

# Diversity Committee

## Annual Report

July 9<sup>th</sup>, 2015

### I. Diversity Committee Formation

The Diversity Committee of the University of Southern Indiana was created in response to House Enrolled Act 1256, authorized by the 2007 Indiana General Assembly (IC-21-27-8-7) which requires that each public institution of higher education create a diversity committee to meet this legislative mandate. One of its requirements is an annual report to the Board of Trustees.

The University's existing Affirmative Action Committee was adapted to meet the requirements of IC 21-27-8-7. The Diversity Committee currently consists of the following members:

*Kirat Baath-Contract Assistant Professor of Biology, Pott College of Science, Engineering and Education*

*Cynthia Brinker-Vice President for Government and University Relations*

*Melissa Chavez-Student, Student Government Association Representative*

*Katherine Draughon-Executive Director, Office of Planning, Research, and Assessment*

*Donna Evinger-Director, Human Resources, and Committee Chair*

*Douglas Goepfner-ADA Coordinator, Human Resources*

*Pamela Hopson-Director, Multicultural Center*

*Ronald Rochon-Provost*

*Marcia Kiessling-Associate Provost for Student Affairs*

*Rose Scruggs-Electronic Services Coordinator, Library Services*

*Joseph Uduehi-Associate Professor of Art Education, College of Liberal Arts*

## II. Diversity Committee Objectives

As previously reported to the Board of Trustees, the Diversity Committee incorporated and expanded upon the legislative mandate by establishing the following objectives:

1. Define the University's vision of diversity and recommend methods to integrate that vision with existing University policies and procedures;
2. Collect information on University programs and initiatives and community resources;
3. Review University employment policies and processes and recommend improvements intended to increase hiring of diverse candidates;
4. Review University complaint policies and processes concerning diversity issues and recommend improvements;
5. Review University programs and processes, developing recommendations as appropriate for improvements to existing programs and processes and for new programs and initiatives that promote recruitment and retention of diverse students, faculty, and staff;
6. Recommend methods that increase awareness of the University's commitment to diversity;
7. Assess University diversity training and communications needs and make recommendations;
8. Develop methods to assess the University's diversity efforts; and
9. Provide Annual Reports to the University's Board of Trustees.

## III. Update on Affirmative Action Progress

In calendar year 2014 and fiscal year 2015, the Diversity Committee found improved levels of diversity in both student body and in faculty and staff including:

- The percentage of female students is currently 62%. This is not a significant increase, as over the past 10 years, the percentage of female students has remained consistently between 60 percent and 62 percent each year since 2003.
- Diversity of among students is also at an all-time high as 12.4 percent of student come from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds, up from 8.2 percent in 2003. Interpretation of this increase can be challenging because of the "multiple race" category (required of all educational institutions) USI now offers to incoming students as a possible response when self-identifying race/ethnicity. Also, international students are now asked to self-identify a race/ethnicity; however, they are reported as an "international" category.
- The percentage of female employees (faculty and staff) increased to a record high of 63.2 percent as of December 31, 2014, up from 58.9 percent on the same date in 2009. (*Source: HR Affirmative Action Plan Workforce Analysis Summary*).
- The percentage of minority faculty and staff increased from 7.0 percent (87 individuals) to 9.6 percent between 2009 and 2014 (122 individuals). The increase is not uniform across campus, and

the University continues to focus on significant opportunities for improvement in the hiring of women and minorities in specific job types and in some departments or colleges. (*Source: HR Affirmative Action Plan Workforce Analysis Summary*).

#### **IV. Review of University Diversity Initiatives and Programs**

In 2014-2015, many departments, colleges, faculty and staff members participated in a wide range of initiatives, programs, and events to promote diversity.

##### Pott College of Science, Engineering and Education

- The *Girls Only (GO) STEM! (residential) Camp* focuses on helping high school girls overcome barriers and stereotypes faced while preparing for and pursuing STEM-related careers through a five-day summer camp experience.
- Engineering faculty have made multiple recruitment trips to the Indianapolis area and have targeted college fairs and schools with high minority populations.
- The Annual Girl Scouts Chemistry Connection introduces scouts at grades 3-6 to science with hands-on activities. The 2015 event was held on April 18 and included faculty lead activities in Biology, Kinesiology, and Chemistry.
- A “Women in Chemistry” panel discussion was held on March 31, 2015 and included professional women from industry and academics to provide employment perspectives for undergraduate students at USI.

##### College of Nursing and Health Professions

- The three USI Community Health Centers provide providing nurse managed care to underserved populations. Currently approximately 48% of the 2,000 patients seen each year are from diverse populations.
- As part of the national Million Hearts Initiative to prevent heart attacks and strokes, nursing students are providing cholesterol and blood pressure screenings and education for underserved populations at Hope Hall, the Potter’s Wheel and the USI Glenwood Community Health Center.
- Nursing students provide health screenings at Potter’s Wheel and local correctional facilities.
- Dental Hygiene students conducted oral cancer screening with women with addiction housed in the Women’s Addiction Recovery Manor.
- Nursing and Health Professions students are involved in providing health screening and education to improve the health of the African American community through the Black Barbershop Health Outreach Program.
- Dental Hygiene students provided free dental cleaning, fluoride and X-rays for military veterans.
- Occupational Therapy graduate students developed accessibility solutions for the Evansville Parks Department.
- The Southwest Indiana-Area Health Education Center (SWI-AHEC) sponsors a summer camp promoting careers in health professions, with a target audience of middle school age kids from diverse backgrounds.

### College of Liberal Arts

- USI's World Languages and Cultures academic department sponsored a variety of diversity related programs including:
  - Annual Multilingual Poetry Reading
  - Annual International Holiday Sing-Along
  - After-School Language Programs in Evansville Middle Schools
  - Outreach English Instruction at Methodist Temple for Non-English Speakers
  - Evansville Remembers Lecture
  - Annual Columbus Day Concert
  - Academic High School Foreign Language Bowl
  
- Despite a relatively small percentage of students who represent diversity in the Theater Program, the program engages strongly in ensuring cultural diversity in its educational experience. Examples include:
  - The program practices color-blind casting unless a racial and ethnic theme determines casting.
  - Programming choices (play selections) are made to ensure cultural diversity
  - New Harmony Theatre has introduced more diversity in its casting and in its play selection.

### Center for International Programs

- Over the past five years, an average of 140 USI students annually have participated in some type of study abroad program. The variety of destinations has expanded over the past few years to 22 in 2014 from just 16 in 2009.
  
- Much effort has been put into recruitment of international students as well, and as a result the diversity among international students has increased significantly. For example, in 2009 only 8% of USI's international student population came from Central and South America compared to 17% in fall 2014. Students from the Middle East continued to make up close to half of the international student population at USI, and the number of students from Africa, North American and the Caribbean has risen since 2009.
  
- *"Think Globally, Act Locally"* is USI's global engagement initiative for USI international students, designed to enhance the international student experience at USI. The goal is to foster cultural exchange, awareness and understanding between the students and members of the community. USI partners with numerous community organizations, addressing issues such as children's education, homelessness, children and youth disability, special education, housing and community development. International students learn about possible solutions to community issues with models that can be replicated in their home countries.

## Student Affairs

### *Multicultural Center (MCC)*

- Currently co-sponsoring a series of focus groups with African American students who are currently enrolled and African American students who chose not to return to USI after attending one or more semesters to help identify factors that affect African American student retention.
- The Multicultural Center completed its first Strategic Plan to assist with setting direction and priorities
- Implemented a new mentoring program for men of color “Priority 1” with a focus on creating systems, structures and spaces for success among this population.
- The MCC hosted a special 50th anniversary celebration of its annual Phenomenal Women program. Phenomenal Women of USI and the Community, held during Women's History Month, honored and celebrated women from all walks of life who had made contributions to diversity in the USI and Evansville communities. This year, the University recognized 50 Phenomenal Women who helped to shape our campus and the community.
- The annual Martin Luther King Jr. Day celebration continues to be a sell-out event (392 in attendance). This year’s key note speaker was Dr. James D. Anderson, a nationally recognized premier scholar in U.S education, specifically in the history of African American education in the south, the history of higher education desegregation, public school desegregation, and the history of African American school achievement in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

### *The Diversity Project*

This student organization creates interactive learning experiences that encourage learning about diversity through peer-to-peer interaction. The group meets regularly to discuss “hot topics” in the news, on social media, and around campus. In addition, the group sponsored various events including:

- Tie Dye (in conjunction with the Student Housing Association (SHA) – Student tie dyed t-shirts and learned about Diversity Project events and outreach
- Real Life Monopoly - This focused around socio-economic status and privileges/advantages that come with the higher levels and the disadvantages that are placed on lower ones.
- Empathy Dinner (in conjunction with Disability Awareness Week) - Students were randomly assigned a simulated disability. For the duration of the dinner, the guests were asked to interact with each other and also attempt to eat a meal, while portraying their disability.
- “Die In” - An awareness event around the black lives matter and violence against minorities’ movements.
- Stand Against Racism Rally - This event was a collaboration between the diversity project, MCC, the Center for Social Justice Education, and the YWCA that was intended to raise awareness about issues related to racism in our community.

### *Student Development Programs*

- Activities Programming Board (APB) sponsored programs:
  - Spoken Word Poet: Ebony Stewart (She speaks on healthy relationships, sexual education, ethnic diversity, women’s rights)
  - Speaker: Ash Beckham (She speaks on LGBTQ issues, being an advocate, and self-image.)
- Training for students:
  - Emerging Leaders Program had a Diversity and Inclusion session by Dr. Sarah Stevens, CNHP Advising Center Director.
  - Student Leader Retreat included an “Inclusivity” training component.
  - Camp Eagle for new freshmen includes an activity on diversity awareness.
- Eagle Experience: UNIV 101 (required of all entering freshmen) included a presentation on Diversity and Inclusion by T. Leon Williams. This event had over 1,400 students in attendance.

### Human Resources

The USI ADA (American’s with Disabilities Act) coordinator continues to provide presentations to USI students preparing for health professions, education, and social work fields, as well as to general audiences in external and internal events, on topics that include:

- A Photographic Journey through an Inaccessible World! – Presentation during “Disability Awareness Week at USI.
- “You Can Ask Your BFF Anything; but Not during a Job Interview” - Presented to multiple classes at USI.
- “A Vampire, a Werewolf, and a Zombie Walk Into an HR Office . . . Presented at the “2014 Open Your Eyes: Employing Individuals with Disabilities” conference and job fair held at the Southern Indiana Career and Technical Center in Evansville, Indiana.

### The University Counseling Center

This center sponsored or co-sponsored 26 campus events and activities (Fall 2014 & Spring 2015) to promote diversity, from film screenings to discussions and larger events. Topics ranged from general diversity and inclusion, to themes specific to women, African Americans, the LBGT community, and people with disabilities. Events of note include:

- Disability Awareness Week – an annual week-long series of events that began in 2012
- Sexual Assault Prevention
- How to Talk about Diversity
- National Coming Out Day Celebration
- Mental Health Screenings
- Developing a Healthy Body-image
- Creating and Nourishing Intercultural Friendships

## University Division

*Student Support Services*, a unit in University Division, provides comprehensive support services for 140 students who qualify as first generation, low income, or persons with disabilities. Activities and services include: promotion of cultural events, support networks, and international programming.

- 83% of SSS students are first generation students
- 70% of SSS students are low income
- 11% of SSS students have a documented disability
- 33% of SSS students are from a minority population (African American, Black, Hispanic, Asian, and/or American Indian)

SSS Diversity programming activities/promotions 2014-2015 included:

- Ted Talk Workshops hosted in Spring 2015, discussing topics of adversity and diversity (ex. Making Hard Choices by Ruth Cheng)
- Cultural visit to the Indianapolis Children's museum while visiting graduate school programs in Indianapolis, Spring Break 2015, Exhibits included (but not limited to): *Take Me There: China, Treasures of the Earth* (exhibit regarding Egyptian culture), *All Aboard!* (exhibit regarding 1890's Madison, Indiana), and *Stories from Our Community*
- Cultural trip to the Evansville Regional Airport for those students who are interested in studying abroad and have never flown or been to an airport before, Spring 2015
- Hosted a weekly Book Club, where students and staff read the *Glass Castle* by Jeannette Walls, which discusses poverty and diversity issues regarding race and class
- Staff presented at the Student Success Week workshop on Grit, perseverance, and resiliency
- Promoted and financially supported student's attendance at all USI theater plays and events (i.e. Picnic, Spring Awakening)
- Promoted and financially supported students attendance to the annual MLK Luncheon and the International Food Expo, Spring 2015

*The Indiana Commission for Higher Education's Scholar Corps AmeriCorps program* aims to increase 21st Century Scholar retention and success by providing on-campus programming, direct support and connecting students to various on-campus resources, information and services needed to be successful in college. Housed in University Division, the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Scholar Corp Diversity Initiatives for 2014-2015:

- Supported 21st Century Scholars to attend the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Scholars Next steps conference in Indianapolis, IN to help all students prepare for the workplace, covered some diversity topics.
- Volunteering in the community: Supported scholars in attending and visiting residents of Jacob's Village in Evansville, whose focus is serving those with mental and physical disabilities.

*Student Success Week* is sponsored by University Division on an annual basis. In 2015, over 70 workshops were presented over a three day period. Topics included: race relations, spiritual climate on campus, LGBT issues, holistic wellness, and international study with 417 students attending in 2015.

### The Veteran, Military & Family Resource Center

The VMFRC is housed in Outreach and Engagement, serves USI's Veteran and dependent community with services in Education, Job Placement, Behavioral Health, and Community Outreach. Campus services include assistance with the Department of Veteran Affairs education benefits, peer-to-peer counseling; and referrals for counseling with financial, vocational and academic issues.

The newly remodeled Veteran lounge consists of areas of student community engagement, four (4) computer study work stations with Common Access Card (CAC) access, full sized refrigerator, microwave, coffee makers and offers handicapped accessible doors. The lounge also houses the Sergeant Brock Babb American Legion Post 324 and the Student Veterans Association chapter of the Student Veterans of America.

The VMFRC has coordinated many events on the campus and community including, but not limited to:

- Monthly Veteran Dental Program with the USI Dental Clinic
- VA Counselor placement on campus with the USI Counseling Center
- Veterans Day Parade and Campus Ceremony
- Military Appreciation Basketball Game with the USI Athletics Department
- STAR Behavioral Health Seminars (I and II) with USI Counseling Center
- NCAA Division II National Basketball Championship and Veteran Tailgate Party
- Veteran Inter-professional Team Workshop with USI Health Professions Mental Health Summit, Resource Fair and Workshop with USI Health Professions

### Procurement – USI Business Office

In 2013, an event for minority and female-owned businesses co-sponsored by USI with the Mid-States Minority Supplier Development Council. The event featured a luncheon, group meetings with vendors on how to do business with USI as well as opportunities for one-on-one meetings with the participating vendors. A similar event is scheduled for August 11, 2015.

### Disability Awareness Week – Spring 2015 Event Summary

- *Disability Awareness Panel: Uncovering Hidden Differences.* What is it like to experience discrimination for invisible parts of your identity? How is the experience of discrimination unique for people whose differences are not immediately visible to others? This panel discussion event will work to challenge myths about disability and other types of difference and help us to think about what it is like to be an "invisible minority."
- *Getting the Gadget Edge: Using Technology to Stay on Top of Everything Life Throws at a College Student!* Disability Awareness Guest Speaker: Wade Wingler, Director of Assistive Technology for INDATA (Indiana Assistive Technology Act)



- *A Photographic Journey through an Inaccessible World!* An interactive presentation by USI's ADA Coordinator, takes the audience on a return trip through a photographic journey that provides the opportunity to identify common examples of inaccessibility in real-world settings.
- *Empathy Dinner* - March 31<sup>st</sup> 6 pm– Traditions Lounge (Described earlier as part of the Diversity Project)
- *One Step at a Time: A Young Marine's Story of Courage, Hope, and a New Life in the NFL* - Keynote Address by Josh Bleill. This presentation follows Josh's journey from his enlistment to active duty in Fallujah, through two years of rehab, and ultimately to his job as the Community Spokesperson for the Indianapolis Colts.

The Committee looks forward to continuing its liaison efforts with the University diversity initiatives and its work on the Committee's objectives in 2015-2016.