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**e****mployment**

**Michael Thigpen**

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**about me**

Experienced team leader, proficient in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion matters. Offers a wealth of experience working with organizations to develop diverse educational opportunities within various industries. Skilled in Organizational Leadership, Communication, Large Group Facilitation, Event Planning, and Customer Service. Michael provides strategic leadership that maximizes every opportunity to connect people and resources to improve the services rendered within an industry.

**Aug 2015 – present**

**Anderson University**

**Chief Diversity Officer & Director of Cultural Resource Center for International & Multicultural Student Services**

Provide vision-driven leadership at a growing liberal arts Christian University with a particular focus on international, multicultural, and other minority groups within the student body. Manage several scholarship programs and provide supervision, training and suport for both full-time staff and student workers. Educate and develop opportunities for healthy conversations around the topics of culture, diversity, equity, and inclusion. Advocate for academic community by building safe communication bridges for all stakeholders. In the Fall of 2020, the university requested that I serve as their first Chief Diversity Officer.

**Jan 2019 – present**

**Madison County Youth Center**

**Executive Director**

Effectively manage annual budget of $2.7M, while leading a seventy-person staff at a 24- hour youth facility. Oversee the care of the county’s underserved youth population. Ensure adherance to all Department of Corrections (DOC) confinment standards, and facilitate the development and implementation of the department’s strategic plan. Cultivate a work enviroment that encourages the growth of staff members, who serve youth through multiple mediums.

**2017**

**Masters Business Administration**

**Anderson University**

**Anderson, Indiana**

Specialization:

**Traditional Business**

**Aug 2013 – Feb 2015**

**Mid-America Christian University**

**Director of Learning Partnerships Development, EMS ~ Hobsons**

Traveled extensively to recruit degree-seeking adults from across the US for a fully accredited, online institution offering undergraduate professional degrees. Developed a national network of degree-seeking adults, and led national relationship building efforts between the university and external institutions seeking to invest in the educational pursuits of contistuents. Developed multifaceted recruitment strategies to recruit and retain adult students for the university’s online programs.

**Reading, Teaching, Event planning Family & Friends, Cooking Travel, Music, Cultural Immersion Experiances, Youth Mentoring, Sporting Events**

**skills (Strengths Finder)**

**Developer**

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**Includer**

**Woo**

**Maximizer**

**Positivity**

**Communication**

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**2007**

**Bachelors of Science** Organizational Leadership

**Anderson University**

**Anderson, Indiana**

Specialization:

**Leadership**

**interests**

**computer**

**MS Office Excel**

**PowerPoint Google Suite**

**2017**

**Brand Development & Management**

**2016**

**Intercultural Development Inventory Qualifying Seminar**

**IDI – Administrator Course**

**courses**

**education**

**recent training facilitation**

**October 29, 2020**

**Crucial Conversations – Racial Justice Part I**

**Madison County Curcuit Court Judges and Community Members**

Facilitated a 90 min. virtual webinar and conversation with local sitting judges and community members around the topics of racial injuctice and blind spots within the justice system. Defined goals for future collaborations to be addressed in Part II

**September 2020**

**Bias Training (4 Sessions)**

**Madison County Courts**

Provided two-hour virtual training sessions for the courts of Madison County on race, equity, inclusion, privilege, and the impact these play on the justice system. Sessions sponsored by Curcuit Court II and offered to all court employees.

**July – August 2020**

**Chat & Chew (2 Sessions)**

**Strada Education DEI Session**

Provided one-hour training for Strada staff and their affiliates on DEI topics with a focus on bias, microagressions, BLM, priviledge, power dynamics, and safe spaces for conversations on race.

**organizations**

**National Association for the Advancement of Color People Branch #3053 – Member**

**National Association of the Church of God – Member, Former National Youth Leader**

**Indiana Ministries – Board Member**

**Intercultural Development Inventory – Trainer**

**MOSAIC – Anderson University Diversity Committee – Co-Chair**

**Race Equity and Inclusion Group - Anderson, Indiana – Co-Leader**

**May 2, 2019**

**Community Diversity Conversation**

**Madison County REI Group**

Unveiled the community strategy for developing a multifaceted race, equity, and inclusion group to tackle the disparities in the criminal/juvenile justice system. The presentation was for community leaders from diversified religious, racial, and socio-economic backgrounds.

**August 16-17, 2019**

**Family Roundtable**

**Indiana Ministries**

Administered a two-day training retreat for ministry leaders across the state of Indiana. Leaders were partnered up for intentional sharing around the topics of race, racism, and religion. Participating leaders get paired by different ethnicities for this twenty-two hour intensive.

**August 27, 2019**

**Diversity Training 2.0**

**Church of God Ministries**

Provided three-hour training for the national offices of the Church of God on the topics of race, equity, privilege, and the power of advocacy. The session was a follow up to a previous training invitation in August 2018

December 20, 2020

Search Committee

Director of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

The Indiana Youth Institute

Dear Search Committee,

I write to apply for the Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion position at The Indiana Youth Institute. I believe that my DEI background makes me qualified to take on this position with vigor and a high likelihood of success. I have benefitted from numerous leadership experiences that prepare me for this type of opportunity. After a long career in youth service organizations, I began serving Anderson University as Director of International and Multicultural Student Services. Recently, I received an invitation from the president to serve as the university’s first Chief Diversity Officer. You will notice on my employment timeline during my tenure at the university, I have also served as the Executive Director of the Madison County Youth Center. There, I was honored to lead fifty staff members and manage a budget of 2.7-million for Circuit Court II under the sitting judge. This letter will describe how I believe my past and current work experiences, coupled with my qualifications, match what you seek in a DEI Director.

My references are likely to describe my leadership style as highly relational, transformational, motivational, and servant-oriented. In addition to being a relationship-oriented leader, I have substantial prior experience in leading youth-oriented organizations with a focus on strengthening their internal and external DEI efforts. Above all, any DEI director must be a lifelong learner to be an effective leader. Throughout my long career in youth organizations and my DEI work, I have developed my leadership styles across many administrative institution types. My philosophy of leadership is to create space for others to learn, grow, and lead. Each person has the ability to do all three, and it is a space that creates the opportunity for action. Seasoned leaders assess their team’s strengths and offer opportunities to ensure that stakeholders are afforded the occasion to continue learning.

In my roles, I lean into my life goal and passion for ensuring and creating spaces that people, especially youth, have a sense of belonging while making room for others. At Anderson University, I co-chair the twenty-two-member diversity team that includes faculty, staff, and students from diverse backgrounds. As a chief diversity officer, I provide guidance for the president and institutional stakeholders in diversity matters, offering best practices. As executive director of the Madison County Youth Center, I ensure that DEI stays at the forefront of our hiring practice, ensuring that our staffing reflects the youth and families we serve. We continually review our policies and procedures to guarantee that inequitable treatment does not persist in the facility’s governance. I often conduct DEI-centered training that focuses on topics like bias, micro-aggressions, and antiracism.

My most significant accomplishments have all involved opportunities where I have been able to assist youth in better understanding how to achieve beyond their margins of expectation. It feeds my purpose any moment that I am able to provide care and support for youth who are urgently in need; moments such as finding funding to purchase one of the state’s only youth detention body scanners to prevent trauma during a strip search or mentor a first-year student through college years to completion. It is my greatest hope and desire to leave the world in a better condition than I found it. Nelson Mandela said it best, *“History will judge us by the difference we make in the everyday lives of children.”*  I believe that each person has an opportunity to make investments, so I must make mine. Though happy in my current role, I find your opening a unique chance to align my youth-serving non-profit organization skills. In doing so, I expect to contribute to advancing a strategic vision that unites your organization around the work of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

Humbly Submitted,

Michael J. Thigpen