

Dontá McGilvery

dmcgilve@asu.edu

EDUCATION

Arizona State University

Doctor of Philosophy, Theatre (Youth and Community)

*The first Black male to graduate with a PhD in Theatre from Arizona State University.

*Most Outstanding Graduate Student Award Recipient

Dissertation: *Developing a BIPOC-Centered Equity Performance Coalition at an Arts College: An Autoethnography*

Aspen Christian College and Seminary

Doctor of Ministry, Urban Ministry

Thesis: *Making Dallas One City Begins in the Classroom: The Urban Ministry Initiative*

Southern Methodist University

Master of Arts Liberal Studies (Humanities and Social Justice)

*Most Outstanding Graduate Student Award Recipient

Thesis: *Making Dallas One City Begins in the Classroom.*

University of North Texas

Bachelor of Arts, Sociology

WORK EXPERIENCE

Staff positions at Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ

1/2022 – Present: Coordinator for Graduate Student Experience; Professional Development and Engagement in the Graduate College

ASU's Graduate College is dedicated to enriching and advancing the graduate school experience for all students and building a student-centered culture committed to inclusion and innovation. The Graduate College welcomes its diverse population of more than 25,000 graduate students. The extraordinary innovations produced at ASU are fueled by the quality of our programs, the diversity of our ideas, the social embeddedness of our work, and the intellectual assets of our graduate student population that represents over 100 nations and myriad backgrounds. Within the Graduate College is the Professional Development and Engagement (PD & E) team. The PD & E team supports graduate students within the university and prepares them and postdoctoral fellows for careers both inside and outside academia. The Coordinator reports to the Director of Student Support Resources.

Responsibilities include:

- Develop and schedule a program/event work plan in accordance with specifications, objectives, and funding limitations.
- Develop and schedule a program/event work plan in accordance with specifications, objectives, and funding limitations. initiates, plans, and delivers services and programs for graduate students

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(including master's, doctoral, online, and international) and postdocs throughout the ASU lifecycle, including orientation, onboarding, mentor engagement, transferable skills, and career agility mindset development.

Current programming includes:

- Credit-bearing courses (New Scholars Colloquium, Preparing Future Faculty seminar, Grant writing seminar).
- Asynchronous certifications through the Center for the Integration of Research, Teaching and Learning.
- Asynchronous and synchronous badging for teacher development and design thinking.
- Annual appreciation week events for ASU postdoctoral scholars.
- Bi-annual welcome events for new ASU postdoctoral scholars.
- Asynchronous and synchronous orientations for new graduate students, new teaching assistants, and research assistants.
- Networking and professional development events for students and postdocs in special populations (Graduate College Enrichment Fellows, Presidential Graduate Assistants, Presidential Postdoctoral Fellows).
- Leadership opportunities for students (Student Advisory group) and Postdocs (Postdoc Council).
- Mentorship recognition through the Outstanding Faculty Mentor Awards nomination process and reception.
- Gathers, organizes, and synthesizes information and data in support of new programs and projects as needed.

Supervise, train, and evaluate assigned staff.

- Supervise interns or student workers to help carry out activities within our unit.
 - Prepares budget proposals and recommendations and establishes budget control system for controlling expenditures; controls expenditures in accordance with budget allocations; recommends equipment and resources for function/program.
- Develops and monitors daily operations and coordinates program/project activities within financial guidelines imposed by ASU budget allocation or other funding agency guidelines.
 - Performs tasks related to specific function/program assigned, such as tracking event attendance, development of brochures or other unique projects.

Performs tasks related to specific function/program assigned, such as tracking event attendance, development of brochures or other unique projects.

- Develops and monitors daily operations and coordinates program/project activities, including developing and maintaining processes for assessment and tracking of professional activities and participation utilizing programs such as Microsoft Excel, Access, Word, and PowerPoint.
- Contributes to and participates in the design and development of equitable processes for reviewing and selecting applications and nominations related to activities of the team (e.g., Student Advisory applications, nominations for Outstanding Faculty Mentor Awards).

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Significant accomplishments include:

- Oversee and manage the Outstanding Faculty Mentor Awards (OFMA) from beginning to conclusion. This student-initiated process requires planning, collaborating, and communicating with the members of the PDE team, the Graduate College's Communication team, the various Colleges across the university, faculty (both nominees and faculty reviewers), deans, and student nominators.
- Helped develop the New Scholars Colloquium course for new graduate students and first-year Graduate Enrichment Fellows. This course aims to provide students with a basic understanding of how graduate life at ASU operates and inform them of where their help and support are located.

7/2020 – 12/2021: Coordinator; Culture and Access Department in the *Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts (HIDA)*

The Culture and Access department works to build a culture of empathy and equity, diversity, and inclusion across all units in Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts (HIDA)-- the largest comprehensive design and arts school in the nation. The Culture and Access department works to dismantle systems of oppression that affect the recruitment and retention of marginalized students, faculty, and staff in the Herberger Institute community. The home for all arts and design colleges at Arizona State University, HIDA houses the School of Art, Music, Dance, Theatre, the Art Museum, and the Sydney Poitier Film School. HIDA boasts a diverse population of 5,000+ students, nearly 400 faculty members, 130 program options, and a tradition of top-ranked program.

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Responsibilities include:

- Execute the Dean's strategic plan of advancing diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging in HIDA by working with the associate dean of Culture and Access.
- Serve on the dean's executive leadership team (associate deans, unit directors, and staff from across HIDA) to decide on important decisions related to the business and innovative landscape of the School (expanding the college, developing new programs, interviewing potential employees, and updates of other activities across the college).
- Helped create and maintain infrastructure for the newly formed Culture and Access department for its sustainability.
- Conduct one-on-one leadership advising and equity professional development presentations to HIDA staff, faculty, and administrators.
- Manage projects that increase minority representation in the HIDA community. These projects include *Shifting the Gaze*, Diversity Library, and the Reconciliation Process (piloted).
- Coordinate meetings and town hall discussions between HIDA staff, faculty, and student activist coalitions to collaborate on and implement equitable programs, processes, and other innovative work that centers equity.
- Develop qualitative and quantitative surveys and data-driven instruments to measure the organizational culture of students, staff, faculty, and leaders of HIDA.
- Engage regularly with student leaders across HIDA and respond to and support their needs promptly.
- Connect HIDA students with HIDA-wide and campus-wide student organizations.
- Mentor minority students from the School of Music, Dance, and Theatre.

Significant accomplishments include:

- Devised, launched, and wrote for *Shifting the Gaze*, a monthly in-house journal publication that promotes equity in the institute by spotlighting the voices and experiences of underrepresented groups across HIDA.
- Collaborate with *Race Forward* and HIDA's *Core Equity team* in a year-long commitment to center equity and access, specifically in budget, community and access, and organizational culture and policy within HIDA.
- Championed the implementation of the Diversity Library exhibit housed inside the Design North Library (opens fall 2021). The exhibit—which will include more than 100 books written by scholars and artists of color in the fields of Music, Dance, Theatre, and Design—is designed to provide students and faculty with diverse

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perspectives and scholarship to learn from and engage with from scholars and artists of color.

- Provide mentorship and advise students interested in attending graduate school or pursuing a career after graduation.

University Teaching Experience

8/2024 – Present: Honors Faculty Fellow; Barrett, The Honors College at ASU Tempe, AZ

8/2022 - Present: Instructor for New Scholars Colloquium (graduate-level course); Tempe, AZ

7/2022– (in-person): Inaugural Theatre Artist in Resident; *Princeton Theological Seminary*, Princeton, NJ; *Black Theology Leadership Institute*

- Fire of Act-ivism: Black Theatre and Black Theological Approaches to Activism

2019 - 2021: Guest Instructor at *Arizona State University*, Glendale, AZ

- American Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s. (K-8 students)
- African American Theatre History (undergraduate and graduate students)

2018 – 2020: Instructor, *Arizona State University*, Tempe, AZ

- Principles of Dramatic Analysis (Undergraduate course)
- African American Theatre History (undergraduate and graduate course)

Master Classes

2/2021, 10/21: *University of Florida*, Gainesville, FL

- Theatre workshop instructor: Theatre for Social Action

8/2020: (virtual) Continuing Education Unit; *Princeton Theological Seminary*, Princeton, NJ

- Theatre workshops instructor (3-day course): Defiant Joy: Dramatization of Joy Embodied in Blackness

2/2019: *Montana Western University*, Dillion, MT

- Guest Lecturer (Week-long): African American Theatre History

7/2020: *Arizona State University's School of Theatre Summer Institute* Instructor, Tempe

- Hip-Hop Theatre, Civil Rights Monologues, Devising Theatre with Marginalized Communities

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SCHOLARSHIP:

Peer-reviewed Articles and Book Chapters (* = IN PROGRESS)

Lester, Neal, A. (author/editor). 2024. (Invited contributor). “Absent Justice” *Social Justice in Action: Models for Campus and Community*. Modern Languages Association.

McAvoy, Mary, and O’Connor, Peter. 2022. (Invited co-contributor with Claire K. Redfield). “Little Red and the Wolf.” *The Routledge Companion to Drama in Education*. Routledge.

*Casas, Jose and Trent, Tiffany. (Invited contributor). 2025. “Righteous Finessing in North Star.” *Every Great Dream: An Anthology of Black Theatre Essays and Plays for Youth*. Dramatist.

PUBLIC SCHOLARSHIP:

General Readership Material

McMahon, Jeff (author/editor). 2019. (Invited contributor). “A Roundtable on Spike Lee’s BlackKklansman” *Response: The Digital Journal of Popular Cultural Scholarship*. Contributors: Isaac Kolding, Caress Russell, Dontá McGilvery, Daniel Bird Tobin, Nicole L. Martin, Al Evangelista, and Sabrina Treacy.

Voth, Ben (author/editor). 2018. (Invited contributor). “Scenario Performances Observed on the SMU Civil Rights Pilgrimage” (Chapter 11) *Great Debates of American Civil Rights*. iBooks. Mustang Press.

Podcast

- 2021 Podcast: Willing to Learn Podcast with Ashley Dominguez
BIPOC Representation in Higher Ed, Leading with Conviction and Advocating for Change. Episode 5.
<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/willing-to-learn/id1553406503?i=1000515217948>
- 2021 Podcast: Arizona State University at Noon on Repeat
My theatre and leadership contributions to the School of Music, Dance, and Theatre at ASU, as well as the Arizona community at large. Episode 5.
- 2021 Podcast: Southern Methodist University, Simmons Alumni Spotlight
Invited as an SMU alum to spotlight the justice-oriented work within higher education and marginalized communities. Episode 16
https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/smu-simmons-alumni-spotlight-podcast/id1444477637?i=1000508208972&fbclid=IwAR08IRpW0Fkppyrv7dHgCKfHdB_71Pi8J_rPXhmdJ-aiprD0FjOgIfcDydsA

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Media

- 2020 Televised: Arizona Public Broadcasting System (PBS) “Breaking It Down” Interview with Dontá McGilvery about the Word “Tolerance” <https://youtu.be/2wsIi5xQlXk>
- 2019 Crafts with the Dean: A Discussion on Theatre, Race, Equity and Justice. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x-0jXNTtFqE>

News Articles

- Young, Alexis. November 8, 2021. “The Many Lives of a Trailblazer for Black Theatre: Alumnus Dontá McGilvery’s Path to the Stage Included Teaching, Social Justice.” *ASU News*. <https://news.asu.edu/20211108-trailblazer-black-theater-asu-alumnus-donta-mcgilvery>
- Abisai, Alvarez. March 14, 2019. “Video: Ph.D. Student Starts African American Theater Class.” *The State Press*. <https://www.statepress.com/article/2019/03/phd-student-starts-african-american-theater-class>
- Faller, Mary Beth. February 18, 2019. “Donta McGilvery Finds Passion in Teaching African American Theatre, Community Work.” *ASU News*. <https://news.asu.edu/20190218-creativity-asu-student-uses-theater-give-voice-people-margins-society>
- Faller, Mary Beth. January 24, 2019. “ASU doctoral student: Use your voice to help those who are struggling.” *ASU News*. <https://news.asu.edu/20190124-arizona-impact-asu-mlk-jr-celebration-awards>

Blogs

- McGilvery, Dontá. January 22, 2021. “Midnight Whispers of Breonna Taylor, Botham Jean, and Jacob Blake.” *Shifting the Gaze*, January 22, 2021. <https://medium.com/shifting-the-gaze/highlighting-diversity-in-the-arts-318c8fbb31a6>
- McGilvery, Dontá. March 31, 2021. “Highlighting Diversity in the Arts. Jalen Montgomery and Ramon Soberano In Conversation with Donta McGilvery.” *Shifting the Gaze*. <https://medium.com/shifting-the-gaze/highlighting-diversity-in-the-arts-318c8fbb31a6>
- McGilvery, Dontá. May 24, 2021. “How do we get to hope? Brian Calo in conversation with Dontá McGilvery.” *Shifting the Gaze*. <https://medium.com/shifting-the-gaze/how-do-we-get-to-hope-brian-calo-in-conversation-with-dont%C3%A1->

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McGilvery, Dontá. October 21, 2021. "An in-person Herberger Institute Day workshop celebrating Native American Heritage Month: Jadarius Conn in conversation with Dr. Dontá McGilvery." *Shifting the Gaze*. <https://medium.com/shifting-the-gaze/an-in-person-herberger-institute-day-workshop-celebrating-native-american-heritage-month-jadarius-9382b10b2655>

Woods, Alden. June 19, 2019. "Stories of Eastlake Park help a community regain past, look to future." *The Arizona Republic*. <https://www.azcentral.com/story/news/local/phoenix/2019/06/19/story-eastlake-park-helps-community-regain-its-past-calvin-c-goode/3685420002/>

ACADEMIC CONFERENCES

- 4/2024 "A Theatre Intervention for Seeking Justice." Society of Race, Ethnicity, and Religion Conference. Conference held at Iliff School of Theology in Denver, CO.
- 7/2021 "Celebration Eastlake." American Alliance for Theatre Education. Conference held online.
- 3/2020 "Hip-Hop Theatre for Youth as a Tool to Engage Students from Marginalized Communities." Mid-American Theatre Conference. Chicago, IL.
- 6/2020 "Decentering Whiteness in University Theatre Classes." Accepted, but conference canceled due to Covid. Black Theatre Network.
- 3/2018 "The Performativity of My Black Body in America." Working Group. American Society for Theatre Research. San Diego, CA.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER/PRESENTATIONS:

- 7/2023 **American Alliance for Theatre in Education Conference (AATE):** Social Justice Through a Mental Wellness Lens. Panelist.
- 7/2023 **Association for Theatre in Higher Education Conference (AATE):** Games We Play. Presenter.
- 2/2021 **Arizona State University's TRIO National Day, Phoenix, Arizona**
Invited keynote speaker at the ASU TRIO National Day.
- 7/2020 **American Alliance for Theatre Education, Phoenix, Arizona**
Member of a Keynote panel in a rotating panel of BIPOC professionals at the intersections of theatre and education.

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7/2017

United States Army War College, Carlisle, Pennsylvania

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Invited to speak on the issues surrounding minority communities across the nation.

4/2015 **First Lutheran Church, Longmont, Colorado**
Keynote speaker drawing on *The Danger of a Single Story: Message of Race & Discrimination*, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie.

1/2012 **Martin Luther King Event, U.S. Corps of Engineers, Ft. Worth, Texas**
Keynote speaker discussing the State of our city from the theme: *Sharing the Dream: Where we were then and where are we now?*

University Service

President Michael Crow's University-wide LIFT Initiative for Black Students, Faculty, and Staff.

9/2020 – Present: Advisory Council on African American Affairs at Arizona State University

To accelerate meaningful change here at ASU and to contribute to a national agenda for social justice, ASU has committed to a series of actions known as the LIFT (Listen, Invest, Facilitate, Teach) Initiative. These actions respond to an accumulation of ideas and public comments from ASU's students, faculty, and staff. LIFT is being undertaken to enhance diversity, growth, and opportunity for Black undergraduate and graduate students, faculty, and staff while also expanding ASU's academic offerings, community services, and collaborative relationships to benefit all underrepresented groups and individuals at ASU.

Responsibilities include:

- Research the needs of Black students, faculty, and staff at ASU to understand the needs of the communities.
- Convene a regular series of discussions between ASU Black community members to listen to the needs and concerns of Black students, faculty, and staff to determine how to meet the needs of the people.
- Provide data-driven information from research and reports to be shared with the public via the LIFT Initiative website.

Significant accomplishments include:

- Served on a team that established new postdoctoral fellowships and graduate assistantships for underrepresented students. Devised, launched, and write for *Shifting the Gaze*, a monthly in-house journal publication that promotes equity in the institute by spotlighting the voices and experiences of underrepresented groups across HIDA.
- Introduced the idea of qualitatively researching Black students' well-being and retention rates.

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- Gathered Black students to attend LIFT Initiative town halls to share thoughts on moving the university further into a more inclusive space.

Organizational Leadership Appointments at Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ

8/2019 – 5/2020: Inaugural Fellow, Dean’s Leadership Fellowship Program in the Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts (HIDA)

After interviewing a local college president and inquiring about what it takes to lead a college, I shared my ideas with the Dean of the Herberger Institute for Design and Culture. Together, the Dean and I created the Dean’s Leadership Fellowship program. This program is designed for HIDA students who aspire to a career in a high-level administrative role in higher education.

This year-long program provides students with a high-level administrative leader as a mentor, opportunities to interview other administrative leaders across ASU’s four campuses and other universities across the country, and the opportunity to learn about the different types of deans at a university.

Responsibilities include:

- Embarked in a yearlong mentorship under Dr. Tiffany Lopez, the Director of the School of Film, Dance, and Theatre and Senior Advisor to the Dean, on select projects to explore the skills and interest toward academic leadership roles (i.e., future dean posts).
- Operated and developed skills and knowledge based on the question: How does one set their career path towards a deanship upon completion of the Ph.D.?

Significant accomplishments include:

- Conversations included one-on-one fire-side chats with senior-level higher education leaders regarding day-to-day responsibilities and what it means to operate in their role. These leaders include Dr. Michael J. Sorrell, President of Paul Quinn College; Dr. Larry D. Johnson, President of Phoenix College; Dr. Deborah J. Rogers, Vice President of Academic Affairs at Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School; Dean Cassandra Aska, Deputy Vice President and Dean of Students at Arizona State University (Tempe campus); Dr. Sharon Smith, Deputy Vice President and Dean of Students at Arizona State University (Phoenix campus); Dean Steven J. Tepper, Dean of Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts at Arizona State University; and Dr. Harvey Young, Dean of the College of Fine Arts at Boston University.

6/2020-12/2021: Justice Organizer of the Music, Dance, and Theatre Liberation Coalition in Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts (HIDA)

The Music, Dance, and Theatre Liberation Coalition is a multicultural graduate student and alum organization within HIDA’s School of Music, Dance, and Theatre. This organization

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exists to foster an environment of understanding and collaboration between students, staff, faculty, and administrative leaders to develop pathways of equity and access on behalf of the entire HIDA community.

Responsibilities include:

- Oversee planning and day-to-day operations of 40 graduate students and alumni coalition.
- Coordinate meetings between students, faculty, and administrators, town hall meetings, and panel discussions to provide access to innovative ideas and discover possible new models of equitable operation.
- Partner with HIDA leadership and outside organizations to help recruit and fund guest speakers and provide students with the opportunity to receive training that promotes diversity, equity, and inclusion from various scholars and leaders specific to students' fields of study.
- Work with HIDA to help reconcile students' needs within the curriculum.

Significant accomplishments include:

- Helped create, champion, and design a pilot for a possible dialogical process that would grant students access, direct representation, and the possibility of reconciling a grievance between students and faculty.
- Collaborate on equity work between the MDT Liberation Collations and other student groups across HIDA and campus. This collaboration led to the synchronization of goals and the creation of a unified voice that provides HIDA and the ASU leadership team with knowledge of the areas of growth in terms of equity.

HONORS AND DISTINCTIONS:

- 02/2023 **National Football League (NFL) Foundation.**
I received recognition from the NFL during the Super Bowl week for the justice and advocacy work I have led in K-12 and higher educational spaces, minoritized communities, and within churches.
- 02/2021 **Greater Phoenix Urban League for Young Professionals, Dean's List of Movers and Shakers in Phoenix, AZ.**
I was recognized as a young adult to "keep an eye on" in Phoenix, AZ, for my leadership in the community and higher education.
- 12/2021 **Arizona State University, Outstanding Graduate Student in Community Outreach** Presented with this award for my service in the ASU community

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and beyond throughout my tenure as a PhD student, including (but not limited to) becoming the first Black male to earn a PhD in Theatre from ASU. I was also selected as the awardee for my outreach to the broader ASU community, as seen through my service on the President's LIFT Initiatives committee, the equity and justice leadership I demonstrated by collaborating with other students and forming equity leadership organizations, and my reach beyond ASU as seen through the theatre company I co-founded and the justice-oriented work I've done through the church and other community activist groups.

- 10/2021 **Arizona State University, 2021 Campus Inclusion Catalyst Award Nomination** Nominated by the Dean and associate dean of Herberger Institute, the MDT Liberation Coalition was recognized for its efforts and innovation in helping the university become a more inclusive space by focusing on Herberger Institute.
- 1/2019 **Arizona State University, M.L.K. Student Servant-Leadership Award** Awarded for my commitment to transforming communities by using theatre to confront misrepresentation and underrepresentation of people of color.
- 12/2017 **Arizona State University, Herberger Arts Entrepreneurship** Sleeveless Acts Drama Company was the sole recipient of Herberger Arts Entrepreneurship.
- 5/2013 **Southern Methodist University: Most Outstanding Student, Dallas, Texas** Awarded by the College of Education and Human Development at Southern Methodist University for most Outstanding Student.

ADMINISTRATIVE AND LEADERSHIP TRAININGS:

- 9/2020 –9/21 **Arizona State University, Race and Equity Training (Race Forward)** Participated in and co-facilitated a year-long intensive leadership training on race, equity, and justice training with the Race Forward: The Center for Racial Justice Innovation.
- 5/2020 **Arizona State University, Digital Humanities Training** Certificate in: Humanities for Social Transformation internship Certificate in: Digital Humanities Pedagogy Training
- 6/2017 **United States Army War College, Carlisle, Pennsylvania** Certificate of Leader Development: National Security & Strategy

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SERVICE

2/2021 **Cohost Campaign ASU Celebration**

This is a virtual celebration highlighting the excellent opportunities that ASU students have been able to engage in due to the support of its donors.

2/2021 **Arizona 1619: 400 Years Onward.**

Co-chair of a coalition of scholars, faith-leaders, and community leaders in Phoenix, AZ., to present a celebration commemorating the 400 years since 1619.

Membership:

Black Theatre Network, African American Christian Clergy Coalition, Theatre for Youth Audiences/USA, American Alliance for Theatre and Education.