

Diversity Planning Committee Meeting Summary September 18, 2008

The following members were in attendance: Mike Berghoef, Mike Cairns, Jim Cook, Matthew Eickhoff, Scott Herron, Thuy Karafa, Amanda Karel, Janel Lockwood, Pam Meadows, Mary Murnik, David Pilgrim, Fran Rosen, Todd Stanislav, Susan Starkey, Paul Sullivan, Kent Sun, Luzia Tartari, Robbie Teahen, Patty Terryn, Troy Tissue, Hurdylyn Woods and Leroy Wright.

Absent: Yolonda Barnes, Marty Bledsoe, Matt Chaney, Susan Fogarty, Don Green, Warren Hills, Sharon Hopper, Russell Leonard, Eunice Merwin-Beck, Jessica Mills, Gretchen Spedowske.

The meeting summary from August 19, 2008 was approved.

Diversity Events -

Hurdylyn Woods reported that Christy Brewer's staff and students have decided to cancel the "Wall" event. Physical Plant personnel raised issues/concerns about the use of cinder blocks, arguing that there were significant liability issues. The DPC suggested that the students re-conceptualize the activity and collaborate with Physical Plant, faculty, and students to revisit the project, possibly during MLK week. DPC volunteered to help.

Janel Lockwood reported that FSU is hosting a Ramadan Dinner, September 18 at 8:30 p.m. in FLITE 404. After dinner an exploration of the cultures and practices of Ramadan will be discussed.

Matt Eickhoff reported that "Standup for Diversity" will be hosting three comedians. There was significant concern from the DPC regarding the show's possible offensive content. After some discussion, it was decided to have small group discussions after the event for people. The DPC recommends that small group discussions sessions should be available after all University-wide speakers, especially when the speakers broach controversial topics. The following DPC members agree to assist with the discussions that follow the comedy shows: Paul Sullivan and Hurdylyn Woods.

Leroy Wright reminded the group about Hispanic Heritage Month; tomorrow night the group Africaribe will be performing in the Dome Room at 7pm.

Mike Berghoef reminded the group that Sister Helen Prejean will be at Williams Auditorium, September 25th at 6pm.

Scott Herron reported that the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians will be doing a sturgeon release on the Manistee River on September 20th. Also, Scott has coordinated a group of Baldwin high school students to visit campus on September 30, 2008.

Emerging Issues –

David Pilgrim reported that on September 15 and 16, Soul Winners Ministry International, had several preachers on the Big Rapids campus. They had a two day permit, with the times 11:30 am to 4:30 pm. Their presentations and the accompanying responses from Ferris students raised a number of questions: At what point does free speech become hate speech? How do we educate the University community about free speech and hate speech? As we move toward a University that embraces its core values, how do we make sure that visitors understand those values? How do we become a community where divergent views are heard without the hearers mocking the speakers? Matt Eickhoff explained how a group is given permission to use the FSU grounds, and Matt distributed the form used by visitors. Matt explained that an addition will be added to the form stating that the groups will have to follow University policy.

David reported that he is heading a committee charged with making a recommendation regarding the relocation of OMSS. The committee has been established. The first official meeting was September 12th. It's the Committee's charge to make a recommendation by the end of October. The OMSS Relocation Committee is committed to having a transparent and inclusive process. The Committee is looking at possible

locations in the center of campus: the Rankin Center, FLITE, CSS and IRC buildings are among the possibilities. The Committee will be holding several more committee meetings and also two open forums. The Committee will present a recommendation to the VPAA for his approval. The President would like OMSS in their new home by spring semester. Anyone with an opinion on this topic is encouraged to attend the open sessions, meet with the Committee, or send emails to members of the Committee. The OMSS Relocation Committee wants the University members to be aware of its progress and to have opportunities for input.

Core Values Promotion -

David thanked UA&M for their work on this project. The banners on State Street, posters, table tents, bookmarks and brochures all look great.

Faculty/Staff Diversity Grant -

The Diversity Mini-Grant link is posted on the Diversity Office webpage.

Please send agenda items to Patty Terryn.