

### **Intercultural Student Engagement Center**

The Western Kentucky University’s Intercultural Student Engagement Center (ISEC) was created on July 1, 2017. ISEC is formally known as the Office of Institutional Diversity and Inclusion (OIDI), the Office of Diversity Programs (ODP), and the Minority Student Support Services, (MSSS), respectively. For various reasons, the university decided to change the name of the unit and empower it with the responsibility of assisting the university with the recruitment, retention, and graduation of underrepresented students. ISEC is housed in the university’s Enrollment and Student Experience Division, formally known as the Division of Student Affairs.

In addition, ISEC sponsors and partners with several university departments, academic units, and community agencies and provides cultural competency activities. ISEC has several student initiatives, student success programs, and cultural and celebratory events housed within its unit charted below.

ISEC Academy	Intercultural Student Engagement Center (ISEC) Academy is a Western Kentucky University initiative/program to assist students that identify as students of color (Black, Hispanic/Latino, Asian, Native American, Multiracial) and/or who are first-generation, Pell-eligible, and need assistance with their transition, persistence, and graduation from Western Kentucky University. This program is coordinated by the Intercultural Student Engagement Center. We believe that students of color at Western Kentucky University are scholars who will achieve positive change in themselves, the WKU Community, and the world!
ISEC Navigators	Serve as the student leaders and Orientation guides for the Academy Orientation. Navigators are placed in cluster groups and are assigned a group of conference attendees and provide support and guidance during and after the summer conference. Navigators gain experience in mentoring, problem solving, event management, and large and small group facilitation. Navigators network with university senior administration, faculty, and staff from across campus as well as undergo training on admissions and university processes to assist in the recruitment of prospective students. Interested applications should value collaboration, teamwork, and inclusive excellence
PRIDE Center	The mission of the WKU Pride Center is to support all LGBTQ, questioning, and allied students at Western Kentucky University. The Pride Center works to

	improve the campus climate for all LGBTQ+ students by advocating for the respect and safety of all members of the campus community through events and educational opportunities. The Pride Center collaborates with other campus programs and groups to support students as they complete their educational goals.
WKU CAREs	The WKU Center for Academic Resources & Success (WKU CAREs) is an initiative to assist students that identify as underrepresented and/or who are first-generation, Pell-eligible, and have some need with their transition, persistence, and graduation from Western Kentucky University. Established through grant support from the James Graham Brown Foundation, students who take part in WKU CAREs activities will find a support network dedicated to ensuring their success. Students will have the opportunity for transformation related to personal development, academic engagement, campus involvement, and opportunities for experiences related to culture and diversity. The Intercultural Student Engagement Center encompasses both programs (ISEC Academy & WKU CAREs) to ensure a quality, diverse, and inclusive experience that will prepare all students to be successful on the Hill.
Why Knot Us (WKU)	The purpose of the program is to increase the sense of belonging of Black males through intentional programmatic needs. Through this, we will improve retention, impact, and quality of life through professional and personal development opportunities. The goals of the program are to increase admission and graduation rates at WKU-Improve faculty, staff, and student relationships; Reduce the attrition rate of black males at WKU; Promote black male involvement in student organizations.
<b>*Why Knot Us 2 (WKU)2</b>	<b>The purpose of the program is to improve the mental, emotional, environmental, and academic success of females of color enrolled at WKU. The goals of the program is to Attract Women of Color who identify as the African diaspora to attend WKU; Educate Women of Color through a structured program designed to support their student experience through academic and social support, access to campus resources, and professional development; Support and challenge students to achieve academically at WKU; Retain Women of Color through continued support programs; and Promote involvement in leadership, both on and off-campus.</b>
Cultural and Celebratory Events	ISEC Recognition Celebration, Lavendar Recognition, Black History Month, Women’s History Month, LatinX/Hispanic Celebrations; LGBTQ+ History Month

**Sisterhood Support Update (Why Knot US 2)**

In 2021 the WKU Sisterhood awarded a \$10,000 *Small but Mighty* grant to support the creation of the Why Knot Us 2 program. Under the leadership of Dr. Cres’Sena Thomas, the associate director of ISEC, an advisory committee was created. The purpose of the advisory

board is to assist with direction, presentations, workshops, sessions, and program curriculum.

The advisory committee includes:

Why Knot Us 2 Advisory Committee	
Dr. Imari Hazelwood- Staff	Niasha Shaw- Staff
Cierra Waller- Staff	Dr. Cres'Sena Thomas- Staff
Aurelia Spaulding- Staff	Zahriaa Barnes & Millie LeJeune-Students

After funding was received, information about the program was disseminated and recruitment occurred. (30) completed program applications. 29 were invited to interview and 29 were accepted to participate in the First Class of the Why Knot Us 2 cohort. On Sunday, March 27, 2022, the Why Knot US 2 induction ceremony was held in the Downing Student Union and approximately 65 families, faculty, staff, and friends were in attendance.

To date, Sisterhood funds have been utilized for the following:

Items purchased	Reason of Purchase	Cost
Cake, Drinks, Utensils	Used for the reception after inducting young ladies.	\$80.07
Embroidered Polos	Polos will be used for events and meetings so young ladies will look unified.	\$833.60
Embroidered Cardigans	Cardigan was part of the induction ceremony into the organization.	\$1,444.08
Venue (DSU)/rental	DSU was used for the ceremony space.	\$70.00
<b>Total expenditure to date:</b>		<b>\$2,431.75</b>

The Intercultural Student Engagement Center is appreciative of the WKU Sisterhood, the continued support, and the funding provided to the Why Knot US 2 initiatives. We are excited about the impact this initiative will have on the university, the Enrollment and Student Experience division, the Intercultural Student Engagement Center, and more importantly the lives of the women involved.

**First Class of Why Knot Us 2**

