

The Division of Multicultural Affairs & Community Engagement
Report to the Wright State University Board of Trustees
January 22, 2016

Diversity Data

A review of November employee census data since 2012 indicates that the University is making progress on its goal of inclusion as it relates to representation of diverse groups in the WSU workforce. There was a 47% and 43% increase in full-time faculty and staff respectively who belong to U.S. racial/ethnic minority groups between 2012 and 2015. These groups include individuals identifying as African-American, Asian-American, American Indian/Alaskan Native, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, Hispanic or two or more races. There were increases for each of these groups. Currently, on our campus the largest faculty minority group is Asian American with 123 full-time as of the 2015 employee census. The ethnic group with the largest increase over the last three years in terms of full-time faculty was individuals identifying as African-American. This group saw an 86% increase from 29 to 54. The largest group of minority staff on campus is African-American with 163 full-time as of the 2015 employee census. However the group with the largest increase was those identifying as Hispanic. This group saw a 71% increase from 7 to 12. Racial/ethnic minority faculty make up 22% of the full-time faculty while racial/ethnic minority staff comprise 18% of the full-time staff. There were slight overall increases in the total number of full time faculty and staff during this period (approximately 10 and 16% respectively).

Diversity and Inclusion Programming

The following are few examples of the many activities and events sponsored by Division offices since the last report.

The Tunnel of Oppression: Nine hundred thirty-two (932) WSU students participated in the Tunnel of Oppression program. The program entails participants visiting a series of 'rooms' depicting various types of discrimination. Pre and post tests were used to determine the impact on participants. Results suggest that attendees gained a greater understanding of the oppression faced by other groups (i.e., people with disabilities, racial minorities, people who are religious, people who are not Christian, people who identify with the LGBTQ community, people with a size greater than average, women, people with mental illness, and people who are poor) as well as groups of which they are a part; increased awareness of having witnessed the oppression of other groups; being more likely to participate in activities aimed at creating positive change for members of oppressed groups; and increased likelihood of talking about discrimination and/or diversity matters with their friends.

Chosen Family Feast: In addition to several Safe Space Ally Development, Spectrum and Our Voice Panel trainings, the office of LGBTQA Affairs held the University's first Chosen Family Feast. It provided an opportunity for queer students to celebrate the season by sharing a meal with allies as they navigate what for many can be a difficult time of year, returning home to families and social networks that might not be supportive of their gender identity, expression or sexual orientation. The event included a brief program in which two new awards were presented recognizing organizations that advocated for the creation of the office as well as policies and practices that promoted equitable treatment of members of this community.

Native American History Month Activities: November is Native American History Month. The Asian and Native American Center presented several programs some of which are described below.

Lecture: What is so wrong about using Native American sports mascots?

Dr. Larry Zimmerman, Professor of Anthropology & Museum Studies at Indiana University—Purdue University, Indianapolis and Public Scholar of Native American Representation at the Eiteljorg Museum of American Indians and Western Art, discussed why Native American mascots have been so persistent, why many Indians don't feel "honored" by such mascots while others do, and how their use damages the self-esteem of many Native people.

Documentary Film: Wounded Knee

The 1973 siege of Wounded Knee lasted for 71 days where Native American activists engaged in a standoff with the U.S. government, bringing the nation's attention to the desperate conditions on Indian reservations. The siege united Native people across tribes, creating a pan-Indian identity and a new path into the future. Wounded Knee, the site of the bloody conflict 125 years ago between the U.S. forces and the Lakota Sioux, the 1973 siege, and where the Pine Ridge reservation is located, remains today as one of the poorest places in America.

Documentary Film: Our Fires Still Burn—The Native American Experience

This compelling one hour documentary invites viewers into the lives of contemporary Native American role models living in the Midwest. It dispels the myth that American Indians have disappeared from the American horizon, and reveals how they continue to persist, heal from the past, confront the challenges of today, keep their culture alive, and make great contributions to society.

Lunch and Learn Series: Should Columbus Day be renamed Indigenous People's Day?

Campaigns are taking place across the U.S. to change the name of Columbus Day to Indigenous People's Day. More historians agree Christopher Columbus didn't actually discover North America in 1492, and more people are coming forward saying it is Native Americans that deserve recognition.

Documentary Film: Black Indian: An American Story

James Earl Jones narrates a stunning and informative documentary "Black Indians: An American Story", which explores issues of racial identity between the mixed-descent peoples of both Native American and African American heritage. James Earl Jones is himself a Black Indian.

Bolinga Brown Bag Speaker Series: This series is a forum to inform, educate and inspire the Wright State community on a variety of topics. This program features African American leaders and scholars in collaboration with the African and African American Studies program, the Greater Dayton community, and the Wright State University community. During November Radwinn Van Wik presented a session on the topic of "Using Poetry and Hip Hop to Tell Stories and Serve Communities" and Dr. Sharon Jones presented on the topic of "Exploring African American Women in the Media".

Community Collaborations

Staff, in collaboration with others in the University community, continue to foster mutually beneficial partnerships that enhance student learning while making Raider Country a better place in which to live. The following are a few noteworthy activities undertaken since the last report.

Property Survey: Students (both undergraduate and graduate) and staff completed a 74,000 parcel property assessment. The project was run over four months and will provide valuable information to assist with the revitalization and rehabilitation of the city of Dayton.

Westwood Community School: Staff, in collaboration with faculty colleagues and academic administrators, continue to expand the partnership begun earlier this fall with Westwood K-8 school and the Westwood neighborhood. We will use funding from the Federal Work Study Program to expand the number of tutors available in the school. The College of Education and Human Services will provide ten pre-service teachers to the school. The college is also working with the principal and colleagues at WSU (including the School of Professional Psychology and The Boonshoft School of Medicine) to plan and provide a “Mental Health First Aid” workshop.

Pre-college Career Development Workshop: The graduate assistant in the Bolinga Center, who is also a doctoral student in the School of Professional Psychology, facilitated a workshop for students in the Upward Bound Program entitled “Greatness is a Choice”. The program included a series of engaging and interactive activities used to motivate students to plan for career success.

Collaboration with the Jewish Federation of Greater Dayton: Wright State University is collaborating with the Jewish Federation to bring the panel exhibit and lecture program, “A Rebellion of Hope” to Dayton in January. The program’s focus is to help promote understanding of the social dynamics that accompany genocide to make this tragedy less likely to occur. It uses examples from the holocaust to explore this topic.

The Vice President for Multicultural Affairs & Community Engagement continues to be involved with many community partners. Some recent community engagement activities undertaken specifically by the VP for MACE include participating in a “Diversity Dinner” hosted by Lt. General Thompson on Wright Patterson Air Force Base, providing a welcome to pre-college age students attending the Modern Language department’s Arabic Immersion Day, serving on the Board of Directors for the United Way of Greater Dayton, representing the University on the Welcome Dayton steering committee, providing diversity training for the Board of Directors for the Dayton YWCA, continuing development of the Women’s Leadership Collaborative of Greater Dayton, and presenting at the National Association of Multicultural Education’s annual conference (just to name of few).

To watch a recording of the Dayton Area Chamber of Commerce’s “Business Connections” segment about Wright State University being awarded the 2015 Dayton Workplace Diversity Award follow this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gBndPOyW0iM> .