

Student Activities Council EOY Report
WCU Innovation in Diversity & Inclusion Grant

Program Description:

Activities in higher education are often characterized by loud, high-energy events with large crowds. However, individuals with sensory sensitivities or those who prefer a calmer environment can often feel excluded from this type of programming. With a focus on student engagement and integration into campus life it is essential to ensure that students feel that they can actively participate in their university. The Innovations in Diversity & Inclusion Grant provided the funds necessary to acquire materials for West Chester's Student Activities Council (SAC) to host a sensory space at all late night programming throughout the 2024-2025 academic year.

SAC has a diversity, equity, and inclusion specific position, the IDEA (Inclusivity, Diversity, Equity, Accessibility) coordinator who oversaw these initiatives, making sure that every member of the WCU community can engage in campus life. The IDEA coordinator did specified research to gather supplies for all sensory spaces that were included in programs to suit a wide range of needs. The supplies included a number of different options of fidget toys among other items typically used during our late night programs.

Results:

With our supplies gathered through the grant we constructed a "sensory cart" that stored all of our sensory space supplies. Logistically this cart is incredibly useful in fitting a well designed sensory space alongside our typical programming. Over the course of the semester 24 of our programs had a sensory space set up alongside it. Sensory spaces will continue to be a staple in our Rams After Hours programs and others as they were largely successful over the course of the year.

Additionally SAC hosted three separate programs planned with sensory sensitivities in mind, Donut Stress, Slime and Unwind, and DIY for Acceptance. All of which were a huge success interacting with hundreds of students.

This past year we also invited the Dub-C Autism Program (DCAP) to table at several of our events to spread more information about resources available to students on campus and hope to continue a working relationship with their office.