

Valerie S. Garr

A native of Davenport, Iowa, Valerie S. Garr, M.A., CDE® is the Director of Diversity-Equity & Inclusion and Coordinator of Supplemental Instruction & Tutoring for the University of Iowa College of Nursing where she advises the Multicultural Nursing Association and co-chairs the College's Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Committee. As a Certified Diversity Executive, Val also co-teaches NURS 3111 Diversity, Equity & Inclusion for the Health Professions, and she teaches in the UI Career Leadership Academy Program as well as guest lectures in various health sciences Colleges and at the University of Iowa Hospital & Clinics Nurse Residency Program on health and cultural competence. She is also a member of the Big Ten Academic Alliance Colleges of Nursing Diversity Group. Val also served on the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) Diversity -Equity-Inclusion Leadership Network Domain Nine Professionalism sub-committee to help integrate DEI into the AACN Essentials for nursing competencies.

Author of her College's Seven Pillars of Diversity, Val has been employed by the University of Iowa for 35 years and has previously worked in the UI Office of Student Financial Aid; UI Office of Support Service Programs; Opportunity at Iowa-Office of the Provost; and UI Office of Undergraduate Admissions as Iowa's first Director of Diversity Relations & Outreach where she created the diversity and Spanish sections of the admissions website and developed one of the very first UI diversity recruitment brochures.

In March 2022, Val was awarded the Iowa Deltas Social Action Trailblazer Award from the Davenport Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc for her significant contributions in the areas of service, leadership, and commitment to social justice and advocacy in her hometown of Davenport.

In April 2022, Val was inducted into her high school's Hall of Fame at Davenport Central High School in honor of her 16 years of community work through the Quad City Minority Partnership, a not for profit organization she founded that collaborates with Quad City area high schools, colleges, and community members who volunteer their time to coordinate an annual Youth Leadership Conference-College & Career Fair for underrepresented and first generation Iowa and Illinois Quad City highschoolers.

In August 2022, Val was recognized by the Iowa State Education Association as a recipient of the Paul Mann Memorial Human Rights Award which honors an individual for exemplary contributions toward the advancement of human and civil rights.

She is a recipient of the UI's prestigious Hancher-Finkbine Medallion (2021); the Iowa Board of Regents Staff Excellence Award (2018); the Iowa Department of Human Rights Unsung Heroes Award (2018); the UI Distinguished Catalyst Award (2016)—the only woman to be awarded this distinction; the UI Staff Council for Excellence in Service Award (2005); the UI-Multicultural Graduation Distinguished Educator Award for Commitment and Continuing Efforts to Promote Diversity (2003); and the College of Law's W.H. Knight Award of Distinction (2003).

Valerie received her Bachelor of Arts degree in Journalism and Mass Communication with a minor in African American World Studies and her Master of Arts degree in Student Development in Postsecondary Education, both from the University of Iowa. She has lived in Iowa City for over forty years.