

RCPA Commitment

Our industry is at a pivotal time, one of acknowledgement, accountability and action. Across the board, institutions and organizations are being held accountable for their part in maintaining and promoting systemic discrimination in the Arts – and Randolph College is no different. This accountability can and will be challenging, but it is vital that this work begin in order to manifest a new, more equitable paradigm.

Randolph College recognizes that it has played a role in and benefited from systemic discrimination based in colonialism and white supremacy. Despite our origins, we are a product of this system as much as any of our peers. We also acknowledge that RCPA has perpetuated traditions and practices that echo and reinforce both systemic racism and the colonial system. These practices have caused our IBPOC community to suffer and struggle as they navigate the system, and that will not be allowed to continue.

Randolph College apologizes for the role it has played as part of “The System”, and for the harm it has caused our IBPOC community. Moving forward, we commit to examining our practices and projects through the lens of diversity, equity and inclusion – rejecting and replacing any that contribute to and sustain systemic discrimination. We stand firmly against racism and discrimination, and will challenge and change these existing structures as they are brought to light.

Recently, our students, alumni and staff have brought a number of concerns forward to us and have asked the College to be and to do better. We are grateful for their contribution and their willingness to work with us, and we fully commit to better supporting our IBPOC community as we begin this work.

Many of the items listed below came from our IBPOC student caucus as suggestions to address their immediate concerns. We will seek out, welcome and listen to our community’s insight and feedback, and commit to monthly meetings with the students’ caucus groups to review their suggestions, work done to date, and to plan for the future.

Action Plan

A) Already Underway

- RCPA has engaged an outside moderator from CPAMO (Cultural Pluralism in the Arts Movement Ontario) for our next series of Town Halls. This moderator will prioritize IBPOC voices to create a safer space for sharing and dialogue. Participation in these Town Halls will be limited to students (alumni and current, respectively) for the same reasons, with staff and faculty to be given alternate methods to contribute to the discussion.
- Randolph College has agreed to the formation of student caucuses where students may work together to explore their specific needs and share their concerns. These caucuses may then formally advocate for these historically under-served and under-represented groups.
- RCPA has met/will soon meet with the student caucuses independently of each other so as to allow each group focused attention without competition or dilution. Student Town Halls from this point will be used to share information and plans
- A Town Hall for RCPA alumni has been booked, and alumni invited to share questions/concerns in advance of the meeting. We will continue to listen to and work with our alumni as we move forward.
- Our Board of Directors has met and has given their support to this work, pledging to the following:
 - o To have RCPA participate in workshops and training offered by CPAMO
 - o To weave multicultural work that explores more diverse stories and ways of storytelling into the fabric of our curriculum
 - o To increase IBPOC representation in all departments across the board

- To creating safer spaces where past and present students can discuss and understand the history of systemic racism and how to best handle the pressure that artists of colour face to conform within the industry
- We have begun the examination of RCPA and its acknowledgment of the Indigenous territories on which it works, asking for student participation in the statement itself as well as how the College can move beyond acknowledgement alone. A Land Acknowledgment will now begin all gatherings of RCPA students, staff and faculty.

B) Immediate

- We will be bringing our Faculty/Staff into discussions regarding Systemic Discrimination and Racism within the College, detailing the College's commitment to challenge racism where and when it manifests. This discussion will detail examples of micro-aggressions, othering, exclusion, stereotyping, etc. and will place the onus of action/interruption on the Faculty/Staff while setting the College's expectations around how our students are to be treated.
- We will be examining our policies and procedures - modifying as necessary
- In specific, we will examine our policies and procedures around racism and discrimination to ensure that our students have a clear, timely and safe procedure for bringing these instances to the attention of the College without risk to themselves.
- We will create a section on our website detailing our commitment to anti-racism, including our action plan. This section will include resources specifically relevant to our IBPOC Performing Arts community, as well as resources aimed at other groups committed to learning more/becoming anti-racist.
- Our student and faculty Handbooks will be modified to include a clearer, more relevant statement of the College's position regarding racism, diversity, equity and inclusion.
- A Land Acknowledgment section will be included in the student and faculty Handbooks.

C) Near-Future

- Future Orientation sessions for new students will specifically call out and reference our expectations around how we work and interact with one another, including examples of discrimination, micro-aggressions, othering, etc. These themes will be revisited and reinforced throughout the terms as we gather.
- We will engage an outside provider to facilitate mandatory workshops/training for staff and faculty on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. Similar training will be a regular part of RCPA's employment/engagement relationships moving forward.
- Resources for staff, students and Faculty will be made available on the Discord server
- RCPA will begin an examination of how to reach communities that have been under-represented and under-served up to this point. The goal of this process will be to increase accessibility and entry points for IBPOC performers.
- We will begin a review of our hiring practices for both staff and faculty

D) Autumn/Winter 2020

- A complete Action Plan including Q4 and 2021 to be shared with our student caucuses and our larger community
- RCPA commits to a thorough examination of its curriculum and pedagogical methods, with a goal of a more culturally inclusive/responsive pedagogy and curriculum
- The College will begin seeking additional ways to provide more Student Financial Aid to IBPOC students (bursaries, etc.)
- RCPA commits to hiring more IBPOC instructors and faculty in Q4 2020 and moving forward

These changes will be undertaken with several broader commitments from the College:

- We will actively consult with, listen to, and work with our IBPOC community – our students, our alumni, our staff and faculty and our industry. We invite you to share your insights and feedback, and to participate to whatever degree you feel most comfortable
- We will undertake the work ourselves, without placing the burden of change on the IBPOC community. This work will, however, remain centred on the experiences and perspectives of our IBPOC stakeholders

- We will keep our community aware of and informed about the work we are doing and will be doing, and will be accountable to them for that work

This is a watershed moment for our industry and for the world at large, and one that has been a long time coming. We recognize that this is just the beginning and are willing to face the challenges along the way as we create something new, something more inclusive and equitable. We appreciate your courage in sharing your experiences to date, and your drive to dismantle systems that ignore and do harm, and welcome you should you choose to engage with us as we transform Randolph College for the Performing Arts into a place that truly is for every performer and artist.