

Reflect, Rebuild, & Rise Conference is Launched

Delia S. Saenz, Ph.D.

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Hello Bennington community members:

I am happy to share that our diversity conference--online version--has been launched! The student leaders who were the drivers of this event worked extremely hard to transition from 'live' format to online delivery. And they succeeded with aplomb in a matter of a few short weeks. Note that I had found their original work and planning remarkable in its own right. Hence, the pivot to online delivery adds yet another level of remarkable talent and effort. Kudos to them!!

For the online Reflect, Rebuild, & Rise conference, 2 new presentations will be released each week, and we invite you to visit the site and participate in both the educational and interactive portions of each session. This week, we feature India Carter-Bolick who helps us understand social identity and positionality, and Alex Briseno who provides a view of the student experience through the lens of women of color on campus. I think you will agree, there is much to gain from the content. As well, we posted 3 introductory videos this week that provide an overview and framework for the conference and our and future goals. I make short remarks and so, too, do the co-leaders of the overall enterprise: Deja Haley and Ahmad Yassir. (If you want to congratulate them, please do so; if you have concerns, I'm the point person.)

I think we can all agree that together, we are better.

Below, I have provided links pertaining to our YouTube channel, 'Community Builders,' where you can find the sessions, and also to Panels, an informational site with details of our work on diversity and inclusion.

Community Builders channel: [Reflect, Rebuild, & Rise](#)

Panels: diversity.bennington.edu/panels

I cannot underscore enough the gratitude I have for the creators of the work and the collaborators they recruited. It was truly a community effort (even in the midst of all the demands associated with COVID-19). Similarly, I would like to give special thanks to IT and Communications. Staff in these offices provided large amounts of support and deserve applause. I am always grateful to the staff from the Office of Diversity & Inclusion and the President's Office and thank them for providing support on this project.

Gratefully, elatedly, and respectfully,

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