

**Multicultural Affairs & Community Engagement
Report to Board of Trustees
January 2014**

Diversity Data

Nycia Bolds, program coordinator in the Office of Multicultural Affairs & Community Engagement tasked with working to diminish the achievement gap at Wright State University worked with Dr. Jacqueline Bergdahl and her graduate students in ABS 7100 (Research Methods I) during the fall semester 2013 to develop and implement a survey for non-returning students.

A total of 562 African-American students who attended Wright State University during the 2012-2013 academic year and did not return for the Fall 2013 semester were contacted by telephone and asked to complete a 16-question interview. Responses were collected from 57 subjects. The majority of those responding were female (61%). Majors from each college were represented. A slight majority of those completing the survey were freshmen (51%) with almost even distribution of the remaining students in sophomore through graduate student standing. The majority (56.1%) was not currently attending college and 16.0% had, in fact, already returned to Wright State. Most of those currently attending were at community colleges.

Financial issues were the primary reason given for leaving Wright State (43.9%), followed by personal reasons (24.6%). Most found financing their college education problematic (50.9%) and most reported receiving financial aid (89.5%) and reported the financial aid process as easy (56.9%). About half of subjects (52.6%) were employed while attending Wright State, working an average of 28.7 hours per week. Most subjects (65.8%) did not believe their employment affected their academic performance. Subjects' financial situation did not change once they arrived at Wright State for most (77.2%). Of those who reported a personal issue, 29.6% reported a family issue, 22.2% another personal issue, 18.5% a personal health issue, 11.1% financial issues, 11.1% an issue with faculty or staff and 7.4% preferred not to answer.

A little over half of the total respondents (52.6%) reported having no personal issues that affected their school performance. Most subjects reported feeling like they belonged at Wright State, 49 out of 57 subjects, or 85.9%. The majority of non-returning students reported no difficulties with faculty, staff or other students (68.4%). And the majority (71.9%) was in good standing when they left. Asked about career goals, a quarter was still undecided, a quarter hoped to eventually complete a 4-year degree and 35.2% named a specific occupation they hoped to attain. Another 12.9% aspired to graduate education. Asked for advice for future Wright State students, 71.9% offered positive advice and 17.5% mentioned things to avoid. The majority of responses about what had been needed for them to have remained at Wright State were related to financing their educations, although academic and emotional support were also prominent. And financial issues were the major theme when subjects were

asked about what it would take for them to return to Wright State. Overall, these subjects' primary issue for dropping out of Wright State was financial, although academic and emotional support were also at issue.

More detailed results and strategies to address issues raised will be discussed with the Council of Deans Council and President's Cabinet during the annual diversity data report later this semester. Detailed results of the survey are available on the Multicultural Affairs and Community Engagement web page.

Programming and Events

The following are a few examples of the many programs in which staff been engaged since our last report.

The Office of Equity and Inclusion is currently conducting a search for an assistant director for the unit. Staff continues to coordinate search committee training for the campus with more than 460 faculty and staff being trained to date.

The lecture, The Meanings of "Indian Blood": Perspectives on Race and Identity took place November 19, 2013 as part of Native American History Month.

Dr. Eva Garrouette, an enrolled citizen of the Cherokee Nation, Associate Professor of Sociology at Boston College, examined the issue of Indian identity and the many competing definitions of "Indian-ness" that are rooted in law, blood, cultural practice, self-identification, and the positive and negative consequences of each as seen from the various perspectives. A crowd of 110 people (students, faculty, staff and members of the Dayton community, including Guy Jones) attended the lecture. Students from Sociology, History, and Social Work classes were given an article entitled "What if My Grandma Eats Big Mac?" written by Eva Garrouette to read in preparation for the lecture. The AHNA Center also invited faculty in Social Work and History, and staff who are interested in Native American scholarship or to learn more about the Native American culture to have lunch with Dr. Garrouette after her talk.

The Bolinga Fellows Facebook page has become a destination cyber-location for students to have dialogue, express their thoughts and connect with others. We currently have over 200 scholars signed up on the page. We use the page to help communicate with students and community members, advertise our events and take public impromptu polls on issues affecting the community.

In December the Bolinga Center held its annual Kwanzaa and Kente Stole Celebration. Approximately 125 African American students who applied for December graduation and their families were invited to attend. The director of the center reports that the overall fall programming agenda proved to be educational and empowering to students, faculty and staff. Most report that they are either satisfied or very satisfied with the information or services provided. We are in the process of developing an assessment tool that will measure the ability of our educational programs to meet learning goals and create synergy around the curriculum. We strive to make our programs support and compliment the academic mission of the University.

Upward Bound students (high school students in a program funded by the federal government to prepare them for college) participated in a hands-on career workshop on December 3, 2013. The workshop featured a focus on health and wellness by working with campus recreation staff. Participants learned about how healthy eating and exercise play key roles in learning. They were also treated to a cultural event that featured ice skating during the month of December.

Community Engagement Activities

The Multicultural Centers will collaborate with the College of Liberal Arts to conduct the Liberal Arts Pathways to Success program February 17, 2014. Prospective students from local school districts will visit the College of Liberal Arts from 9 a.m. – 12:15 p.m. for a glimpse of college life.

The Director of the Asian/Hispanic/Native American Center served as a translator for the yearly IEP for a family with a young adult daughter with special needs at Wayne High School, Huber Heights, on December 11, 2013.

The Service Knitting Circle hosted by the Women's Center made 46 cold-weather scarves and 22 cold-weather hats, 1 pair of mittens and 15 blankets. All items were donated to Hannah's Treasure Chest.

The Women's Center, along with the Southwest Ohio Consortium for Higher Education (SOCHE), hosted the Dayton area's first live stream TEDWomen event on December 5, 2013. Speakers included swimmer Diana Nyad, poet Sah Kay, speech therapist Rupal Patel, and businesswoman Sheryl Sandberg, among others. Even with the time difference between California where the program originated and Ohio, many people participated in the viewing and discussion.

Bolinga Center staff collaborated with MLK Dayton to organize a community celebration of the legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr. They also conducted programming events on campus that were open to the public including:

- Building the Beloved Community discussion
- The documentary "Letters from the Birmingham Jail"
- An on-campus march and rally

Some of the community engagement/leadership activities in which the Vice President for Multicultural Affairs & Community Engagement has been involved include serving as the Women's Leadership Chair for the Dayton United Way, serving on the Dayton Area Chamber of Commerce's Leadership Council for the Minority Business Partnership program, and representing the University on the City's Welcome Dayton Committee.