

How DB Latimore Professional Services Group Helped Utica College Synchronize its DEI Division

DB Latimore Professional Services Group is a talent management consulting firm that specializes in maximizing workforce productivity in both organizations and individuals. Its goal is to provide talent development that aligns strategy with operations by cultivating the value every employee brings to the table—turning stagnant operations into agile organizations. Each program is customized to the clients' needs, utilizing its exclusive Productivity Powered by P.E.O.P.L.E.® framework.



About Utica College

Located in the heart of Central New York, Utica College is a private institution whose mission is to foster a rich diversity of perspective, background, and experience in the context of an equitable, respectful, and inclusive environment. Its Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion / Student Transitions Division creates safe spaces for community-building events and brave spaces for robust dialogue across experiences and identities. The Division also empowers students to make informed career decisions and successfully transition to their next professional steps.

The Situation

Just over a year ago, Dr. Anthony Baird stepped into the roles of Chief Diversity Officer and Vice President for the newly restructured Division of Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI) and Student Transitions at Utica College. One of his first strategic initiatives was to build community and culture within this new space by working together as a team—not only to build trust and authenticity, but also to bring a new level of understanding of DEI for all as they embarked on this journey together.



The Challenges



Foundation

Company and/or departmental restructuring can often leave employees feeling insecure about their jobs, leading to low morale and poor customer service.



Leadership

Changes in the workplace are happening more rapidly than ever. If leadership doesn't examine how they communicate, develop talent, and build workplace cultures, they will struggle with finding and retaining talent in this era of “the great resignation.”



Adaptability

To build and sustain increasingly diverse teams, organizations must adopt more inclusive behaviors. The question is, how can they best achieve this goal?

Enter DB Latimore Professional Services Group

Shortly after taking on his new role at Utica College, Dr. Baird met Daphne Latimore, founder of DB Latimore Professional Services Group. They quickly hit it off, and Dr. Baird knew immediately that Daphne's services were exactly what the DEI division needed. In February 2021, Daphne began a series of weekly meetings with Dr. Baird, and monthly meetings with the Executive Director, the leadership teams, and staff.

The Results

- Developed ongoing professional development for faculty, staff, student organizations, and student leaders beyond that which is required for compliance, setting an example for the larger culture.

- Established collaborative relationships among and between student groups and resources in the organization and the greater Utica community to enhance educational, professional, and social opportunities.

- Created a sustainable infrastructure that supports an equitable and inclusive living, learning, and working community.

- Supported efforts to develop curricular offerings and innovative pedagogy, and effective communication strategies that reinforce and promote the principles of DEI.



“Daphne served as an objective third party in our meetings and was helpful in opening up dialogue, especially while working in virtual spaces due to the pandemic. She provided support to 12 staff members within our Division—all at varying levels and stages in their careers. Concomitantly, her expertise and utilization of the Tilt 365 Assessment was a critical anchor to the change within our Division. Being able to understand how we work together has helped us get to know each other better in a tumultuous working climate as we worked through changes with staffing, such as a resignation, promotions, and onboarding of new staff. There is certainly no shortage of services provided by Daphne and her team.”

— Dr. Anthony M. Baird, Chief Diversity Officer and VP of DEI

Why Does DB Latimore Professional Services Group Work?

Easy. With offices located just outside of Washington, D.C., Daphne and her team remain on the cutting edge of the latest in DEI efforts and the impacts it has on organizations. Her professional-yet-approachable personality creates fresh ideas, trust, and authenticity as she helps guide and educate the team, keeping everyone on the same page throughout what could otherwise be a complex and sensitive process.



“DB Latimore assisted Utica College with creating a new division of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and Student Transitions. Though Daphne and I met virtually and most of our work together was via virtual calls and/or meetings, I felt an instant connection with her—it seemed like we had known one another for years. Daphne's expertise and extensive knowledge of human resources, use of coaching and conflict models, and listening and teaching skills ended up being the compass for our success.”

— **Mark Kovacs**, Executive Director of DEI & Coordinator for Community Relations

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