

**DIVERSITY COMMITTEE  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT AND STATE AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE**

A meeting of the Diversity Committee of the Board of Trustees of the University of Vermont and State Agricultural College was held on Friday, November 18, 2005 at 9:45 a.m. in Room 427A, Waterman Building.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chair Thomas Little, Vice Chair Ian Boyce, Claire Ayer, Christine Hertz, James Leddy, and Kami Patrizio

**REPRESENTATIVES PRESENT:** Staff Representative Marilyn Eldred and Student Representative Katie Kasarjian

**ABSENT:** Alumni Representative Janet Terp, Faculty Representative Jane Birnn

**PERSONS ALSO PARTICIPATING:** Willi Coleman, Vice Provost for Multicultural Affairs, Kathryn Friedman, Executive Director Diversity and Equity, Annie Stevens, Assistant Vice President for Student and Campus Life

Chair Little called the meeting to order at 9:45 a.m.

**Approval of Minutes**

A motion was made, seconded and voted to approve the minutes of the August 26, 2005 meeting.

**Office of Multicultural Affairs Annual Report**

Vice Provost for Multicultural Affairs, Willi Coleman, delivered a summary of the Office of Multicultural Affairs (OMA) activities, which fall into two categories – those that are generated within the OMA office that then affect campus life and those that request support of the office.

The George Washington Henderson Fellows program sponsors pre-doctoral and post-doctoral scholars who will advance the University's research and teaching needs and assist the university in reaching its diversity goals, especially with respect to the curriculum. Based in OMA, the program is currently soliciting Doctoral Fellows for three departments that will have tenure track positions open in the next one to two years: Economics, Biology, and the College of Education and Social Services.

The Strategic Curriculum and Faculty Diversity Plan provides support for the hiring of new faculty who will diversify a department or its curriculum. These dollars may cover moving and office set-up expenses and provide research funding for the new faculty. Twenty faculty lines in five departments are currently being supported through this fund. Three departments are in the process of making offers to bring faculty utilizing this fund: Economics, English and Political Science.

The Center for Cultural Pluralism (CCP) is the central Programming arm of OMA and promotes cultural pluralism as foundational to academic excellence. Beyond the increase in numbers of faculty, staff and students of color, creating a truly diverse campus requires education of all of its members. CCP serves

this campus with a myriad of programs including: a social justice film series, professional development workshops and lectures as well as providing space for campus groups and organizations to meet and make presentations.

UVM has recently, by invitation, joined the Faculty Resource Network. Based at NYU, this consortium of 50 other schools; half of which are Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Tribal colleges and Hispanic serving institutions. The Network invites faculty to apply to spend a cost-free week attending theme-based seminars at NYU with faculty of other member institutions, providing an educational experience among diverse people, not possible on our own campus. UVM faculty have been accepted and attended each of the last three summers. Additionally, three of our faculty have been accepted to the first Winter Network program to be offered this coming January.

Responding to requests for funding for diversity projects is one way in which OMA supports campus-initiated diversity efforts. An application is required explaining how a project will advance the University's diversity mission.

Extraneous requests are also made to the OMA office – ones that might otherwise fall through the cracks. An example would be a request to help fund a graduate student's travel to present at a diversity conference. OMA has had the flexibility to respond to these requests. The efforts of this office reach across the entire campus and OMA strives to support as many areas and projects as possible with its limited funding resources. Diversity efforts are growing in strength and number and that is both good news and a challenge.

Chair Little asked Vice Provost Coleman to provide a vision statement describing what a successfully diversified campus would look like and what her goals are for the next few years toward that end. Dr. Coleman will respond to this at a future meeting.

A question was raised regarding the status of the six-credit diversity curriculum requirement. The proposal is in the process of being vetted through Faculty Senate hearings, following which the Senate will forward its recommendation to the Provost.

### **Student Presentation**

Melissa Conly, a Vermont native and currently in her third year at the University of Vermont, presented her personal story of discovery, awareness and growth regarding race. Coming from Lyndonville, Melissa had only encountered two people of color in her life before she came to UVM. She presented a timeline and reflections of her experience that have led her to understand her white privilege, and underscored the value that her experience and education have brought to her understanding of the range of diversity issues at UVM and of the broader world. The Committee thanked her and commented on how striking and moving her presentation was.

### **Work Plan Development - Diversity and Anti-racism Trainings**

Executive Director for Diversity and Equity, Kathryn Friedman, provided an overview of the types of trainings that have been offered to various units and departments on campus.

A wide variety of programs including: diversity, race and racism, gender identity and expression, sexual harassment, heterosexism, disabilities, culture, and gender violence have been presented to a large number of groups including student groups and programs, campus and student life staff, police services and academic classes. The vast majority of these have been offered for or required of students. All students have some introductory training as part of their new student orientation program and all Resident Advisors are required to provide a program for their students each semester.

There is no university requirement for faculty and staff and this kind of education is left to the discretion of managers. An opportunity for discussion is available through the format of the annual review, however there is no oversight university wide. Some colleges and schools have diversity committees that concern themselves with this issue. The challenge remains to institutionalize these efforts across campus.

Trustee Leddy asked what amount of University general fund dollars are devoted to diversity efforts. Executive Director Friedman will respond to this inquiry at a future meeting.

Trustee Boyce suggested that the Diversity Committee might like to see an action plan detailing how the diversity agenda will move forward.

Chair Little would like to see some diversity and anti-racism training and education at the Board level, noting that he feels that success in diversifying UVM is dependent on its leadership – including its Board of Trustees - understanding the importance of such training and education.

The work plan for the Committee will need to be developed and the Chair suggested that any one who has ideas for what they would like to see on upcoming agendas should be in touch with him.

### **Other Business**

Willi Coleman distributed a flyer for a special program that will pay tribute to Rosa Parks on December 1<sup>st</sup> from 1 to 3 p.m. in Ira Allen Chapel.

### **Adjournment**

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 11:15 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas Little, Chair