

Office of Housing & Residence Life Diversity Report 2011

The Office of Housing and Residence Life at Ferris State University consistently celebrates and promotes education, understanding and inclusion for all students. Our intention is to build a safe community inclusive of all on campus students. Our office promotes an inclusive community through programming initiatives, recruitment and employee training, and committee initiatives such as the Harmony Project.

Success in the Office of Housing and Residence Life

Our office has been intentional in recruiting and maintaining a diverse staff.

Staff Demographics:

- 1 out of 11 Professional Staff identify Hispanic/Latina (8.33%)
- 1 out of 11 Professional Staff identify as African American (8.33%)
- 5 out of 11 Professional Staff identify as women (45.45%)
- 1 out of 11 Professional Staff identify GLBT (9.09%)
- 1 out of 11 Professional Staff identify as International (9.09%)
- 13 out of 124 student staff members identify as African American (10.49%)
- 4 out of 124 student staff members identify as Latino/Hispanic (3.23%)
- 58 out of 124 student staff members identify as a Woman (46.77%)
- 3 out of 124 student staff members identify as Native American (2.42%)
- 6 out of 124 student staff members identify as GLBT (4.84%)
- 1 out of 124 student staff members identify as Veterans (.81%)
- 5 out of 124 student staff members identify as Bi-Racial (4.03%)

We have been successful in promoting diversity in training initiatives for staff. Examples of these initiatives are identified below:

- True Colors
- Dr. Pilgrim: Presentation to HD and student staff
- Honest Dialogue Training
- Identity and Diversity of Our Staff & Our Residents
- Counseling Center: Mental Health Issues and Our Students
- Authenticity & Owning Up
- Openness and Not Changing Your Personal Values
- Personal Biases & Working Past Them
- Social Justice
- Safe Place Training
- Authenticity in a Residence Life Position
- Personality Tests and how that impacts the work that we do

The Office of Housing and Residence Life has been successful in implementing the Harmony Project as a major committee of student and professional staff collaborating in the Office of Housing and Residence Life. The Harmony Project is responsible for campus wide programming. Members of the Harmony Project present ongoing training opportunities through staff in-services with topics such as Crossing the Line, Honest and Courageous Dialogue, and other relevant diversity issues.

Our office has been successful in encouraging and expecting both passive (bulletin boards, poster campaigns) and active diversity programs on campus. This is done by including diversity programming in our expectations of student staff. Also, all staff expectations include utilizing inclusive language at all times.

Highlights of the direct and indirect diversity programming that occurred in the Residence Hall in 2010-2011:

- Dream Catchers
- Background Check
- Archie Bunker's Neighborhood
- Hunt for Color
- Lunar New Year
- Immerse in a Different Culture
- Bulletin Boards
- Diversity Chat
- Snacks and Stereotypes
- Extra Baggage
- I Am Thankful For
- How Good is your Gaydar?
- Pie your RA fundraiser for Jim crow Museum
- Jane Elliott Experiment
- Cross the Line
- Pride Panel
- Why Can't We Be Friends?

The Office of Housing and Residence Life has been successful in encouraging professional development for our professional staff as expressed through various presentations and involvement.

Off Campus Professional Diversity Committees

- Members of the Great Lakes Association of College and University Housing Officers (GLACUHO) Inclusion and Equity Committee
- Minority Mentor through GLACUHO (Lisa Ortiz)
- Oshkosh Placement Exchange Minority and Friends Network long standing sponsor (Ferris State) and mentors (Jon Shaffer, Lisa Ortiz)
- Winner of the 2011 Minority and Friends Commitment to Diversity Award.

On Campus Diversity Committees

- Diversity Action Team (DAT) Chair
- Advisor to Diverse Sexuality and Gender Alliance (D-SAGA)
 - Office for D-SAGA is hosted within the Housing Office
 - National Coming out Day
 - Day of Silence/Night of Noise
 - Pride Panels as classroom and residence hall programs/presentations
- Advisor to Mujeres Truinfando
- Members of the Diversity and Inclusion Council (and Lisa Ortiz)
- Dr. MLK, Jr. week Planning Committee (Khayree Williams)
- International Students Committee
- Administration and Finance Diversity Committee

- Student Affairs Diversity Committee
- Sustained Dialogue Initiative collaboration with OMSS

Areas of Challenge for Office of Housing and Residence Life

Our office will continue to be challenged by the student misperception that decisions are made and/or actions are taken differently between students based on race, sexual identity, or other diversity factors. The department strives to and will continue to educate the community to assert that all students are treated equally in the conduct process, the employee process, and in the conflict resolution process. Any suggestions to the contrary are followed up on immediately. In addition, all of our processes have methods for students to appeal that are transparent and part of our expectations.

Our office has been challenged with hiring professional staff of color. We are able to recruit a viable diverse pool, but often lose our candidates to more urban campus environments. Active efforts are made to recruit professionals of color, but struggle with convincing candidates that Big Rapids, Michigan is an inclusive community and a welcoming place to live. Despite this, we have a diverse staff that is fairly representative of the demographics of the student body. We are active in the Minority Friends Network at the annual Housing and Residence Life job fair at the Oshkosh Placement Exchange as a long time sponsor and in providing mentors (Jon Shaffer and Lisa Ortiz), which helps candidates recognize Ferris as a welcoming campus. Members of our department are also committed to mentoring entry level professionals in our field which reflects the department's commitment to diversity. We will continue to intentionally recruit professionals of color and will continue to create a program that is enticing and enriching for all candidates. This program will be created by intentional professional development opportunities and responding to the needs of our staff

The Office of Housing and Residence Life has been challenged in recruiting students of color to student staff positions (RA, CA, DSM). The department's committee for student staff recruitment and selection has developed a plan to actively recruit student staff members that are from traditionally underrepresented groups. This recruitment plan includes intentional points of contact with students from diverse populations to increase the diversity in our hiring pool.

Continued Commitment to Diversity

The Office of Housing and Residence Life will continue a strong and sustained commitment to diversity through professional and student staff training, the Harmony Project, recruitment of diverse professional and student staff, professional and student staff professional development, and diversity initiative programming expectations. Each of these commitments is evident in our community development model, expectations of our staff, recruiting efforts of outreach to diverse populations, and the individual work of many of our professional staff. We will continue to celebrate and promote education, understanding and inclusion for all students.