



SPOTLIGHT: TIMOTHY COTMAN

Timothy Cotman serves as the Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Coordinator at Wakefield High School. Mr. Cotman earned his Bachelor of Arts in English/Writing, Master of Education in Curriculum and Instruction and a graduate certificate in Conflict Resolution/Advanced Skills from George Mason University. He began working at Wakefield High School in 2019 after serving in this role at Thomas Jefferson Middle School for over 20 years. During his career, he has worked diligently on initiatives that have supported students, their families and APS staff in creating more equitable and inclusive environments that capitalize on the diversity of the Arlington community. He believes in the power of collaboration between home, school and community in supporting students to reach their goals and is passionate about creating spaces where each individual is empowered and able to be their authentic self.

IMPORTANT DATES

- January 4 - World Braille Day
- January 11 - National Human Trafficking Awareness Day
- January 15 - Dr. Martin Luther King Birthday
- January 24 - International Day of Education
- January 27 - International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Winter Retreat

The Office of DEI gathered with coordinators from each APS secondary school to discuss our role in leading equity work across schools. Special attention was paid to how data is mined and utilized to inform decision making. Thanks to Ms. Stephanie Smith, Ms. Tamarah Stanley, and Mr. James Sample for their leadership as each shared how they use data at their respective schools.

AROUND NOVA

2023 MLK Weekend of Remembrance
Lifting Music and Our Voices in His Honor
Middleburg Barn
4444 Arlington Blvd, Arlington, VA 22204

From Friday night, January 13, through Monday, January 16, 2023, the Unitarian Universalist Church of Arlington (UUCA) community will come together to remember and celebrate the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Friday, January 13, 7pm - Classical Violin Recital
Saturday, January 14, 9:15 am and 11:15 am - MLK: A Musical Remembrance
Sunday, January 15, 10am - Noon - Sunday Worship Service

Monday, January 16 - MLK Day of Service
Visit <https://www.uucava.org/> for more information

Contact us at DEI@apsva.us

SPOTLIGHT: NEKYA BALL

Born and raised in Arlington, Nekya has worked for Arlington Public Schools since 2004 and has 2 children that are APS graduates as well. She currently serves as a CTE Business Teacher and Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Coordinator at H-B Woodlawn Secondary Program where she's been since 2013. Nekya has earned an Associate's Degree in Criminal Justice, a Bachelor's Degree in Business with a concentration in Legal Studies, a Master's Degree in Education with a concentration in Educational Management, and numerous post-graduate certifications. Passionate about her career, her values lie in making every student feel like they belong, no matter their circumstance. She wants every student that she encounters and connects with to feel and know that there is a place for them, and they will be great. Nekya enjoys her position as DEI coordinator. She takes pride in coordinating numerous activities and opportunities for her students throughout the year, as well as allowing them to share their talent, passion, and identity through school events such as the annual Hispanic Heritage Month Celebration and the Black History Month Show. She strongly believes in a philosophy that creating good positive relationships with students aids in fostering their drive and overall success.

IN THE CLASSROOM

Culturally Responsive Teaching and Equitable Practices

Indicator 2: Fosters classroom environments that create opportunities for access and achievement by acknowledging, valuing, advocating, and affirming cultural and social diversity in all aspects of the learning process, including for gender, race, ethnicity, English Language Learners, and students with disabilities.

Teacher Practices:

- Teachers use language that validates multiple identities, encourages questioning, and builds discourse.
- Teachers instruct and model a growth mindset.
- Teachers emphasize effort.
- Teachers create clear expectations and criteria for peer collaboration and feedback.

WHAT WE ARE READING

Please use this [link](#) to share your thoughts on what we're reading and offer suggestions to expand our library and collective knowledge.

We are currently reading:

Cognitive Biases In a Nutshell: How to Spot and Stop the Hiccups in our Thinking Process - Thinknetic

TERM OF THE MONTH

Inclusion

The unyielding effort to create a culture where our unique identities are celebrated, valued, respected, and embraced.



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