

W In the Room

The Office of University Community Student Ambassadors

Where It Happens

Photos by Travis Caperton

Student ambassadors from the Office of University Community host guests from dignitaries to prospective students on all three OU campuses, but perhaps their most important role is providing a student perspective to the office they serve.

“Our student ambassadors are the face of our office,” says D’Andre Fisher, special assistant to the vice president in the Office of University Community. “These are students who want to learn about being a more diverse and inclusive person, who want to learn how to be an ally for marginalized communities and share their concerns with the administration in a meaningful way.”

Here, students share in their own words why they became agents for change:



“I had Mr. Fisher as a professor for Intro to Human Relations and he blew me away. He is very passionate about the subject and I’m the same way. Having the opportunity to do meaningful work related to my major has been wonderful. The office is building a bridge between students and administration. Both sides are coming together to make a change. There is still a lot to do. We need to make greater strides in diversity when hiring faculty. It’s only been a year, but we’ve done so much.” – *Amy Jenkins, Choctaw, Okla., senior majoring in human relations*



“I’ve grown so much in just the brief time that I’ve been working for the Office of University Community. They’ve really helped me develop as a professional. The best part of working with high school students is seeing their faces, the change that they go through and how much they appreciate the extended hand. Seeing kids that you’ve recruited come to the University of Oklahoma is so rewarding.” – *Taylor Berry, Dallas graduate student in higher education and intercollegiate athletics*

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“Mr. Fisher recruited me to OU. I look up to him and wanted a chance to do what he does. When I got the chance to jump in, I took it. I believe that in the last year and a half our office has made major strides in race relations and overall campus climate. Organizations like Veterans Affairs, LGBTQ and people with disabilities all need a voice on campus. The problems other groups face are just as prevalent as the race issues. We are not where we want to be, but we are working on getting closer every day.”
—*DeAndre Martin, Moore, Okla., senior majoring in human relations, pre-law*



“The most meaningful part of my experience has been being able to mentor students and speak to incoming freshmen about what diversity means. Everyone comes from different backgrounds and has different perspectives. Being a University Community Ambassador has given me the opportunity to be part of something from the ground up and be able to say, ‘I was there.’ It’s also a wonderful experience to be able to go back to Douglass High School and let the students know that you can attend the University of Oklahoma. You can do anything.”—*Danielle Rutledge, Oklahoma City advertising and enterprise studies senior*



“I see a lot of what is going on, the hurt and pain, but I wanted to do more than voice it. I wanted to help change it. It seemed to me I could do that most effectively on the inside, in the room where administration was, where the meetings are actually taking place, where the conversations are happening. I see a big difference just with the presence of this office. We are definitely moving in the right direction.” —*Vivian Tyson, Oklahoma City sophomore majoring in public affairs and administration, pre-law*

