

**LIBERTY**  
OFFICE of EQUITY & INCLUSION

TO:  
Chief Diversity Officer, Greg Dowell

2 June, 2020

Liberty University Division of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

For all of the following reasons, and much more, I can not remain in my current position. Please allow this letter to serve as an official notice of my intention to resign effective July 2, 2020.

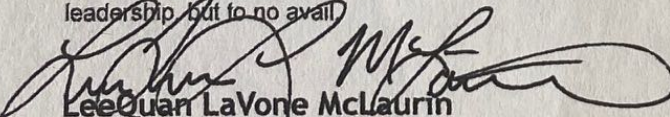
I have worked at Liberty University and served the student body here since 2013. During this time I have been a part of 3 different departments: Information Technology, Resident Enrollment (SAO/Retention), and lastly the Office of Equity and Inclusion. My time in each of these departments has allowed me to rapidly gain experience as a student affairs professional. My motivation for working in these spaces, specifically SAO and OEI, has been to assist students like myself (first generation, a minority, low SES) navigate their collegiate experience.

While I am a product of Liberty University, having earned a B.S. of Psychology: Counseling, Clinical, and Research, I can no longer say that I support much of what is being produced by my alma mater or current employer. At this point I have no other alternative, but to resign. It is morally unconscionable for me, as the Director of Diversity Retention, to ask students of color to stay at a university and within a space that not only does not value their well-being and lives, but actually perpetuates very real and damaging racial trauma against them, and then "gaslights" and silences them by grossly appropriating scripture.

This goes beyond forced ideological views, social media presence, or the innumerable challenges faced with being a Black male DEI professional at a predominantly white conservative evangelical institution. My decision to resign from my position lies in the conflict of my job description and basic expectations as a higher education diversity professional, and the reality of inaction and suppression of tangible support for our minority student populations. This is directly related to the appointment of the university Chief Diversity Officer, Darryl Gregory Dowell, and his inability and utter incompetence regarding his duties in his position. Lacking even the most basic knowledge expected within in our field, and instead stating that we only need his own personal warped interpretation of scripture as our source of knowledge, which includes the belief that God does not love everyone.

He has failed to lead our division effectively or support our minority populations he has been charged with, and has instead worked to actively denigrate and work against them. From calling students thugs for protesting, to firing our prior Executive Director, Melany Pearl, to stripping away almost all multicultural programming that benefits our minority students, to refusing to support professional development for his staff, Dowell has neglected to fulfill his duties and advocate for the protected classes that he has been entrusted with. This doesn't even touch on items such as the hostile work environment that he has fostered, lack of funding and resources, several HR complaints lodged against him, internalized racism that he attempts to place onto others, or the encouragement of our minority students to assimilate to university culture, rather than enrich it.

Lastly, his continued blatant refusal to allow our team of professionals to affirm the sanctity of Black lives, or respond to the countless concerns that have been issued by our students, faculty, and staff, or as the Chief Diversity Officer, hold our university accountable for recent events and actions. I can not just be a window dressing on what is clearly an institution that struggles with a history of racism, prejudice, and discrimination. If I am going to be in this position, then I have a moral obligation to serve and support the populations I am entrusted with, and I simply can not do that under my current leadership. I have tried to find solutions and compromise with him directly, HR, and even to his leadership, but to no avail.

  
LeeQuan LaVone McLaurin

Director of Diversity Retention  
Office of Equity and Inclusion

1971, University Blvd, Lynchburg, Va. 24515

☎ 434.592.4020

✉ [Equityandinclusion@liberty.edu](mailto:Equityandinclusion@liberty.edu)