

Belinda Higgs Hyppolite, Ed.D.

Dr. Belinda Higgs Hyppolite was selected Vice President for Diversity and Inclusion and Chief Diversity Officer at the University of Oklahoma in January of 2020. Dr. Higgs Hyppolite has worked as a professional in Higher Education for 25 years. Under her leadership at OU, Dr. Hyppolite is helping to build the Division of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and lead work related to the Universities new strategic plan, placing special emphasis on Pillar IV, Becoming a Place of Belonging and Emotional Growth for All Students, Faculty, Staff, and Alumni. The University has received four national awards, including the City of Tulsa Chamber of Commerce Mosaic Inclusive Workplace award in 2020, the NASPA Equity, Inclusion, Social Justice, and Related award in fall 2020. Most recently, OU received Higher Education Excellence in Diversity Award (HEED), fall 2021, and the *INSIGHT* Into Diversity 2021 Inspiring Programs in STEM award.

Before her time at OU, Dr. Hyppolite served as the Assistant Vice President at the University of Central Florida, in Orlando, Florida, before coming to OU. She has served in a variety of leadership roles and responsibilities. Dr. Hyppolite started in Student Affairs working on retention efforts for at-risk students and working with the residential student within Housing and Residential Life. Dr. Hyppolite has supported and advocated for several student populations such as fraternity and sorority students, multicultural, low-income, first generation, foster care, religious and non-religious, DACA/TPS, and Undocumented students. Dr. Hyppolite has worked in Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, Greek Life, and Multicultural Affairs and has and continues to support and confront social justice issues plaguing student success.

Past functional areas of responsibility include supporting Religion and Non-Religious Services, Fraternity and Sorority Life, Social Justice and Advocacy Department, and the Multicultural Academic Support Services Departments. Dr. Hyppolite served as the Divisional Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion liaison at UCF and provided leadership to the University Bias Incidents Team and the Dream US Scholars program. Dr. Higgs Hyppolite served as an adjunct professor for the Burnett Honors College, LEAD Scholars program, and a guest lecturer for Higher Education and Policies classes and taught Introduction to Higher Education classes. She facilitates leadership development, diversity, equity, and Inclusion, and oppression reduction workshops. She has and continues to present at numerous conferences on various topics. Dr. Hyppolite *passions are* advocating for the voiceless through Diversity Education and Oppression Reduction work. She considers herself a **Social Justice Advocate and Educator**. Dr. Higgs Hyppolite believes access to education is a right, not a privilege.

Dr. Higgs Hyppolite is a proud member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., where she has served in the capacity of Treasurer and Chaired the Social Action Committees. She is a member of the Florida Diversity Council, which is a community group that *fosters a learning environment for organizations to grow in their knowledge of diversity*. She is active in the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) regionally and nationally. *Dr. Higgs Hyppolite served as a United Way Campaign Cabinet Member and held this volunteer role since the fall of 2011, and she participates in the annual 5k walk benefiting the American Heart Association and is an active volunteer with the Juvenile Diabetes Association.*

Dr. Higgs Hyppolite holds two Bachelor's degrees in Psychology and Speech Pathology, two Master's degrees in Counseling Education and Human Resources, and a Doctorate of Education, specializing in Professional Leadership, Inquiry, and Transformation. Dr. Hyppolite is the wife to her amazing husband, James Williams Hyppolite, and proud mother to a very active Zahara Boston and two bonus children

Brandon Hyppolite and Sarah Hyppolite. One of her favorite quotes by Michelle Obama is, “***There is no magic to achievement. It is really about hard work, choices, and persistence.***”