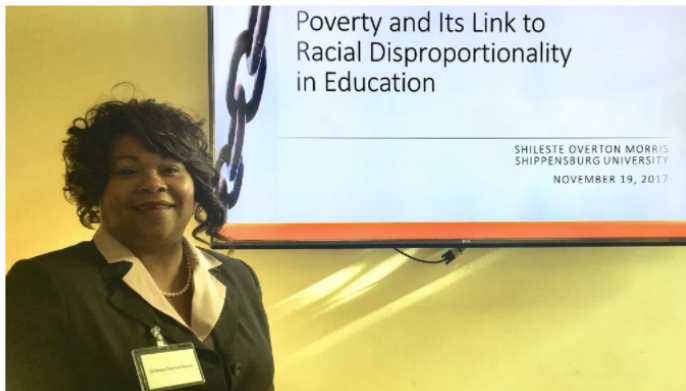


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December 7, 2017 Jared Hameloth News 0



Shileste Overton Morris gave a powerful presentation on poverty and racial disproportionality on Dec. 2. Photo by Taylor Cole.



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Taylor Cole
Staff Writer

With so many programs in place to ensure student success in the classroom, are students still being left without the tools they need to succeed? Unfortunately, the answer is sometimes yes, as many students are unequipped and left behind. One of the main factors for this problem is poverty, which is unavoidable for many, and was the focus of Millersville's Conference on Education and Poverty held last weekend.

The conference ran from Thursday, Nov. 30 to Saturday, Dec. 2 and touched on topics such as homelessness, cultural acknowledgement deficiencies, English language learners, and race disproportionality.

On Saturday, the conference opened up with a keynote speech delivered by Dr. Robert Slavin, the director for the Center for Research and Reform in Education at John Hopkins University. Dr. Slavin has co-authored more than 300 articles and book chapters on a vast array of education topics. He has received countless awards and acknowledgements from his studies and academic work. At the conference, he discussed the educational effects of poverty and how the Every Student Succeeds Act can help. Dr. Slavin showed a website he created with other academics that outlines programs beneficial to student learning, with evidence to support the program's success.

After the keynote speech, over 300 attendees dispersed into different rooms for multiple presentations. One of those presentations was delivered by Millersville's own Shileste Overton Morris. A doctoral candidate and the director for Center for Schools and Communities, Overton Morris delivered a powerful presentation on poverty and racial disproportionality in education.

During Overton Morris's presentation, the audience learned that African-American boys and girls are suspended more often for the same offense that their Caucasian peers committed. She also explained the stereotypical view that non-white students misbehave more often than their white counterparts. Overton Morris debunked this myth with evidence that showed both white and non-white students often misbehave the same amount. The presentation worked to expose stereotypical misconceptions while also outlining the need for change.

The conference helped to kick start this change. By opening up about such important issues, educators in the field are better equipped to meet student's needs. In most schools, there is a disconnect between student needs and student achievement. In order to get students to achieve, engage, and succeed, educators need to make schools a place for all students to learn and grow. The first step in doing so is by making educators aware of these issues that students are facing.

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