

## **Diversity Planning Committee Meeting Summary**

### **April 16, 2009**

The following members were in attendance: Mike Cairns, Matt Chaney, Jim Cook, Deb Cox, Shohred Ferdowsi, , Scott Herron, Warren Hills, Thuy Karafa, Amanda Karel, Janel Lockwood, Pam Meadows, Jessica Mills, Mary Murnik, Lisa Ortiz, David Pilgrim, Fran Rosen, Gretchen Spedowske, Todd Stanislav, Susan Starkey, Kent Sun, Luzia Tartari , Patty Terryn, Robbie Teahen, and Leroy Wright. The following guests were also present: Shelly Cripps, Bryan Lochan and Katherine Harris

Absent: Yolonda Barnes, Marty Bledsoe, Mike Berghoef, Travis Cervandes, Susan Fogarty, Don Green, Sharon Hopper, Russell Leonard, Eunice Merwin-Beck, Lyle Mourer, Paul Sullivan, Troy Tissue, and Hurdylyn Woods,.

**If you cannot attend a meeting please send a representative.**

The meeting summary from March 19, 2009 was approved. Please feel free to send corrections or additions at any time.

#### **The Alliance of Ferris Employees –**

Katherine Harris introduced the DPC to information about The Alliance of Ferris Employees, a newly-created professional organization that acts as a resource for LGBTQA staff and faculty and serves as an advocacy group for LGBTQA issues. They are united in common cause with organizations at Michigan's other colleges and universities to advance the tolerance and acceptance of gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and queer people. This group is bolstered by allies who care about the social issues LGBTQ people face—and, in some cases, have families and friends who are LGBTQ-identified. The Alliance will seek to help build a University that is inclusive and respectful of all regardless of an individual's sexual orientation or gender identity/expression. Katherine explained that Ferris State University is one of two public universities in Michigan that does not offer an expanded benefits plan to cover the family members of LGBTQ people. Katherine showed the DPC the new website ([www.ferris.edu/afe](http://www.ferris.edu/afe)) which will be kicked off next week with a university-wide notice. The AFE will be conducting a membership drive Fall 2009. Katherine and Karen Strasser, Department Head in Biology, will be guests on the *Expect Diversity* television show next week.

#### **The Wall Project –**

Bryan Lochan reported to the DPC on the process of the “Wall Project” which is slated for Fall 2009. Bryan will be working with the Construction Management Department and their student RSO to help build the “Wall”. The “Wall Project” will take place mid October 2009. Bryan asked for DPC members who would like to assist with the planning the event, those volunteers were: Lisa Ortiz, Kent Sun, Todd Stanislav, Fran Rosen, Matt Chaney and Jessica Mills. A meeting will be planned soon with Physical Plant to discuss placement of the “Wall” and logistics. The members of the DPC supported the project but stressed that it should be well-thought out, properly implemented, and inclusive of many components of the University.

#### **Diversity Events –**

Todd Stanislav reported that Ferris had very good representation (at least twenty) at the Equity in the Classroom Conference. The 2010 Equity Conference will be held at Central Michigan University, the following year it will be held at Michigan Tech.

Matt Chaney reported that the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Reunion of the Kappa Alpha Psi and Delta Sigma Theta held on April 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> was very well attended. The Diversity and Inclusion Office helped sponsor that event. Also, the 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Talent Showcase Auditions will be held April 23<sup>rd</sup>, the Talent Showcase is May 1<sup>st</sup>.

Jessica Mills attended the WILL Conference and had very good feedback from students who attended.

Luzia Tartari and Janel Lockwood reminded everyone that the International Festival of Cultures is this Sunday, April 19<sup>th</sup>, 1-5pm in the Dome Room. Also, Ten Thousand Villages will be there selling items.

Other events that were mentioned: Speaker Jean Kilbourne will be on campus April 23<sup>rd</sup> to share her lecture, "The Naked Truth: Advertising's Image of Women," with the Ferris and Big Rapids communities. Day of Silence is being held today; DSAGA is organizing activities for the event.

### **Proposed Diversity Office Name Change**

David Pilgrim asked the DPC their thoughts on changing the name of the Diversity Office to "The Diversity and Inclusion Office". He asked the group what would be the pros/cons of adding the word "inclusion." Most members did not object to the name change but one person wondered if it would make it easier for departments or offices to be added to the Diversity Office.

### **Update of Recommendations to the Board**

David reported that the University is making progress on the five recommendations that he presented to the Board of Trustees in February. David will update the Board in July. Every year the DPC will give recommendations for David to take to the Board.

### **Diversity at Ferris**

Please send information to the Diversity Office for Fall 2009 events.

### **Emerging Issues –**

Lisa Ortiz reported that the Diversity Action Team had received an Incident Report concerning an "April Fools" joke that went too far. The employee victimized did not want to file a formal complaint. The DAT is still working on the case.

Fran Rosen reported that the Faculty/Staff Mini Grant Committee has approved two more grants. The Committee will meet one more time this semester (May 5<sup>th</sup>). A University-wide will be sent announcing the approved grants. The Diversity will post the results on its website.

Please send agenda items to Patty Terryn.