lacette Cross

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**EDUCATION**

Samuel DeWitt Proctor School of Theology of Virginia Union University, Richmond, VA

Doctor of Ministry (DMin) 2021

Doctoral Project: Making Room: Womanist Healing Space for Black Womxn’s Sexual Wholeness

Union Presbyterian Seminary, Richmond, VA

Master of Theology (ThM) 2016

Master’s Thesis: Frieda’s Ruined Resistance: Constructive Theo-Ethical Sources for a Womanist Sexual Ethic

Samuel DeWitt Proctor School of Theology of Virginia Union University, Richmond, VA

Masters of Divinity (MDiv) 2012

The Catholic University of America, Washington, DC

Bachelors of Social Work 2009

**work EXPERIENCE**

**Executive Director 10/2022 – Present  
Diversity Richmond**

*Provide leadership to staff to accomplish organizational goals*

*Build relationships with internal and external stakeholders*

*Represent the organization in various settings*

*Develop long-term strategic goals in partnership with board and staff*

**Adjunct Faculty, Gender, Sexuality, Women’s Studies Department 01/2020 – Present  
Virginia Commonwealth University**

*Meet all designated course instruction guidelines*

*Grade assignments and exams in a timely manner based on instructions/rubric provided*

*Respond to student inquiries within 24 hours*

*Submit final grades according to College and Department policies*

**VA SIP Strategic Advisor 08/2019 – Present  
NEO Philanthropy**

*Understand and navigate existing state infrastructure for wise investment and strategic collaboration*

*Maintain accountability efforts to keep grantees on track with SIP goals and vision*

*Research and identify organizational partners who should be considered for funding*

*Review grant reports, renewals and proposals*

*Provide strategic support to members of SIP funded organizations*

*Assist in connecting grantees to those working on progressive agenda issues to foster cross-movement synergy*

*Engage with other state advisors to keep a pulse on movement work that influences SIP goals and vision*

**Director of Volunteers and Outreach 07/2016 – 07/2019  
Side by Side formerly ROSMY**

*Manage the volunteer process to best support the organization*

*Develop and implement new processes that increase organization capacity to best serve LGBTQ youth*

*Create an outreach plan that increases awareness of programs and services of the organization*

*Coordinate programs and services to support LGBTQ youth in Greater Richmond and Petersburg area*

*Implement Side By Side’s first ever youth group in Petersburg, VA at Petersburg High School*

*Work with a team to develop the infrastructure and resources for a Youth of Color group*

*Lead staff and board team to implement a racial equity lens for the organization*

*Implement outreach plan to communities of color*

*Write trauma informed and intersectional curriculum for youth groups including Youth of Color group*

*Conduct Side by Side trainings with local school districts, nonprofits, private companies and public agencies*

*Submit reports in a timely manner*

*Represent agency across the state at trainings, conferences, coalitions and networks committed to creating supportive environments for LGBTQ youth*

**Site Coordinator 08/2012 – 07/2016  
Communities In Schools of Richmond, Richmond, VA**

*Provide support to students, faculty and staff at assigned school site*

*Develop relevant programming to support student success in school*

*Coordinate service providers and volunteers to meet needs at site*

*Prepare monthly reports entered into national database*

*Serve as primary contact for teachers and parents for resources to help support students*

*Identify community partners to help support the school and student success*

*Participate in CIS staff meetings and trainings*

*Maintain partnerships with community agencies and local businesses to support parents and teachers*

**Sexual Health Educator 06/2008 – 01/2012  
Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice, Washington, DC**

*Provide instruction on sexuality and reproductive health topics*

*Facilitate youth-focused sessions on relevant sexual health issues concerning African American girls*

*Develop peer educator training modules according to program objectives*

*Provide sexual health information and training presentations to staff and parents*

*Maintain accurate reports of group sessions and trainings conducted*

*Serve as Community Health Educator to local middle and high schools in Washington, DC*

*Coordinate sexuality education sessions with school and community based groups*

*Provide consulting services on relevant sexual and reproductive health topics for youth-centered community based and faith based settings*

*Develop, maintain, and evaluate materials for sexual and reproductive health education sessions and presentations*

**ministry EXPERIENCE**

**Pastor 02/2016 – Present  
Restoration Fellowship RVA**

*Provide visionary pastoral leadership to developing faith community. Responsible for preaching, teaching, planning and executing Christian education program; lead team in developing and implementing outreach plan. Connect with community organizations for social justice projects centering racial equity and intersectionality.*

*Executed projects include: Let’s Talk Sex and Faith, Anti-Violence Vigil, Resilience Series, Community Healing Space, Campaign for Comfort pad and tampon collection drive and Life Skills University (LSU) young adult community and skill building program*

**Founder/CEO 02/2015 – Present  
Will You Be Whole**

*Develop and provide resources to individuals, churches and communities on how to talk about topics and issues regarding sex and faith. Responsible for overall operation, conducting trainings, presenting at conferences and providing one-one-one pastoral sex-and-faith coaching sessions.*

**Pastor of Christian Education 09/2012 – 12/2013  
Abundant Life Christian Center**

*Responsible for developing the Christian Education for a new church start. Plan included developing a theology of Christian education, pedagogical model and training of new teachers for all areas of church ministry – children to senior adults.*

**community EXPERIENCE**

**Co-Founder/Executive Director 09/2016 – Present  
Us Giving Richmond Connections/Black Pride RVA**

*Co-found and lead a non-profit committed to improving the health and wellness of Black LGBTQ persons of the Greater Richmond area.*

*Chairperson of Black Pride RVA, the first ever event in the Commonwealth of Virginia centered on the unique experience of Black LGBTQ+ persons*

*Develop a monthly social event to foster community connections*

*Plan and implement bi-monthly education and awareness events on topics of health and wellness*

**Fellowships**

**Richmond Memorial Health Foundation 04/2018 – 02/2019  
Equity + Health Fellowship**

*Equity + Health Fellows gather together as community-based grassroots leaders from underrepresented communities focused on promoting health equity through projects related to the built environment. My project is a feasibility study for a physical community center for Black LGBTQ persons in greater Richmond as a safe space to access health and wellness information.*

**Initiatives of Change 01/2018 – 05/2018  
Community Trustbuilding Fellowship 2018**

*Community Trustbuilding Fellows participate in group of national leaders who gather to learn how to become better community leaders and authentic trustbuilders capable of overcoming divisions of race, culture, economics and politics. Fellows seek to develop as change agents committed to healing historical wounds, creating new shared narratives and building healthy equitable communities.*

**Center for American Progress 01/2014 – 12/2016  
Faith and Reproductive Justice Leadership Institute**

*Institute Fellow of a national group of diverse faith leaders committed to reproductive justice. Trained in public policy, media engagement and program implementation. Implemented a local project with Richmond area repro justice leaders.*

**Princeton Theological Seminary 07/2013 – 06/2014  
Black Theology and Leadership Institute**

*Inaugural fellow of a national gathering of African American church and parachurch ministry leaders. Explore and examine roots of Black theology for 21st century leadership possibilities. Participated in national response of Black clergy leaders to verdict of George Zimmerman.*

**PAPERS and presentations**

“Emerging Theology: Womanist Embodied Theology”

Presentation at the Liberation Theologies Speaker Series Event,May 2019  
Charlotte, NC

“At the Crossroads: Doing Intersectional Equity Work”

Keynote at the Richmond Memorial Health Foundation Co-learning and Equity Event,May 2019  
Richmond, VA

“Not In My House”

Presentation at the Holistic Hurt, Wholistic Healing Conference,October 2018  
Richmond, VA

“Let’s Talk About Sex and Faith”

Presentation at the Planned Parenthood of Wisconsin, Inc. March 2018  
Safe Healthy Strong Conference, Milwaukee, WI

“Of Flesh and Faith: Sexuality and Spirituality in the Black Church”

Presentation at the American Association of Sexuality Educators, January 2018  
Counselors and Therapists (AASECT) Winter Institute, St. Louis, MO

“I Love God and Sex Too: Redefining Our Sexual Ethic”

Presentation at the Let’s Talk About Sex Conference, New Orleans, LA October 2017

“Defusing the Power of Toxic Religion for Sexual Advocacy”

Co-presentation at the Woodhull Sexual Freedom Summit, Arlington, VA August 2017

“Frieda’s Ruined Resistance”

Paper presented at the American Academy of Religion annual meeting in Atlanta, GA November 2015

“God Positive Sexuality”

Co-presentation at the Sex Down South Conference, Atlanta, GA October 2015

“Bible Body Bliss”

Presentation at the Woodhull Sexual Freedom Summit, Alexandria, VA August 2014

“Politics of Silence: Black Women’s Coalition Building for Justice”

Paper presented at Koinonia Forum Graduate Student Conference at Princeton Theological Seminary, Princeton, NJ March 2013

“Politics of Silence: Black Women’s Coalition Building for Justice”

Paper presented at Intersections Symposium at Morgan State University, Baltimore, MD March 2013

“Divine Gift of Sex”

Paper presented at the Southeastern Conference on the Study of Religion (SECSOR), Atlanta, GA March 2012

**PUBLICATIONS**

*“Exploring a Holistic Sexuality in the Black Church:* March 2019 *In Conversation With Rev. Lacette Cross” at* https://sojo.net/articles/exploring-holistic-sexuality-black-church-conversation-rev-lacette-cross

“The Audacity to Be Free”

*The Feminist Wire at* https://thefeministwire.com/2018/09/ eulogizingaretha-the-audacity-to-be-free/September *2018*

“*What is Your Movement Blueprint*”athttps://btpbase.org/April 2018rev-lacette-cross-what-is-your-movement-blueprint-mlkglobal/

“Frieda’s Ruined Resistance: A Womanist Ethic of Survival”

Journal of Black Sexuality and Relationships, Winter 2017 October 2017

“Sexual Wholeness as Justice Work”

Medium at https://medium.com/@ManyVoicesOrg/sexual-wholeness-as-justice-work-6573c317ce22 March 2017

**AWARDS**

2020 Outstanding Woman Award, YWCA of Richmond May 2020

2019 OUTStanding Virginian, Equality Virginia April 2019

Black and Bold Award, Diversity Richmond February 2018

Squaring the Womanist Circle Scholar Award, Union Presbyterian Seminary Sep 2015 – June 2016