-Track and Tenured Professors

#### COMMITMENT

Increase the complement of Black tenure-track and tenured professors. Currently [September 2020], 14 tenure track and tenured professors at the University self-identify as Black in McGill's employment equity survey. This represents 0.8% of our tenure-track and tenured academic staff.

While labour-market availability cannot be discerned specifically for Black populations (since census data for "visible minority/racialized" persons are not disaggregated), a hiring target can be set by relying on Canadian census data. As such, McGill will set a target of 85 Black tenure-track or tenured professors (5%) by 2032,<sup>\*</sup> with an interim target of at least 40 Black tenure-track and tenured professors by 2025. These colleagues will be recruited across disciplines and academic units.



*Welcome Event for  
Incoming Black Faculty, Aug. 2021  
Photo credit: Prof. Terri Givens*

#### ACTIONS:

- A strategic hiring initiative was launched in 2020-2021 that issued 18 licenses across Faculties to enhance the representation of Black faculty and to recruit faculty with research and teaching expertise relevant to Black experiences, histories, communities.
- The strategic hiring initiative is coupled with ongoing efforts to identify and recruit excellent Black faculty who are members of underrepresented groups, including Black faculty.
- 15 new Black faculty joined McGill's professoriate, each exceptional scholars in their own right. These colleagues are appointed within a range of Faculties, across all ranks. At the same time, 13 additional searches are underway connected to the Action Plan.

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<sup>\*</sup> This target date aligns with that set for target Indigenous representation of tenure-track and tenured faculty in the [Final Report of the Provost's Task Force on Indigenous Studies and Indigenous Education](#).

- The Equity Team is working to propose Faculty-level targets for representation for all equity-seeking groups, including specific targets for Black Faculty. Conversations with Faculty Deans on these targets will take place in Fall 2021.
- [Professor Terri Givens](#) was appointed Provost's Academic Lead and Advisor on the Action Plan, with a mandate to lead recruitment, support, mentorship, and retention efforts for Black faculty.

## 2/ Support for Black and Other Racialized Academic Staff

### COMMITMENT

Support the well-being and success of Black and other racialized academic staff notably through:

- Extension of a budgetary commitment to the Dr Kenneth Melville McGill Black Faculty Caucus (“the [Caucus](#)”)
- Semi-annual meetings between the Principal, Provost, and the Caucus
- Creation of a mentorship network open to all academic staff, with the expectation of a disproportionate benefit for members of underrepresented groups
- Ensuring that hiring units are aware of, and encouraged to deploy, the University's robust recruitment and retention protocols, including spousal appointment processes
- Analysis of demographic representation within salaried ranked Contract Academic Staff, accompanied by the setting of targets, measures, and timelines to address identified gaps

### ACTIONS:

- Budgetary support has been allocated to the Dr. Kenneth Melville McGill Black Faculty and Staff Caucus.
- The Principal and Provost met with the Caucus in Fall and Winter of AY2020/21. Biannual meetings will continue in the present year.

The [Provost's Faculty Mentorship Network](#) was launched in August 2021 to guide and support all pre-tenure professors. [Mentors](#) who are part of the Network possess a range of strengths and capacities that will contribute to guiding and advising junior colleagues. Pre-tenure faculty can learn about participating in the Network by visiting the [Becoming a Mentee](#) page.

- A vital component of Professor Givens' work as the Provost's Academic Lead and Advisor is to provide mentorship to Black faculty. Professor Givens will host events for Black faculty to allow colleagues across campus to connect. This work seeks to create a sense of community and belonging for Black colleagues at McGill. Professor Givens is also working on developing a transnational network to help spread the word about faculty hiring at McGill, as well as encourage students to consider McGill for graduate work.

- **Jean St-Vil, Special Advisor to the Vice-Principal (Research & innovation)**, will support Black faculty with research activities such as and pursuing funding and partnership opportunities, joining and leading complex multidisciplinary teams, and serving on granting agency selection committees.
- The foregoing initiatives are enhanced and complemented by the commitments and efforts of the **Dr. Kenneth Melville Black Faculty and Staff Caucus**, which also plays a vital role at McGill in relation to mentoring and community-building for Black faculty.

### 3/ Representation and Advancement of Black and Racialized Administrative Staff

#### COMMITMENT

Work to increase the representation of, and career opportunities for, Black administrative and support staff, notably through:

- Setting population-based workforce targets for M-level and Executive staff. Black M-level and Executive staff currently represent 3.4% of that cohort at McGill. The following targets are set:
  - 5% representation by 2025
  - 6.8% representation by 2032
- Outreach with Black community groups and networks in hiring initiatives
- Training to enhance recruitment, interview, and selection practices
- Enhanced onboarding and mentoring for new hires
- Exploring mentoring and reverse mentoring/networking opportunities for students and staff with Black alumni and the larger Montreal community
- Delivering equity and anti-racism training for all HR professional staff, including HR Advisors, as well for senior management staff
- Review of policies and practices related to merit, retention, and promotion

#### ACTIONS:

- The **HR Working Group to Address Anti-Black Racism**, launched in Spring 2021, focuses on advancing the commitments set out in this section of the Action Plan. The Working Group includes representation from the Equity Team and varied branches of Human Resources, including Staffing, Organizational Development, Labour Relations, Communications, Total Compensation, and Shared Services. The Working Group is divided into four subgroups: onboarding, support, and mentorship; outreach and recruitment; promotion, career development and retention; and training for leaders and HR.

- To build community relations and attract excellent candidates from Montreal's Black community, job postings are now disseminated among BIPOC community groups in the Montreal area by the Employment Equity Advisor, **Sara Pierre**. The ABR Working Group's Outreach Branch is planning to launch a community newsletter in AY2021/22, which will include information about working at McGill and various opportunities; this will be disseminated throughout the Montreal community.
- **Karen Diop** was appointed Program Manager: Anti-Black Racism Action Plan. Charged with oversight of the implementation of all Action Plan commitments, a key component of Karen's role is support for initiatives to increase representation and career opportunities for all Black staff.
- In August 2021, the first **Black Employee Resource Group** was launched by the Equity Team. This will be a space for Black administrative and support staff to meet formally and informally, with a view to developing networking and community-building opportunities.
- Data on demographic representation of the workforce is collected, analysed, and reported on through processes linked to McGill's Employment Equity Policy and *La Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse*. The Equity Team is monitoring the representation of equity-seeking groups, including Black persons, across our workforce to ensure that we are making steady progress toward addressing gaps in representation in all sectors and across ranks.

## 4/ Equity and Anti-Racism Training for Search and Advisory Committees

### COMMITMENT

Develop more robust equity and anti-racism training and capacity-building for search and advisory committees for the appointments of the University's senior-most positions. The intention will be to cast wide nets, worldwide, as part of all executive searches to yield candidate pools consistently characterized by excellence and diversity. The ultimate aim is to build diversity, including racial diversity, within McGill's senior leadership.

### ACTIONS:

- The [curriculum developed by the Equity Team](#) broadened in scope considerably over AY2020/21. Workshops focused on equity in recruitment and hiring are a core component of this curriculum. These workshops are intended for all members of the McGill community engaged in hiring, whether in the academic or administrative context. These recruitment-focused workshops are coupled by a range of additional trainings that are offered to all faculty and staff, and are designed to ensure that colleagues, once at McGill, experience equitable and inclusive environments where they believe they can succeed.



- McGill has committed to deepening representation not only within the professoriate but also across senior leadership (Principal's Leadership Team (all VPs), Deans, AVPs). As PALA on the ABR, Professor Givens will play a key role guiding academic leaders (Deans, Chairs, Directors, Associate Deans) about the distinct needs and experiences of Black faculty and measures that can facilitate an equitable and inclusive environment for all, including for BIPOC faculty. She is will also lead workshops for university leadership.
- Enhanced training on equity and anti-racism was developed and delivered to all senior leadership advisory committees.

## THEME 5: PHYSICAL SPACE

Crucial to one's sense of belonging within higher education settings is seeing oneself reflected in the imagery, iconography, and languages encountered across a campus' physical space. Black members of the McGill community – notably Black students – have stressed how experiences of isolation and alienation are compounded by the fact that there is barely any visual representation of Black or even Indigenous or otherwise racialized persons in the sculptures, photos, or other artwork at the University. The McGill Black community has also stressed how helpful designated space for Black students would be, with a view to facilitating networking and social opportunities.

Accordingly, McGill undertook the following commitments and steps:

### 1/ Campus Planning Working Group on Recognition and Commemoration

#### COMMITMENT

Establish a Campus Planning Working Group on Recognition and Commemoration. This Working Group will be mandated to examine issues of representation in the execution of the McGill Master Plan, particularly with reference to Black and Indigenous presence on campus.

#### ACTIONS:

- Terms of reference for the Working Group are being drafted and will be inspired by the Action Plan, the [Final Report of the Provost's Task Force on Indigenous Studies and Indigenous Education](#), and the [Report of the Working Group on Principles of Commemoration and Renaming](#).
- Working Group is projected to be constituted and convened by the end of AY2021/22

### 2/ James McGill Statue

#### COMMITMENT

- Install, for the time being, a plaque next to the James McGill statue on lower campus, which explains who James McGill was, including his connections to, and involvement with, the transatlantic slave trade and his ownership of enslaved peoples.
- Assess and determine the statue's most suitable setting – including its location and necessary contextualizing information – as McGill enters its third century.

#### **ACTIONS:**

- The University rewrote its public-facing brief history of James McGill. This version of James McGill's history, on the University's [Who Was James McGill? website](#), accounts for McGill's ownership of enslaved persons within his household and his participation in the transatlantic slave trade.
- In June 2021, this history was inscribed on a plaque installed next to the sculpture of James McGill on lower campus. A month later, the sculpture and the plaque were vandalized. Both were removed for repair. A decision as to whether either or both of these items will be returned to their location or situated elsewhere will be considered and explored over the course of the Bicentennial.

### **3/ Bellairs Research Institute**

#### **COMMITMENT**

Convene a working group to explore and make proposals that would draw on the [Bellairs Research Institute](#) as a site to further research and learning in connection with topics such as: Barbadian-Canadian relations, Caribbean studies, slavery studies, post-imperial studies, sustainability studies, and the blue economy.

#### **ACTIONS;**

- A Working Group on the Bellairs Institute has been struck under the leadership of **Karen Diop**, the Action Plan's Program Manager. In a first instance, the Working Group plans to hold consultations with Bajan and Caribbean communities in Montreal and with communities in Barbados to work toward a vision as to how to evolve the vocation and activities of the Institute to acknowledge colonial histories and connections to McGill, and to create stronger links with local communities. The Working Group is composed of a staff member of the Bellairs Research Institute and McGill's faculty and staff who have an excellent knowledge of the institute and strong connections with and within Montreal's Black communities.

### **4/ Living Website**

#### **COMMITMENT**

Create a living website modelled on [Blazing Trails: McGill's Women](#) to showcase the presence and success of Black McGillians over time.

#### **ACTIONS:**

- McGill has committed to highlighting the history and contemporary presence of diverse peoples within our campus through multiple sites and modes of communication. Ultimately, the intention is to develop a living website to highlight the successes and contributions of Black McGillians. Over the past year, the achievements of the Black McGillians have been highlighted on the University's [Bicentennial website](#). Luminaries such as: [Dr. William Wright](#), [Dr. Ernest Melville DuPorte](#), [Dr. Kenneth Melville](#), and [Juanita Corinne DeShield](#) have been highlighted.

## 5/ Black Student Space

### **COMMITMENT**

Consolidate and enhance University resources dedicated to antiracism education, support for racialized members of the McGill community, community outreach, and response to incidents of racial discrimination. The University administration and members of the McGill community will together determine the structure and mandate of a unit dedicated to such anti-racism initiatives.

### **ACTIONS:**

- Student associations were consulted throughout AY2020/2021 about their needs and how these can be most effectively addressed vis-à-vis space. Currently, a location in the Ferrier building has been reserved for Black student space. It will be accessible to students beginning in Fall 2021 to be used for meetings and small-scale events, as well as lounge space.
  
- A guest access policy will be drafted with the Black Students' Network and McGill African Students' Society.

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## Looking Ahead

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Thank you for reading this annual report on the first year of activities carried out pursuant to the Action Plan. While we have made some important strides in Year 1, our work must continue, and it must be marked by ongoing humility and perseverance. Hence, while the momentum that the Action Plan has generated across McGill is uplifting, we must not lose sight of the fact that – as we have said throughout this annual report – we are only just getting started, and the road ahead requires all of us to persist in the hard, but crucial work of understanding and addressing anti-Black racism.

We are on our way to a campus community marked by greater inclusivity. Reaching our goals will require ongoing efforts from each of us. These efforts include careful listening to and engagement with one another about matters central to the Action Plan. They also call for creating opportunities and sites to honour the contributions that Black students, faculty, and staff have long made, and continue to make, at McGill.

There is much to look forward to as we begin Year 2 of the Action Plan's implementation. Aside from sustaining the efforts already been initiated in the first year of activity, we anticipate that Year 2 will see a range of highlights, including:

- Completion and submission of the African and Black Studies Working Group (ABSWG)'s report, followed by plans to implement that report's recommendations.
- Launch of an online learning module on systemic racism for all members of the McGill community that will complement in-person training and workshops on EDI and anti-racism.
- Establishment of a research team to carry out an expanded McGill history project on our university's connections to the transatlantic slave trade.
- Opening of a dedicated campus space for Black students.
- Launch of the Provostial Visiting-Fellowship-in-Residence on Black Life and History initiative, and appointment and welcoming of the first Visiting Fellow.
- Launch of the Bellairs Working Group, which will consult with members of Montreal's Black and Barbadian communities about potential orientations for Bellairs in line with the Action Plan
- Extension of the Student Leadership Program: Pick Your Path! to Black Students
- Continued opportunities for McGill leadership's engagement with the Black members of the McGill community through: town halls with the Black members of the McGill community, biennial meetings between the Principal, Provost and Dr. Kenneth Melville Black Faculty and Staff Caucus, and regular meetings between the leadership of the Black Students' Network, the McGill African Students' Society, and members of the Equity Team.

Over the year ahead, the team leading work under the Action Plan will engage through multiple platforms to solicit feedback and ideas about areas where more work, or more effective work, is needed to advance the Action Plan's objectives, in both letter and spirit. Please be on the lookout for invitations to share your voices and views on this front.

The final word of this report is one of recognition and thanks to all who have been working to address anti-Black racism at McGill and striving to make our campuses more equitable and inclusive for all.

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## Appendix

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McGill University acknowledges and appreciates the important contributions of the [Dr Kenneth Melville Black Faculty and Staff Caucus](#).

Members of the McGill community are invited to view the Caucus' [Statements](#) on the following topics:

- McGill Plan for Addressing Anti-Black Racism - Statement of the Dr. Kenneth Melville McGill Black Faculty Caucus - 1 August 2020
- Dr. Kenneth Melville McGill Black Faculty and Staff Caucus Response to McGill University's Action Plan to Address Anti-Black Racism - 12 November 2020
- Use of N-Word in the Classroom - 9 December 2020
- Caucus 2021 Statement - agreed by Caucus on August 25, 2021, published on September 16, 2021

A Montreal Community Contact article, entitled "[The Black Presence at McGill University](#)", recounts the history and vital impact of the Caucus' formation.