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Framework to Foster Diversity

• A REPORT ON DIVERSITY INITIATIVES
FOR THE DIVISION OF DEVELOPMENT
AND ALUMNI RELATIONS

PENNSTATE



A REPORT ON DIVERSITY INITIATIVES
FOR
THE DIVISION OF DEVELOPMENT
AND ALUMNI RELATIONS

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Executive Summary

The following document represents a summary of activity and progress by the Division of Development and Alumni Relations toward six (of seven) challenges charged by the University to advance diversity throughout its programs, services, and people. The document summarizes both the progress made toward fulfilling the diversity goals, objectives, and strategies outlined in the 1999–2000 Strategic Plan Update, and additional activity and progress made to advance diversity in the Division.

Activity toward addressing Challenge One, “Developing a Shared and Inclusive Understanding of Diversity,” included the establishment of a Division-wide task force on diversity, the establishment of a diversity committee by the Office of University Development (which issued a comprehensive report in August 2001), and the prioritization of diversity programs, events, and alumni interest groups by the Alumni Association. These combined efforts have helped to create a shared definition of diversity among Division staff, volunteers, and constituents.

Activity toward addressing Challenge Two, “Creating a Welcoming Campus Environment,” included the support of university-wide, diversity-related events, programs and rallies, as well as the use of the Division’s publications to showcase diversity-related priorities. Specific efforts include the Alumni Association’s “FastStart” mentoring program that helps first-year minority students, and the successful raising of funds for college and campus diversity-related programs and facilities by the Office of University Development.

Activity toward addressing Challenge Three, “Recruiting and Retaining a Diverse Student Body,” included the securing of numerous scholarship and program funds specifically dedicated to advancing diversity and international education issues by the Office of University Development (see Addendums A, B, and C for details) and an active, strategic partnership between the Office of Student Affairs and the Alumni Association designed to develop student mentoring programs, sponsor student organizations, and create staff positions that support a diverse student body.

There has been marginal progress toward addressing Challenge Four, “Recruiting and Retaining a Diverse Workforce,” as only 3.77 percent of the Division’s employees identify themselves as minorities. However, the Division has begun to take steps to attract a more diverse work force and promote and require diversity training for its employees and managers.

Activity toward addressing Challenge Six, “Diversifying University Leadership and Management,” has been marked, especially in the area of advancing women in the Division. Other efforts include the active recruitment of women and minorities for Alumni Council and other Division-volunteer leadership positions. However, little progress has currently been made in advancing minority staff leadership.

Activity toward addressing Challenge Seven, “Coordinating Organizational Change to Support our Diversity Goals,” included active work between development officers and diversity/minority coordinators in each unit or college that has resulted in the funding of numerous specific programs and scholarships, which advance diversity. Since the beginning of the Grand Destiny campaign, University Development has raised approximately \$23 million for

diversity-related programs and scholarships. Exemplary efforts include the establishment of significant minority and/or women scholarship programs in the Colleges of Engineering, Communications, and Business, as well as a volunteer “Women and Philanthropy Committee” as part of the Grand Destiny campaign. The Alumni Association’s efforts have included the establishment of an official Diversity Sub-Committee of the Alumni Council and its financial support of diversity-related projects and programs including the HUB/Robeson Center and the Office of International Programs.

In general, the Division has actively advanced diversity issues where and when possible, but recognizes the need for continued and active strategic planning which specifically and proactively addresses: 1) the recruitment, retention, advancement and education of a diverse workforce; 2) the partnership with university-wide diversity efforts that recruit, educate, and support a diverse student and university population; and 3) the advancement of organizational changes which value, champion, and embrace diversity.

CHALLENGE 1

Developing a Shared and Inclusive Understanding of Diversity

The Office of University Development and the Alumni Association endeavored to develop and articulate a unit-wide understanding of diversity-related issues. The most recent example is the establishment of a diversity task force for the Division of Development and Alumni Relations. This task force was charged with drafting the Division’s diversity plan and providing recommendations for the Strategic Plan on how the Division can champion diversity initiatives in the coming years.

The Alumni Association made diversity a priority in its initiatives and goals by providing diversity staff training, supporting diversity-related events, programs, alumni interest groups, and student organizations. The Alumni Council, the Alumni Association’s governing body, has a Diversity Committee which plays a critical role in supporting diversity initiatives and representing the interests of its alumni body. While neither the Alumni Association nor Alumni Council has yet to formulate its own definition of diversity, the assumption has been made that both of these groups support and recognize the University’s encompassing definition.

The Office of University Development has also targeted diversity as a future priority for its fund-raising initiatives. Development appointed a diversity committee in Spring 2001 to comprehensively assess current and suggested efforts to advance diversity within Penn State and among peer institutions. The committee researched diversity issues, created a shared definition of diversity, and developed a strategic report that was completed in July 2001.

Other initiatives each unit has accomplished individually or collectively are:

- Presented diversity issues at staff and volunteer meetings. The Alumni Association highlighted diversity-related programs during monthly staff gatherings to encourage staff to attend diversity related events and provided its staff with new handouts containing information about diversity-related programs.

- Included diversity issues in annual personnel reviews and the addition of a diversity-training component in the annual Staff Review and Development Plan (SRDP).
- Established a diversity retreat for key managers in the Division to discuss Division objectives and strategies for diversity-related issues.
- Provided either solely as a unit or in conjunction with the University, diversity training sessions available to all staff (i.e., Lilya Wagner, Ed.D., CFRE, Indiana University School of Philanthropy).
- Participated in diversity-related events (i.e., speakers, rallies, marches).
- Utilized Web communications to inform internal and external audiences on diversity-related campus news, programs, and events (i.e., the Launchpad for Development and the Web site created by the Alumni Association to inform alumni and staff of diversity-related campus news).
- Made public statements and answered constituents' inquiries on behalf of University Development and Alumni Council condemning the recent racial incidents on the University Park campus.
- Dedicated, at quarterly Division meetings that include all 400+ Division staff, at least one meeting each year to diversity issues with guest presenters such as representatives from the Commission for Women and Tom Poole and Art Carter.
- Created, via the Alumni Association, advertising campaigns against hate and incivility that appeared in both the *Collegian* and *The Penn Stater* magazine.

CHALLENGE 2

Creating a Welcoming Campus Climate

The Division of Development and Alumni Relations has supported diversity-related events, programs, or rallies that help contribute to a welcoming campus climate in reaction to related University-wide happenings. Within the unit, mandatory diversity training and encouragement to participate in diversity-related committees or events contribute to a welcoming climate.

The Division has also utilized communications and publications, such as *The Penn Stater* magazine, prioritizing diversity-related photos, stories, and issues, and provided an alternative format for alumni with visual impairments. The Alumni Association and University Development have used different strategies in providing a welcoming campus climate.

The Alumni Association:

- Developed programs and coordinated reunions for diversity-related alumni interest groups such as the African American Alumni Interest Group and the Lambda Alumni Interest Group.
- Provided statements and ads against hate to promote a welcoming climate.
- Sponsored the “Be A Part From the Start” program, a pep rally to welcome all students to Penn State.
- Established strategic partnerships with the Office of Student Affairs, developed student mentoring programs, sponsored student organizations, and created a full-time staff position, assistant director of student involvement, dedicated to recruiting and retaining a diverse student body.

- Served as a sponsor and adviser to Lion Ambassadors, the Penn State student alumni corps who help recruit and retain diverse students by providing campus tours. The Lion Ambassadors have made significant efforts to diversify their membership. Fifteen percent of their membership represent minorities, which compares favorably to the overall student population. In the 2001 Lion Ambassador applicant pool, of those who answered the application ethnicity question, 22 percent were self-reported ethnic minority.
- Sponsored the Blue and White Society, a new student organization with 2,800 members. The society is a spirit group that represents the student members of the Alumni Association and helps retain students by promoting pride and civic leadership through spirit programs, community service projects, and student-leader connection events.
- Established, in collaboration with the Office of Admissions, an alumni admissions program in which alumni help recruit students or make phone calls to prospective students in their local communities.

University Development:

- Partnered with diversity coordinator/minority recruiters within their college or campus; and
- Successfully raised money specifically for minority programs that enhance the climate of diversity in their specific college or campus.

Currently, there is limited specific activity that directly relates to a welcoming campus climate, and many employees have difficulty pointing at specific, leadership initiatives in the unit to improve the climate. For example, there are few resources for management which help foster a welcoming climate or examine how climate issues are addressed. Because of this, staff address climate issues on a case-by-case basis.

CHALLENGE 3

Recruiting and Retaining a Diverse Student Body

The Division secured scholarships and program money specifically dedicated to advancing diversity issues, aiding underrepresented students, and developing initiatives to help recruit and retain a diverse student body through alumni relations volunteer programs.

The Office of Student Aid reports that approximately 1,977 University scholarship sources were awarded to students in the academic year 2000–2001. From 1968 through the late 1990s, eleven scholarship funds specifically targeted for diversity were established by individuals and administered by the Office of Student Aid. The Martin Luther King Memorial Fund, established in 1968, was the first of these diversity-specific funds. In the last year, three of these funds, which are larger and more substantial than those established in previous years, were created and set up by University Development. These are:

- Judith Loftin Davenport and Ronald Ross Davenport Scholarship in the Sciences
- Ronald Ross and Judith Loftin Davenport Endowed Merit Scholarship
- John K. Tsui Scholarship (encouraging diversity in the student body, with first preference for the awards going to Asian Americans)

These named endowments recognize and support students whose “cultural and racial backgrounds support diversity at Penn State.” Generally, each of these scholarships provides approximately \$2,000 of support per year.

The Office for Disability Services (ODS) currently provides eight scholarships for students with disabilities, several of which were handled by Development. Currently, the Development Office is working with ODS to provide an endowed fund for one of its established scholarships, the Charlotte W. Newcombe Scholarship, which is the largest scholarship funded through the Office of Disability Services.

Additionally, University Development strives to create more scholarships through the Destiny Scholarship and the Enrichment Scholarship funds. This family of scholarships is geared toward underrepresented and economically disadvantaged students. Thus far, Development has highlighted these funds in the Undergraduate Programs brochure.

University Development activity relating to diversity initiatives has been on a case-by-case basis, however, and not a specific concerted effort. The activity has mostly been in response to immediate program or student needs within a college or campus, or sometimes, at the request of an interested donor.

In addition to the above scholarships, Development has:

- Raised funds for minority scholarships and programs including the Jewish Studies Program, Hispanic Heritage Month, Women in Engineering Program, Minority in Engineering Program, and so on.
- Raised minority support from companies interested in recruiting minority students through the Office of Corporate and Foundation Relations.
- Solicited funds for facilities impacting underrepresented students and programs such as the HUB/Robeson project, the MBNA Career Center, and the Multi-faith Spiritual Center.

(Please see Addendums A, B, and C for specific scholarship and program information.)

The Alumni Association has provided financial and alumni support for recruiting and retaining a diverse student body in the following ways:

- Established strategic partnerships with the Office of Student Affairs, developed student mentoring programs, sponsored student organizations, and created staff positions dedicated to recruiting and retaining a diverse student body.
- Offered \$5,000 in the Spring of 2001 to the University’s \$25,000 reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the person or people responsible for death threats against an African American student leader.
- Created FastStart, a mentoring program designed to help first-year students from African American, Latino/Hispanic, Asian and Asian/Pacific Americans backgrounds wanting to get their college careers off to a fast start. A mentoring triad of a faculty/staff member, an alumnus/a, and a first-year student is formed to help ensure that students flourish in their new environment by answering questions, directing them to resources, and offering support. Informal networks for career development can also be built. This program has been fundamental to helping retain minority students at Penn State—72 percent of minority students involved in the program at University Park graduated from the University.

- Developed a virtual tour of the University Park campus to help recruit potential applicants who may not be able to visit.
- Raised funds via alumni chapters to create scholarship programs for disadvantaged students and organized local freshman sendoffs.
- Created LionLink, a professional networking program that links Penn State students and alumni.
- Participated in Martin Luther King Day events (including financial support).
- Provided financial support to Asian student groups during Asian Awareness Month.
- Supported the Negro Educational Emergency Drive (NEED) program in Pittsburgh, an organization that provides scholarship monies for minority students to attend college.
- Established a \$10 million endowment, the Margin of Excellence Fund, with the earnings earmarked for annual philanthropy to the University. Last year's Margin of Excellence funds went to scholarships for Commonwealth campus students, a more economically and ethnically diverse population than University Park campus students.
- Contributed pledges of more than \$12 million to the University in support of such programs as undergraduate student scholarships and graduate student fellowships as well as the building of HUB/Robeson Cultural Center, Pattee Library, the Bryce Jordan Center, the MBNA Career Center, and the University Libraries.
- Encouraged Alumni Interest Groups to become involved with related student interest groups. For example, students in the FastStart program met with members of the African American Alumni Interest Group in the Washington D.C. area for a networking luncheon.
- Provided internship and work-study opportunities at the Alumni Association for underrepresented students.
- Established, in collaboration with the Office of Admissions, an alumni admissions program in which alumni help recruit students or make phone calls to prospective students in their local communities.
- The Alumni Council's Diversity Committee meets with President Graham B. Spanier, staff, administration, and students two to three times a year to discuss and support diversity issues that impact these efforts.

CHALLENGE 4

Recruiting and Retaining a Diverse Workforce

The Division of Development and Alumni Relations has little representation of diverse populations within its staff as well as marginal training in diversity. As of November 2001, 265 employees comprised the Division (208 for University Development, 46 Alumni Relations, and 11 Vice President staff members), as reported by the Office of Human Resources.

- Nearly 96 percent of these individuals identify themselves as white.
- 1.88 percent identify themselves as African American.
- 1.13 percent identify themselves as Latino.
- And less than 1 percent identify themselves as Asian American.

Thus, total minority employment in the Division is 3.77 percent. One challenge that arose for the task force in preparing this document was the discovery that the statistics collected by the Office of Human Resources do not consider wage-payroll positions. These positions often require the employees to work 30–40 hours per week. The task force feels strongly that all employees—exempt, non-exempt, and wage-payroll—are valuable for their unique contributions to their organization and should be included in all subsequent diversity statistics.

In terms of staffing, University Development has not successfully recruited diverse candidates—although efforts have included placing ads in minority-oriented publications and contacting minority candidates via headhunters.

Thus, only one minority was promoted last year (2001). Because of this, staff members may not necessarily join the Division because of its welcoming climate but rather because of its success.

However, the Division recognizes the need to recruit and retain a diverse workforce and values differences. Alumni Association staff, in particular, are encouraged by leadership to challenge each other, challenge the accepted viewpoints, norms, and mores, and to challenge processes, lifestyles, and accepted beliefs. These values are reflected in the Association's culture where four out of five departments have diverse representation among its staff. (This statistic counts wage-payroll employees as well as exempt and non-exempt).

Helping to recruit and retain a diverse workforce, both Development and Alumni Relations:

- Provided limited training and mentoring of part-time minority staff who possess transferable skills to help them grow professionally and fulfill full-time positions.
- Developed flex-time schedules for units with particularly strong female make-up in order to accommodate the needs of families.
- Approached colleagues of diverse backgrounds at professional conferences and seminars and encouraged them to apply for openings in the Division.
- Worked with Intercollegiate Athletics and other units to recruit and train minorities.
- Provided training sessions on diversity (both from the Division and the University as a whole) with an expectation to offer more in the future.
- Communicated diversity activities and stances against hate to staff via listservs, press releases, and advertisements.

The Alumni Association has also:

- Encouraged alumni of diverse backgrounds who are involved in affiliate groups—such as the African American Alumni Organization, Alumni Interest Groups, regional chapters, and Alumni Council volunteers—to apply for open positions.
- Offered “diversity updates” at Alumni Association monthly staff gatherings to encourage participation in diversity-related training and activities. (i.e., the Office of Educational Equity produced and conducted mandatory full-day training for the Alumni Association staff).
- Participated in past summer clerical intern program.
- Strongly encouraged foreign national staff to participate in professional development programs especially English and writing skills.

- Routinely posted job announcements in major metropolitan papers in hopes of attracting minority applicants.
- Sponsored the James A. Robinson Equal Opportunity Award given to a University staff member who advances the causes of equal opportunity.
- Encouraged the staff to participate in University programs and committees that focus on diversity including CORED, the Council of College Multicultural Program Directors, and the Miss Black Penn State contest.
- Sponsored table at the Commission for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Equity ten-year celebration and presented on career and community service topics via the National Pan-Hellenic Council.

CHALLENGE 6

Diversifying University Leadership and Management

Because the Division's constituents represent a diverse population, it is imperative that both staff and volunteers reflect that diversity.

In addition to staff, the Alumni Association's definition of University leadership includes Alumni Council and the volunteer leaders of the more than 300 affiliate groups. It is the Association's executive director's belief that the more diverse the management and leadership is, the more creative and innovative the organization will be. In addition,

- In the last five years, the number of women and minorities promoted in management positions has increased 350 percent.
- The Association actively recruits women and minorities for Alumni Council and other volunteer leadership positions.
- Executive Board of Alumni Council (18 members) is comprised of 5 women and 6 people of color.

The Office of University Development has successfully promoted women candidates at all levels. In 2000, fourteen females were promoted and in 2001, eighteen females were promoted. These promotions are not upgrades. They represent new positions that employees have pursued.

However, more work must be done to hire and promote minority employees, including those of different races and ethnicities, into leadership and management positions within University Development. Development will only be able to approach and fulfill this challenge when they begin actively and successfully recruiting a more diverse staff. Thus far, Development has:

- Established a mentoring program to help advance employees with potential for leadership/management.
- Created the Women and Philanthropy Committee—establishing a culture which is open, inclusive, and enthusiastic about the philanthropic power of women and their families; one which involves women as donors and volunteers in innovative ways.
- Participated in the Administrative Fellowship program for two consecutive years—2000 and 2001.

Across the Division, women and minority managers were specifically nominated and participated in Mastering Supervision classes. In the last three years, nine employees completed the program. Of these participants, seven were female and two were minorities.

CHALLENGE 7

Coordinating Organizational Change to Support Diversity Goals

University Development

According to the report generated by University Development's Diversity Committee, there is a general awareness for the need to address minority support issues, and every unit is doing something to address these issues. For example, many development officers work with a diversity coordinator/minority representative in colleges or campuses. Some units, such as the Colleges of Engineering, Communications, and Business have been very successful in raising funds for minority programs.

More specifically, since the beginning of the Grand Destiny campaign, University Development has raised approximately \$23 million (see Addendums A, B, and C), including:

- More than \$3 million for diversity programs and scholarships.
- More than \$8 million for international-related programs and activities, including more than \$5 million from the Schreyers to support international study since the beginning of the Grand Destiny campaign.
- Approximately \$4 million for programs and scholarships that benefit women students.
- More than \$8 million to support religious diversity through the new Multi-faith Center.

In addition, Development has:

- Helped to establish 120 diversity-related scholarships and programs to benefit students with diverse ethnic, cultural, and national backgrounds.
- Established the Women and Philanthropy Committee to provide an open, inclusive, and enthusiastic environment about the philanthropic power of women and their families.
- Appointed a Diversity Committee to analyze what development has done and what could be done in terms of championing diversity and diversity-related initiatives.

University Development's advantage is that it touches all aspects of the University as every unit is assigned a development officer. However, University Development's Committee report also found:

- There is a lack of minority professionals and identification of minority alumni.
- Those directors who are not working in a specific academic unit do not have a diversity professional to work with.
- Development does not know what minority donors are interested in from a philanthropic standpoint.
- Development does not have specific development goals for minority programs/services.

- There is a general lack of knowledge of the legal parameters for fund-raising and minority programs/scholarships.
- There are no leadership gifts in the area of minority support in the campaign.
- Development does not have alumni/friend advisory and development boards for minority offices in each unit.
- There is little articulation of minority programs in each unit, and less translation into specific development objectives.

Given these findings, it is imperative that University Development move forward with a strategy to expand on its diversity initiatives.

The Alumni Association:

Changes in the Alumni Association that support diversity have been small ones and not initiatives that have been well-organized or strategically planned. However, they have been initiatives that will have an impact on what the Association does in the coming years. The Alumni Association has:

- Made the Diversity Committee of the Alumni Council a permanent committee on Council to show the Association's commitment to diversity.
- Established the FastStart mentoring program in coordination with the Division of Student Affairs to assist first-year minority students. A full-time position funded by the Association was also created.
- Created Alumni Interest Groups to connect alumni with common cultural and curricular interests. Groups representing African American, Latino, Asian, and Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual groups have already been formed. The Association provides some extra support to these groups in terms of resources of data, meeting space, marketing services, and so on.
- Developed women's professional networking groups in several cities.
- Provided financial support totaling \$12 million to the HUB/Robeson, MBNA Career Center, the Libraries, the Bryce Jordan Center, and the office of International Programs.
- Changed membership application cards and registration cards to use term "partner" rather than "spouse."
- Changed the description of joint membership to include two people living at a household.
- Defined diversity as one of its core values in its strategic plan. This statement reads: "Encouraging, understanding, and celebrating the diversity of the Association and the University community."

The Division as a whole established a goal of four hours of professional development in a diversity topic for each employee. The goal is tracked and reviewed by supervisors through the staff review and development process.

List of Appendices

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