First Annual University-wide Diversity Conference: Building a Stronger Community

On April 5, President Joel Seligman, in coordination with the Office for Faculty Development and Diversity, hosted the first annual University-wide Diversity Conference. The purpose of the conference was to build a more diverse and inclusive community through improved communications, sharing of best practices, and encouraging innovations and programs that strengthen diversity and inclusiveness. One hundred sixty leaders from faculty, staff, and student groups came together to weigh in on the initiative’s progress and encourage the creation or modification of programs that serve all of our constituencies.

The conference began with three concurrent morning sessions; there were nine presentations featuring speakers from different areas of the University. After lunch, participants had the opportunity to present their thoughts during a large group conversation moderated by Provost Ralph Kuncl. This session also included comments and feedback from a panel of University of Rochester Board of Trustees members and diversity officers from Rochester companies, including Xerox, Champion Socks, Eagle One (Valvoline), and Totaline (Carrier). Her goals within the Simon Career Management Center are to empower students to develop and manage their careers, strengthen corporate connections to broaden career opportunities, and to make their internal and external customers aware of the high quality of students. Cynthia, an avid Tarheels basketball fan, is married and has 13-year-old twins.

To increase inclusivity, since it is impossible to fit 19,000 people in one room, this was also the first time we have used technology to engage the entire community in a real-time discussion through Twitter, Web streaming, and a postcard campaign.

More information on the conference, including presentations, the video of the panel discussion, President Seligman’s opening and closing remarks, the working lunch notes, the conference evaluation survey, and the Twitter feeds can be found at www.rochester.edu/diversity/annualconference/index.html.

Welcome

Cynthia Saunders-Cheatham
(Simon Graduate School of Business)

Cynthia is the executive director of Corporate Relations and Career Management in the Simon Graduate School of Business. Before coming to Simon, she was the brand advisor at the Johnson School at Cornell University. Before that, she was the Consortium Fellow at the Kenan-Flagler Business School at The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Cynthia has 15 years of corporate marketing experience working on such brands as Hanes Underwear, Champion Socks, Eagle One (Valvoline), and Totaline (Carrier). Her goals within the Simon Career Management Center are to empower students to develop and manage their careers, strengthen corporate connections to broaden career opportunities, and to make their internal and external customers aware of the high quality of students. Cynthia, an avid Tarheels basketball fan, is married and has 13-year-old twins.

Tommye Hinton (Highland Hospital)

Tommye came to Highland Hospital in January as its chief nursing officer (CNO). She set out to discover an organization centered on both transformational leadership and clinical excellence and found Highland. A nurse executive with more than 36 years of experience in urban health care, she has a passion for excellence and a vision to match her passion. One of the things Tommye excels at is inspiring others to peak performance and building a high-performing team. She is committed to nursing excellence, and it shows: from Tuskegee Institute in Alabama, to Wayne State University in Detroit, and now Rochester, Tommye has amassed many leadership, clinical, and academic experiences. She is currently developing professional staff, forging community alliances, and mobilizing Highland to compete for Magnet Designation—the most prestigious and highest nursing honor to be bestowed on hospitals for nursing excellence. Tommye is excited about the many resources available at the University to help her realize this goal. As an avid cook, she enjoyed the culinary experiences the city has to offer. Dancing is her favorite pastime.

If you know new or early-career faculty who should be part of “Faculty Spotlight,” please contact Maggie Cassie (maggie.cassie@rochester.edu).

Diversity Spotlight: Office of Minority Student Affairs

For over 40 years, the Office of Minority Student Affairs has supported students by creating an environment that ensures achievement of their academic, personal, and career goals. Read about the office’s role on this flyer, which can be posted in offices and on bulletin boards. Learn more about diversity at the University in future installments of Diversity Spotlight in @Rochester.

Simon Blog Cited Among Top Blogs for Women

The Women Entrepreneurs Blog @ Simon, featuring tips, resources, and advice for current or aspiring female entrepreneurs from women who have their own successful businesses, has been cited by Accounting Degree.com among the 100 Best Blogs for Women in Business.
Organizational-wide Framework for Diversity and Inclusion at University IT

University Information Technology (UIT) is in its fifth year of an organizational development program that includes a foundation of shared values and a commitment to ongoing professional development. “It all started with discussions I had with our leadership team to recognize that organizational culture is fostered and reinforced by actions from the top. If we don’t model the right behavior, it is a deal breaker for establishing the trust necessary to move forward,” says vice provost and chief information officer David E. Lewis. The details and accomplishments of this initiative are highlighted in an upcoming research bulletin that will be published June 1, 2010, by the EDUCAUSE Center for Applied Research (ECAR), which provides timely research and analysis to help higher education leaders make better decisions about information technology. The bulletin, Attract, Retain, and Engage the Best: Building an Inclusive IT Culture through Professional Development, is coauthored by Samantha Singhal with Julie Buehler and Jeffrey Carpenter.

The professional development program, the authors write, “engages staff across the IT organization in the development and delivery of knowledge sharing and training sessions.” The commitment to ongoing professional development grew out of a partnership between University IT, Human Resources, and the Warner School of Education. The three core goals for this program are to collaborate, educate, and participate.

As UIT strives for increased collaboration within the organization, it has come to further recognize the value of the individual. The program aims to foster an individual’s diverse talents to improve human capital and create transformational collaborations. “Diversity is not just about gender or race. It is about difference—in styles, background, experiences, and ways of working.” University IT has built into the fabric of the organization that every person is valued and that diversity is important.

This program demonstrates that University IT is committed to the ongoing development of its staff. It is this commitment that the organization views as the best way to attract new hires and engage existing staff for a successful and diverse IT organization. As of June 1, 2010, the ECAR research bulletin will be open to all University of Rochester faculty, students, and staff. Go to www.educause.edu/ecar and look for “Research Publications.”

Career Development for Women Faculty in Science and Medicine—Meeting the Challenges

On April 14, the Office of the Associate Dean for Women and Diversity hosted a Career Development workshop for women faculty in science and medicine. The keynote speaker was Stephanie Abbuhl, MD, University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine. This event was planned because national and local data show that women are less likely to advance into leadership roles in academic medical centers. The gaps in organizational practice to be addressed are providing an overview of institutional policies that affect career development (especially for women) and best practices internally and nationally. As well, a recent University-wide study of faculty suggested a need for programs that support faculty development (including mentoring career advancement and leadership programs sponsored by professional societies).

The goals of the conference included discussing the current status of women faculty in academic medicine and challenges to resources for career development within the University of Rochester Medical Center and beyond, and recognizing the impact of family leave policies on women’s faculty careers. Fifty people attended this successful event. For information about future events, please visit www.urmc.rochester.edu/education/faculty-development/women-diversity/.

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Upcoming Events

Asian Pacific American Heritage Month, May 1–31
www.rochester.edu/diversity/eventscalendar/?event&id=398790

Faculty Development Seminar: Using Accomplishments in Teaching to Make the Case for Promotion
Thursday, May 13, 2010, LeChase Assembly Room, Noon–1p.m.

Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Pride Month, June 1–30

Xerox Rochester International Jazz Festival (XRIJF)
June 11–19, 2010, downtown Rochester
The Xerox Rochester International Jazz Festival presented by M&T Bank features more than 1,000 artists performing at 285 concerts, including more than 60 free shows. The festival’s ninth edition takes place in Rochester’s East End Cultural District, with 17 venues and outdoor stages all within walking distance. XRIJF is known for delivering one of the most extensive international lineups of any jazz festival in the United States.
http://rochesterjazz.com/