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IN THIS ISSUE | October 2017

Special Report: Entrepreneurship and Business Schools

Organizations Provide Assistance to Growing Entrepreneurial Populations
By Mariah Bohanon

Business Case Competitions Provide Avenues for Leadership Development and Future Success
By Kelley R. Taylor

Building an Inclusive Workforce

Aspiring Business Leaders: Driving Diversity and Inclusion in the Workplace
By Anise Wiley-Little

AACSB Promotes Inclusion in Business Schools, But More Work Is Needed to Diversify the Pipeline
By Sheryl S. Jackson

Business Schools Encourage Student Participation in Community Revitalization Programs for Real-Life Experience
By Alice Pettway

ALSO:

Greek Life on Campus: An Asset and a Challenge
By Ajay Nair, PhD, and Victoria L. Chan-Frazier

Trump’s Nationalist Agenda Changes the Landscape for American Students Abroad
By Alice Pettway

Building Accountability Systems: Matters, Metrics, and Maturity
By Ken D. Coopwood Sr., PhD

Defining, Mitigating, and Reducing Harassment in the Workplace
By Julia Méndez

Fostering Partnerships Across Campus to Advance Equity, Inclusion, and Global Engagement
By Brooke Barnett, PhD, and Jon Dooley, MEd, PhD

The Power of Sports to Foster Greater Appreciation for Diversity and Inclusion
By Bernard Franklin, PhD

A Budgetary Commitment: Strategy and Creativity Drive Institutions’ Approaches to Funding Diversity Efforts
By Alexandra Vollman

ON THE COVER: Questrom Ascend fellows and mentors in Boston University’s Questrom School of Business
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In Brief

Diversity and Inclusion News Roundup

New Directions

Leaders on the Move

INSIGHT Partner Profile

ALFDP Supports Law Firm Diversity Professionals to Improve Access, Opportunities in Law
By Mariah Bohanon

The Diversity Professional Spectrum

Business School Deans

This Month's Celebration

National Disability Employment Awareness Month

HEED Award Spotlight

Institutions Offer Programs to Assist Underrepresented Youth with Transition to College
By Alexandra Vollman

Diversity Champion Spotlight

Oklahoma State Serves as Role Model in Continuous Effort to Improve Campus Environment
By Mariah Bohanon

Closing INSIGHT

Hurricane Harvey Relief
Legislation May Negatively Affect Diversity and Inclusion Efforts at North Carolina Universities

The North Carolina General Assembly will consider consolidating the diversity and inclusion operations at the state’s 16 public universities into “a single office headed by an equal employment officer … in order to promote effectiveness and efficiency,” according to North Carolina’s 2017 budget bill.

Senate Bill 257 was passed on June 28 when the Republican-controlled legislature voted to override the veto of North Carolina Gov. Roy Cooper, a Democrat. His objections to the bill included the creation of “a tax plan that will cause the state to fail to fund … community colleges and universities,” according to a press release.

Cooper did not, however, directly mention Sections 10.13(a) and 10.13(b) of the bill, which call for an evaluation of the costs of all “policies related to diversity and nondiscrimination adopted by each constituent institution” of the University of North Carolina (UNC) system. The two sections make up a small portion of the 458-page budget, but they represent what could potentially be a massive overhaul of diversity and inclusion efforts at the system’s 17 campuses, which include 16 universities and one residential high school.

Section 10.13(a) requires the UNC Board of Governors to conduct a study detailing “policies intended to promote equal opportunity, diversity, or inclusiveness” at each UNC campus and to calculate the costs related to the staff positions in charge of implementing such policies. Furthermore, it states that the board must also “consider the feasibility of developing equal opportunity plans at each constituent institution that consolidate all equal opportunity services” into a single, system-wide office.

Section 10.13(b) requires that the board submit a report of its findings to the North Carolina Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee by January 1, 2018.

According to committee co-chair Sen. Chad Barefoot, the sections were authored by Sen. David Curtis, a Republican. Curtis’ office did not respond to INSIGHT Into Diversity’s request for comment. The GOP-controlled legislature is responsible for appointing the members of the UNC Board of Governors thanks to a law signed by outgoing Republican Gov. Pat McCrory last December, which effectively stripped the incoming governor of the power to make such appointments.

While it is not known what findings or suggestions it may present to the committee in January, the board has already gained attention for taking steps to diminish diversity and equality efforts at UNC campuses. On September 8, the board passed a motion banning UNC law schools from participating in litigation — a decision widely condemned by human rights activists on the grounds that it targeted the UNC Center for Civil Rights, which was the only unit within the university system to actually engage in litigation. The center provides pro-bono legal services for minority and low-income populations.

The Board of Governors did not return INSIGHT Into Diversity’s requests for comment on Senate Bill 257.

— Mariah Bohanon

What DREAMers Need to Know About the Termination of the DACA Program

On September 5, President Donald Trump announced that he would make good on his campaign promise to end the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program, which protects from deportation approximately 800,000 illegal immigrants who were brought to the U.S. as children — commonly referred to as DREAMers.

DACA status means an individual can be legally employed, obtain a driver’s license, and enroll in higher education, provided he or she meets eligibility requirements that include completing a high school education and maintaining a clean criminal record.

With Trump’s decision, Congress has until March 2018 to devise a solution that would lawfully allow DREAMers to stay in the U.S. Should it fail to do so, DACA recipients will be unable to renew their status — which expires every two years — after March 5, 2018. The first individuals likely to be eligible for deportation are those who enrolled or who renewed their status in March 2016.

According to a 2017 survey by the Center for American Progress, an estimated 45 percent of DREAMers are currently enrolled in higher education. Of those, 72 percent are pursuing a bachelor’s degree or higher.

The higher education community has been a major proponent of DACA, with many colleges and universities denouncing the White House’s termination of the program and vowing to protect undocumented students from deportation.

According to an emailed statement from a U.S. immigration attorney, there are several key steps that DREAMers can take to protect themselves. First, they should be aware
of when their DACA status expires, as those needing to renew on or before March 5, 2018, must now submit an application before October 5, 2017. Those who do not renew by this date will be eligible for deportation as soon as their current status expires.

In addition, DREAMers who do not have a Valid Advance Parole Travel Document — which allows DACA recipients to travel in and out of the country — should not attempt to leave the U.S., the attorney warns. Individuals currently traveling abroad whose document is set to expire soon should be sure to return before its expiration. It is important to remember, however, that permission to remain in or re-enter the U.S. after traveling abroad can be revoked or denied by the federal government at any time.

The attorney also emphasized that DREAMers need to be wary of “notarios” — individuals who pretend to have the legal authority to assist with immigration issues in exchange for money or personal information. He recommends that they contact an immigration lawyer as soon as possible, before they make any decisions regarding their future plans, as an attorney can help them determine if they are eligible to stay in the U.S. under “something better and more permanent” than DACA.

Last, DREAMers should not give up hope. In addition to seeking legal assistance, DACA recipients — and the advocates who support them — should contact Congress to tell them it is important to allow these young people to continue to live, work, and learn in the U.S. without fear of deportation.

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security website (dhs.gov) provides detailed information regarding how the Trump administration’s announcement changes the program’s current policies regarding status renewal, work permits, and other important areas. Many organizations, such as the National Immigration Law Center, offer information on legal rights and services for DREAMers. Visit nilc.org to learn more. To learn how to support DACA recipients, visit the Immigration Defense Project at immigrationdefenseproject.org.

— Mariah Bohanon
As the alt-right — a term for white nationalism with origins in pre-World War II fascism and white supremacy — experiences a resurgence in the U.S., college and university campuses are increasingly finding themselves in the middle of a nationwide battle over political discourse and free speech.

Appearances and speaking engagements by prominent alt-right figures, such as Richard Spencer and Milo Yiannopoulos, have become more commonplace on college campuses. Most recently, the planned removal of a statue of Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee led to protests, clashes, and violence on the University of Virginia’s campus in Charlottesville. At the same time, many higher education institutions, now serving a growing population of students from underrepresented and marginalized groups, are embracing the values of diversity, equity, and inclusion while still supporting the free expression of ideas.

For some college Republicans, who may feel increasingly excluded on liberal campuses, the alt-right speaks to their feelings of being shut out. But as Lecia Brooks, outreach director at the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC), points out, the alt-right ideology centers not on productive political discussion, but the idea that “white identity” is under attack. “People like Milo Yiannopoulos and Richard Spencer go out of their way to seek out invitations from the Young Republicans. They’re using them, [posing] themselves as speakers from conservative political thought, when really their message is white nationalism,” Brooks says. “This is not political discourse — this is white supremacy.”

[Some] college administrators [tell students] they should go, listen to, challenge, and ask them questions,” she adds. “No — this gives them some academic cachet that they don’t deserve.”

With the dual purpose of creating awareness of the alt-right’s agenda and providing recommendations for how to counter the movement, SPLC created a guide titled The Alt-Right On Campus: What Students Need to Know, which it sent to 2,400 colleges and all 75 historically black institutions. The guide exposes the movement’s underlying ideologies, profiles its key figures, and offers constructive approaches to counter alt-right propaganda and on-campus speakers.

“Students weren’t really aware of who these personalities were and what they were really talking about, so we thought it was important to give them information based on our research … because they were trying to present themselves as something they were not,” Brooks explains. “It seemed like administrators didn’t know how to respond or, we felt, weren’t responding strongly enough or preparing these students for the speakers. [They] were just saying, ‘We have to honor free speech rights,’ … and that was it.”

Thus, when an alt-right figure is scheduled to speak on a campus, “the most effective course of action is to deprive the speaker of the thing he or she wants most — a spectacle,” the guide states. While SPLC believes there is nothing wrong with peacefully protesting hateful ideology, instead of directly confronting these individuals, the organization advocates for hosting alternative events “to highlight your campus’s commitment to inclusion and our nation’s democratic values” in order to draw attention away from the alt-right and toward a message of hope.

While taking back the narrative in this way, Brooks says, is important, SPLC provides key steps to take prior to alt-right speaking events occurring on campus. These include researching institutional processes for approving outside speakers as well as the alt-right’s history and views; meeting with campus groups that are most often targeted by the alt-right, such as LGBTQ individuals, Muslims, and Jews, to enlist their support; approaching the group hosting the speaker with concerns; and raising awareness among all campus constituents about what the alt-right stands for to build a community opposed to bigotry.

Brooks says the creation of the guide was sparked primarily by SPLC’s desire to protect free speech rights, and as such, she understands and appreciates the situation that colleges and universities find themselves in. However, that many of them act as if “their hands are strung by the First Amendment” is a lie, she argues, and she believes hosting an alternate event can have a major impact.

“Let [the alt-right speakers] come and then have nobody show up,” Brooks says. “[Use this] tremendous opportunity to send a message to them that what they’re selling is rejected.”

For more information, visit splcenter.org.
— Alexandra Vollman
Has your campus recently hired a new diversity administrator? INSIGHT Into Diversity would like to publish your news. Please email editor@insightintodiversity.com.
ALFDP Supports Law Firm Diversity Professionals to Improve Access, Opportunities in Law

By Mariah Bohanon

Despite some small gains made by women and minorities in the legal profession in recent years, the industry remains one of the least diverse of all white-collar professions in America, with a workforce that is 81 percent white and 64 percent male, according to the National Law Review. Similarly, a 2016 report by the National Association for Law Placement found that just 2.5 percent of American lawyers identify as LGBTQ, and 0.4 percent identify as having a disability.

Carlos Dávila-Caballero, JD, is extremely familiar with these disparities. As chief diversity officer for the international firm Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP and president of the nonprofit Association of Law Firm Diversity Professionals (ALFDP), he has seen the legal industry become increasingly aware of its problem in this area and of the need to create a more diverse and inclusive workforce. In fact, since ALFDP was founded in 2006, the organization’s membership, which consists of law firm diversity professionals, has grown from just 30 members to approximately 150 — which Dávila-Caballero believes indicates the growing number of firms that recognize the benefits of having a diverse workforce.

“Everyone in the legal industry knows we’re still one of the least diverse professions,” he says. “But the increase in ALFDP membership equates to a higher level of sophistication when it comes to the discussion of how we recruit, retain, and ultimately promote diverse individuals within firms.”

ALFDP has helped facilitate these conversations in the legal community and connects its members to colleagues and experts across the country who are all working toward the same goal — to increase opportunities for underrepresented individuals to enter into and succeed in the legal profession. Together, ALFDP members compose a network that spans 30 cities in 22 states.

Members gather annually for the ALFDP conference, which provides them an opportunity to learn best practices, participate in workshops, and hear from fellow members and outside experts about the challenges they face as diversity professionals in the legal industry and solutions they’ve devised. According to Dávila-Caballero, topics often discussed at these events include how to create and use resources such as diversity dashboards and methods for communicating with individuals at all levels — including executive leadership, junior employees, and even clients — about the importance of diversity and inclusion efforts.

In addition to the conference, ALFDP enables members to continuously share information, resources, and ideas via the association’s web portal and daily listserv. These online tools allow members to pose questions and exchange advice on topics that range from hiring an outside diversity consultant to celebrating ethnic heritage in the workplace.

Dávila-Caballero says.

He believes that frequent contact with others who are also working as law firm diversity professionals is essential for individual member success as well as for the development of the profession as a whole — especially considering that the position itself is fairly new. “When you look at the corporate structure of law firms, diversity departments or professionals are, for the most part, the most recent addition to the operations of any given organization,” explains Dávila-Caballero. “People are always asking what it means to be a diversity professional [in a law firm], and we’ve had to work to answer that question as [the role] has continued to evolve.”

ALFDP recently asked its membership to complete engagement surveys designed to track the size, budget, and responsibilities of their firms’ diversity departments. The organization used this information to create its first executive report on the state of the profession. Dávila-Caballero believes that this move has helped increase “the visibility and transparency” of law firm diversity professionals’ roles at a time when firms are increasingly recognizing the benefits of having diverse legal teams.

“There is a strong consensus in our industry,” he says, “that you can only provide the best legal representation if you have a diverse composition of individuals with a broad range of experiences.”

Mariah Bohanon is a senior staff writer for INSIGHT Into Diversity. For more information, visit alfdp.com.
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Greek Life on Campus: An Asset and a Challenge

By Ajay Nair, PhD, and Victoria L. Chan-Frazier

In the lives of many college students, sororities and fraternities are vital elements — unique assets that can serve as premier leadership programs in campus communities. As our respective experiences as members of Greek organizations were among the most profound of our lives, we believe that the opportunity to join fraternities or sororities should be available to every interested student.

Despite the benefits of Greek life, it is also an area in which there is much work to do. Progress is being made, but not at the pace at which a contemporary college student operates. It’s worth noting that many Greek organizations were founded generations ago on traditions that are antithetical to the institutional values of most colleges and universities, including hazing, heteronormativity, sexism, racism, ableism, and classism. Because of these and other factors, profound social, cultural, and ethical questions about Greek organizations loom large on campuses nationwide.

In many cases, however, Greek-letter organizations have taken the initiative to address these issues. For example, after the 2015 incident in which members of the University of Oklahoma’s Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity were caught on video singing a racist chant, the fraternal organization hired Ashlee Canty, a member of a historically black sorority, as their director of diversity and inclusion; she led training on inclusivity and Title IX with chapters nationwide.

That same year, the Sigma Phi Epsilon fraternity voted to extend membership to any transgender man. More recently, the Lambda Phi Epsilon fraternity retired the word “colony,” which it used to refer to its newly charted chapters, recognizing that the term “colonization” can connote rape, enslavement, and genocide in Asian and other nations populated by people of color.

Sometimes, fraternities and sororities draw strong responses from institutions beyond higher education and national Greek organizations. Following the hazing-related deaths of Tucker Hipps at Clemson University and Robert Champion at Florida A&M University, South Carolina and Florida — the home states of the respective institutions — took steps to increase public awareness of the dangers and consequences of hazing. One such measure involved publishing information online regarding the kind of conduct that results in organizations being found responsible for hazing; another involved implementing mandatory hazing-awareness training for every incoming student.

Even with the many challenges still facing Greek life, students continue to rush for many reasons, including legacy and a desire for a shared experience with their peers. And many fraternities and sororities have embraced our changing society in positive ways, reflecting values such as integrity, scholarship, philanthropy, diversity, and inclusion.

Last fall, Emory University’s Greek members collectively earned an average GPA of nearly 3.5, and last year, they raised more than $75,000 for philanthropic causes and contributed 25,000 hours to community service. Similar examples abound across our nation’s campuses.

Yet, while many Greek chapters nationwide embrace social change, some unfortunately still see it as an existential threat to their organizations. To be positive forces in these changing times, they must recognize and accept change as both essential and inevitable. Sororities and fraternities that continue to operate on the margins of our campuses simply perpetuate existing problems and ensure an unsustainable future for themselves.
Equally problematic is the fact that this resistance to change fuels antagonism among Greek-letter organizations, higher education institutions, students, and alumni. These strained relationships are caused by tensions that also represent opportunities for Greek life to grow and thrive along with higher education.

Representing Campus Diversity
A major challenge that higher education faces in building a productive relationship with Greek life is fixing the erroneous perception that institutions want to remove groups that do not represent the diversity of the overall campus community.

Although most colleges and universities encourage all organizations to be inclusive, they do not require Greek chapters to do so, as they are semi-independent entities. When an institution takes the extreme step of removing a chapter from its campus, it is due to the violation of established rules of conduct — not a lack of diversity. The most offensive of such actions include sexual violence and extreme forms of hazing, and colleges and universities cannot tolerate such egregious behavior by individuals or organizations.

This same perception also compounds racial tensions by attempting to delegitimize the predominantly African American, Latino, and multicultural Greek chapters that have more recently joined campuses. These organizations began arriving at Emory in the 1970s. In 1976, the historically black fraternity Alpha Phi Alpha joined the campus community and later became the first chapter of Emory’s National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC), a historically black organization. Similarly, in 2002, the predominantly Asian sorority Delta Phi Lambda became the first chapter of the Multicultural Greek Council on campus.

Unfortunately, despite societal changes, many Greek communities throughout higher education still resemble segregated neighborhoods, representing less racial and ethnic diversity than their campuses as a whole. This is also true at Emory, where many of our Greek chapters remain overwhelmingly white, despite the university’s being one of the nation’s most diverse campuses today.

In the past, Greek members at Emory were leaders in diversity. Our Pi Kappa Alpha chapter became the fraternity’s first chapter nationwide to initiate a black member in 1968, and two presidents of our Intersorority Council were members of NPHC.

Greek organizations today could do much more to better represent higher education’s increasingly diverse student population.

More than Housing
A second and equally challenging tension is that institutions like Emory want to provide social capital, including housing, to non-Greek organizations as well as Greek ones. Traditionally, Greek-letter organizations, unlike other groups, enjoy on-campus programming space. Yet, on many college campuses, Greek communities continue to grow while available housing shrinks. The expanding number of organizations is a good thing; however, the dearth of housing is not.

Greek organizations housed on campuses offer an important social venue for community members — but should this be the basis for exclusive housing for Greek organizations? If so, which ones should get access to that housing? Institutions need plans that support the strong presence of Greek life in a variety of spaces while simultaneously affording such housing privileges to other organizations and individuals who also embody the institution’s values.

Of course, Greek life encompasses far more than occupying a house and enjoying the social capital associated with that. If housing becomes the most important consideration when it comes to a student’s decision to rush, one must question a chapter’s raison d’être (i.e., the most important reason for its existence). Each chapter must vigilantly elevate its national organization’s mission and community’s values above the appeal of housing.

Ensuring Safety and Adherence
A third tension involves the privacy of Greek organizations, many of which are resistant to housing inspections and staff rounds. Their perception is that the university is on a witch-hunt to undermine Greek life, when in fact, facilities checks help ensure that students are safe and policies are followed.

Ideally, Greek housing should be held to the same standards as other on-campus housing. At Emory, staff rounds are no more frequent in Greek than any other university-owned residences. Staff members conducting rounds rarely enter student rooms; they do so only when necessary and after knocking several times and announcing themselves. Most allegations of violations come not from staff inspections, but from members of Greek life who are concerned about the behavior and safety of their peers.

As institutions, we have a paramount responsibility to maintain safe environments for our students and, at the same time, respect their right to privacy. These commitments must exist in concert, alongside greater trust and student accountability.

We all must own Greek life on our campuses and share the responsibility of helping it improve. Higher education can and should help sororities and fraternities thrive on individual campuses and across the nation. For their part, Greek organizations must retain the best traditions of their pasts while embracing the cultural transformation that’s essential to our collective future as a higher education community.

Ajay Nair, PhD, is the senior vice president and dean of campus life at Emory University. He is also a member of the INSIGHT Into Diversity Editorial Board. Victoria L. Chan-Frazier is the assistant director of student conduct at Emory University.
Trump’s Nationalist Agenda Changes the Landscape for American Students Abroad

By Alice Pettway

“America First” — the mantra of the Trump administration — may energize conservative crowds in the U.S., but the response to President Donald Trump’s isolationist rhetoric and policy decisions has been less positive globally. For foreigners struggling to understand the rapidly changing political landscape in the United States, the more than 300,000 American students studying abroad each year are often a first line of communication, says Margaret Wiedenhoeft, executive director of the Center for International Programs at Kalamazoo College.

“I think one thing that happened almost immediately in the aftermath of the election was ... people saw [students] as representatives of the United...
States, and they were very interested in trying to understand how [Trump] could have been elected president,” says Wiedenhoeft.

Timothy Barton, director of student life and support services for the College of Global Studies at Arcadia University, says he has witnessed a similar phenomenon in his school’s study abroad program. Students were “forced to think about the change in administration very differently, from a global perspective, which they weren’t anticipating prior to going abroad,” he says.

While neither Wiedenhoeft nor Barton have heard any reports from their students of direct confrontations or animosity while they were studying abroad, Barton says that the intensity level of the questions his students have been receiving from people in their host countries increased once Trump took office and began implementing some of his campaign promises. “During last fall,” says Barton, “the comments to students were, ‘How in the world is this guy running for president?’, ‘How is this not a joke?’, and ‘How are people voting for this candidate?’ And in the spring semester, it was ‘How are you allowing this to happen?’, ‘How are you allowing the travel ban to go into effect?’, and ‘How are you allowing him to take this position on healthcare [or] on LGBTQ issues?’

The change in tone experienced by Barton’s students parallels falling global confidence in the United States. A study of 37 countries published by the Pew Research Center in June found that favorable views of the U.S. have fallen from 64 percent when President Barack Obama was leaving office to only 44 percent under Trump’s presidency. The drop may be in part due to low global approval for some of Trump’s key priorities, including withdrawing from climate and trade agreements, building a wall between the U.S. and Mexico, and instating an international travel ban on people from a number of Muslim-majority nations.

It’s too early in Trump’s presidency to know how the tension between parts of the global community and the United States will ultimately affect the number of American students who decide to study abroad. But for the moment, both Wiedenhoeft and Barton aren’t seeing a noticeable drop in their programs’ numbers due to the change in administration. What they are seeing is increased concern from students about how they’ll be received in their host countries.

Wiedenhoeft has taken to telling them that creating a strategy for inevitable political discussions is as essential for traveling out of the country as going to the doctor is. “One of the first things I would tell students,” says Wiedenhoeft, “is ‘First of all, they’re going to ask who you voted for. Obviously, that’s your [personal] information, and you can choose to respond to that how you wish — but you will be asked. And, you will probably get an opinion about who you voted for either way.’”

She encourages students to think of the current political climate as an opportunity as much as a challenge, though. “I think, for the most part, our students … do tend to be quite politically engaged,” Wiedenhoeft says. “So often, they may end up having good conversations.” Students can use curiosity about politics and government in the United States to start conversations with host country nationals about governmental and social systems in their countries. Wiedenhoeft says that even something as simple as a question about the U.S. Electoral College could provide an opportunity to learn about how votes are tallied in their host country.

For Barton, it’s important that students understand that interest isn’t the same as animosity. “An individual who you might meet out at a pub … [who asks you] questions … is probably not attacking you, but rather wants to engage in conversation,” he explains. “And the onus is on [students] to be informed about and understanding of the situation at home, as well as to be able to speak intelligently about what’s happening.”

NAFSA: Association of International Educators calls study abroad programs “fundamental to fostering peace, security, and well-being” — a sentiment shared by Wiedenhoeft and Barton. “I think [sending student ambassadors out into the world] has always been important, because they are the ones who have contact with folks on the ground,” says Wiedenhoeft. In-person contact is especially important, she says, because many people in other countries may only know about the United States through films or books. “[Study abroad] is always an opportunity to represent a [U.S.] student in many layers — who they are as a person, their larger community, and their nationality.”

She worries, however, that maintaining thriving study abroad programs under Trump may be more challenging if barriers to international travel are heightened. “I think what’s really important is that we keep up the habit of wanting to know people who are not like ourselves,” says Wiedenhoeft, “and wanting to do it in a respectful way that is educational and energetic and gets to that piece about getting to know someone better.” She hopes that the experience of studying abroad will lead young people to question stereotypes and to develop the ability to consider and reject unfounded assumptions about other countries.

Barton focuses on the flip side of the cultural-exchange equation, emphasizing that as Trump implements more isolationist policies, study abroad becomes even more essential for showing the world that Americans are still interested in communicating and collaborating with the global community. “As a section of the United States turns inward,” Barton says, “it becomes more and more important for others to go out … to show the case that, [while] America is doing this, Americans are doing something else.”

Alice Pettway is a contributing writer for INSIGHT Into Diversity.
BUSINESS SCHOOL DEANS

In each issue, INSIGHT Into Diversity features diverse professionals in higher education. To be featured in this section, email your bio and photo to editor@insightintodiversity.com.

Delmonize “Del” Smith, PhD, is dean of the College of Business and Public Affairs at Alabama A&M University. Having had an extensive career in the business sector, he launched and later sold his first tech startup at the age of 25, followed by a second startup — a strategic human resources and information technology management company. Smith has also served as a systems analyst in the U.S. Army, a consultant for Fortune 1000 firms, and an economic development commissioner. His research on what it takes for minority entrepreneurs to succeed has appeared in the Journal of Business Research and the Journal of Information Technology Management.

Rowena Ortiz-Walters, PhD, is dean of the SUNY Plattsburgh School of Business and Economics and a professor of management. Her research interests include examining mentoring relationships as a career development tool for women and minorities, diversity in the workplace, and entrepreneurship by women and minorities. Ortiz-Walters previously served as chair of management in the School of Business and Engineering at Quinnipiac University, where she helped found its Business Women in Search of Excellence initiative and the Center for Women and Business. She has also served as an advisory board member for a study on gender diversity for Harvard Medical School.

Miles Davis, PhD, is dean of the Harry F. Byrd Jr. School of Business and a professor of management at Shenandoah University. He has more than 15 years of higher education teaching experience and is an authority on entrepreneurship, with a focus on integrity, values, and principles within the business sector, as well as faith-based entrepreneurship. Davis is also the founding director of the Institute for Entrepreneurship at the business school. Prior to joining Shenandoah, he worked as a managing consultant and principal for EDS Corporation and has consulted for Boeing Corporation and the U.S. Mint.

Erika H. James, PhD, is the John H. Harland Dean of Goizueta Business School at Emory University and a professor of organization and management. She previously served as senior associate dean for executive education at the Darden Graduate School of Business at the University of Virginia, an assistant professor at Tulane University’s Freeman School of Business, and a visiting professor at Harvard Business School. James is known for her involvement in diversity initiatives and was honored in 2014 by the National Diversity Council for her commitment to establishing an equal playing field across gender and race. She sits on the board of the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business.

Glenn Worthington, EdD, is dean of the School of Business and Professional Studies at Brandman University. A U.S. military veteran, he served in the Army Reserves, Air Force Reserves, and Army National Guard, doing tours of duty in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Iraq. For his role in the invasion of Iraq in 1991, Worthington was awarded the Bronze Star. Prior to his current position, he served in administrative roles in elementary and secondary schools and as an adjunct faculty member, program manager, professor, and associate dean at Brandman. Because of his military background, Worthington strives to ensure a strong support system for military and veteran students at Brandman.

Nitin Nohria, PhD, is dean of Harvard Business School and the George F. Baker Professor of Administration. He previously served as co-chair of the Leadership Initiative, senior associate dean of faculty development, and head of the Organizational Behavior Unit in the business school. Nohria’s research interests focus on human motivation, leadership, corporate transformation and accountability, and sustainable economic and human performance; he has co-authored or co-edited 16 books, as well as more than 50 articles, chapters, and papers on similar topics. Additionally, Nohria has served as an adviser and consultant to companies of all sizes around the world.
Every October, we celebrate the contributions of workers with disabilities in the United States and emphasize the value of a workforce that’s inclusive of their skills and talents with National Disability Employment Awareness Month. In honor of this year’s theme “Inclusion Drives Innovation,” INSIGHT Into Diversity recognizes some of the progress that has occurred over time for people with disabilities in the workplace.

1920
Signed into law by President Woodrow Wilson, the Smith-Fess Act establishes the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, which authorized funds for vocational guidance, training, and occupational adjustment and placement services for Americans with physical disabilities.

1945
President Harry Truman approves a Congressional resolution declaring the first week in October “National Employ the Physically Handicapped Week.” The word “physically” was removed in 1962, and in 1988, Congress expanded the week to a month and updated it to the current name.

1954
Congress passes the Vocational Rehabilitation Amendments of 1954, which increased funding for and the scope of the VR program, including expanded services for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and disorders. It also provided funds for research and facility development grants and for colleges and universities to train rehabilitation counselors.

1973
The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is passed, which extended and revised state VR services and prohibited discrimination on the basis of disability by federally funded and assisted programs, as well as federal employers and federal contractors.

1982
Congress passes the Job Training Partnership Act of 1982, authorizing the establishment of federal assistance programs to prepare youth and unskilled adults for entry into the labor force. It also provided job training to economically disadvantaged and other individuals facing serious barriers to employment, including those with disabilities.

1990
President George H. W. Bush signs the Americans with Disabilities Act into law. Its employment provisions prohibited discrimination in job application procedures, hiring, advancement, and termination and provided for equal access to workers’ compensation and job training.

2009
Congress establishes the Office of Disability Employment Policy within the U.S. Department of Labor. That same year, the Job Accommodation Network opens, providing free and confidential expertise on workplace accommodations and disability employment issues, and the Workforce Recruitment Program for College Students with Disabilities is established to connect employers nationwide with highly motivated college students and recent graduates.

2013
The Department of Labor’s Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs updates regulations implementing Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act. This prohibits federal contractors and subcontractors from discriminating against employees with disabilities and requires that they take affirmative action to recruit, hire, promote, and retain these individuals.

Source: U.S. Department of Labor
Recognizing the role they play in serving their communities, colleges and universities are continually offering programs that promote the benefits of higher education to youth from underrepresented groups. To ensure the best outcomes for all students, many institutions are not only encouraging these young people to consider college but also supporting their cultural identity, helping ease their transition to campus, and providing them opportunities to assist others like themselves.

**Eastern Kentucky University**

In the Center for Student Accessibility (CSA) at Eastern Kentucky University (EKU) in Richmond, students with disabilities can find both the encouragement and support they need to not only successfully enroll in college, but also persist and graduate. Through a grant from the Kentucky Department of Education, the center offers two programs specifically designed for students with learning disabilities, attention deficit disorder, and other cognitive disorders.

The Appalachian Transition Grant allows EKU to assist students from 51 Kentucky counties with the transition to college. For high school juniors and seniors, this effort begins with CSA’s summer transition program, Planning to Win. During this three-day camp, students reside in residence halls and participate in educational and inspirational workshops designed to encourage them to consider postsecondary education.

“It was created to give students who have disabilities an opportunity to have the college experience so that they know that it is something they too can achieve with or without accommodations,” says Lori A. Davis, JD, director of equity in the CSA.

Mark Pressley, transition coordinator in the center, visits K-12 schools throughout eastern Kentucky to recruit students into Planning to Win. The first 50 individuals to fill out the application and pay a $10 fee — which covers the cost of meals and a T-shirt — are able to attend. Participants tour EKU’s campus, learn about assistive technology, and engage in team-building activities, voluntary presentations, themed projects, and a collective mural art project.

Not only does the program help prepare students for college, Pressley says it also introduces them to others with similar disabilities and teaches them how to advocate for themselves and ask for help when needed. “We treat them like college students and show them what college is going to be like,” he says, adding that this approach has had a positive effect on EKU’s enrollment. “… We had several participants last year who were [high school] juniors — they’re seniors now — saying ‘I want to come to EKU. I like the way they treated me. They treated me like a person, not like a person with a disability.’ That means a lot to us.”

For these and other students with learning disabilities and cognitive disorders who enroll at EKU, CSA...
continues to provide support to help them integrate into and achieve success in college. Also funded by the Appalachian Transition Grant, Project Success offers comprehensive support, including academic coaching, tutoring, and focus groups, to help students complete their degree. CSA is typically able to take on 75 Project Success students at a given time — a number that Davis says often fluctuates throughout the year as individuals come and go. “Some

many of whom also have disabilities, who work with students to help them overcome problem areas in math, science, or English. Focus groups add a mentoring and social component to Project Success.

Should students still have unmet needs, Griesheimer makes a point to collaborate with other campus units to connect them to the necessary resources. “There are some students who, for example, have autism or are on the autism spectrum and may need additional support in developing or enhancing social skills, so we have worked collaboratively with the occupational therapy department here on campus,” Davis says. “Their graduate students serve as mentors to many of our students to help them design a plan for success in [a given] area.”

According to Davis, Project Success is having a positive impact. In 2016-2017 alone, the retention rate for participants was 81 percent from the fall to spring semester, and the graduation rate was 77.3 percent. She hopes to expand the program in the future — which may require additional funding — to serve this growing student population. “We know that more and more students feel, once they come to college, that they no longer need the type of support they received before, and they may find that they flounder a bit, and that’s when they come to our office,” she says, adding that the program is customized to meet participants’ needs. “It is focused not necessarily on the specific disability but on the manifestations and the impact of that disability on the student’s learning. So there may be some students who have ADHD who need assistance with managing their time or [someone to] help them with study skills.”

Project Success participants meet with Academic Success Coordinator Lee Ann Griesheimer once a week to ensure they are on track and to address any issues they may be having. Additionally, they have access to tutors, additional support in developing or enhancing social skills, so we have worked collaboratively with the occupational therapy department here on campus,” Davis says. “Their graduate students serve as mentors to many of our students to help them design a plan for success in [a given] area.”

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**Central Michigan University**

At Central Michigan University (CMU) in Mount Pleasant, the Native American Programs office seeks to inspire Native American students through its Niijkewehn Mentoring Program “to become cultural and professional leaders in their tribal communities and beyond,” according to the program’s website.

Through a partnership with the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe (SCIT) — and specifically its behavioral health office — the program works to increase the retention and graduation rates of Native American youth and college students by supporting their cultural identity. CMU and SCIT partner with five area schools to identify Native American children in fifth through eighth grade who could benefit from having a mentor.

“We [partner] with school counselors and the social worker who works with the tribe [to] identify kids in our partner schools who could really use a mentor or somebody to look up to,” says Nichole McLachlan, Niijkewehn Mentoring Program co-coordinator.

She says that in 2012, the program included only 10 Native American
mentees and 10 CMU student mentors, but as Niijkewehn began to grow, the university had to expand its search for mentors. “We like to directly recruit Native American college students because we know helping youth in their community gives them a purpose, but we [found] that we needed to look beyond [that] because we weren’t getting enough to fulfill how many youths we had,” she says. “We actively recruit through the Native American Programs office, sending out emails to those who identify as Native American. But we also have non-Native students who are taking certain courses, such as social work or youth studies, and are interested in working with these students.”

Additionally, McLachlan says she and founder of the Niijkewehn Mentoring Program David A. Kinney, PhD, recruit students from the local tribal college, Saginaw Chippewa Tribal College (SCTC).

Mentors are typically paired with a mentee for an entire year. During that time, they go to their mentee’s school one day a week for an hour and a half after school to help them with homework, reading, and any identified areas of need — whether social or academic — as well as engage in cultural activities. This aspect of Niijkewehn also takes the form of a summer program for mentees and other interested students that takes them to different locations around Mount Pleasant and across Michigan and includes language and culture workshops.

“I think that culture strongly influences how an individual approaches education, and I think [students] are more likely to engage and to have a sense of belonging when they feel like they have a stronger cultural identity,” says McLachlan.

As a major focus of Niijkewehn is education and persistence, mentees also participate in campus visits to both CMU and SCTC where they explore cultural centers and various departments, such as the volunteer center and the diversity center, and do activities. “We show them that CMU is here and that this is definitely an opportunity,” McLachlan says, “but we also take them to the tribal college because some of them feel more comfortable at a smaller school.”

A fairly new, innovative feature of the program is the addition of junior mentors. “Once our mentees ‘graduate’ from the program at the end of their eighth grade year, we invite them to become junior mentors … to go back to their elementary or middle school and work with their younger peers,” says Kinney.

These students are once again paired with a college student mentor as well as two mentees. “They stay in a group of four so that when they feel comfortable, they can move on to just being with one of the children,” says McLachlan. “So we’re preparing them to become mentors, to be able to empower and inspire somebody younger than them.”

Last year, McLachlan says 47 mentors and 49 youth participated in Niijkewehn, and she points out that the program continues to grow and have a positive effect on all involved. Post-program survey results for 2016-2017 revealed that the vast majority of mentees said they viewed the program as having positively affected their lives, while data seem to indicate that participation in the program improved the retention rates of mentors as well as their sense of belonging and desire to succeed at CMU.”

Alexandra Vollman is the editor of INSIGHT Into Diversity. Eastern Kentucky University is a 2016 and 2017 HEED Award recipient. Central Michigan University is a 2014 and 2016 HEED Award recipient.
The National Association of Diversity Officers in Higher Education (NADOHE) is pleased to announce that nominations for the 2018 INSIGHT Into Diversity Global Engagement Scholarships are now being accepted.

The 2018 scholarships are generously funded by INSIGHT Into Diversity.

Each $2,500 scholarship is designed to encourage global engagement among underrepresented students whose backgrounds reflect a broad cross-section of our society. These backgrounds include, but are not limited to, students who are:

- first generation college students
- from rural or isolated areas
- from low socio-economic communities
- living with disabilities
- from diverse racial and ethnic identities
- from various religious backgrounds
- LGBTQIA and other identity expressions.

This scholarship opportunity is for US citizens only.

Preference will be given to students who have not traveled or studied abroad previously. The scholarships may be used to support faculty-led programs and/or for semester/study abroad options.

These scholarships will be presented by INSIGHT Into Diversity at NADOHE’s Annual Conference Awards Ceremony.

**CRITERIA**

- Undergraduate students should be in their second, third, or fourth year.
- 3.0 and above GPA is preferred.
- Students would need to submit a 2-3 page statement with application describing the anticipated educational impact or relevance of the global experience the funds will be used to support.
- Students would be expected to either produce a final 3-5 page paper after the experience to be submitted to NADOHE, do a blog while they are away or perform a 10-hour service commitment relevant to their global experience.
- Submit at least two letters of recommendation from a university official (staff/faculty).
- Attend presentation at NADOHE’s Annual Conference if possible.
- Provide a budget and share other possible funding sources for the planned global engagement experience.
- Have the opportunity to be featured in INSIGHT Into Diversity magazine as a scholarship recipient.

**NOMINATIONS OPEN**: SEPTEMBER 15, 2017

**SUBMISSION DEADLINE**: OCTOBER 31, 2017

*Must be a NADOHE member to nominate.

**THE 2018 SCHOLARSHIPS ARE FUNDED BY**

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FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT INFO@NADOHE.ORG
Building Accountability Systems: Matters, Metrics, and Maturity

By Ken D. Coopwood Sr., PhD

Accountability, while mentioned in nearly every strategic plan in higher education, is still the loftiest of goals but is necessary to ensure achievement and to invoke transformation. It makes sense that achieving such goals means that someone should be held accountable for the results. Nonetheless, the notion that someone can be blamed when things go awry is often powerful enough to cause considerable deflection when discerning why plans failed, who was responsible for the failure, and who may have been an accomplice.

To build an effective accountability system, institutional infrastructure and its circumstances — fiscal, personnel, political, etc. — must be aligned. Otherwise, adherence to objectives in a strategic plan is nearly impossible. This means that the task of making a plan creep-proof — difficult to stray from strict lines of thought and behavior related to an objective’s achievement — is likely the most critical among all other concerns about accountability. A plan that is not creep-proof typically results in a struggle to learn what happened during implementation. This and other related outcomes could cause a barrage of expensive, emotionally devastating, and acrimonious responses in search of the truth — or deflection.

Research pertaining to accountability reveals these universal principals: The cart should not come before the horse, what doesn’t get measured can still matter, and the most effective attempts at transformation begin with intentional efforts to examine one’s commitment. However, such principals are useless when accountability is approached from perspectives of title and territory. For example, expecting a president to be accountable for subordinates several levels below his or her title or territory will usually lead to a very loose accountability structure. Alignment between the role of the president and that of a subordinate could easily be lost, making it more difficult for a strategic plan to be designed to connect their senses and scopes of responsibility.

In the above example, measurable components of accountability such as objective scope, relationships, and resource sharing that serve to establish levels of collaboration and interdependency are bypassed, thereby subjecting the subordinates to indirect supervision and the president to hands-off accountability. Moreover, an assessment of personal commitment by either party is foregone, which can result in lackluster execution of any plan involving them, as well as metric achievement away from the plan and a myriad of excuses and deflections as to why planned tasks were incomplete.

Applying universal principals from research, three areas germane to accountability should always be considered: matters, metrics, and maturity. Considering these areas separately and upfront can provide uncommon understanding about what to consider before attempting to build an accountable system.

Matters of accountability are about the value bestowed on the objective for which a person will be held accountable. This consideration has historically gone unaddressed while strategic plans were designed and delegated in advance of review by those who will be doing the work. This is putting the cart before the horse. Instead, discussions about what will most naturally lead to accountability should come first. For example, discerning what business objective is most relevant to the accountable person is a strategic first step because this will likely reveal the highest personal motivation for his or her success. It gives far more substance to being held accountable than can be derived from the statement, “Take this seriously if you want to keep your job.”

By not first taking on the matter of alignment between person and task, it is easy to miss out on the discovery of values such as pleasure in work, personal investment, and the need for recognition that drive human productivity and thus accountability. Moreover, determining up front if the plan is valuable to those being held accountable, as well as discussing science-based guidelines that will ensure the plan’s effectiveness, makes it more likely that the plan will be accepted and accountability requested. If the cart is placed before the horse, then there will likely be a disconnect between the plan and the person or department being held accountable. In short, matters of personal attachment, visions of accountability, and recognition precede commitment. Without these considerations first, a strategic plan is just words on paper, as opposed to a strategy.

Metrics drive behavior and define scope-creep, the factor of productivity...
that draws from Six Sigma terminology meaning to identify defects in linked processes. They provide guidelines to ensure that those being held accountable do not creep away from behaviors and thoughts that determine the degree to which they will be held accountable. Therefore, considering metrics within a strategic plan translates to intentionally institutionalizing one set of behaviors over another. Specifically, it means that behavioral-based metrics must be in place — along with formal enforcement — to guide and align infrastructure and circumstances affected by a strategic plan.

An adverse example of this idea would be designing a strategic diversity plan without the input of a diversity official to decrease the number of perceived insults within an office after the expectation that students are greeted as they enter that office has been mandated. The diversity official, without valued input or formal authority to measure and assess other offices, might not be vested or willing to carry out the plan to the highest expectations of accountability. The result is a strategic plan with metrics of little significance to the person who’s most likely accountable and assurance that others are positioned to be silent accomplices in the success or failure of the plan.

The example above indicates that the process of designing metrics that attract accountability should be paradigm-based as opposed to title- or territory-based. This means that before a strategic plan is developed, questions about what paradigm shift — new rules and patterns — is needed should be discussed with relevant personnel. During this assessment, it is also vital to identify what expertise is needed and what strengths and weaknesses the achievement of metrics will expose about the institution’s infrastructure. Asking questions such as “who will benefit when the metrics and paradigm shift are achieved” and “how will metric achievement make the larger institution a benefactor (i.e., save money, time, or something else of value)” makes for more effective alignment between infrastructure and circumstances but, more importantly, between the task and accountability. 

*Maturity* represents both personal and institutional levels of development that dictate the zeal for accountability. The extent to which a person or institution identifies with the functionality of his or her role will likely sway or skew his or her scope of accountability and, ultimately, what he or she is willing to accept as personal matters of success or failure. The person or institution must research, assess, and implement a process for identifying behaviors, competencies, and specific components for which they are willing to be held responsible. However, the extent to which people are ready to be held accountable will ultimately indicate whether a strategic plan is strong or weak. If readiness is not determined prior to introducing a plan, there is a high risk for its being reduced to a script of valuations used to declare incremental progress by the institution. Furthermore, future opportunities to improve maturity and readiness will go unrecognized and undiscussed, which recycles the same esteem and effort for the next phase of incremental progress.

Building accountability systems should involve at least three important inquiries prior to implementing a strategic plan: knowledge about the values held by the person targeted for accountability, the capacity to direct thought and behavior toward metric achievement, and the readiness of the institution or person accountable to lead. A person, department, or institution should not expect the functionalities of title or territory to make accountability inevitable.

By not first taking on the matter of alignment between person and task, it is easy to miss out on the discovery of values such as pleasure in work, personal investment, and the need for recognition that drive human productivity and thus accountability.

Consider the following questions prior to developing your next strategic plan:

- How relevant is the solution to your business problem to the values of the person or unit being held accountable for results?
- What formal authority is afforded to the person accountable for achievement of metrics that define and align institutional infrastructure with preferred circumstances?
- What can be done to ensure institutional and personal readiness for new rules, patterns, and functionality as presented in your strategic plan?

Ken D. Coopwood Sr., PhD, is the vice president for strategic diversity and infrastructure for Viewfinder™ Campus Climate Surveys, a division of INSIGHT Into Diversity. He is also a member of the INSIGHT Into Diversity Editorial Board. To contact Dr. Coopwood, email kcoopwood@viewfindersurveys.com.
You do not have to look very long or hard lately to find cases of harassment in the workplace. Employees are increasingly coming forward to report harassment by a manager, employee, faculty member, student, or even a customer. Surprising to many is the fact that the number of charges of alleged harassment filed with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) has increased each year over the last three fiscal years (FY) from 26,820 in FY 2014, to 27,893 in FY 2015, to 28,216 in FY 2016. Keep in mind that these totals do not include reports filed with state or local Fair Employment Practices Agencies.

To understand what is involved in such cases, one must first be aware of what the federal government defines as “harassment.”

**Definition**

If an organization employs 15 or more people, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act provide coverage for employees. For companies employing 20 or more people, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act also provides coverage. According to the EEOC, harassment is defined as follows:

*Unwelcome conduct that is based on race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy), national origin, age (40 or older), disability, or genetic information. Harassment becomes unlawful where 1) enduring the offensive conduct becomes a condition of continued employment, or 2) the conduct is severe or pervasive enough to create a work environment that a reasonable person would consider intimidating, hostile, or abusive.*

If an organization is a covered federal contractor or subcontractor required to abide by regulations under the jurisdiction of the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP), then sexual orientation, gender identity, and veteran status are classifications that are also protected. Unlawful conduct could take the form of offensive jokes, slurs, name-calling, physical threats, insults, or even the use of offensive pictures or objects.

**Cases and Settlements**

B&H Foto was ordered to pay $3.2 million in back pay and interest in a case that was reviewed by the OFCCP in August 2017. The OFCCP not only alleged that the company was discriminating against female, African American, and Asian job seekers and employees in hiring, compensation, and promotion decisions, but that B&H Foto also gave these groups unequal access to the company’s restroom facilities and routinely subjected Hispanic workers to harassing conduct.

Another August 2017 settlement involved Ford Motor Company, which was investigated by the EEOC. Ford agreed to pay up to $10.125 million to settle a case involving a group of individuals at two of the company’s Chicago area facilities. The EEOC found that the organization subjected female and African American employees to sexual and racial harassment.

In August 2017, the EEOC sued Life University after learning that the chiropractic college treated African Americans differently than other employees because of their race. This treatment included harsher discipline compared with that of whites who committed similar offenses. When the black employees complained, they were subsequently fired.

Higher education has also had to pay out some hefty settlements in the past due to harassment. In 2010, Lafayette College agreed to pay $1 million to settle a sexual harassment suit, which came about after a supervisor repeatedly groped and forcibly kissed women, as well as emailed them pornographic materials.

In 2011, Anthem College Online was ordered by the EEOC to pay $200,000 as part of a sexual harassment settlement after female employees were harassed by three supervisors who engaged in unwanted sexual touching and solicitations for sex.

**Harassment Policy Tips**

The primary goal and best practice for all organizations is to have an environment that is respectful and does not tolerate discrimination or harassment. Taking preventive measures, such as implementing anti-harassment policies, disseminating an effective complaint process, and regularly providing anti-harassment and unconscious bias training to all employees, is key to creating a respectful and engaging workplace. The EEOC offers the following tips for developing an effective anti-harassment policy.

* Clearly define what is considered harassment, and make clear that it is
illegal and will not be tolerated. The EEOC recommends that examples of conduct that is prohibited be listed.

- Explain the process for reporting harassment. The EEOC recommends that at least one person who is outside an employee’s chain of command be designated to receive complaints of harassment.

- State that, to the greatest extent possible, the confidentiality of employees who report harassment or assist in an investigation will be protected.

- Explain that employees will not be subject to punishment or adverse action or treatment for reporting harassment or assisting in an investigation.

- Outline the consequences of violating the harassment policy, which may include termination.

**Best Practices for Prevention**

Having an anti-harassment policy helps mitigate incidents, but to reduce the likelihood of harassment occurring in the workplace, best practices such as these should be implemented:

- Create anti-harassment policies and disseminate them via the employee handbook, company intranet, email, or mailings. In addition, ensure that policies are posted in cafeterias and other common areas in facilities.

- Set examples from the top levels of the organization of respectful behavior toward all individuals. Embedding into the culture that harassment will not be tolerated and that the organization will be a workplace that is respectful of all employees is the responsibility of senior leaders.

- Provide regular training regarding equal opportunity compliance, harassment, inclusion, and respect.

All members of the leadership team and their respective units must take part in regular training to emphasize the importance of policies and define the actions that are considered harassment.

- Hold managers accountable for effectively handling any inappropriate behavior that they witness by others. Management must clearly demonstrate that there will be no retaliation against employees who file harassment claims.

- Have specific consequences for unwelcome behavior in your organization. Detailing in your human resource policies the specific consequences of harassing behavior is necessary to ensure that discipline is consistently enforced.

Harassment in the workplace is not only illegal — and can be financially costly to an organization — but it can also affect the morale of employees, causing them to either leave or be less productive. Organizations should take steps to ensure that their workplace is free of offensive behaviors by being proactive when it comes to providing training on anti-harassment policies for all employees.

For a company to be competitive in the global market, its workforce must be highly engaged, and the removal of the fear of harassment is a critical step in developing this type of culture. An organization must have preventive steps in place, including producing an anti-harassment policy, disseminating it to all employees, and creating an environment where all people feel welcome and respected.●

Julia Méndez, SHRM-CP, PHR, CAAP, CDP, CELS, is principal business consultant in the Workforce Compliance and Diversity Solutions Division for PeopleFluent Research Institute. She is also a member of the INSIGHT Into Diversity Editorial Board.
more college and university campuses are placing an emphasis on achieving excellence by implementing initiatives to strengthen diversity, equity, inclusion, and global engagement. These efforts often require doing more in an era when financial resources are limited. In such an environment, university leaders need to be more efficient. One of the best approaches for complex organizations is to identify ways to work collaboratively across the institution rather than view efforts as competing. This strategy, however, is not easy because it requires dismantling the organizational silos that have become commonplace in American higher education.

One important opportunity for collaboration is the partnership between academic affairs and student affairs, which remains an elusive goal for many institutions despite several decades of calls to action from national associations and higher education leaders. Differences in focus between intellectual and psychosocial development, the divide between in-class and out-of-class learning, competition for students’ time and attention, and compartmentalization of student success are just a few of the challenges that separate these two important areas on a college campus.

These differences can often seem insurmountable; the competition for resources can be fierce, and examples of effective collaboration often seem limited to specific programs or small-scale projects. But some campuses have found pathways for effective partnerships that advance targeted institutional priorities across campus, perhaps offering a model for more collaboration in other areas as well. The most obvious example is the joint work required to enact high-impact practices such as residential learning communities, service-learning courses, internships, and first-year experiences. The structures that lead to success in these areas can often be employed in pursuit of other institutional goals.

Another opportunity for collaboration comes with bridging the divide that often occurs on campuses between diversity and inclusion efforts and those involving internationalization and global engagement. The American Council on Education’s (ACE)
2007 report titled *At Home in the World: Bridging the Gap Between Internationalization and Multicultural Education* provides some provocative reasons why multiculturalism and internationalization are often seen as disparate efforts on a college campus. Often, these foci come from different disciplinary traditions, and those leading these efforts typically report to different divisions. ACE calls for higher education institutions to “understand the intersection between multicultural education and internationalization” and “commit to advancing the strategies for collaboration springing from this common ground.”

So why is the common ground among student affairs and academics as well as international and multicultural efforts not providing that springboard? On a practical level, practitioners from different on-campus areas seldom sit down together to discuss common teaching and research interests. On an intellectual level, this lack of engagement and collaboration across divisions often manifests itself as a lack of understanding of the issues raised by the “other” side and a failure to see the connections between all of these efforts.

During a meeting on our own campus among offices and centers that focus on inclusion, global education, and service-learning, colleagues noticed how conversations within their areas about intercultural competencies included different terms and approaches but were often in pursuit of the same broad goals. And yet those offices carried out their functions in isolation, missing the opportunity to make connections across their shared work. The work to bring these units together is ongoing and will require sustained dialogue and focus, but already, new programmatic collaborations have occurred.

On some campuses, faculty who concentrate on race and ethnicity through the curriculum in their academic disciplines may never engage in a conversation or in collaboration with student affairs professionals who are creating co-curricular education around the same construct. This intellectual isolationism reflects the traditional, disciplinary-based academic silos that emphasize specialization rather than integration at a time when most campuses are trying to help students integrate their experiences and transfer learning across different contexts.

Breaking out of this silo thinking — student life versus academics or multiculturalism versus internationalization — provides opportunities for connection and collaboration that will strengthen institutional effectiveness. A focus on speech and civic engagement; bridging political divides; and the significance of religion, worldview diversity, and interfaith understanding provides more opportunities to deepen students' learning and help them navigate and better understand diverse perspectives. All too often, these conversations are not happening across units and divisions.

During our own visits to other campuses as consultants, we have repeatedly witnessed people with shared goals around inclusion connecting with each other for the first time during our meetings. In those sessions, participants exchange information, discuss how they should be working together more often, and pledge to do so. If they did work together as promised, we suspect it would lead to more authentic, collaborative, and effective efforts the following year.

Higher education leaders can and should do better if they want to make meaningful and sustainable changes on their campuses. From our own experiences as collaborators, there are some important factors to consider for bridging these divides.

**Institutional commitment.** For effective collaboration to occur at multiple levels of an institution and across all units, schools, and divisions, a commitment to integrative work and learning must be made at the senior-most levels. If senior leaders operate as a team and expect the same of others, they foster a culture of collaboration that permeates the organization. Senior leaders must talk often about the importance of integrative, collaborative efforts and demonstrate their commitment to this work through their actions. Not all campuses have this commitment at the senior level, and if yours is one that does not, others in the organization may still be able to effectively guide these efforts on a more limited scale.

**Organizational structure.** While relationships matter, they are not always enough to break strong silos that have been established. Structures that transcend traditional
engagement and understanding. Working across different cultures and perspectives takes time, patience, and commitment. One of us came into our current role through a pathway as a full-time faculty member, and the other as a full-time student affairs educator. Even in our shared daily work, we find ourselves translating the concepts and jargon of our own areas of expertise to each other; navigating and negotiating different perspectives, lenses, and frameworks; and unlearning decades of myths and misconceptions.

Managing roadblocks and barriers in order to work collaboratively across university silos is not easy and requires a commitment over the long haul. Effective relationships will inevitably require resolving disagreements and misunderstandings to truly benefit from the unique roles and perspectives that different individuals bring to the table.

Each of these considerations requires time and investment, and there will be moments when it may seem easier to keep doing things the way they have always been done. Undoubtedly, there will be bumps along the road. In the end, however, effective integration and collaboration is a strategy worth committing to because it will foster organizational and individual excellence in a diverse environment that honors and values the unique perspectives and contributions of multiple individuals.

Brooke Barnett, PhD, is the associate provost for academic and inclusive excellence at Elon University. She is also a member of the INSIGHT Into Diversity Editorial Board. Jon Dooley, PhD, is the vice president for student life at Elon University.
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SAN DIEGO 2017
Oklahoma State Serves as Role Model in Continuous Effort to Improve Campus Environment

By Mariah Bohanon

Diversity Champions exemplify an unyielding commitment to diversity and inclusion throughout their campus communities, across academic programs, and at the highest administrative levels. INSIGHT Into Diversity selected institutions that rank in the top tier of Higher Education Excellence in Diversity (HEED) Award recipients.

Oklahoma State University (OSU) in Stillwater, Okla., has made rapid progress in its effort to provide all students access to a high-quality education. In the span of seven years, from 2009 to 2016, the university managed to increase its undergraduate minority enrollment by a full 96 percent — a feat which Jason F. Kirksey, PhD, vice president for institutional diversity, attributes to a campus-wide commitment to “change not just the look, but the feel of the institution.”

“We talk a lot about diversity and inclusion as not just the exception, but the expectation here at OSU,” says Kirksey. “We call our campus community the OSU family, and that’s the type of environment we strive to create — one where we look after, take care of, and support one another.”

Today, OSU is recognized as a leader in creating inclusive learning environments. Since 2010, the university has been the leading public land-grant institution for graduating Native American students, and in 2014, it was designated a Minority-Serving Institution by the U.S. Department of Education. Kirksey says that while the university community is certainly proud of such accomplishments, it “recognizes that there is still more work to be done.”

Oklahoma Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation

To help underrepresented minority students thrive, OSU has developed multiple programs and offers a plethora of resources to support them on campus. The Division of Institutional Diversity (DID) has four departments that oversee these efforts as they relate to employment, multicultural affairs, student support services, and the Oklahoma Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation (OK-LSAMP). A national program designed to increase the number of minority scholars in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM), LSAMP is funded by the National Science Foundation (NSF).
OSU has served as the lead institution for OK-LSAMP’s consortium, which consists of 11 colleges and universities, since the program began in 1994. In this role, the university is responsible for overseeing the distribution of $3.4 million and charting each institution’s progress toward increasing minority participation in STEM.

As part of this effort, OSU facilitates opportunities to help advance OK-LSAMP’s mission to prepare minority students for the world of advanced STEM scholarship. The university’s annual OK-LSAMP Annual Research Symposium, for instance, helps them gain experience presenting their work in a professional conference setting.

All OK-LSAMP participants are required to conduct formal research, explains Kirksey, which can include leading their own project or assisting on faculty research. At the symposium, students have the opportunity to exhibit their work through poster or oral presentations to faculty and staff from other alliance schools as well as industry and graduate school representatives. In addition, they hear about the experiences of STEM leaders and participate in trainings and workshops covering topics such as research ethics and applying to graduate programs. Now in its 23rd year, the symposium typically features the work of more than 100 OK-LSAMP scholars.

OSU students who have participated in these experiences have gone on to present at international research conferences, publish their work in national journals, and gain acceptance into elite graduate programs such as the Mayo Clinic Graduate School, Kirksey says.

OSU’s efforts also include hosting summer programs for minority high school and incoming first-year students interested in majoring in STEM disciplines, partnering with community and tribal colleges to recruit individuals into the program, and collaborating with organizations like the Society for Advancement of Chicanos and Native Americans in Science to provide additional programming focused on supporting those interested in STEM. Under OSU’s leadership, OK-LSAMP has had a positive effect on minority participation in these disciplines. In its 23-year history, the program has resulted in a 385 percent increase in undergraduate enrollment in STEM across all 11 alliance schools, according to an OK-LSAMP report.

Retention Initiative for Student Excellence
The Diversity Academic Support (DAS) department serves as one of the student support services units of DID. In addition to federally funded TRiO programs like Upward Bound and Student Support Services, DAS oversees several programs and initiatives unique to OSU that align with its mission to “provide resources and opportunities for academic, social, and emotional growth” for disadvantaged students.

One such program, the Retention Initiative for Student Excellence (RISE), helps underrepresented
students transition to college and persist to graduation by providing a strong foundation of academic and social support, says Jovette Dew, PhD, director of DAS. RISE accepts 65 incoming freshmen who are either first-generation, low-income, or from a minority group — many of whom come from underserved urban high schools. “In RISE, we are looking for students who have overcome adversity in their lives, have high GPAs, and are determined to succeed,” explains Dew. To apply, students must submit an essay detailing how they have overcome obstacles in life to achieve academic success.

Being a member of RISE means having a cohort of peers with whom they can identify, which Dew believes can be particularly powerful for individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds who are transitioning to college. “The main thing is to get these students connected and to keep them engaged while they’re here at OSU,” says Dew. “Being in RISE means they’re getting to know people who have gone through some of the same things in life and are also doing all of the same activities and [engaging in the same] experiences with them here on campus.”

For the duration of their first year, RISE provides opportunities for participants to engage in academic, social, and community service work together, with the goal of creating strong ties with each other, DAS staff, and the broader campus community. RISE students are required to attend campus and cultural events each semester, which serves the dual purpose of providing a social activity and encouraging campus engagement, Dew says. Participants must also complete community service projects each semester, typically in one of Stillwater’s underserved neighborhoods.

“We want these young individuals to become leaders,” says Dew, “not only for themselves but also for the community we live in.”

Perhaps most important, though, is the sense of accountability to one another and the support from DAS staff that come with being part of the RISE program. “When students feel discouraged, we remind them of their [application] essay and the fact that they’ve already overcome something difficult to get here,” Dew says. “Sometimes students aren’t encouraged at home, or sometimes they think they can’t have a certain major, like finance or civil engineering, if no one in their family does that. We are here to encourage them and tell them they can.”

According to Dew, DAS takes into account the fact that many RISE participants are likely to face obstacles when it comes to persisting in school. Thus, they are required to attend monthly workshops focused on dealing with issues like stress, finances, time management, and other challenges affecting retention.

To ensure their academic success, DAS requires RISE students to log 10 hours of study time per week, and staff educate them on how to use campus resources for help, such as the OSU Writing Center and the Mathematics Learning Resource Center. “We’re trying to get them indoctrinated into a culture of studying and doing their homework consistently,” Dew says. One goal of RISE is to have every participant complete his or her first year with a minimum 3.2 GPA. By committing to these efforts, Dew says that students develop high expectations for themselves, confidence in their academic abilities, and a strong work ethic — all of which improve their chances of reaching graduation.

In 12 years, 492 students have participated in RISE. A large part of the reason for the continued support of its private sponsor, the Phillips 66 Company, is its effectiveness. According to Dew, the program has achieved an 86 percent retention rate — a figure well above the national average of 60.6 percent, as reported by the National Student Clearinghouse.

Center for Sovereign Nations

Located in a state that is home to 39 tribal nations, OSU considers service to Oklahoma’s Native American population an integral part of its mission as a public land-grant institution. Making up 11 percent of the total undergraduate student population, Native Americans comprise the largest minority group at OSU. To better serve these individuals, the university offers affiliation groups and cultural activities, scholarships and grants,
and since 2015, the Center for Sovereign Nations (CSN), which was designed specifically to meet their needs.

“The center started with our president, Burns Hargis, who had a vision for focused service to the 39 nations in Oklahoma,” says Elizabeth Mee Payne, JD, who serves as director of CSN and helped establish the partnerships with tribal nations that led to its founding. “We had this idea that, as a land-grant institution, we should ask the nations how we could best serve them, so that we could better understand their vision for educating their citizens.” In consultation with tribal leadership, OSU created the center with a threefold mission: to promote tribal sovereignty, create partnerships between the tribal nations and the university, and help Native American students succeed.

To achieve these goals, the center employs 18 Native American student leaders who provide assistance with academics, navigating campus resources, and any other issues a student may face, says Payne. “The center is a point of connection,” she says. “Most of what we do amplifies the rich set of resources that the university has but with an added sense of community and [the benefit of] having a home base.”

Providing a place where students can find a sense of belonging, Payne says, is a top priority for the tribal nations — which also help fund the center — and the student leaders who work there. “One of the most differentiating aspects of our center is that it is truly student-led. [They] determine the best way to serve their peers,” she says. This includes providing exemplary service to make every visitor to the center feel at home on campus. When students come in seeking assistance, for example, student leaders will often escort them to the proper office or department that can meet their needs.

“Something we realize is that students, particularly native students, don’t do well if they don’t have a sense of family on campus,” says Mason Two Crow, a recent OSU graduate and former CSN employee. “So we always try to start with making every visitor feel welcome.”

Noah Berryhill, a senior engineering major and CSN employee, believes that having a space on campus where Native American students can congregate positively affects their retention. “A big reason that people leave school is because they don’t feel like they have a niche there,” he explains, adding that many students from tribal nations are first-generation and from very rural areas.

“Having the center gives you a home away from home. It gives you people you can relate to.”

Included among CSN’s services is supplemental academic advising, which is provided by center staff using the university’s online advising system. “If a student comes in and is having trouble getting into a class or has questions about course options, we can look at the system and reach out to other primary advisers as well as faculty to work out something that’s in that individual’s best interest,” says Payne. “That’s only possible because faculty and staff greatly support it and are willing to help us help our students.”

Similarly, she says, CSN recently developed a partnership with the College of Engineering to offer tutoring services for the many Native American students who major in this discipline. This is fitting as OSU is the leading school in the U.S. for graduating Native American engineers, and one-third of the students who work in the center are engineering majors.

“Having tutoring within [CSN] greatly helped my GPA and took off a load of stress,” says Berryhill. “It’s also gotten a lot more native engineering majors to come to the center, which has helped us make more connections with native students.”

The center also provides information and opportunities to celebrate native students’ shared heritage as well as their individual tribal cultures. CSN’s website, social media, and emails all provide information on campus affiliation groups and cultural events such as tournaments for stickball, a traditional Native American sport, and even alert students when representatives from their home nations will be visiting campus.

Payne says CSN invites all OSU students to come to the center to learn about tribal sovereignty — each of the tribal nations is legally a separate nation with its own governance, culture, and history. “Many of [these tribal nations] choose to use their resources to send their students here, and we feel like their sovereignty is something that should be recognized and respected,” she says. In its efforts to educate on and promote public awareness of the different nations, OSU hosts its Sovereignty Speaks monthly speakers’ series, a powwow, and stickball games.

Such conscientious efforts to support underrepresented groups demonstrate OSU’s institutional commitment to diversity that Kirksey says has been a key factor in the university’s overall success. He attributes much of this progress to senior leaders being attuned to students’ needs. “As far as our president and our provost,” says Kirksey, “these diversity efforts wouldn’t happen without them and their commitment to truly making a difference in the lives of students.”

Mariah Bohanon is a senior staff writer for INSIGHT Into Diversity. Oklahoma State University is a 2012-2017 INSIGHT Into Diversity HEED Award recipient.
I recently announced my retirement from the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) National Office, where I have served as a senior staff member for more than 13 years. During my tenure with the NCAA, I have been able to witness firsthand the lessons that sports can teach about achieving greater diversity and inclusion. For the most part, athletic competition is predicated on the notion of team participation. There are sports where individual participation is the norm, but in most instances, athletic competition centers on teamwork. It is through the concept of a team that athletics provide an insightful perspective on diversity and inclusion.

For an athletic team to function at its maximum capability and potential, its members must universally recognize the need to embrace the team’s diversity. This recognition is twofold since it must not only understand the diversity associated with the various roles and positions team members fill, but also the different dimensions of diversity each individual teammate represents. For example, a successful softball team cannot function if all the players are pitchers. A team composed of only pitchers may have a great pitching roster, but what about the other roles necessary to field a competitive team?

The success of any team is predicated on the reality that members must fill diverse roles and positions and that each one needs to have a different function in order for the team to succeed. Likewise, a team must embrace the fact that each member brings a unique set of experiences, perspectives, and characteristics. There will be racial, socioeconomic, and sexual orientation differences — and the list could go on — but the concept of a team reinforces the notion that although each player may be different, they are all one unit. This concept is the cornerstone for creating an inclusive environment.

Institutions and organizations can achieve diversity in their workforces, but that does not mean that they have an inclusive work environment. Often, they place great emphasis on diversity yet pay little to no attention to how to inculcate diversity into the overall cultural fiber of their organizations. Inclusion does not mean you bring into the circle only those people who look and think like you; rather, it necessitates that you make a deliberate effort to celebrate and embrace differences. This approach does not mean that there will always be agreement and acceptance. Inclusion represents a mutual respect for differences even when there may not be complete understanding of those differences.

Athletic competition offers a powerful lesson on creating more diverse and inclusive cultures and teams. We can all learn something from the power of sports that will help us embrace our differences and similarities and promote respect.

Bernard Franklin, PhD, is the executive vice president of education and community engagement and chief inclusion officer for the NCAA. He is also a member of the INSIGHT Into Diversity Editorial Board.
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State funding cuts to higher education and a growing skepticism of the value of diversity offices by some lawmakers have had both positive and negative effects on colleges and universities’ diversity budgets. While some institutions have had to reassess their efforts and develop more efficient and cost-effective ways of offering programming and supporting the needs of underrepresented students, others have been forced to eliminate such services altogether — as was the case at the University of Tennessee, where the state legislature defunded the university’s diversity office in 2016.

As the need to maintain access to diversity and support services increases, those charged with leading these efforts often struggle with institutional priorities and the availability of funds. A recent national study by executive search firm Witt/Kieffer, titled *The Critical First Year: What New Chief Diversity Officers Need to Succeed*, surveyed 81 chief diversity officers (CDOs) — most of whom work at colleges — regarding the challenges they face on the job. Fewer than half of respondents said they began their positions with adequate resources to effectively carry out their responsibilities.

Some believe this finding could be attributed to the fact that so many CDO positions are new — more than half of survey respondents said they were the inaugural CDO at their campus — and these individuals may not yet know what resources they need to do the job effectively at their respective institution. This and other factors make it difficult to assess whether diversity offices specifically are receiving sufficient funds to drive these efforts, says Archie Ervin, PhD, president of the National Association of Diversity Officers in Higher Education (NADOHE).

“I do know that the resources allocated to support diversity offices range from modest to substantial investments,” he says. “Many factors account for this vast range, such as institution size and type — public versus private — and scope of responsibilities, to name a few.”

Budget cuts and politics aside, many higher education experts argue that colleges and universities — no matter their financial situation — have an obligation to ensure the retention and success of their students, especially those who are most vulnerable. “Institutions, regardless of their individual resources, should see helping students, particularly
underserved students who are disproportionately at danger of dropping out, as an investment,” says Julie Ajinkya, PhD, vice president for applied research at the Institute for Higher Education Policy (IHEP). She believes this short-term investment “bears out in long-term gain — not only for the institution, but also for the students they graduate into their surrounding communities, [which] aggregate into our national economy.”

Ervin believes that the vast majority of institutions see the value in these efforts, which he says is evidenced by the growing number of senior-level diversity officer positions in higher education in recent years. But maintaining support services, in particular, which often benefit racial and ethnic minority and low-income students most, requires creativity and collaboration to work around budget limitations. While it is public institutions that most often find themselves in this situation, private colleges are also being forced to do more with less.

“Over the years, with some of the budget cuts that many institutions are experiencing, I think that has necessitated [that we] think about creative ways to have the necessary resources to provide optimal services and resources for our students,” says Sonja Feist-Price, vice president for institutional diversity at the University of Kentucky (UK) in Lexington.

As UK has proven, however, this challenge has made the university more efficient and effective. “In the last 10 years roughly, state appropriations have been reduced from about $335 million annually to a little less than $270 million this year,” says Roy Blanton, a university spokesperson. “[This] means we have to work smarter and even more strategically.” Because of its size — UK enrolls 30,000-plus students — and the fact that it’s a public institution, he says UK has been able to “leverage resources and people from a variety of backgrounds to [continue to] create … a community of belonging for all people.”

In contrast, Augustana College is a small private school in Rock Island, Ill., with a student enrollment of approximately 2,600. Kent Barnds, executive vice president for external relations, says that Augustana’s commitment to the success of each student helps ensure that the college continues to align resources to support this work that is always in transition.

“As student needs change, … our funds have reflected those changes, and certainly the diversity of our student population, the diversity of the world in which [they] are going to be entering, all [reflect] how we spend our money,” says Evelyn S. Campbell, PhD, dean and vice president of student life at Augustana. “I think because of our size, we’re able to be quicker at recognizing what students’ needs and goals are and making adjustments. You can do that when you’re smaller.”

Although they are very different in both their makeup and size, Augustana and UK demonstrate that a lot can be done with fewer resources when diversity and inclusion are made a strategic priority.

Integration and Realignment of Resources

At Augustana, Campbell says diversity and inclusion are woven into everything the college does, as it is one of four platforms in the institution’s strategic plan. “Our board of trustees buys into [this]; the president of the college is committed, the deans and vice presidents are committed [as well as] our directors, all the way down to our staff,” she says. “So from the very top of the institution, it’s a commitment.”

Serving their students, Campbell says, means not just providing diversity-specific programming, but also ensuring that diversity is an element of everything they do — from events and initiatives to policies and practices. This “integration,” as she calls it, means that diversity and inclusion are never an afterthought, which makes ensuring proper resources to drive these efforts easier.

“Money has flowed in different directions, but … integration is how we are leveraging and getting more out of the money that we have,” says Campbell.

By remaining alert to the changing needs of its students, Barnds says Augustana is able to shift resources to better align with their needs when appropriate.

“It doesn’t necessarily always represent new investment; sometimes it represents a realignment … to ensure that we’re serving today’s student,” explains Barnds. “We’re looking at the needs of our campus, its changing composition, but most importantly, we’re looking at what we want our students to have in regard to skills and experiences when they graduate, and we recognize that realigning our investment, whether it’s curricular or co-curricular, to ensure those outcomes is important.”

For example, Campbell says that the Office of Multicultural Student Life has experienced significant growth over the last three years, expanding from one staff member to three. The funds to cover this expansion came from cutting some academic support on the administrative side and possibly one faculty position, she explains. This evaluation of resources and need, she adds, is something the college engages in on a yearly basis.

“We’re doing that all the time to make sure that the
human resources as well as the financial resources reflect the needs that we’re trying to meet,” explains Campbell. “So over the years, the faculty sometimes has grown, … and Multicultural Student Life, International Student Life, and Disability Services are in a growth mode right now, while some administrative positions are shrinking in order to fund that.”

In 2016, to further assess its diversity and inclusion work, Barnds and a few of his colleagues created a Diversity Efforts Inventory to “provide the Augustana community a sense of [its] efforts, seen and unseen, to become a more diverse and inclusive institution,” as the document states. It lists all of the college’s efforts — across every department and office — related to the recruitment, retention, and support of students from racial and ethnic minorities. The inventory has not only demonstrated to senior leadership how well the college is serving students of color, but has also helped ensure that Augustana is collaborative and cost-effective in its distribution and utilization of funds.

“It’s allowed us to identify if there are gaps or things that maybe we should stop doing or start doing,” Barnds says, adding that the inventory also tells a story about the impact of Augustana’s investments. “If we go back 15 years, one out of every 10 of our students was a student of color. Today, we’re approaching one out of every four. So there’s a good story in the Diversity Efforts Inventory that reinforces where our resources are being invested.”

Ajinkya at IHEP believes that evaluation of this kind and the collection of data regarding a program’s effectiveness are key to ensuring that students are being supported and that funds are being well spent. “We always suggest that an assessment [be] designed at the outset of a program,” she says. “All strategies aimed at closing equity gaps should be data-informed and incorporate ongoing assessment. Institutions need to know their numbers to identify where to devote resources and ultimately close gaps.”

As a private institution, Augustana is largely tuition- and fee-driven. But it also has “friends and alumni who support the college generously,” Barnds says. “Certainly, our alumni, many of whom are employers and work in the real world, also embrace this orientation toward being a welcoming community,” he adds, “and I have to imagine that connects to their generosity and their support of Augustana because they know how important it is in their own organizations.”

**Strategic Funding Approaches**

Recognizing the importance of diversity and inclusion in all of its work, UK has not only designated it as one of five strategic priorities, but has also integrated it into the other four areas. But with significant state budget cuts over the last 10 years, the university has had to develop more innovative ways to ensure diversity programming and support for underrepresented students.

“We realize that belonging and inclusion are really important … because we know that when students are not engaged, sometimes they’re less likely to be successful, they’re less likely to be retained,” says Feist-Price.

UK has been able to avoid cuts to diversity initiatives and events facilitated by its Office of Institutional Diversity (OID) thanks to a $6 inclusive excellence fee that every student pays at the beginning of each semester. “We generate about $150,000 each semester in student fees for inclusive
excellence programming, and that’s on top of the resources that we already get from the university for our office, our staff, and our programs,” Feist-Price explains. “With those fees, we haven’t had to minimize our programming. If anything, we’ve been able to expand some of the opportunities that exist.”

The student fees fund UK’s Inclusive Excellence Grant, which provides students the opportunity to compete for resources to develop and host diversity programming. Every spring and fall, OID has a call for proposals, and individuals submit an application to be considered for an award — the largest of which is $25,000.

Not only must proposed projects concentrate in some way on diversity, but they must also be inclusive of different student populations; demonstrate collaborative partnerships between a variety of groups, offices, and student organizations; serve as models for replication across the campus; and expand the success of existing programs at UK, according to the university’s website. A committee of faculty, staff, and students reviews all proposals to ensure that a project has considered each of these areas. “At every turn, we’re working to make sure that students are working collaboratively across multiple identities, so they’re partnering with diverse groups and they’re targeting diverse groups in their programming,” explains Feist-Price.

These requirements mean that students must work together with people who are different from them to determine an area of need or interest in order to develop an event. “They communicate with their peers and come up with ideas. They have an opportunity to write a proposal, advertise and carry out the event, and then they have to report back on their accomplishments,” she says. “I think that’s why this process and these inclusive excellence funds are so important, because they celebrate students’ ability to work collaboratively with others and allow them to think about the ways in which diversity and inclusion show up and how they want them to be celebrated.”

To both hold students accountable for meeting requirements and demonstrate the return on investment the grants provide the campus community, OID has groups submit a report following the conclusion of a project. Feist-Price says the office then “advertises the outcomes associated with the grants” for all to see.

Because the grants are made possible through student fees, UK requires that the funds be used to meet their specific needs. However, this can also mean training teachers to improve students’ engagement and learning in the classroom, says Feist-Price. This fall, some of these dollars will be used to host a Faculty Learning Community, which will bring together up to 15 faculty members to learn about best practices and develop an understanding of some of the ways in which they can affect students’ learning “as it relates to [them] engaging each other and learning about inclusive pedagogy,” Feist-Price explains.

Beyond Inclusive Excellence Grants, she says that OID’s funding is sufficient for meeting the needs of students. “In my current position, I have never felt that if there was a need to do something impactful for our constituents — whether it’s faculty staff, or students — that our resources are not available to do that,” she says.

In terms of supporting underrepresented students and faculty, Blanton says UK has other efforts in place to ensure the proper allocation of resources. This includes public–private partnerships; an increase in the number of academic advisers; funding — which was doubled last year — to recruit and retain underrepresented minority faculty; and the UK Leads program, which provides more institutional aid to students with unmet financial need.

Sustaining Programs and Support
At IHEP, much of the emphasis is on researching and providing resources, best practices, and examples of innovative support services for higher education institutions to implement on their campuses. For example, it publishes online postsecondary guidebooks that offer information on supports in a variety of areas: academic, career, personal, and financial.

“These tactical guidebooks are all very focused on highlighting case studies of successful institutional and community leadership that are … the vanguards of personal or student supports in the postsecondary system,” Ajinkya explains. “We know institutions that are trying to do good and design interventions for students with the resources they have. We want to figure out what institutions and other community stakeholders can do to help improve student chances of succeeding in the postsecondary system.”

Increasing students’ chances for success doesn’t always mean additional funding, but it does often require creativity, an open mind, assessment, and partnerships, she says. “Institutions can do quite a bit as is, and it really takes them reaching outside of their institutional walls and forming partnerships,” says Ajinkya.

To truly enact long-term, deep-seated change, however, she believes that all efforts around diversity, inclusion, and support for underrepresented students must be addressed at a higher level.

“To pursue sustainable change …, [this] usually means that there is some sort of policy lever that you can pull, which might be at the institutional level, it might be at the state system level, and it might be at the state governmental level — it could also scale up to the federal level,” says Ajinkya. “In many cases, if we want these programs to really sustain themselves and have a lasting [effect], we have to figure out how to enshrine them in policy.”

Alexandra Vollman is the editor of INSIGHT Into Diversity. For more information about IHEP, visit ihep.org.
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Building an Inclusive Workforce

Companies are increasingly recognizing the importance of recruiting diverse and underrepresented business school graduates to their workforces to deliver better products and services. INSIGHT Into Diversity asked several companies to share why they value diversity in their operations.

CVS Health

“We continue to search for MBA-prepared candidates from top business schools in the Northeast and throughout the country. Given the changing demographics in the U.S. and the increasing demand to deliver culturally relevant healthcare, we look for diverse candidates and strategic thinkers who take an analytical approach to our business and who bring valuable leadership and collaboration skills to our organization.”

Lisa Bisaccia, chief human resources officer for CVS Health Corp.

General Motors

“The auto industry has always been driven by innovation and a curious spirit. The convergence of new technologies, evolving customer trends, and intense global competition are paving the way to truly transform the industry. At GM, we recognize the power of diverse talent and perspectives. It’s why we actively recruit students with diverse backgrounds at all levels — from interns to graduate students. By harnessing collective capabilities, perspectives, and talents, we cannot only navigate the disruption of our industry, but also lead it.”

Kenneth J. Barrett, global chief diversity officer for General Motors Co.

PwC

“PwC has championed diversity for a long time… When we go to campuses to recruit employees, diversity matters. And it’s not just about numbers. It is part of our culture. We know that embracing diversity and inclusion leads to happier employees and, frankly, stronger teams [that] do better work for our clients.”

Rod Adams, talent acquisition leader at PwC LLP

TIAA

“As the marketplace continues to evolve, diversity and inclusion remain a business priority for TIAA. We understand that having a team with a wide range of perspectives and experiences helps us to better serve our diverse customers. When recruiting, we look for students who illustrate problem-solving and critical-thinking skills, as well as an understanding of how data and metrics underpin decision-making — a skill that is becoming increasingly important in the workplace.”

Skip Spriggs, senior executive vice president and chief human resources officer at TIAA
The journey to becoming a good leader requires development, training, and accountability. It is no longer enough for leaders to understand sales, finance, and operations; now they must also be able to build a diverse and inclusive workplace. However, we don’t leave leaders to learn managerial economics or statistics on their own; they engage in intense study to learn the fundamentals of business management. So why do we leave them to their own devices to learn how to build a diverse workforce and an inclusive workplace?

Diversity and inclusion should not be optional competencies; instead, they should be required for all business leaders. It is important to take the time to understand the differences and commonalities of those on one’s team — something that does not come naturally to many people. Additionally, business professionals should be trained to lead diverse teams while also learning other skills. We teach financial acumen, business analytics, and negotiation, so why not the value of and skills associated with diversity and inclusion?

New Leadership Requirements
I recall a particular instance years ago when my daughter accompanied me to my job on Take Your Daughter to Work Day. The instructor asked everyone to define diversity, and my daughter, who was 14 years old at the time, articulated what diversity and inclusion meant to her. Her answer came as a surprise to the facilitator of the session. At that time, I lived and breathed diversity as the head of diversity for a $32 billion organization; however, my daughter’s answer did not come from me. It came from her experiences at school where she and her classmates discussed these issues in their diversity club.

Fast-forward 10 years, when my son accepted a position in a leadership program during college. As part of the training, he attended a session on diversity and inclusion — a common subject in schools today, but one that isn’t often a requirement.

As students make decisions about how they will navigate their careers and become the next generation of executives, it is becoming increasingly clear that they will require different competencies to lead. One of these will not only be defining and understanding diversity and inclusion, but also knowing how to foster an environment in which diversity and inclusion thrive in their organizations to ensure maximum productivity.

Cultural Competence
Leaders of tomorrow require us to teach them how to be inclusive. But what does that mean? As a diversity leader, I am most often asked, “What should I do?” It’s a simple question that has a not-so-simple answer: Change mindsets.

In an abstract published in the Journal of Business Ethics in 2004 titled “Building an Inclusive Diversity Culture: Principles, Processes and Practice,” Nicola Pless and Thomas Maak asserted that building an inclusive culture for a diverse workforce was fundamental. However, since that time, there has been little progress in this area.

New leaders know that their businesses and organizations will attract a more diverse customer base; thus, they will need to value, understand, and embrace this diversity. It is also important that they embrace the diversity within their organizations, unlocking the full potential of each employee through inclusive practices and an inclusive environment.

How does this happen? It begins when leaders take the necessary time to understand who their employees
are as individuals — not as groups such as Latino men, white women, or LGBTQ individuals. It begins when executives set out to uncover what motivates people, how they want to be recognized, and where, when, and how they want to work.

A Culture of Inclusion
Leaders are required to create an environment of trust that facilitates a culture of inclusion, allowing employees to be respected and recognized for what they bring to the organization. They also need to be cognizant of those in the room.

I once attended a leadership meeting designed to foster team building. The facilitator asked us all to bring in our baby pictures and everyone had to guess the identity of the child in the photo. I looked at the Indian-American man sitting next to me as he looked at me. We both knew that our pictures would be easy to identify.

As the exercise continued, none of the other participants acknowledged that the pigment of our skin would clearly give us away. The experience did not feel inclusive. A similar situation occurred when the facilitator instructed us to write down the name of an actor who could play us in a movie; the team then had to guess who wrote which actor. If I had selected a black actress, I would have been outed immediately, but no one else selected an actor of a race different from his or her own. Although these actions reflected unconscious bias, they demonstrate a clear lesson regarding inclusion.

Business leaders must keep inclusion top of mind when they make decisions about people — similar to the attention they give to analyzing quarterly results. This requires understanding one’s self, one’s teams, and where people are as individuals on their diversity journey. In order to achieve great results and engage one’s team, the journey of discovery must be ongoing for everyone — leaders and employees.

Allowing Inclusion to Flourish
Our leaders are the driving force to opening the doors of opportunity for everyone. New leaders will require training to create cultures that allow everyone to thrive through self-discovery. Understanding who we are, how we see the world, and how those views affect others paves the way to having a more productive workforce.

Anise Wiley-Little is chief human capital and diversity officer for the Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University. She is also a member of the INSIGHT Into Diversity Editorial Board.
AACSB Promotes Inclusion in Business Schools, But More Work Is Needed to Diversify the Pipeline

By Sheryl S. Jackson

When Thomas Harwell assumed the newly created role of director of student diversity and inclusion initiatives for Boston University’s Questrom School of Business, he turned to the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business International’s (AACSB) resources for program development guidance.

Although the business school had diversity efforts in place, Harwell was charged with creating a program that tied all of that work together. AACSB’s articles, best practice documents, and network of diversity directors at business schools gave him the information he needed to fully develop his school’s program.

“It’s important to have a community that provides benchmarks as we build our program,” explains Harwell. “I’ve reached out to others to ask questions and share information.” Additionally, he says two initiatives resulted from his networking with AACSB peers.

The first, Questrom Ascend, is a one-week fellowship program for incoming freshmen from underserved minorities — African American, Latino, Native American, Pacific Islander, and first-generation students — that precedes their first semester and includes an introduction to business concepts, leadership skills, team building, campus resources, and student leaders. Participants also meet with faculty and staff and have opportunities to explore Boston. “Throughout the program, we emphasize acceptance and respect for diverse people and opinions,” explains Harwell.

“For our graduate students, we have the Women in Leadership program, which includes a speakers’ series, women’s summit, and a diversity and inclusion conference,” he adds. Harwell and his colleagues promote the initiative via brochures and events that feature noted alumni to demonstrate the school’s longstanding commitment to women in business.

Providing resources and access to a diverse and inclusive community that focuses on business education is just one way AACSB is promoting inclusion in business schools, says Juliane Iannarelli, the diversity and inclusion advocate and chief knowledge officer for the organization.

Iannarelli assumed the role of diversity and inclusion advocate in addition to her role as chief knowledge officer when AACSB’s inaugural diversity and inclusion advocate Christine Clements retired. Clements served as an advocate in addition to her responsibilities as vice president of membership. When asked if AACSB plans to create a position dedicated solely to diversity and inclusion efforts, Iannarelli responded in an email, “At this time we have not outlined a plan to do so, but neither have we excluded that as a future possibility.”

“AACSB] dedicates resources across all staff and services to provide leadership, support, and visibility to the many individuals among our member network who are leading important discussions of critical importance,” she added, “including the cultivation of diverse and inclusive learning environments around the globe.”

This focus on diverse learning environments is also noted in the organization’s most recent update to its accreditation standards. Published in June 2017 for business schools undergoing accreditation surveys beginning in January 2018, the new standards include information in their guidance that emphasizes the importance of diversity and inclusion.

“[This] is not a single standard that appears one time in our accreditation
requirements,” explains Iannarelli. “It has been part of the overall standards for many years, but the new guidance clarifies the intent and better reflects the importance of diversity and inclusion today.”

Although there is not a specific requirement that focuses entirely on diversity, Iannarelli says that all members must align with the full set of standards, including diversity and inclusion guidance, through AACSB’s Initial Accreditation and Continuous Improvement Review processes. “In instances where a peer-review team conducting a Continuous Improvement Review at an accredited school [cites] specific concerns regarding alignment with AACSB accreditation standards, these may be brought to the attention of the school to address in the 12-month period immediately following the review,” she explains. “When concerns have not been adequately addressed within that time frame, the team may recommend an additional focused review period of up to two years, culminating in a decision to extend or revoke accreditation.”

Iannarelli points out that AACSB’s standards are not prescriptive and are based on each individual institution’s mission and academic outcomes. “We don’t define diversity for each school because [it] is different in each country or region,” she says. “U.S. institutions most often focus on race, ethnicity, and gender, but schools in other countries don’t always track these factors; instead, they may focus on religious or socioeconomic backgrounds.”

In addition to enhancing the breadth of resources available to business school deans and diversity officers via its website, AACSB plans to host for the first time this November a one-day conference called the Diversity and Inclusion Summit: From Awareness to Action. The agenda includes interactive workshops to review AACSB data on diversity, discussions regarding strategies for defining a school’s inclusion program, and best practices to move diversity programs forward. “The summit is designed to help those who are champions within their schools lead the effort to develop their programs,” Iannarelli says.

The inclusion of a data-based session to initiate discussion fits with Iannarelli’s goal to ensure that AACSB’s diversity and inclusion strategies are based on insights from data. “We collect [information] from our members, but we are also planning to develop relationships with other organizations that will further expand our knowledge,” she says. AACSB currently works with partners and initiatives such as The PhD Project, the Women Administrators in Management Education Affinity Group, the PhD Pipeline program, and the Collective Vision for Business Education.

Data collected from AACSB members, however, is not available to the public. “A primary benefit of membership in AACSB is access to data for benchmarking purposes,” Iannarelli explains. “This includes the ability to generate custom data reports on specified numbers of schools, including [information] related to race and ethnicity where available.”

Additionally, AACSB promotes the sharing of innovative ideas between member schools. It does this via an awards program created in 2016 called Innovations that Inspire. While the first year of the award included an outreach and engagement component, the 2017 program featured a category called Engaging a Diverse Community that more clearly focused on diversity and inclusion initiatives.

One of the 2017 Innovations that Inspire winners was the Richard J. Wehle School of Business at Canisius College in Buffalo, N.Y. The school was recognized for its Enactus Program, which partners with migrant and inner-city populations through several student-led programs. More than 10 years old, Enactus is composed of three initiatives that allow business students to teach underprivileged youth how to start and run their own businesses, as well as help local refugees adjust to life in America by providing them with the tools to fulfill their entrepreneurial dreams. Another component of the program teaches Bhutanese refugees, who are mostly women, to earn income by sewing and creating bags and other products.
“It is important to share ideas that may not yet be proven to be successful but are inspirational,” says Iannarelli. “We encourage members to be innovative and try new approaches without being hampered by the sense that [their] accreditation is at risk.”

AACSB publicizes the list of award recipients and their projects and allows members to access all submissions from both years to search for ideas that may fit with their institution’s mission and goals.

Some of these ideas might lead to an enhanced pipeline of minority students, says Patricia A. Hutton, PhD, professor of economics at Canisius. While the college’s Enactus Program exposes students to individuals of diverse backgrounds with whom they may not have previously interacted, Hutton points to the need for additional outreach by business schools and AACSB to create a more diverse pipeline — undergraduate and graduate students as well as faculty members.

“Achieving diversity, particularly among faculty, is challenging. Although AACSB has been at the forefront of assisting African Americans, Hispanic Americans, and Native Americans with attaining a business [degree], minorities continue to be underrepresented [in business schools],” says Hutton. “In my opinion, more work needs to be done … to promote community outreach in K-12 to create a ‘college-achieving’ culture, implement recruitment strategies, and enhance enrollment and retention in undergraduate majors that provide the proper academic preparation for graduate business studies.”

Sheryl S. Jackson is a contributing writer for INSIGHT Into Diversity.

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Business Schools Encourage Student Participation in Community Revitalization Programs for Real-Life Experience

By Alice Pettway

When Lyneir Richardson, executive director of the Center for Urban Entrepreneurship and Economic Development (CUEED) and an instructor of professional practice at Rutgers Business School in Newark, N.J., starts his class each semester, he asks his MBA students what the biggest issues are in their respective cities. The responses he receives range from crime rates to education, but his comeback is always the same — you can find a business solution to any of these problems.

Nearly 10 years ago, when CUEED was created, Richardson says he and his colleagues started out with the modest goal of helping fledgling entrepreneurs in vulnerable communities reach the next level of success with their businesses. The center has since met and exceeded that objective. Of the more than 400 entrepreneurs who have been sponsored by CUEED, over 70 percent are still in business.

“We’re celebrating the role of the entrepreneur as being impactful to urban community revitalization,” says Richardson.

Part of continuing that cycle of revitalization, he says, means having Rutgers business students working “shoulder to shoulder” with local entrepreneurs. To do this, CUEED pairs small groups of students with an entrepreneur or organization leader in a Newark neighborhood for a six-week project in which students must complete a
scope of work, project outline, paper, and final presentation on what they accomplished and observed.

This arrangement ensures that students receive the experiential learning necessary to understand how entrepreneurs can positively affect underserved communities, and it provides local entrepreneurs and organizations with resources they might not have access to otherwise. Through these projects, CUEED students have contributed to the economic development of underserved communities in a variety of ways — from identifying expansion and acquisition opportunities to helping a local arts organization generate earned income.

Sherry Shepard, a former student in Richardson’s CUEED class, says that participating in these projects allowed her to learn life skills while helping people in the process, and she believes the program equips students to succeed as urban entrepreneurs. Perhaps most important, though, she says that CUEED “fosters an environment of investment in the community and economic development.”

Jennifer Bruen, project coordinator of the Michigan State University Center for Regional Economic Innovation (REI) — another program focused on revitalizing underserved communities — agrees that putting young people into real-world situations in vulnerable neighborhoods is important both for the students and the communities they work with. Often, students haven’t encountered the economic realities that underserved areas face, she says. “In the work we do with communities, we see social inequality and racism, but we are recently seeing a rise in income inequality across religions, cultures, and races impacting occupations at all levels,” Bruen says, “and this is becoming the great divide.”

REI’s Student-Led, Faculty-Guided Projects bring college students from across Michigan — those majoring in business as well as other disciplines — into underserved communities, such as the Brightmoor neighborhood in northwest Detroit and Berrien County, under the supervision of experienced faculty. It’s a partnership that allows students to gain experience and apply the theoretical knowledge they’ve acquired in the classroom. The model seems to be effective in preparing them to contribute in the real world; according to Bruen, 95 percent of REI participants say their project experiences have helped prepare them for future jobs.

Additionally, REI sponsors Co-Learning Projects in which practitioners, decision-makers, community leaders, entrepreneurs, scholars, and other stakeholders collaborate to examine pressing economic and entrepreneurial issues in Michigan. These projects span a range of business areas; recent ones have looked at policies that drive infrastructure investment, examined social enterprise planning, and encouraged entrepreneurial activity. But all of them aim to “stimulate economically vibrant places that encourage high-growth entrepreneurial development and create well-paid, sustainable, new-economy jobs,” says Bruen.

Women Who Weld — a nonprofit organization that has been funded both through REI’s Student-Led, Faculty-Guided and Co-Learning projects — has pursued that same goal by giving unemployed women, some of whom may be homeless, the opportunity to learn about welding, career development, and communication skills. “It’s a springboard for personal and professional development,” says Samantha Farr, one of the project’s founders. After completing Farr’s REI-funded workshops, all of the participating women were able to find employment, and one of them began working toward a degree in welding at Washtenaw Community College.

Richardson places a high priority on partnering with female and minority entrepreneurs and others who haven’t had exposure to entrepreneurship. Of the businesses that CUEED works with, 70 percent are minority-owned and 62 percent are women-owned. Through one of CUEED’s flagship projects, the Entrepreneurship Pioneers Initiative, first-generation entrepreneurs receive financial coaching, marketing assistance, and customer development strategies.
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Entrepreneurs with businesses that aren’t “flashy” enough to attract typical venture capital investors are embraced by CUEED, says Richardson. Whether it is a tech startup or a skilled photographer with no business training, he believes that a burgeoning business in an urban neighborhood provides a path toward community revitalization. “We are shining a light on the fact that entrepreneurs play important roles in communities by paying local taxes, hiring local people, supporting the local little league teams and charities, and participating in local civic affairs,” Richardson says.

Bruen believes that growth from inside a community can be an alternative for neighborhoods that are withering as they wait for big companies to bring jobs. With this in mind, she urges local entrepreneurs to “remember those who do not have a voice, … those who lack the money, education, or power to influence change” and to create an economic transformation from within.

In the end, both Bruen and Richardson hope their students graduate with a better understanding of and a commitment to the vulnerable communities around them.

“I think most of the students who work [in REI] have never been exposed to poverty,” says Bruen. “I hope they leave knowing that economically stressed communities actually exist in Michigan and that assisting them requires compassion and a long-term commitment. … I hope they will want to make a difference in [these places] once they graduate.”

Shepard believes many CUEED participants will make a difference, whether it’s by serving these communities or by starting a business of their own. “Not all students seek to serve the community; … however, working with CUEED certainly plants the seed that urban entrepreneurship is a necessity and an achievable possibility.”

Alice Pettway is a contributing writer for INSIGHT Into Diversity.
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Organizations Provide Assistance to Growing Entrepreneurial Populations

By Mariah Bohanon
To encourage even further progress in this area, many nonprofits have made it their mission to provide services and support tailored to the unique needs of and challenges faced by these growing segments of the entrepreneurial population — including minorities, women, LGBTQ individuals, and veterans.

Veterans with Disabilities
The Entrepreneurship Bootcamp for Veterans with Disabilities (EBV) offers business development training and support to service members who became disabled while in the line of duty. Founded at Syracuse University (SU) in 2007 by Michael Haynie, PhD, vice chancellor for strategic initiatives and innovation, EBV has graduated more than 1,300 veterans with disabilities. Since its founding, it has become a national program facilitated by 10 universities and a vast network of educational and industry volunteers.

“[Haynie] realized that veterans transitioning out of the military, especially those who were disabled, were in need of a program that would help them craft their own vocation or start their own business,” says Misty Stutsman, director of SU’s Center of Excellence for Veteran Entrepreneurship. “It immediately became something that gained a lot of traction and caught the attention of other universities.”

EBV accepts roughly 30 veterans a year who are in the early phases of starting a business. However, Stutsman says EBV makes a point of offering assistance even to those individuals it is unable to accept into the cohort; they are allowed to participate in a follow-up program that provides workshops and trainings to help them develop a business plan.

The 30 EBV participants are assigned to one of the 10 partner universities. Because the program has rolling admissions, the schools offer it at different times throughout the year, Stutsman explains. Each college provides the same fundamental model of education and support, which includes three components — a 30-day online course, a weeklong campus residency, and support services.

“The online phase gets the vets to understand more about their own business goals and the fundamentals of entrepreneurship,” says Stutsman. “During that time, we also want them to be looking at market validation, such as getting feedback from customers and finding out if their business idea is valid.” Following the online course, the residency program allows participants to engage with other veterans in their cohort, attend a full week of lectures, and access advising offered by professors, industry experts, and EBV alumni.

The third and final phase provides veterans with 12 months of access to pro-bono business support services. These include advisement and consultation from EBV’s vast network of education and industry experts as well as volunteer services from professional accountants, designers, marketers, and more.

EBV is funded through SU’s Institute for Veterans and Military Families (IVMF), the partner schools, and corporate partners, and it’s valued at approximately $550,000, according to Stutsman. She says EBV also

While the landscape of business ownership in the U.S. continues to be dominated by white men, these demographics are rapidly changing. As the number of new entrepreneurs continues to rise — increasing 15 percent between 2014 and 2016 alone, according to the Koffman Foundation — diversity among this population is also growing.

Opposite: Carissa Anderson, winner of the 2017 WBENC Pitch Competition
covers travel costs and any additional services the participants may need to accommodate a disability.

Once veterans complete the final phase of the program, they continue to have access to EBV and IVMF support services, including everything from advisement to resources, Stutsman says. “Once you’re part of the EBV and IVMF family, you stay a part of it,” she says. “We’re going to continue to work with you and invest in you as much as possible.”

People of Color
Arizona State University’s (ASU) Office of Knowledge Enterprise Development is dedicated to advancing research, partnerships, and resources that lead to economic development in Phoenix and beyond. The office’s Entrepreneurship + Innovation division (E and I) creates and oversees programs to support minority business owners in local underserved communities and is specifically focused on diversifying the field and “broadening the definition of entrepreneurship,” says Ji Mi Choi, associate vice president of knowledge enterprise development.

“Entrepreneurship takes many forms, and entrepreneurial thinking can be empowering for many people, … especially young people and marginalized communities,” says Choi. “We show these populations that there are resources available for them and that their dreams and ambitions are as valid as any other [entrepreneur’s].”

The division’s Prepped program supports underrepresented individuals in developing mobile food businesses, such as food trucks and catering companies, which Choi says are popular ventures for low-income, minority entrepreneurs because they require little initial capital. Like all of E and I’s endeavors, Prepped leverages ASU’s extensive resources to provide comprehensive support. Faculty members from the business school offer training on topics such as finance planning and marketing strategies.

E and I also recruits local experts to share their personal experiences. “We’ve been able to bring in some very well-known chefs and restaurateurs to share their best practices and their stories of what it’s like to grow your own business,” Choi says.

The program consists of a 10-week training for teams — these comprise individual entrepreneurs or a group of partners — that are preparing to launch or have recently opened a mobile food business. Since Prepped began last fall, 21 teams have completed the program. Choi says that at the end, the businesses had experienced a collective revenue increase of 240 percent. Additionally, she says 92 percent of participants were people of color.

E and I also hosts a program called Poder — the Spanish word for “power” or “ability” — to provide entrepreneurial training to students in the Maricopa County Community College District (MCCCD), which has a student population that is 45 percent minority, according to the institution’s website. “We wanted to work in a community college setting to encourage these populations and help them see entrepreneurship as a viable path,” Choi explains.

While Poder is free, it does not count toward academic credit. To participate in the four-week program, individuals have to be enrolled in at least one credit hour at an MCCCD institution. Both ASU and MCCCD faculty instruct students through Poder, which takes place on MCCCD campuses.

“Poder exposes students to the idea of entrepreneurship and to the resources and technologies that can grow a business,” Choi explains. They are also coached on how to present a business idea and invited to participate in ASU’s annual pitch competition, in which they can win up to $5,000 in seed money. Thus far, 125 students, ranging in age from 17 to 65, have completed Poder — 77 percent of whom were from a minority group.

LGBTQ Individuals
Future entrepreneurs who identify as LGBTQ can find professional support through Reaching Out MBA (ROMBA). Originally founded as an association for LGBTQ individuals pursuing graduate degrees in business, ROMBA now comprises a global network of LGBTQ business students and professionals — including those who aspire to start their own businesses.

“The idea behind Reaching Out MBA is that by connecting all of these people together, we can have a greater impact on not only individual careers, but also on the LGBTQ community as a whole,” says Matt Kidd, executive director of ROMBA.

One of the organization’s primary offerings is a fellowship program that awards $2.5 million in scholarships to
LGBTQ MBA students each year. It accepts roughly 50 individuals annually, some of whom have expressed an interest in wanting to start their own business either while still in school or immediately following graduation, says Kidd. “Through our fellowship program, we get students who are very entrepreneurship-minded and [are considering] a career a little off the paved [path],” he says.

ROMBA works to connect these individuals with program alumni and professionals who are small business owners or investors. “We try to make sure the students are very well connected to entrepreneurs and those in funding so that they understand what the landscape is and start building those professional contacts while still in school,” explains Kidd.

The organization is also known for its Reaching Out LGBTQ MBA and Business Graduate Conference — often referred to as the ROMBA Conference — which draws nearly 1,500 members, industry leaders, and recruiters every year. The event offers multiple opportunities for future entrepreneurs — both students and alumni — to learn about starting a business, consult with industry experts, and win seed funding. “We build entrepreneurship programming largely around our annual conference … because it is applicable to both students and professionals,” he says. “We want to capture as many people as [we can] and make the programming as accessible as possible.”

In conjunction with the professional association StartOut, which also supports LGBTQ entrepreneurs, ROMBA offers what Kidd refers to as an “advising zone” where conference attendees can meet with successful professionals in the startup field.

“We create an area where students and alumni … can learn how the [entrepreneurial] process works and what they need to do to [prepare],” Kidd says. “They get to talk to experienced entrepreneurs and investors to get candid feedback and essentially pressure-test their ideas.”

The conference features several sessions that provide valuable information for those thinking about starting or who are in the early stages of launching their own business. These include lectures and workshops that are typically led by established entrepreneurs and financial backers, who cover topics such as scalability, managing investors, and securing funding, says Kidd.

“There are proven disadvantages that the LGBTQ community has [when it comes to starting a business], particularly with funding, so the extent to which we can get our members talking to
investors and to those who know how to [secure] funding is a critical step,”
he explains. “We want to create an advantage for LGBTQ entrepreneurs by giving them this access.”

The conference culminates in a startup pitch competition in which four individuals have the opportunity to present their business concepts before a panel of venture capitalists. The winner of the competition receives a $5,000 investment. “The [goal] … is for people to test their ideas, get feedback, and hopefully win a little seed money that will give them the momentum to go out and find initial investors,” Kidd explains.

Women
Founded in 1997, the Women’s Business Enterprise National Council (WBENC) is a network of female entrepreneurs, business leaders, and Fortune 500 employees; its mission is to be the leader in women’s business development. The organization launched its Student Entrepreneur Program (SEP) in 2008 to help young women create and grow innovative, successful enterprises while still in college or graduate school.

According to Andrew Gaekle, director of strategic planning at WBENC, the organization works with more than 130 colleges and universities to identify “the best and brightest students” and accepts a cohort of up to 25 female undergraduate and graduate entrepreneurs into SEP each year. Candidates must be pursuing a degree in business or a science, technology, engineering, arts, or math (STEAM) discipline, as one goal of the program is to increase the number of women in these fields. In addition, he says, WBENC works to diversify the entrepreneurial and STEAM landscape by ensuring that SEP students come from a variety of backgrounds and institutions, including public, private, and historically black colleges.

The organization gives preference to “applicants who are currently the owner, founder, or controlling shareholder of a company and principally responsible for its operation,” according to the WBENC website. Accepted students include those who have created their own product or are in the early stages of launching a business. “We want to make sure students are going down the entrepreneurial [path], that they have some kind of traction with their business idea or have already launched a [venture],” says Gaekle.

SEP programming centers around the WBENC National Conference and Business Fair, held every June. While the conference lasts just two days, SEP students spend a full week at the event site to participate in classes and events tailored to young women entrepreneurs. WBENC provides its own curriculum, and a host of business experts lead the classes and trainings.

“Our curriculum is really based on identifying both what the entrepreneurial journey is and what it means to start and grow a small business,” says Gaekle, adding that SEP classes cover topics like funding opportunities and understanding the supply chain.

In addition to these classes, the women are introduced to entrepreneurial ecosystems by visiting local business incubators and suppliers. They are also connected with WBENC mentors and corporate representatives who provide one-on-one advisement and help them prepare for the pitch competition that takes place on the last day of the conference. While the event provides SEP students with a multitude of networking opportunities, Gaekle says it is the mentorship component that often proves most valuable when it comes to learning how to pitch a business and find investors.

During the WBENC pitch competition, each student is given 90 seconds to present her business plan to a live audience and a panel of WBENC judges. Three women walk away with third-, second-, and first-place prizes of $4,000, $6,000, and $10,000 in seed capital, says Gaekle. “The money gives students what they need to develop their products, access new markets, bring on a temporary resource, or whatever else their need may be,” he explains.

“SEP is really about helping take these students to the next level,” he adds, “and that happens by engaging them with mentors who can advise them and by giving them … the resources to take them there.”

Mariah Bohanon is a senior staff writer for INSIGHT Into Diversity.
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Business Case Competitions Provide Avenues for Leadership Development and Future Success

By Kelley R. Taylor

As a high school student, Maysa Alqaisi enjoyed public speaking and participated in numerous debates and mock trials. Later, at the University of Texas at Austin (UT Austin), Alqaisi wanted to continue those experiences and enhance her problem-solving skills. She discovered case competitions — competitive events where teams of students work under pressure to develop and present an effective solution to a realistic business challenge.

During her freshman year, Alqaisi, who is now a senior finance major in UT Austin’s McCombs School of Business, placed third in two such competitions. Afterwards, Alqaisi says “the thrill of strategizing to solve a problem under time constraints and sometimes with limited information and pertinent industry experience” kept her competing again and again.

Each year, business students participate in case competitions in the U.S. and abroad. At these events, which are often sponsored by major corporations, small teams are given real-world scenarios that typically involve a complex business question or decision. Their goal is to effectively resolve and address these cases to the satisfaction of an esteemed panel of judges and, in some instances, to win prize money. To do so, according to the Case Center, an international clearinghouse for case competition information, students must apply business and management theory and effectively use skills including negotiation, analysis, teamwork, decision-making, and defending and challenging viewpoints.

“Participating in a case competition is the best way for students to learn how to crack a real-world business case,” says Cyndi Huang, another student in McCombs School of Business. “[Students] conduct industry research, apply analytical and critical-thinking skills, and work efficiently with a team. All of this happens in a very compressed timeline, and the final product is pressure-tested in front of
a panel of judges. In many ways, case competitions allow undergraduate students to get a glimpse of the real business world and pick up skills they would not have acquired otherwise.”

Alqaisi endorses that view. “The intensity of the pressure [for teams] to problem solve is significant,” she says. “For a lot of students, a case competition is their first application of concepts they are learning in the classroom.”

Case competition judging panels are often composed of accomplished business executives and professionals who engage the teams in high-pressure Q-and-A sessions to test their resolve and their proposed solutions.

“A [significant] part of case competitions is the delivery of a team’s solution,” explains Alqaisi. “A good delivery requires confidence, quick thinking — especially during the Q-and-A — and charisma. These characteristics are essential to success in the real world and are given [room] to grow in case competitions.”

A conventional case competition is designed to help students develop business skills involving sales, marketing, finance, and related strategies. For example, students might be asked to devise an approach to help a company dealing with steep declines in product sales to avoid bankruptcy.

Success for companies and organizations in the U.S. and global business workforces is becoming tied to diversity and inclusion more and more. According to a Forbes study, organizations are increasingly finding “having a diverse and inclusive workforce as critical to driving the creation and execution of new products, services, and business processes.”

With that and similar principles in mind, some business schools are sponsoring case competitions that focus on diversity- and inclusion-related scenarios. For instance, such a competition may have students devise a diversity and inclusion program for a Fortune 500 company. Or they may be asked to address a scenario involving reported discrimination or bias in the workplace from a management consulting perspective. The goal is to help students cultivate contemporary leadership and critical thinking skills that can help them effectively navigate diverse business environments.

In April 2017, Drexel University’s LeBow College of Business hosted its inaugural Diversity and Inclusion Case Competition, sponsored by TD Bank.

“Our case competition … was not about the company’s product … but about the culture within the company and how employees could feel comfortable self-identifying,” explains Porsche Johnson, assistant director for undergraduate programs at LeBow. “[The case] allowed students to tackle issues in the workplace related to diversity and inclusion. This is important for students as they prepare to enter the workforce … where there are many companies — large and small — that have committed to developing a culture of inclusion.”

Also focusing on inclusion and diversity, in terms of team composition, is McCombs School of Business’ National Women’s Case Competition, which the school has hosted twice in the last two years. Title-sponsored by Ernst and Young, the 2017 competition welcomed 12 all-female teams from undergraduate business schools across the U.S. The event had sponsors and judges from high-profile corporations including Phillips 66, Accenture, Wal-Mart, AT&T, Toyota, and Shell. The top award for first place was $3,000, and second and third place teams received $2,000 and $1,000, respectively, for their approaches to a
conventional business case scenario.

Stephanie Hinojosa-Galvan, MEd, director of Texas BBA (Bachelor of Business Administration) Student Life at McCombs, was instrumental in creating the Women’s Case Competition.

“At McCombs, we have great gender diversity in our student body, which is rare for business schools,” Hinojosa-Galvan explains. “That is why I was concerned that more women were not participating in case competitions. It gave me pause that something had to change.”

“Often, women do not want to complain about subtle things they are experiencing that affect what opportunities they take and the challenges they face,” explains Hinojosa-Galvan. “Many of our minority business students reported experiencing less-than-positive group dynamics stemming from gender, race, and stereotype bias that sometimes were not previously considered or recognized.”

Hinojosa-Galvan credits McCombs’ dean, Jay Hartzell, for embracing diversity awareness and encouraging other schools to replicate what McCombs is doing. “Good [university] leadership and awareness is huge,” she says.

Johnson also acknowledges the importance of awareness of issues of diversity and inclusion in business and business education. “Amid growing discussions and experiences throughout the nation and world, a focus on these issues in case competitions is important,” she says. “Since many social movements are being spearheaded by … college-aged students, it is vital to provide a platform for [them] to discuss the issues at hand and to offer opportunities for learning.”

Huang, who is a rising senior double majoring in business and management information systems, describes participating in case competitions as the best decision she has ever made. “After having zero idea as to the type of career I wanted to pursue — [despite] taking an entry-level course in almost every business major — participating in business case competitions led me to my post-graduation dream job at a leading business consulting firm,” Huang says. “Every case competition was completely different. Much like in the management consulting industry, the learning curve never ends.”

The Women’s Case Competition started as a local event in 2015 and has continued with largely positive results. “We have found that women participants are [filling] some of the roles on case competition teams that they were never assigned or never took naturally when the teams were coed,” says Hinojosa-Galvan. “Performing all the roles on a team has strengthened their skills and, in some cases, boosted participants’ confidence to return to coed competition groups.”

She says that the National Women’s Case Competition has spurred important conversations with university advisers, as well as raised essential consciousness among business school and university leadership regarding realities and best practices surrounding inclusion and diversity.

Alqaisi, who is currently the Women’s Case Competition chair of UT-Austin’s Undergraduate Business Council, also believes that her case competition experience has positively affected her everyday life.

“Every case I attempted to solve came with obstacles — from not having the right experience because it’s tech-heavy or not having access to … useful data because information is private,” Alqaisi explains. “However, the teams that succeeded used what they had instead of dwelling on what they did not. Learning this life lesson [has impacted] how I address any school- or life-related issue I face.”

Kelley R. Taylor is a contributing writer for INSIGHT Into Diversity.
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BTHO Harvey and other campus organizations also raised more than $30,000 by selling BTHO Harvey T-shirts to support American Red Cross hurricane relief efforts. Von Miller, a former Texas A&M football player and current Denver Broncos linebacker, donated $100,000 to the campaign. In addition, the university created the Texas A&M Student and Employee Disaster Relief Fund to provide clothes, textbooks, and other essential items to members of the campus community directly affected by Hurricane Harvey.
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