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Professor Oakes

WRT 205

Source: Ted Talk-“INCLUSION over Diversity”

“‘INCLUSION over Diversity.” Performance by Kenyona Matthews, *YouTube*, YouTube, 29 May 2018, www.youtube.com/watch?v=V\_v9Nd6TYt0.

Kenyona Matthews is a graduate from Guilford College and the University of Akron School of Law, during her time at Guilford she aided in the creation of an Anti-Racism team and was responsible for organizing city-wide diversity and inclusion events. In the Ted-Talk “INCLUSION over Diversity” Kenyona drew on her own experience being a member of a marginalized group in her predominately white university. Throughout the video, Kenyona directly forms a connection between her success in this university and the universities efforts to create an inclusive environment for all its students. As she provides insight into her experience prior to the school’s adoption of more inclusive practices, it is evident that once this shift occurred, Kenyona’s motivation increased greatly. She even mentions that when she saw the institution actively working towards becoming inclusive through things like funding African American history courses, she felt valued and seen which reflected into her schoolwork because her grades began to rise. When she went to Law school, she was met with an entirely different environment which was not as accepting to Black people. She mentioned that by her second year, a large majority of her Black classmates had left since they felt like they didn’t belong there.

This ted-talk is very important for my research because it is the most informative primary source that I have found. In my opinion Kenyona explained everything very clearly, I liked how she explained the differences from her PWI and her high school which had a majority population of minority students. She was also able to explain the differences in how she felt prior to the adoption of inclusive practices and after, and then she went on to explain the differences from and inclusive environment to her experience in law school. This all helps my research a lot since it is essentially showing the difference in a diverse environment and an inclusive one, through Kenyona’s experience. I also think it is very helpful that she spoke about the change in her motivation at school and how it was connected to the increase of inclusion in the school. This relates to the article “The Inclusion Dividend: Why Investing in Diversity and Inclusion pays off” because it supports the idea that the more diverse and inclusive an organization is the higher their success rates. This is because the employees will feel valued which results in them doing their best work. A very important part of this was towards the end when she said “diversity will always give us space in the rooms, but it leaves no room for our thoughts and out ways of life. Inclusion will change our rooms. Inclusion will make sure we all have a seat and voice, and it makes it so that once you hear the voice you have to act and make some changes” this gives me a good explanation of the difference between Diversity and Inclusion which is a part of my research as well. Diversity does not guarantee Inclusion, which also means it alone is not enough to make sure a company/organization is successful because when people do not feel like they have a voice or a seat at the table, they will not be able to work their best.