The mission of the African American Network is to inform, involve, and inspire like-minded individuals who desire to work in an environment that embraces diversity, individuality, and creativity throughout the University of Rochester and its affiliates.

The African American Network (AAN) is a voluntary association of people who share a common interest in embracing diversity, building relationships, strengthening communities, and enhancing the quality of life for ALL at the University of Rochester.

The African American Network is not reserved solely for people of color but is an organization open to all members of the University community. Because the University of Rochester includes people from so many rich and diverse subcultures, fostering and maintaining productive, collaborative relationships is crucial to everyone’s success. We encourage anyone who is interested in creating a work environment where cooperation and communication are encouraged and fostered to join us.

The Network has sponsored an Annual Family Picnic for the past two years. As with all AAN events, the emphasis is on inclusion with members of other University affinity groups as well as Xerox, City of Rochester, Monroe Community College, Action for a Better Community, and Rochester Institute of Technology affinity groups invited to participate. Dave Lewis, vice president of University Information Technology and executive champion for the African American Network, received a plaque at last year’s picnic acknowledging his steadfast leadership and support for the network.

Members of the African American Network have sponsored two annual Back to School Book Bag and Supply Drives and are planning a third for this summer. In August 2011, enough book bags and school supplies were donated by the University community to provide 250 students with supplies and much-needed words of encouragement at the beginning of the school year.

The AAN recently invited Deb Koen, president and CEO of Career Development Services, to provide a seminar, “A New Year: Three Resolutions to Boost Your Career,” for members of the University community. Her presentation was well attended and enjoyed by a diverse group of employees from across the University.

The African American Network at the University of Rochester is dedicated to making a positive impact on individual lives. For more information, go to www.rochester.edu/diversity/affinity/aan/index.html.