

To: Dr. W. Terrell Jones
Vice Provost for Educational Equity

From: Philip J. McConnaughay
Dean, The Dickinson School of Law

Date: February 23, 2004

Re: A Framework to Foster Diversity at Penn State: 2004-2009

The Dickinson School of Law did not conclude its merger with Penn State University until July, 2000, and as a result, to my knowledge, did not submit or complete a strategic plan for diversity in conjunction with Penn State's 1998-2003 Framework to Foster Diversity. Prior to the merger, the Law School's record with respect to diversity initiatives was not good. In fact, both the American Bar Association (ABA) and the Association of American Law Schools (AALS), the two agencies responsible for the accreditation of all American law schools, raised serious questions during their pre-merger evaluations of the Law School about whether The Dickinson School of Law remained in compliance with ABA and AALS accreditation requirements concerning diversity. This situation has changed dramatically since the Law School's merger with Penn State University.

I became dean of The Dickinson School of Law eighteen months ago, on July 1, 2002. I am Penn State's first decanal appointment at the Law School. My charge from President Spanier and Provost Erickson from the outset has been to promote meaningful diversity and academic excellence at the Law School so that the Law School is able as quickly as possible to join Penn State's other graduate units as among the most inclusive and best in the world. I am pleased to report that, as a direct result of support from Penn State leadership, the Law School has made substantial progress during the past 18 months with respect to diversity initiatives and goals. My report will detail this progress and our long-term commitment to the initiatives which contributed to our success.

I. Promoting Student Body Diversity and a Climate that Values Diversity

When the Association of American Law Schools conducted its pre-merger site assessment of The Dickinson School of Law in 2000, there were no Black males in the entering class, only 2.6% of the student body was Black, and only 7.6% of the student body self-identified as minority. I am pleased to report dramatic improvements in our student body diversity since that time, largely as a result of two over-arching initiatives: (i) the enhancement of our professional admissions staff and related improvements in outreach, and (ii) promoting an institutional climate at the Law School that values diversity. I will report on each initiative separately.

Professional Staff and Outreach. Shortly following my appointment as dean, I appointed the Law School's first Assistant Dean for Admissions and Financial Aid. Janice Austin, who happens to be African-American, joined us from the University of Pennsylvania School of Law, where she held the same position and title. Janice is the current Chair of the Law School Admissions Council's ("LSAC") Minority Affairs Committee; she is a member of the LSAC Board of Trustees; and, she is a past President of Philadelphia's Center for Gay Civil Rights. She has published and made presentations to national organizations on such topics as Diversity in Higher Education, Affirmative Action, and Disability Issues in Law School Admissions. Janice is widely regarded as one of the nation's leading law school admissions professionals.

Shortly following her October 15, 2002 arrival at the Law School (which was well into our 2003-2004 admissions cycle), Janice hired two additional professionals for our Admissions Office: Elena De Luca, an experienced pre-law counselor from Penn State's University Park campus who arrived in January 2003, and Susan Bogart, an experienced financial aid professional from The John Marshall Law School in Chicago who arrived in March 2003. These three additions represent a doubling in size of our Admissions Office in comparison to the preceding year.

Also immediately following my arrival at the Law School, I discontinued distribution of the Law School's existing *JD Bulletin* (glossy magazine) for prospective students and asked for immediate changes in the Law School's web site because of my impression that these publications failed to convey to prospective students a message of the Law School's substance and inclusiveness. Although we since have created entirely new publications for use in our recruiting efforts (discussed below), my decision not to use the existing *JD Bulletin* resulted in the Law School going through the entire 2003-2004 academic year admissions cycle without a *JD Bulletin*. Additionally, although we did effect several positive changes in our web site before the end of that admissions cycle, we were not able to institute a web-based application for use by prospective students until the unveiling of our completely new web site in September 2003, just in time for the 2004-2005 academic year admissions cycle.

I mention these shortcomings in the 2003-2004 academic year admissions effort because they make all the more dramatic the late-cycle gains in our applicant pool following Janice Austin's arrival. By way of comparison, two years ago, during the 2002-2003 academic year admissions cycle, The Dickinson School of Law was one of only four law schools in the nation whose applicant pool decreased in size. Last year, our applicant pool increased by 46%, to the highest number of applicants in the Law School's history. Further, our applicants of color increased by over 40%, once again to the highest number of applicants of color in the Law School's history. *Finally, I am especially pleased to report that 21% of our 2003-2004 entering class self-identify as students of color (approximately 7% are Black/African-American, 8% are Asian/Pacific Islander, and 6% are Hispanic/Latino), which, once again, represents the highest percentage of entering students of color in the Law School's history.*¹

¹ In fact, 23% percent of our tuition deposit payers were students of color, but three of these students had to withdraw just before the start of classes for medical or other personal reasons. Moreover, even though our applicant pool for the 2003-2004 academic year, as one would expect, presented average academic credentials (i.e., LSAT/GPA) that were largely the same as the preceding year, our 2003-2004 entering class, in addition to being significantly more diverse than any previous entering class at the law school, actually made slight gains in average academic credentials over the preceding year. We hope this represents just the beginning of steady incremental improvements in our entering class academic credentials. Finally, it is interesting to note, and a positive indication of how the law school is being perceived by applicants of color, that students of color in our

These achievements resulted from the collective efforts of Janice Austin and her admissions staff and many of our faculty and students, especially our students of color, who, because of their personal commitments to improving the diversity of our Law School, gave countless hours of their time to admissions initiatives and recruitment efforts that Janice and her office initiated. Some of the more significant of these outreach efforts include the following:

(i) we have instituted special events for students of color during our annual Admitted Students Weekend, including overnights with members of our minority law student organizations (BLSA, LaLSA, APILSA, Outlaw, and MLSA);

(ii) we have increased recruiting visits to undergraduate campuses with large minority populations (e.g., Michigan, Miami, Virginia, Vanderbilt, Berkeley, Texas, UNC, NC State, Temple, Penn State), initiated recruiting visits to several historically Black colleges and universities (Bennett, Fayetteville State, Florida A&M, Hampton, Howard, Johnson C. Smith College, Lincoln, NC A&T, NC Central, Norfolk State, and St. Augustine College), and continued to attend AALS recruitment fairs in metropolitan areas across the U.S. (NYC, Atlanta, Chicago, L.A., D.C., San Francisco, Houston);

(iii) we have hosted online real-time internet chat rooms between prospective and enrolled minority students; and

(iv) we have used the national LSAC/LSAT database to target minority students and students self-identifying as gay or lesbian for special mailings from our Admissions Office and minority law student organizations.

Additionally, under the direction of our new Communications Director, Kelly Jones, we have created a completely new *JD Bulletin* and several other publications for prospective students (copies of which are included with this report), as well as a completely new web site and web-based application (which may be accessed at <http://www.dsl.psu.edu>), all of which convey unmistakable messages of the Law School's substance and inclusiveness.

entering class do not represent a greater percentage of scholarship recipients (21%) than they do of matriculants. (In other words, most of our students of color, like most of our students, are not scholarship recipients.)

Another outreach effort of significance is the Law School's new annual *Summer Law Scholars Program*, which we instituted during the summer of 2003. Under the direction of Legal Writing Professors Beth Cook and Stephen Dodd, the Law School's *Summer Law Scholars Program* provides college sophomores and juniors who are members of groups that traditionally have encountered obstacles to joining the legal profession with a seven-week cost-free residential program that includes classroom instruction and undergraduate course credit in two substantive law classes (last year we offered a class in "Equal Protection and Civil Rights" taught by Professor Victor Romero and a class in "The Constitutional Law of Religion" taught by Professor Larry Catá Backer) and in Legal Writing and LSAT preparation (taught this year by Professors Beth Cook and Stephen Dodd). The program includes field trips to Harrisburg and Philadelphia for meetings with federal and state judges and prominent practitioners with law firms and corporations. We employ Penn State Dickinson law students to serve as mentors throughout the program.

Last summer 15 undergraduate students of color participated in the program, and their reviews were uniformly fantastic. I was most impressed by the favorable student comments about the highly demanding nature of the program. The program concluded with a graduation luncheon attended by all of the students and their families at which one of our prominent graduates of color (Nathan Waters, General Counsel of Harrisburg Public Schools) gave a keynote address. We intend to continue our *Summer Law Scholars Program* on an annual basis.

Significantly, Penn State's Office of the Vice Provost for Educational Equity's Educational Opportunity Planning Committee (EOPC) program recently awarded the Law School's Summer Law Scholars Program a \$44,934 grant to help support the program for the summer of 2004. The Law School plans to replace this generous start-up grant by seeking outside funding for the program in future years.

Promoting an Institutional Climate that Values Diversity. All of the senior staff and faculty appointments we made during the past 18 months were made with a single purpose in mind: having a positive and significant near-term impact on the Law School's national

academic standing. Coincidentally, these appointees also comprise a very diverse group of exceptionally accomplished and distinguished professionals, which has contributed incidentally, but very significantly, to our efforts to promote an institutional climate that values diversity. All in all, our faculty and professional staff additions this past year include, among others, two Black men, three Black women, three Caucasian women, one Hispanic man, and four people who are openly gay. Given our size, this is a significant and positive enhancement of the diversity of our institutional leadership that has contributed significantly, and will continue to contribute significantly, to the understanding of current and prospective students and staff that The Dickinson School of Law values diversity and offers a welcoming and inclusive educational environment. I have enclosed a brochure we published about our new and returning faculty, which demonstrates this point.

Our visiting professors and scholars for 2003-2004 also include several persons of color: an African-American tax scholar (Andre Smith, a recent Howard Law grad, Georgetown LL.M., and U.S. Tax Court Law Clerk); an African scholar of human rights law (Jacqueline Moudeina, a persecuted civil rights activist from Chad who will be spending a year of sanctuary at Penn State Dickinson as a result of a generous grants from the University of Chicago Scholars at Risk Network, the IIE Scholar Rescue Fund, and Penn State's Office of the Provost); a Korean scholar of trade law (Professor Jae-ok Chang of Seoul University); and, a Chinese scholar of human rights law (Professor Yaqiu Hu of Peking University). Some of our more prominent guest lecturers this past year also have been persons of color (e.g., Randall Robinson, who visited last February, and spoke on "*The Debt: What America Owes to Blacks*;" Julian Bond, who delivered our Commencement Address; Dr. Michael Eric Dyson, who lectured two weeks ago during Black History Month on "*Why We Can't Wait: The Need for Social Transformation*;" Dr. Mohammed Nimmer, who spoke on "*Islam in America*;" and Stacey Sobel, Esq., who spoke on "*Trends in LGBT Legal Issues*.").

The prolific growth and vitality of our minority law student groups this past year seems to reflect this understanding. Shortly after I became dean, I asked the membership of the Law School's single Minority Law Students Association ("MLSA") to consider establishing separate chapters of BLSA (Black Law Students), LaLSA (Latino/a Law

Students), and APILSA (Asian and Pacific Islander Law Students) because I was concerned that the absence of separate chapters discouraged greater numbers of minorities in the Law School's applicant pool. I am happy to report that the Law School today enjoys, along with MLSA as an umbrella administrative organization, vibrant and active local chapters of BLSA, LaLSA and APILSA. The Law School has continued, as we began last year, to provide office space to these groups, to fund the participation of several of their members in the national conferences of each organization, and to host special orientation events for our incoming students of color. (Significantly, the Law School's new BLSA chapter recently won the "Best Chapter" award at the January, 2004 Mid-Atlantic Black Law Students Association Conference.) Additionally, on April 26, 2003, the Law School sponsored its first annual Minority Alumni Banquet, to which all of our faculty, staff, and minority alums were invited to join our minority law students for an elegant dinner, program, and dancing. Our next annual Minority Alumni Banquet will be on April 3, 2004, and we plan to continue this annual event thereafter.

Finally, I am happy to report the establishment last spring (2003) of "Outlaw," a new student organization that focuses on the interests and legal concerns of gay and lesbian individuals, and the establishment of a new "Differently-Abled Law Student Organization," which focuses on the interests of individuals with disabilities. I am especially pleased to report that almost 40 students attended Outlaw's organizational meeting. In the entire five-year existence of the Law School's predecessor Gay & Lesbian Student Organization, only *one* student had approached the designated faculty advisor to express interest in the organization. Clearly, our institutional message of valuing diversity is being heard.

All of our minority student organizations together have begun publication, with the Law School's support, of a student-edited magazine for all students, faculty, staff, and alums, entitled "*The Minority Report: On to New Horizons*," the inaugural issue of which currently is being printed. I have enclosed a page-proof copy of this excellent new publication with this report. Faculty members Larry Catá Backer, Carla Pratt, and Victor Romero have been instrumental in supporting and encouraging the growth and activities of our minority student organizations.

The Law School's student/faculty/staff Diversity Committee, chaired this year by Legal Writing Professor Stephen Dodd, also has pursued an active agenda dedicated to promoting an inclusive institutional climate. For example, Vice Provost Terrell Jones has made multiple visits to the Law School at the Committee's request to advise and support this Committee's initiatives with respect to faculty diversity training. Dr. Jones and Dr. Neill Johnson will be conducting the next session for faculty on March 29. The Diversity Committee has met with local Borough officials with respect to local law enforcement bias concerns and personal safety issues; they are working with the Law School's IIT department to establish a "diversity link" on the Law School's web site; they have conducted community meetings on diversity for all of our students; they have secured the introduction of standard vegetarian selections in the Law School's cafeteria; they are participating in a re-evaluation of the Law School's academic support program (discussed below); they have co-sponsored diverse guest lecturers (Michael Eric Dyson, PA Secretary of State Pedro Cortez, critical race theorist Dorothy Brown); and, they have been instrumental in efforts to establish a confidential telephone "hotline" for the reporting of incidents of intolerance.

I have tried, as dean, through my public statements to leave no doubt among all Law School constituencies about where I stand on the importance of diversity. I believe that these statements also have helped to promote the value of diversity at the Law School; I know that they have confirmed for me the indispensable role of a dean in nurturing and protecting this institutional value. For example, here is what I said to an assembly open to all students, faculty, and staff of Dickinson while I still was a candidate for this deanship:

Let me mention a few areas that I would consider priorities were I your dean. The first is the diversity of your student body. I told your search committee in New Orleans that three sentences about Dickinson in the ABA Site report stopped me absolutely dead in my tracks. The first was that you have no Black males in your 2000-2001 entering class. The second was that the Law School as a whole has only four Black males. The third was that Blacks make up only 2.6% of your student population. The only thing I found more troubling in the ABA's Site Report was its conclusion that Dickinson is not facing any serious problems. My sense of these numbers, and of Dickinson's relatively small overall minority enrollment – I believe only about 7.6% last year – is that your lack of diversity is a *very* serious problem.

My appointment as dean was proposed to and approved by the Penn State Board of Trustees in May, 2002, at which time I was introduced to the Board and briefly addressed the Board. I had occasion to address the Penn State Board again shortly after I assumed the deanship when they met at the Law School on July 10, 2002. On both occasions, I opened my remarks (which were reported by the local press) with a statement about my commitment to achieving a meaningfully diverse student body at Dickinson:

When I was introduced to you for the first time at your May meeting, I mentioned the importance to me personally, and to others at our Law School, of working as hard as we possibly can to improve the diversity of our student body. We are not where we should be in terms of our diversity [at this point a slide was projected ranking all Big Ten/CIC law schools by student body diversity, with Penn State Dickinson at distant 12th of 12]. [I proceeded to describe some of my plans for improving diversity.]

When I was interviewed for an issue of our alumni magazine, which is distributed to all Dickinson Law School alums and students, this is what I said on the question of student body diversity:

Q: What do you think your biggest challenges will be as dean?

A: I have two overarching goals that I believe are intimately related: the first is to increase the diversity of our student body; the second is to work to enhance the academic reputation of our Law School. I believe very strongly that the more diverse you are, the better your academic reputation, and the better your academic reputation, the more diverse you will become. Diversity and high academic standing go hand in hand; it is extremely difficult to have one without the other. Statistics bear this out: the most highly ranked law schools in the Big Ten all have student bodies that are nearly 30% diverse. Moreover, I believe equally strongly that the educational and intellectual environment in a diverse classroom is simply superior to that in a classroom that is not meaningfully diverse, and we owe all of our students the best educational environment we can provide. We will be undertaking several initiatives this year and in coming years that hopefully will enhance the diversity of our applicant pool and ultimately improve the diversity of our student body.

II. Additional Initiatives: Academic Support, Placement, Staff Hiring/Training

I will conclude by briefly summarizing the Law School's extensive efforts in three additional areas that impact on the inclusiveness of our institutional environment: (i) academic support programs for our students, which can relate to retention rates; (ii) the placement services we offer, which can have a direct impact on the professional prospects of our minority students and graduates; and, (iii) our efforts to recruit and sustain a diverse and tolerant staff. I have reported above our efforts with respect to faculty hiring and training. Because the AALS maintains a central national registry that is used by all persons seeking law teaching positions, the Law School does not encounter issues with respect to the creation of a diverse applicant pool with respect to law faculty positions.

Academic Support Program. The Law School has had a long-standing mandatory program of assigning students who are determined to be "at risk" of academic failure (either by virtue of first semester grades or designation by a Legal Writing Professor) to faculty mentors after their first semester of law school. Minority student participation in this program traditionally has not been significantly greater than minority student representation in the first year class. A series of periodic faculty-led tutoring sessions open to all first year students has been added to these mentoring assignments in recent years. This year (the 2003-2004 academic year) I created a Special Faculty Committee on Academic Support and charged them to "consider whether we are doing all that we can in the way of academic support of students who experience unusual difficulty keeping up with our academic program." That Committee has reported a set of recommendations to the entire faculty, which the faculty will be considering this semester. It is the Law School's policy to continually monitor this program and to support needed improvements. Importantly, the Law School's Minority Law Students Association (MLSA) runs its own peer-provided academic support program throughout the year.

Placement Services. Following are significant portions of a report to me from Gicine Brignola, Assistant Dean for Career Services, about the efforts of the Law School's Career

Services Office to offer programs and services designed to meet the needs of a diverse student body:

One of the goals of the Career Services Office is to prepare minority students for the challenges they will face when they enter the legal market. Many of our students lack exposure to the professional world, and few have knowledge of the legal field. We assist students in:

- Creating effective application materials
- Developing contacts
- Enhancing their job search skills
- Obtaining experience, possibly through internships
- Securing support
- Identifying role models

Programs that engender these skills are successful if they are presented in a forum students find to be supportive. Offering these programs specifically to minority student groups (MLSA, BLSA, LaLSA, APILSA, Outlaw) is one way to promote the kind of environment that affords the security conducive to student development. Another method, upon which we rely primarily, is to meet with students individually. When students feel comfortable with the career counselor, regular individual appointments yield the greatest results.

Our office emphasizes the importance of creating an atmosphere that is comfortable for all students. We display indicators that we are receptive to minority groups, such as membership in the Penn State support network. We encourage students to communicate with the staff members they find most approachable. We ensure that students receive appropriate advice by having the staff member seek the information from the best office resource or facilitate the student communicating with another staff member or member of our alumni network. We educate our staff on concerns of minority students. Additionally, we have regular meetings with a committee of students, which includes minority students, about the services our office offers. The student committee openly communicates concerns of the student body and suggests and implements programming.

We are confident that the school's minority population utilizes the services of our office to a greater degree than the student body as a whole. We presently count the number of student appointments, walk-in questions, email communications, phone calls and workshop attendees. In the future, we will assess the use of these same services by known minority students.

Now that the school's minority student groups all have active memberships, it will be appropriate to meet with them about issues specific to their group. For example, the Career Services Office would likely do a joint program with Outlaw, the student group associated with gay, lesbian and transsexual issues, on topics such as "When to be out to an employer" and "Issues related to military recruitment practices." Similarly, Career Services would like to cosponsor a program with our Differently-Abled student group on the topics of "Reasonable accommodations in the workplace" and "When to disclose a disability."

We participate in the following ten job fairs designed to facilitate opportunities for minority students:

1. **Delaware Minority Job Fair for First-Year Students** - Held in January in Wilmington, DE.
2. **Delaware Minority Job Fair for Second- and Third-Year Students** - Held in August or September in Wilmington, DE. Organized by a consortium of the Delaware State Bar Association's Committee for Diversity in the Legal Profession and legal employers interested in recruiting lawyers to increase diversity in the Delaware Bar.
3. **Dupont Minority Job Fair** – Held in August in Houston, Los Angeles, Wilmington and Chicago. Approximately forty-five employers participate. Students may apply for one of four cities in which to interview but are essentially applying to all participating employers.
4. **National Black Prosecutors Association Job Fair** – Held in August in Atlanta, GA. Provides a forum for law school students, recent graduates, and experienced attorneys from across the nation to meet and interview for prosecutors' offices at the local, state, and federal levels.

5. **Minnesota Minority Recruitment Conference** - Held in September at the offices of Faegre & Benson, LLP, Minneapolis. Sponsored by the Twin Cities Committee on Minority Lawyers in Large Law Firms and the Hennepin County Bar Association.
6. **Philadelphia Area Minority Job Fair** - Held in September at the University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia. Features approximately forty public and private sector legal employers.
7. **Dauphin County (PA) Minority Job Program** – Dauphin County Bar Association seeks law student applications by early September, then forwards them to area legal employers. Students are contacted directly for interviews for summer and full-time positions.
8. **Lavender Law Conference and Job Fair** – Held in October at Fordham University School of Law in New York City. Sponsored by the National Lesbian and Gay Law Association and the National Lesbian and Gay Law Foundation. Provides opportunities for participants to network and obtain jobs as attorneys and summer associates/interns with employers from across the country.
9. **Philadelphia Diversity Law Group** - Summer associate program for first-year law students who have had to overcome obstacles in pursuing a legal career, come from disadvantaged backgrounds, or from backgrounds that are underrepresented in the Philadelphia legal community and have the ability to succeed in the summer programs run by member organizations.
10. **Mid-Atlantic Black Law Students Association (MABLSA)** – Held in October in Washington D.C. Over fifty employers from the Mid-Atlantic region and New York including over 30 law firms and many government agencies and public interest employers.

Additionally, we post other positions with organizations whose mission is to assist underrepresented groups and who may be seeking minority applicants. We have a section of library resources devoted to “Minorities and the Law.” We encourage minority students to access the national minority bar associations, which are rich resources as well as any state or local organizations that may be helpful. We have jointly produced a brochure with Alumni Relations seeking minority alumni to self-identify. Eventually, we will create a minority alumni network of our own. We also have begun efforts to identify minority judges in the United States in the hope of promoting clerkship placements.

Staff Hiring and Training. Following are relevant portions of a report to me from Doris Orner, the Law School's Chief Financial Officer and Human Resources Representative, concerning the Law School's diversity initiatives with respect to staff hiring and training:

Hiring. The Law School recognizes that one of the most important components of its diversity strategy is recruiting and retaining a diverse workforce. To strengthen diversity initiatives and improve recruiting efforts, the Law School has made use of various recruitment resources made available by the University through The Affirmative Action Office or The Office of Human Resources.

The Affirmative Action Office's guide *Recruiting a Diverse Workforce* has been distributed to supervisors and others involved in filling vacant positions at the Law School. This handbook provides practical examples and new resources to assist search committees and supervisors in conducting fair, sound and legally defensible searches for all positions in the creation of a diverse and competitive pool of applicants.

We now place ads for open Law School positions in a number of minority publications, including Black Issues of Higher Education and Hispanic Outlook. We also use the two on-line job search engines – Jobnet.com and Latpro.com -- recommended by the Office of Human Resources in partnership with the Equal Opportunity Planning Committee (EOPC). Both of these sites offer many advantages for recruiting and supporting the diversity of our applicant pools. Jobnet is promoted regionally in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, New York, Washington, Maryland, Virginia, Ohio and Connecticut. LatPro is one of the largest diversity employment web sites in the United States.

In an effort to identify new resources and publications that focus on specific diverse audiences, the Law School has utilized the experience of Patty Dees, Account Coordinator with Nationwide Advertising Services (NAS), to assist us in identifying additional minority publications which target South Central Pennsylvania audiences. NAS is the agency used by

the University for the placement of vacancies through the Electronic Vacancy Management System (EVMS).

We regularly search the University's *Diversity Talent Bank* database and review applicants' information for possible candidates who might be interested in filling our vacancies. The *Diversity Talent Bank* is a repository of professional vitae with the purpose of increasing the pool of potential applicants from diverse cultural backgrounds for consideration in all employment categories. These are diverse candidates who have asked to be considered for job openings at Penn State.

We also encourage personal efforts and contacts through professional organizations (Pennsylvania Library Association Job Hotline, Associated College Libraries of Central Pennsylvania, Pennsylvania Bar Association Legal Career Center Network, Pennsylvania Legal Services, and Job Market Previews, a national clearing house for Legal Services, Inc.), training facilities (Carlisle Area Learning Center), and colleagues at other institutions are effective networking resources. We work to strengthen, maintain and promote these contacts and resources for referrals.

Finally, we distribute to "all faculty" and "all staff" email announcements of all Law School vacancies. These announcements include a description of the position, the process for applying and the Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Statement, "Penn State is committed to affirmative action, equal opportunity and diversity of its workforce." Also, these emails remind faculty and staff that "all Standing, Fixed-Term I and Fixed-Term Multi-Year Staff positions are posted in accordance with Policy HR74, Staff Vacancy Announcement Procedure, in order to fill vacant positions with the best qualified person available, without regard to age (as defined by law), ancestry, color, disability or handicap, national origin, race, religious creed, sex or sexual orientation, or veteran status."

Training. The Law School has sponsored two staff retreats in the past 18 months with sessions focused on diversity. Kenneth F. Lehrman, III, Director of Affirmative Action, presented *Diversity in a Changing Workplace*. The objectives of this program were to

increase awareness about diversity; to learn more about the meaning and definition of diversity; to identify and learn more about individual diversity; to discuss how diversity impacts everyone in the workplace; and to identify personal actions around diversity. Later, at a second retreat, a diversity trainer from the Affirmation Action Office continued this discussion by having us explore our knowledge of our own cultural diversity and developing skills for working more effectively in a multicultural organization.

We encourage our new employees to attend the *New Employee Orientation* programs offered by the Human Resources Development Center (HRDC) at University Park. In addition, we provide an orientation program for the Law School's new faculty and staff on *Diversity, Customer Service, and Quality and Planning at Penn State*. An HRDC trainer assisted us with this training. The program stressed Penn State's (and the Law School's) commitment to diversity, and encouraged the need to value the diversity of all members of the Penn State (Law School) community and the need to strive to create an environment where people use the diversity of their backgrounds to enhance the overall effectiveness of the organization.

Because recognizing exactly what diversity means to individuals can be complex and sometimes confusing, we intend to continue offering staff retreats and other training opportunities with components dedicated to continuing our diversity education. Individual perceptions of diversity impact the Law School. The staff must be aware of the impact of perceptions and stereotyping as it relates to "customer service." Barriers related to diversity and "customer service" must be identified for both internal and external "customers." For each staff member these "customers" may be defined differently (students, prospective students, alumni, vendors, co-workers, community leaders, etc.). We need to talk about diversity because not talking about it can affect productivity, collaboration, cooperation, interpersonal relationships, management styles and conflict.

In addition to programs provided by the HRDC and Affirmative Action Office, we have relied on additional University resources to assist in discussing diversity at the Law School, including specifically the General University Reference Utility (GURU). The

University has articulated policies for dealing with situations when diversity is not honored. These policies include: Statement on Intolerance, AD29; Statement on Nondiscrimination and Harassment, AD42; and Sexual Harassment, AD41.

The Law School places an emphasis on building specific skills and creating polices to get the best from every employee. The efforts of employees are monitored through Staff Review and Development Program (SRDP) and by progress toward achieving goals and objectives. We also provide career development planning for new (and existing) employees.

We encourage the participation of our staff in the various programs offered through the Human Resource Development Center (HRDC) by paying registration fees, travel expenses, and accommodations if an overnight stay is necessary. Many of our staff have completed various Excellence in Leadership and Management programs, the Penn State Leader, Mastering SuperVision, the Management Institute, and the Leadership Academy. We also have promoted the latest HRDC offering, Office Professional Certificate, and several of our staff now proudly display their certificates.

III. Conclusion

The Law School is committed to promoting and maintaining a lasting commitment to significant and meaningful diversity and to inclusiveness and tolerance as core values of the institution. We are grateful for the support and advice of the Office of Vice Provost for Educational Equity as we pursue and continually reevaluate our progress in meeting these goals.