Key Concepts Related to Understanding Diversity & Inclusion

**Diversity:** Individual, group, social and cultural differences.

**Inclusion**: Intentional engagement with diversity in ways that increase awareness, cultural competence and cognitive complexity.

**Culture**: A set of learned behaviors, ideas, and values whose components are shared and passed down by members of a particular society or group. Various segments within and among ethnic and racial groups can have their own culture.

**Empathy**: The ability to understand the perspective and experiences of others with feeling.

**Social Construction**: Roles and meaning assigned to certain groups that are made-up to “maintain the current social order”. These rules reﬂect the current social values of a particular group at a particular time.

**Privilege**: Unearned advantage that is derived from membership in a certain group of people. The advantage may be the absence of certain stigma or hardship (for example; not having to deal with the daily consequences of oppression/discrimination) or the result of positive assumptions about the group.

**Oppression**: A state of being in which a person is deprived of dignity or some basic human right and is/believes he or she is powerless to do anything about it. Oppression exists as part of a system that maintains the power of a particular group of people. The concept of multiple oppressions, particularly, race, class and gender oppression is important in understanding this perspective.

**Implicit Bias:** Commonly held prejudiced attitudes and stereotypes that impact our beliefs and actions of which we are not consciously aware.

**Microaggression**: Subtle, frequently occurring remarks that denigrate individuals based on group stereotypes. The people making these remarks are often unaware of their impact.

**Stereotype Threat:** Anxiety related to the fear of confirming a negative stereotype about a group to which you belong.

**Cultural Competence:** A set of knowledge, skills, attitudes and practices that enable individuals and organizations to interact effectively with those perceived as different in some significant way. It is an ongoing, long-term developmental process.

**Equity Mindedness:** An understanding of issues affecting equal access to and outcomes for programs offered by an organization and, most importantly, being committed to take action to provide equal access to and outcomes for all who can contribute to and benefit from these programs.

"We don't see things as they are, we see them as we are." Anais Nin

Kimberly Barrett. PhD.

February 2016