



October 13, 2017

Colleges of the Fenway
200 Riverway
Boston, MA 02215
Attn: Tasha Baclawski, Senior Director, Programs & Communication

Dear Tasha,

In celebration of 15 years, (AAWHE-NE) African American Women in Higher Education of New England brought together over 135 women in the academy to the annual conference titled, '*The Power of Resilience*' held at Emmanuel College on August 3, 2017. At the Conference, the founding members, Damita Davis, Jamica Nadina Love, Jeanette Buntin, Yvonne Bogle, Rita Dove-Smith, Rene Davis ShaQuan Davis Read, Deborah Pace and Lori Cawthorne of AAWHE-NE were honored as we celebrated the success as an organization for fifteen years. Holding the annual AAWHE-NE Conference at Emmanuel College was symbolic in that the organization was established at Emmanuel fifteen years ago. AAWHE-NE was founded as an organization dedicated to the support and professional development of African American women working in Higher Education. And fifteen years later, we still pride ourselves to provide a welcoming and comfortable atmosphere for women working in the Academy to gather for support, networking, and recognition of our outstanding contributions to our places of employment and our communities. We seek to empower women through: Connections, Collaborations and Commitment to Excellence.

The Power of Resilience Conference embodied the tenants of Connections, Collaborations and Commitment to Excellence by providing networking opportunities, a space for women to discuss issues salient to African American Women in the academy as well as fostering collaborations with regional professional organizations and to examine best practices in higher education.

At this year's '*The Power of Resilience*' Conference, we opened the conference with our invited keynote speaker, Dr. Lisa Coleman, Senior Vice President for Global Inclusion, Diversity, and Strategic Innovation and NYU's inaugural Chief Diversity Officer. Dr. Coleman delivered an amazing talk on "*Black Women, History, Culture and The Power of Resiliency*" that was well received by conference participants.

Dr. Lisa M. Coleman was Harvard University's inaugural Chief Diversity Officer and Special Assistant to the President, and was responsible for developing a strategic approach – and the supporting initiatives and platforms – for promoting diversity and inclusion (D&I) across Harvard University's schools and programs.

Dr. Coleman has worked with numerous organizations, universities, and colleges prior to Harvard, including the Association of American Medical Colleges, Merrill Lynch Inc., the City University of New York, the College of Wooster, Vassar College, and Tufts University. She directed the Africana program at Tufts University, and also served as that institution's first senior D&I officer where she worked with the President, Provost, and other senior leaders to create and implement university-wide D&I strategies. Dr. Coleman has received numerous awards for teaching and academic leadership, and for her work on equity, inclusion, and diversity.

Dr. Coleman earned her doctorate in Social and Cultural Analysis, American Studies from New York University, and three master's degrees from the Ohio State University in African and African American Studies; Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies; and Communication Studies.

Following Dr. Coleman's address a Distinguished Panel of Educators addressed the question of '*Is Resiliency a Myth*' and the day concluded on offering five showcased workshops. Which included, Factors That Support The Leadership and Resilience of Women Of Color, Intersectionality at Work: Black Women's Perceptions of Their Work Performance at PWI's, Success Factors For Self-Care and Sisterhood: A Model or a Myth, From Selfless to Self-Care: Taking Care of Self When Taking Care of Others, Owning Our Shifting Selves: Double Consciousness and the First Generation.

The conference was well received as indicated by the shared testimonials listed below from conference attendees at the AAWHE-NE's 15th Annual Conference: *The Power of Resilience*

- I love every part of the day, and can't wait to attend again next year.
- The welcome was warm and friendly, as with all AAWHE events, and this is one of my favorite things about attending. I loved the keynote address and have been reflecting on it since last Thursday. The workshops were great and informative.
- It was definitely worth my time to travel from DC. I hope to find a local organization that will allow me to be more engaged in an organization such as this.

In closing, on behalf of the Board of Directors of AAWHE-NE, we thank the Colleges of the Fenway, Wheelock College, Emmanuel College, Simmons College, MCPHS University, Massachusetts College of Art and Design and Wentworth Institute for your generous support, which made all the difference in the success of the AAWHE-NE 'Power of Resilience' 15th Annual Conference.

Sincerely,


Denise A. Phillips, M.Ed.

AAWHE-NE Board Vice President