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Integrating Social Justice Values in Educational Leadership:  
A Study of African American and Black University Presidents

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the  
requirements for the degree Doctor of Education

by

Guadalupe Navarro-Garcia

2016

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## **ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION**

Integrating Social Justice Values in Educational Leadership:  
A Study of African American and Black University Presidents

by

Guadalupe Navarro-Garcia

Doctor of Education

University of California, Los Angeles, 2016

Professor Robert Cooper, Co-Chair

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This qualitative study investigated the experiences that led to African American and Black university presidents' social justice values and how they acted on them in the leadership of their universities. It contributes to the dialog on leadership preparation and how 21st century educational leaders can be effective in the social justice-oriented efforts expected of today's moral leaders. It offers lessons learned from senior leaders and helps identify how social justice-oriented leaders can sustain their efforts in light of resistance and expectations held of them to be activist leaders.

Six African American and Black presidents from four-year, predominantly White higher education institutions nationwide participated in the study. A document review identified presidents who had a history of social justice efforts. They participated through a

questionnaire and in-depth interview. Thirteen faculty, staff and student leaders were also interviewed. Participants' data was triangulated and analyzed for thematic content. The findings show that the presidents' social justice values were influenced by their family, cultural wealth and experiences with injustice. Their social justice values were deeply embedded in their leadership practice. All presidents' values had a moral base to improve society and/or do the right thing. Their leadership principles were found to align to the principles of Moral Leadership.

The findings support the paradigm shift from managerial authority to moral authority and the infusion of social justice into all aspects of leadership practice. The findings show how higher education leaders respond to current student movements, contribute to student leadership development and work toward transformation of their institution. The study provides leadership counterstories and opens up new directions of inquiry about the strength-based approaches of diverse leaders. The findings contribute to the dialog on leadership transition and how 21st century educational leaders can practice and sustain themselves as moral leaders.

The dissertation of Guadalupe Navarro-Garcia is approved.

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2016

## DEDICATION

Robert Paul Garcia, the love of my life, you are always there and always supportive of my growth. I am happy to bring a Bruin graduation to your parents.

To my hearts, Ritchie and Celina, I will always respect you both for understanding the calling of my work and unconditionally supporting my pursuit of a doctorate degree.

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## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **Introduction**

Leaders by nature of their special position have a greater opportunity to influence others (Northouse, 2007). They set the tone, develop the vision, form the ethical choices and decisions and establish and reinforce organizational values (Freeman, 2011; Gini, 1997). People look to college presidents to provide moral leadership everyday (Ponder & McCauley, 2006). Presidents play an important role in shaping higher education institutions and their preparation for leadership is critical. When compared to their counterparts, African American higher education presidents were found to have held their current positions longer; were older; and planned to retire in higher numbers (ACE, 2012). Studies showed that these presidents also faced the added challenge to act on social justice advocacy values borne out of personal and professional struggles and experiences with injustice (Collins, 1990; Jean-Marie, 2006). The retirement of a generation of social justice advocates and the lessons learned from senior higher education leaders raises a concern about how to train the next generation of social justice advocates and leaders for educational equity and transformational leadership (Kuk, King & Forrest, 2012). Educational research has focused on advancing students and faculty of color with a gap in knowledge about how higher and postsecondary education is engaging, retaining and advancing administrators of color to aid in the development and advancement of the next generation of leaders, in particular African American leaders (Holmes, 2004; Jackson, 2004). Studies on African American presidents found mentorship from colleagues to be critical in their attaining the presidency (ACE, 2012; Harvey, 1999; Herring, 2010; Holmes, 2004). The availability of mentors and the transfer of knowledge are central to the preparation and advancement of future leaders.

African American presidents make up *only* six percent of university presidents compared to their White counterparts, who make up 88 percent (ACE, 2013). In the 2012 American Council on Education (ACE) college presidents report, African American presidents' numbers nationwide were found to have increased *only* one percent since 1986 (ACE, 2012). University presidents of color face the conventional concerns of all presidents (Stewart, 2009) and in studies on African American presidents many were found to have faced discrimination on a daily basis (Gasman, 2011; Ricard & Brown, 2008). These presidents were also found to have a strong sense of mission and values that focused on contributing to the community (Jean-Marie, 2006; Esters & Strayhorn, 2013). This sense of mission, values and community are key themes in the expectations held for moral leaders (Freire, 1998; Sergiovanni, 2007).

Moral Leadership (also called ethical, value-based or purpose-driven leadership) draws its inspiration from a vast array of moral philosophies and leadership literature (Knights & O'Leary, 2006). While some leadership-focused theorists look at the behavior, motive or conduct of the leader, others look at the viewpoint of the leader's character (Northouse, 2007). Central to moral leadership is the importance of integrating one's values into the organization's values (Kouzas & Posner, 2007). There must be a connection between a sound value system and the ability of the leader to use these values in his/her decision-making. Moral leadership emerges as an area to explore and in particular for these leaders, how they acted on their sense of mission and values and sustained themselves while tackling social justice issues such as achievement and opportunity gaps.

Leadership transition creates an opportunity to prepare leaders (and institutions) to address social justice challenges in higher education. To help guide 21<sup>st</sup> century leaders in how

to successfully integrate the social justice-oriented actions expected of ethical leaders, I studied African American university presidents who have a documented history of social justice advocacy. I explored the source of their social justice values, how they integrated and acted on these values in the leadership of their universities and how these values and actions aligned to principles of Moral Leadership. I focused on these presidents from four-year institutions that are not Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU).

## **Background**

### **Social Justice and Moral Leadership**

Although social justice has been widely studied, scholars have not agreed upon a definition (Shoho, Merchant & Lugg, 2005). Seminal works include Rawls' (1971) focus on how goods, services and burdens are properly (or improperly) distributed among members of society and Freire's (1998) focus on "conscientization," the process of achieving deep awareness of contradictions of social structures and situations and the reality to transform them. Key themes in many definitions of social justice include the issue of equity and the "righting" of injustice. Along this line of thought comes critical theory and advocates of Critical Race Theory who call for the questioning of privilege, beliefs, actions and policies that structurally maintain privilege and the status quo (Freire, 1998; Furman, 2012; Gooden & Dantley, 2012; Lopez, 2003). Furman (2003) argues that the increasing focus on social justice is in part due to a shift in focus toward the moral purposes of leadership. Patton, Shahjahan and Osei-Kofi's (2010) approach to social justice touches upon common themes in the definitions of social justice. They define it as the process of recognizing and working against oppression at individual, institutional and systemic levels. Davis and Harrison (2013) argue that social justice is most effective when its practice emerges from a deeply integrated sense of self in the world.

This personal, often value-driven focus on social justice efforts in leadership raised a direction of inquiry for this research study and for an understanding of how leaders employed moral leadership principles in the running of their university.

Social justice is often described through terms such as equity, equality, fairness and adequacy (Shoho, Merchant & Lugg, 2005), which each have an expectation of an outcome for the greater good. When social justice is applied to educational leaders, many conceptualizations also call for them to “act” and be activist leaders (Freire, 1998; Lopez, 2003; McKenzie et al., 2008; Parker & Villalpando, 2007).

Educational scholars have much to say about educational leaders’ responsibility to be architects of change and to act with a social justice lens (Bensimon, 2005; Patton, Shahjahan & Osei-Kofi, 2010). What remained to be studied was how to manage one’s personal sense of social responsibility and social justice values within one’s work roles. Research has ignored how an individual’s personal story may influence his/her leadership (Waring, 2003). Education research about educational leaders of color has focused on how their practice has been affected by how others treat or view them because of their race. Fewer studies have investigated the ways in which leaders reflect on how “who they are” influences “what they do” (Santamaria, 2014). As we undergo a historically significant leadership transition of many who are considered higher education’s pioneers, frontrunners and architects of Civil Rights’ efforts in the United States, we have a significant opportunity to transfer knowledge and lessons learned to emerging 21<sup>st</sup> century leaders. Understanding how African American university presidents acquired social justice values and the challenges they faced (if at all) in infusing these often personal values into the running of higher education institutions is both a critical “story” that needs to be told and an area for investigation.



Theoretical approaches/frameworks related to social justice in leadership, such as Critical Race Theory (Bell, 1992; Freire, 1998; Rawls, 1971), Servant and Moral Leadership (Sergiovanni, 2007), and an “equity lens” (Bensimon, 2005), imply a moral responsibility to act on behalf of structures and practices that create inequitable outcomes for certain groups (Bensimon, 2005; Lopez, 2003). These leadership frameworks argue for a new paradigm or a non-traditional approach that integrates social justice into all aspects of leadership and incorporates the “emotional aspects” of leadership that are inclusive of values, beliefs and ethical principles (Sergiovanni, 1992). I studied the origins of African American university presidents’ social justice-related values and the personal and professional challenges they faced in realizing a social justice orientation within their dual role as a university leader and an agent of change. I identified African American university presidents’ leadership practices related to social justice and compared their leadership principles to the principles of moral leadership. Four research questions guided the study.

#### **Four Research Questions**

1. How do African American university presidents who advocate for social justice define social justice?
2. What do the presidents identify as their social justice values?
  - a. What life experiences do they say led to these values?
  - b. How do the presidents’ social justice values influence their beliefs about the principles of good leadership?
3. What do presidents and campus stakeholders say are the president’s social justice-oriented leadership practices?

4. What do presidents and campus stakeholders say are the challenges the presidents face and strategies the presidents employ to integrate social justice actions into their leadership practice?

### **Research Design**

With the reality of ongoing achievement gaps and the resulting need for equity-minded leadership, an in-depth qualitative investigation of the social-justice values, leadership practice and lessons learned from higher education's highest placed leaders has the potential to influence the social justice efforts of our academic institutions. The research design targeted African American university presidents' acquisition of social justice-related values and the actions they employed to infuse these values into their work. A document review was conducted to seek potential president participants. In-depth interviews investigated the origins of social justice-oriented values and the impact of these experiences and values on leadership practices.

University reports and publications were reviewed to identify current African American presidents who held presidency positions for a minimum of five years and were active in social justice-oriented efforts. To contribute to a gap in educational research, the participants sought were African American presidents of public and private four-year, non-HBCU, colleges and universities. There are more African American presidents in community colleges and HBCUs, than there are in predominantly White four-year colleges and universities (Fikes, 2004). The larger number of African American presidents in the former institutions has resulted in a larger volume of research on these institutions' presidents. Focusing on African American presidents of non-HBCU institutions, to include predominantly White institutions and other four-year colleges and universities, will add to the knowledge base. To find participants who met the

study's criteria a national search was conducted. A questionnaire and in-depth interview was conducted with six university presidents and supporting interviews with student, faculty and administrator leaders at each institution. Stakeholder leaders were interviewed to augment the findings from the presidents' interviews and identify the president's social justice practices, challenges and strategies.

### **Significance of the Study**

This study provided an opportunity to transfer knowledge between generations, while encouraging a culturally relevant method of research that could yield leadership counterstories. The research design used interview questions designed to elicit the experience of African American university presidents and help define leadership frameworks reflective of any social justice-related values, language, diversity experience and challenges that may emerge. The lived experience of "professional leaders of color" can offer a counterstory to "majoritarian" narratives that can maintain the status quo (Solorzano & Yosso, 2002) and instead explore alternative social justice value-driven leadership counterstories on how to effect individual, structural and institutional change.

Alternative leadership frameworks can create dialog and strategies to help prepare and sustain 21<sup>st</sup> century leaders on how to integrate social justice efforts into leadership arenas both in and out of education. How study participants, as pioneers or frontrunners, created, implemented and sustained social justice and educational equity programs across the changing sociocultural, educational and legal landscape is an important history, counterstory, legacy and model of leadership for research. Understanding the challenges, successes and lessons learned can offer insight for diverse and new approaches to leadership practice. The study hopes to

extend the presidents' efforts, and create a dialog on how we view, define, prepare, mentor, practice and sustain leaders who can transform their universities.

Whether used in formal academic avenues or through informal mentorship, the findings can generate reflection and dialog on Moral Leadership; strategies to navigate the politics of critical theory's premise to challenge inequitable structures; and motivation to continue to counter resistance to social justice advocacy. The findings explored the social justice-related leadership theory of moral leadership and how to integrate a social justice lens onto the conventional responsibilities of one's work place role. The findings are not limited to assisting current or aspiring university presidents or African American leaders. The findings will inform both a wide range of leadership preparation purposes and individuals and/or institutions interested in social justice leadership. The findings are significance for practitioners who aspire to lead within a social justice framework and educators and students who research social justice and leadership across the disciplines. The findings will be shared through participation in professional associations, publications and professional development opportunities.

Due to the opportunity created by the leadership transition of the Civil Rights' era generation, exploring the personal origins of social justice values and their impact on university president's leadership practice is historically significant. Documenting the counterstories of how social justice-oriented leaders persisted and succeeded in the face of adversity and resistance is an important narrative to contribute to educational research and the preparation of 21<sup>st</sup> century leaders.

## CHAPTER TWO

### Introduction

American higher education leaders are at a critical period in post Civil Rights' era reform. These leaders are faced with changing definitions of the purpose of education, competing educational equity demands, bleak fiscal realities and domestic and global achievement gaps (Santamaria & Santamaria, 2012). Theoharis (2007) found that social justice-oriented leaders face significant barriers and formidable resistance when acting upon social justice goals. He argues that it is irresponsible to prepare leaders for these enormous challenges without understanding how to weather the resulting storms. With the imminent retirement of African American presidents and the potential loss of available mentors, preparing the next generation of higher education leaders is an important topic for educational research. Aspiring leaders need to note the challenges and pitfalls faced by their predecessors and attend to these issues as part of their preparation for senior leadership positions (Kuk, King & Forrest, 2012). Lessons learned from those that have gone before them can assist emerging leaders in meeting the educational needs of all students (Gaston-Gayles et al., 2005).

The literature review first examined social justice and moral leadership. It begins with the use and definition of key terms: social justice history, definition and language; leadership preparation; leadership theories; moral philosophy and ethical systems and identification of the study's four principles of moral leadership. Second, it reviewed key issues germane to the focus on leadership transition. It examined leadership diversity, quantitative findings on leadership transition and emerging social justice-related paradigm shifts. Third, it reviewed the experience of presidents of color and why African Americans were chosen for the study. It reviewed moral scholarship, achievement and opportunity gaps experienced by African

Americans, racism and the equity needs of the African American community. Fourth, it reviewed the social context of education for African Americans starting with the history of schooling of African Americans in the South and social justice movements and legislation. It reviewed the Black Intellectuals, Black Renaissance and Black Power and Black Lives Matter movements. It reviewed theories on the process of “coming to awareness” and summarized Civil Rights legislation from 1954-1968. It reviewed the challenges faced by African American and other groups in leading for social justice and the strategies used to sustain them. It concludes with the opportunity leadership transition creates to integrate social justice concerns into the discourse of educational leadership.

## **Key Terms**

### **Use of Terms**

**African American:** The term African American will be used in the study unless cited differently in the literature or preferred by the participants. The participants selected for the study are those who self-identify from the African diaspora or from the full range of the Afro Caribbean race/ethnicity to include their preference in identification such as African American, Afro-American, Black, Haitian, Jamaican or other ethnicity-related terms. Participants with an intersection of various ethnic/racial identities will be included in the study as long as one of the identities meets the previous racial or ethnic identifiers.

**Moral Leadership:** A leadership theory synonymously referred to in the literature as ethical, purpose-driven or value-based leadership. I use “Moral Leadership” in the study.

### **Definition of Terms**

For the purposes of this study the following definitions were used.

**Intersection:** The process whereby identifying with one or more social groups produces new forms of subjective experience that are unique and not additive or reducible to the original identity (Stewart & McDermott, 2004). It expands discrimination beyond a single-issue framework that can serve to compartmentalize experience (Crenshaw, 1989).

**Moral Leadership:** Includes the elements of self awareness and questioning of the biases, assumptions and values that drive one's ethical (social justice-oriented) leadership practice and setting aside self-interest for the needs and common good and well-being of the community and society. It also includes questioning the exclusionary impact of laws, norms and standards that privilege one group over another and taking action on the previous items. It is also referred to as purpose-driven, values-based or ethical leadership (Adapted from Freire, 1998; Knights & O'Leary, 2006; Lopez, 2003; Northouse, 2007).

**Racial Justice:** The process of achieving or helping others to achieve equality in all social, educational, legal, civic and political processes with a specific focus on race and racial equality (Bell, 1989).

**Social Justice:** The process of achieving or helping others achieve just resources, outcomes, regard, respect and inclusion at the individual, institutional and systemic levels. It includes access and participation in all aspects of the social, civic, political and educational process. Social justice has a moral purpose of outcomes for the common good and can be inclusive of a multitude of identities and intersections such as race, ethnicity, class, gender, (Adapted from Freire, 1998; Furman, 2003; Patton, Shahjahan & Osei-Kofi, 2010) gender expression, sexual orientation, religion, etc.

**Social Justice Actions:** Actions that translate to concrete, tangible outputs that produce outcomes and make a reasonable difference (Nayak, 2015). Actions can include questioning

and acting on systems of inequity, inclusion of the history and experience of diverse groups, acknowledging actions, practices and history of racism and other isms. It included practicing leadership from a deep value or belief in justice, ensuring the well-being and inclusion of diverse groups, being inclusive of the needs of the community, not separating the social context from the needs of diverse groups and mentoring the next generation for social justice leadership. (Adapted from Bensimon, 2005; Freire, 1998; Jean-Marie, 2006; Lopez, 2003; Sergiovanni, 1997; Yosso, 2005).

**Social Justice Values:** Values can be inclusive of acting from a deep sense of belief and purpose for justice, having a sense of mission or calling to serve the community and working toward racial equity or racial justice and equity and justice for other underserved identities, communities and their intersections. It included acknowledging racism and other isms, confronting and acting on isms, inequity and injustice at the systemic level, ensuring equity in distribution of resources and access and putting self interests aside for the public good. It included acting on behalf of the justice needs of others without expectation of a reward, recognizing one's own privilege, easing the way for others to participate in institutions and society and ensuring the inclusion of the history, experience and voice of others (Adapted from Freire, 1998; Jean-Marie, 2006; Lopez, 2003; Sergiovanni, 1997; Yosso, 2005).

### **Evolution of Social Justice, Definitions and Language**

Although the democratic process informs current notions of justice, in a historical analysis of social justice, definitions of justice have historically been defined by and for the elite. The disenfranchised were neither invited nor allowed to engage in the early process of defining justice (Capeheart & Milovanovic, 2007). From this historical perspective, it is not surprising that social justice has been studied in the fields of law and philosophy and also



economics, political studies, sociology, psychology, anthropology and public policy (Brooks, 2008a). Although social justice is a relatively new term to the field of educational administration (Shoho, Merchant & Lugg, 2005), it has become a major concern for educational scholars. The concerns are driven by many factors, including the demographic shift of Western society, increased achievement and economic gaps of underserved populations and accountability pressures (Furman & Gruenewald, 2004; Shields, 2003).

Defining social justice has proven to be difficult (Jean-Marie, Normore & Brooks, 2009). Bogotch (2000 & 2002) asserts that social justice is a social construction and that there are no fixed, predictable, permanent or universal meanings and no attainment. Educational leaders will need to continually confront the issue of social justice in changing times and in all of its guises. The history of social justice and its changing terminology, legislation and practices (as outlined later in this literature review) seem to support Bogotch's premise of social justice as an ongoing effort. As a result, social justice remains central to the discourse and practice of educational leadership.

Social justice has encompassed a range of terms such as equity, equality, inequality, equal opportunity, affirmative action, multicultural and most recently, diversity and inclusion. Each term takes on different meaning in different contexts (Blackmore, 2009). Until about a century ago, justice was understood as a virtue of individuals and not of societies or institutions (Barry, 2005; Capeheart & Milovanovic, 2007). In tracing the discourse of the definition of social justice, its evolution illustrates critical theorists' shift in its focus from individual concerns to include societal or institutional obligations for justice. Drawing upon the classic work of John Rawls (1971), social justice was associated with the concept of distributive justice (how fairly goods, services and burdens are distributed). In turn, theorists argued that

this conception of justice overlooks social and institutional structures that determine the distributive pattern of resources (Gewirtz, 1998; Patton et al., 2010; Young, 1990). Patton, Shahjahan and Osei-Kofi (2010) support this argument, stating that the numerical representations of “minoritized” bodies, such as the distribution of minority faculty, students and administrators in higher education, ignores the social structures, processes and institutional contexts that produce these (often unequal) distributions. Slaughter (2009) also challenges the social justice concept of “distribution” by introducing “inclusion.” He argues that achieving diversity is about inclusion, not a matter of numbers. Inclusion of diverse communities implies participation and representation at all levels of the institution.

Goodman (2011) emphasizes that social justice addresses issues of power, privilege and psychological well-being, not just cultural differences. She describes social justice as actions that address issues of equity, power relations and institutionalized oppression. It works toward equitable distribution of power and resources. It creates opportunities for people to reach their full potential within a mutually responsible, interdependent society so they can all live with dignity, self-determination and physical and psychological safety. Attaining social justice requires changing unjust institutional structures, policies and practices and challenging dominant ideology. Gewirtz (1998) provides a definition centered on disrupting and subverting arrangements that promote marginalization and exclusionary processes. He describes social justice as actions that support a process built on respect, care, recognition and empathy. Goldfarb and Grinberg (2002) define social justice as the altering of (institutional and organizational) arrangements by actively engaging to reclaim, appropriate, sustain and advance inherent human rights of equity, equality and fairness in social, economic, educational and personal dimensions. A concern about social justice is that although its literature provides a

framework to guide general qualities of such leaders, it is disconnected from defining the actions of such work (Dantley et al, 2008). The call for action is clear, however, the actions are still materializing (McKenzie et al., 2008).

Although terms such as educational equity are often used synonymously for social justice in education, some theorists argue against definitions that do not acknowledge that equal resources do not necessarily meet the needs of groups who have been historically oppressed (Zine, 2001). Secada (1989) makes a distinction when equality and equity are used in education. Equality describes parity between groups along some agreed upon index. Even though actions may be in accord to a set of rules, if their results are unjust, educational equity should be used to check on the justice of these specific actions and their results. Zine (2001) argues that equity is not about providing the same resources to different groups in the same manner. Equity is about providing the right amount of resources needed by certain groups, given the historical, material and social marginalization they have experienced. An equity framework acknowledges that different groups may need disproportionate resources.

Another underlying theme in the definitions of social justice is the moral responsibility for justice. A seminal figure in this discourse is Paolo Freire. He argues that one's vocation (calling) was to act upon and transform the world and move to a fuller life individually and collectively (Freire, 1998). He argued that no one could be authentically human while denying another his/her own humanity. His concept of critical consciousness, grounded in Critical Theory, was based on the premise that to fight oppression, injustice and dehumanization, one first had to acknowledge their existence. Only then would liberation from the status quo actualize.

## **Theoretical Frames Related to Social Justice**

### **Critical Race Theory (CRT)**

Social justice and Critical Race Theory both follow a long tradition of resistance to oppression and injustice and are grounded in the moral responsibility of justice. CRT began in law, but has spread to other disciplines (Crenshaw, 2010). It examines the relationship among race, racism and power. CRT challenges the overt and hidden manifestation of racism in the political, legal and organizational and social arenas that maintain beliefs about neutrality, equal opportunity, and democracy in popular U.S. ideology (Bell, 1992; Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). CRT derives from the legal scholarship of Derrick Bell (1992) and Alan Freeman (Ladson-Billings, 1998). It has been used as a theoretical framework in educational research. CRT emerged as an intellectual movement. In the discourse and struggles over the scope of race and racism in the 1980s, significant divergences and misalignments concerning descriptive, normative and political accounts of racial power began to crystallize between allies (Crenshaw, 2010). CRT is not simply a critique of dominant frames on racial power; it is also a product of activists' engagement with material manifestations of liberal reform. Particularly, activist demands that elite institutions rethink and transform their conceptions of "race neutrality" in the face of the functionality of exclusionary practices that maintain the status quo.

CRT challenges the unequal and unjust distribution of power and resources along political, economic, racial and gendered line along with systems, which perpetuate established power relationships of society (Taylor, 2009). It is this resistance to injustice in distribution that connects social justice with CRT. The CRT model consists of five themes: race and racism is central to dialog; dominant ideology is challenged; there is a commitment to social

justice; experiential knowledge is valued; and trans or interdisciplinary perspectives are considered (Solorzano, 1997).

Giles (2010) asserts that issues of race follow the contours of American history and the lens CRT provides is an understanding of the overt and covert relationship between race and education. Research from a CRT, (including a queer and feminist) perspective has remained at the margins of mainstream educational leadership literature and has had little to no effect on the preparation and practice of leaders. Lost is the opportunity to question assumptions, expand one's knowledge base, push theory and reveal the complexity of educational leadership (Young & Lopez, 2011). Adding to CRTs complexity, Gillborn and Ladson-Billings (2004) argue that despite some achievements, past approaches to identify and apply critical multiculturalism, critical antiracism and CRT have been appropriated into mainstream discourse. This has taken away the radical edge, helped maintain the status quo and has left inequities intact. For example, McLaren (1994) argues that multiculturalism has taken on a variety of forms that move it away from the ideals of liberation and social justice. He argues that a focus on multiculturalism without a transformative political agenda is just another form of accommodation to the larger social order. The impact of CRT on educational leadership is still unfolding and it is a relevant social justice area of study for social justice-oriented leaders.

### **Preparation of Social Justice-oriented Educational Leaders**

Multiple dimensions of social justice involve not only the identification of and dialog on institutional and societal inequities, but also the assumption of an activist role for social change (Cambron-McCabe & McCarthy, 2005). The expectations for educational leaders are that they should go beyond the ideals of social justice and also take an activist role in its attainment (Cambron-McCabe & McCarthy, 2005; Gooden & Dantley, 2012; Hernandez &

McKenzie, 2010; Jean-Marie, et al., 2009; McKenzie, et al., 2008; Rodriguez, et al., 2010). In an analysis of various leadership preparation programs for social justice, four key findings emerged in the models (Cambron-McCabe & McCarthy, 2005; Gooden & Dantley, 2012; Jean-Marie, et al., 2009; McKenzie, et al., 2008). 1.) The use of Freire's (1998) "critical consciousness" as a pedagogical tool for social justice preparation. The language used by the models, such as disrupt, identify, provoke or foster awareness show a shift toward critical consciousness and its reliance on Critical Theory's premise of challenging assumptions, bias, systems and practices of inequity. 2.) Race and other isms need to play a prominent role in the critical dialog. 3.) Faculty is expected to model activism and one's role as change agents. 4.) Social justice needs to be infused in all aspects of leadership preparation and practice (Gooden & Dantley, 2012; Jean-Marie, et al., 2009; McKenzie, et al., 2008).

In the development of social justice-oriented educational leaders, studies used multiple theoretical frameworks, including Critical Theory, Critical Race Theory, Political Theory and Systems Theory, to support the questioning of structures that maintain inequity (Cambron-McCabe & McCarthy, 2005; Gooden & Dantley, 2012; Jean-Marie, et al., 2009). Key elements of Freire's (1998) critical consciousness include the pedagogy of critical/cross dialogue that questions assumptions and inequities, counternarratives that include alternate perspectives and critical reflection that questions personal bias. Using these elements of CRT's critical consciousness to address issues of privilege and bias and are found to be important pedagogical tools for social justice-oriented leaders.

### **Leadership Theories Related to Social Justice**

Leadership for social justice theory investigates and poses solutions for issues that generate and reproduce societal inequities (Dantley & Tillman, 2009). Social justice leadership

begins with critical self-reflection (Bogotch, 2002; Brown, 2004; Dantley and Tillman, 2009). Because it requires a systemic analysis and critique of the world external to the leaders, it first necessitates an examination of one's own beliefs and practices (Furman & Shields, 2005). Social Justice Leadership defined by Theoharis (2007) is one that makes race, class, gender, disability, sexual orientation and other marginalizing conditions central to one's advocacy, leadership practice and vision. Of the varied leadership theories associated with social justice, the following are most commonly associated with social justice themes and language.

### **Transformational Leadership**

Transformational Leadership refers to the process whereby an individual engages with others and creates a connection that raises the level of consciousness, motivation and morality in both the leader and the follower. Transformational leadership is value driven (Basham, 2012). It draws from deeply held personal value systems and its power derives from shared principles, norms and values. The leader raises the level of consciousness of the followers and gets them to transcend their self-interests for a higher level need (Northouse, 2007). Schlechty (2009) adds that efforts to transform educational institutions must include a different type of leadership development and an assessment of followers' abilities to support systemic change. Transformational leaders cannot merely be hired and put in place; they have to be committed to the direction of the institution and internalize the values of the institution at a "bone-deep level." They must be individuals of passion who see transformation as a cause and calling and not just a task and a job. Transformative Leadership is grounded in critical theory, demanding that educational leaders critically assess the asymmetrical relations of power (Dantley, 2003). It begins with questions of justice, democracy and the dialectic between individual accountability and social responsibility. Its fundamental task is to ask questions about who is

taught and at the same time, work with dominant social formations to exercise oppositional power, resist courageously and be activists and voices for change and transformation (Weiner, 2003). The purpose of transformational leaders is to “make over” the institution: its mission; structure; policies and procedures. In short, makeover its way of doing things (Valverde, 2003).

### **Servant Leadership**

Servant Leadership’s “characteristics of a good leader” (Northouse, 2007) include values related to social justice such as stewardship, awareness, empathy, community and empowerment. Servant Leaders hold their organizations in trust for the greater good of society, are aware of their impact on others, provide a place where people can feel safe and connect people to one another. Servant Leaders do not compromise their ethical principles and create value for community. Because of their principles and leadership approach of putting others first, they improve outcomes for individuals, organizations and society. Servant Leaders serve others by becoming an advocate on their behalf (Sergiovanni, 1997). Stewardship gives legitimacy to the moral dimensions of leadership. It promotes the CRT tenets through its practice of “Leadership By Outrage.” When the standards fall short and when what needs to be done is impeded, leaders must give voice to the injustice.

### **Moral Leadership**

Moral Leadership (also referred to as ethical, purpose-driven or values-based leadership) is another leadership theory that situates leaders in a broader social context beyond mere management of the institution. In education, there is a moral imperative that social justice not be separated from the practices of professionals, schools, academic disciplines and governmental agents (Bogotch, 2000). Moral Leadership is a consciousness of issues of race, class and gender. It holds leaders to a commitment to social justice and genuine demonstrations



of democracy. It expects leaders to ask hard questions regarding the purpose of education and who is most ably served by it (Dantley, 2005). The shared aims of the Moral Leadership and related purpose-driven theories are their consciousness raising, questioning and focus on justice, moral uplift or leading for the greater good. “Freirian leadership” is also grounded on the concepts of morality and meaning (Miller, Brown & Hopson, 2011). According to Freirian principles, all aspects of education and all members of the community are intertwined in any resolution of oppression.

**Moral Philosophy and Ethical Systems.** In moral philosophy, Knights and O’Leary (2006) note that the literature emphasizes three areas: consequences, actions and character. The “Consequentialist” perspectives of rightness or wrongness of an act are determined either from concern/interests for self or for the interest of others. Three concepts emerge: *egoism* and its individual focus on self-interest; *utilitarianism* and its interest for a majority in society; and *altruism* and its interest in others without hope for a reward (Bowie 1991; Northouse, 2007). If leaders fail to understand that leadership is about interpretation (of right and wrong), there is a greater tendency for them to fall back on the conventional individualistic (egoism) approaches to leadership. This approach is problematic for ethical leadership because leaders become pre-occupied with their own image as leaders rather than with their ethical responsibility to others. On the other end of the approach, leaders exhibiting altruistic values or actions are considered trustworthy because they put their self-interests aside.

In the “act” emphasis of moral philosophy, Deontology ethics focus on the actions of the leader and are based on the premise that there are universal rules that provide standards of right and wrong behavior (Knights & O’Leary, 2006). In the “character” emphasis of moral

philosophy, virtue-based ethics are internal and do not lie in rules or rights, but in the classic notion of character (honesty, fairness, compassion, and generosity).

Although theorists argue against telling people what to do and instead argue that the emphasis needs to be placed on what to be (Velasquez & Velasquez, 2002), the ethic of responsibility for leaders moves one away from a pre-occupation with the self toward an ethical responsibility to others (Knights & O'Leary, 2006). There are various schools of thought on how the moral rightness of an action is determined. Hitt (1990) synthesized four ethical systems and found moral actions to be determined by the consequences of one's actions, laws and standards, norms of a particular community and one's own conscience. How these themes get applied to society is the concern of ethical and moral leadership (see Table 1 for a summary of the Four Ethical Systems and their proponents and respective definitions of the source of moral rightness).

Themes common to the theoretical frames, social justice-related leadership theories and moral philosophy and ethical systems, are the moral-driven efforts. They are the calling, principles, ethics, conscience and values, if you will, of serving to ensure justice and inclusion for all members of society. They each demonstrate a shift from individual needs to the needs of the community. To ensure these ideals, another common element is also one from CRT and its premise to call to question policies, structures and actions that maintain inequity.

### **Principles of Moral Leadership**

From the previous analysis of the tenets of Critical Race Theory, social justice's infusion in leadership preparation programs, leadership theories and moral and ethical philosophy, four principles of moral leadership were chosen to compare to the social justice-related actions and leadership principles of the presidents in the study. Each approach has

elements, such as critical consciousness, that overlap with each other and also with the principles of moral leadership designated for the study. The principles and the supporting frames, theories and philosophies are described in this next section (for a synopsis of the common elements see Table 2 for theories by principles of Moral Leadership).

#### **Four Designated Principles of Moral Leadership**

**Principle 1: The moral imperative of setting aside self-interest for the needs of the community and society.** It is supported by the frameworks that argue for placing the needs of the community and underserved over the needs of the individual (Bensimon, 2005; Freire, 1998; Ladson-Billings, 2006; Lopez, 2003). It stems from a Servant Leader's strength being based on moral authority and its values relating to empathy and working toward the greater good of society (Northouse 2007; Sergiovanni, 2007) and Moral Leadership (Bogotch, 2000; Dantley, 2005).

**Principle 2: Critical consciousness and questioning of virtues, values, biases and assumptions that drive individual and institutional actions.** It is supported by the frameworks that argue for acting from an understanding of own beliefs and how they impact one's actions (Bogotch, 2000; Freire, 1998; Schlechty, 2009; Sergiovanni, 1992). It stems directly from CRT (Freire, 1998), social justice leadership theories' critical self-reflection (Bogotch, 2002; Brown, 2004; Dantley & Tillman, 2009), Transformational Leadership (Basham, 2012) and Moral Leadership (Dantley, 2005; Miller, Brown & Hopson, 2011).

**Principle 3: Infusing social justice into all aspects of leadership and questioning and challenging the equity impact of laws, norms and standards on different members of society.** It is supported by the frameworks that argue for infusion of social justice (Bensimon, 2005; Cambron-McCabe & McCarthy, 2005; Jean-Marie et al., 2009) and the application of an

“equity lens” (Bensimon, 2005) to all aspects of leadership, and questioning discriminatory practices and policies (Cambron-McCabe & McCarthy, 2005; Gooden & Dantley, 2012; Hernandez & McKenzie, 2010; Lopez, 2003; Solorzano, 1997). Infusion of social justice into leadership and the practice of “questioning” are tenets in CRT (Solorzano, 1997), Moral Leadership (Bogotch, 2000) and also stem from moral and ethical philosophy (Bowie 1991; Northouse, 2007).

**Principle 4: Taking action on the previous three principles with an emphasis toward public good and social justice.** It is supported by frameworks that argue for the taking of action to counter systems of inequity (Cambron-McCabe & McCarthy, 2005; Gooden & Dantley, 2012; Hernandez & McKenzie, 2010; Lopez, 2003; Solorzano, 1997). It stems from CRT’s tenets through its practice of “Leadership by Outrage” (Sergiovanni, 2007), Servant Leadership (Northouse 2007; Sergiovanni, 2007), Moral and Ethical Philosophy (Bowie 1991; Northouse, 2007), Transformational Leadership (Basham, 2012) and social justice leadership theories (Bogotch, 2002; Brown, 2004; Dantley & Tillman, 2009).

The study will compare these four principles of Moral Leadership to the presidents’ social justice-related practices and leadership principles to determine if they align. Goddard (2003) argues that the work of leaders is predicted on their value and belief systems; their actions cannot be separated from the value positions they hold. Leaders understanding of “right” and “wrong” depend on their world view and beliefs. As we begin to explore the moral imperative for this paradigm shift in leadership, we can understand how experiences with social justice impact social justice-related values, principles and practices.

## **Overview of the Key Issues in Leadership Transition**

### **Diversity in Leadership**

A social justice issue relevant to the leadership transition discourse is the small number of African American university presidents in the United States. Racial and ethnic diversity in the presidency has lagged (Cook, 2012, September). Although there were gains in predominantly White institutions post desegregation, Harvey (1999) argues that there still remains a continued prevalence of racism in higher education institutions, underrepresentation of African Americans in administrative and faculty positions and a social climate that encourages resistance to efforts and actions designed to expand affirmative action or multicultural representation.

The racial and ethnic composition of predominantly White college and university presidents has changed very little in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Nearly a century passed between the first appointment of an African American college or university president to the second appointment 93 years later (Fikes, 2004). Fikes (2004) researched African American presidents from 1873-2004. The first African American to become president of a Predominantly White Institution (PWI) “passed” as White man in his appointment to Georgetown University. At the time (1873), no one knew Patrick Healy’s racial pedigree. It would not be until 1966 when another Black person, James Allen Colston, became a college president, this time at a community college, Bronx Community College. Because his racial identity was known, it was considered a significant civil rights’ milestone. Although HBCUs are not the focus of this study, it is interesting to note that prior to the 1930s, HBCU presidents were White men (Anderson, 1988). As of 2004, there were 105 HBCUs operating in the United States. In 2007, when Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) are

excluded, people of color (Hassan, 2007) lead less than ten percent of colleges and universities nationwide. When minority-serving institutions are excluded, only nine percent of presidents belong to ethnic/racial minority groups (ACE, 2012). The significance of this disparity is that as society becomes more multicultural, its leadership should also reflect this heightened diversity (Ausmer, 2009) and be reflective of the world around it (Cook, 2012, September). Without the narrative of leaders of color, the understanding they can bring to university educational equity challenges is missing.

Waring (2003) argues that it is important to understand the presidents' conceptions of leadership and how they were shaped. Research provides evidence that educational leaders who are also members of historically underserved groups in the United States may practice educational leadership through different filters of experience than their mainstream peers (Alemán, 2009; Santamaria, 2014; Santamaría & Santamaría, 2012). Shared marginalized educational experiences might result in these leaders' increased multicultural understandings, alternative perceptions and practices of applied leadership. This may also result in increased leadership practices promoting multiculturalism or social justice and equity (Santamaria, 2014). A major aim of a multicultural approach is to transform educational institutions so that students from diverse racial, ethnic and social-class groups can experience educational equity (Banks, 1993).

### **Changing of the Guard**

Higher education is undergoing a leadership transition. In 2008, King and Gomez reported that 92 percent of all college/university presidents were 51 years of age or older, with 49 percent of that group being older than 60 years of age. Of all senior administrators, the group most likely to transition to presidency positions, 66 percent were 51 years of age or

older. In 2011, the average age of presidents was 61 years of age with fewer new presidents belonging to a minority group (ACE, 2012). The transition of presidential and upper-administration leadership shows evidence of a significant need for the increased development of higher education leadership in America (Brown, 2010). Educational scholars have suggested that equity in educational leadership itself is an innovative approach to addressing diversity challenges in the national educational landscape (McKenzie et al., 2008; Scheurich & Skrla, 2004). The increased multicultural experiences of people of color results in value-added leadership practices that promote social justice and equity (Santamaria, 2014).

**Recruiting Grounds.** Lack of diversity in the presidency is attributed to the lack of racial diversity among positions that are typically considered recruiting grounds for the presidency. Prior to their first presidency, 42.4 percent of public institution presidents and 26.2 percent of those from private institutions held the position of provost or chief academic officer (CAO) (Selingo, 2005). In a 2005 study of Title IV universities, 84 percent of full-time tenured U.S. faculty was White, whereas 4.5 percent were Black, 6.5 percent were Asian and 3.1 percent were Latino (Knapp, Kelly-Reid, Whitmore & Miller, 2007). In a 2008 ACE study, only 16 percent of administrators and 10 percent of CAOs were people of color (Cook, 2012). In a comparison of 2008 and 2013 data on senior administrators holding leadership positions that lead to the presidency, the overall CAO numbers remained the same. Increases were only found in their age and gender diversity. African American CAOs decreased from 3.7 percent to 2.3 percent, Asian American CAOs from 3.7 percent to 2.4 percent and Hispanic CAOs from 1.5 percent to 0.08 percent (ACE, 2013).

**Presidents by Ethnicity/Race.** In the 2011 ACE college president report (2012), 87.2% of presidents were White, 5.9% were African American, 1.5% Asian, 3.8% Hispanic

and .8% American Indian (see Table 3 for the Percentage Distribution of Presidents by Race/Ethnicity from 1986 to 2011).

**Minority Presidents.** Minority presidents combined were represented in higher numbers at public institutions (ACE, 2012). Minority presidents were least represented at doctorate-granting (5%), masters (6%) and private institutions (8%).

### **The Road to the Presidency**

In studies about the preparation of presidents, there is little mention of their preparation for practicing within a social justice-frame. Although college presidents tend to be “self trained,” those who felt well prepared worked under a president (Cook, 2012) or mentor (Holmes, 2004; Waring, 2003), who helped them prepare for the presidency. In a Chronicle of Higher Education survey of chancellors and presidents, Selingo (2005) found that 41 percent of presidents said they were “very well prepared” and another 46 percent said they were “moderately well prepared” for their first presidential job. A majority of presidents reported a clear understanding of the job when they accepted it. However, a sizeable minority stated that during the search process they were not made aware of all institutional challenges, the financial condition nor the expectations of the presidency (Cook, 2012, September). These studies on preparing presidents have more heavily focused on the business aspects of the position and not on leading with a social justice frame or on social justice issues.

### **Paradigm Shifts**

A key theme for leadership transition is an understanding of the various paradigms shifts facing current leaders and social justice practice and leadership preparation.

**Infusion.** Analysis of social justice models reflects a new movement/social order that shifts away from traditional preparation to leading with a social justice/equity frame



(Bensimon, 2005; Cambron-McCabe & McCarthy, 2005; Jean-Marie et al., 2009). Researchers describe traditional preparation approaches in education programs and leadership as those where social justice and its relevant frameworks are treated as separate topics and not integrated throughout the scope of leadership. They argue that social justice cannot be a “separate” topic and must be infused into all aspects of leadership (i.e. expectations, preparation and practice, including business, financial and policy areas). They note the concerns that fuel the argument for infusion are the inequitable practices and conditions in education. An example includes privatization, which they argue reinforces the present system of inequity and perpetuates achievement and opportunity gaps. Integrating social justice into all aspects of leadership and its responsibilities is the new movement that can change dialog, awareness and practice. Without the introduction of an “equity lens” (Bensimon, 2005) to all aspects of leadership, inequity will inherently be perpetuated. Leaders will fall prey to maintaining an emphasis on higher education institutions as an enterprise and not one that also includes a relationship and responsibility to the community.

**Changing Roles.** Senge (1990) argues that both leaders and “followers” will need to adopt new roles in order to effect organizational change. Traditional leadership models will need to give way to leaders who are facilitators, coaches, teachers and designers. Followers will also need to learn new roles that include empathy, willingness to commit and mutual support. Dialog from this “new movement” can serve to stimulate interest and strategies for more inclusive sociocultural frameworks on leadership (Theoharis, 2007).

**Moral Purposes of Leadership.** Furman (2003) argues that the increasing attention given to social justice is part of the shift in the field of education toward a focus on the moral purposes of leadership. As society becomes more demographically diverse, educational leaders

will need to develop, foster and lead tolerant and democratic institutions (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2001). The paradigm shift supporting leadership and social justice is a shift to the inclusion of what Sergiovanni (2007) calls “sacred authority” over “secular authority.” He describes sacred authority as faith in the authority of community and in professional and institutional norms and ideals over secular authority’s faith in bureaucracy. The challenge of leadership within this paradigm shift is to make peace with the competing imperatives of managerial and moral. Neglect of one creates problems for the other. Theorists argue against the emphasis of management and what Frederick W. Taylor calls “scientific knowledge” (Dantley, 2005; Sergiovanni, 1992) and its focus on objective evidence over values, preferences and beliefs (Sergiovanni, 1992). Sergiovanni (1992) states that management values considered legitimate are biased toward rationality, logic, objectivity, self-interest, explicitness, individuality and detachment. Emphasizing these values neglects the importance of group membership, emotions, sense and meaning, morality, self sacrifice, duty and obligation as additional values. Relying on bureaucracy, psychological knowledge or skill and technical rationality neglects professional and moral authority as additional bases for leadership practice. The moral imperative proposes leadership values such a purposing, empowerment, outrage and kindling outrage in others.

### **Presidents of Color**

Minority presidents were largely what Birnbaum and Umbach (2001) called “scholar” presidents. This group, who followed a traditional route to the presidency, was the most diverse in terms of race and gender. They had full-time education teaching experience and their previous two positions were in higher education. People of color (and women) are more likely to have earned their degrees in education. Regardless of degree, Ed.D. or Ph.D., education

degrees were found to severely limit the type of institution to which these graduates were likely to be appointed (Harvey, 1999). In a study on African American female college and university presidents, Jackson and Harris (2007) found that women had to bring more attention to their work abilities. They entered the presidency after exceeding job expectations in their previous positions, holding jobs with high visibility, developing leadership skills outside of education and joining career networks.

In a study of African American female leaders of HBCUs, Jean-Marie (2006) found that they came from a tradition of protest. Their commitment to social justice and racial uplift was related to their own personal and educational experiences having started their career in segregated America, both *de jure* and later *de facto* (Valverde, 2003). As a result, their work was connected with activism and its pursuit of equality and justice for African Americans and other people of color. They dedicated themselves to ensure that future generations were successfully prepared to embrace personal and societal challenges. In another study, African American female presidents found themselves as reluctant presidents, having chosen to ascend to the position after realizing that they could do more to create educational opportunities if they held an administrative role (Waring, 2003).

**Dual Roles.** Much has been written about the ethics of leaders and the responsibility for moral and systemic work toward public good (Freire, 1998; Lopez, 2003; Dantley, 2005; Pasque & Rex, 2010), but less on how leaders can navigate the educational and political landscape where they may be both a recipient of discrimination and an expected leader. Although presidents of color have accomplished what is considered a “terminal” role in higher education, they still have to counter systemic racism (Bates, 2007) for themselves and the students they serve. Shoho, Merchant and Lugg (2005) describe this as a contradiction in

reconciling espoused theories of inclusiveness and theories in action of exclusiveness that maintain the status quo and inequity. In Waring's study (2003), African American female presidents' race was a salient issue for several reasons. In majority White institutions, there was high visibility of being African American and they received a lot of attention. Sherman et al. (2010) called this added scrutiny due to their race as "surveillance." For others, race was a motivating force in their work. Several of the presidents in the study were "activists" in the Civil Rights Movement and continued to be committed to civil rights even as presidents. One chose to work in a HBCU due to attacks on affirmative action and concern for the education of future leadership needed by the African American community. Another made a commitment to always help African Americans through her work. Another who worked at a predominantly white institution planned to return to civil rights work after her tenure as president because of the embedded racism she witnessed that others did not see. She wanted to return to being a "voice" for African Americans. This illustrates how personal experiences impact the social justice direction of one's careers and the diverse manners in which African American presidents expressed their advocacy of social justice.

**"Cultural Wealth."** Although no studies were found that discussed the impact of African American presidents on student success, a study on Latino college administrators confirmed that the presence of Latino faculty promoted equity, increased the achievement of Latinos and students of color, improved educational quality and better prepared students for living and working in a global society (Leon & Nevarez, 2007). This finding opens up the inquiry that the same could hold true for African American administrators and their impact on student of color's success. Leon and Nevarez, (2007) argue that non-traditional sources encourage aspiring leaders to view leadership in terms of the common good and expand its

conceptions to include societal responsibilities. By opening up the conceptions of leadership to narratives drawn from diverse lives, options for changing organizational policies and practices emerge (Crow & Grogan, 2011). Yosso (2005) argues that communities of color have cultural wealth that is ignored by dominant ideologies and having a lens on the experiences of people of color reveals accumulated assets in the histories and lives of communities of color.

### **Why Study African Americans?**

University presidents were chosen for the study because they play an influential role in the values and direction of higher education institutions (Bogotch, 2000; Freeman & Gasman, 2014). Longstanding achievement and economic differences (Bensimon, 2005) and challenges to social justice-oriented legislation (Hinrichs, 2012) have created opportunity gaps that negatively impact the African American community and their pursuit of a higher education (Bensimon, 2005). Although other people of color experience similar achievement and opportunity gaps, African Americans were chosen for this study due to the disparity in their representation at all levels of university constituencies, the consistent levels of racism they experience and their long standing history and activism in pursuit of “schooling.”

### **“Moral Scholarship”**

The history of racism toward African Americans in the United States and the longstanding practices that have maintained their oppression are significant influences in the moral imperative to explore and understand their experience in higher education leadership. Lipsitz (2001) argues that the problems produced by "racialized" space should not simply be the concerns of Blacks. If racism and racial justice cannot be fundamentally addressed for African Americans, education institutions and its leaders and researchers are losing the opportunity to deal with racism for African Americans and other disadvantaged groups, who

are also experiencing achievement gaps, and campus climates and culture that are not inclusive of them. The leadership counterstory of African American presidents will yield an understanding of how these diverse leaders attained their position, sustained their leadership and worked toward systemic change.

The study gives a brief review of equity issues, legislation and the history of education related to the African American community that gave rise to the imperative for moral scholarship. The compelling social justice reason to select a population for research outside of self-interest and instead focus on public good and the social justice imperative is to shed light on how systemic oppression impacts a community of people and society. The review of a few equity issues in brevity is not intended to minimize the larger equity discussion and needs of the community. A review of education from “schooling” and social and intellectual movements to Civil Rights sets the frame for understanding the importance of social justice and the need for “critical consciousness” (Freire, 1998). Also reviewed is the importance of an education for diverse communities and their political inclusion in society. This study will both highlight the value of examining and documenting African American presidents’ leadership counterstory (Solorzano & Yosso, 2002) and the moral imperative of adding to the discourse on social justice and higher education leadership in educational research.

### **Achievement and Opportunity Gaps**

One of the most persistent education policy challenges faced by states throughout the nation is the achievement gap between minority and disadvantaged students and their White counterparts (National Governor’s Association, 2005). Examples of achievement gaps that impact ethnic/racial groups’ higher education access are the graduation and dropout rate at the high school level. In California the high school cohort graduation rate data among ethnic racial

groups shows a disparity in achievement between Whites and other race/ethnicity groups (Education Data Partnerships, 2013). Whites show a high school graduation rate of 87.7% and Black/African Americans show a rate of 68.1%. The disparity between the two groups is 19.6%. The high school dropout rate between these two groups shows a disparity of 12.3% with Whites having a smaller percentage of dropouts in four years compared to their Black/African American cohort counterparts in the same graduating class (for these rates and those of other ethnic groups see Table 4 for High School Four-year Cohort Graduation and Dropout Rate: State of California, 2012-13).

In 2012, the poverty levels in California also show a disparity when race/ethnic groups are compared (KFF, 2014). Blacks and Hispanics are shown to have more than double the poverty levels of their White counterparts (see Table 5 for a comparison of Poverty Line by Race/Ethnicity 2012). The gap in wealth is much larger than the mere impact of the gap in earnings; it goes far beyond the impacts to the household. The implications extend to social and political power, exclusion from the civic process, social capital for business access and to cushion fluctuations in the market. It impacts the quality of housing, neighborhoods and schools and the ability to finance a higher education (Altonji & Doraszelski, 2005).

### **Legacy of Racism**

African Americans have experienced deep-rooted racism and institutionalized oppression in the United States. The previous tables are but a small example of their education and experience in the United States. Decades after many Civil Rights' gains and efforts, a binary still exists in the United States that attempts to separate the equity needs of oppressed groups from the needs of "real Americans" (Apple, 1989). Apple offers the example of the "Conservative Restoration" and how its rhetoric shifts oppression from disenfranchised groups

to how they impact the dominant group. It introduces a “we/they” rhetoric that drives a sense of loss of control of economic and personal security, of knowledge and values that should be passed onto children and of visions of what counts as sacred text and authority about a majoritarian perspective. The binary of “we” is the law abiding, hardworking, virtuous and homogeneous. The “they” are those who are argued to be the opposite; law breaking, lazy, dishonest and heterogeneous. These binary oppositions distance most people of color, women, gays and others from those in the dominant community who are deemed to be the “worthy individuals.” The subjects of discrimination are no longer groups who have been historically oppressed, it is now the “real Americans” who are being harmed by the “theys” who are blamed for taking away the “true Americans” way of life, economic resources; and a romanticized past (Apple, 1989). A candidate who engenders fear and blame about disenfranchised groups adopted this rhetoric in the current presidential campaign (Ronayne, 2016) under the guise of, “Let’s make this country great again.” This ideological distancing introduces fear, maintains the social order and makes it possible for racism to exist because its rhetoric is linked with other issues. This pairing enables Americans who feel under threat to turn against groups who are even less powerful than they themselves (Apple, 1989; Bolick, 1996). This phenomenon mirrors the rhetoric used post slavery. The fearsome image of the black rapist targeted the black population, and was the most likely stereotype to ignite racial violence and unify the nation toward “legal” violence (Helg, 2000). Verbal and physical anti-Black violence was institutionalized. Lynching helped maintain the Southern social hierarchy. It reestablished economic and political domination over Blacks, as the economy depended on and required a large, cheap and docile labor force. After Reconstruction, White elites used the “Black threat” to unite lower-class Whites with them and prevent any class alliance between



Blacks and poor Whites. Today, the same rhetoric of fear is being used to portray African Americans as violent and law breaking (Garza, 2014). To survive, African Americans have had to learn the many unwritten and ever-changing rules of interracial relations set by Whites (Helg, 2000). The matter of race in the American past and present for some is an urgent question of power and morality and for others an everyday matter of life and death (West, 1994). Education was an area where African Americans had to navigate an often-slippery slope of interracial relations toward their liberation. Historically Black Colleges and Universities were established to provide an avenue for the education of African Americans (Freeman & Gasman, 2014). Even still, Black education was seen to be as the root of “the Black problem,” and was equated with African Americans not accepting their place in society by demanding political rights and “social equality” (Helg, 2000).

### **Equity Needs of the Community**

Zooming in on university presidents specifically, the low number of African American higher education leaders represents one startling example of the equity needs of diverse communities in higher education. For the past 25 years, there has been no significant growth in the number of African American higher education presidents (ACE, 2012). ACE found that African American presidents have higher percentages (41.7%) in the 61-70 year age group compared to Whites (34.4%), when responding that they will be stepping down in 3-5 years (see Table 6 Presidents Race/Ethnicity By Ages 61-70 and Years to be Stepping Down from Current Position).

### **How did we get here? Schooling and the Rise of Black Intellectuals**

Education for Blacks in the South in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century was influenced by slavery and a strong desire to learn to read and write (Anderson, 1988). The uprising of former slaves was

considered a central threat to planter's rule with much public and political discussion about the conceptions of Blacks' proper place in roles of state, church and education. Postwar South was hostile to the idea of universal public education as its economy relied on a non-skilled or semiskilled workforce. Although the North was supportive of public schooling for Blacks, it too relied on Black labor and its support of schooling for Blacks was to teach for the trades and industry and not for their advancement.

For Blacks, the foundation of the freedmen's educational movement was to secure education for themselves and their children. Self-help and self-determination were key themes in that Blacks wanted to establish their freedom and keep their education in their own hands. Many ex-slaves established their own educational collectives and associations and staffed schools. Early black schools were established in the 1860s and supported largely through Afro-Americans' own efforts.

As the debate over free public schooling ensued from both Whites and Blacks, schools for Blacks emerged from a variety of sources, such as schools run by Afro-Americans, White missionaries or the African Methodist Episcopal church. Schools included normal, common and industrial schools among others. The debate on the purpose of schooling for Blacks included themes of the moral value of hard work and knowing one's place, industrial education and learning a trade and the advancement of Blacks. For the White elites, the struggle was to control the shape and content of Black schools and keep an alliance from forming between poor Whites and Blacks around free universal schools.

Public discourse ensued among Black intellectuals of the day to include notable leaders such as Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. Dubois. Although both were concerned with the training of black leaders, they differed in their approach. The ideology of training Black

leaders for industry and trade was fiercely debated against the classic liberal education and training of Black leaders for social critique. “Black leaders such as Charles Chestnut, John S. Durham, John Hope, Bishop Alexander Walters, Bishop Henry M. Turner, Ida Wells-Barnett and W.E. B. Dubois endorsed racial equality, political enfranchisement, equal civil rights and higher education for Black teachers and leaders” (Anderson, 1988). The Black Intellectual Movement and its intelligentsia played a key role in the dialogue about the experience and contributions of Blacks in America and the preparation of leaders from the Black community.

The Black Intellectuals Movement and the Black Renaissance that followed stand out as the vehicles for the African American community to participate in the discourse on education, intellectual thought and cultural critique. In addition to a wealth of contributions to educational leadership, politics, the Arts and philosophy, its leaders interacted with Whites, Blacks and others. They posited that the plight of Blacks in the nation was of concern for society, while changing the narrative to one where Blacks would self-determine the direction of their education and participation in the political process. Active discourse on pressing issues of the day in education, politics and the Arts allowed for the focus on social justice themes of equality and inclusion in America’s institutions.

### **Renaissance to Radicals**

As the national economy shifted in the early 20th century from proprietary to corporate capitalism, the surplus of educated young people freed of the production of basic goods could now function as “intellectuals” outside of traditional social institutions (Hutchinson, 1995). This expansion of roles allowed for transformation in the fields of art and literature, cultural critique and the emergence of the Black Renaissance. Hutchinson states that the Harlem Renaissance was deeply involved in battles over the relationship between race, nation and

culture. The African American intellectuals and writers knew they had a strategic relationship to American nationhood. The literary renaissance was active in augmenting the value of Black culture in the national cultural field, challenging the dominant, racist consensus and encouraging diversity and reform. By expanding the notion of the people who composed the American national community, they legitimated their right to help set the direction of that community. The focus on nationalism brought formerly segregated groups together to discuss modernist American cultural nationalism and cultural pluralism.

The next phase of the Black freedom struggle was more militant and led by the working class (Robeson, 2006). Legal segregation ended with the Civil Rights Act of 1965 and was considered the entry point for middle class Blacks into the melting pot of society. Civil Rights Movement's gains primarily benefitted the Black middle class and professionals without substantially helping the great majority, who constituted the working class and poor. The resulting Black Power Movement was aimed at taking an equitable share of political power. Its broad base included Martin Luther King's Poor People's March and opposition to the disproportionate number of Blacks in the Vietnam War. It spawned groups such as the Black Panther Party. The Black Power years were marked by an artistic renaissance, political organizing and ideological debate.

Desegregation, integration and affirmative action were endeavors about the right of oppressed people of color to occupy the same space as their White counterparts and enjoy the same privileges and opportunities (Parham, 2015). History reminds us that the changing demographic composition did little to change the hostile climate that many people of color experienced as they sought to take advantage of their newfound freedom. Change poses new realities, forces individuals to rethink age-old traditions, and places people in different

situations where they must consider new outlooks on their realities (Howard, 2010). Change in beliefs, habits and interactions, especially in an ethnically and pluralistic society, is the most challenging type of change. It has been far from smooth and is combined with individual and group resistance. It has been detrimental for some, challenging for many, beneficial for others and non-ending for most.

### **Black Lives Matter (BLM)**

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, Hurricane Katrina was a defining moment in Black America's relationship to its country (Bouie, 2015). The events of the storm and its aftermath sparked a profound shift among Black Americans toward racial pessimism. Black collective memory of Hurricane Katrina informs the present movement against police violence, "Black Lives Matter." The disaster of Hurricane Katrina and its impact on the collective experience of Black America sowed the ground for a reckoning. The recent eruption of Black deaths, at the hands of the state and its consistent escape from sanction or punishment, gave the movement new urgency. The cumulative treatment of Blacks in the U.S. has impacted the social movements America is currently facing (Harris-Perry, 2015). From Bloody Sunday on the Pettus Bridge when nonviolent protesters were tear-gassed and beat by police, to Hurricane Katrina and the inadequate federal response, and the search for justice of Michael Brown, who was murdered at the hands of police, Blacks have been treated inhumanely in the United States. The "Black Lives Matter" (Garza, 2014) movement brings to the forefront the human rights experience of Blacks in contemporary America. It is a call to action for Black people instituted by three queer Black women, Patrisse Cullors, Alicia Garza and Opal Tometi, after according to Garza, "Trayvon Martin was placed on trial for his own murder" (Garza, 2014). BLM acknowledges the liberation struggles still faced by Blacks, particularly when it comes to "state violence." It

validates the importance of strategy and action around Blackness without having to center it on non-Black communities. It is instead centered on Blacks' contributions to society, their humanity and resilience in the face of deadly opposition. It is also centered on Blacks who have been marginalized within Black liberation movements (i.e. queer and trans and all those across the gender spectrum, disabled, Black-undocumented, women and "folks with records") and affirms their lives. It calls for an understanding of the negative impact that the push for unity has when it does not include an understanding of concrete differences in context, experience and oppression.

**Why Black Lives *should* Matter to the University Presidency.** Black Lives Matter has found a place on campuses the same way that Civil Rights and Black Power movements once did (Bradley, 2016). According to Parham (2015), BLM is a reminder that although campuses are desegregated, students of color continue to experience hostile campus climates. Of note in the movement were the activities of members of the University of Missouri (Mizzou) student demonstration group, Concerned Student 1950. They, along with the Mizzou football players, demonstrated against racist incidents and lack of response by university leadership (Stewart & Kingkade, 2015). Reports of racial slurs and a "poop-smear" swastika led to demonstrations during a homecoming parade, one hunger striker, tents in the quad and threat of a boycott by the football team (McKenna, 2015). BLM demonstrations at Mizzou galvanized campuses throughout the country to demonstrate out of solidarity, to bring to light to racial problems at their own schools and to address racial issues that students felt administrators had not attended to for years (Kingkade, Workneh & Grenoble, 2015). Mizzou's demonstration methods were copied at dozens of colleges, complete with Student Activists'

Demands at Purdue University, Claremont McKenna College, Occidental College, Yale University, Amherst College, Emory University and Georgetown University.

Racial incidents at the University of Missouri, Yale and other campuses reinforced the important role that universities play in confronting issues of racism, intolerance and insensitivity in American society (Drake, 2015). The failure of university leadership, at the campus and system level, to respond to racial incidents and adequately address the demands of the BLM on its campus resulted in the resignation of the University of Missouri's president and chancellor (Eligon, 2016, February 3). Claremont McKenna College's dean of students also resigned following criticism over her response to student complaints of racism and hate speech on campus that included photos of slaves on party invitations, students of color being spat and peed upon at parties, and anti-gay language of Queer Resource Center posters and vandalism of Black Lives Matter posters (Kingkade, 2015, November 13).

It has been over 90 years since student demonstrations ousted a president over issues of racial insensitivity (Bradley, 2016). In 1923, Florida A&M experienced a three-month protest, class boycotts and curfew violations to remove a segregation-accommodating president. In 1925, urged by W.E.B. DuBois, Fisk University students in Nashville waged a 10-week strike leading to the resignation of a socially conservative president, who had denied the creation of a N.A.A.C.P. chapter.

Since the "Mizzou" resignation, protestors organized at more than 100 colleges and universities nationwide (Curwen, Song & Gordon, 2015). A president stepping down is a serious event (Howard, cited in Curwen, Song & Gordon, 2015). It caused students elsewhere to wonder if their issues too could be brought to the forefront. A change from decades ago is the advent of social media; a protest goes viral in no time. Complaints of racism and

microaggressions fed Facebook and campus websites nationwide (Curwen, Song & Gordon, 2015). What began as a grievance evolved into a movement.

Kruger (2015) calls the student activism and demonstrations nationwide a modern civil rights movement that is making issues of social justice and inclusion integral to higher education leadership. The resignations of higher education leaders set administrators around the country on a frantic course of correction efforts (Eligon, 2016). The terms “campus climate” and “inclusion” took off as new diversity buzzwords (Bradley, 2016). Student demonstrators’ demands and actions made clear to administrators the need for a cultural shift on how institutions deal with racism and the consequent threats of violence toward students of color posted on social media following the demonstrations (Stewart & Kingkade, 2015). Many campuses responded by hiring Chief Diversity Officers to work on campus climate (Parker, 2015; Kingkade, 2015, November 10). As with most movements, there is resistance to the growing cultural shift and, in this case, the rise in chief diversity officers. While Mizzou appointed a chief diversity officer to deal with campus climate and threats of violence, Tennessee’s state legislature, led by ten GOP state senators and representatives, requested an investigation of the University of Tennessee’s diversity office. Of controversy are diversity efforts around religious symbols at holiday parties, gender-neutral pronouns and programs around sexual identity, relationships and safety (Kingkade, 2016).

The BLM movement and its growing demand efforts on college campuses brought to light other issues impacting higher education, its leadership and finances. One issue is the appointment of non-academics to the presidency. According to the American Council on Education (2012), U.S. college presidents that come from fields outside of academia are growing in numbers. They rose from thirteen percent in 2006 to twenty percent in 2012. The



call for the University of Missouri's (non-academic) President, Tom Wolfe's resignation brought to question the preparation of corporate leaders to run academic institutions and their ability to understand the unique culture of college campuses and shared governance models that include faculty and students (McKenna, 2015).

Another impact of the movement for higher education leaders to consider is the financial impacts and demands of students. The threat of a boycott by Mizzou's football team had significant economic impacts on the campus (McKenna, 2015). In California, the Afrikan Black Coalition (ABC) harnessed its demands to pressure the University of California (UC) to divest \$25 million in private prison shares making the UC the first public institution to denounce the private prison industry (Williams, 2015). ABC mobilized Black students and Black Student Unions across the state's three public higher education systems to continue to apply collective political pressure toward social justice efforts.

### **Civil Rights/Social Justice Legislation and Impacts**

Running parallel to social movements is the growing awareness and consciousness that in turn can impact legislation related to higher education and social justice. In Weick's (1983) growth-task model of human development, growth occurs when development-themed task areas are challenged. An underlying theme in the model is empowerment. Individuals that can see and understand their own situations and learn from the changes develop a sense of power. This theory mirrors Freire's Critical Theory and his premise about the importance of self-reflection and the coming to awareness (conscientization) as important to leadership development and practice. Lorenzen (1996) argues that one's history is inseparable from professional life. These theorists hold in common the importance of human experience and how these experiences shapes one's values, awareness, convictions and actions. A key example

of individual's and also society's taking action on values for social justice was the Civil Rights era and the many efforts in legislation that followed.

The Civil Rights Movement was a period between 1954-1968 when there was a push for moral leadership in America to uphold social justice values through legislation. A longstanding and continuing challenge in higher education is diversity. Students of color continue to be underrepresented on most college and university campuses. Legislation that allowed for consideration of race has been controversial from its point of inception to the present time. Federal legislative efforts have worked directly and indirectly to diversify higher education. These social policies have been challenged by the states and have risen several times to the Supreme Court.

### **Federal Legislation and Edicts**

The Civil Rights Movement was the impetus for vast changes in social policy. These policies, reflected in judicial, legislative and executive activities of the federal government (Lehmuller & Gregory, 2005), had impacts on higher education. A seminal case was *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas (Brown v. Board, 1954)*, where “separate but equal” doctrine and the constitutionality of segregation of public schools was challenged (U.S. Courts, 2015, March 9; Holmes, 2004). *Brown* consolidated cases from four states, Kansas, South Carolina, Virginia, and Delaware (*Brown v. Board, 1954*). Thurgood Marshall and the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund handled the cases arguing that separate school systems for Blacks and Whites were inherently illegal and violated the “equal protection clause” of the Fourteenth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution (U.S. Courts, 2015, March 9). *Brown* has been called the major breakthrough in the area of nondiscrimination in the United States since the Fifteenth Amendment (the right of citizens to vote). The 1973 Adams decision would go on to

mandate enforcement of desegregation laws of state systems of higher education, stipulating that states must not only achieve a better racial mix of students, but also increase the access and retention of minorities at all levels of higher education (Roebuck & Murty, 2008).

Federal legislation, such as the 1964 Civil Rights Act, ending legal discrimination in the United States and the Voting Rights Act in 1965, ending the prevention of African Americans from voting in the South (Ezra, 2009), had implications for inclusion of diverse communities. Although this legislation was not targeted solely or directly at education, it led to legislation in higher education arenas and expanded opportunities for participation of diverse communities. An example was the Higher Education Act of 1965 (HEA, 1965), which opened the doors for federal financial assistance for students enrolled in postsecondary and higher education.

A key initiative in social justice legislation is “affirmative action.” The term was first used by President John F. Kennedy in Executive Order 10925 in 1961 and expanded further through the equal protection granted with Executive Order 11246 in 1965 (USDOE, 2015, January 31). Affirmative action initially worked to ensure that employment applicants were treated without regard to their race, creed, color or national origin and were given equal rights. Affirmative action policies in higher education developed in a separate direction from federal legislation, which initially focused on employment (Eastland, 1996). The application of affirmative action to higher education admissions opened a new chapter in achieving access for people of color. Although Civil Rights laws were aimed at overcoming past discrimination and moving toward a color-blind society, social policies designed to tackle issues of race did not avoid scrutiny on issues of race nor resistance. Incidentally, Lopez (2003) argues that race is not neutral and argues against society’s ability to be colorblind.

When opportunities are allocated based on race, political lines are drawn on the basis of group identity. The result is a heightened race-consciousness. Inevitably, the process will cause a backlash among those who believe they are losing out (Bolick, 1996). This proved to be the case through the challenges to affirmative action in university admissions in *Regents of the University of California v. Bakke* (1978). The outcome of its legal challenges resulted in a redirection of educational equity practices and ideology. When the *Bakke* case rose to the Supreme Court, the ruling changed the character and future, not only of the University of California, but also of all institutions of higher education in the nation (Garcia, 1998). This case held that the use of race as a criterion in admissions decisions in higher education was constitutionally permissible, but found that the rigid use of racial quotas violated the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. *Bakke* effectively took racial justice off the table as the foundation for affirmative action (Crenshaw, 2010). As a result, “diversity” emerged as the vehicle that would integrate people of color into institutions from which they had been excluded.

It was in higher education where the “diversity rationale” emerged for affirmative action. The changing rationale was assumed by Harvard College through its admissions’ practices (Eastland, 1996). In this context, the use of race was not about the righting of a past wrong. There was a shift from the “redistribution” focus of justice to the primary consideration being that diversity of experience was a benefit to society. Noted was the educational value of a racially and ethnically diverse student body; people of color enhanced the learning environment. They provided intellectual perspectives that were missing on campus. Other universities followed suit and adopted the diversity perspective in their admissions’ practices.

The diversity rationale, too, was challenged and upheld. *Grutter v. Bollinger* (2003) used the Fourteenth amendment to authorize the use of racial preferences to achieve diversity in university admissions citing that student body diversity is a compelling state interest that can justify using race in university admissions. In *Gratz v. Bollinger* (2003), the Court found that the University's policy to automatically distribute one-fifth of the points needed to guarantee admission, to every single "underrepresented minority" applicant solely because of race, was not narrowly tailored to achieve educational diversity. The court held for the petitioner.

### **State Initiatives**

States have challenged federal affirmative action legislation with some success. These “wins” have set the precedent for other states to follow suit. Bans on government-sponsored affirmative action worked to eliminate affirmative action programs for women and minorities run by the state or local governments. Areas targeted were public employment, contracting and education practices that gave "preferential treatment" on the basis of sex, race, color, ethnicity or national origin. Examples include California’s Proposition 209 in 1996 (Calvoterguide, 1996), Washington’s Initiative 200 in 1998 (Guppy, 1998), Nebraska’s Initiative 424 in 2008 (Baker, 2008) and Arizona’s Proposition 107 in 2010 (Jaschik, 2010). Other states also banning affirmative action included Florida, Georgia and New Hampshire (Hinrichs, 2012). Michigan, Texas and California are states whose legal challenges to affirmative action have been widely publicized and followed. The Michigan Civil Rights Initiative, Proposal 2 sought to end affirmative action in publicly funded institutions. It passed in 2006 and rose to the Supreme Court, who in 2014 upheld its constitutionality (University of Michigan, 2015, January 31). Another legal loss for affirmative action in Michigan was *Schuette v. Coalition to Defend Affirmative Action* (2014). The use of race in college admissions and the ban on

affirmative action held. In other states, the reliance on affirmative action to diversify academic communities was also called into question and suspended in California under *Economic Equity v. Wilson* and in Texas under *Hopwood v. Texas* (Hinrichs, 2012; Holmes, 2004). In a recent case, *Fisher v. University of Texas* (Howe, 2013), it was determined that the courts themselves will need to confirm that the use of race is “necessary” and that there is no other realistic alternative that does not use race that would also create a diverse student body. Because the lower court had not done so, the Court sent the case back for a determination on whether the university could make this showing. Legal challenges to affirmative action continue, raising new challenges for educational equity efforts nationwide.

### **Legislation Impacts and Educational Equity**

Hinrichs (2012) found that affirmative action bans decreased underrepresented minority enrollment at selective colleges in the top 50 of the U.S. News rankings. In 1995, this resulted in a decrease in enrollment for blacks of 1.74 percentage points, Hispanics of 2.03 percentage points and Native American of .47 percentage points. Since the enrollments are small for underrepresented minorities, these effects had large impacts on the representation of these populations. The affirmative bans resulted in an increase in both White enrollment by 2.93 percentage points and Asian by 1.43 percentage points. He further notes that the importance of the findings hinge on whether college quality and reputation has an impact on the student’s later labor market outcomes, whether underrepresented minorities are “mismatched” at selective colleges and whether college diversity matters for later outcomes.

Evidence on the impact of college choice and college diversity is mixed. In a National Center for Education Statistics’ study, there is a disparity between Whites and Blacks’ attendance at selective institutions. In the NCES study, 45% of Whites attended moderately or

highly selective four-year institutions, compared to 23% of Blacks (Ross & Green, 2000). Although not directly addressing the impact of the type of college attended, Wolfe and Haveman's (2001) study, on the intergenerational effects of education, catalogs a series of "non-market effects of schooling." A positive association exists between one's own schooling and schooling received by one's children, cognitive development of one's children, one's own and the family's health status, efficiency of choices, fertility choices and schooling/social capital of one's neighborhood and participation in criminal activities. The educational level and health of the next generation is tied to the education of their parents making higher education access one of the greatest social justice equalizers and conduits to social mobility.

Although *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas*, Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act in 1965 were victories, racial justice remains elusive (Lipsitz, 2001). Supreme Court decisions, legislative initiatives and actions by the executive branch of government have undermined or dismantled key policies created during the Civil Rights era. Lipsitz argues that to protect and preserve the traditional privileges of whiteness, leaders across the political spectrum have embraced the strategy of "color blindness." The presumption that color-bound injustices require color-blind remedies (race-based problems should be solved by race-blind remedies) maintains race as a single most determining factor in life chances and opportunities in America.

### **Challenges of Leading for Social Justice**

A common theme in educational research about social justice is fostering a "consciousness" of inequities, in order to understand the structures, beliefs and practices that maintain them. Building the capacity of a leader's political acumen to question practices and policies that favor the educational outcome of some students over others is also a key theme in

the discourse on social justice leadership. Although the moral imperative expected of leaders to act is compelling, the “how to,” decision-making, stress and consequences of doing so remains an unexplored area of study. The challenge for educational leaders remains on how to create safe space for dialogue, put these ideals into practice and greater still, how to prepare themselves and others to practice with this frame. A synthesis of literature on college and university presidents yielded the following challenges they face in acting on social justice.

### **Preparation**

University presidents, and educational leaders in general, will grapple with how to act on being an activist and calling attention to institutional structures and policies that maintain the status quo. Little preparation is available to assist in integrating social justice ideals and actions into the presidents’ leadership practice. Preparation of presidents is largely informal in nature, with an exception of leadership institutes. Leon and Nevarez (2007) reviewed the leadership programs in higher education that play a key role in preparing top administrators. There are long-standing institutes and, more recently, those that target minorities. These institutes help prepare presidents, assist with interviewing, forge important relationships, build support networks and help with practical areas, such as finance and understanding the function of the presidency. The minority institutes emerged due to the mainstream programs not sufficiently meeting minority needs. For presidents to practice with an equity frame, all institutes and all presidents, not just those attending minority institutes, can increase their efforts and awareness of educational equity and social justice concerns and practices. Bensimon (2005) asserts that leaders will need to introduce an “equity lens” throughout their leadership and in all aspects of their position. This has not been an area in the preparation of presidents.

### **Integrating the Conventional Role and the Social Justice Role**



Leading a higher education institution in the 21st century comes with its own set of responsibilities and priorities. A starting place for presidents is to understand the mission of the institution and the purpose of higher education. There are many perspectives on the purpose of education, such as creating democratic educational institutions, communities, societies and citizens (Bowen, 1977; Darling-Hammond, 2006; Harkavy, 2006), meritocracy, training the work force, (Spring, 1996) or economics and advancing the prosperity of the nation (Wolk, 2007). Presidents face unprecedented challenges in achieving their institution's mission that include ballooning or deflating enrollments, fiscal pressures, fundraising, a wide array of constituents and stakeholders, politics, accountability (Cook 2012; Hayes, 2012) and the change engines of technological advances (Cook, 2012). HBCU presidents reported additional challenges in areas of turnover/recycling in leadership, board of trustees and accreditation in fiscal management and governance (Freeman & Gasman, 2014; Hayes, 2013) and absence of wealthy alumni, inadequate endowment funds and continuing effects of racial discrimination in the United States (Riddick & Brown, 2006).

Constituencies presented challenges for presidents, which varied by institutional type of control. According to ACE (2012), all presidents of public institutions faced the constituency challenges in rank order of legislators/policy makers, faculty and system office/coordinating board. Private institutions faced the constituency challenges in rank order of faculty, governing board and donors/benefactors. The top five ranked items of all presidents' in the primary use of their time were budget/financial management, fundraising, community relations, strategic planning and personnel issues. The most frustrating factors in the first presidency of African American presidents in rank order were never enough money, difficulty in cultivating leadership in others, campus politics, unrealistic expectations to solve everyone else's

problems and lack of time to think and reflect. In comparison, the most frustrating things in the first presidency of all presidents in general were never enough money, problems inherited from previous leadership, campus politics, faculty resistance to change and difficulty in cultivating leadership in others.

The university president is charged with representing all university constituencies and responsibility for the education and business aspects of the enterprise, such as budget and financial management, fundraising, strategic planning, community relations, personnel issues, governing board and government relations, enrollment management, faculty issues, capitol improvement and academic issues (ACE, 2012). An added responsibility for the social justice-oriented leader is how to integrate an “equity frame” (Bensimon, 2005) into his/her personal and structural leadership of the institution. Bensimon (2005) argues that educational leaders must discover how to shift an equity framework from within him/herself outward to the institution. She proposes that unequal outcomes for students reside within the cognitive frames that govern individual’s attitudes, beliefs, values and actions and that the ability to reduce inequities also resides in one’s capacity to develop equity as their cognitive frame. Because leaders in institutional roles influence the outcome of student success, it is critical that they learn the cognitive process that enables them to think about underrepresented students from a lens of equity. Becoming equity-minded allows leaders to understand and address structural and cultural obstacles that prevent colleges and universities from producing equitable educational outcomes for all students. Organizational learning in both theory and practice of an equity frame is key to making the “invisible visible” and the “undiscussable discussable” and to address unequal race- and ethnic-based outcomes on college campuses. She argues for infusing all responsibilities and all aspects of the institution (finances, policy, operations,

assessment, admission, education, research, constituencies, fundraising, etc.) with an equity framework.

**Tension of Inside Outsider Role.** Reducing the personal and professional conflict leaders face in the expectations of their formal role and that of being an activist was found to be a challenge (Gasman, 2011; Harrison, 2011). Creating spaces for social justice and challenging the very structures in which such spaces exist, places "minoritized" faculty in a precarious position when they engage in social justice efforts (Osei-Kofi, 2003). This finding may extend to university presidents. Harrison (2011) describes this as tension between gaining access as an insider or challenging the system as an outsider. In a study of Civil Rights' era HBCU presidents, Gasman (2011) found that African American presidents faced conflict between preserving the institution and lodging a direct fight against injustice. She noted that the actions of a protester or liberator did not work well with the responsibilities of a college leader to maintain an institution and administer a curriculum. Today, adopting an equity or social justice frame, which can include the practice of speaking out and shining a light on institutional practices that foster inequity and injustice, can be met with resistance, denial, controversy and risk. In a study of teachers of color, though not a higher education population, the findings showed an opposite interpretation of risk. Kohli (2009) found that participants were not concerned with how being outspoken about racism might shorten their careers. They were already at risk of minimalism and marginalization and took a different approach to endure as educators. They met racism head on. They practiced social justices with a "bent" toward Critical Race Theory. CRT calls for the questioning of structural practices that lead to inequity and integrating activism into one's leadership (Freire, 1998; Lopez, 2003). Leaders must determine with whom, how and when to practice activism (Lopez, 2003). Harrison (2011)

found that one can only take a stand against an organizational policy or procedure a limited number of times before losing the very position to effect positive change. Harrison argues that there may be situations where sacrificing oneself in the service of a greater ideal is the necessary and right course of action, but it is not a sustainable strategy.

**Activist? Expert?** Leadership for social justice suggests an active and possibly an activist orientation toward issues of inequity (Jean-Marie et al., 2009). A study on training educational leaders for social justice found that the leaders saw themselves as subject matter experts, with none of them being trained in their B.A., M.A., Ph.D., Ed.D. and J.D. degrees to see themselves as institutional change agents (Hernandez & Bell-McKenzie, 2010). Navigating the role of a change agent or activist remains a key focus area for leadership preparation, particularly since the expectation of a social justice leader includes an ability to initiate an equity consciousness and to challenge injustice and issues of privilege at the institutional level.

**Decorum and Critique.** Weiner (2003) argues that leaders must be willing to take risks, form strategic alliances, learn and unlearn power and reach beyond their “fear of authority.” By doing so, one lays the foundation for democratic, inclusive and equitable education. Aleman (2009) argues that “niceness,” civility, and the search for commonalities serve to maintain the status quo, cover up institutionalized racism, and silence the experiences of marginalized students and communities. He contends that the focus on collaboration and decorum can detract from the political discourse shaped by critique, conflict and questioning of White privilege.

Lopez (2003) argues that scholars need to focus on racism as a social construct and prepare future educational leaders to raise questions about racism in society. They have an ethical responsibility to interrogate systems and organizational frameworks that privilege one

perspective or group over another. The politicized nature of social justice language can be a challenge. When language and “voice” is perceived as inflammatory, reactive behavior and resistance can result. Social justice language, words and phrases such as revolutionary work, "liberatory" education, challenge the status quo, interrogate systems, White privilege and racism generate reactionary responses (Cambron-McCabe & McCarthy, 2005; Gooden & Dantley, 2012; Jean-Marie, et al., 2009).

### **Understanding the Educational Landscape for Students of Color**

Woodard, Love and Komives (2000) argue that is critical for social justice leaders to understand the evolution of social justice efforts and understand the current educational landscape for students of color.

The 1960s and 1970s ushered in an era of optimism and youthful promise, focused on human and civil rights. This was also a period of great enrollment expansion, as the baby boomers began to attend postsecondary education in droves. The 1980s began the fiscal nightmare for higher education. Enrollments continued to grow, but financial support for higher education diminished as other societal needs, such as health care and social services, competed for shrinking funds. And the 1990s was a decade of restructuring higher education to address financial, quality, and accountability issues. The first decade of the new millennium was characterized by efforts to transform our institutions to prepare students to meet a growing accumulation of unsolved domestic problems... (Woodard, Love & Komives, 2000).

Ladson-Billings (2006) argues that the historical, economic, sociopolitical and moral decisions and policies that characterize our society have created an education debt that has accumulated and remained unpaid for minority and disadvantaged students. Although there have been many Civil Rights’ improvements in education, gaps and challenges still remain in access, social capital, opportunity and representation. The current climate in higher education makes it important for college and university presidents to understand and be responsive to their communities and the contexts in which higher education takes place (Cook, 2012).

One of the pedagogical changes post Civil Rights era is the shift in approach administrators and students took toward social justice. Social movements reconfigured the horizons of individuals and groups by challenging old forms of knowledge and advancing new ones (Lipsitz, 2001). For administrators, their role took on that of an advocate, mediator and change agent to help resolve Civil Rights era issues that arose on campuses as a result of the student protest movement (Gaston-Gayles et al., 2005). Students' change in role was in the push to be treated as mature adults. Gone are the days of *in loco parentis* due to a shift toward independence and empowerment of students. Students' emerging identity embraced the role of change agents, pushing for legal rights, exercising their right for freedom of speech, due process, free press rights and the right to demonstrate, protest, organize and be involved in university governance. They continue to make their social justice demands known for a myriad of concerns such as access, campus climate, human rights, equity and inclusion.

The social justice landscape for students of color in higher education remains a target area for university presidents in the United States. Preparing higher education's leaders for the changing social justice landscape will be ongoing (Bogotch, 2000 & 2002) and has continued to include how to enroll, retain and promote a diverse student body and maintain legislation support for its social justice efforts.

### **Strategies to Sustain Social Justice-oriented Leaders**

Preparing leaders to critically inquire into the structures and norms that result in inequitable education for some students and influencing educational policies to achieve social justice is a grave concern (Cambron-McCabe & McCarthy, 2005). There are frameworks to approach social justice-oriented work such as Bensimon's (2005) cognitive equity frame, which can be practiced through discourse and strategizing with an "equity cognitive frame" on

all aspects of leadership responsibility. Another strategy suggested was to help educational leaders see themselves as change agents and not just content experts. This approach will help create dialogue to safely consider the effects of race, class, gender and other –isms (Hernandez & Bell-McKenzie, 2010). Preparation and practice of social justice-oriented discourse through formal and informal efforts such as mentorship and dialog are strategies recommended by educational researchers (Holmes, 2004). Populations to target for leading with a social justice frame could include Chief Academic Officers and other positions that have historically led to the presidency. “Outgoing” leadership needs to share their lessons learned about the process of balancing leadership of the institution and leadership for social justice with those they mentor. Many of the presidents studied credited their mentors as having prepared them for the presidency role (Freeman & Gasman, 2014; Holmes, 2004; Jackson & Harris, 2007; Madsen, 2007). This same level of mentorship and preparation can be repeated for the next generation with the added understanding of social justice oriented-leadership practice.

Current presidents need to identify, develop and support leadership talent (Cordova, 2012) and generate dialog on how to both sustain their motivation and increase the effectiveness of their social justice-oriented leadership. With the current legislative challenges and the low representation of underserved populations across the leadership spectrum of higher education, the need for social justice-oriented leaders will continue well into the future. Succession planning and preparation on how to lead with an equity frame (Bensimon, 2005) and with a social justice-orientation will benefit 21<sup>st</sup> century leaders and also, the students and institutions they will serve.

The dichotomy of expectations held for social justice-oriented leaders points to the need to further explore how to prepare (and sustain) them. Expectations to be an advocate and

outlaw, maverick and trouble-maker (Bogotch, 2000) and to be both “warring” and complementary (Leonardo & Harris, 2013) speak to the challenges faced by social justice-oriented educational leaders. To affect the most change, leaders must determine how to maintain their positions “at the table” while challenging the process and raising the consciousness of those around them to practice with an equity frame. The concept of a “tempered radical” (Meyerson, 2001) for organizational change is offered as a cautious, yet committed approach on how to straddle the insider-outsider divide and represent ideals or agendas that are at odds with the dominant culture. This subject is important for educational research and preparation of 21<sup>st</sup> century leaders.

### **Summary: Social Justice University Leadership**

The imminent retirement of a large percentage of African American presidents and the lack of significant growth in their numbers in the last two decades coupled with the continued economic, opportunity and achievement gaps of this community illustrate the importance of this study’s emphasis on this population, succession planning and moral leadership. Jean-Marie (2008) describes social justice as being “called to lead.” Freeman and Gasman (2014) note that presidential leadership of higher education institutions is a privilege that comes with the “responsibility to protect” both the integrity of the institution and those who depend on it. In the face of opposition or when under threat, presidents who are committed to underlying principles, will act with purpose and conviction. The values that drive one’s leadership will carry forward and have a profound influence on the direction of one’s leadership and of one’s professional life. Bogotch (2000) argues that whenever educators act on their beliefs, it makes a difference both to the institution and to their own sense of purpose.



The personal narrative of how leaders acquired their social justice-orientation and how this personal experience impacts how they lead can inform the manner in which we prepare future educational leaders. The mass retirement of a generation of leaders is fueling a labor leadership shortage (ACE, 2012; Freeman & Gasman, 2014) and presents a timely (and possibly time-sensitive) opportunity to consider the social justice leadership needs in higher education. Faced with the immediacy of succession planning, this leadership transition period is also an opportunity to diversify the leadership of American higher education to be reflective of the world around it (Cook, 2012, September). Leaders of educational institutions set the tone and vision for the institution (Bogotch, 2000; Freeman & Gasman, 2014) and will determine the future direction of education. By understanding what shapes the social justice values of African American university presidents and the challenges and successes these, often, social justice-oriented leaders face, we can anticipate the preparation needs for future educational leaders. We can also identify how they might define and sustain their social justice moral leadership efforts.

## CHAPTER THREE

### Introduction

An “organized anarchy” is how Cohen and March (1974) describe the organizational setting experienced by university presidents. They argue that the president has modest control over the events of college life due to inconsistent goals among constituencies, the university as an organization being unclear of its own processes and key participants varying from one time to another. African American presidents who integrate a social justice-orientation to their leadership have added challenges that must be incorporated within this “loosely coupled” (Weick, 1976) organizational structure. African American leaders must often navigate the conventional responsibilities of the presidency with the added challenges of an inside outsider role (Harrison, 2011), different treatment because of their race (Waring, 2003) and expectations to be an activist leader (Gooden & Dantley, 2102; Jean-Marie, Normore & Brooks, 2009; McKenzie, et al., 2008). I studied African American university presidents who have a documented history of social justice efforts. I focused on presidents from four-year institutions (non-HBCU), in an effort to understand the source of their social justice values and how they integrated and acted on these values in the moral leadership of their universities.

The research study investigated the leadership experiences of African American presidents of four-year institutions that are not Historically Black College or Universities (HBCU). There is a gap in the literature on this population and in these specific higher education institutions. Another gap in the literature is on how higher education presidents’ leadership approach and practice is influenced (if at all) by their personal experience with justice, and by any consequent social justice-oriented values. The study attempted to understand the challenges faced by African American university presidents who acted on their

social justice values and explored the strategies they employed to be effective in incorporating a social justice-orientation into their leadership. The study hoped to understand how these presidents' leadership compared to the expectations held of moral leaders and how they sustained themselves to act on values toward social justice. Studies on these senior African American administrators hoped to yield insights about the ways educational, social and political issues, including race relations, were navigated in institutions such as predominantly White institutions (Waring 1999) and other institutions that are not HBCUs. The following research questions guided the study.

### **Research Questions**

1. How do African American university presidents who advocate for social justice define social justice?
2. What do the presidents identify as their social justice values?
  - a. What life experiences do they say led to these values?
  - b. How do the presidents' social justice values influence their beliefs about the principles of good leadership?
3. What do presidents and campus stakeholders say are the president's social justice-oriented leadership practices?
4. What do presidents and campus stakeholders say are the challenges the presidents face and strategies the presidents employ to integrate social justice actions into their leadership practice?

## Research Design

A qualitative study explored the social justice-related experiences that impacted African American college and university presidents' construct of social justice, the origin of their values and how these factors influenced (if at all) ethical leadership practice in higher education today. Although a quantitative survey could yield data about president's social justice values, definition, practices and activities, a survey would not elicit information on the process of developing social justice values, becoming a leader, and acting on these values. Semi-structured interviews allowed the researcher to probe where needed for depth of responses. This could not be done in a survey format. The qualitative approach for the study focused on an experiential approach rather than an information-driven approach. Speaking about personal experiences that drove one's values could be a moving and powerful exchange between the president and the researcher. The nuances, depth and breadth of that experience could be lost in their transmission via an online or paper survey. Studying people and their social worlds by going to their workplaces was also found to help understand their situations and behaviors (Richards, 2015). Meeting in-person with the interviewer and engaging in a face-to-face in-depth exchange provided the opportunity to hear and see the participant's "story" unfold. By walking through experiences as the participant interprets them, the researcher hoped to grasp the singular aspects (van Manen, 2014) of the formation of the president's social justice values. A qualitative study allowed the participants to tell their stories in their own voice, identify their social justice values and definition and share the experience(s) that impacted their development and practice. In-depth interviews allowed participants to describe the affective, cognitive and evaluative meanings of their experiences and bring out the experiences that give the situations distinctive meaning for the participant (Merton, Fiske &

Kendell, 1990). Using elements of Seidman's (2006) qualities of an interview, this qualitative study enabled an understanding of the participant's "life history" related to the research topic, concrete "details of their experience" with the research topic and a reflection to gather the meaning they make of that experience.

To further answer and triangulate the findings, a student government leader, a faculty member (from the academic senate) and a senior level university administrator (chief diversity or equity and inclusion or student affairs officer) were also interviewed to explore the research questions and understand the presidents' leadership practices from an outsider's perspective. The stakeholder findings were triangulated with data from the presidents' interviews.

## **Site and Population**

### **Criteria for Site Selection**

The study's sites were four-year public or private colleges and universities in the United States. The presidents were not selected from an institution identified as a HBCU and instead were inclusive of other institution types including, but not limited to those identified as Predominantly White Institutions (PWI). Four-year and non-HBCU institutions were selected because there is less educational research on African American presidents from these institution types, as well as smaller numbers of African American presidents at these institution types.

### **Criteria for Participant Selection**

**Presidents.** The participants were presidents who self-identified as African American or a related ethnic identity. The term "African American" is used in the study unless a related ethnic identity was used in the literature review or preferred by the presidents due to political/ideological consciousness or origins outside of the African diaspora. Participants had

a documented history of social justice-oriented advocacy efforts and at least five years of experience as president of a non-HBCU, four-year private or public college or university in the United States. This five-year time period was chosen to ensure that the president had time to establish him/herself in the capacity of a president. It also allowed for the president to define his or her role, understand the politics, challenges and personalities of the institution and experience several academic year cycles. All of the presidents in the study were active presidents; none were retired at the time of the interview.

Participants had a documented social justice history or background of identifiable social justice advocacy or inclusion efforts in their leadership. The activities that defined their social justice-oriented efforts included: pioneered as one of the first African American presidents in a PWI or non traditional field; worked toward diversity; received awards for their social justice/equity efforts; made a career decision based on social justice; initiated legislation, research, or innovative programs toward equity or inclusion of the racial experience; conducted educational research to improve the educational experiences of underrepresented students or advocated at policy, structural or institutional levels for social justice. Because educational research does not have an agreed upon definition of social justice, there was not one-way to define social justice-oriented work. Uniformity in the presidents' social justice-oriented efforts was not expected. How presidents approached their social justice activities was expected to be unique to the individual, institution, location and time in history. Careful attention was made to ensure participation of social justice-oriented presidents while, at the same time, allowing room in the study for the presidents themselves to identify the definition, actions, characteristics and values of a social justice-oriented presidency/leader.

**Supporting Interview Participants.** Representatives from key stakeholder groups at the president's university were interviewed. Participants included student body presidents or student government proxies, faculty academic senate/council members and senior level administrators, such as a campus diversity, equity and inclusion officer or student affairs leaders. These stakeholders were selected due to their potential knowledge of the president's actions and social justice-related campus decisions.

### **Data Collection Methods**

#### **Document Review**

Finding presidents who met the participant criteria of an African American president who practiced leadership with a social-justice orientation required a broad search for eligible participants. African American presidents of non-HBCU universities that had a documented history of action(s) related to social justice and met the other participation criteria were identified through a document/web review. African American university presidents who had a history of social justice through their actions, career decisions, awards, legislation, research efforts, programs or practices were considered. A review of higher education online and in-print announcements and documents were used to identify presidents from higher education institutions throughout the United States who met the study's parameters. Additional online resources were used including publications such as the Journal of Blacks in Higher Education. Participants' curriculum vitae, biographies and university websites were reviewed for data on the presidents' background, such as education, professional experience, awards, appointment and preparation.

#### **President Pre-interview Questionnaire**

Each participant received via email a pre-interview questionnaire (see Appendix A for

the questionnaire). It asked demographic information that could not be obtained from their curriculum vitae, such as ethnic identity, family educational background, etc. The questionnaire was developed using Qualtrics software.

### **In Person President Interviews**

**Interview and Storytelling.** The interview protocol (see Appendix B for the presidents' interview protocol) was designed to be both structured to yield tangible data, such as specific social justice values, definitions or strategies and semi-structured to yield their leadership story, such as asking about the experience and process of becoming a social justice-oriented leader. Grand tour interview questions were designed to elicit "storytelling" of the experiences that shaped the African American university presidents' social justice values and defined their social justice leadership practice. Speaking about personal and institutional challenges around themes of (in) justice had the potential to elicit topics some might consider controversial (discrimination and structural policies that reinforced privilege). Some concern was anticipated about the sharing of their identity, the identity of their institution and about speaking freely in general, particularly for those still employed by their respective institution. The study focused on how their experiences shaped their social justice values, leadership and actions from a personal storytelling perspective. The interview protocol focused on the president's leadership journey and experience and did not emphasize the institution itself.

Storytelling follows a rich African American tradition and is a tool for providing instruction, building community and nurturing the spirit (Stewart, 1997). It also provided opportunities to examine difficult periods, glean wisdom and empowerment (Polkinghorne, 1988; Rybarczyk & Bellg, 1997). Storytelling experiences helped strengthen traditions of social, cultural and political survival and resistance (Solorzano & Yosso, 2002) and could offer



insight into how to successfully navigate the often political and controversial challenges of leading within a social justice framework.

Initiating a conversation about the leadership experience and contributions of underrepresented groups/people of color can bring to light the issues of privilege, race and other isms and Critical Race Theory and its expectation for activism. Although these themes were not the primary focus of the study, it would be difficult to thoroughly engage in a study involving an underrepresented group without acknowledging the potential intersection of these themes. The interview was chosen because it was the method that would best allow for critical dialog and reflection on themes that could be related and/or controversial, yet relevant to study.

A storytelling approach to the interviews allowed for an understanding of Freire's (1998) "critical conscientization" through a first-hand understanding of the presidents' process of coming to awareness on issues of injustice and its impact on their values and leadership. By allowing for their story and its meaning to unfold in their own words, the analysis of the interview had the opportunity to yield a "counterstory" that was not representative of a majority perspective (Solorzano & Yosso, 2002). The leadership "counterstory" illustrated how these social justice-oriented leaders acquired and acted upon their social justice values, responded to leadership challenges, served as a model for leadership and offered relevant strategies and insights for emerging social justice-oriented leaders.

**Expert Review.** To ensure that the interview questions elicited information on the relevant life history, constructs and variables surrounding social justice values, as well as the practice of social justice-oriented leadership, higher education leaders (current or emeriti) from the researcher's universities assisted in refining the interview protocols. The experts were chosen due to their social justice-oriented leadership practice in higher education institutions

that were non-HBCUs and/or due to their expertise in qualitative methodology. Three individuals served as an expert reviewer by participating in a pilot test of the interview and/or reviewing the interview protocols. The odd number of expert reviewers was to ensure that more than one person verified the areas marked for change. The expert reviewers consented to participate in a practice interview and/or review the interview instrument to offer feedback on the content, design and alignment to the research questions. The information from the expert review of the interview protocol was used to eliminate any ambiguities and gaps and to also analyze the effectiveness of the interview questions in soliciting information that provided an understanding of the process of acquiring social justice values and alignment of questions and responses to the research questions. It provided information on how to anticipate the length of time needed to conduct an in-depth interview, how to pace the interview and where to shift from structured to semi-structured questions. It also provided the opportunity to test the effectiveness and use of the recording devices.

**President Interviews.** African American university presidents nationwide who met the criteria were contacted through their administrative office via email to the president's executive assistant or to the president's contact email (see C for president email sample). If there was mutual acquaintance between the potential participant and the researcher, this party initiated an email introduction. Initial contacts were made via phone and email. The outreach efforts ceased after gaining assent from six presidents who agreed to participate in the study. Interviews were to be held in the location of choice for the president. Because each president was to be interviewed once, the interview was preferred to be in-person and approximately two hours in duration. A phone interview was used, if preferred by the president.

If the president agreed to participate, a consent form (see Appendix D for the president's consent form) was sent to the president via email. For all but one president, who communicated to the researcher directly via email, email communication was routed through the president's administrative assistant and consent was relayed to the researcher.

At the beginning of the interview, the participants' were asked for permission to record the interview. The interview began with identification of the president and the president was asked to confirm consent to participate in the study. The interviews were recorded and the researcher took observation notes. The recording used two devices, which included an audio digital recorder, iPhone and/or iPad. Interview recordings were transcribed by the researcher or sent out electronically for transcription.

**Member Check.** After the interview, each president was emailed a transcript of the interview and asked to review the content and clarify any areas as needed. At the time of the member check, the president was given a prompt asking him/her to reflect on anything they might want to add (see Appendix E for member check sample email).

### **Supporting Participant Interviews (Stakeholder)**

The student, faculty and administrator participants were contacted via email or phone (see Appendix F for supporting participant email contact sample). If the campus stakeholder agreed to participate, a consent form (see Appendix G for the supporting participant consent form) was sent to the stakeholder via email. Interviews were to occur in person or over the telephone. At the beginning of the interview, the stakeholders' were asked for consent to record the interview. The interview began with identification of the stakeholder. The stakeholder was asked to confirm that he/she consented to participate in the study. All stakeholders were asked the same qualitative and quantitative interview questions related to the

study's research questions about the president's social justice-oriented leadership practices, challenges and strategies (see Appendix H for supporting participant interview protocol).

## **Data Analysis Methods**

### **Document Review**

The document analysis provided background information about the presidents and their institutions and was used to determine eligibility for the study. This print or online information identified how the presidents were publicly known to be practicing social justice-oriented leadership based on the criterion reviewed in the data collection document review section. Other relevant background information reviewed included information on their institution and campus type (as determined by Carnegie Classification). After analysis of these materials, a list of presidents was constructed. Online resources, such as the presidents' CVs or biographies were reviewed for information on the participant's background, training, work experience and type of institutions of their employment. They were also reviewed for social justice-related participation in activities, such as organization membership, philanthropy, etc.

Once participants were selected, the participant's curriculum vita or university website information on the president was analyzed for career trajectory, leadership preparation, educational experience, organization membership, scholarly work, etc. Similarities and differences in presidents' backgrounds and places of employment were reviewed to provide a context for the study and understand their potential impact on the president's leadership and the study's findings. This information was used to create a profile of each president for the vignettes and/or an aggregate of the presidents as a whole.

### **President Pre-interview Questionnaire**

Survey data from the questionnaire was used to establish a brief life history related to

each president's family educational history and background. Data was included in the profile created for each president. Data from each president was also analyzed as an aggregate for comparison purposes among presidents and to profile the group.

### **President Interviews**

The transcript was then sent to the president for a member check. He/she was asked to review it for accuracy, make any revisions or final reflection and return it within two weeks to the researcher via email. Interview transcriptions were coded using Word and Excel tables. Coding categories were created for each research question and for those relevant to each research participant group (president or stakeholder). Coding categories were created for items such as definitions of social justice, identified social justice origins, values, practices, leadership principles, resistance/challenges and strategies. In order to triangulate findings, presidents' interview content was coded and compared to data from the stakeholders' interviews and literature findings. The themes from the challenge and strategy categories were identified and a hand count determined the themes with the highest frequency based on the number of presidents (as stated by presidents and stakeholders) who experienced the challenges or employed the strategies. The themes with the highest frequency were chosen for review in Chapter Five. Data analysis also provided the critical questions, dialog and implications for further educational research and leadership practice explored in Chapter Six.

### **Supporting Participant Interview**

The student, faculty and administrator interviews were transcribed and coded manually or via a Word table. Coding categories were created for each research question applied to the stakeholders. They included social justice-oriented practices, resistance/challenges and

strategies. Stakeholder interview content was used to augment the findings from the presidents' interview data.

### **Ethical Issues**

Integrity in the selection process was assured by adhering to the selection criteria. A list of presidents was compiled from the document review process and the first six to agree to participate were selected for participation. Communication about breadth and scope of the study and future uses of data, such as presentations, panels, book, etc. was articulated in all of the participant consent forms. Approval from human subjects was obtained. The data was secured in a password-protected computer. A main concern was identifying the presidents by name in the study and that of their institution(s). Pseudonyms for the presidents, participants and descriptions of their institution using Carnegie classifications were used if requested. To mitigate risk to supporting participants, the study did not identify the stakeholders by name.

### **Trustworthiness**

To ensure the trustworthiness of the qualitative study, provisions were made using Guba's (1981) criteria of credibility. To verify whether or not the study's findings represented a true picture of the phenomenon being studied, the measure of triangulation was used. Items used for the triangulation of findings included interviews of both presidents and stakeholders, observation notes taken during the interviews, member checks of the interview transcripts, the opportunity for revisions and reflection post-interview, expert review of the interview protocol and themes that emerged from the presidents, supporting interview participants and literature.

Due to the challenges of practicing leadership with a social justice orientation and in sharing incidents about injustice, reactivity needed to be addressed by the interviewer and protocol. The presidents and supporting participants could have reservations about information

shared that could shed a negative light on him/herself, their university or colleagues. One of the primary roles of the president is to protect the university. This responsibility could lead the president to potentially steer toward a public information type response.

Speaking about personal and educational challenges, possibly around themes of race, racial justice or other isms, discrimination, injustice and structural policies that reinforce privilege, can be controversial topics. Concern was anticipated about sharing their identity, the identity of their institution and in speaking freely, particularly for those still employed by their respective institution. Also expected was that the supporting participants might have some reservations about speaking freely about their president. Having a clearly outlined description of the study and its focus on the presidents' individual journeys and not on the institution was emphasized to help mitigate the presidents' concerns. Supporting participants were asked questions specific to the research questions and not related to the presidents' performance. All participants were given the option to be identified or not and to answer questions or not, in order to get as full participation as possible.

The president interview questions underwent an expert review and were piloted on three educational leaders, in order to revise the questions for clarity and trustworthiness to the research questions. The number of expert reviewers was odd to ensure that more than two people could confirm potential changes or interpretations.

The interviews followed the interview protocol to ensure consistency. Participants were given the option to abstain from answering any questions; participation was voluntary. All presidents' interviews were transcribed and the researcher compared the audio-recorded interview with the transcribed document. The researcher then sent the presidents the interview transcripts giving the president the opportunity to review their interview transcripts for

clarification/revision where needed and for any final reflections. The interview findings were triangulated to the research questions, responses from their respective institutions' stakeholders and themes and theoretical constructs found in the literature.

### **Summary**

By following the predetermined protocols, the study hoped to increase the depth of the participants' responses and the trustworthiness of the study. Following elements of Seidman's (2006) qualities of interviews, the study hoped to understand the context of the presidents' experiences through an understanding of their life stories (background), the detail of their experience about the theme of the study (social justice values and leadership) and through the opportunity to reflect on the interview. The study explored the meaning of the presidents' social justice values and their impact on his/her leadership principles and practice. Not only will the analyses of the data provide definitions of social justice, social justice practices and principles of leadership, the findings also provided an understanding of the president's coming to awareness about social justice. The resulting thematic content identified the presidents' social justice values and actions, their alignment to the principles of moral leadership and the challenges they faced in integrating social justice into the leadership of their universities. Analysis of the strategies they employed to be successful in acting on their social justice values in the leadership of their institutions could create dialog to further extend educational research's inquiry into social justice-oriented leadership practice, Moral Leadership and the preparation of 21<sup>st</sup> century leaders.



## CHAPTER FOUR

### Introduction

This study identifies the experiences that led to the development of African American college and university presidents' social justice values and practices. It highlights the presidents' definitions of social justice, social justice values and leadership practices, as well as identifies their social justice-related challenges and strategies. The study also investigates how the presidents' social justice values influence their leadership principles. These principles are compared to the four principles of Moral Leadership derived from social justice-related theories/frames that were described in Chapter Two. The findings emerged from questionnaires and interviews with the six college or university presidents and supporting data from 13 interviews with administrators, faculty and student stakeholder leaders from the presidents' current educational institution. The research questions are answered in the next two chapters. This chapter discusses the findings for the first three research questions noted below.

#### Chapter Research Questions (RQ)

1. How do African American university presidents who advocate for social justice define social justice?
2. What do the presidents identify as their social justice values?
  - a. What life experiences do they say led to these values?
  - b. How do the presidents' social justice values influence their beliefs about the principles of good leadership?
3. What do presidents and campus stakeholders say are the president's social justice-oriented leadership practices?

A vignette for each president is used to explore the origins of the presidents' social justice values and how these experiences influenced the presidents' definition of social justice and social justice practices, and principles. The vignettes are followed by an analysis of the presidents' definitions of social justice (RQ1), presidents' social justice values (RQ2), origins of the presidents' social justice values (RQ2a), influence of social justice on the principles of good leadership (RQ2b) and the presidents' social justice-oriented leadership practices (RQ 3). I will first review the participants and their current institutions.

### **Participants and Sites**

Six presidents agreed to participate in the study (see Table 7 for a description of the presidents). The participants range in experience from 8 to 34 years in the role of a university or college president. The presidents and their institutions are identified, with the exception of one president who is identified through the use of a pseudonym for himself and his current and former institutions. In total, 13 supporting participants were interviewed (see Table 8 for a list of stakeholder interviews by institution). The stakeholders are identified by stakeholder group (administrator, faculty or student) and not by name. Four were chairs of the faculty academic senate. Five were administrators who held positions in equity, inclusion and compliance or student services. Four were presidents or vice presidents in undergraduate student government. On average, two stakeholders were interviewed per institution.

The most recent Carnegie Classification was used to compare the institutions (CCIHE, 2016, March 30). Four are classified as "Publics" and two are "Private not-for-profits." The "student population" in the institutions ranged from 1,331 to 58,322 students. A description of each of the six institutions can be found in Table 9 (see Carnegie Classification and Site Information).

## **The Vignettes**

### **I. Dr. Michael V. Drake The Ohio State (OSU) Columbus, Ohio**

#### **Beliefs and Background**

Dr. Michael Drake stated that while he was growing up, he and his family “were utterly and completely aware on issues pertaining to social justice on a minute-by-minute basis.” Being an African American family in the era of Civil Rights in the 60s, “We faced issues of social inequality and social injustice on any given day, in any given moment. It was always an omnipresent part of our existence.” To counter injustice, he committed himself to steadily make movement. On a “moment-by-moment basis,” he chiseled away at injustice in whatever situation or opportunity he found in front of him. He stated that his social justice efforts were based on commitment and excellence and his leadership would be one that considered social justice in all decisions.

Dr. Drake’s parents were born in New Jersey and Georgia. They both attended Morgan State University, a Historically Black College in the 1930s. His mother held a bachelor degree and he said that she was very proud of this achievement. His father had a medical degree. When Dr. Drake was born, his father had just finished medical school and they were living on an intern and resident’s salary. As his father’s career developed, the family shifted to upper-middle income. Dr. Drake grew up in neighborhoods that were a combination of mostly African Americans and also mixed groups.

His parents were active on issues surrounding social justice in educational institutions and local and national organizations. They were members of the NAACP, had many politically active colleagues and friends and were active themselves. They were members of fraternities

and sororities. He said that these organizations had social justice components built into their ability to exist. Through these organizations, his parents were active throughout their lives.

Dr. Drake was born in New York City. When asked about his awareness of social justice he stated, “I can remember when I was 7 that it was something I was concerned about. And at (age) 10 and 12 and today.” He grew up during the Civil Rights era. In this time period in the U.S., he described desegregation as being a “front and center news item.” He said,

My first elementary school was largely segregated. When I moved to another elementary school, it was segregated in a de facto way... the neighborhoods were segregated... As a child, I sort of had a first-hand experience with the Civil Rights Movement in one way or another every day. Civil Rights fought for a system that treated people fairly and equally and gave them the full opportunity to succeed, that made sense to me when I was 7 or 8 years old... and still does today.

When asked about the source of his social justice values and if there was any particular event that stood out, Dr. Drake articulated a theme that would emerge with the other presidents’ interviews. It was not one experience, but a steady number of experiences. He said that there would have been a thousand of experiences, an endless stream of things. The reality of living in those days, he said, was that he was able to see in daily life, what a system that did not respect social justice or promote social justice was like. He said that injustice was a daily occurrence and a part of many aspects of his childhood. The more he thought of the circumstances, the more examples of experiences emerged and he stated,

I am loath to say that anyone stood out. It’s just that I remember in that era of Civil Rights and of segregation and that moving from that to a more integrated society exposed innumerable examples of social injustice and each one of those affected me in some way as they have in the half-century in between, so it’s a continual message.

He described the impact of these experiences to be a continual process that mirrored the Civil Rights evolution of the country.

President Drake defined social justice as circumstances or procedures that reflected what he called the Golden Rule. In this context, he said, people were treated with respect and dignity. They were allowed to fulfill their human potential through mutually respectful interactions and these circumstances and procedures would lead to a just social framework. President Drake described his social justice values to be respect, empathy, integrity and appreciation for the circumstances of others. These values, among others, he used as a guide for himself. He said, "I try to apply those on a continual basis, every day to all the decisions we make, whatever the circumstances." He also stated that social justice itself was a value that he "holds dear." He framed the purpose and reason for the application of his social justice values by stating, "It's the right thing to do." President Drake described the work that he did over the years to be in pursuit of this effort.

From the beginning (from the point of entry into education), all the way through there is a lack of opportunity for people of color and a lack of diversity... that's something since college that I felt was important to try and enhance opportunities for those who were underrepresented or had been disenfranchised to be able to gain entry and access to institutions of higher education. I worked in programs directed towards that for more than 40 years. I think that has always been an important thing... I was speaking with some faculty yesterday. I believe that mentoring and guidance are really important for people who are in higher education institutions to be able to succeed and to move forward. I try and do a little bit of those in some way all the time.

He further stated, "All of the things I've been talking about have been parts of moving from a culture of more discrimination and lack of opportunity to one of less discrimination and greater opportunity." He said that racism today is not as over specific as it would have been 50 to 60 years ago; the "vestiges of those things are what we seem to run into today." He stated that racism today is more subtle or unspoken or characterized as something else. The sources of resistance are ubiquitous and will need to be worked on continually.

When asked about the challenges of social justice-oriented leadership, Dr. Drake stated

that all of us, no matter what our circumstances, are in a competitive world.

I've always felt it was important for me to perform at a high level to be able to continue to move forward. I would say that to the extent that, at various times I might run into people who hold some of these views or whose practices would make it unusual to see someone like me, those views or practices had to be overcome.

He stated that each one of us had the task of trying to deal with what was in front of us and deciding how to move forward. He stated that he tried to do a good job...

Decision by decision, step by step, moment by moment, whatever the venue and then to be guided by values while doing that, and then to have those values based on one's life experiences and the things that are important. I think that's just the way we've kind of constructed our approach to leadership.

### **Value-based Leadership (also called Moral Leadership)**

Dr. Drake stated that he espoused Values-based Leadership where one uses his/her values as a guide. "If I have any mantra or reminder, it is to be clear about values and make values-based decisions. That helps keep one on a path that leads to places you'd like to be." He stressed the importance of knowing your own values and being able to be "explicit at least to yourself about them and (to) try and make sure that you're guided by your values." He also stated that it is important for leaders to be prepared and arrive at decisions with as much knowledge as possible. He used his values as guides on a continual basis for all decisions.

You take what you know, your knowledge, the data that you have and you use your values... to help you make the next decision. Do this on a continual basis over and over. I think that's a good way to approach being a leader.

Without the other key principles of commitment and excellence, he stated that one's outcomes would not reach their full potential. He stated that the cumulative total of one's decisions and actions together could "bend the arc of time towards social justice."

In describing his social justice leadership practices he stated that a key leadership action was to perform at a high level in all things. Dr. Drake emphasized the importance of being

driven by your own standards. “If this were something that came from the outside, I don’t know that I would be able to look back on it as being as successful on a series of endeavors.” He stated that social justice works better when you believe in it. He listened to others and was cognizant of students, faculty, staff and others. However, he personally had a very high standard and that was his main motivator. When mentoring students, or speaking to leadership groups, the first thing Dr. Drake said he did was encourage them to be clear about their values. He worked with them to understand that they had the privilege of deciding the values that mattered the most and that it was important to act based on those values.

Next, he advised one to be prepared for the enterprise he/she was entering. He considered passion and commitment to be positive and important virtues, but advised one to always have a basis in fact. “You want to have as much knowledge as you can before you allow passion to fuel moving forward.” He said that if one is value-driven, “If you’re energized by commitment and passion and if you’re based on fact and reality and you know the truth and can live with that, you’re in a position to make a positive difference.” He said, “If you short-circuit any one of those, if you cut short on values, knowledge and fact-base or are only intermittently committed, you do not achieve nearly as much.”

Social justice-oriented leadership practices described by a student stakeholder were focused on his outreach efforts. Dr. Drake partnered with secondary education for recruitment and college preparation activities. His efforts of inclusion and community engagement extended to secondary education institutions throughout the state. He made himself available and accessible to students and communities on and off campus. He personally did a statewide tour every summer on the institution’s “Buckeye Bus.” It visited manufacturing plants, farms and various communities, such as the Appalachian community in Ohio.

Dr. Drake prioritized mentoring youth. The goal of President Drake's community outreach was to foster access for diverse communities and to bring prospective students to the Ohio State campus. He made sure to tell students that Ohio State was their university and offered programs that exposed secondary education students to what college involved. An example is through the "A Day in the Life" program, which brought lower-income minority students to campus. The program aimed to foster an understanding of college life and introduce the university to students. The student stakeholder stated that the message was, "This is college. This is Ohio State." During campus visits, he showed visitors the university, personally talked with them and also connected them to Ohio State students, who could talk to them about the university experience.

The student stakeholder stated that Dr. Drake was public about his vision that a priority-level of engagement and equity needed to exist for all students on every single level at the university. The student stated,

If it (the focus of his social justice actions) had two bullet points it would be (that he) actually makes himself accessible to students, but also a vision. Because, especially in a university the size of Ohio State, that vision and priority-level of engagement and equity for students has to occur on every single level in this university, from president, to the staff, to enrollment services, to the advisors and the faculty that are working the colleges. It's my opinion that he had to have it in the vision and set that priority from the top, and he's very publicly done that.

She said that he did this to ensure that from the moment students arrived, students were equipped for success and taken care of at every point of contact. Dr. Drake was also described as a university president who meets with students. The student stakeholder stated, "Any average student that is not in a leadership position can also reach out to his office and actually meet with him."



According to the student stakeholder, Dr. Drake is a president who does not make things a mandate; he works to get others to believe in his vision (access, affordability and excellence) and wants to help in implementing it. She said that his style for implementing his vision is to both listen to others and...

Explain how (social change) benefits the university, assists the department in expanding social justice programs within specific colleges, expands graduation rates, success, or research initiatives.

To get buy in and get others to see the benefits of implementing social justice changes, he explains the benefits of his vision and how it will enhance programs.

### **Education, Career and Accomplishments**

Dr. Drake's initial career goal was not in education. He started his education at Sacramento City College. He was an alumnus of Stanford University (BA) and the University of California, San Francisco (MD, UCSF). He was an Ophthalmologist. From 1979-2005, he held both faculty and administrative positions at UCSF with growing levels of responsibility. Prior to becoming Chancellor of UCI, Dr. Drake also served as Vice President for Health Affairs for the University of California system, overseeing academic program policy at the system's 15 health sciences schools, located on seven campuses. At UCI, he also served as a professor of Ophthalmology and Education. He served on the faculty of the UC San Francisco School of Medicine. He was the Steven P. Shearing Professor of Ophthalmology and Senior Associate Dean. Although he was working in an administrative leadership position in health sciences at UC Irvine, he had not branched into broader university leadership. He was recruited to both the University of California Irvine (UCI) and The Ohio State leadership positions.

Dr. Drake knew the Chancellor position at UCI was open. It had been for months. "I hadn't thought about applying," and was surprised to be asked. His interest was piqued by the

social justice possibilities the position offered. He stated that from a young age, he had what he describes as a “kind of inborn interest” in social justice. “The opportunity to make decisions that effect institutions, and to bend those towards social justice, however in whatever small amounts on a regular basis...seemed attractive from the very beginning.” He had a variety of leadership positions during his time as a faculty member. The positions were not necessarily aimed at being a university president. However, in those leadership positions he described always being very excited when he was able to help further the broad causes of social justice. As he considered the chancellor position, what attracted him was...

I could really help to further excellence and help to further that inclusiveness, do what I could to make the university a better and more appreciated, more functioning university and try to help people from broader backgrounds be respected and successful in the university. That was very intriguing.

He had been working with other university leaders and chancellors on a regular basis, many who had become his friends and colleagues. The presidency was not something he had seriously considered. When he was contacted about the UC Irvine position, he went for the interview and listened to what the board and search committee were looking for in the candidates. He said the position seemed interesting; he felt that he could act on his social justice values in a larger capacity. He spoke to his wife and they decided to accept the offer.

“Things worked extraordinarily well for us (at UCI)...we were very pleased with how things turned out and how the campus was moving forward.” That record led to the call from The Ohio State, after he had been at UCI for about 8.5 years. He said that it was not clear to him that he would do another presidency. “It was a fascinating opportunity. It was a similar process of listening first, considering it, then saying, ‘Yeah, that’s a fascinating change and great opportunity. Great privilege.’”

Dr. Drake became the 15<sup>th</sup> president of The Ohio State on June 30, 2014, after serving as the fifth Chancellor of the University of California, Irvine (UCI) from 2005-2014 (OSU, 2016).

Aiding in the access and success of underrepresented groups, Dr. Drake's efforts toward social justice included the President's Affordability Grant program at The Ohio State, dedicating \$35 million over two years to need-based grants (OSU, 2016). In his last 5 years as Chancellor, UCI's undergraduate students from underrepresented minority groups increased by nearly 60%. In 2014, 60 percent of the entering frosh class was comprised of first-generation students, with 40 percent coming from lower-income families. "Both percentages were among the highest in the nation, and evidence of a steadfast commitment to diversity and inclusion" (OSU, 2016, February 13). Programs originating while at UCI include the Program In Medical Education for the Latino Community (PRIME-LC), a program at the University of California that increased opportunities for physicians that would serve underserved populations.

In 2004, Dr. Drake received the Association of American Medical Colleges' prestigious Nickens Award. The award was given to an individual who had made outstanding contributions to promoting justice in medical education and the health care of the American people (AAMC, 2016, February 27). He received numerous honors and awards for teaching, public service and research, including the Burbridge Award for Public Service, the Asbury Award (clinical science) and the Michael J. Hogan Award (laboratory science) (OSU, 2016, February 13). In 2014, he became the 27th person to be awarded the University of California Presidential Medal, in recognition of exemplary service to the university. The University of California President noted Dr. Drake's transformative legacy, including both physical and

academic enhancements to the campus, the first new public law school in California in 40 years, and a 90 percent increase in student applications (Lawhon, 2014).

Dr. Drake served on the board and membership committees of the Association of American Universities and as chair of the Council of Presidents of the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities. He also served in leadership roles for the University Innovation Alliance, American Talent Initiative and the National Collegiate Athletic Association.

## **II. President Jackie Jenkins-Scott Wheelock College Boston, Massachusetts**

### **Beliefs and Background**

“Honesty, church, and community, those were family; those were the values that we saw growing up.” As an African American and in the family that she grew up in, social justice President Jackie Jenkins-Scott stated,

It’s part of our DNA that you give back and you strive to make the world a better place. That’s just who I am. It’s what I was taught. We grew up in a religious family, (with) traditional, southern African-American family roots and so all of these (social justice) values were very much a part our life and our family’s lifestyle.

She grew up near her grandparents and great grandparents in a family that had been religious for many generations. She stated,

Throughout the generations we’re a religious family... Honesty, church, and community, those were family; those were the values that we saw growing up. It’s a traditional church, twice a week kind of thing. It was very much a part of who we were.

Like her parents, President Jenkins-Scott was born in Arkansas. She was a first-generation college student and the only one of her sibling group who graduated from college. Her mother had some college and her father had a junior high or early high school education. She grew up in a low-to-middle income environment in an African American community. Her parents’

activism was affiliated with the Local Chapter of the Urban League and the NAACP. She was a native of Flint, Michigan (Wheelock, 2016, March 20). She stated that her activism was through faith-based organizations. Her family background and the way she was raised were a part of her identity; an identity that she stated included a mission-driven focus on social justice work.

The president's definition of social justice was brief and to the point. "Social justice for me is fairness and equity and you strive for fairness and equity spread across all populations." She described a social justice leader as an advocate who clearly exhibits equity and fairness in their actions, including, "What they say, how they say it and what they do." When asked about her social justice values, she stated that she was a product of her environment and that social justice was all around her. Both her professional life and civic engagement were driven by her values, which she described as being similar to her definition of social justice. She stated,

I've always been an activist outside of work. I've always volunteered for nonprofits. I've been a very active person in the Democratic Party. Both my professional life and my civic engagement has been very much driven by my values and so when you look at the things I've volunteered for and the things I work on and things I give money to, all of those things are about equity and making this a better society for all.

An example of the integration of her values (equity and working toward a better society for all) and identity was due to the time frame in which she grew up. "I was a child of the '60s... what was going on in society influenced and impacted me and my career choices." She started college in 1967. She was in a large state school that would in current time be considered a medium-sized state school. Activism was very much a part of the day in the late 1960s and it was all around her. Being in college when Dr. King was killed had an impact. She was active in the Civil Rights Movement and the Vietnam War protests. These events were a part of the environment she lived as a young adult. She said that they helped shape her values for fairness

and equity and her social justice identity, which also included being an activist. She did not separate her social justice values from her personal identity or sense of purpose.

President Jenkins-Scott stated that if you incorporated social justice values into your life, into your lifestyle, then you saw it in your choices. Examples of her social justice choices were represented throughout her professional career. Before becoming a college president, President Jenkins-Scott said, “I spent about twenty-five years working in inner city, nonprofit organizations and so that's where the bulk of my career has been spent.” She chose to work in the nonprofit sector because of who she was and how she grew up. She also chose mission-driven, social justice-oriented and value-oriented institutions. She liked turnarounds, which she described as organizations that were being challenged to grow and evolve. She believed in Wheelock’s mission and its unique calling to improve families and children. She wanted to advance it and ensure that the college had a long and successful future. The college, she stated, had been at a standstill of sorts. “Standing still was not good. Standing still means you are moving backwards.” She saw the position as a great opportunity and challenge. The institution had a hundred year plus history and a strong mission and set of values. It was struggling with enrollment, finances, facilities, reputation and visibility. She stated that tackling these issues was a big challenge.

### **Collaborative Leadership**

According to President Jenkins-Scott, “Good leaders lead with a moral code.” Her principles were based on the premise that, “Good leaders exhibit the attributes from their values.” Her leadership principles and values were intertwined and not separate from one another. She considered herself to be a collaborative leader versus an authoritarian leader. She stated that she did not operate from a designated leadership philosophy. Her approach over

time was to learn, take the best that she could from experience and adapt it to her personality, her own personal style and the style of the institution. She stated, “A sign of a good leader is the ability to change. Sometimes the organization might need you to be a little more authoritarian and sometimes you've got to be able to step back and let things evolve.” She stated, “A good leader is able to assess the environment and climate and make adjustments without losing one’s core principles... from there you can adjust depending on the circumstances and needs of the institution.”

When asked about her principles of good leaderships, President Jenkins-Scott offered four “attributes” that she follows: “fairness, honesty, good communication skills, and data.” The first two attributes she stated, “I hold dearly, deeply.” Fairness is the most important attribute that she has “ tried to carry” and apply to her leadership, followed by honesty. Throughout her career, she tried to be viewed as a fair person. Fairness was as important to her as being a compassionate person. One of the things that she cherished and believed to be the reason she was well respected was being known to be fair to her employees. She stated, “At times, people have very complicated lives.” Fairness in responding to those circumstances was important. The second attribute she offered was honesty, which included transparency and courage. She made sure to communicate to those around her and be as transparent as possible. She credited these core attributes to be the source of what she called being viewed as a “straight shooter” who did not play games. Communication helped keep the campus community informed and it helped transmit values. She also constantly looked at data.

“Good leaders try to operate with good data and try to be good communicators.” She stated that the changing demographics toward a diverse world made it important for institutions to both do the right thing and change. She stated that the campus initiated, “a very detailed

branding study.” In admissions, she looked at who was applying and who was not. She looked at the composition of staff and faculty. She looked at what people said about the college and what they thought about its reputation and image. From that data, the campus developed their marketing branding strategy. A decision made was to focus on the local community. She said, “If we're going to be an institution that's in Boston, it should be serving Boston.” She said that she approached the marketing task by asking the campus to consider how to infuse a social justice message. She stated that in some ways,

Wheelock has a leg up over many institutions where social justice isn't part of the ethos of the institution. We actually say it is part of what makes Wheelock, Wheelock and we proudly talk about that... It's very good and it gives us a leg up, but it also means that we truly have to walk the talk and... it's harder.

Asking critical questions (such as “How do we truly be reflective of this mission and our values?”) helped the college embrace social justice in a higher capacity.

It was always a part of our values and who we are, so we're sort of wearing it on our sleeves as one of those things that helps to distinguish us, both in terms of how we recruit students ... faculty and staff, as well and what we do as an institution... We want people who believe in the mission, who are devoted to the mission.

Once the campus changed its marketing approach, she said, the campus shifted from only twelve percent of the college’s students coming from Boston to now its growth to thirty percent of the population. President Jenkins-Scott believed that if you were not using data to make decisions, you were doing so at your own peril. She added, “I think good leaders are courageous; they have to be in order to make tough decisions and tough calls.” “When these... four core principles are there, you can adjust depending on the circumstances and needs of the institution.”

President Jenkins-Scott believed that social justice leadership practices needed to clearly exhibit integrated actions. “People look at your actions, they look at what you do, what



kind of organizations you support and are you engaged with them?” Even though she came to academia, she felt that it was important to continue her activism in the community for three reasons. She believed that it was who she was and what she believed. It sustained her energy and spirits. It was also part of the mission of the institution to be inclusive of community.

Being active on and off campus is exhausting because you don't get away from all the responsibilities of being a college president: the donors, the faculty, the staff, the internal work, recruitment and students and you're still participating in outside organizations that you believe are important and sometimes that gets to be a strain.

Being simultaneously active personally and professionally could be a challenge, but it was part of her values and the mission of the institution.

Less so now that she is in her 12th year as president, but certainly in the beginning, President Jenkins-Scott experienced microaggressions. She said, “It was subtle stuff that came with being the first African-American president of a white institution.” Although she felt the support of groups, such as the college’s alumni who were very generous in welcoming her, she stated that there were subtleties and microaggressions.

I had a double whammy because I'm not an academic. I didn't come from the academy; so some of the microaggressions could've been for that or some could be for race. Nonetheless, they happened, questions such as what does she know about creating sustained academic programs?

She believed that the microaggressions were often unintentional comments or actions that slipped out about expectations or lack of expectations people had about her. It was hard to determine if the comments’ intentions were about her as a person or because she was African American. The challenges presented by the undercurrents of discrimination and the questioning of her qualifications was a layer of resistance that she had to navigate. She said that she sustained herself “by being a role model and a good example.”

On the topic of student movements, the president stated that in the last two years the country had seen a lot of activism on campuses across the country and Wheelock had not been immune to that phenomena. Its students were raising their issues too and Wheelock had taken the position of wanting to engage in conversation with students. Wheelock held quite a few town hall meetings and conversations. The campus truly wanted to dialog with the hope that it was going to make it a better and stronger institution. President Jenkins-Scott acknowledged students' leadership role in transformation. "Students are terrific; they are examples for us adults on how to have some of these tough conversations and have them in a mature and open way." She stated that navigating the current climate issues impacting college campuses nationwide had not been easy, but it was a part of the nature of where we now were as a society. "I think it's good for the country. I think it's good for the students that they're engaged and raising issues." Taking leads from the students was critical. She stated, "The students know the kind of conversation and dialog they want to have."

President Jenkins-Scott stated that what was happening now was a very different world than the late 1960s due to the advent of social media. She said that they did not even have copy machines; "it is a whole new world." The human spirit was one that sought to raise the bar for humanity and each generation would have its own way of improving.

The hope is that we are learning from the past. The past generations have laid the foundation and the groundwork for us to use the techniques, the materials and the advances that have been made in society to get us a little bit closer to having a more just, fair and equal society.

She admired where we are today. She was excited to see more and more reflection or at the very least students and others wanting to learn about what happened in previous generations. "Whether it's Beyoncé and the Black Panthers or a deeper understanding of what Dr. King

really meant by his beloved community,” she is seeing more engagement and she thought that it was good.

President Jenkins-Scott viewed information as a tool that could either help build relationships or tear them down. Being a strong communicator was important. Information sharing, use of data and communication were the foundation for conversation and dialog. Part of being a good administrator, she said, was getting the right information, in the right amount and out at the right time. Social media’s real-time and sound bites did not articulate the full picture of events or conversations, which added a challenge to communication. Being transparent and the nature of what, how, and when leaders communicate helped people determine whether or not to trust the leader, have confidence in her and believe in and follow the leader’s vision.

Interviews with two stakeholders made up of a faculty member and an administrator found the following practices President Jenkins-Scott employed related to social justice. She partnered with the city to run the Mattapan Community Center. It was in one of the poorest areas of the city and adjacent to a public school. Due to very limited resources,

The mayor was going to close the community center. Jackie took on managing that center so that that community would not lose that ... Not only not lose that resource, but build upon what it already had looking at the assets (of)... the community... Out of that, we've created...the Mattahunt community health center where over two hundred people... who had no access before, can now get mental health services.

Wheelock’s social justice-related values of maintaining a strong connection to the community and improving the circumstances of families and children led to the partnership. Students’ practicums, internships and volunteerism and staff and administrators’ volunteerism at the community center addressed needs in the local community and provided opportunities for the university community to act on its mission.

The president was described as “relentless” in ensuring that Wheelock had hiring processes that were inclusive of people of color and first generation college graduates. People who were underrepresented in higher education were among the candidates that the campus intently considered. The campus worked to ensure it was inclusive of these populations when it considered where to advertise and how it recruited for positions. The president said that she made sure that admissions’ policies included recruiting from the college’s own neighborhood and the urban areas in Massachusetts. It made an impact. The faculty stakeholder stated that the population of students of color from the president’s arrival to the present had doubled. The administrator stakeholder stated that President Jenkins-Scott “lent her clout” as president to prioritize the community needs of students of color and built up the campus’ cultural resource centers. In speaking about the president, the administrator stakeholder gave an example of the president using her “clout.”

She began to diversify the student body... She has lent her leadership to make sure that student groups, affinity groups, are supported, created and that they grow. Since she came to campus, we have La Herencia Latina, the affinity group that works with Latina students and those leaders. We have the Black Student Union. ‘We Speak Culture,’ which is sort of our ALANA (African American Latino Asian Native American Association) group, has grown on campus.

Wheelock is a small campus and the president made sure that the resource centers had signature space that was aboveground and not underground. She set it as a campus priority to make diverse students feel welcomed.

President Scott-Jenkins indicated that she worked hard to increase all forms of diversity on campus, including in the student body. That change and consequent increase in representation had a positive influence in also helping the campus think about other areas, such as the curriculum and available services. She said that she constantly asked others to consider, “Have we done enough?” Her questions helped the campus shift to consider how its services

prepared diverse students for the professions they were pursuing and how to continue to consider next steps and needs. The campus' branding study re-focused the campus' marketing strategy. They embraced their values for social justice and "wore it on their sleeves" to distinguish themselves from other institutions. This focus re-elevated their identity and was used to recruit people who believed in their mission.

The president pushed when she felt that there was injustice. She was supportive of faculty initiatives and agendas. However, if she felt that faculty opposition was due to resistance to change, she said that she pushed against it. To reduce the friction of faculty resistant to feedback and training on academic freedom and cultural sensitivity, she stated

We've tried to create (a) reduction of silos by forcing more collaboration. For example we created a program called International Service Learning and so you get two faculty leaders from two different departments to lead a group (for study in a another location such as Guatemala)... you get someone from education and from social work leading a group to Northern Ireland. I think you try to find... more cross-disciplinary work groups...when looking to create new programs; you try to make it cross disciplinary if you can... You look for every opportunity to reduce silos.

Setting learning outcomes for an international learning experience across two disciplines helped faculty to identify cultural barriers and strengths and consider another discipline's approaches to societal issues. This indirect approach helped foster development and reflection opportunities for students and faculty. She also took a direct approach when needed. She responded to accusations of cultural insensitivity and academic freedom by tracking them down and putting the issues on the table for discussion.

### **Education, Career and Accomplishments**

President Jenkins-Scott received her B.S. degree from Eastern Michigan University, a Masters of Social Work from Boston University School of Social Work (Wheelock, 2016, March 20). She completed a Post Graduate Research Fellowship at Radcliffe College. She

received Honorary Doctorate Degrees from Wheelock College, Suffolk University, Northeastern University, Bentley University, Mount Ida College and the University of Massachusetts, Boston.

Before her arrival to Wheelock, President Jenkins-Scott served as president and CEO of the Dimock Community Health Center in Roxbury, Massachusetts (Wheelock, 2016, March 19). Prior to that position, she held several positions with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Departments of Public and Mental Health. She served on the Board of Directors of Tufts Health Plan and the Schott Foundation.

She stated that having run a health and human service agency for a long time, she did not know what kind of institution would be next. She did know it would be mission-driven. Higher education was compatible and consistent with her values of transforming lives and education was something that she believed in. She stated that she felt fortunate that the position at Wheelock College was open and that she had the opportunity to interview.

On July 1, 2004, Jackie Jenkins-Scott became the thirteenth President of Wheelock College in Boston, Massachusetts. She was the college's first African American president. She announced her retirement, which is scheduled at the end of the academic year in 2016.

President Jenkins-Scott received the INSIGHT Into Diversity magazine's Giving Back Award for Presidents and Chancellors (Wheelock, 2016, February 11). It is the only national award that honors presidents and chancellors for their personal commitment to diversity and inclusion by giving back to their campus and community. President Jenkins-Scott received numerous awards and citations including being honored with the Boston Business Journal's 2014 Women of Influence Award and the 2010 Color Magazine Change Agent Award (Wheelock, 2016, March 19). She was a recipient of the Associated Industries of

Massachusetts Legacy of Leadership Award and the Pinnacle Lifetime Achievement Award from the Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce. In 2004, Jenkins-Scott received the Boston University Distinguished Alumni Award.

In her tenure at Wheelock College, President Jenkins-Scott implemented initiatives to increase undergraduate enrollment (Wheelock, 2016, March 19). Enrollment nearly doubled, co-curricular programs significantly expanded and financial aid resources increased. The campus' commitment to diversity and student retention led to the establishment of the Office of Student Success and Institutional Diversity. The campus saw a reorganization of the College's professional departments and the establishment of a new Center for Scholarship and Research for faculty. The new Aspire Institute, a cross-disciplinary, cross-sector collaboration which aims to solve society's toughest problems, including equity and access in education (Wheelock, 2016, April 29), resulted in significant increases in resources and new program opportunities in Massachusetts. At Dimock Community Health Center in Roxbury, Massachusetts, President Jenkins-Scott provided services to the most vulnerable populations (Wheelock, 2016, March 19). Dimock Community Health Center is one of Boston's largest community-based health and human service agencies. It is now a national model for integrated comprehensive health and human services.

**III. Dr. Horace Mitchell**  
**California State University Bakersfield (CSUB)**  
**Bakersfield, California**

**Beliefs and Background**

“It was the beginning of the modern Civil Rights Movement, in the mid-50s of Dr. King and Rosa Parks and all of that,” when Dr. Horace Mitchell began to become aware of injustice. “I was only about 10 or 11 years old at the time, but, nonetheless, it became clear that there was injustice happening.” His thought, even at that age, was that he wanted to do something to make that situation better than what he understood it to be. Dr. Mitchell also realized that “caring” about people would need to come for all people, “not just the people around you or your immediate circle.” He stated that his awareness that we were “all in this together,” caused him to pay close attention to the philosophies and values of leaders, such as Dr. King and Mahatma Gandhi. A sense of mission or purpose of his life work was starting to develop that would direct the treatment of one another toward justice and the improvement of the social context.

Dr. Mitchell’s parents were born in Mississippi and Tennessee. They both received a high school education. He was born in Mississippi and was the only one of his siblings to earn a college degree. His family lived in a lower income area, in a mostly African American environment. Dr. Mitchell described his parents’ level of activism on issues surrounding social justice to be moderate with their activism conducted via local institutions. Growing up, Dr. Mitchell himself had a high level of awareness surrounding issues of social justice and identified himself to have been moderately active in educational, local and national institutions.

President Mitchell described a definition of social justice that included access as a right. Social justice was not something that you had to “do your time for and work for,” it was a



right. “Everyone in a society, in a group or in a family have access to all of the amenities or qualities of life...that everyone else has. Access and quality of life is a right...” He went on to state that social justice was treating people respectfully, at all times and in all ways, and ensuring sure that everybody had equal access to opportunities. He described social justice-oriented leadership as people who take the time to pay attention to areas of inequality and work to change that situation.

President Mitchell’s social justice values centered on care for people from all backgrounds. With this care came the responsibility to both understand and improve their circumstances. His values included the element of taking action. He stated, the importance of “Caring about people from all backgrounds, trying to make their situations better, paying attention to differential outcomes or differential opportunities and acting on those.”

The value of caring for the situation of others came up more fully after graduate school when he joined the national organization, Association of Black Psychologists. The main values of African American Psychology was to understand situations well enough so that their research could inform strategies for changing the circumstances that people were experiencing. This membership and the organization’s emphasis on improving circumstances had a strong impact on his social justice values.

### **“Value of Caring”**

Dr. Mitchell stated that you get into a leadership role not because you want the title or the perks that come with it. Instead, you did so because you wanted to be in a position to serve others. When asked about his principles of leadership, he stated that he had five leadership principles that he followed.

First, care about everybody. “If you care about people--everybody, then you will pay attention to any differential outcomes or differential opportunities. You'll try to act on those to make sure that everybody has access to those things.”

Second, take pride in everything that you do; commit to excellence. Particularly with social justice, commitment to excellence was both in one's own behavior and an expectation of excellence from others.

Third, pay attention to what is going on around you. This, he said, had a lot of parts that included how important it was to listen well, scan the environment and get good feedback. As a leader, “You have to have your own sense of where things are, as opposed to sitting in your office and getting reports back from individuals in a small circle who do not represent the whole group.” Leaders must pay attention to what was going on around them.

Fourth, do your homework. Engage in strategic thinking, strategic planning and strategic action. Understand the environment and the circumstances well enough that you have clear goals around social justice and related academic values. It must be clear what it is that one needs to do to be true to these values.

Fifth, is one, he said, was in fact very simple: do the right thing. For Dr. Mitchell this was not doing the easy thing or the politically correct thing. It was doing what was right for the circumstances and people to ensure that everybody had equal access to opportunities.

In describing Dr. Mitchell’s social justice leadership practices, the interviews with both Dr. Mitchell and the three campus stakeholders shared the following examples. The first was to work on transformation from whatever position you held. California State University Bakersfield’s three campus stakeholders shared that they could clearly see that Dr. Mitchell believed that each person had some type of power to change unjust dynamics and a duty to

change the world he/she lived in. People may not have recognized this role or understood it early on, but he mentored others so they could work from whatever position they held to transform society.

Changing the organizational culture and creating joint vision was the action Dr. Mitchell took to create the environment conducive for social justice-oriented leadership practice. In a previous position at the University of California, Berkeley (UCB), while implementing a new financial system, the existing administrative culture was long established. This made it difficult to effect change. Dr. Mitchell focused on the university's values for venturing into new areas of innovation, best practice and the preparation and training necessary to optimize the success of the effort. Learning from this experience at UCB, when he began his presidency at CSUB, he started with building a culture of collaboration and drafting a campus vision statement that recognized the importance of social justice. Working with campus stakeholders, the vision statement was the first task they all did together. He expected resistance and emphasized social justice values as being the right thing for the campus to do. He involved the provost council, student government and different stakeholder groups to develop a vision that included consistent and defined social justice values and a culture that could promote them.

Believing that getting the right leadership influenced organizational culture, when filling positions he made sure that the candidates understood the campus' values and were prepared to help work in their direction. He noted that, "If you get people into leadership roles who have the right values... then you can expect that they will do the right thing." It did not mean they would do exactly what he wanted, but it meant that they would, "consider the issues in front of them and make decisions that represent...social justice, no matter what the area is

on campus.” Getting people with social justice values made it, he said, “Easier to get things done, as opposed to having to put out fires all over the place.” As examples of infusing social justice into different areas, he offered questions to consider: How did IT (instructional technology) support the mission of a university that has social justice values; or how did institutional research look at data to inform what was happening with students? Excellence in higher education, according to Dr. Mitchell, “requires diverse leadership, in personnel (and faculty), not just in the institution’s students.” The integrity of the hiring process was always “top drawer” and the campus was able to get some outstanding people who were very student-centered.

Interviews with three stakeholders in leadership positions at Cal State Bakersfield yielded a description of the practices that Dr. Mitchell employed related to social justice. Some of the leadership practices that they offered about Dr. Mitchell were consistent with those discussed by Dr. Mitchell himself. A faculty member stated that Dr. Mitchell “Walks the walk and talks the talk.” She said that he had both the message and the actions together. He was consistent in articulating the social justice-related vision for the campus in terms of diversity, inclusion and respect for others. Not only did he personally take action in their pursuit, he involved others in this effort. He knew the expertise of the faculty and staff and trusted them to act. When responding to campus situations, Dr. Mitchell was always willing to listen to their opinions, needs, suggestions and plans.

Dr. Mitchell was deliberate in the hiring of campus leadership; he took care to include diversity in his cabinet. He said,

I wasn't doing social engineering to make sure I got that in quite that way, but it's the overall orientation toward what it is that we're wanting to accomplish that leads to making sure that we're looking at candidates of color throughout the university and the faculty, et cetera.

He was very strategic in the way he selected leaders for different positions on campus and how those leaders then worked to transform the culture within their particular area. He was also very proud of the people that he groomed for leadership positions on and off campus. One, Dr. Soraya M. Coley, became a President at Cal Poly Pomona.

He was mindful about selecting people with the best skills and knowledge for leadership positions. Depending on the needs of the issue, a student stakeholder stated that Dr. Mitchell consulted with his cabinet members and included in the communication, the chair of the Academic Senate, the student government president and other members of the university so that they could communicate back to their respective groups. If there were significant questions, or concerns, the student said that Dr. Mitchell made the time to meet with the departments, community members and/or leaders and students to personally engage in conversation. Dr. Mitchell created an atmosphere in which everyone was part of the discussion and everyone's voice was heard within meetings.

Dr. Mitchell collaborated with faculty and was a guest lecturer on topics in which he wanted to further engage and enlarge student learning. When asked, he participated as a guest lecturer in classes such as women and gender studies. If he had a certain topic he wanted to discuss, he communicated with the faculty and asked about presenting. The student stakeholder stated that it was clear to students that Dr. Mitchell liked teaching on topics of social justice. Dr. Mitchell also worked with Student Affairs, the Student Union leadership and the Campus Programming office to initiate or participate in social justice related events and often engaged formally and informally in dialog with students and staff.

According to the administrator stakeholder, Dr. Mitchell did not favor one aspect of social justice over another. He attended student events about a variety of social justice topics.

He committed time to be present and shared his input at campus events. The campus recently had a “brown bag” discussion for African American Black History Month. When he was asked to participate and what his topic would be, he asked for time to seriously consider it. The administrator stated, "When he finally did pick a topic, he wanted to talk about the legacy of Martin Luther King and what that means to leadership." He talked about what each of us can do to transform the society in which we live.

Among his many efforts on behalf of social justice, Dr. Mitchell’s key social justice practices included his outreach to faith-based organizations and his work with area schools and community colleges to increase the representation of first-generation college students in higher education (Rogers, 2006). A faculty member stated that Dr. Mitchell viewed community outreach to be the personal responsibility of leaders and critical to attaining diversity. He joined a collaboration of other education leaders and did outreach to increase representation of communities who were underrepresented on college campuses, such as African American males. She stated further the effectiveness of Dr. Mitchell’s storytelling,

When he gives commencement addresses or talks to the students at different points, he always tells his own story: that he never thought that when he went to the university he would be the college president. He uses his own story as a model to say..., “Look what you can achieve...”

The faculty stakeholder stated that Dr. Mitchell visited churches in an outreach effort called “Super Sunday.” She stated that Dr. Mitchell frequently shares in his community outreach that, “Cal State is here to serve the community; we are a partnership with the community.” His speeches, she stated, always include a value orientation. She said he placed a strong emphasis on family and on social justice. He told communities of color that they could achieve and that the university was there to help them achieve their dreams.

## **Education, Career and Accomplishments**

Dr. Mitchell made the decision to attend Washington University in St. Louis while he was in high school. He had a sense that it was a great university and that it was where he should be. Initially, his interest was in pre-med and for the first few years he was enrolled in all science and math courses. After taking some courses in Psychology, he changed his major. He said that it became clear that if he wanted to do something “meaningful” in Psychology, he would need an advanced degree. He received his degree in Psychology (BA) and continued on at Washington University in pursuit of a master’s degree in Counseling.

As a graduate student, he was hired into his first professional position as the Assistant Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences. He was 23 years old. The position came with an agreement that they would cover his fees for the master's degree program. He stated that this appointment was phenomenal because he had come to higher education from a low-income family. In his first Sociology course, his community in St. Louis was defined as a “ghetto.” He stated that he, “never saw it as that; it was our neighborhood.” His worry had been how he was going to pay for graduate school. He began to think about a new possibility, that of becoming a university professor. He enrolled in the Counseling Psychology, Ph.D. program at Washington University. He continued as the Assistant Dean of Arts & Sciences and they continued to pay his fees. He did not incur student loans. When he finished his doctorate, he was interested in a faculty position. He said,

My interests were in Psychology as the primary field, but in addition to that I was interested in what was called, at that time, Minority Mental Health. I was interested in making sure that I could have a role in helping psychologists in training become well trained enough and culturally competent to work with individuals who were not White because all the programs geared students to work with White populations and that wasn't my sense of it.

Washington University offered him a position with a joint appointment in Black Studies, and Counseling Psychology. He said, "It's like a no brainer. (I) looked at other positions around the country as possibilities, but that was exactly what I wanted. They knew what I wanted and so they put that together." One of the first courses he taught as a new Assistant Professor was a seminar in counseling minority students. He said it was centered on helping non-persons of color learn how to work therapeutically with African Americans. This had been the topic of his dissertation.

His next positions at Washington State were an Assistant Professor of Education and Black Studies and eventually, Chair of the Black Studies Program. Dr. Mitchell was on the faculty for five years at Washington University when he and his wife started talking about moving to California. He had spent two summers, while still at Washington University, as a visiting Assistant Professor at the University of California, Irvine. After his wife finished her second masters' degree in 1978, they decided to move to California.

Dr. Mitchell was hired to work at UCI. He said that he had two roles, part-time professor in Social Ecology and special assistant to the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs. In the course of his career at UCI, he was assigned to work with the Dean of the medical school because they were having problems in their Student Affairs' organization.

I went over, spent some time with the Dean and with the Student Affairs organization and in final analysis I wrote up some recommendations to the Vice Chancellor and to the Dean about how Student Affairs ought to be organized, staffed and funded.

Dr. Mitchell was asked to join the medical school on an interim basis while they conducted a search. He became the acting Assistant Dean of the medical school for Student and Curricular Affairs. He said that Curricular Affairs was not generally a part of that title, but that there were a lot of issues that had to be dealt with from a Student



Affairs standpoint. Eventually, UCI proceeded with a search for the position and he was hired into the permanent role. He said that during that time, a lot of social justice issues came up because they had one of the highest percentages of students of color in the medical school. “There were issues about whether or not the students of color were getting the best shot in all of the circumstances of basic Science labs and other kinds of things for clinical practice and things like that.”

While at the University of California, Irvine, Dr. Mitchell had been involved in what he said was a “tricky” situation that took him a long time to sort through. The outcome would also play a key role in establishing his leadership reputation and trajectory to the presidency. At one point, he was caught in the crossfire between two supervising administrators. They were both in disfavor for political reasons. When the position of Vice Chancellor for Students Affairs became open, the position to which he had been the special assistant, Dr. Mitchell figured that his chances of being selected were slim. He decided to become a candidate anyway. When he was selected for the Vice Chancellor position, Dr. Mitchell thought it was because he always tried to do excellent work. He was loyal to his supervisors and maintained his own personal integrity. If others might have done things that went off from what he thought ought to be done, he made the decision not to go in that direction. He was able to show that he was not dependent on these other two people and that they did not influence his actions. Had his actions and integrity been influenced, Dr. Mitchell probably would not have been the kind of person that the chancellor might have wanted in this particular role. He eventually became the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs and Campus Life and Associate Professor of Psychiatry and Human Behavior at the University of California, Irvine (UCI). He said that the “tricky”

situation worked out and that the Vice Chancellor role was critical in his career and trajectory toward the presidency.

Being the first non-white person to be appointed as a vice chancellor at the University of California, Irvine (UCI), he was able to put in place programs that highlighted the experiences, backgrounds, perspectives and worldviews of UCI's diverse students. One program was a symposium, which highlighted for the campus and the broader community the important values and legacy of Dr. King in the areas of social justice, human and civil rights. Mrs. Coretta Scott King, Yolanda King, Dexter King, Martin Luther King III, three of Dr. and Mrs. King's four children were speakers. The symposium continues at UCI, actively managed by the current Vice Chancellor for the Student Affairs, who was the first person that Dr. Mitchell hired. Dr. Thomas Parham, who in Dr. Mitchell's mind, is an outstanding person with the right kinds of values about inclusion and working with students and communities.

While at UCI, he met Chang-Lin Tien, who would go on to serve as the Chancellor of the University of California, Berkeley (UCB). When a vacancy came up at UCB, Chancellor Tien had people inquire after Dr. Mitchell. Initially, Dr. Mitchell had reservations about going to Berkeley. He was a Psychologist. As head of Student Affairs, he had been working largely the areas of student and human development. UCI was 13 years old when Dr. Mitchell had arrived there. Everything was new and he worked in areas that were beyond the usual Student Affairs' Vice Chancellor role. The UCB position was going to be about the business side of the enterprise, accounting and financing, payroll, police, parking and public service and community relations. Chancellor Tien argued that Dr. Mitchell was uniquely qualified because he understood the enterprise.

Dr. Mitchell wanted to be somewhere where he could make a difference and it was unclear how he could enhance an institution that was already academically strong. Chancellor Tien shared his concern that UCB did not have the administrative capacity to serve its academic mission. Chancellor Tien wanted him to consider the position and the Chancellor put Dr. Mitchell's name in the candidate pool. Dr. Mitchell and his wife were invited to campus. They went to visit and he was surprised to find the cabinet in recruitment mode. At the end of the day, Dr. Mitchell was offered the position. He went on to serve as UCB's Vice Chancellor, Business and Administrative Services and as an affiliated professor, African American Studies. Due to the rise of the IT era, a key task was changing the organizational culture to be open to new systems and training. It took him longer than anticipated to change the organizational culture at UCB, partly due to its being grounded in a 130-year history. The lesson he learned about collaboration and the importance of working together to create a shared vision would play a key role in how he approached his next position.

Dr. Mitchell became the fourth President of California State University, Bakersfield in 2004, after thirty-six years of experience in higher education (CSUB, 2016, March 19).

Upon leaving UC Berkeley, the President of the University of California system bestowed upon Dr. Mitchell one of the campus' highest honors. He was awarded the Berkeley Citation and the title Vice Chancellor-Business Affairs, Emeritus. Dr. Mitchell was named the recipient of the "Robert C. Maxson President of the Year Award" in 2006, by the California State Student Association, which represented over 400,000 CSU students. He received the "Distinguished Alumnus Award" from Washington University in 2008, "President's Award" from the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators Region VI in 2010 and Presidential Award from 100 Black Men of Orange County, Inc. He has been recognized

widely for his many years of community service by civic, non-profit, governmental, educational, and professional organizations.

His memberships have included the American Council on Education, Association of Black Psychologists, National Forum for Black Public Administrators, and the Association for Multicultural Counseling and Development among many others.

His research focused on understanding situations well enough to inform strategies for changing people's circumstances and included critical analysis of standardized testing, Black families and "psychological openness" of White counselors and Black clients. He continues to teach and maintains his California license for private practice as a Psychologist.

#### **IV. Dr. Steven Phillips <sup>1</sup> State Public University (SPU)**

##### **Beliefs and Background**

"Everybody deserves to be treated with civility and mutual respect. That is what I always say;" these words have guided Dr. Phillips and his efforts to create an inclusive and welcoming environment. Ethics powered Dr. Phillips' values, leadership and fundamental belief to do the right thing. His social justice values were influenced by his religious beliefs. For Dr. Phillips, this involved calling out injustice. He said that with some people racism and resistance is intentional in what they do. For others, they are often not aware of the impact of their beliefs or actions. Racism he said, "is the sum of who they are and it is in their DNA." You just have to work with them and continue to point things out. Dr. Phillips said that he did not believe in "sweeping things under the rug." He brought issues to the surface and committed to dialog. His goal was to create an inclusive environment for all people. He quoted Dr. King,

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<sup>1</sup> A pseudonym was used for this president and site.

who once said, “An injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.” He believed that if one let a little bit of injustice or racism go unaddressed, “I’m not doing, we’re not doing (our job).” Not only was one doing the individual a disservice, one was also compromising what Civil Rights’ leaders fought so hard for through the sacrifice of their blood, sweat, tears, and even their lives. To honor their sacrifice, he stated that it was one’s responsibility to recognize, acknowledge, speak up and act on issues of injustice.

Having grown up in Alabama, where the march to Selma came through his county, he heard about his mother and father’s experiences. His parents shared their stories, “About fighting and dealing with Civil Rights’ battles as they grew in the South.” He was sheltered from a lot of those battles, but not from experiencing racism and injustice. Dr. Phillips was not a stranger to being called the N-word. He dealt with being treated as a second-class citizen and not being included. He experienced the lack of respect for diversity, “the whole gamut.” Racism, however, did not impact his regard for others.

Dr. Phillips’ social justice values grew over a period of time. He said, “They instilled from all of the positions in which I have served.” The responsibilities of the positions he held coming up the ranks and his own positive and negative experiences as a person of color all had an impact on the creation of his social justice values. Being the person responsible for human resource-type programs to diversify positions and the curriculum influenced the formation of his personal and professional social justice values, definition of social justice and responsibility to act on their behalf.

His parents’ stories about growing up in the South during the Civil Rights’ era and his own experiences growing up in the South also influenced his social justice awareness, values and leadership beliefs. His definition of social justice included “the whole nine yards” in terms

of diversity and inclusion at all levels. Another influence on his values was being a person of color. He stated,

I think it plays a great part in terms of my value and my support for social justice. As a person of color, I've had various experiences, some of them negative and some are positive. I have firsthand experience so I feel that I'm able to articulate, as well as support and implement (social justice efforts) because of who I am and because of the experiences.

Social justice, he added, was not restricted to issues of race, but also included a wide range of groups and issues. Dr. Phillips' social justice values did not differentiate from his definition of social justice and its goals of diversity and inclusion. To these goals, he added his values of fairness and openness and making sure that people were treated with dignity and respect. Commitment to these values was paramount, as was integrity. He anchored his value of integrity together with his spirituality. He understood himself and his emotions and decided not to hold hatred inwardly. Instead, he focused discussion and actions on doing the right thing.

### **Servant Leadership**

Dr. Phillips referred to himself as a Servant Leader (Phillips, 2015) and a "man of the people." The presidency, as he saw it, was to serve others. He also linked this responsibility to his spiritual values of caring for others. He made sure to give direct access of his time and person to the various university constituencies, comprised of students, faculty, staff, parents, community members, etc. Principles of openness, transparency, willingness to listen, compromise, communication and consensus building guided his leadership. He did not expect others to do things he would not do himself; he led by example.

Part of his care of others was to treat everybody the same. Even when people did not want to respect him due to his race and did not want him "in that space, in that environment, maybe not even in this position – that's their problem. It's not mine." He was comfortable in

his identity and his role as president and in academic and professional environments. Racism, he stated, said a whole lot about the other person. He did not internalize it. He knew what it was, but it was not going to stop him from the responsibility he held to create an inclusive and respectful environment. "I have a job to do. I love people. All people. And I don't hold certain things. I'm a very spiritual person. I don't hold hatred in." When racism surfaced from any stakeholder, students, trustees, or faculty, he did not have a problem dealing with them directly. "I'm just going to say it, move on and turn the page. I play a part in creating and setting the environment and setting the tone for the institution. I try to be comfortable wherever I go." For Dr. Phillips, comfortable also meant speaking out against injustice and ensuring inclusion and respect of others and regard for everyone's well being. Dr. Phillips believed in leading by example. He did not expect anyone to do things that he did not do. Honesty and integrity were central in his leadership. He always told people, "If you make a mistake, say it and move on." Taking responsibility for one's actions was a critical part of maintaining integrity. Dr. Phillips acknowledged his mistakes and kept the momentum moving forward. He focused on facts, told the truth and got the job done. He described himself as a "wholesome person" who cared about people, the work environment and its relationships.

His care and concern for people encompassed their professional and personal experiences at the university. He wanted to make sure that people at his university had a good experience in the workplace and knew he cared about them, the environment in which they worked and the various relationships they held in the workplace. A culture and environment, where people had a joint mission and enjoyed what they did, had to be created. It was his role as the leader to help create this culture and set the tone. He said,

I am always concerned about people and making sure that... they understand and are having a good experience in the workplace. Leading by example, building

consensus, focusing on facts, getting the job done, trustworthiness, honesty and integrity, all of those things come to play in good leadership. I always (include) telling the truth. That's big for me.

Modeling these elements was good leadership. He made sure that he and his leadership team always told the truth.

He stated that there were issues around race and racism that he had to deal with all of his life. He said that it was either, "going to make you, as they say in the South, or break you."

There are people who think that they are very liberal. And they are not. There are people that have been stuck in their own environment, have not had various kinds of experiences... Some of them really don't know... that they are racists, but they are. These are the kinds of things that (I) deal with. I'm not just talking about here. I grew up in Alabama and then moved to various places...

He believed that these experiences made him stronger, particularly in order to deal with the situations that he deals with today. He had some experiences with racism early in his career in higher education. His response was to not internalize nor let them impact him, but instead to educate individuals when it happened. He did not get irate, nor did he shy away from racism. He let people know in a firm way that the behavior was unacceptable and used the incident as a teachable moment. Even with the leadership team at his campus, he used situations as teachable moments. He had conversations with those involved in the situation. He pointed things out and this modeling in turn created the space, "where others too, point things out." The discussion that ensued created an organizational culture that allowed for dialog.

Addressing the needs of diversity was part of his campus' strategic plan, mission and goals. Diversity and inclusion were just one part of his social justice efforts. In discussions with various groups, together they looked at the purview of that group and discussed areas for change. In academic affairs, they looked at every department and made sure that it was as diverse as possible. Even when they looked for dissertation candidates, they looked for those



departments that might not have diversity. When hiring, they tried to make sure that the candidate pool was diverse and that the selection committee had diversity in it as well. He worked with the equal opportunity office, when recruiting for positions and when working with search committees. Together they talked to committee members about the things they could and could not say or ask and the things they should be looking for to include diversity.

Dr. Phillips worked with campus groups to facilitate social change. He said that a good leader moved with the changes and worked to get other people to buy into those changes. One of his toughest challenges was that a lot of people did not like change. He stated that the campus was bringing in different students each year, students from different backgrounds, from all walks of life, and with various kinds of experiences and needs. “If we call ourselves the modern university, we are going to have to change to address those needs, address the changes that society needs, and the needs of the local citizens.” He stated that that even though they are changing constantly to address diversity needs, change is not fast in higher education. “It takes a while, but change is necessary in terms of growth and productivity.”

Dr. Phillips’ social justice leadership practices reflected his values and leadership principles. Acknowledging that his role as president and as a leader was to directly address racial incidents and not perpetuate injustice, he reached out to stakeholders about principles of community and articulated the university’s values of inclusion and mutual respect. “As the president, it had to come from the top.” Discrimination or racism did not sidetrack him. He addressed it and maintained his focus as a leader. Guided by his spiritual values, he did not respond in kind nor let acts of hatred guide his work. He directly addressed discrimination and racism and focused his energy on the values and greater purpose he wanted to carry forward.

Dr. Phillips took time and care when it came to decision making. He said,

At the end of the day, well I'm a spiritual person. I pray about everything. That's just me... I pray about things and try to get guidance... Even when it's a difficult decision, I pray. I get guidance on it. I get clarity and don't make a hasty decision.

He stated that when he was younger, he sometimes made hasty decisions. Now, he says, "Let me think about it; let me get back to you." Even though he may have something in mind that he wanted to say or do, he may not have made a decision that day.

Some decisions should be given a lot of thought... You don't want to make the wrong decisions. These decisions are affecting people's lives. You're affecting your university, the faculty and staff. It's important that you think about these things before you (make a decision).

Dr. Phillips established advisory groups with faculty, staff and students. He worked to build strong relationships with these stakeholder groups. These relationships helped him understand the implications of decisions. When he had to make tough decisions, he relied on these groups for consultation and information. He said,

Even when you have to make tough decisions that may be unpopular, they trust you because they know the kind of person that you are and they know that you have already consulted them. The decision has to be made; a lot of people respect that. It may not be what they want, but they know that a decision has to be made.

They may not have agreed with the decision, but they respected that Dr. Phillips had a process for his decision-making, various groups for consultation and that they had a voice.

Interviews with a student and administrator at State Public University found other examples of actions that illustrated how Dr. Phillips operationalized his social justice values (and in his case, his spiritual values) into social justice-related leadership practices. A key finding was his ability to engender a sense of mission and collective journey. An administrator mentioned that Dr. Phillips communicated regularly to those he formally and informally mentored. Everyone who wanted to participate in the communication was included. To understand the significance of this communication, one stakeholder noted that it needed to be

considered in the context of Dr. Phillips' religious faith. Dr. Phillips had a sense of mission that he fostered with others. The administrator stated, "There's this sense of... journey we're collectively on together, not as individuals, to try and do something greater than ourselves." Dr. Phillips' mentorship of others helped create a collaborative environment, shared sense of mission, purpose and a journey of which they were all on together. Getting others to think beyond themselves and work toward a higher purpose embodied Dr. Phillips spiritual and social justice values.

The administrator stated that when you looked at the decisions Dr. Phillips made, they were based on dignity, respect and doing what was right. His focus and calmness, even in the face of adversity, was reinforced by his strong values. It did not matter the tone of the conversation; Dr. Phillips kept his "eye on the prize." On the occasions when issues came up, a student stated that Dr. Phillips was the first person you heard from. He was on top of things and dealt with them right away. He took initiative in different areas to promote social equality. Whether through speeches, campus wide emails or presence at student group meetings, his immediate and numerous forms of communication in promoting social equality went a long way. He was out in front of what was happening and did not let things fester.

He was described as "dynamic." It was through Dr. Phillips' mentorship and leadership that others could see his values and leadership principles. After seeing Dr. Phillips facilitate a heated discussion, the administrator realized that Dr. Phillips did not operate from an angry, frustrated, rash, brash, or harsh perspective. Although he could have reacted in kind, Dr. Phillips displayed a level of calmness and responded with principles of community and respect. According to an administrator,

I had a conversation with him after one of these meetings where I was like, 'Oh my goodness,' and I remember telling him, 'I am amazed. Why are you doing

this?' And he said, 'You always have to extend the knowledge branch.' This is the president of the university, and I'm just amazed. I marvel in that. That's the framework in which he operates.

A key social justice practice Dr. Phillips centers on is doing the right thing. An administrator stakeholder stated,

He is a president that is a person of color, but when you ask him his role, his role is to take care of all students while not denying that there are marginalized groups... He advocates for marginalized groups when it is the right thing to do because it's the right thing to do, not because he's part of that marginalized group.

The stakeholder stated that Dr. Phillips fulfills the role of president and person very well. His values for doing the right thing are integrated in who he is and in his leadership role. When needed, Dr. Phillips uses his presidential authority to advocate for marginalized groups. "The university may say, 'Nope.' Initially... going up through the ranks, we may say, 'No,' and he says, 'No, no were going to do this and here's why.'" If Dr. Phillips intervenes, it is because it is the right thing to do. The administrator stakeholder articulated how the social justice implications of the president's decisions are not always understood.

We're a predominately White institution, I feel (we) have a more difficult time if... there is a social justice component as to why he came to the conclusion. I think if you're not part of those groups at times, it does become more difficult because it's not second nature to think about it. He does bring that, which is great to me, because I do not feel I have to train my supervisors in a sense, of that sensitivity.

Having the role model of an African American or Black leader was not something that the African American administrator stakeholder stated that he had a lot of during his own journey through higher education. He stated that it was fascinating to work under Dr. Phillips' leadership and eye opening to see to the weight of responsibility that presidents' face. He added further that to have to... "add in the (African American or Black) identity component, it's just

another weight on top of that.” The presidents’ racial identity added another dimension to the president’s leadership practice.

Describing how the president as a moral leader was misunderstood, the administrator gave an analogy about the misperception held of presidents of color. He stated that if the president sees two people drowning, a person of color and a non-person of color, those resistant to a president of color would assume that the president would save the person of color. The stakeholder argued against this mind-set and stated that the president’s mindset was going to be, “How can I save you both?” The president’s decisions were not going to be based on race or ethnicity. He stated, “I think that’s where the social justice component sometimes gets confused. Social justice is everyone. Everyone’s basic right to be.”

When people ask Dr. Phillips about how he juggles the responsibilities of leadership, they are usually focusing on the leadership part and not the personal part. He stated that presidents, “Do have a life outside of the presidency.” Or, at least they should. At times, he feels like his life is consumed by the presidency. To manage, he tries not to bring work home as much as possible. That goal was, at times, impossible. He had everything he needed on his cell phone. He was on social media and had three sets of emails. He valued accessibility and made a commitment to be available to a wide range of stakeholders, including prospective students. He wanted to make sure everybody was heard and had his or her questions answered. He stated, “The job is 24/7.” You have responsibility for the campus and responsibilities to the community, family and friends, and you have to act on your values in terms of social justice as well. He said that juggling the personal and professional was a challenge.

Dr. Phillips' leadership practices embodied leading by example, offering respect and dignity to others, staying focused on the needed outcome, listening to all voices and being present in the moment with whoever and whatever was in front of him.

### **Education, Career and Accomplishments**

Dr. Phillips grew up on a small farm in Alabama. He stated, "My parents were not able to get a formal education because they had to work in the fields." His parents were both born in the United States and their education included some high school. His mother played a key role in encouraging him to finish high school and go to college. His initial career goal was to become a high school teacher. As an undergrad, and later as a graduate student, mentors told him that he needed to continue his education and obtain the next degree. He chuckled as he shared that, as a result of their encouragement, he kept going and never taught high school.

In his early twenties, Dr. Phillips began his career in higher education in an entry-level management position. He continued with his education at another state university for his doctorate. Serving in various capacities, he worked in public universities and a private HBCU in six different states. The encouragement of yet another mentor to keep advancing in his career was a turning point. The pursuit of a university presidency started to take shape. Her influence helped him to develop a winning attitude and the belief that he was capable of going further. He said, "I had a love for higher education. My mentors... encouraged me, but I think it grew out of all of that (combined)." Under her leadership, he started to prepare for the presidency through participation in leadership institutes and assignments that allowed him to experience advancing levels of leadership. His mentors played a key role in his pursuit of the presidency. Dr. Phillips stated, "I saw what they were doing and thought I could do it too."

When the opportunity presented itself, he applied for a senior-level administrative position at State Public University (SPU, 2016, February 28).

Dr. Phillips was an internal candidate when he later applied for and was named the president of SPU. His inaugural address reflected his social justice values for service, social responsibility and commitment to the community (Phillips, 2016, March 13).

A strong proponent of mentoring faculty from diverse backgrounds, Dr. Phillips' efforts at SPU established initiatives and other programs that supported the professional development of faculty (SPU, 2016, February 28). In his tenure, he worked on the enrollment of diverse students, financial aid and programs to support their access, retention and success (Phillips, 2016). His research interests aligned with values for social justice by advocating and giving voice to diverse communities.

Dr. Phillips began his tenure as president by taking proactive stances in key areas (Phillips, 2016). He set goals to enhance SPU's reputation as an accessible institution with a commitment to academics and respect and appreciation for all people. He convened committees to develop a strategic plan for enrollment and the improvement of retention and graduation rates. He established transition courses for new students, mentoring programs, enhanced student advising and new degree programs. He also designated funds for scholarships, enhanced academic and first-year programs, new facilities and facility upgrades, technology and faculty research awards.

His social justice-related leadership efforts included extensive community service. He was the recipient of leadership, teaching and service awards. He was affiliated with a wide range of local civic organizations. He held membership in state and national organizations and

associations such as service organizations, boards, higher education associations, partnerships and athletics.

**V. Dr. George Pruitt**  
**Thomas Edison State University (TESU)**  
**Trenton, New Jersey**

### **Beliefs and Background**

The first protest or civil engagement Dr. George Pruitt was involved with was in 1963 while he was a junior in high school. He worked with his classmates to organize a boycott of the Chicago Public Schools to get school superintendent, Benjamin Willis, fired. They were angry at the education they were receiving: the hand-me-down textbooks and the unevenness in the quality of facilities, education and teachers in Black schools compared to other schools in the city. His high level of activism was life-long and included high school and college organizing, administrative roles implementing social justice programs and addressing racism and student protests. Even now, as a president, he navigated the political arena at the local, state, and national levels for both his institution and organizations' responsibilities. He was the only president in the study who identified as "Black," called himself a "radical student" and described himself as "not nonviolent." His call to action had strong roots in injustice, in defining his identity and in his call to leadership.

Dr. Pruitt's parents were both born in the United States. They both had some college and both attended a Historically Black College or University. He was born in Mississippi and grew up in a middle-income background and in neighborhoods that were a combination of groups. He and his brother attained college degrees. He stated that as a result of experiences, which stemmed from being Black in Texas and Mississippi, his parents had a high level of awareness of issues surrounding social justice, but were not activists.



“I’ve got a million of them. It’s my whole life,” was Dr. Pruitt’s response when asked about the experience(s) that led to his social justice values.

When I was in Mississippi, I was in a segregated place. I couldn't go in a restaurant. I couldn't go to the bathroom. When I went to the movie theater I had to sit in the balcony and go in the back door. I was half scared, half the time.

He stated that the northern migration up the Illinois Central Railroad from the South to the North before, during, and after World War II took his family back and forth. He grew up in the 1940s and 1950s and split his time between Illinois and Mississippi. He attended Chicago public schools. Whenever school was out, his family spent time back in Mississippi visiting his grandparents. He described Chicago as the most racially polarized and segregated city in the north. It was, at that time, the second largest city in the United States.

Its public school system had the largest African-American student body of any city in the United States There was not a single Black principal, counselor, or an administrative official in the entire city of Chicago.

In the barbershop on the south side, Dr. Pruitt would occasionally encounter Malcolm X (before anyone knew who he was). Malcolm X visited Chicago because Elijah Muhammad, who was head of Nation of Islam at the time, was based in Chicago. Malcolm X liked that Dr. Pruitt pushed back. Dr. Pruitt stated that it was part of the Nation of Islam to relinquish one’s given name. In the barbershop, Malcolm X argued, “Why would you embrace the name of a slave master? That’s why the nation had said, ‘You preach your own last name.’” Dr. Pruitt argued back, “My last name is my daddy’s name. I know where my name came from and I don’t care who had it before them.” Dr. Pruitt was adamant that he was not going to give up his “daddy’s name” and he and Malcolm X had that kind of repartee. He did not argue with Malcolm X about the right to define who you were.

Malcolm was the first person that I ever heard talk about the fact that you had a right to define who you were, that the society, the culture, the country, didn’t

have the right to decide for you... Malcolm had a powerful effect on me. The idea that I had an obligation, not only a right, but an obligation to decide who I was... affected me and I bought into that totally, still do.

“I have always felt (an) ...obligation. I know of the struggle that went on so somebody like me could sit in here.” This realization and obligation helped he said, “define me.”

The next step after defining one self was to challenge and contest institutions, political structures, political apparatus, governments and cultural things that disempower you and instead, promote things that empower you, give you opportunity and choice. Dr. Pruitt’s political orientation was established around these ideas. To this day, he is not tied to a political party because he has seen both parties be equally oppressive. He is instead attracted to policies that make sense.

Dr. Pruitt was in Mississippi when Emmett Till was killed. His father took him to see Emmett’s body before Emmett was buried. In this time period, there were rigid rules and protocols to maintain segregation and violence against Blacks who did not follow them.

“Growing up in the middle of that kind of racism, both in the South and in the North, it can't help but shape you and the color of the lens that you went through the world.” He stated that he grew up in the cusp of the most severe apartheid that this country has had since slavery. “I look at some of the things that my younger friends are dealing with now... I take it seriously, and I'm not trying to poo-poo it, but this is so shallow compared to what we went through.”

“Let me tell you a story about my aunt.” His aunt had come home to Mississippi to give birth. Dr. Pruitt and all of his cousins were born in his grandmother's bed in Canton. Aunt Daisy was nine months pregnant when she started bleeding from an ulcer. “My uncle was the only Black doctor in Canton and our version of the Affordable Care Act.” He drove her past the White hospital to a hospital in Yazoo City, 20 miles away, that would accept Black people.

They did not have her blood type. He drove another 50 miles to Jackson, which was the location of the closest blood bank that would give blood to Black people. By the time his uncle got back, Aunt Daisy had bled to death.

These weren't philosophical arguments about justice or fairness. People... lost their lives. They weren't allowed to own property. They weren't allowed to vote. This was not some intellectual thing. This was apartheid in the United States. That's the life I grew up... and I hated it. I hated it.

Dr. Pruitt knew from the time he was five years old that he was going to be a doctor like his Uncle Carl, who he idolized. Dr. Pruitt's college choice was very simple. His father said, "Apply to college. Wherever you get a scholarship, that's where you'll go." Dr. Pruitt was offered a scholarship from the University of Illinois, Champaign. "The University of Illinois was the most selected public university in Illinois. All the Black kids (who attended)... were very smart kids," but the university had a very high attrition rate. Very few Black students graduated and it was not due to the overt racism, such as the faculty not giving you the grade that you earned. It was due to the environment. Dr. Pruitt said, "It was a pressure cooker." Although there were approximately thirty-five thousand students at the university, there were only two hundred and fifty Black students. "You were always the only Black student in your class and... residence hall." If you walked into the classroom, people would avert their eyes. They would not let you sit next to them nor agree to be your lab partners. The Black students that graduated were the "toughest," those who could handle the alienation, hostility and the academic work. He helped start a Black students' organization to counter the isolation and hostile environment and once again, helped organize a protest. The Black students planned a series of protests to occupy the administration building. Their demands, called Project Five Hundred, focused on recruitment and increasing the number of Black students.

Dr. Pruitt transferred from the University of Illinois to Illinois State in the second semester of his junior year to avoid the required two-year foreign language requirement. He believed that he had a kind of dyslexia and did not think himself capable of learning a foreign language. Although he was pursuing a major in biology and minored in chemistry, Dr. Pruitt realized that he did not want to be a doctor; he wanted to be his uncle. He had to find a new career path. It was in the middle of the Vietnam War. He was not opposed to war or the military; he was not a pacifist and he was “not non-violent,” but that war, he said, was particularly wrong. He was in a draft district that was overwhelmingly White, but the overwhelming majority of people that got drafted from it were Blacks that lived in specific “pockets” of those neighborhoods. His college student deferment kept him out of the military until they had the draft lottery. “My draft number was two hundred and seventy-seven, I’ll never forget it.” The night of the draft, some people, like him were celebrating on campus that they were not going to war, and the other half were drinking and crying because they were drafted. He said, “College saved me from the war.”

At Illinois State, he helped the administration write a grant proposal to provide funding for a program to increase minority enrollment and faculty. He took a summer job at Illinois Bell Telephone Company. When he graduated, the company offered him a management job. He was the first African American in the management and traffic department and was hired along with an African-American woman from the University of Wisconsin. They were hired the same day and had the same background and skills. Although they both held similar management roles in different divisions, Dr. Pruitt made more money than she did. He said, “Not only was there the racism going on, there was this other thing going on.”

He eventually got a call from Illinois State about the grant proposal that he had helped write being funded. They offered him the opportunity to come back, run the program and go to graduate school. He said that he was trying to decide between corporate America, the academy and something where his heart could be invested. Everyone at his company knew him as the “only Black guy in management.” The company was organized similar to the military: districts made up a division and so many divisions made up a department. Elmer Carlquist was head of the department, Bob McCann was head of a division and Dr. Pruitt’s boss was head of a district. Bob McCann arranged for Dr. Pruitt to meet with Elmer Carlquist on the executive floor of Illinois Bell. Carlquist's office was huge and it impressed Dr. Pruitt. He and Bob McCann sat on either side of the desk. Carlquist asked, "Do you know how much money your boss makes?" Carlquist shared the salary of the district manager and Dr. Pruitt was impressed with the figure. He was told that if he applied himself and worked hard that he would some day become a district traffic manager before he left the company. It was intended as a pep talk, but all Dr. Pruitt heard was the limits of his capacity to advance in the company. "So you're telling me that right out of college, if I work hard for the rest of my life, I can look forward to two promotions?" What Dr. Pruitt heard was that there was a ceiling.

Given the way I'm put together, I asked him. It ticked me off a little bit and I said, ‘Well, tell me Mr. Carlquist, what kind of effort is necessary to have, say, your job?’ The guy next to me, damn near fell off of his chair. Carlquist recovered, he turned red, and then basically gave me, ‘Well, anything. This is America, anything's possible,’ speech.

Dr. Pruitt walked out and decided to quit.

Dr. Pruitt went back to Illinois State and worked on the grant-funded program. When Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was assassinated in 1968, campuses were on fire. One of his most proud achievements was that while campuses all over America were burning and in the midst

of violence, Illinois State was the only campus in the State of Illinois where there was no violence.

In Chicago, there were two members of the head of the Chicago Black Panther Party. One was named, Fred Hampton. In 1969, the police raided Fred Hampton's apartment and he was killed. Dr. Pruitt knew Fred; Fred had been to the campus several times to speak. "A lot of Black folks were getting killed and shot, but we knew these. This was personal." A guy named Alonzo Pruitt (no relation to Dr. Pruitt) went to the flagpole and brought the flag down to half-mast. Word spread and many joined Alonzo at the flagpole. "We were heartbroken, so this group of us, we all just stood there by the flagpole, quiet, some people were crying, it was just hard." They had been out there for about an hour when Dr. Pruitt was called up to the president's office. The lowering of the flag had been on the radio, and the governor's office had received complaints. He ordered the president to have the flag raised, stating that only the governor or the president had the authority to lower it. Dr. Pruitt said that the students holding vigil were a little ticked off, but they raised the flag back up and were dispersed. After that, Kent State happened and campuses once again were erupting all over the country. "Our White radical group was really little, anemic, but they wanted to do something, so they went and lowered the flag." Dr. Pruitt and a group went to the president's office and basically said, "What's up? How come we do it and we're not allowed to do it. The White kid folks get killed, they do it, and it's okay?" Dr. Pruitt remembered this image of President, Samuel E. Braden. When they walked into his office, President Braden had his shirtsleeve rolled up and his head in his hands. He looked up and said, "I was expecting you all. We told them that we had to raise it. I called the governor's office." By this time, campuses all over the country were rioting. The governor said, "You're on your own. It's a local discretion." They all agreed to let the flag

stay at half-mast for another hour. In a week they would have a martyr's day for everyone who had been killed for every cause, put the flag at half-mast and have a university dialog about those who had been killed or lost their lives to violence around social justice and racial issues. On the appointed day, the flag was lowered and a security guard was left to guard the pole.

Local community members beat up the security guard, and raised the flag back up. They threatened the security guard that they would return, if the flag was lowered. One hundred and fifty to two hundred people went to guard the pole. The state police arrived with riot gear. The demonstrators stayed near the state police for protection, in case the counter-demonstrators returned. Dr. Pruitt was the spokesperson and was reported about in the media and shown on television. "I'm fairly sure we were under surveillance by the police, or where I lived was under surveillance. I got a knock on the door that there had been a threat against my life." The police knew where Dr. Pruitt was and they came to get him. He was taken to the police station to be kept safe.

The program where Dr. Pruitt worked grew due to a supportive administration. In 1970, when Dr. Pruitt finished his master's degree, one of the vice presidents of Illinois State, James Fisher went to Towson State University in Maryland as President. Fisher recruited Kenneth Shaw as his academic vice president and Shaw recruited Dr. Pruitt to Towson to come and serve as Dean of Students. Dr. Pruitt was 24 years old, but they had seen something in him and were willing to take a risk. Towson State University was historically, a white institution. When it was discovered that Dr. Pruitt was Black, President Fisher had to fight state bureaucracy to get Dr. Pruitt's appointment approved.

Dr. Pruitt's definition of social justice included an element of the legal use of the word justice and the concept of judgment. He stated that a synonym for justice is fairness. People

should be treated fairly and given fair and reasonable access to opportunity and equity. Equity should be in terms of opportunity, not necessarily in terms of outcome. “Assuming that one follows basic, fundamental and generally agreed upon norms for one's obligation to a community and orderly society,” it should not impose unfair, arbitrary or artificial impediments upon a person’s ability to create the life that their talents, aptitudes and ambitions would permit.

Although it was appropriate for people to be judged on their obligations as a member of a civil and respectful democratic society, the judgment should not be based on gender, ethnicity, religious preference, nationality and culture. “We come to every enterprise with different talents, aptitudes, abilities, skills and different kinds of moral compasses and ethical behaviors and all of those should determine how we do, not external and arbitrary impediments.” Social justice was also about empowerment. “People ought to be empowered, to essentially be the architects of their life.” Empowerment is an active verb, “How to empower you be the architect in your life?”

Dr. Pruitt had not considered defining his values and pondered how to describe them. “I take positions that people sometimes look askance at because it goes against the conventional wisdom, the group speak that we mindlessly follow, the pigeon holes we put people in.” Part of the responsibility of leadership was calling attention to, "What's the point of it all?”

Shedding light on issues of injustice and questioning conventional wisdom were reflected in his value to not accept the status quo. In the course of the conversation, he elaborated further on this value of questioning.

You will never get the right answer to the wrong question. If you look at a bunch of people that are oppressed and subjugated in every way, economically and



educationally and the name you use to call that oppression is segregation, or in South Africa, apartheid, what's the opposite of that?

The opposite is how you liberate them, not how you integrate them. Empowerment and liberation were examples of his values toward social justice. Questioning was how he challenged the status quo. Dr. Pruitt's "calling" toward social justice was also driven by a sense of urgency about valuing his time on the planet. Being surrounded by death (his father was a mortician), seeing Emmett Till's body, being faced with violence or death if caught outside of his Chicago neighborhood and being threatened for his social justice activism, he stated, "I've always viewed that life was finite, that it was precious, that tomorrow is promised to no one."

### **Stewardship**

Stewardship was the framework that Dr. Pruitt used to center his leadership principles.

He stated,

Stewardship is the most important word. This institution doesn't belong to me. It's not mine. It was here before I came here. It'll be here after I'm gone. My responsibility is the stewardship of it while it's being entrusted to my care.

He considered it an ethical obligation to be an effective steward of the institution's resources.

He worked to ensure that resources were used for the purpose that they were intended and not diverted or wasted. Stewardship included managing human resources. People within the institution had to be treated in equitable and fair ways, including being evaluated fairly and receiving feedback about how they were doing. Leadership responsibility included holding people accountable for their performance.

Dr. Pruitt's principles emphasized justice, judgment and accountability. He stated that, "One of the things that King and Gandhi were clear about in terms of civil disobedience, that the power of civil disobedience is not the act of breaking the law, it is the act of voluntary

accepting the punishments and consequences of breaking the law.” He believed in accountability, judgment and being responsible for one’s own actions.

When Dr. King was in Chicago for the open housing march Dr. Pruitt worked on the march while in college. He did not meet Dr. King because Dr. Pruitt made a conscious decision not to go to the march. Dr. Pruitt stated that he is “not non-violent” and “I didn't want to mess it up.” For an activist, who did not embrace Dr. King’s non-violent methods of civil disobedience, Dr. Pruitt’s leadership practices did reflect Dr. King’s calling to serve. This calling was blended with Malcolm X’s belief about empowerment.

Dr. Pruitt described the leadership of his institution as a “calling.” “You can't be a good African-American president or a good Latino president or a good Asian president unless you're first a good president.” Dr. Pruitt said that being a good president had to come first, and then you had to use the platform.

I decided that I wanted to be a president not because I wanted a title or an office. I had an agenda. There were things that I wanted to see happen. As I looked around, I thought the best platform was the presidency. That's why I did things that led me here.

Dr. Pruitt’s sense of urgency drove his mission to try to mold and shape institutions back to functioning along the lines of Malcolm X’s principle to empower people. Dr. Pruitt’s goal in higher education was to give people the tools and the resources so they could be the architects of their own future. Knowing that life was not finite, he said, “Be useful, be productive; don't waste it. Make sure you leave things better than you found them.”

When discussing his social justice practices he said, leaders have a responsibility to articulate a coherent and clearly understood vision for the collective good. People who are part of the institution and community can then calibrate around it. Leaders created a common set of expectations about where they wanted to collectively go and organized people, resources or

institutions to get there in an ethical and fair way. Believing that you are only as good as the people with whom you are surrounded. Dr. Pruitt organized like-minded people around the achievement of commonly accepted goals and outcomes. He recruited and maintained talented and committed people. He stated that by cultivating a collective sense of purpose in those around you, your every move is multiplied.

Universities have a fundamental obligation to provide high-quality experiences for the students that they serve. He argued that organizations, no matter the type, colleges, universities, churches, and political organizations, over time turn inward and serve their own purposes and conveniences. It was critical that the leader maintain the institution's focus on the purpose for which it was created. Not having on-site or permanent full-time faculty, Thomas Edison State University, the site of Dr. Pruitt's presidency, kept the focus on students as the "center of the universe" instead of faculty. Its model was built around students.

Interviews with two stakeholders (a faculty member and administrator) in leadership positions at Thomas Edison State University described the following practices Dr. Pruitt employed related to social justice. Dr. Pruitt placed people on the board of directors who could contribute to a strong social justice environment. He had the Admissions staff work with faculty administrators to identify what they could do to help from a social justice perspective. He created a culture where everyone participated in creating the university's social justice climate. Dr. Pruitt recruited and retained people who held the same focus on diversity. The value of diversity and opportunity was communicated "down the line." TESU offered opportunities for promotions fairly. Opportunities for growth and development were offered across the board to those with management and entry-level positions.

TESU offered access easily to populations that other institutions could not or found it difficult to accommodate. These populations included students with disabilities, members of the military and the incarcerated. Although he received job offers from traditional colleges, Dr. Pruitt felt that he could make a bigger difference with the population of students at an adult-centered nontraditional institution. Students had access to all of the institution's services, regardless of their geographic location. Affordability was key. Dr. Pruitt worked to make sure TESU's "per credit" cost rate was extremely low.

Dr. Pruitt was described as being very open to change, one who listened to others and who heard from staff at all levels. He was open to people bringing new ideas to his attention and was accessible. One stakeholder stated,

I think a huge factor is that I can call my president and I can get a hold of him. I don't have to go through 15 people to get to the person that I need to speak to or to take it seriously. His leadership style is extremely authentic and it comes through in his conversations with people.

His values for fairness came across in an example about compensation. The Governor implemented a furlough mandate, where people had to take days off without pay. It was only for the union staff; management would be exempt. Dr. Pruitt did not feel that furloughing only the clerical and administrative professional staff was a fair thing to do. The campus talked about it and they all agreed to furlough. Dr. Pruitt emphasized that they were all in it together.

### **Education, Career and Accomplishments**

Dr. Pruitt is an alumnus of Illinois State University in Biology (B.S.) and Guidance and Counseling (M.S.); and The Union Institute in Higher Education-Administration (Ph.D.) Prior to his work at TESU, he served in executive leadership positions at Illinois State University, Towson State University, Morgan State University, Tennessee State University and the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (TESU, 2016, February 27).

Dr. Pruitt was named the third President of Thomas Edison State University in 1982 (TESU, 2012). He is the longest-serving public college president in the country (Hyatt, 2015).

During his presidency, he has been the recipient of five honorary degrees in addition to numerous awards, honors, and commendations (TESU, 2016, February 27). The Exxon Education Foundation funded a study on presidential leadership and Dr. Pruitt was identified as one of the most effective college presidents in the United States. He is active in the formulation of educational policy nationally and within the State of New Jersey. Efforts under his leadership at TESU included the establishment of an institute for public policy (Galioto, 2016). Currently, the institute is developing a regional comprehensive economic development strategy for 19 densely populated municipalities in New Jersey. In partnership with the New Jersey Urban Mayors' Association, it will encompass economic development, job creation and transportation access (NJF, 2015).

Encompassing local, state and national levels of involvement, Dr. Pruitt has served on the boards of a wide range of civic and education-related organizations. He also holds membership in many state and national organizations.

**VI. Dr. Eileen Wilson-Oyelaran  
Kalamazoo College (K College)  
Kalamazoo, Michigan**

**Beliefs and Background**

"I always... wanted to be a good teacher." This statement by Dr. Eileen Wilson-Oyelaran gets to the heart of her life's work. A Developmental Psychologist, she considered herself to be a teacher and educator. She grew up in a family that always said, "If you have talents, your talents have to be used in service of other people." Her mother had a master's degree in Vocational Rehabilitation Counseling and her father was a pastor and a lawyer. A

majority of his work was around Civil Rights law. Her parents were activists and did a lot of work in the church, NAACP and Urban League. They also did organizing during WWII. Her father's best friend was a longshoreman, and they were involved with the unions. She stated that in the '50s, the divisions around race and gender were not great. Issues crossed groups and her parents were heavily involved in politics, both locally and nationally.

Her parents went to the to the National NAACP Convention in 1961 or 62. Her father brought back interview recordings on reel-to-reel tapes of some of the "kids" who had spoken at the convention. The kids were from the south, the conference had been in New York, and her parents were coming back to California. Contemplating what was going on in the nation, her parents were trying to assess where they were as a community and what they might do next. Seeing her parents' activism and listening to them share the experience and journey was impactful. After hearing the Freedom Riders speak, she remembers her father saying, "These young people are so beyond us." Very often, she says, she puts herself in his shoes and asks herself how to reach the point where today's "young people are so beyond me." Dr. Wilson-Oyelaran is a leader who values reflection and mentorship of others. Throughout her career and at critical points in decision-making, she took time to seek clarity about a controversial decision, how best to facilitate movement on the issue at hand or how she might develop future leaders. Taking time to reflect was a theme that emerged at key points in her life.

Her family lived in a new community that was developed in south central Los Angeles for returning GI's. It was all African American. The schools were de facto segregated because the neighborhood was segregated. She described it as a very upward striving neighborhood. Her integrated activities were two-fold. She was very active in Girl Scouts and often went to Girl Scout camps where she was the only African American girl. Her second integrated

experience was through her father's friendships. Her father had gone to City College of New York and had a lot of Jewish friends. As people moved west, they kept their connections and her family would have dinner once a month with these friends.

She went to a Catholic all-girls high school. Having recently spoken at her 50th class reunion, one of the themes she shared was that she had not realized how much of a pre-feminism and powerful environment the school experience had been for the women. This held true for the nuns as well. Although she said that there were a lot of things the nuns did not have or do, they were women who acted on their own. She stated that her classmates turned out to be really interesting women and that she did not believe they realized what an influential experience their school had been in their development. Having attended an all-girls high school, she did not think that gender had been as powerful of a factor as was race in shaping who she was. Her gender was certainly a lens for her to use to view others, but it was her high school experience that grounded her leadership. She took for granted that there were girls schools and boys schools and that in her school, the girls did everything. They were the leaders. They ran the laboratory. They held all of the roles in plays. They did not have to deal with peer pressure around issues of sexual identity or coming to terms with who they were as young women. They wore uniforms and there was no need to compete with each other about clothes. Considering all of these factors together, she thought about how not having the totality of that type of educational and social experience might be destabilizing for adolescent women in this country. She said that in many ways, she was not a part of a structure that confined women to specific roles.

Her family environment and expectation of service was what she considered the defining moment in the formation of her social justice values. She and her sister both came to

their respective work due to issues of social justice, fairness and access. Dr. Wilson-Oyelaran defined social justice as the opportunity for all individuals to use their capacities to fully thrive. It included the absence of structural, institutional and organizational barriers that prevented an individual's ability from being realized. Her social justice values focused on putting the people you served at the center of the conversation. She said that rather than try to solve things for them, try to listen and hear them in the resolution of the problem. She said, "I will always try to ask myself, 'Who's missing from the table?' It's almost a mantra."

Dr. Wilson-Oyelaran, like her parents, had high levels of awareness and activism around issues of social justice. She was active in the youth wing of the Youth Human Relations Council. Adding to the formation of her social justice values and activism was the era in which she grew up. She was a senior in high school during the Watts Riots in 1965. The riots and growing up during the height of the Civil Rights Movement provided added context for her social justice values and actions. When she arrived at college, it was what she described as, "the birth of the Black Student Union and the anti-war movement."

Whereas, her family fostered an expectation to be in service to others, she herself chose that the vehicle of her social justice work would be education. "I was a student activist in the late '60s. I have always seen education... as a vehicle for access, for individuals to transform their reality and by so doing, the reality of their communities." In the 1970s, law school was the social justice-oriented career choice of her peers. They considered law to be the vehicle for making change. She chose to be an educator. "For me, education was the vehicle for change-making."



Leaving the country at two different times and for a total of 15 years had a formative impact on her life. She stated that both times, she was at such a point of despair about the potential for the country that the only thing she could do was leave. “I saw people murdered.”

The police are shooting up people... and they're people you know. Or you've just engaged in a huge struggle trying to change a campus and the leadership says they're going to make changes, and then nothing happens. That's very hard, particularly when you are 20 or 25... Recently, I was watching a televised PBS special on the Panthers, and I said, ‘Oh, damn. I knew those people in L.A.’ When you get that close to stuff, you sometimes have to step away.

No stranger to international education, she had an undergraduate study abroad experience in England and had studied the education of immigrant children (KZOO, 2016, February 27). Being a recipient of a Thomas J. Watson Traveling Fellowship enabled her to go to Ghana, Nigeria, and Tanzania to conduct independent research. She stated that going to Nigeria was a foundational thing. It was time to pull back, reflect and find meaning. She stated that when she returned to the US, she had a different outlook because she had seen a different world. “I've lived in a world where I was the majority to some degree, although an outsider, but still visually, the majority.”

To describe her social justice leadership practices, Dr. Wilson-Oyelaran used her actions in addressing racial incidents at K College and the student-led Intercultural Movement and demands that followed. In the spring of 2015, Kalamazoo College experienced a racist and anti-Semitic Internet posting incident (Hall, 2015, March 4). The posting included a threat to its faculty. The incident put Kalamazoo College into the national media spotlight. Kalamazoo College called a meeting at the Stetson Chapel located on campus. Dr. Wilson-Oyelaran took a firm stand on the cowardice of the anonymous posting (Hall, 2015, March 4) and the need to commit as leaders and as a community to restore its equilibrium. She stated, "Don't let them

win...Love is hard work. Struggle is hard work. Building community is hard work and we all have to work hard at it."

In the end, (students) took their action to the Board of Trustees in what I would describe as a very well developed and articulated guerrilla theater. I don't mean that to diminish what they did, but that's the way I would have described it.

Once the board left, the question was, "What were we going to do? I spent a lot of time trying to think about how we could move from that place to get something done."

Being a believer that conversation was critical to work, she wrote to three student leaders and said, "I'd like you to identify 12 people. I would like you to come to my home and we're going to have a conversation." The first response that she received from students was that they would come, but certain members of the administration could not come and, "if they came, they could not speak." Dr. Wilson-Oyelaran responded,

We're coming together to be in conversation. Everybody's voice must be heard. If you're acting from principles of justice you can't silence anybody... that's your request, but that's not the way the meeting in my house is going to take place.

She identified six administrators and six faculty members and working with the director of the campus' social justice leadership center, put an agenda together for the meeting.

She stated that leaders must model, particularly in an educational institution, what they hope their students, and even their faculty and team can do. She did not claim to do everything right all the time, but she followed the principles from an essay by Diana Chapman Walsh. It asked, "Can we be the leaders our students need us to be? Can we engage difference? Can we be advocates for human rights while, at the same time, protecting free speech? Can we model integrity? Civility?" (Walsh, 2006). Dr. Wilson-Oyelaran stated that it was important not to use the guise of civility to silence voices, but instead to model, "the capacity to really engage a

conversation that is different from one's own and hard from one's own without either silencing the other person or dismissing what that person is bringing to you.”

Dr. Wilson-Oyelaran brought to her work what she called a “spirit of generosity.” She stated that it was easy to get angry and that was not what she wanted to bring to her work. She used a Martin Luther King quote as a guide. It was about power infused with love. She believed that everyone has power.

I'm not going to deny that I have power. The question is, ‘How am I going to use the power I have?’ I hope it's infused with love... with the capacity to hear the voices, sometimes, that I don't want to hear. That it allows for mutual problem solving. That it allows for creative negotiation as part of the resolution of things.

The goal for the meeting was to leave with a sense of how they were going to move forward, what the process would be and timeline to execute the plan. “Because my work has taught me it works, we began with a meal.” From the meal, they went into a conversation. The agenda was mutually negotiated and students were able to add to the agenda. “I think we got a lot done that night that shifted it from protest and theater to now it's time to do the real work.” They identified the topics to address and formed work groups.

Dr. Wilson-Oyelaran thought it was important to look for some vehicles where students could participate in the work without their academic progress being harmed by the time commitment necessary to develop a response plan. She approached the provost about co-teaching an Independent Study course for the students who were engaged in the work groups. Because it was part of their academic credit, the innovative independent study approach allowed students to participate without any penalty to their academic progress. A report-out at the end of the quarter was included for the students enrolled in the independent study. The work was done very intensely for about six to seven weeks. It became the roadmap that the

campus used as it worked to make changes. Engaging students to participate in the transformation process and explore solutions, empowered them to be critical thinkers, act from knowledge, consider their own leadership role in the process and problem-solve.

Another practice that she used in her leadership was exercising courage and persisting in whatever circumstance presented itself in the situation or within oneself. She referred to a quote by Maya Angelou, who said, "Courage is the virtue without which no other virtues are possible." Dr. Wilson-Oyelaran's work was at time challenging, but she approached it as she advised her students to do. She did the work within herself and in cooperation with others. She questioned her praxis and made the time to reflect on how she might best serve and teach. She pulled in the staff and faculty experts and collaborated or trusted their ability to act.

The president's social justice practices were described by three campus stakeholders and are as follows. She both addressed the macro agenda-setting level of working toward change by zooming out to the overall college's strategic plan and then zooming in to the specific goals of how each department's efforts would be unique to their function, yet still be aligned with the campus plan. The micro individual level was addressing social justice concerns as they arose. "By virtue of her title and position, she is the leader of our campus. I think that she has adopted the role of socially just-minded leadership as we go about solving problems." She addressed instances of injustice as the college president with all of the significance that comes with that title. "As our campus was in the middle of students of color on campus feeling unsafe at the college," she called a campus gathering, addressed the responses and needs head-on to the collective campus and sent out campus-wide emails from the Office of the President. As the crises arose and unfolded, the president's leadership showed follow-through in terms of preventative measures moving forward. Actions she took included

forming a committee or a task-force to deal with a particular issue or getting the hiring process moving for a director of the new intercultural center. Dr. Wilson-Oyelaran took serious her responsibility to follow through on the actions needed to keep the campus response moving.

According to the student stakeholder, “The College’s motto is ‘Enlightened Leadership’ and that’s something that we pride ourselves on.” President Wilson-Oyelaran acknowledged, recognized and welcomed students to the table as emerging leaders. She respected the developmental process of the leadership growth that occurs while in college. She made room for students to have the experience and growth of enlightened leadership, in order for them to understand what it might look like when they made the transition from student to professional. She made it a point to instill leadership itself as a value, “I would call that its own particular kind of value.”

She made an effort to be involved in social justice areas such as the hiring process of the people who would run social justice initiatives or those who would be responsible for creating the ethnic studies program. She looked for ways to recruit and retain diverse student populations such as student scholarships. She partnered with K-12 programs for recruitment. “She herself has done some of the heavier recruitment.” She worked in the areas of policy development, implementation and review. She carefully considered policy changes, in order to, “Try to make what is historically a White institution that carries all the historical baggage that that entails and really trying to rethink that, to make this place more inclusive.” She was conscientious about making K College, he said, “a more supportive campus for everybody regardless of their experience and their backgrounds.”

“In academia we’re really good at, ‘this is the way we’ve always done it.’” Dr. Wilson-Oyelaran’s stakeholders said that she asked hard questions, in order to challenge the status quo.

In addition to thinking about the strategic direction of the institution, she asked, "Is this the way we ought to do things now? Is this what curriculum should look like or pedagogy should be or the structures of the organization might look like to really be an inclusive and supportive environment?" Her questions helped others think critically about how their actions could impact change.

### **“Trustworthy Leadership”**

A model that Diana Chapman Walsh (2006) called, “Trustworthy Leadership,” guided Dr. Wilson-Oyelaran’s leadership principles. Its premise considered questions about how we engage difference. It asked about our ability as leaders to engage a conversation that is different from one's own and hard from one's own without either silencing the other person or dismissing what that person is bringing to you (Wilson-Oyelaran). Using this model as a frame, Dr. Wilson-Oyelaran stated that her social justice values were embedded in her leadership and not in an identity of leadership.

I don't know that I came to this work thinking I was a social justice leader. I came to this work because I believed in the capacity of what education could do. I think somebody else put that label on me. I don't know that if you asked me, ‘Everyday, did I analyze what I do by social justice principles?’ I'd probably have to say, ‘No.’ I'd probably have to say that I analyze them more by what I'm getting done.

She outlined the principles that guide her leadership.

“Number one: It's not about you.”

“Number two: Any vision you create must be co-created with others. The vision isn't about you either.”

She added the following principles. One must be informed by what he/she sees as a just world or a better world. “What's your responsibility to a larger world, to a larger community?” Knowing this is what guides leadership. “I don't know that I would necessarily say that I'm

through (with) my praxis.” She stated that leadership was ongoing and reflection was critical to its process.

Be as transparent as one can be. “In my case, I think to be as collaborative as one can be. And, yet, I think people would say that I am both collaborative and very direct, and I think I am. I try to listen to everybody, and I have strong opinions.”

Integrity: Know why you are doing what you are doing. “What's the real rationale? Does that rationale hold up against those things that you say, in the end, are important?”

Execution. “I've seen a lot of people who give wonderful speeches and deliver nothing.” Execution is important, as is having something to show at the end of it. She stated that one must continually work to make sure he/she is keeping his/her eyes on what is most important. “That can be really hard. Being clear to yourself, what are they (what is important) and making sure you don't get side tracked?”

While serving as an acting president, she realized that the presidency was a different form of teaching. “All that I have been doing at K is teaching, but in a very different way. For me, I had to find the teaching in it for it to work for me.” She was once a guest presenter at a class entitled, “How to Change the World?” The faculty member, a well-known activist, made a comment to her after her lecture. “You're a real teacher.” She wanted to say, “What the hell did you think I was?” Her lecture was on helping students understand their leadership role in fostering change. She stated that part of being an activist is doing your homework. The unwillingness of others to do the work required for social change frustrated her. Her teaching efforts encompassed preparing students for future leadership. She said that change required action, and careful, critical analysis. Part of her job was to teach that by pushing stuff back. In one incident, she told students who approached her with a costly proposal to provide more

information. They did not follow through and then were mad because she did not take the proposal “serious.” She said, ”I’ve been there, petitioning authority... Do the work, and I’ll consider it, but don’t tell me you woke up today and thought I should spend so much money... that could have been somebody’s scholarship,” on a project that you have not researched. “I’m supposed to do your work for you?” She believed that part of her work was to equip people to be good leaders for social change. She said, “To do the work, to do the organizing and to do the ugly stuff. It’s not all about carrying a sign.” Her job as she saw it was to help them think. She wanted them to consider the type of leaders that were in place and what tactics would be most effective with each of those leaders? Another example of her role as a teacher involved a different form of “pushing back.” She had received a divestment petition that came with a list of demands. She responded, "...I’m willing to engage this position, but I’m not going to do ‘demands’ ... the word suggests to me that there’s no conversation, and we haven’t even had the first conversation that we have chosen to walk away from.” She saw her role as a teacher to be one of complicating things a little bit and holding others accountable to not issue demands without first engaging in communication about their concerns. To be effective in their future leadership roles, she wanted to teach them now how to go through a critical thinking, strategic planning process, which included considering how to be most effective with the people they are approaching and being prepared by coming to the table with data and information.

Dr. Wilson-Oyelaran shared a story about being in a meeting where she was the only woman in the room who was a professional. All the other women were partners or spouses. In addition, she was the only person of color. The person sitting next to her, a college president, turned and asked, "What did your parents do?" What the microaggression implied to Dr. Wilson-Oyelaran was, "You don't belong in this room. I have to know who you are." After they



spoke and he knew her story, she asked him, "What did your parents do?" He said, "My mom worked in the home and my father was a farmer." The assumptions she perceived he had made about her background and not "belonging" in a professional role left her livid. She commented back to him how "he" had done very well for himself. She stated that at times, you have to name it (racism). "You learn very early that to keep your sanity you have to ask, who owns the problem?" In elaborating further on racism, she stated, "I know when it's my sickness, I hope. I often know when it's somebody else's sickness. If you don't know that by the time you get to a place like this, you'll go crazy."

Dr. Wilson-Oyelaran stated that self-care was critical in order to sustain oneself during leadership challenges. Having a community that can ground you was the form of self-care that she employed. She had a group of three girlfriends that have been getting together every summer since 1969. They are what she described as her "clearness committee." She also said, "Every battle may not be the one to fight."

There are some fights you're going to walk away from... temporarily, maybe permanently... The question is, do you know why? Can you articulate a rationale for what you've done? If it's a rationale that you can live with, it doesn't matter whether other people can live with it or not.

### **Education, Career and Accomplishments**

An alumna of Pomona College, Dr. Wilson-Oyelaran holds a degree in Sociology (BA) and from Claremont Graduate University, degrees in Education (M.A. and Ph.D.). She held her first academic position at the University of Ife (now Obafemi Awolowo University) in Nigeria, teaching in both the departments of Education and Psychology (KZOO, 2016, February 27). At Ife, she served as a department chair and Vice-Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences. While in Nigeria, she was a UNICEF consultant on early childhood development. She was a visiting scholar in Education at North Carolina Wesleyan College and served as an Associate Professor

and Chair of the Department of Education at Winston-Salem State University. She served as Vice President and Dean at Salem Academy and College and briefly served as acting president.

She had not originally considered the presidency.

I was at a professional development program for department chairs and deans and somebody said to me, ‘You ought to be a college president.’ I said, ‘You’ve got to be joking.’ Of course, I had never seen a woman college president at that time... For a long time I really resisted it because teaching was so much the core of who I was.

Dr. Wilson-Oyelaran was named the 17th President of Kalamazoo College in 2005 (KZOO, 2016, February 27). She was both the first female and African American to serve as president of the college.

During her tenure, the student body at Kalamazoo College broadened to include more first-generation college students, and more students of color and international students (MLive, 2016). She also oversaw the creation of a center for social justice leadership. A proponent of equity and inclusion, Dr. Wilson-Oyelaran was honored nationally and locally for her work on behalf of young women and girls (KZOO, 2016, February 27). She received the Visionary Leadership Award presented by the Claremont Colleges Intercollegiate Office of Black Studies, the American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education Gender Equity Architect Award, the Salvation Army’s *Strong, Smart, and Bold Award*, and the YWCA’s Woman of Vision and Lifetime Woman of Achievement awards (Monacelli, 2015) and the Mortar Board National College Senior Honor Society’s Alumni Achievement Award. She also received Kalamazoo Network’s Glass Ceiling Award for breaking through traditional barriers and serving as a role model for all women.

### **The Presidents: Analysis of the Themes (RQ1-3)**

The interviews provided personal insight into the presidents' social justice-related leadership journey. Although the sharing of their background, experience with injustice, racism, violence and civil unrest in the 1960s were often communicated with a "matter of fact" attitude, the impact and emotion of these experiences were evident. These experiences influenced the presidents' definitions of social justice and their values, leadership principles and practices.

#### **Definition of Social Justice (RQ1)**

The presidents defined social justice in a variety of manners that included individual concerns and societal obligations: how one was treated and how one was included in opportunities. The presidents used concepts in their definitions that leaned toward the legal definitions of social justice. These concepts included words such as justice, judgment, equity, fairness and distribution. Their definitions also used concepts that included elements of well-being. These concepts/descriptions were respect, dignity, inclusion, fulfillment of human potential, quality of life and ability to use one's capacities to thrive.

Dr. Drake and Dr. Wilson-Oyelaran defined social justice in a manner that included one's treatment and potential. The descriptions of treatment included dignity, respect and being allowed the ability to thrive. The descriptions of potential included the absence of barriers that prevented the fulfillment of one's potential. This definition was similar to President Jenkins-Scott's, which involved the fair treatment of people. However, she also introduced the concept of distribution. Her definition included equity being distributed to all people. Dr. Mitchell introduced the concept of "rights" to the definition. He stated that each individual had a right to access, inclusion and a quality of life. Dr. Pruitt introduced the concept of judgment, which he

described as people not being judged based on gender, ethnicity, religious preferences, nationality or culture. This inclusion of different groups or identities is supported by Dr. Phillips' definition. He, too, adds the inclusion of diversity to the definition, stating that social justice was not just about racial justice. Dr. Pruitt expanded on Dr. Drake and Dr. Wilson-Oyelaran's inclusion of potential and Dr. Mitchell's inclusion of "rights." To their definitions, Dr. Pruitt added empowerment. He defined it as individuals being empowered to be "architects of their lives." Three presidents added the removal of institutional impediments to people's fair treatment or access (Drake; Pruitt; Wilson-Oyelaran).

Frameworks offered by the presidents included the concept of justice (access, fairness, distribution and equity) and ethical/moral philosophy of doing what was "right" (Mitchell; Pruitt). Another framework, described by Dr. Drake as the "Golden Rule," included interpersonal aspects of how one is treated. These included dignity, respect, and inclusion.

**Social Justice Defined.** A synthesis of all six of the presidents' definition of social justice resulted in the following definition.

Social justice is the absence of barriers that negatively influence an individual or groups' well-being and "potential."

Barriers were identified as institutional, situational, structural, organizational or procedural impediments.

Well-being was identified as one's quality of life or capacity to thrive.

Potential was identified as ability, talent, aptitude, ambition or opportunity.

### **Social Justice Values (RQ2)**

Although only two presidents specifically stated that they could not separate their social justice values from their definition of social justice (Jenkins-Scott; Phillips), all six presidents

were found to have at least one overlapping element between their social justice values and their definition of social justice. There were also two social justice value theme areas that all six presidents had in common. These two themes areas were caring for others and taking action toward social justice. The presidents' other social justice values varied. Themes included "fairness" which was described through words such as equity (Jenkins-Scott) and diversity (Phillips). Another theme included how one was treated. It was described through words such as respect, dignity, empathy (Drake) and inclusion (Phillips; Wilson-Oyelaran). Another theme area was "ideological" in nature. It was described as empowerment and liberation (Pruitt). A final theme area was improvement of society (Mitchell). It was described as improving the circumstances of others. I will review the presidents' social justice values and the themes that overlapped with their definition of social justice. I will follow with the two themes the presidents had in common.

### **Overlapping Definition of Social Justice, Values and Actions**

President Jenkins-Scott's stated that her social justice values were not separate from her definition of social justice, nor were they separate from her identity. She stated, "I have always been an activist outside of work..." She acted on her social justice values in her personal and professional life. She stated that all of these activities were about, "Equity and making this a better society for all." Dr. Phillips stated that he did not see a difference nor could he differentiate between his social justice values and definition of social justice. The overlap for him was through the concepts of diversity and inclusion. His other social justice values included fairness, openness and respect. The overlapping concept between Dr. Drake's definition and values was respect. Dr. Drake, like President Jenkins-Scott, infused social

justice values into his leadership practice. He did not separate his values from his actions. Dr.

Drake stated,

The values I would hold dear are things that would support social justice. I use the values of respect, empathy, integrity and appreciation for the circumstances of others, among the values that I list as guides for myself. I try to apply those on a continual basis, every day, to all the decisions we make, whatever the circumstances.

Dr. Mitchell and Dr. Wilson-Oyelaran's overlapping social justice definition and social justice values were centered on others. Their social justice values focused on caring for others and understanding and improving their circumstances.

Empowerment was the concept that overlapped between Dr. Pruitt's definition of social justice and its related values. He believed that his social justice values involved providing the resources or means to help others to be architects of their own future. Dr. Pruitt's other social justice values include not accepting the status quo and, instead, working toward empowerment and liberation.

### **Two Values in Common: Caring and Action**

The first social justice value agreed upon by all six presidents was caring for others. Examples offered were a need to understand the social context, improve the circumstances of others and ensure equity for all. Dr. Mitchell described his social justice value of caring for others, stating that it was due to the many injustices around him. He realized that improving the circumstances of society would involve everyone working together. His efforts to start his leadership by working on vision, was to engender a "we are all in this together" approach. He described the social justice value of caring for others.

I think it's to care about all people and not just the people around you and your immediate circle, but to really care about people in general from all backgrounds and recognize that we're all together in many respects.

The second value was taking action on behalf of social justice. Dr. Wilson-Oyelaran's actions included considering the viewpoint and needs of others and involving them in problem solving. She describes her actions as,

Putting the people, if it's people I'm working with, putting the people with whom I work at the center of the conversation. Rather than trying to solve it for them, I try to listen and hear them in the resolution of problems.

Other examples offered for acting on one's social justice values was infusing social justice into every decision and in some way every day, (Drake; Jenkins-Scott; Phillips), questioning or not accepting the status quo (Jenkins-Scott; Pruitt; Wilson-Oyelaran) and having a generosity of spirit and giving others dignity when using one's power (Mitchell; Wilson-Oyelaran). Other examples were centering on those you serve and inclusion of their voice (Mitchell; Pruitt; Phillips; Wilson-Oyelaran).

### **Life Experience Impacts on Social Justice Values (RQ2a)**

In their responses to a question about the experience(s) that led to the formation of social justice values, the presidents shared many de facto and de jure experiences or alluded to many experiences while growing up that were related to injustice. However, embedded in these presidents' stories were many examples of cultural wealth that also played a role in the formation of their values and career choices. The male and female presidents identified their primary influences to be different from one another. The primary influences were either experience with injustice for the males and family for the females. All presidents identified the Civil Rights Movement and its events or leaders as a key influence on their values.

The male presidents identified experiences with injustice as the primary influence on their social justice values (Drake; Mitchell; Phillips; Pruitt). Three mentioned that growing up in the South (Alabama and Mississippi) and its racist (and for some, violent) environment and

history influenced their values (Mitchell; Phillips; Pruitt). Dr. Pruitt described his life growing up in Mississippi. “I grew up... in the most segregated, racially polarized and probably meanest state in America... Mississippi.” When Dr. Pruitt’s father specifically took him to see Emmett Till’s body, it was an experience meant to identify the violent reality faced by Black males. Dr. Pruitt stated that growing up in the South shaped the lens of how he viewed the world and helped form his “calling” for social justice in higher education.

Although Dr. Pruitt shared a narrative full of the injustice that influenced his social justice values, his story also included a connection to his family and communities. Influences on his social justice values were his uncle’s calling, the philosophy of Malcolm X, his father’s hard work for the railroad and his Grandmother’s home in Canton, Mississippi as the center of his extended family. All of these influences were a steady and influential backdrop in his consciousness of injustice and social justice. The male presidents did not specifically identify their family as a key influence. However, all of the male presidents stories gave examples of the influence of family members, mentors and role models.

The female presidents emphasized and identified the cultural wealth of their family as the primary influence in the formation of their social justice values. Both female presidents stated that acting on social justice was part of their families’ expectations, and how they were raised (Jenkins-Scott; Wilson-Oyelaran). President Jenkins-Scott stated that her social justice values were due to her family and church’s upbringing. Her social justice values were embedded in her identity as an African American and originated from her religious and family values to give back and make the world a better place. She described growing up near two generations of grandparents and being active in her church. This traditional family and church background embedded social justice values in her identity and actions. Dr. Wilson-Oyelaran



credited the formation of her social justice values to her family environment and expectation of service. Her parents both had careers that had social justice foci (Civil Rights law and Vocational Rehabilitation Counseling) and they were politically active on the national level. Conversations in her household were about Civil Rights, workers rights and Freedom Riders. Both Dr. Wilson-Oyelaran and her parents were also active in social justice–related organizations. Although the female presidents identified their family’s cultural wealth as a main influence on their social justice values, they did also share their awareness of injustice and its influence on their commitment to social justice. These experiences, however, were not identified as a primary influence on their values.

Five presidents mentioned that the Civil Rights Movement (or history), their own activism and coming of age in the 1960s played a key role in the formation of their social justice values (Drake; Jenkins-Scott; Phillips; Pruitt; Wilson-Oyelaran). Dr. Phillips mentioned the racism and the awareness of Civil Rights’ battles his family fought in Alabama. He was very much aware of the Civil Rights history and social movements that occurred in his county and the impact on his family. The Civil Rights Movement and its leaders influenced his social justice values to do what was right.

Three presidents also described the process of “coming to awareness” (Freire, 1998) on issues of injustice and the realization or “obligation” that they would need to act or play a role in “change” or in the “care” of others (Mitchell; Pruitt; Wilson-Oyelaran). Dr. Mitchell described being at a young age in the 1950s and in the beginning of the Civil Rights Movement when he became aware of injustice. He referred to Dr. King and Rosa Parks and the realization that he, too, would need to play a role in countering injustice, caring for others and working together to make the “situation better.” After witnessing the violence in Civil Rights

Movement and experiencing the loss and murders of Dr. King, Malcolm X and Fred Hampton, Dr. Pruitt felt that he had an obligation. He said that he knew the struggles that had occurred for him to have the privilege to “sit here.” He felt that it was his obligation to continue to act on social justice. Dr. Phillips mentioned a similar sense of responsibility. He knew of the blood, lives and sacrifices made by others and Dr. Phillips did not let one injustice go unaddressed. The loss of these lives needed to be honored; he called out injustice every time he saw it.

Two of the presidents responded that there was not a formative experience that led to their social justice values. Instead, there were a “steady stream” or “millions” of experiences with injustice that shaped their values (Drake; Pruitt). Dr. Drake stated that social injustice was always an “omnipresent” part of his existence and that he would be loath to choose any one experience from the era of moving from Civil Rights and out of segregation toward a more integrated society. He said that there would have been a thousand of experiences of what a “system” that did not support social justice were like. The other presidents gave examples of experiences with injustice. According to the male presidents, these experiences included racism in their communities, rigid rules that maintained segregation and inequity in schooling, housing and medical facilities, violence or a daily threat of violence, having to use separate facilities and entrances, being called the N-word and deaths/murder (Drake; Mitchell; Phillips; Pruitt).

For two presidents, religion played a key role in their social justice values and actions (Jenkins-Scott; Phillips). For President Jenkins-Scott, social justice was embedded in her church upbringing to serve others. For Dr. Phillips, it was a part of a “higher calling” to do the right thing. Dr. Phillips described his spiritual values and how they involved letting go of the anger that was triggered by racism. His spiritual and social justice values involved identifying and addressing injustice, building a collective sense of purpose toward social justice and

staying focused on serving others. Regardless of how he was treated, he responded with respect. Doing the right thing and acting on social justice values anchored him. Having a strong moral sense of what was right helped him stay focused.

The words the presidents used to describe this deep commitment to social justice were “calling,” “mission” or “obligation.” Experiences with injustice, their family and, for some, Civil Rights leaders and their the sacrifices were found to have an impact on the presidents’ life-long commitment to social justice. The presidents all had a deep conviction to act on behalf of social justice and their social justice values. Regardless of the primary source of their social justice values, their values were deeply felt. Dr. Drake said that he tried to act on his social justice values in every decision and take action on social justice on a regular basis. The presidents’ values were not something that they could separate from their leadership, principles of leadership or sense of mission.

### **President’s Principles of Good Leadership (RQ2b)**

Either a leadership theory or a moral/ethical framework identified the presidents’ principles of good leadership. The presidents’ principles of good leadership were found to align to the principles of Moral Leadership. This section reviews the presidents’ leadership principles as outlined previously in the vignettes. The frameworks and common themes are reviewed, followed by the study’s four principles of Moral Leadership (see section below) and how the presidents’ principles aligned to this leadership theory.

### **Frameworks**

Although not asked to identify a leadership framework or theory, all presidents articulated a leadership framework that they used to describe their principles of good leadership. Their leadership frameworks varied from actual leadership theories to moral or

ethical philosophies. Only one president (Drake) identified himself as a Moral Leader, using the related term of values-based leadership. Although only three presidents included doing what was right (Drake; Mitchell; Phillips) in their leadership principles, all six presidents included a moral or ethical element in their principles and leadership framework. All six of the presidents included the care of or service to others in their leadership principles. None of the presidents identified as a “social justice leader,” but two did identify with being or having been an activist (Jenkins-Scott; Pruitt).

Dr. Drake described that his principles of good leadership used social justice values were like a mantra. He used his values to consider and guide his decisions. He introduced the moral purpose of doing the right thing into each of his decisions. A values-based decision was based on knowledge and facts and doing the right thing. Acting on one’s social justice values and information, he said, would lead one to the decisions that needed to be made.

Three presidents used the social justice-related leadership theory of Servant Leadership to identify their leadership principles (Mitchell; Phillips; Pruitt). In a document review, Dr. Phillips directly identified himself as a Servant Leader (Phillips, 2015). In the interview, he described himself to be “a man of the people.” His practice of calling out injustice modeled Servant Leadership’s “Leadership by Outrage” (Sergiovanni, 1997). Two other presidents described themselves in a manner that was consistent with Servant Leadership’s focus on acting in the services of others and being a steward of one’s institution (Greenleaf, 1977; Sergiovanni, 1997). Dr. Mitchell’s first leadership principle was caring about people. He said that one gets into a leadership role not because he/she wants the title or the perks, but one gets into a leadership role to be in a position to serve others. He stated, “I always see Servant Leadership as the kind of leadership that's consistent with these values.” Dr. Pruitt described

himself as a steward. His leadership principles centered on those he served. He stated that to be an effective steward, one had to ensure that the institution's resources were used for their intended purpose and not diverted or wasted. Part of stewardship was getting staff and faculty to share the same level of care for those they served. He kept the institution staff and faculty centered on students. His role as the steward of TESU was to make sure that students had the resources to be successful. His application of stewardship also included caring for the institution and the staff.

President Jenkins-Scott stated that social justice was embedded in her identity. Social justice was a part of who she was and a part of her identity as an activist. She did not identify a leadership philosophy, but instead described herself as a collaborative leader. She assessed the situation and adapted her leadership style, for example to be a supporter or authoritative, whatever leadership approach the situation required.

For Dr. Wilson-Oyelaran, social justice was embedded in her leadership, but not in an identity of leadership. Dr. Wilson-Oyelaran described herself as a "trustworthy leader" (Walsh, 2006), who tried to engage difference and be inclusive of voices other than her own. Trustworthy Leadership is another name for Transformational Leadership (Bowie, 1991; Northouse, 2007). It focuses on right and wrong and the needs of society as opposed to self-needs. Like Dr. Drake, she used her social justice values as a mantra to guide her decisions, particularly in regard to her social justice value for inclusion. Her mantra was to ask herself, "Who is missing from the table?" Trustworthy Leadership describes those who operate from a moral or ethical philosophy by setting aside self-interests for the needs of society and moral rightness.

Several president interviews touched upon the emotion and anger that was associated with either disagreement or injustice (Jenkins-Scott; Phillips; Pruitt; Wilson-Oyelaran). During incidents with high levels of anger or emotion, leaders had to be guided by doing what the position of president required one to do in conjunction with leadership principles, such as of doing what was right and being-well-informed (Phillips). In this situation, stepping into the role of the leader could be its own leadership principle. Leadership dictated that leaders make decisions based on the leadership role that they hold (their position as president), not on the personal position (opinion) they hold or the difficult position (emotional/tense place) they find themselves (Phillips). Dr. Phillips elaborated on emotion and leadership, stating that when people become angry or upset about emotional decisions, leaders needed to address distinct definitions of “position.” The key principle in this situation was leadership itself. A leader had to step into their role as the leader and use one’s other leadership principles as guides.

Two presidents stated that courage was needed during difficult or high emotion situations and when making tough decisions (Jenkins-Scott; Wilson-Oyelaran). Dr. Wilson-Oyelaran mentioned that courage was a quality a leader needed, “Sometimes, it’s just hard. You’ve got to have courage because there is no immediate gratification.”

### **Common Principles**

In an analysis of leadership principles, all six presidents stated that their social justice values were connected to their leadership principles. Five presidents identified the use of information, such as knowledge, facts, data or an environmental scan, to make decisions (Drake; Jenkins-Scott; Mitchell; Phillips; Wilson-Oyelaran). Five mentioned caring for others as a guiding principle directing their leadership. They expressed this sentiment with words such as empathy and compassion (Drake; Jenkins-Scott; Mitchell; Phillips; Pruitt). Three noted

a commitment to excellence, which includes the execution of their social justice values and actions (Drake; Mitchell; Wilson-Oyelaran) and three also mentioned integrity of one's words and action (Drake; Phillips; Wilson-Oyelaran).

Dr. Pruitt's leadership principles, although aligning with the Servant Leadership theory used by Dr. Mitchell and Dr. Phillips, emphasized the theory's focus on stewardship. His leadership framework leaned toward the legal definition of justice. He held a perspective of justice that holds one accountable/responsible for his/her actions. His emphasis on stewardship focused on a leader being responsible for the institution's resources and ensuring that other stakeholders did the same and focused on those who the institution served.

#### **Four Principles of Leadership and Moral Leadership (RQ2b)**

Although the presidents used a variety of leadership frameworks to identify their principles, the study found evidence of alignment between the presidents' leadership principles and the four principles of Moral Leadership designated in the study. This next section reviews the designated four principles of Moral Leadership and provides examples of the alignment between Moral Leadership and the presidents' principles of good leadership.

##### **Principle 1: Setting aside self-interest for the needs of the community and society.**

All six presidents' interviews emphasized the importance of focusing/centering on those they seek to serve. Dr. Drake said that one must have an appreciation of the circumstances of others and help people from broader backgrounds to be respected and included in opportunities. President Jenkins-Scott talked about fairness across all groups and the need for compassion. Dr. Mitchell and Dr. Phillips's principles included caring for others. Dr. Mitchell spoke about the importance of holding a universal care for others, stating, "If you care about others, you will care about differential outcomes." Dr. Phillips spoke about the

connection between his spirituality and leadership stating that you must, “Love all people.” Dr. Wilson-Oyelaran emphatically stated, “It is not about you.”

**Principle 2: Critical consciousness and questioning of virtues, values, biases and assumptions that drive individual and institutional actions.**

To focus their leadership beyond their own personal experience, five of the presidents talked about the importance of paying attention to the circumstances of others and/or what was going on around them (Drake; Jenkins-Scott; Mitchell; Phillips; Wilson-Oyelaran). Dr. Phillips strongly believed in the need to acknowledge one’s mistakes, listen to the concerns of others and being willing to change your mind. He valued being honest and transparent with others and one self. Dr. Wilson-Oyelaran often reflected and questioned her own praxis about how best to serve others and not silence their voices. She asked herself critical questions about her responsibility to the larger world.

From the interviews, all six of the presidents were found to have diverse cabinets, councils or advisory groups, whose faculty, staff and student constituencies helped the president to consider all voices in decision-making. Four of the presidents’ consciousness of social justice and injustice was borne at a young age (Drake; Mitchell; Phillips; Pruitt). This awareness came with an understanding of differential treatment and outcomes for groups.

**Principle 3: Infusing social justice into all aspects of leadership and questioning and challenging the equity impact of laws, norms and standards on different members of society.**

The presidents described infusing social justice into their leadership, through descriptions such as “making values-based decisions,” “lead from values,” “calling,” or “doing the right thing” (Drake; Jenkins-Scott; Mitchell; Phillips). President Jenkins-Scott specifically



stated that she did not separate her social justice values from her actions. She stated that one had to consider a social justice lens in everything one does. She said,

We have to look at everything and ask do we have a diversity lens, do we have a social justice lens, do we have a fairness and equity (lens), and do we have an accessibility lens? The fact of the matter is that all institutions that want to have a healthy future should be looking at things from these lenses because the demographics are changing; the world is changing. We're a much more diverse world.

The use of “questioning” of the institution’s policies and progress was a practice used by the presidents to ensure diverse voices were included (Jenkins-Scott; Wilson-Oyelaran). Dr. Pruitt also used questioning to challenge the status quo.

**Principle 4: Taking action on the previous three principles with an emphasis toward public good and social justice.**

A theme that emerged in the presidents’ principles and actions was commitment. (Drake; Mitchell; Wilson-Oyelaran). Dr. Drake stated that social justice efforts have better outcomes when people believe in them and when the work comes from within. Having a high standard and being internally driven makes a difference. When asked about the social justice efforts that he was the most proud of, his examples showed a strong commitment to as he describes, “Bend the arc of institutions toward social justice.” He cited his efforts of inclusiveness and diversity in medical college admissions, the programs created to support diverse students and the permanent state funding the program received. He also helped start a law school; its faculty was amongst the most celebrated and diverse faculty on the campus. He helped increase need-based financial aid for undergraduates. His approach showed the steady progress and process he pursued to act in increments that led to eventual large outcomes. He stated, “It’s just been, bit by bit.” He was awarded the Nickens Award, which is given to an individual who worked at the national level to promote social justice in medical education.

This award was based on Dr. Drake's 20-25 years of work in medical education. His social justice efforts in the diverse arenas and areas modeled social justice action over a long period of time, in a variety of capacities and across institutional areas. He worked toward transformation and created opportunities and pathways for those who were underserved.

President Jenkins-Scott made it a point to be active in social justice in her personal life, in addition to her professional life. Her social justice identity involved philanthropy, political organizations, civic engagement and volunteerism. The focus of her campus' mission was children and families. She extended the college's mission into the community. She called her work and volunteerism mission-driven because, in and out of education, it focused on improving lives.

Dr. Pruitt's longevity in higher education (approximately 34 years as president at Thomas Edison State University and 14 years at other institutions) and his political and civic engagement was driven by his belief that higher education was as much his calling, as working in medicine was for his beloved Uncle Carl. His uncle modeled that one's calling was about healing the people of one's community. Dr. Pruitt's mission was to try to mold and shape institutions back to functioning along the lines of Malcolm X's principle to empower people. His calling was to help give people the tools and resources to be the architects of their own future and create an institution that could remove the irrelevant impediments to students' achievement. Believing that colleges and universities have a fundamental obligation to its students, he did what he knew how to do. He said, he "got" active. "That's what I know how to do." He participated in many local, state and national agencies and organizations that could impact his institution, community and students' outcomes, resources and development. The breadth and scope of Dr. Pruitt's commitment to social justice is life-long.

Another social justice action the presidents took was in their career choices. Four presidents stated that social justice (itself or its values) influenced their career decisions and choices (Drake; Jenkins-Scott; Pruitt; Wilson-Oyelaran). It influenced their choice of profession, accepting a position or the type of institutions they chose to work. The long-term and service-focused emphases of the presidents' careers and their work on and off campus are indicative of their commitment and action on behalf of social justice and public good.

### **Social Justice-oriented Practices (RQ3)**

The vignette for each president gave examples from the president and stakeholders' interviews of the practices that the presidents employed to take action on social justice. The stakeholder interviews yielded many social justice-oriented practices. The wide range in the distribution of stakeholders' responses resulted in small response numbers for each practice. From an analysis of the presidents' social justice-oriented leadership practices, four key themes emerged. The themes were infusing social justice into leadership practice, creating a social justice vision, being prepared for the enterprise and communication. The stakeholder responses were aligned to the presidents in three theme areas: infusion of social justice, communication and hiring/mentoring those with shared social justice values. The practices identified offer many possibilities for social justice-oriented practices.

#### **Practices Identified by Presidents**

The infusion of social justice into leadership was the practice identified by five presidents (Drake; Jenkins-Scott; Mitchell; Pruitt; Wilson-Oyelaran) and also by four stakeholders. It included integrating social justice into all decisions and areas of leadership and acting on social justice everyday. It included modeling social justice through one's words and actions. Questioning one's progress (Have we done enough?), outcomes and inclusion of

diverse voices and plans was another practice that centered social justice in leadership practice. Other practices included acting on one's social justice values, being clear on what they would tell one to do and staying centered on the social justice mission of the institution.

Vision and organizational culture formed another key area of focus for the social justice practices of four presidents (Jenkins-Scott; Mitchell; Phillips; Pruitt). The presidents' practices were to collaborate with all stakeholders on the vision for the campus, be inclusive of the ideas of all stakeholders and ensure voices from a broad range of constituency groups. The presidents collaborated to acknowledge students' role in helping transform the institution and worked across groups to create a shared vision. These practices were implemented to help change the organizational culture and multiply their efforts (Pruitt).

Being prepared for the enterprise was a practice identified by four presidents (Drake; Jenkins-Scott; Phillips; Wilson-Oyelaran). It was described as doing the research and using facts, data and relevant information to make decisions. President Jenkins-Scott stated, "Do your homework. Get the knowledge you need to act on facts. Look at what is happening locally, in the state, nation and globally. In doing so, it becomes clear what the right thing is that you must do."

Communication was the practice used by three presidents (Jenkins-Scott; Phillips; Wilson-Oyelaran) and also three stakeholders. In some instances, communication was centered-around campus climate type incidents. Practices included communication to the campus immediately after an incident and being public and open about the incidents. Communication was a tool used to build relationships and a joint vision with stakeholders. It was found to be effective when it was timely, transparent and done in all forms (in person, written and social media). It also involved consulting with relevant stakeholders.

Hiring/mentoring those who held social justice values reflective of the institution and leadership's shared values was a practice offered by three presidents (Jenkins-Scott; Mitchell; Pruitt) and also four stakeholders. President Jenkins-Scott stated, "We want people who believe in the mission, who are devoted to the mission." The institution's hiring practices infused diversity in the processes and selection committees and were supported by four stakeholders (two administrators and two faculty members) who represented four presidents (Jenkins-Scott; Mitchell; Phillips; Pruitt). It also involved the mentorship and professional development of staff in social justice pursuits and values.

### **Practices Identified by Stakeholders**

The stakeholder interviews yielded many themes for the presidents' social justice-oriented leadership practices. Three themes triangulated with the presidents' responses: infusion of social justice, communication and hiring/mentoring those with shared social justice values. The wide range of practices diffused the stakeholder responses leading to small numbers identifying each practice. The top themes that emerged from the stakeholder interviews are included. The number of stakeholders identifying the practice is shown, in addition to the number of presidents they represented.

Lending the agency of the president's office was a practice identified by six stakeholders (three administrators, two faculty members and student) representing five presidents (Jenkins-Scott; Mitchell; Phillips; Pruitt; Wilson-Oyelaran). This practice was described as serving as the institution's representative and champion and being vocal to the cabinet and other stakeholder groups about social justice efforts. Another practice was serving as a model of professionalism, calmness and civil discourse to the campus and local community. It included responding to incidents and demonstrations and following through on

any consequent agreements and commitments. It included using the agency of the president's office to address injustice and support the needs of diverse groups. Finally, it was personally participating in key social justice-oriented co-curricular efforts and activities.

Infusion of social justice into leadership was a practice identified by four stakeholders (administrator, two faculty members and student) representing three presidents (Mitchell; Pruitt; Wilson-Oyelaran). It was described as working on transformation in all campus areas, placing people on boards to advocate for social justice and addressing social justice at structural and individual levels.

Accessibility was a practice identified by four stakeholders (two administrators, one faculty member and student) representing four presidents (Drake; Jenkins-Scott; Mitchell; Pruitt). It involved having an open door policy and being willing to engage in dialog and talk things through with all stakeholders. It was fostering an environment where all members of the institution could share their ideas with the president. It was mentoring current students and the creation of opportunities for prospective students to be mentored by current students.

Outreach was another practice identified by three stakeholders (administrator, faculty member and student) representing three presidents (Drake; Jenkins-Scott; Mitchell). It involved making sure the university was accessible to all students, bringing prospective students to the campus and going out into the community. Practices included holding special events for youth, such as symposiums and campus visits. It also included recruiting students from the local region and participating in outreach to local public schools and targeted groups.

Communication was a practice identified by three stakeholders (two administrators and a student) representing three presidents (Jenkins-Scott; Mitchell; Phillips). It was described as being the first to speak up after an incident. Communicating to the campus community both in

person and through email. Pulling in representatives from stakeholder groups to discuss key issues and having them report back to their constituency groups.

Hiring/mentoring those who held social justice values reflective of the institution and leadership's shared values was a practice offered by four stakeholders (two faculty and two administrators) representing four presidents (Jenkins-Scott; Mitchell; Phillips; Pruitt). This practice incorporated inclusive processes, mentorship and consideration of people of color and under-represented groups. It also included recruiting and giving consideration to members of underrepresented groups, promoting diversity and being inclusive of a wide range of voices in human resource processes.

The stakeholders and presidents offered other social justice-oriented practices. The practices were pushing against resistance by challenging the status quo and calling out injustice. Another practice was aligning the capacity of in person and online services to match changing student demographics. Another practice was connecting the university to the community and helping the community during a crisis. Another practice was participating in or creating student-learning opportunities and participating through co-curricular activities, presentations in classrooms or at student organization meetings. Another practice was serving as a role model and modeling professionalism when addressing resistance or anger and following through after a crisis.

### **Practices Summary**

Communication, infusion of social justice into all areas of leadership and hiring/mentoring those with shared social justice values were the social justice-oriented leadership practices identified by both presidents and stakeholders. Overall, the stakeholder responses were small and spread across a wide range of themes areas. The interview findings

in two institutions found similar social justice leadership practices noted by both of the respective institution's president and stakeholders. For example, in the SPU and K College interviews, both the presidents and stakeholders' practices were running parallel to each other and their responses aligned. The stakeholders and president used the same racial incidents for the examples of the presidents' practices. They also identified a few of the same practices such as lending the agency of the president's office to call out injustice and addressing racism "head-on" to the campus community in person and in writing.

Administrators were the stakeholder group found to be the most aware of the presidents' social justice practices. The stakeholders identified more social justice-oriented practices than the presidents themselves identified. Although the stakeholder responses had small numbers, the general response from the stakeholder interviews was that the presidents' social justice practices (and values) were visible, identifiable and understood to be social justice-related.

### **Chapter Summary**

The presidents' definition of social justice included that absence of barriers that negatively impacted an individual or group's well-being or potential. The presidents' experiences with injustice, the historical events and social movements in the 1960s and cultural wealth of their family and/or religious upbringing influenced their definitions of social justice and the formation of their social justice values. For some presidents, there was not a distinction between their definition of social justice and their values. The presidents' social justice values were reflected in their leadership principles, practices and, for some, their career choices and identity. The presidents varied in their leadership frameworks, but all six presidents identified caring for others and acting with a moral purpose as part of their social justice values and



leadership. The long-term and service-focused emphases of the presidents' careers and their work on and off campus were indicative of their commitment and action on behalf of social justice and the public good. The interviews found identifiable practices used by the presidents to take action on social justice and alignment of their leadership principles to Moral Leadership. The social justice practices identified by the presidents and stakeholders found triangulation in three practice areas. The presidents were found to model Moral Leadership that infused social justice in their leadership framework, values, principles and practices.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **Introduction**

Having reviewed the formation of the presidents' social justice values and their impact on leadership, I now review the presidents and stakeholders responses to the challenges the presidents face and the strategies they employ to be successful in social justice-oriented leadership practice. The research question for the chapter is noted below.

#### **Chapter Research Question (RQ4)**

4. What do presidents and campus stakeholders say are the challenges the presidents face and strategies the presidents employ to integrate social justice actions into their leadership practice?

The chapter will begin with the key challenges the presidents faced when they acted upon social justice in the leadership of their universities.

#### **Challenges**

Three key themes emerged in the data analysis of the presidents' interviews about challenges they face in their social justice-oriented leadership practices. They were racism directed at or involving diverse students, frustration with the slow speed of change in addressing diversity needs and finally, responding to current student movements/actions. Four key themes emerged in the data analysis of the stakeholders' interviews about the challenges the presidents faced in their social justice-oriented leadership practices. They were the race of the president, understanding the complexity of intersection, budget and external pressure. I begin with the presidents' responses.

## **Presidents Say... Presidents' Social Justice Challenges**

Examples from stakeholders' interviews were included in some of the challenge areas to support the presidents' findings. I will review the three key themes identified by the presidents as social justice challenges.

### **Racism**

Racism was identified as a challenge by four presidents (Jenkins-Scott; Mitchell; Pruitt; Wilson-Oyelaran). It involved students and faculty and manifested in a variety of contexts.

**Assumptions and Bias about Students of Color.** Racism often came out as biases, assumptions and unconscious stereotypes held by faculty and staff about students of color (Wilson-Oyelaran). The presidents were challenged with changing the organizational culture to be inclusive of diverse students. The faculty's willingness or inability to understand their own isms, biases and assumptions about diverse students' qualifications interfered with the transformation efforts of the institution and negatively impacted campus climate. Getting faculty to be aware of or change their attitudes and recognize the institution's responsibility to adapt or be inclusive of the institution's changing diversity was a challenge. An example given by Dr. Wilson-Oyelaran was about the increase in the number of students from all ethnic backgrounds and social classes. Faculty made the assumption that every Black student was poor and Latino students were former at-risk students referred by an outreach program. The reality was that half of the Black students' parents were professors in neighboring universities and not all Latino students were at-risk students. If there were concerns about students' progress Dr. Wilson-Oyelaran objected to attitudes that blamed the student for deficits that were in their previous schooling or the institution's unwillingness to address its pedagogy to address the needs of the student.

Pushing against attitudes that students of color were not qualified was a challenge, particularly when the success of outreach efforts and rebranding efforts to portray an inclusive campus resulted in increased diversity numbers, but the attitudes welcoming them on campus were hostile and biased. Dr. Mitchell described a situation at a previous institution where he worked. When there was an increase in students of color, Dr. Mitchell stated, “There were people who were not accustomed to having... students of color in medical schools.” A question (a microaggression) arose when faculty asked, “Are these students qualified to be here?” Dr. Pruitt mentioned that he, too, had to challenge the assumption that diversity required a tradeoff and sacrifice of qualifications. “One of the things that I've had to fight against all the time is the idea that to find people of color you have to make compromises and concessions about their background, training and capacity...” (Pruitt). When institutions are transforming to increase their student diversity, it is often difficult for presidents to get the institution to change as the same pace.

**Faculty Resistance.** Another example of racism was identified as cultural insensitivity in the area of academic freedom. President Jenkins-Scott described faculty being accused of not being culturally sensitive in exchanges that occurred in the classroom. One of the disagreements was about the use of the N-word. According to Dr. Wilson-Oyelaran, “In the academy, one of the biggest hurdles is that most faculty members define themselves as liberal and find it very difficult to accept the fact that they, themselves, have seeds of whatever -ism you want, in this case racism, deeply embedded in their praxis.” President Jenkins-Scott stated, “We talk the social justice language, but then academic freedom creeps up, so there's a conflict there. Students are saying, ‘We don't want the N-word used in our class,’ and they're (faculty) saying, ‘Academic freedom,’ so that's the rub.” Dr. Wilson-Oyelaran believed that getting buy-

in from faculty for training was challenging. Although students demanded that training for faculty be required; forcing change on others had historically not yielded positive results. Academic freedom and the governance of faculty through their own academic senate, took decision-making out of the purview of the president. Navigating student concerns about faculty's lack of cultural sensitivity in the classroom remained a difficult area for presidents to negotiate and collaborate toward change within the structure of higher education's shared governance model (Jenkins-Scott; Wilson-Oyelaran). The president could appeal to the senate, but could not enforce any directives. Although getting faculty buy-in for changes in curriculum and diversity awareness training was a challenge for some presidents, another did not see working toward curriculum changes as a challenge. Dr. Phillips stated that he saw curriculum changes as something that was needed. He felt that at his institution people were aware and wanted to make sure the students had a good experience in the classroom. Compared to responding to racial incidents, working to infuse social justice into the curriculum was a good thing and not a source of pressure.

### **Slow Speed of Change**

Four presidents (Drake; Mitchell; Phillips; Wilson-Oyelaran) described the tension and challenges they faced surrounding the slow speed of change in addressing diversity needs. It manifested in a two manners for the presidents. The first was that due to resistance the institution was not changing to meet the needs of increasing student diversity and the second was that change was not occurring fast enough. Two presidents argued that higher education had the responsibility to make changes needed by society and to respond to the needs of local citizens (Phillips; Mitchell). When institutions made these changes, such as bringing in diverse students with diverse experiences and student service needs, it was difficult to get buy-in for

the changes (Phillips). Dr. Phillips and Dr. Wilson-Oyelaran expressed frustration about people's resistance to change and to do the work required for social change. The number of diverse students had increased, but there was resistance to changing how the institution operated. The curriculum did not change to be inclusive of diverse student's concerns. There was also an attitude that the students needed to change, as opposed to the institution changing to meet the needs of the campus' increasing diversity. Resistance to change resulted in students demonstrating about the cultural insensitivity in the classroom or racial incidents on campus. Dr. Drake spoke of the importance of institutions to move from a variety of isms that tend to marginalize and hold people back (such as race-based discrimination), to a more just society. He stated that moving from a society/system that supported social injustice to one based on fairness and equity was an extraordinarily difficult cultural shift.

Presidents and their stakeholders confirmed the slow process of change. Two stakeholders with a long tenure at their respective institutions stated that they could see the "rapid" changes that occurred on the campus, due to the arrival and influence of having a president of color who promoted social justice. The stakeholders stated that the demands for immediate change came mostly from those with a shorter span on campus, such as students, who perhaps did not see change as happening fast enough.

### **Responding to Student Demonstrations/Actions and Acts of Intolerance/Racism**

Four of the presidents mentioned a recent experience in responding to racial incidents on campus (Jenkins-Scott; Mitchell; Phillips; Wilson-Oyelaran), with a student stakeholder at a fifth campus stating that her campus and president also had to respond to racial incidents or Black Lives Matter actions/demonstrations. Dr. Pruitt and stakeholders at TESU stated that

they traditionally did not have student demonstrations because TESU did not have students in residence.

Interviews with the president and a student stakeholder at K College and document review (Eligon, 2016, February 3) stated that the demonstrations on the campus focused on curriculum, language over an Intercultural Center, student governance and campus climate and identity. Dr. Wilson-Oyelaran stated that the pressure after an incident was “difficult,” citing pressure from all stakeholders, including the board. Dr. Phillips stated that when there were racial incidents or acts of intolerance on campus or in the local community, he too received various kinds of pressure from multiple constituencies. Even though he did not sweep things under the rug and tackled incidents head on, the incidents nonetheless brought their share of pressure.

The pain that students were experiencing as a result of racism and racial incidents was both a challenge area and concern expressed by one president. According to the president, the pain of the experience interfered with the student experience and with their student development process. Another president stated that each generation needed to identify their own way of advancing social justice initiatives and also learn from previous efforts. Bridging how to understand and respond to student needs and their autonomy in student movements was a challenge (Jenkins-Scott; Wilson-Oyelaran).

**“Got You” Culture, Politics and The Break Down of Dialog.** The inability to engage in dialog in current politics was a challenge expressed by Dr. Pruitt and Dr. Wilson-Oyelaran. The current United States presidential campaign, Dr. Wilson-Oyelaran stated, “is also promoting a ‘got-you’ culture as opposed to a dialog culture. We attack and bite before we do anything else.” Dr. Pruitt supported the difficulty in engaging in conversation in a manner

that could find common ground. When we disagree with others, we not only disagree with them, he stated, “We demonize them.” Dr. Pruitt stated,

You're not only wrong, you're evil, racist, communist, fascist, capitalist, imperialist, or militarist. The ability to come together in some civic dialog to talk about the common interest and shared sacrifice, those discussions aren't even happening.

Dr. Pruitt stated that the academy should be a place where controversial discussions, even offensive speech, is tolerated, examined and refuted. This happens because you shine a light on it not because you refuse the discussion or debate. Speech may be abhorrent and repulsive and you may disagree, but campuses ought to have those discussions, encourage diversity, different points of view and be tolerant of them. Instead of finding the common good, people are trying to have their point of view win. It has become about winning and losing, not about what is right and wrong. He stated that the manner in which dialog was conducted made it difficult to find common ground.

Social media was an added challenge (Jenkins-Scott; Wilson-Oyelaran). There was no control of the message; anything put out on social media became credible and misinformation became reality very quickly. “Once it’s out there, it’s hard to correct” (Wilson-Oyelaran). Dr. Wilson-Oyelaran argued that social media provided invisibility without accountability and created a very nasty discourse. A faculty stakeholder supported the president’s findings about the challenge of the lack of discourse and models for civil discourse in society, stating that the president struggled with how to create models on campus that provided a counter narrative and counter example to what students were experiencing, "Out in the world."

### **Stakeholders Say... Presidents’ Social Justice Challenges**

In the data analysis of the stakeholders’ interviews, four themes emerged in the challenges presidents faced while acting on social justice-oriented leadership. Similar to the



responses in the social justice practices' section, the stakeholders' responses were diffused by the wide range of answers they offered. The challenges are described by first using the number of stakeholders that made up the finding, then the number of presidents. The themes with the highest stakeholder numbers are described.

Six stakeholders (four administrators, one faculty member and student), representing five presidents, identified the president's race as the top challenge. Three to five stakeholders, representing three presidents each, identified the next three challenges. The challenges were intersectionality, budget and external pressure. Examples from the presidents' interviews were included to support the stakeholders' findings in some of the challenge areas.

### **Race of the President**

Although three stakeholders (administrator, faculty and student) representing two presidents (Mitchell; Pruitt) stated that the race of the president had no impact in leading the university, five other stakeholders (four administrators and one faculty member) representing four presidents (Jenkins-Scott; Mitchell; Phillips; Wilson-Oyelaran) disagreed. The stakeholders offered the following examples of how the presidents' race became an issue. An administrator and a faculty member stated that it was harder for the presidents to push social justice initiatives through. One administrator mentioned the challenges in the intersection of a female president's race and gender. Referring to a female president, the administrator stated that the president faced more resistance "than a white man would." Two administrators and a faculty member stated that African American presidents faced more scrutiny in their decision-making and in whom they mentored. If they made a decision over a diversity area or mentored a person of color, particularly an African American, they were accused of favoritism.

**Obama Variable.** Three stakeholders (two administrators and one faculty member) representing three presidents made parallels between the university presidents and the first African American President of the United States (POTUS), Barack Obama. The faculty stakeholder called it the “Obama variable,” stating that African American higher education presidents too faced added challenges and resistance from different sources. The comparison to POTUS manifested in three manners. The first comparison was from an administrator, who mentioned intra-group dynamics where other Black individuals expected the president to have some of the same thoughts, wants and vision because they shared a racial identity and assumed experience. The second comparison, offered by a faculty and administrator stakeholder from two separate presidents, was an accusation of favoritism. The faculty person stated that it came from people who thought the president favored a particular group over others and who felt that they or their issues were not getting the same attention or advocacy. The administrator stated that people assumed that “doing the right thing” and acting on the diverse needs of students, faculty or staff was favoritism. In the third comparison, an administrator stated that having the institution’s first African American president had the same impact as having the country’s first African American president. She stated, “It’s awakened... White fragility.” The administrator described this fragility as White people who are unhappy with the changes being made on the campus and who are expressing sentiments about diverse people that were not based on real data or information. This supports the presidents’ challenge theme of racism, where questioning students qualifications was not based on data, but on assumptions about diverse students’ inability to succeed.

Although the presidents were not asked if they experienced racism while serving as president, four of the presidents mentioned experiencing racism during their presidency

(Drake; Jenkins-Scott; Phillips; Wilson-Oyelaran). Dr. Drake and President Jenkins-Scott stated that racism directed at them was often subtle or could be explained as characterized by something else. President Jenkins-Scott stated that the difficulty with microaggressions was that it could be difficult to pinpoint which of her identity (ies) was (were) the target of the microaggression. She felt the microaggressions, but could not determine if they were directed at her race, gender or because she came to the presidency from a non-academic route. The presidents experienced undercurrents and microaggressions of racism from constituencies on and off campus. Dr. Drake further stated that the same cycle of circumstances where people are treated with disrespect, these sources of resistance, are ubiquitous.

### **External Pressure**

Five stakeholders (two administrators, two faculty and one students) representing three presidents (Mitchell; Pruitt; Wilson-Oyelaran) identified accountability expectations from multiple constituencies as a challenge for the presidents. Constituency demands included the institutions' immediate students, faculty and staff and external stakeholders, such as prospective students, parents, alumni, trustees, politicians and government. External challenges offered by the stakeholder were the conservative politics of their surrounding areas and their resistance to social justice decisions and use of resources.

### **Intersection**

Intersection involves the consideration of not just one social group or single issue of identity, but instead the consideration of the intersection of social group identities such as race along with consideration for the individual's other identities such as sexual and gender identities, social class, geographic, regional or professional identities (Crenshaw, 1989, Stewart & McDermott, 2004). Three stakeholders (two administrators and one student) representing

three presidents (Jenkins-Scott; Phillips; Wilson-Oyelaran) raised intersection of identities as a challenge. Examples of identities, beyond racial identities, described by the participants included socioeconomic diversity, geographic diversity (rural farming and large urban communities), social and political differences, students with disabilities, sexual orientation, gender expression and other identities and subgroups. Dr. Mitchell shared an example in which students raised concerns about intersection and identities beyond the single focus on race. While working on Ethnic Studies requirement, questions arose about the inclusion of the experiences and intersection of gay, lesbian and bisexual students, women and gender studies and international students. A challenge was getting the dominant group to understand the complexity of intersection and identity and to address this diversity in the campus' inclusion and education efforts (Mitchell; Wilson-Oyelaran). Dr. Wilson-Oyelaran stated, "As we've opened the doors, the economic doors, the complexity of what we call racism is infused by a variety of other things." These "tensions" play themselves out on university campuses and impact discourse and social justice.

### **Budget**

Three stakeholders (three faculty) representing three presidents (Jenkins-Scott; Pruitt; Wilson-Oyelaran) mentioned the challenges of running the enterprise when outside influences counteracted their ability to balance budgets and maintain diverse and inclusive campuses. One worried about how institutions implemented their own policies about inclusion and access when the state had not provided sufficient resources to enroll eligible students, another worried about how they would implement a 12% cut, and a third stated that social justice decisions were more heavily challenged when the budget was tight. The presidents also mentioned budget challenges and the impact of dwindling state resources on the campus and its social justice efforts (Phillips; Pruitt). Dr. Phillips stated that the year was almost over and they did

not yet have a budget from the state. Dr. Mitchell stated that faculty argued, "Why should we be taking students when we don't get enough money?" He stated that the tax base that supported schools and education had decreased and the state was failing to provide funds to maintain or increase opportunities for students of color just as their numbers had started to increase. The reduction of financial resources has impacts on the institutions ability to maintain social justice initiatives.

When one institution offered funds to run a local community center, a stakeholder shared that there was some sentiment that the community center, focusing on nearby underserved populations, was not the responsibility of the institution. Because of worry over potential financial shortfalls, campus public opinion was against the university's development and support of services to the local community and co-curricular learning opportunities for students. President Jenkins-Scott argued that a campus whose vision statement embedded the betterment of families and children in its mission had to include the betterment of the surrounding community.

### **Strategies**

The presidents and stakeholders articulated various strategies employed by the presidents to promote the effectiveness of social justice-oriented leadership. The key themes showed triangulation between the two groups. This area showed higher stakeholder numbers in comparison to the practices and challenges' sections. Because both groups found the same key themes, the common strategies will be reviewed using both groups' findings.

#### **Presidents and Stakeholders Say... Presidents' Social Justice Strategies**

In the analysis of data from the president and stakeholders' interviews, both groups identified three key social justice-oriented leadership strategies. The key themes were

leadership itself, communication, and leadership teams. President and stakeholders' responses will be reviewed together. Communication and Leadership Teams were interconnected themes and are described together as well.

### **Leadership Itself**

Leadership itself was the strategy identified by five presidents (Drake; Jenkins-Scott; Mitchell; Phillips; Wilson-Oyelaran) and eight stakeholders (five administrators, two faculty and one student) representing all six presidents.

One example of the presidents' social justice-oriented leadership strategies was identified as modeling ethical moral philosophy in their leadership through the focus on social justice and the ethics of "doing the right thing." The statements about consistently acting on behalf of the ethics of social justice were identified directly by four of the presidents (Drake; Mitchell; Phillips; Pruitt). Three of the presidents described holding true to their social justice values and ethics as a key task of leadership (Drake; Jenkins-Scott; Wilson-Oyelaran). One administrator also described his president's leadership actions as "doing the right thing," and the student stated that her president was driven by his own standards, which were clearly articulated to hold social justice as central to his leadership framework. Dr. Phillips stated that one has to commit oneself to fairness, equity, honesty and integrity when one is leading. These values come into play in terms of how well you treat others and are willing to listen to their concerns. Stakeholders described the presidents' leadership itself to be collaborative and not top down. To get maximum buy-in, the presidents were not authoritarian. They were described as being transformative, diplomatic or a catalyst, doer or risk taker. They set boundaries with their boards and knew their own purview. They participated in campus group processes, worked on building relationships by listening to diverse voices and were physically present at

social justice-related programs either as a participant or as the initiating party. They also led by example and acted on their social justice values, which was described by one faculty stakeholder who stated that her president “walked the walk.”

### **Communication and Leadership Teams**

Because communication examples were used to describe the effectiveness of leadership teams and other advisory groups, the themes of communication and leadership teams will be discussed together.

Communication was the strategy identified by three presidents (Jenkins-Scott; Phillips; Wilson-Oyelaran) and eleven stakeholders (five administrators, two faculty and four students) representing all six presidents. The Leadership Team was the strategy identified by four presidents (Jenkins-Scott; Mitchell; Pruitt; Wilson-Oyelaran) and six stakeholders (two administrators, three faculty and one student) representing four presidents (Jenkins-Scott; Mitchell; Pruitt; Wilson-Oyelaran).

Eleven stakeholders stated that all six presidents had various communication mechanisms they put into place to create dialog and foster communication, trust and transparency. The key avenue for communication described by both presidents and stakeholders was the leadership team’s role in being a conduit of communication to other campus constituency groups. The presidents also convened a variety of groups that included community councils, regular focus groups with students, regular round tables or advisory group meetings with different stakeholder groups, meetings with student organizations or open meetings to let people know what was happening. Open meetings could be state of the union type addresses or meetings called to specifically address campus incidents.

Dr. Phillips stated that emotions are often brought into situations and one cannot make decisions off of emotions. If it is a major decision, he takes it to the governing groups and gets input and feedback. He stated, “That’s the reason I have those president’s roundtables with faculty, staff and students... I get feedback and feel that I am making a well-informed decision when I take action.”

In addition to the value and effectiveness of having a diverse cabinet or leadership team, another key function of the leadership team related to social justice was to participate in creating an organizational culture and shared vision that could address the institution’s social justice objectives. Leadership teams were both responsible for understanding the needs of the institution, developing a response and helping to create a culture of inclusion and shared values.

Other communication methods described by both presidents and stakeholders were the use of speeches and emails to take a stand against oppression or community and/or campus climate incidents. The student stakeholder from Ohio State described the importance of personal communication with the president and communication of the values and goals from the campus’ strategic plan.

This last year, there was a protest rally on campus for Black Lives Matter, and he agreed to meet with the organizers of that group to listen to their concerns and the issues that they have with the university structure. So, that's the direct impact that I see as a student, on how he is a social justice leader and how he deals with social justice issues. It's part of his 2020 vision for the university, of making sure that we have inclusive excellence for all students...

Holding the campus accountable for social justice, communicating these values in writing and in person to the institution and being present to listen and speak up when the principles of community were violated, showed the various ways the president communicated. It was



important in upholding social justice values and civility and supporting the needs of diverse communities.

Being an effective communicator was important in helping build buy-in for social justice initiatives. The presidents used communication to establish transparency, co-construct the campus' vision, respond to campus climate incidents and share plans and the reasoning behind decisions. It helped foster open dialog, communicate strategic plans and express support for all constituencies.

Stakeholders offered several other strategies. Although these next strategies were offered by a small numbers of stakeholders, they offer an understanding of the presidents' efforts. The strategies included working on the organizational culture. This was done through mentorship of others and fostering shared values, embedding diversity into the institution's identity and practice and having standards for their achievement. Other strategies included self-care and taking the time for reflection, guidance and gathering of other perspectives. Another strategy was questioning stakeholders when needed and holding the institution accountable for social justice and diversity efforts. Questioning was also directed at themselves, in order to ensure that they were constantly acting in the interests of public good.

### **Chapter Summary**

Although racism was a key challenge articulated by the presidents and stakeholders, the presidents focused more on the challenges of resistance to change, budget, intersection and external pressure than they did on racism and resistance directed at them personally. Whether a microaggression or a campus racial incident, the presidents and stakeholders' interviews gave evidence of the president addressing it head on. The presidents employed a variety of strategies. They included using the agency of their office and sharing the campus values and

vision. Through their own leadership efforts, partnership with leadership and advisory groups and communication, the presidents centered the institution on social justice. Communication and leadership teams were an effective strategy to help the presidents move through resistance, address incidents and structural barriers and co-construct shared values and vision.

One of the administrators stated that one of the things that she most admired about her president, whether it was responding to resistance or a campus racial incident, was that the president did not allow herself to be marginalized. She stated that the beauty and strength in which the president approached her work was inspiring. The president might have had a harder time than someone who was not a person of color, but she had been successful in transmitting respect, sharing the importance of diversity and maintaining her authentic leadership style and care for the university. Similar sentiments were conveyed about each of the presidents and their leadership ability to handle social justice challenges, harness the values and talent of their leadership teams, communicate the values of the institution and stay on course about who they were and the responsibility they held to lead the institution.

## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **Introduction**

The university president's image as a moral leader is one that is expected to enhance the reputation of the campus, inspire the development of character, educate generations of students and contribute to public discourse and the life of the nation (Nelson, 2000). In reality, it includes pleasing some constituencies on one occasion and incurring heated resistance and outrage on another. The study's presidents face similar challenges and resistance. In addition to understanding how African American and Black presidents act on their social justice values in the leadership of their universities and an understanding of social justice practices, challenges and strategies, the study outcome also hopes to make the following contributions to educational research and leadership practice. One is to understand how social justice-oriented leaders sustain their efforts in light of resistance. The second is to identify lessons learned from senior leaders that can benefit the preparation of 21<sup>st</sup> century leaders and offer recommendations. The third is to identify practices and strategies that partner with Critical Race Theory's call for leaders to interrogate or challenge systems of inequity and how social justice-oriented leaders manage expectations held of them to be activist leaders while also being responsible to protect their institution from risk. First, I will very briefly review the study.

### **Discussion of the Findings**

The qualitative study investigates higher education six African American and Black presidents nationwide and 13 stakeholders from their universities or colleges. The study elicits the presidents' definition of social justice (RQ1), social justice values (RQ2) and the experiences that lead to their social justice values (RQ2a). It also identifies the impact of these social justice values on the principles of good leadership (RQ2b) and investigates the

presidents' alignment to the principles of Moral Leadership. Finally, the study identifies the presidents' social justice-related practices (RQ3) and their challenges and strategies (RQ4).

Injustice, family expectation and cultural wealth are found to have influenced the presidents' commitment to social justice, social justice values and the moral purpose of their leadership efforts. The presidents' sustained practice of social justice-oriented leadership and decision-making shows evidence of Bensimon's (2005) equity lens and its argument supporting a leader's responsibility and relationship to society. Social justice and a moral philosophy serve as the presidents' cognitive frame; they govern the presidents' beliefs, values and actions. The presidents infuse social justice into their guiding principles and leadership efforts on and off campus and in their personal and professional lives. The presidents' values, leadership framework, moral authority and the cultural wealth of their family, community and its leaders serve to sustain the presidents' commitment and capacity for social justice-oriented leadership.

### **Value Formation**

The presidents in the study identify experiences with injustice or family expectations as having key influence on their social justice values. As their stories unfold, the presidents' cultural wealth also reveals itself to be a driving force in their social justice value formation and actions. Cultural wealth, according to Yosso (2005), states that the experiences of people of color, in a critical historical context, reveals accumulated assets and resources in their histories and lives. In order to survive and resist oppression, communities of color utilize community cultural wealth that includes a vast array of knowledge, skills, abilities and contacts.

The interviews with the presidents provide examples of cultural wealth that have a strong impact on the presidents' values, beliefs, leadership principles and goals. In addition to their family's expectations for them to improve society, the presidents describe a variety of assets from their family and community's cultural wealth. Their examples include being raised near multiple generations of grandparents, witnessing of a "calling" actively displayed by a beloved uncle or parent, parents and/or sibling's education and the family's value for education. Other examples are witnessing a strong work ethic and parents actively involved in social justice organizations and in their profession. Other assets include strong values for justice, serving others and family traditions connected to one's community, such as "coming home" to their parent's neighborhood for the summer or for births and spending time near one's grandparents. There are also strong ties to religion and church and religious and/or spiritual values' influence on the call to serve others. These findings support Davis and Harrison's (2013) argument that social justice is most effective when its practice emerges from a deeply integrated sense of self in the world. The presidents' family, church, neighborhood and community leaders provide the foundation for the presidents' value formation and critical consciousness.

The presidents' cultural wealth and their experiences with injustice are equally profound, both leaving strong social justice values in their wake. This finding is consistent with Goddard's (2003) belief about a leader's values and belief systems and the inability to separate actions from value positions. These presidents do not separate the moral imperative of creating a just society from their values, leadership, principles and decisions. The career and type of institution they choose are influenced by their strong values for social justice. The presidents approach their work with a "mission," and "calling" and with commitment. Some choose the

presidency because it gives them the platform and ability to act on social justice in a higher capacity. Their decisions are guided by a religious conviction and/or a moral and ethical philosophy to do what was right. The presidents are encouraged by their families, mentored by leaders and motivated to pursue a higher education, both as a vocation and as a vehicle for social justice, transformation and leadership.

### **Moral Authority and Sustaining Social Justice Efforts**

In leadership toward “rightness,” the presidents embrace what Sergiovanni (2007) calls “sacred authority.” The presidents’ leadership counterstories reflect a paradigm shift from managerial authority to moral authority (Sergiovanni, 1992). They counter injustice through their value for community, collaboration, listening, understanding, acting on truth and knowledge, inclusion, pushing against resistance, and knowing who they are. They use these values and their moral and ethical base to guide their leadership. Sergiovanni (1992) contends that a leader needs to focus on the values of group membership, emotion, sense and meaning, obligation and duty. This was in opposition to sole reliance on the rational and logical values of scientific management and its emphasis on data and empirical evidence. The presidents’ collaborative leadership approaches and their efforts to build campus communities and leadership teams who share values, beliefs and commitment to social change define the presidents’ practice of moral authority (Sergiovanni, 2007).

Being grounded in a moral and ethical base is foundational and key in sustaining the presidents’ social justice-oriented leadership. The presidents’ leadership frameworks vary, but the underlying similarity of their approaches is the reliance on moral authority and doing the right thing to counter injustice. The moral authority of their leadership principles, collaborative approach and actions are based on what was right and good, as well as on what works

(Sergiovanni, 2007). Dr. Pruitt describes this when he shares that in his twenties he ran a program where a consultant was contracted to evaluate its affirmative action plans. The plan was criticized for being too simplistic. Dr. Pruitt had attached to the plan the program's results. The institution was the most diverse public institution in the state, in both the staff mentor group and in the student body. The graduation rate was also the same percentage as the enrollment. The university led the state and had all of the metrics as evidence. When criticized for having great results with a "lousy plan," Dr. Pruitt took responsibility for the plan and the results, stating that, "It was not about the type of plan you make; it is about the actions you take and the people you hire." Acting on moral authority (Sergiovanni, 2007), he was able to hire the right people and together they centered the community on shared values and beliefs and collectively achieved their goals.

Three of the presidents' leadership principle of "do the right thing" (Drake; Mitchell; Phillips) supports moral philosophy and its premise to act on universal rules about right and wrong (Knights & O'Leary, 2006). Four of the presidents' virtue-based ethics, described as honesty, ethics or generosity, guide the presidents to trust their moral conviction and the decisions they make under its guidance (Jenkins-Scott; Phillips; Pruitt; Wilson-Oyelaran). Their moral purpose sustains them in times of controversy (Drake; Mitchell; Phillips). Deeply rooted values guide the presidents' ethical leadership. Their practice includes various social justice-related frameworks, such as social justice leadership theories, ethical philosophies and in particular, the purpose-driven (Bogotch, 2000) conviction of Moral Leadership.

The presidents and stakeholders' descriptions of the "calling," "mission" and "collective journey to do something greater than oneself" (Jenkins-Scott; Phillips; Pruitt) support Freire's (1993) premise of the moral responsibility of leaders to use their vocation to

act and transform the world. The presidents' narrative about the formation of their values and its deep impact on their leadership principles and actions also support Schlechty's (2009) premise that transformational leaders need to have a commitment that is "bone deep." All presidents articulate the deep conviction and commitment of their social justice values. As President Jenkins-Scott states, social justice is in her DNA.

Practicing Servant Leadership's "leadership by outrage," (Sergiovanni, 1997), the presidents do not maintain the status quo by remaining silent. They are described by stakeholders as addressing racism "head-on," not allowing him/herself to be marginalized and pushing against those who are resistant to change. The presidents also "question" themselves, their leadership teams and institution to determine if all voices are being served and if they have done the most that they can on any given issue. Challenging the status quo ensures inclusion and models the ethical component of Moral Leadership and also Servant Leadership. Dr. Drake, Dr. Phillips and Dr. Mitchell state that the rationale of their decision-making and actions are based on social justice because it is the right thing to do. Holding to social justice values is a key theme in the presidents' practice and alignment to Moral Leadership. The ethics of right or wrong, justice or injustice, or status quo or meeting the needs of a changing society align their leadership to the four principles of Moral Leadership designated for the study. Their respective leadership frameworks align by centering on others, questioning their own worldviews and that of their institution's practices and organizational culture. The presidents anchor their leadership on social justice and the ethics of doing what they see as the right thing.

The cultural wealth of their family upbringing, religion, ties to their community, proximity to grandparents and great grandparents, modeling of family member's work ethic or calling, influences of Civil Rights' leaders and social movements, connections to other



activists, strong ties to one's neighborhood and community and participation in civic organizations grounds the presidents in the moral and ethical "rightness" of their values and their own calling or sense of mission. The presidents hold strong values for community, act on religious, spiritual or ethical values around right and wrong, believe in the importance of giving of themselves in service or activism and consider the needs and improvement of society as part of the guiding frame of their leadership. These experiences run counter to the presidents' many experiences with injustice and racism. Injustice triggers the presidents' critical consciousness to think beyond oneself and improve society. Injustice and cultural wealth result in deeply felt social justice values and a calling and/or career direction for one's work. Although the presidents offered a variety of self-care strategies, such as reflection, prayer, a circle of friends or colleagues, fitness or being a role model or good example, it is their strong social justice values that sustain their commitment and morale and serve as the rationale for their actions, particularly in times of difficulty or controversy.

## **Recommendations**

### **Addressing Inter-generation "Disconnections"**

Although presidents have the task to help educate a generation of student leaders (Nelson, 2000), the study found a "disconnect" and tension between generations (between presidents/faculty and the students) that make it difficult for the presidents and students to fully engage with one another. This section will review examples of the "disconnect" between groups and include recommendations.

**"Racialized" Space.** Getting the campus community to engage one another about "racialized" space and address the rage and anger of the national and campus climate is central to students feeling heard and valued. Dr. Wilson-Oyelaran spoke of how faculty finds comfort

in theoretical work on the politics of race. With the small number of faculty of color, their help is needed (President Jenkins-Scott) to be a part of the students' community, enable a sense of belonging and also serve as advocates for student needs. Faculty's focus on theory does not address the immediacy of the students' anger, fear or rage (Wilson-Oyelaran). How each group copes with racism and injustice is different and does not allow the groups to come together in a way that the students need. President Jenkins-Scott said, "...the nature of where we are as a society now, ...there's no putting the genie back in the bottle for what students expect and want and (the) kind of conversation and dialog they want to have." Validating and understanding student anger, hurt, fear and other emotions and understanding the impact of the current student experience and campus climate are critical to collaboration, dialog and trust. A recommendation is to address the needs of "Black space" including identity, race, campus climate and curriculum at the student, faculty and institutional levels.

**Expectations for Change.** Another key issue in the generation "disconnect" is that students want immediate change while the presidents' know that fast change is not always feasible. Dr. Wilson-Oyelaran stated,

When you're 18, you really think you can fix it. When you're 68, you look at it very differently. The arc of the universe is long, it bends toward justice and it backtracks. I don't think any of us, at 18, realized how much it was going to backtrack. If you look at it from a historical perspective, yeah, things are better. They're terrible, and they're better.

The presidents value their role as mentors in the leadership development of students (Jenkins-Scott; Mitchell; Wilson-Oyelaran). The difficulty, at times, is how much more work needs to be done. Student expectations and demands for immediate change add further weight to the presidents' response to the slow pace in which change occurs. A recommendation is to partner with students in developing the response plan, timeline and priorities.

**Parallel Journeys.** Another example of the disconnect between generations is that presidents and students are at different points in their leadership process and also have a shared racial experience that they must navigate both together and separately from one another. Both generations (presidents/faculty and students) are also experiencing tension from racial incidents, student demonstrations/action and social movements; coming together on a shared racial experience is not always assumed. It is not that the presidents do not support students' activism. The source of tension is that, at times, the president and students' parallel journeys, needs, roles, expectations and approaches diverge from one another's. Presidents are trying to determine how to assist students in their developmental process and psychological well being while navigating their own role, emotions, process and well being. A recommendation in this area is to explore community self-care needs, identifying the topics that will be discussed together and separately, in what arena and who might best facilitate the conversation.

**Assumptions about the President.** In interactions with students during demonstrations and in its corresponding dialog, Dr. Wilson-Oyelaran describes how students perceive her role as an administrator to be devoid of her race. She stated,

They put you in the same category that I would have put a White male, who had never had any experience of discrimination. Then when I talk to people they will say, 'I didn't know that.' I'll say, 'Did you ever ask that?'

The presidents are viewed as administrators and with distrust. Some of it stems from being perceived as the person with power, but there is also a preconceived notion of what the president believes or assumptions that the president comes from a privileged background and will not understand their struggle. When there are student demonstrations or concerns, the presidents in the study were found to respond with additional dialog, listening, storytelling of their experience and presence at campus events, classes and meetings. A recommendation for

leaders of color is to consider how to connect with students of color in an authentic manner about any shared racial experience. Leaders can address this dynamic in their interactions with students by sharing their story and making time for individual and group conversations.

**Self-care.** Dr. Wilson-Oyelaran stated that students had expectations about her role as the president that put her on a pedestal. Even though Dr. Wilson-Oyelaran verbalized her beliefs about the importance of social justice during campus demonstrations, students were unforgiving if she made a mistake and did not live up to their expectations. Not being seen as an ally by Black students during social movements was difficult. To cope, Dr. Wilson-Oyelaran checked in with other presidents. She had a colleague at another college who was going through the same thing at about the same time. Dr. Wilson-Oyelaran said,

We would get on the phone at night. Check in with one another, but, also, discuss what strategies we were using or just making sure we weren't going crazy... There's the kind of gender thing where we could be honest, "Look, this happened to me and the Black students called me in a room and they did this to me. My kids just went to my board of trustees." We could kind of pull (that) apart.

A recommendation is to have colleagues who are not affiliated with the campus that can be a trusted soundboard, source of support and counsel.

**Intersection.** The dialog about intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989; Stewart & McDermott, 2004) and the identification with one or more social group identities is taking place in activist movements and in the tension within movements. Intersection was a key issue in the establishment of the BLM movement (Garza, 2014). The founders started the movement to ensure the inclusion of the voices that were marginalized in previous Black liberation movements. Tension is surfacing within the African American community between BLM activists who embrace inclusion of communities, such those who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer and Civil Rights leaders who are largely the clergy (Wilson-Oyelaran).

President Jenkins-Scott stated that higher education's institutional structures have not been geared towards supporting students' "intersectionality." She recommends that social justice processes and procedures need to be examined and adjusted to not just address issues of race and culture, but include the intersection of a variety of other social group identities and experiences such as gender, economic diversity, etc.

### **Addressing Race**

**Racial Politics.** Educational researchers argue that race and other isms need to play a prominent role in preparing future leaders (Gooden & Dantley, 2012; Jean-Marie, et al., 2009; McKenzie, et al., 2008). When asked about the impact of her status as a person of color in shaping any values she holds toward social justice, President Jenkins-Scott laughed. Her laughter made it clear that race is a salient issue for people of color. She stated, "Yeah, I can't escape it. I am a person of color." Although race was a theme in all of the presidents' interviews, not all presidents had time in their schedule to describe a complex construct in a brief timeframe. A recommendation for future leaders is to consider the impact of their own and other's race, how it manifests in assumptions, attitudes, actions and decisions and the manner in which racism and microaggressions can be addressed with a wide range of stakeholders.

**Surveillance.** The stakeholders describe the surveillance (Sherman et al., 2010) the presidents receive due to their race. This supports Waring's (2003) findings that the presidents' race is a salient issue due to the high visibility of being African American, particularly on a predominantly White campus. Although many individuals are "proud" of having an African American president, there are assumptions that race is not a problem. However, the study finds that the presidents' decisions receive extra scrutiny. The presidents are perceived as showing

favoritism when they make social justice-related decisions that impact marginalized communities, when they mentor people of color and when they diversify their cabinets. The study finds evidence that the presidents prepare for decisions through the use of data and knowledge and consultation with a wide range of constituency groups. A recommendation is transparency in communication to the campus about social justice needs, goals, actions and decisions and how social justice is connected to the campus mission. Communication can emphasize that diversity benefits the entire campus and is not just about the numbers (Pruitt; Wilson-Oyelaran), but is also about supporting efforts toward inclusion (Slaughter, 2009) and success (Pruitt).

### **Sustainability of “Leadership by Outrage.**

A reason for this study is to understand the impact of activist-type practices expected of social justice-oriented leaders, such as Servant Leadership’s “leadership by outrage,” (Sergiovanni, 1997) and Critical Race Theory’s call for leaders to interrogate or challenge systems that structurally maintain privilege and the status quo (Freire, 1998; Furman, 2012; Gooden & Dantley, 2012; Lopez, 2003). A question was whether or not these practices negatively impacted a leader’s ability to persist or thrive in their profession and protect the institution from risk. The study finds that the presidents’ frameworks and practices “model the way” (Kouzas & Posner, 2007) for others on how to address racism and resistance and how to infuse social justice in leadership (Solorzano, 1997). The presidents are found to model “activist” leadership and hold their institutions accountable to doing the right thing. The presidents are respected by their stakeholders for their social justice leadership principles and actions, and particularly for how they call out injustice. Recommendations are to use the agency of one’s office to both promote community principles and condemn racial incidents.

Other recommendations are to foster the campus' critical consciousness and dialog about issues of injustice; examples of the institutions actions in this area include hiring chief diversity officers and opening a social justice leadership center and/or equity resource center. Another recommendation to maintain the "sustainability" of an activist-oriented type of leadership is to use a collaborative leadership style and work with others to co-construct a shared vision.

### **Presidents' Recommendations**

Whereas President-Jenkins Scott hopes that past generations have laid the foundation and the groundwork to get closer to having a more just, fair and equal society, Dr. Pruitt worries that the current generation is being left with a "bad hand" due to the decline in the college going rates and a college education not being affordable for a majority of the national population. To identify social justice concerns for emerging leaders, the presidents were asked to identify the current social justice needs in higher education. Four key areas emerged: 1) the K -12 infrastructure (financing, facilities, resources, etc.) to support the basic foundation of education; 2) K-12 system's capacity to prepare students for college access and success; 3) access and opportunity to pursue higher education and 4) higher education's role in building communities and creating a just society. Perhaps, these are the recommendations that the presidents can pass forward for future leaders to carry the torch.

### **Limitations**

This was a nationwide study with only six key participants. The number of supporting interviews per campus averaged two out of the three stakeholders targeted per institution. The stakeholders' positions varied, due to some campuses not having that particular office or non-participation. There was not the same number of stakeholder interviews per campus.

Although visits to the institutions provided information about campus' social justice climate, the study focuses on the president. A method to study the institution was not a part of the study. The practices or strategies applicability to other campuses will vary by institution type, governance model or campus climate context.

The online questionnaire provides information on the presidents' background, but does not provide contextual information. Using a Likert scale response option for the parents' level of activism does not ask about the context for their level of activism. If the president's parents are not active in social justice efforts in 1950s Mississippi, was it by choice or was it not safe to do so? The different manners in which the questionnaires are conducted (electronically or in-person) impacts the breadth of the responses. To understand the context of the presidents' experiences, more depth in the questionnaire and/or qualitative questions are needed.

The depth and breadth of the data elicited from the presidents may have been negatively influenced by limitations on the presidents' time due to campus events and priorities. Not all presidents responded to the question about how race impacted their leadership, which impacted the depth of exploration in this area. Follow up with the presidents was limited. More in-depth data may have emerged from several interviews with each president.

### **Implications for Future Research**

A significant impact on the social justice values of each of the presidents is the era in which they grow up. The injustices they witness and/or experience play a prominent role in their consciousness surrounding issues of justice. The Black Lives Matter Movement has the potential to influence a new generation of leaders and their values and principles. An added theme for research is the exploration and impact of inter-generation responses, values and



interactions in social movements. In the future, researchers may want to study the development of social justice values' formation linked to different kinds of social movements and varied experiences with social injustice.

Goodman's (2011) question about how leaders can create environments that infuse social justice efforts in a manner where everyone has the capacity to succeed, feel safe and empowered still remains a concern. Addressing the psychological pain inflicted by racism and its violence remains a concern. The paradigm shift in social justice to include psychological well being is a timely area for future research given current day student demonstrations about racial incidents and hostile campus climates. The impact of intersection of gender and other identities in social movements and campus climate is also a key finding and an area for future research.

Dr. Pruitt states that in order to be a good Black President, you have to first be a good president. In what manner and circumstances can and do Black presidents embrace their "Blackness?" What is the impact and perception held of leaders of color when they "embrace" their identity as a leader of color and act from that lens or identity and when they do not? What is the impact on the campus and faculty, staff and students of having a person of color as president? How do leaders of color navigate the surveillance they receive when acting on behalf of social justice in general or when mentoring or acting on the social justice needs of members of their own or other marginalized communities? How can other groups articulate their needs while supporting the needs of marginalized groups? Other topics related to social justice include the purpose of higher education and its role in social change and how presidents address faculty resistance, academic freedom challenges or White fragility.

## **Value of the Study**

Although the presidents' time to participate in the study was limited, most stated that they consented because of the importance of the topic. The agreement to participate in the study speaks to the importance and timeliness that social justice holds in the minds (and hearts) of higher education presidents at this point in history and in their careers.

The goals of the study are to define social justice and identify tangible actions that can be practiced in its pursuit. Providing examples of how a president can successfully navigate environments with multifaceted social justice problems and use practices such as questioning the status quo and embedding social justice in their vision and work can benefit leaders in and outside of higher education. Preparing for challenges and resistance while having an understanding of tangible social justice practices and assets from cultural wealth can assist leaders to pursue and sustain their social justice-oriented efforts. The study hopes to contribute to educational research leadership counterstories that model the paradigm shift toward moral authority. The study has the added value of assisting leaders who are grappling with current social movements and student demonstrations.

One important value of the study is to help future or brand new leaders understand the historical background of social justice and how to work with current constituencies around issues of social justice. This knowledge is essential to preparing social justice leaders.

## **Conclusion**

Grounding themselves in a strong value system and sense of mission, the presidents in the study are able to navigate the changing socio-political landscape, current social movements, competing constituency needs, resistance and the 24/7 demands of the presidency. Their life-long social justice efforts modeled their ability to “work from wherever they were to

transform society” (Mitchell) and effectively conveyed the sacred authority of moral leaders. The presidents’ counterstories, as shown in the vignettes, frame both their experiences with injustice and the impact of their cultural wealth. Families and communities provide strength and the moral conviction for the presidents’ career path, calling and leadership.

The study’s findings in the practices, challenges and strategy areas can assist in the preparation of 21<sup>st</sup> century leaders. Although the presidents identify with several leadership frameworks and use various leadership principles, all six presidents have a moral/ethical base (Hitt, 1990; Miller, Brown & Hopson, 2011) to their leadership principles and framework. The presidents’ strength-based approaches involve acting from their values, centering on those they served, and following leadership principles that are guided by moral purpose.

Infusion of social justice into leadership (Gooden & Dantley, 2012; Jean-Marie, et al., 2009; McKenzie, et al., 2008) is found to be a key practice used by the presidents. The most used leadership framework is through the practices of Servant Leadership (Greenleaf, 1977; Sergiovanni, 1997; Northouse, 2007). The presidents use “leadership by outrage” and “questioning” and direct these practices at their leadership teams and at the institution’s policies and practices. The presidents “give voice to injustice” (Northouse, 2007) by addressing racial incidents “head-on” in person and through a variety of communication mechanisms. They model Moral Leadership’s “consciousness raising” (Miller, Brown & Hopson, 2011) for others on how to approach injustice and dialog. They respond to social movements, such as Black Lives Matter demonstrations and involve students in finding solutions. This supports Servant Leadership’s focus on empowerment of communities (Northouse, 2007). The presidents support the developmental process of students’ growth as

future leaders and offer partnership and mentorship opportunities for students to participate in the campus response to student actions/demonstrations.

The presidents work with a variety of constituency groups to address organizational culture and co-construct vision. This supports Transformational Leadership's premise to get others to transcend self-interests (Northouse, 2007). Although all presidents experience racism during their presidencies, they do not allow resistance to distract them from their purpose and do not allow themselves or others to be marginalized. Their social justice values are embedded in their identity, actions and principles and have a strong influence in their leadership, career choices and decisions.

Their longevity as presidents, extensive leadership in civic organizations and the high regard in which their stakeholders hold them shows evidence that being active as a social justice leader and working consistently and assertively toward social change is sustainable. The presidents' social justice focus and "questioning" of processes did not put their institution at risk. The stakeholders felt strongly that the presidents held the institution accountable to advance social justice actions and were highly respected for their commitment, efforts, values and principles. As one stakeholder stated about the president's social justice efforts, "He walks the walk and engages in action." Acting from social justice values, the presidents' modeled the paradigm shift from managerial to moral authority.

The president and stakeholder interviews, document reviews and campus visits gave insight into the institution's campus climate, responses to national movements and social justice needs and actions. The institution types are different in size, geography and academics, yet each one experiences challenges in areas that impact its social justice efforts (i.e. budget, student demonstrations, enrollment and access issues, curriculum, diversity needs, etc.) and

pull on the presidents' values, leadership and principles. Most of the campuses are responding to racial incidents and/or Black Lives Matter-related demonstrations; others are in the midst of state budget cuts and politics with the state, their college or university system and/or trustees. Racism is a reality for the presidents, their universities and their stakeholders. The discourse around racism, social justice, intersection and social media is a challenge. The need for leaders to practice Moral Leadership remains. The ethical responsibility to be inclusive of all communities, address social justice needs in access and opportunity, confront racism, microaggressions and racial incidents and address campus climate, inclusion, intersectionality and psychological well-being continues to be a priority for presidents and the preparation needs of future leaders.

### **Personal Reflection**

My motivation for conducting this study was to provide a structure for the voices and narratives of social justice leaders in the discourse on leadership. Leaders in our college and universities, such as the Drs. Mitchell, Phillips and Pruitt, developed some of the original Civil Rights' era equity-type programs. They, at the ages of 22 and 24, built these programs from the ground up during what can be described as the most turbulent social movement era in our country's history. By challenging myself to research a group outside of my own identity, I had to navigate the tension and fine balance of learning while not claiming to be "expert" of their experience. This resulted in a rich journey of critical consciousness. I was gifted with meeting stellar leaders at critical points in their career and life stage. The presidents' experiences and wisdom and the research experience itself offered countless opportunities for discussion and reflection. The presidents did not question my interest in their histories about (in) justice or

leadership; they embraced me as a fellow traveler who was trying to make sense of one's responsibility (and praxis) in creating a just society.

There was a sense of urgency to gather the narratives, lessons learned, strategies and practices before these influential leaders retired. President Jenkins-Scott and Dr. Wilson-Oyularan are retiring at the end of the term. Two more presidents are now or will soon be in their 70s and may soon follow. Colleges will have a higher number of retirements of leaders of color, with less of their numbers entering the profession (ACE, 2012). Legislation, issues and concerns change. However, the legacy of these presidents' wisdom is something that we can carry forward through educational research. Although I do not aspire to the presidency, I do aspire to participate in the training of current and future leaders. In the words of Dr. Drake, I want to be prepared for the enterprise and also contribute to research that can support the leadership development of those who want to practice with a social justice lens.

## APPENDICES

### Appendix A

#### President Pre-interview Questionnaire

Thank you for agreeing to participate. The purpose of this study is to understand how personal experiences define and influence the values and leadership practices of African American presidents from four-year higher education institutions. Complete this background questionnaire before the in person interview.

Answer this section about your parents or family as noted:

1. Where were your parents born?
  - A. Parent 1: City, State, Country
  - B. Parent 2: City, State, Country
  
2. What was the highest educational level obtained by each of your parents?

<u>Parent 1: Choose One.</u>	<u>Parent 2: Choose One.</u>
A. Do not know	A. Do not know
B. Elementary or middle school	B. Elementary or middle school
C. Some high school	C. Some high school
D. High school diploma or GED	D. High school diploma or GED
E. Some College	E. Some College
F. Bachelors Degree	F. Bachelors Degree
G. Masters Graduate/Professional Degree	G. Masters Graduate/Professional Degree
H. Doctorate/Terminal Degree	H. Doctorate/Terminal Degree
  
3. If you selected some college or higher for your parent(s), were any of their respective colleges a HBCU?

Parent 1: Choose One. Yes No	Parent 2: Choose One. Yes No
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4. What is the highest education level/degree obtained by each of your siblings?

Choose one for each sibling:

  - A. Do not know
  - B. Elementary or middle school
  - C. Some high school
  - D. High school diploma or GED
  - E. Some College
  - F. Bachelors Degree
  - G. Grad Masters level Graduate/Professional Degree
  - H. Doctorate/Terminal Degree

Sibling # 1 \_\_\_ If some college or above, were any a HBCU: Choose one: Yes No  
Sibling # 2 \_\_\_ If some college or above, were any a HBCU: Choose one: Yes No  
Sibling # 3 \_\_\_ If some college or above, were any a HBCU: Choose one: Yes No  
Add siblings as needed.

5. Would you describe your family as? Choose One.
  - A. Lower Income
  - B. Middle Income
  - C. Higher Income
  
6. As you were growing up, what was your family's level of awareness surrounding issues of social justice? Choose One.
  - A. High
  - B. Medium
  - C. Low
  - D. None
  - E. Do not know
  
7. As you were growing up, how would you describe your family's activism level on social justice issues? Choose One.
  - A. High
  - B. Medium
  - C. Low
  - D. None
  - E. Do not know
  
8. If rated Low to High, what type of affiliation was the focus of their social justice activism? Choose all that apply.
  - A. Education institution
  - B. Faith-based organization
  - C. Local organization
  - D. National organization
  - E. Global organization
  - F. Military
  - G. Athletics
  - H. Do not know
  - I. Other: Describe

Answer this next section about yourself.

9. What are the city, state and country of your birth?
  
10. What is your age bracket? Choose One.
  - A. 30-39 years
  - B. 40-49 years
  - C. 50-59years
  - D. 60-69 years
  - E. 70-79 years
  - F. 80-89 years



11. How do you identify yourself based on race and or ethnicity (ies)?
12. What is the highest degree you have obtained? Choose One.
  - A. Some high school
  - B. High school diploma or GED
  - C. Some College
  - D. Bachelors Degree
  - E. Masters Graduate/Professional Degree
  - F. Doctorate/Terminal Degree
13. If you selected some college or higher, were any of your colleges an HBCU? Choose One. Yes No
14. Why did you choose your particular college(s)?
15. As a college student, describe your level of awareness surrounding issues of social justice.
  - A. High
  - B. Medium
  - C. Low
  - D. None
16. As a college student, describe your level of activism surrounding issues of social justice.
  - A. High
  - B. Medium
  - C. Low
  - D. None
17. If you answered Low to High on the above question, what type of affiliation influenced your social justice activism? Choose all that apply.
  - A. Education institution
  - B. Faith-based organization
  - C. Local organization
  - D. National organization
  - E. Global organization
  - F. Military
  - G. Athletics
  - H. Other: Describe
18. If you answered Low to High on the above question, describe a key theme/objective of your social justice activism?

## Appendix B

### President Interview Protocol

1. How do you define social justice?
2. How do you define social justice leadership?
3. Share a formative experience(s) (if any) that helped shape any values you consider to be social justice values.
4. What social justice values and leadership principles resulted from this experience?
5. What do you identify as the top 3 social justice needs in higher education today? Share an experience where you acted upon the top social justice needs you previously identified. *What do you identify as the sources of resistance/hurdles to their attainment in your university leadership practice? What were the personal and professional challenges? What strategies did you employ? Were they successful? Who did you involve and why?*
6. Describe the areas and the types of actions you employ to integrate social justice into your university leadership practice? *Is it possible to integrate social justice into all tasks of the presidency? Why or why not? What are your social justice leadership practices or actions and when, how and with who do you employ them?*
7. How has the educational landscape changed in regard to social justice over the course of your presidency? How have you made adjustments to accommodate these changes? Have you seen gains or losses? If so, what were they and how did they impact your leadership actions?
8. How do your social justice values influence your beliefs about the principles of good leadership? *Identify your leadership principles or framework.*
9. What type of pressure, if any, do you receive from others to act on social justice efforts? *Who was the source of the pressure? Intra or intergroup pressure? How did you resolve it?*
10. How (if at all) has your status as a person of color shaped any values you may hold toward social justice and leadership? *How has race impacted your leadership in the university? How has race impacted your social justice-oriented leadership in the university?*
11. Share a situation where you have mentored another person on being “true” to their social justice values in leadership? *What was their challenge, what strategies or self-disclosure did you offer? Did you offer any advice on self-care/motivation? If so, what was it?*
12. How do you sustain yourself as a social justice-oriented leader? *How do you get others to listen or act on social justice issues?*

13. What wisdom would you share with 21<sup>st</sup> century leaders about leadership and acting on their social justice values? *What words of caution, encouragement or lessons learned would you pass forward?*
14. Is there anything you would like to add to the interview (*anything that I did not know to ask*)?

## Appendix C

### **President Email Contact Sample**

Dear (insert president name here),

I am embarking on the first of its kind, a national study about how African American college or university presidents acquired values related to social justice and how they have acted on them in the running of their university. The study is for my dissertation in Education at UCLA.

The qualitative study is partially funded by the UCLA Institute of American Cultures. Its findings will have implications for engaging in dialog across groups and preparing 21<sup>st</sup> century leaders. The time commitment for participation will be approximately 3 hours in winter of 2016. The main interview is in-person (2 hours). The pre-interview questionnaire and review of the interview transcripts will be done via email.

To augment my study, other leaders from the institution will be interviewed about the leadership actions related to social justice that they have witnessed. These supporting interviews involve a 30-minute phone interview with a campus stakeholder (academic senate faculty member, an administrator and a student government leader).

I would like to have a brief conversation with you to discuss your willingness to be a participant and avail myself to work around your schedule. I look forward to hearing from you.

Respectfully,

## Appendix D

### President Consent Form

#### PRESIDENT CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Integrating Social Justice Values in Educational Leadership: A Study of African American University Presidents

#### IDENTIFICATION OF INVESTIGATORS

(Insert researcher's name here) is conducting a qualitative research study.

You were selected for the study because a document review showed you to have advocated or taken action on a social justice related effort and to be an African American/Black president of a four-year college or university. Your participation in this research study is voluntary.

#### WHY IS THIS STUDY BEING DONE?

To understand how African American/Black college or university presidents (with a documented history of social justice advocacy) acquired their social justice-oriented values, how they act on these values in the running of their university and how these actions align with the principles of purpose-driven/moral leadership.

#### WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF I TAKE PART IN THIS RESEARCH STUDY?

If you volunteer to participate in this study, the researcher will ask you to do the following:

- One (1) Pre-interview questionnaire (online or via email)
- One (1) interview with the researcher (in-person in your city of residence) and a review of the interview transcripts (email)
- One (1) Transcript review and written reflection (via email)
- Questions will focus on social justice definition and experiences that led to social justice values; leadership practices, challenges and strategies.
- Assist in referrals for interviews with supporting participants: One faculty Academic Senate member, one administrator, such as chief diversity officer and one student government leader.
- Copies of all products of the study will be provided to the:  
UCLA Institute of American Cultures  
Ralph J. Bunche Center for African American Studies
- Research findings might be used for professional development activities such as conference presentations, courses and scholarly publications including journal articles and books.

#### HOW LONG WILL I BE IN THE RESEARCH STUDY?

Participation will total about 3 (non-consecutive) hours during the following time period:

ARE THERE ANY POTENTIAL RISKS OR DISCOMFORTS THAT I CAN EXPECT FROM THIS STUDY?

There are no anticipated risks or discomforts. Participation is voluntary.

ARE THERE ANY POTENTIAL BENEFITS IF I PARTICIPATE?

You will not directly benefit from your participation in the research.

The results of the research may benefit educational research and the training of 21<sup>st</sup> century leaders. Copies of all products of the study will be provided to the UCLA Institute of American Cultures.

WILL INFORMATION ABOUT MY PARTICIPATION AND ME BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL?

The presidents and their institutions will be identified, unless a pseudonym is requested. You can do so in writing at anytime of the study.

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can identify you will remain confidential. It will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law. Confidentiality will be maintained by means of a password secured computer. A secure transcription service will have access to the data.

WHAT ARE MY RIGHTS IF I TAKE PART IN THIS STUDY?

- You can choose whether or not you want to be in this study, and you may withdraw your consent and discontinue participation at any time.
- You may refuse to answer any questions you do not want to answer and still remain in the study.
- You have the right to review the audio file and transcript made as part of the study to determine whether they should be edited or erased in whole or in part. The researcher and the contracted transcription party will have access to the audio files. The audio files will be erased one year after the conclusion of the study, unless written consent is given to extend this period.
- You have the right to ask for pseudonyms to be used for yourself, the participants and descriptions of your institution using Carnegie Classifications. You can request in writing, the use of a pseudonym at any time during the study.

WHO CAN I CONTACT IF I HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS STUDY?

If you have questions or concerns about the research, you can contact:

The Researcher or the Researcher's Faculty Sponsor:

(Insert names here)

Office of the Human Research Protection Program (OHRPP):

If you have questions about your rights while taking part in this study, or you have concerns or suggestions and you want to talk to someone other than the researchers about the study, please call the OHRPP at (insert phone number here) or write to:

(Insert address here)

You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your records.

## Appendix E

### Member Check Sample Email

Thank you for your assistance in facilitating (insert president's name here) participation in my dissertation study. It was such a pleasure to meet you both last week and visit (insert institution name here). To conclude (insert president's name here) participation, I need the following item in the next two weeks. Let me know if another time frame better meets the president's time needs.

**Transcript Review:** The priority is for the president to confirm that the attached interview's content reflects his/her intended statements. The president can make any changes directly on the document; save it and email attach it back. If there are no changes, an affirmation to proceed with the transcript "as is" would suffice.

**Final Reflection:** If the president has any final reflections on the topic of the study, here is a prompt for consideration.

*"Reflecting on the personal or professional experiences shared during the interview write about any additional thoughts or reactions of the impact of these experiences on your social justice values and university leadership practice." Please comment on anything you would like to add or anything that I did not know to ask.*

To avoid asking a lot of background questions, I am reviewing the campus website. I would appreciate any additional items, such as a CV or any additional biographies, you may have beyond the website materials.

I appreciate your facilitating this final participation element of the study with the president. Please do contact me with any additional questions.



## Appendix F

### Supporting Participant Interview Protocol

The first three questions are about you and your potential frame of reference.

1. What is your role on campus? Choose one.
  - A. Administrator
  - B. Faculty
  - C. Student
2. Do you identify as a person of color?
  - A. Yes: If so, how do you identify?
  - B. No
3. Briefly describe how you define social justice and social justice leadership.

Answer the remaining questions about the President.

4. Describe the areas and actions the president takes in his/her university role that focus on social justice, if any?
5. What are the president's social justice-oriented leadership practices?
6. What are the (*personal and professional*) challenges, if any, the president faces at the university when acting on social justice-oriented objectives? *What are the president's sources of resistance, if any?*
7. What are the strategies employed by the president, if any, to enhance the success of his/her social justice-oriented objectives? *What social justice actions does the president employ that are successful?*
8. How does the president get others to listen or act on social justice issues?
9. What is the impact of the president's race, if at all, in leading social justice efforts at the university? *How do campus stakeholder groups respond to the president due to his/her race?*
10. What social justice values permeate (are reflected in) the president's leadership? *How do you see the president taking action on these values in the course of his/her leadership?*

## Appendix G

### Supporting Participant Consent Form

#### CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Integrating Social Justice Values in Educational Leadership: A Study of African American University Presidents

#### IDENTIFICATION OF INVESTIGATORS

(Insert researcher's name) is conducting a qualitative research study.

You were selected as a possible participant in this study because your college or university president agreed to participate as the primary participant in the research and because of your leadership role on the campus. Your participation in this study is voluntary.

#### WHY IS THIS STUDY BEING DONE?

To understand how African American/Black college or university presidents (with a documented history of social justice advocacy) acquired their social justice-oriented values, how they integrate these values in the running of their university and how these actions align with the principles of purpose-driven/moral leadership.

#### WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF I TAKE PART IN THIS RESEARCH STUDY?

The researcher will ask you to participate in the following activities:

- One (1) Interview (Via phone or in person)
- Copies of all products of the research will be provided to the:  
UCLA Institute of American Cultures  
Ralph J. Bunche Center for African American Studies

#### HOW LONG WILL I BE IN THE RESEARCH STUDY?

If you volunteer to participate in this study, the researcher will ask you to do the following:

- One 30-minute qualitative interview (phone or in-person).
- Questions will focus on social justice and the president's leadership practices, challenges and strategies.
- Research findings might be used for professional development activities such as conference presentations, courses and scholarly publications including journal articles and books.

#### HOW LONG WILL I BE IN THE RESEARCH STUDY?

Participation will take a total of about 30-minutes during the \_\_\_\_\_ time period.

ARE THERE ANY POTENTIAL RISKS OR DISCOMFORTS THAT I CAN EXPECT FROM THIS STUDY?

There are no anticipated risks or discomforts. Participation is voluntary.

ARE THERE ANY POTENTIAL BENEFITS IF I PARTICIPATE?

You will not directly benefit from your participation in the research.

The results of the research may benefit educational research and the training of 21<sup>st</sup> century leaders. Copies of all products of the study will be provided to the UCLA Institute of American Cultures.

WILL INFORMATION ABOUT MY PARTICIPATION AND ME BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL?

The presidents and their institutions will be identified, unless he/she requests otherwise. If so, you will also be given a pseudonym. If the president does not request a pseudonym, your affiliation (i.e. academic senate faculty member, administrator/chief diversity officer, student government leader, etc.) will be used in the research. Your name might be used unless you request a pseudonym.

WHAT ARE MY RIGHTS IF I TAKE PART IN THIS STUDY?

- You can choose whether or not you want to be in this study, and you may withdraw your consent and discontinue participation at any time.
- You may refuse to answer any questions you do not want to answer and still remain in the study.
- You can request a pseudonym to be used instead of your name and a generic description to be used for your affiliation (i.e. faculty, administrator, student, etc.). You can request the use of a pseudonym in writing at any time during the study.

WHO CAN I CONTACT IF I HAVE QUESTIONS/CONCERNS ABOUT THIS STUDY?

The Researcher or the Researcher's Faculty Sponsor:

(Insert names here)

Office of the Human Research Protection Program (OHRPP):

If you have questions about your rights while taking part in this study, or you have concerns or suggestions and you want to talk to someone other than the researchers about the study, please call the OHRPP at (insert phone number) or write to:

(Insert address here)

You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your records.

## Appendix H

### **Supporting Participant Email Contact Sample**

Dear (Insert Supporting Participant's Name),

I am a doctoral student in Education at UCLA conducting a study on the social justice-oriented leadership practices of African American university presidents. In addition to interviewing presidents from universities across the country about their social justice-related values, actions, challenges and strategies, I will be conducting brief interviews with campus stakeholders at each respective site. Your university president, (insert president name here) has agreed to participate in my dissertation study and is aware that I am contacting campus community members for supporting interviews. I would very much like to interview you in your (insert title here) leadership capacity.

My study is partially funded by the UCLA Institute of American Cultures and has implications for training 21<sup>st</sup> century leaders and fostering dialog across groups and organizations on issues of leadership. Your participation should total 30 minutes. I would be extremely appreciative of your time and insight.

I am available to answer your questions and can absolutely work around your schedule. We can arrange an appointment at your convenience.

I look forward to hearing from you and answering any questions you may have about participation.

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1

*Four Ethical Systems*

<b>Ethical System</b>	<b>Proponent</b>	<b>Moral philosophy</b> <i>The moral rightness of an action is determined by...</i>
End result ethics	John S. Mill (1806—1873)	<b>considering its consequences.</b>
Rule ethics	Immanuel Kant (1724—1804)	<b>laws and standards</b>
Social contract ethics	Jean J. Rousseau (1112—1778)	<b>the customs and norms of a particular community.</b>
Personalism ethics	Martin Buber (1878—1965)	<b>one's conscience.</b>

Adapted from Hitt (1990)

Table 2

*Theories By Principles of Moral Leadership*

<b>Theories</b>	<b>Principle 1: Setting aside self interest for greater good</b>	<b>Principle 2. Critical consciousness and questioning one’s own assumptions, biases</b>	<b>Principle 3. Infusion of social justice into leadership questioning laws, norms and standards of society</b>	<b>Principle 4. Taking action with an emphasis toward public good and social justice</b>
<b>Social justice leadership</b>	Makes race, class, gender, disability, sexual orientation and other marginalizing conditions central to one’s advocacy (Theoharis, 2007)	Social justice leadership begins with critical self-reflection (Bogotch, 2002; Brown, 2004; Dantley & Tillman, 2009).	Systemic analysis and critique of the world (Furman & Shields, 2005).	Acting on a “calling” and serving (Bogotch, 2002; Brown, 2004; Dantley & Tillman, 2009).
<b>Critical Race Theory</b>	All members of the community are intertwined (Freire, 1998)	Critical Consciousness (Freire, 1998)	Commitment to social justice; Dominant ideology is challenged (Solorzano, 1997)	Model activism and their role as a change agent; Leadership By Outrage (Sergiovanni, 1997; Northouse 2007)
<b>Preparation: Social justice leadership programs</b>	Race and other isms need to play a prominent role (Gooden & Dantley, 2012; Jean-Marie, et al., 2009; McKenzie, et al., 2008).	Critical Consciousness (Freire, 1998)	Infusion of social justice into all aspects of leadership, critical dialog (Gooden & Dantley, 2012; Jean-Marie, et al., 2009; McKenzie, et al., 2008).	Expectations of leaders to model activism (Cambron-McCabe & McCarthy, 2005; Gooden & Dantley, 2012; Jean-Marie, et al., 2009; McKenzie, et al., 2008)
<b>Transformational Leadership</b>	Motivation and morality (Basham, 2012) Leaders get others to transcend self-interest (Northouse, 2007).	Consciousness (Basham, 2012)	Engages with others and create a connection that raises awareness. Power derives from shared principles, norms, and values. (Basham, 2012) Question asymmetrical systems of power (Dantley, 2003).	Value driven leadership (Basham, 2012). Cause and calling (Schlechty, 2009) Be an activist for change and transformation (Weiner, 2003).
<b>Servant Leadership</b>	Empathy, community and empowerment. Organizations in trust for the good of society (Northouse, 2007)	Awareness (Northouse, 2007)	Give voice when standards fall short (Northouse, 2007)	Stewardship & Leadership By Outrage (Greenleaf, 1977; Sergiovanni, 1997; Northouse, 2007)
<b>Moral Leadership</b>	Situates leaders in a broader social context (Bogotch, 2000)	Consciousness raising (Miller, Brown & Hopson, 2011)	Social justice is not be separated from role of leaders (Bogotch, 2000) Ask hard questions about who is most ably served (Dantley, 2005).	Purpose-driven leadership (Bogotch, 2000)
<b>Moral Philosophy and Ethical Systems</b>	Trustworthy leaders put self interests aside, interest for society; Right and wrong for society v. self (Bowie 1991; Northouse, 2007) Leading for the greater good (Miller, Brown & Hopson, 2011). Moral rightness (Hitt, 1990)	Personalism ethics and one’s conscience (Hitt, 1990)	Consciousness raising, questioning and focus on justice (Miller, Brown & Hopson, 2011) Rule ethics—Laws & Standards, social contract ethics--customs and norms of a particular community (Hitt, 1990)	Genuine demonstrations (Dantley, 2005)  Acting without a hope for a reward (Bowie 1991; Northouse, 2007)

Table 3

*Percentage Distribution of Presidents by Race/Ethnicity*

Group	All Presidents 1986	All Presidents 2006	All Presidents 2011
African-American	5.0	5.9	5.9
American Indian	0.5	0.7	0.8
Asian American	0.4	0.9	1.5
Hispanic	2.2	4.5	3.8
White	91.9	86.4	87.2

ACE (2012)

Table 4

*High School Four-year Cohort Graduation and Dropout Rate: State of California, 2012-1*

Race/Ethnicity Group	Graduation Rate	Dropout Rate
American Indian or Alaska Native	72.8%	17.4%
Asian	91.6%	4.6%
Black or African American	68.1%	19.7%
Filipino	91.6%	4.7%
Hispanic or Latino	75.7%	13.9%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	78.4%	14.2%
White	87.7%	7.4%

Education Data Partnerships (2013)

Table 5

*Poverty Line by Race/Ethnicity 2012*

Race/Ethnicity Group	Percentage Below Poverty Line
Asian	10.2%
Black	23.7%
Hispanic/Brown	22.3%
White	9.4%

Adapted from Kaiser Family Foundation (2012) and Munin (2012).

Table 6

*Presidents Race/Ethnicity By Ages 61-70 and Years to be Stepping Down from Current Position*

Presidents by Race/Ethnicity	Percentage between Age 61-70	Stepping Down from Current Position 3-5 Years from Now
African American	60.9%	41.7%
Asian	26.1%	22.7%
Hispanic	59.0%	48.0%
White	53.1%	34.4%

ACE (2012)



Table 7

*Description of Presidents*

President	Gender	Birthplace	Parent 1/ 2 Education	President's Education	Number of presidencies/ Retirement	Age	Identity Preference
Drake Ohio State University	Male	New York	MD/BA	MD	Two	60s	African American
Jenkins-Scott Wheelock College	Female	Arkansas	Some high school/ Some college	MSW	One Retirement: June 2016	60s	African American
Mitchell California State University, Bakersfield	Male	Mississippi	High school (both)	Ph.D.	One	70s	African American
Phillips State Public University (Pseudonyms)	Male	Alabama	Some high school (both)	Ph.D.	Two (Interim & Current presidency)	50s	African American
Pruitt Thomas Edison State University	Male	Mississippi	Some college (Both)	Ph.D.	One	60s	Black
Wilson-Oyelaran Kalamazoo College	Female	California	JD/MA	Ph.D.	Two (Interim & Current presidency) Retirement: June 2016	60s	African American

Table 8

*Stakeholders Interviews by Institution*

Stakeholder	California State University Bakersfield	Kalamazoo College	Ohio State University	State Public University	Thomas Edison State University	Wheelock College
Administrator	Equity, Inclusion & Compliance	Director of Intercultural Student Life		Student Affairs, Administrator	Equity, Inclusion & Compliance	Equity, Inclusion & Compliance
Faculty	Academic Senate, Chair	Academic Affairs, Chair			Academic Council, Chair	Academic Senate, Chair
Student	Associated Students, President	Student Commission dissolved, Former President	Associated Students, Vice President	Associated Students, President	No student government or students in residence	

Table 9

*Carnegie Classification & Site Information*  
(2015 Update of 2013-2014 Time Period)

Site	Level	Control	Student Population	Basic	Size & Setting
California State University Bakersfield  Founded in 1970 40,000 alumni (CSU, 2016, March 19)	4-year or above	Public	8,720	Master's Colleges & Universities: Larger Programs	Four-year, medium, primarily nonresidential
Kalamazoo College  Founded in 1833 Living alumni, unknown (KZOO, 2016, February 28)	4-year or above	Private not-for-profit	1,461	Baccalaureate Colleges: Arts & Sciences Focus	Four-year, small, highly residential
Ohio State University  Founded in 1870 500,000 living alumni (OSU, 2016, February 18)	4-year or above	Public	58,322	Doctoral Universities: Highest Research Activity	Four-year, large, primarily residential
State Public University (Pseudonym)  Founded in late 19 <sup>th</sup> century Living alumni unknown (SPU, 2016, February 27)	4-year or above	Public	11,458	Master's Colleges & Universities: Larger Programs	Four-year, large, primarily residential
Thomas Edison State University  Chartered in 1972 50,000 cumulative degrees awarded (TESU, 2016, February 28)	4-year or above	Public	21,495	Master's Colleges & Universities: Medium Programs	Four-year, medium, primarily nonresidential
Wheelock College  Founded in 1888 19,000 living alumni (Wheelock, 2016, March 19) (CCIHE, 2016, March 30).	4-year or above	Private not-for-profit	1,331	Master's Colleges & Universities: Medium Programs	Four-year, small, highly residential

Table 10

*Comparison of President and Stakeholder Responses RQ 3 & 4*

SOCIAL JUSTICE	PRESIDENTS n=6	Responses	STAKEHOLDERS n=13	Responses
PRACTICES RQ3	Infusion of social justice into all aspects of leadership	5	Infusion of social justice	4
PRACTICES RQ3	Vision & Organizational Culture	4	Lending the agency of the presidency to a social justice effort	6
PRACTICES RQ3	Preparing for the enterprise & decision-making through the use of knowledge, facts & data	4	Accessibility to the president	4
PRACTICES RQ3	Communication	3	Communication	3
PRACTICES RQ3	Hiring mentoring individuals with shared social justice values	2	Hiring mentoring individuals with shared social justice values	4
PRACTICES RQ3			Outreach	3
CHALLENGES RQ4	Racism	4	Race of the president	5
CHALLENGES RQ4	Slow speed of change	4	External pressure	5
CHALLENGES RQ4	Responding to demonstrations and social movements	4	Intersection	3
CHALLENGES RQ4			Budget	3
STRATEGIES RQ4	Leadership Itself	5	Leadership Itself	8
STRATEGIES RQ4	Communication	3	Communication	11
STRATEGIES RQ4	Leadership Teams	4	Leadership Teams	6

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