

JASON MOORE

EDUCATOR | CREATIVE PROFESSIONAL

DIVERSITY STATEMENT

I grew up as the son of an itinerant pastor and have lived in rural, suburban, and urban communities across New York State and Central Georgia. I approach the world as someone who has experienced life through many different lenses and can understand that the collection of geographic, socio-economic, and cultural diversity of our world can be better described as a spectrum rather than a dichotomy. It is not about "us" versus "them," it is about all of us.

In college I circumnavigated the globe with the Semester at Sea study abroad program, visiting 12 ports of call in 100 days. I spent time in a dalit village in India, I stood in the vast open plains of sub-Saharan Africa, and I internalized the complex history found across Southeast Asia. I witnessed the richness and beauty of the peoples and cultures on each leg of my journey and recognized in a very clear way just how much more there is to the world than I had imagined up to that point in my life or had seen on the news. Each country holds its own blend of language, customs, and heritage that should be celebrated and understood in order to have context for how they fit into the greater picture of history and the future. Studying the religions of the world I sought to better understand myself and how a society's stories can shape its culture and history. Beneath the surface of each of the world's religions is the sense that even in our differences there is commonality. And I humbly discovered within myself that there was so much more that I did not even know that I did not know.

As an educator in a career and technical high school I see students from across fifteen component school districts spanning the Southern Tier of New York in Broome and Tioga counties. I teach students from affluent neighborhoods, middle class suburbs, low-income urban and rural settings, and those who are one step away from being homeless. I have students who have experienced trauma, students who have been rejected by family because of who they love or the pronouns they use to identify themselves, and students who live life with physical, emotional, educational, and/or developmental hurdles that make learning and interacting with others difficult. I have students divided by politics, personal identities, orientations, racial and cultural backgrounds, and all positions of the treacherous high school caste system all mixing together in a single classroom. It can be a challenging environment at times because some of my students have been insulated from those who are different from themselves and have never interacted with anyone outside of their familiar.

I strive to create a classroom that encourages self-expression and enables students to be themselves without the labels and stereotypes they face every day. I work to transfer my acceptance of others and my openness to be changed and influenced by those that do not look, love, believe, or think like me to my students so they, too, can create a world for themselves that is more complete than the one they were born into. It is my hope that what we share can be stronger than what separates us and that our uniqueness may be celebrated as part of the great tapestry of our world.