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UDC ADVANCES LGBTQ INCLUSION WITH SCREENING OF AWARD WINNING FILM: *THE NEW BLACK*

Washington, DC—The University of The District of Columbia (UDC) is among the group of five historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) to receive a grant award from Promised Land films. UDC was selected to be a part of the Empowering Equality Faith-Initiative and Empowering Equality at HBCUs program used to advance on-campus LGBTQ inclusion through screening the award-winning documentary, *The New Black*.

The New Black tells the story of how African American communities are grappling with LGBTQ rights issues in light of the recent same-sex marriage movement and the fight over civil rights. The film documents activists, families, and clergy on both sides of the campaign to legalize same-sex marriage and examines homophobia in the black community's institutional pillar—the black church. It also reveals the strategy of some Christian activist groups of exploiting this phenomenon in order to pursue a political agenda that opposes LGBTQ rights.

Promised Land Film views the screening as an opportunity to build upon the social change efforts of past grantees and continue to provide campuses and faith institutions with important tools for amplifying issues of inclusion and justice at the intersection of race, gender, sexual identity and expression.

In a political climate where Black and LGBTQ communities are disproportionately impacted, the screening of *The New Black* creates a unique opportunity for the campus community to discuss these very important issues.

“This film and subsequent panel discussion has increased the level of engagement and urgency demanded by students to ensure that UDC is fostering an intersectional learning environment where all students can feel supported, affirmed and valued,” said Trinice McNally, founding director of The Center for Diversity, Inclusion & Multicultural Affairs, which will provide resources, support and opportunities specifically for LGBTQ students, beginning Fall, 2018.

The Alliance Group (TAG) UDCs LGBTQ-Student Organization and the UDC Chapter of the NAACP teamed up with the Center for Diversity, Inclusion & Multicultural Affairs to host the final Lunch & Learn Intergroup Dialogue on campus for the spring 2018 school-year. UDC is among the small percentage of HBCUs which have policies that protect individuals on the basis of gender identity and sexual orientation.

Taylor Bryant, sophomore Business Management major, who serves on the Executive board of TAG is enthusiastic about the new Center at UDC.

“Diversity does not equal inclusion and inclusion does not equal intersectionality, UDC must be more intentional about serving underrepresented communities because we deserve equitable solutions and resources to ensure that we thrive, instead of barely survive,” she said.

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