

D&I Diaries Episode 7: An Interview with Jordan Lane Transcript

Speaker 1 [00:00:15] Hello and welcome to this episode of D&I Diaries, a podcast produced by the Office of Diversity and Inclusion in the Biological Sciences Division at the University of Chicago. My name is Camilla Frost-Brewer, and I am one of the program managers for diversity and inclusion in the division, and I'll be one of your hosts for the show.

Speaker 2 [00:00:32] And my name is Tobias Spears, and I will be your other host. And I serve as assistant dean of diversity and inclusion in the division. Through this podcast, Camilla and I hope to highlight and showcase the diverse voices of everyday years. We want to create a space to authentically and candidly share our DEI stories where we get to know one another outside of our professional roles. And finally, we hope to engage a coalition of listeners who value DEI and increase interest in DEI work and conversations across the BSD. So without further ado, let's begin the show.

Speaker 1 [00:01:13] Hello listeners, and welcome to this episode of D&I Diaries, the show that uncovers diverse stories in the BSD. We are your hosts, Camilla Frost-Brewer.

Speaker 2 [00:01:22] And Tobias Spears.

Speaker 1 [00:01:23] And today we are joined by Jordan Lane, who is an immunology Ph.D. candidate, originally from Waldorf, Maryland, and having received a B.S. in Biology from Towson University. He is currently with the Esterhazy lab studying gastrointestinal lymphatics. So thank you so much for being here with us today.

Speaker 3 [00:01:40] Thank you for having me.

Speaker 2 [00:01:41] You bet. You did it. Thank you.

Speaker 4 [00:01:44] I was.

Speaker 2 [00:01:44] Like, you know, it's so intimidating because she has such like a radio personality voice. Right. So it's like you when you hear Camilla, you're like, Wait, do I sound like that, too?

Speaker 1 [00:01:53] I have also been told that my entire life and in this life, but also in another life, I was a scientist. So I. Were you.

Speaker 3 [00:02:02] Looking at.

Speaker 1 [00:02:03] I really love chemistry, actually.

Speaker 2 [00:02:06] Okay.

Speaker 1 [00:02:06] Not a bio.

Speaker 4 [00:02:07] Girl.

Speaker 2 [00:02:07] In the past.

Speaker 4 [00:02:09] Yes.

Speaker 1 [00:02:10] Well, you know, chemistry. Yeah, it. It feeds into everything here. I just have a deep appreciation for science and medicine. My parents really wanted me to be a doctor, so I did, like, a lot of internships and stuff. Yeah, So.

Speaker 2 [00:02:23] But you decided ultimately to do diversity?

Speaker 1 [00:02:25] No, I failed calc two at UNC, and I heard that it was actually the most failed class at the institution. So I was like, You know what? I'm going to do myself a favor and take calculus one again. Oh, got a 99 in the class. Took calc two. I can't see shapes in space, and all calc two was at Carolina was areas of shapes and space. Yeah. So I asked my to for help and he said, well, this is the way to do it. And it was one of the bravest moments of my life. I said to him in his eyeballs, It's math. There's at least three other ways to do this. He's like, Well, this is the way that I'm teaching it. And I didn't know about tutoring. I mean, like I knew about it, but I was like, No, I was the smart kid. I don't need tutoring. So I was like, I'll show him. Nope. Showed my transcript. So that's all it was.

Speaker 4 [00:03:19] Yeah.

Speaker 3 [00:03:19] I also didn't do well in calc two.

Speaker 4 [00:03:21] Too. Absolutely.

Speaker 3 [00:03:22] So I went into the one science that did not require.

Speaker 4 [00:03:25] Right, right. Beautiful. I think logic as a.

Speaker 2 [00:03:29] Way to not have to take the hard math, I guess, is what we write. Is it hard?

Speaker 1 [00:03:34] We usually say like hard science.

Speaker 4 [00:03:35] Science is hard.

Speaker 1 [00:03:36] All math.

Speaker 4 [00:03:37] Is hard. Yeah, Sorry. I mean.

Speaker 2 [00:03:40] Okay, So, Jorden, could you tell us a little bit about your research and what you do here at UChicago?

Speaker 3 [00:03:47] Yes. So I like mentioned like Camilla mentioned, I'm in the Esterhazy lab. I look at and testing lymphatics specifically in the context of infections and how those infections impact lymphatics and their downstream functions. Yeah. So that includes nutrient uptake such as like lipids, like fats that you do lipids, but also yeah, lipids, cholesterol. Yeah. But also drugs that are taken up through lymphatics, but also additionally it has a lot of functions and immune responses. Yeah. And so your lymphatics are super important, but they've been traditionally overlooked by immunologists. So I find it surprising. Yeah.

Speaker 2 [00:04:28] And that's the intervention you're making.

Speaker 4 [00:04:29] Yeah. I mean I.

Speaker 2 [00:04:30] Think I talk in the language of intervention since, you know, I remember having to do with the dissertation and intervene. So yeah. So you recently were in Italy, so can you tell us what you did in Italy and what you were like, what you were there for?

Speaker 3 [00:04:44] Yeah. So I was given an opportunity to go to Italy for a conference. So there is a series of conferences called the Gordon Research Conferences and very prestigious. The Gordon Conference on LYMPHATICS happens every other year. So this year it happened to be in Italy. And so my PI Daria asked if I wanted to go, you know, of course I said yeah.

Speaker 4 [00:05:09] Yes.

Speaker 2 [00:05:10] I want to go.

Speaker 3 [00:05:11] It's a yeah, it was a good opportunity to not only like learn the state of the field, but also present my own work. Yeah. For the first time.

Speaker 2 [00:05:19] Right.

Speaker 3 [00:05:20] And I, you know, learned I got in contact with so many other people that are like, in the field, and it was. It was a really good time.

Speaker 2 [00:05:28] Yeah.

Speaker 3 [00:05:29] I actually won a poster award at that.

Speaker 4 [00:05:33] Conference, which is.

Speaker 3 [00:05:35] Very validating, especially since we're not a lymphatics lab traditionally. Right. And it was very nice to know that, like, even though we're not old enough that traditionally we're not established forces in the lymphatics field, that we're still able to make a very significant contribution to the.

Speaker 2 [00:05:49] Field.

Speaker 3 [00:05:49] Here. So yeah, it was there was a lot it wasn't a much needed boost.

Speaker 4 [00:05:55] Yeah, right.

Speaker 2 [00:05:55] Right.

Speaker 3 [00:05:56] Right at this point in my training.

Speaker 2 [00:05:57] So cool. Thanks for sharing. Yeah.

Speaker 1 [00:06:00] Yeah. So what I'm hearing is you're going to be the one to watch out for in a few years here.

Speaker 3 [00:06:04] We'll see. We will see. You know what I like? What I want to do. I'm hoping that's the that's the end goal.

Speaker 1 [00:06:10] So I'll set my Google alerts. So next question that we have for you is how does diversity, equity and or inclusion connect to your work? And maybe how do you incorporate it or see it as integral to the work that you do?

Speaker 3 [00:06:25] Yes. So science as a whole. Part of our job is science, communication and getting our science out. It's not just our science. It's not just for other scientists. It's for the public as a whole.

Speaker 2 [00:06:37] Yeah.

Speaker 3 [00:06:38] You know, a lot of our work is funded by the NIH, which is, you know, public taxes. And so I truly take it seriously. Science, communication. I think one of the failings of science education as a whole is how they have not really shown the scientific process or how it's continuously changing. Mm hmm. A lot of people are taught science to be this very, like, strict thing. And, you know, we were given these test and it has to be like X, Y, and Z for you to be right. But that's just it's not how science works. And so I, I really want to. No matter what I'm doing, I'm kind of changed that. I, I haven't been doing the best job as of late to try and figure out, like, what niche I can carve out myself. Yeah. And that's something that I have been trying to work on. Unfortunately, I'm a perfectionist and so I don't really move on too many things without having like a clear cut goal and things like that. So yeah. But in terms of the die space, I want to there's a lot of people who are already doing it. Like Raven, the science maven has a great science communication space, and so she does a great job of taking science and then putting it in a way that accessible. Yeah, not only for the black community, but really anybody. That's something that I really aspire to do, something like that. But also like the just the demographics of who actually does science.

Speaker 2 [00:08:12] Mm hmm.

Speaker 3 [00:08:13] I'm not great on mentoring because I have problems specifically explaining things to people, but that doesn't mean I don't want other people to come up in that space. I think I'm also saying that I don't think I would be the best mentor, but I think that I still want people that look like me to be around and making the decisions. I don't know if that's a good way to put that, but.

Speaker 2 [00:08:39] Yeah.

Speaker 1 [00:08:40] That's a perfect way to put that. That is it actually has a name. It's called sponsors.

Speaker 4 [00:08:44] Yeah. Yeah.

Speaker 1 [00:08:45] So just sponsoring not even just financially but sponsoring people who are coming up behind us to have access to the science but also to the programs that get them to where you are too. And a plug for us. We can hook you in. Mm hmm. To do science communication somehow.

Speaker 4 [00:09:05] Yeah.

Speaker 2 [00:09:06] Yeah, It's important. There's a person here who does it for the division, so, yeah, it's. It's its own kind of specialty where people are trying to translate information and make it legible to people who, you know, don't necessarily sit in a classroom all day or in the lab.

Speaker 3 [00:09:20] Yeah, I know. That would be, like, a great opportunity.

Speaker 2 [00:09:23] Mm hmm.

Speaker 3 [00:09:24] So, yeah. Thank you.

Speaker 2 [00:09:25] Cool. So I want to ask about the South Side of Chicago, because that's where we are. And what does it mean to be, you know, a budding scientist on the Southside living in this community? And I know we just talked about like the translation of work, you know. Are there any connections between the Southside and like what you're doing in your lab? So just, you know, you know, to reflect on that?

Speaker 3 [00:09:49] Yeah. So in my lab specifically, I'm not really sure if there's connections with the Southside, but I think like, for me personally, yeah, it would be that, you know, I. I actually commute in.

Speaker 2 [00:10:01] Mm hmm.

Speaker 3 [00:10:02] And I'm surrounded by tons of black people. Yeah. On my commute. And then once I step outside this campus, there's none, like, Yeah. And I kind of see, like, those parallels in science itself. Mm hmm. Where, you know, there's tons of researchers looking into breast cancer and diabetes and a lot of things that really disproportionately affect black people. But the people researching them are just they're all white.

Speaker 2 [00:10:29] Mm hmm. Yeah.

Speaker 3 [00:10:31] And it's it's a tricky it's a tricky place to be in. And I see how, you know, we're continuously kept out of these spaces and kept out of science as a whole. And it's it's unsettling, but it's. It's been like this for years. Yeah, it's kind of actually like how I felt as, like, a at a disadvantage from starting grad school. You know, I didn't I didn't know that this was actually like something that you could do until my senior year of undergrad.

Speaker 2 [00:10:59] Mm hmm.

Speaker 3 [00:11:00] And then you come here and learn that people have known that this was a thing since they were children, like.

Speaker 2 [00:11:05] Yeah, yeah, yeah. Mm hmm. And they've been preparing for it, right?

Speaker 4 [00:11:09] Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

Speaker 3 [00:11:11] But I think that the best way that I can, like, serve the Southside community is by doing. By participating in things like the. The science.

Speaker 2 [00:11:21] Fair and.

Speaker 3 [00:11:21] The fair that happens.

Speaker 2 [00:11:22] Yeah.

Speaker 3 [00:11:23] And that was a really enriching experience for me, because you're not only like exposing people to what immunology is because they know what microbiology is and, you know, cancer biology, but I'm not at all the people that like know what immunology is. And so that was a really enriching experience. Yeah. Telling them like not only like just immunology itself, but like the immunology behind COVID. Mm hmm. Yeah. And like, why it's important to get boosters or why it's important to get vaccine shots and things like that. So.

Speaker 2 [00:11:51] Yeah. Okay.

Speaker 1 [00:11:52] Thank you. Yeah, that's awesome. So 50% of my job is in the cancer center at UChicago, actually. So what you're talking about is so crucial because it's not just that the researchers are predominantly white, right? It's the cell lines that they use. It's the clinical trial accruals. Like it is not as inclusive as we want to need it to be, especially living and working on the south side. So that is a very critical point.

Speaker 2 [00:12:24] Mm hmm.

Speaker 3 [00:12:24] Yeah. And a lot of researchers treat like a lot of these illnesses or things as just a way to get money from the NIH without like, thinking about, you know, there's a people or there's entire families are affected by this. Like, my great aunt died of like. Like breast cancer.

Speaker 2 [00:12:44] Yeah.

Speaker 3 [00:12:44] Like so many of my my family has, like type two diabetes, type one diabetes. And, you know, you know, there's only so much that you can do.

Speaker 2 [00:12:54] Mm hmm.

Speaker 3 [00:12:54] My my cousin, she has a lot of problems with her GI tract. She has a GI cancer.

Speaker 2 [00:13:00] Yeah. Mm hmm.

Speaker 3 [00:13:01] And I try to, like, break down the science to her.

Speaker 2 [00:13:05] Mm hmm.

Speaker 3 [00:13:06] You know, as best as I can, there's. There's only so much that so few of us can do.

Speaker 2 [00:13:11] Yeah.

Speaker 3 [00:13:12] So.

Speaker 1 [00:13:13] Yeah. Thank you. And I'm sorry to hear that.

Speaker 2 [00:13:15] Yeah.

Speaker 3 [00:13:16] I mean, it's. I'm not going to say it's life, but it kind of is.

Speaker 2 [00:13:21] It's the way. Yeah.

Speaker 3 [00:13:22] It's where things are, unfortunately.

Speaker 1 [00:13:24] Yeah. And so many of us are touched by chronic illnesses, diseases, etc.. So it does have a real human impact. The science doesn't exist just to get funding to do the research. That research needs to translate, as Tobias said.

Speaker 2 [00:13:39] Yeah. Yeah.

Speaker 1 [00:13:39] Yeah. So for our next question, we are just, you know, curious if there was ever a moment or an experience that you had that made you think differently about D-I and it could be either personally or professionally.

Speaker 3 [00:13:57] Yeah. So when I was going from undergrad to grad school, I knew that, you know, grad school was an option for a career in science. And then when I started grad school, you know, you're with your cohort, you're getting to know your cohort and how your cohort not only like got to know the program, but also like, you know, decided to do the PhDs. I learned that so many of people, so many people in my cohorts not only have like families with PhDs, but like they had like family and friends who were like and tangentially like, in science and could like, lead them, you know, to that to that space or to the space. And it was a really it was a struggle for me, honestly. Like I it took me like I out of undergrad, I only got one job offer to do a postdoc research and in a lab. And I it was literally impossible for me to get into like industry, even though I and I have had like, all of this experience and, you know, from not only like undergrad but also high school. I've been doing science for so long, but it was super. It was literally very hard for me to get a job to even try and get experience to get to this point.

Speaker 2 [00:15:13] Yeah.

Speaker 3 [00:15:14] It was just like an uphill battle. And then I've learned that like, yeah, like I said, like I learned I got here and I learned that everyone's road was just not everyone's road, but a lot of other people's roads were just so much easier than mine. And I kind of one of the things that I set out in my early years was to try and make that road a little less hard for other people. Yeah, and I know that, you know, when I was doing the documentary, I was like one of the things that I was very vocal about.

Speaker 2 [00:15:41] Yeah.

Speaker 3 [00:15:42] Was trying to make that road a lot more straightforward and easier for the people to come through.

Speaker 2 [00:15:48] So yeah, yeah, yeah. It's interesting because I think for so for so many folks who have like underrepresented identities, you know, our impetus for doing DEI work is because we don't want it to be like this for other people. Yeah, and it's just such a different place where I think our energy comes from because I think we know that we are the ones we've been waiting for, right? It's like we know I don't want this to be like

this. Other people where and it's interesting because I remember defending my dissertation and going into the meeting feeling like, you know, I don't want people to make this hard just because they think it was hard for them. Right. And so it's such a great political move to want to make sure that people don't have to experience the same things you've had to experience as it relates to identity as you hold.

Speaker 3 [00:16:38] Yeah, but the problem is, like so many, like older faculty in science want that like hardness to remain. And I just don't understand. Like, yeah, they want those barriers to stay up. Mm hmm. For whatever reason, Not only because, like, they may be jaded by how hard their process was to do it, or, you know, they want the community to continue to look like them, so they continue to feel comfortable. Yeah. And it and it's just it's so frustrating and.

Speaker 2 [00:17:06] Mm hmm.

Speaker 3 [00:17:06] It's like, okay, those are to me, those are kind of two separate points. Okay. So you want it to be hard because you had a hard time.

Speaker 2 [00:17:13] Yeah.

Speaker 4 [00:17:15] Okay. Like, yeah.

Speaker 3 [00:17:19] It was also wrong that it happened to you.

Speaker 4 [00:17:21] Like, it was. It was not like when that happened to you. So, like. Yeah.

Speaker 2 [00:17:25] So don't continue the trend.

Speaker 3 [00:17:26] Yeah. And so I don't continue to the trauma. And then there's the, there's the point of, okay, I want this program to look like me or it's, you know. Mm hmm. And then there's with that, it's like, okay, well, when the program looks like you, you're shutting out so many other people. And yeah, there's nothing like you guys are just having, like, this cacophony of, like, just the same ideas and the same. But it's not a that's not an uncommon thought. Like.

Speaker 2 [00:17:55] Yes, no. And the NIH and its have don't want the program to be homogenous.

Speaker 4 [00:17:59] No.

Speaker 2 [00:18:01] You know, so yeah.

Speaker 1 [00:18:03] Yeah. You bring up a lot of really important things I think one about faculty wanting departments, programs, whatever to continue to look like them is so detrimental to the science. Like, we know it's bad for the science. You don't get the difference of ideas, of experiences, of expertise in the lab, in the research space, in the trial, whatever. Mm hmm. I also want to touch on this kind of educational privilege and the educational gatekeeping that happens and how it affects humans, the science and like our health in general. Like, the more you keep and the more you keep people out, the worse the science is, in my opinion, as a non-scientist. But like the less applicable the science is to the people that it need. To reach.

Speaker 2 [00:18:57] Yeah, yeah, yeah. So, Jordan, was there ever a time when you had to show allyship or camaraderie for someone else? And what was that experience like and what did you learn or take away from that moment?

Speaker 3 [00:19:10] Yeah, so I don't like calling myself an ally because I feel so that's geared towards like the group that you're supporting or bringing up to call you an ally. But I try to I'm not even sure if being a champion is even the right way to say that. But but I really try to do to support black women, but especially black trans women. There's just so many attacks on both of those groups right now, and they're only escalating by the day, not only from politicians, but also just by the world itself is really attacking them. And so I try to bring light and be vocal about all of the violence that's happening against them in whatever way they can, whenever way that I can. I try to be supportive of black women and black trans women as a cis black man, you know, moving through this world with the privileges that I have.

Speaker 2 [00:20:12] Yeah. Yeah. I you know, it's it's interesting because I was talking to one of my really good friends about this yesterday because we were talking about how what we don't talk about in queer communities, right, as a black gay man. Right. Is that folks don't talk enough about like how the violence and antagonism directed toward LGBT folks. Right. Is transphobic in its nature. Right? It's about your performance. It's not really about who your sexuality. Right. Who who you are like, oriented to. It's really about you said this this way, you didn't do this this way, you move this way. And so the way that like transphobic antagonism. Right. Is like the the culprit of it all, you know, it's always about the way you perform yourself because it's in some ways, right. If you're a gay person who performs yourself according, you know, to the, you know, hegemonic standard of like masculinity and femininity, it's okay. Right. It's when you it's when people suspect something different. Right. And that's typically an eye towards, you know, transphobic kind of impulses. Right. To say, oh, well, you're not doing this this way. You're not behaving that way.

Speaker 3 [00:21:22] Yeah, yeah. Like masculine gay men are people are more comfortable around masculine gay men than they are feminine gay men.

Speaker 2 [00:21:29] Yeah.

Speaker 3 [00:21:30] And that's speaking directly towards your point.

Speaker 2 [00:21:32] Yeah, yeah.

Speaker 1 [00:21:34] Yeah. And I think it like I want to say, it's also rooted in sexism.

Speaker 3 [00:21:37] Like, absolutely. Yeah.

Speaker 1 [00:21:39] Because a lot of the negative things that we have to say about LGBTQ folks is rooted in our hatred of women. Mm hmm. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Speaker 4 [00:21:52] Yeah.

Speaker 2 [00:21:52] And in the hatred of, like, the feminine right. And hatred, you think about, like, you know, gay cultural discourse around, like, top bottom. You know, it's an insult to call someone about them, right? It's an insult to call someone what you associate

with femininity. Right. And so what I think that means is that, you know, if we had this world where the feminine or femininity is always looked at as like a downgrade or like the thing to not be right, then why are we surprised when, you know, people treat women in these ways. And this is why we need to switch that discourse, right. To help people understand that what it means to be a woman or to be feminine isn't feminine, isn't inherently bad, isn't, you know, the thing to always shy away from, right? I'm thinking now about, like, people's responses to like Jonathan Majors. I think that's his name. When he was on the cover of whatever magazine, he was on a cover up. But or like, you know, ASAP. Rocky when he was walking behind Rihanna, right? People are like, oh, he's not the man because he's behind Rihanna with the baby and Rihanna's in the front. Right. And so it's this discourse around, you know, he looks like the mother. Right. And in that sentiment, it makes the mother bad. It makes the mother the thing that you don't want to be.

Speaker 1 [00:23:16] Sexism and toxic masculinity are quite literally killing us all.

Speaker 2 [00:23:21] Yeah, well.

Speaker 1 [00:23:22] Yeah, to make things serious. But I also wanted to bring up the point of, like, I feel like in queer communities, queer and trans communities, we talk a lot about the violence against specifically black and brown women.

Speaker 2 [00:23:34] Mm hmm.

Speaker 1 [00:23:35] And trans women. But I was actually just reading an article about, I think, Dr. Eve L. Ewing's new book about education and how black girls are disciplined at significantly higher rates than, like, white girls and sometimes in some instances, black boys. So, like. That discipline of specific black girlhood, black womanhood, and like black femininity and how it doesn't align in certain ways with whiteness are really detrimental and are really hurting our black girls. So that's something just that I care. I care a lot about education, and I think it matters when we talk about science education because I was like 19 and it was a math class and that T.A. told me, no, figure it out or goodbye. And I took the good bye. Like, imagine if that happened to a seven year old.

Speaker 2 [00:24:32] Right.

Speaker 1 [00:24:33] Like that. It starts so young that so many of why I can only speak about specifically black girls because I was one are just. Diverted from this path. Actively diverted?

Speaker 3 [00:24:47] Yeah. My mom, she was a kinesiology major in college, and she really liked it. But she, you know, as I'm as I'm going through this path myself, she's been, you know, telling me more and more about herself specifically in that period of time. And she says that she was actively told to go away from the from the kinesiology program. Yeah. They put her into the sports medicine to help to be support for the trainers. And that was just something that she didn't necessarily, you know, want to do.

Speaker 2 [00:25:23] Yeah.

Speaker 3 [00:25:23] And she says that if she would have done it again, she would have liked to be more. More of a scientist. Mm hmm. And I kind of it's I can see it like she. She's so inquisitive.

Speaker 2 [00:25:33] I know.

Speaker 3 [00:25:34] And it's I love her so much. And I really wish that she would have been able to.

Speaker 2 [00:25:41] Yeah.

Speaker 3 [00:25:41] You know, do it herself, because I would be super interested to see where she would have gone with it.

Speaker 4 [00:25:48] Yeah.

Speaker 1 [00:25:49] Hashtag. We all love Jordan's mom.

Speaker 2 [00:25:51] You're Mama Jordan.

Speaker 1 [00:25:52] We're all here for her getting her Ph.D..

Speaker 4 [00:25:56] Yeah.

Speaker 1 [00:25:58] So one of her final questions is, can you tell us a little bit about what it means for you to belong somewhere, you know, either at work in your community or somewhere else. And what does it feel like when you have this sense of belonging?

Speaker 3 [00:26:13] Yeah. So a sense of belonging to me is when you feel as though like there's no right or wrong things to say when you're surrounded by the people, when you're surrounded by like your community, your friends, your family. I would like to say that this does not apply to bigotry.

Speaker 4 [00:26:34] Like this.

Speaker 3 [00:26:36] Does not apply to bigotry because there.

Speaker 2 [00:26:38] Are wrong.

Speaker 4 [00:26:39] Things, because they are wrong things to.

Speaker 3 [00:26:41] Say. But do you? But we're human. We make mistakes sometimes. And you have to, you know, learn from those mistakes, stand up in them, not stand up at them. But like, you know, just like, learn from them, like stand up. But you said that and then, you know, just don't make that mistake again.

Speaker 2 [00:26:56] Absolutely.

Speaker 3 [00:26:57] And, you know, with my with my career community, I we're so supportive of every big and every little little thing. We say the dumbest things. And it's it's so nice. People will just be our authentic.

Speaker 2 [00:27:14] Selves, you know.

Speaker 3 [00:27:15] Around each other. And I really feel as though that's what it means to have, like, a sense of belonging.

Speaker 2 [00:27:23] Yeah. Yeah. To me. Yeah, yeah, yeah. I feel that because it's so. Yeah, it's just like, so much of so much of, like, who I am is around, like, what I say, right? And what I hear and how I hear it. And I think that's because, you know, as a black queer person, we don't, you know, when you go to Boys Town, you go to Castro, you go to like Short North in Columbus, you go to Chris Street, New York City. You don't really see yourself within the built environment, Right? You don't see like, you know, the resources and the stores. But you do see yourself in the culture and how you talk and what you say. Right. And it's it can be so affirming to be in a space where you don't have to police that. Right. And someone can tell you that's not that's not that's not always going to be right. And you say, okay.

Speaker 4 [00:28:13] Right.

Speaker 2 [00:28:13] And so it's just Yeah, yeah. So it is you know, language is so important. So thank you for that. Yeah.

Speaker 3 [00:28:18] But even like in those spaces, when, you know, Boystown is pretty, it's pretty white. Mm hmm. But when you're with your your queer friends of color in those spaces, you still find somewhere like a sense of belonging.

Speaker 2 [00:28:31] Absolutely.

Speaker 3 [00:28:32] However you can. So.

Speaker 1 [00:28:34] Yeah, it's so true. I love this piece about being your authentic self, because in similar communities, for me, it feels like I can let my guard down because in many spaces I occupy whether that be at work a different professional space, some part of me has to be guarded. Mm hmm. And I just think that's that's really special when you get to be messy with other people in the real way and in the proverbial way, like, you can just be messy and be your real self and hold each other accountable and still have that love for each other.

Speaker 2 [00:29:13] Yeah. And it's you know, what's fascinating about that is I think that people on the outside looking in, especially folks who are like what they would call anti-woke, right. They just assume that folks who care about progress, who are LGBTQ, who care about like language, they just they think that we all sit around and police exactly what you can say and what you can't say. And it's like, so the opposite of that, right? It's trial and error. It is about making mistakes. It is about apologizing. It is about finding what people are comfortable with. And that is life. Right? And that is how I think queer folks of color have created community, right? By making mistakes, by doing the wrong thing, by, you know, Oh, that's not right. Let me bring myself back. Right. And it's like but the perception is that there is this way that people have to do it. And that's not really true, you know, so. Yeah. Made me think about that. So I'll go to the last question. And from our conversation today and reflecting on anything else that may not have come up. What is one piece of advice, actionable item or takeaway you want to leave your listeners, our listeners with?

Speaker 3 [00:30:28] Yeah, kind of going from that last question. I think that people are, especially in today's climate, are very afraid to say the wrong things and especially a lot of people in positions of power and privilege. They're afraid to say the wrong things, even

though they believe the right thing. Yeah, and it really prevents them from taking those steps forward to hold. Up for those people that have less privileged than them to support them to to really do much. And it's kind of it's holding those communities back. I'll speak from my my point of view right now as a gay man, I also feel the need that, like other queer people need to support trans rights right now.

Speaker 2 [00:31:19] Hmm.

Speaker 3 [00:31:21] There's a lot of anti-trans talk and not only outside of our community, but even in our community. And a lot of people who are not anti-trans are protesters just don't know the right language or the right things to say. And they don't want to be perceived as anti anti-trans. And I just implore them to please, like, just say something like, you don't have to go on this, like just a very long, educated tirade. Yeah. Just just say something.

Speaker 4 [00:31:57] Wrongs set.

Speaker 2 [00:31:58] Out.

Speaker 4 [00:31:58] Yeah. You're wrong.

Speaker 3 [00:32:00] Yeah, just. Just say something.

Speaker 2 [00:32:03] I don't know the word, but you're wrong.

Speaker 4 [00:32:05] Yeah. Yeah.

Speaker 1 [00:32:05] No, truly, I use that tactic. I hate confrontation, though. So what I say is like, Oh, that's not. That didn't hit me. Right? And I feel like it is anti-trans. Let's go look it up together. Like, let's learn together why that is incorrect.

Speaker 2 [00:32:22] Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. And I think you what you, you know, your points, your point speaks to this idea of, like, not letting things be okay that are not okay. Right. Because it doesn't you may not even know what to do, but to say that wasn't right. And I'm going to come back to it. But I want to tell you that that wasn't right. And I'm not I don't hate you, but I'm a come back to that because I feel like we need to have more of a conversation. Right. And at least let's the let folks know that there's something more. Right. Then I'm going to come back to something. So.

Speaker 4 [00:32:55] Yeah. So. Yeah.

Speaker 1 [00:32:56] And silence is violence. We take from our queer ancestors.

Speaker 2 [00:33:01] Yeah, yeah, yeah. So this was illuminating.

Speaker 1 [00:33:05] Thank you. Right.

Speaker 4 [00:33:07] No problem.

Speaker 2 [00:33:08] So we appreciate you coming to talk to us today. We'll close out this episode and thank our listeners for being here. And we will be back next month with another episode and Camilla's radio voice slash personality.

Speaker 1 [00:33:23] Yeah. Thank you so much for joining us, Jorden.

Speaker 2 [00:33:24] Yeah, no problem. And it is a great radio voice and personality. You're very good.

Speaker 2 [00:33:32] Yeah, right. I'm like, I'm just gonna sit back.

Speaker 4 [00:33:33] I am smiling from ear to ear.

Speaker 2 [00:33:37] So thank you so much. And we will talk next time.

Speaker 1 [00:33:42] We'll see you next month.

Speaker 2 [00:33:45] We want to thank our guests today and all our listeners for tuning in to this episode of D&I Diaries. We hope you learned a little bit more about our colleagues and practices at work. Remember to stay in contact with us through our website, our listserv, Instagram, Facebook and Twitter to receive updates about new episodes and how to engage with our podcast.

Speaker 1 [00:34:07] You can find us on all platforms where you listen to podcasts and we drop a new episode the third Tuesday of every month. So join us next time for a conversation with another best colleague as they share their DEI journey and truths. Until then, be safe and have a great day.