

Meet Teara Flagg Lander, Ed.D., Assistant Vice President for the Office of Diversity Equity and Inclusion, Norman Campus

A position as an assistant vice president requires a long list of competencies and expertise usually acquired via a terminal degree and extensive experience. Both characterize the curriculum of the inaugural assistant vice president for the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, Norman campus, Teara Flagg Lander, Ed.D.

As the Norman campus AVP, Lander will launch initiatives and develop programming that coherently align with the 2020 strategic plan that envisions OU as a place of belonging and emotional growth for all students, faculty, staff, and alumni. Drawing into the meaning of her work, she explained that diversity and equity lead to inclusion when “everyone counts and is aware of it. I want people to feel included, seen, and empowered to make a difference.”

Her view distills different identities and lived experiences to be leveraged in her AVP position. In her words: “My intersecting identities and experiences have primed me to work in the DEI field: military kid, non-traditional student, aunt of multi-racial children, wife of a cyber security expert, and mother to two Black boys. Professionally, I experienced both faculty and staff roles.”

Upon completing a doctorate degree in educational leadership in 2009, Teara Lander began working full-time in higher education as a staff member while also teaching in various institutions. In 2018, she joined the University of Oklahoma as a director in the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. As she explains: “I claim Oklahoma as home, so once I graduated, I was positive about working in the DEI field in Oklahoma. I know that I can continue nurturing a welcoming and inclusive environment for faculty, staff, students, alumni and the community at large.”

Congratulations, Dr. Lander!