Diversity Council Minutes  
Monday, September 25, 2006


Absent: Kathleen Hall, David Jones, Cornelia Miller, Maurice Moore.

EEO/AA vs. Valuing Diversity

Mrs. Martin provided a short quiz to the group as a means of summarizing the major differences between Equal Opportunity Employment/Affirmative Action and the Valuing Diversity model as found in Chapter 3 of Loden’s book. EEO/AA focuses on changing historic patterns of discrimination by increasing numbers in protected categories on a fixed schedule. The Valuing Diversity model, on the other hand, is a proactive, internally driven process which attempts to bridge the gaps between various diverse groups by raising awareness.

Implementation Principle #2

In order to value diversity, institutions must first assure that they are truly diverse at every level — not just when it comes to the secondary dimensions, but diverse in terms of the primary dimensions of diversity as well.

ACSRMA Diversity Conference

Committee members gave impressions and highlights from their experience at the ACSRMA Diversity Conference.

Several mentioned that they enjoyed the presentation by Mr. Brad McClain, Associate Pastor at Dauphin Way United Methodist Church in Mobile. Mr. McClain spoke about the importance of individual choice in the development of character and as a determining factor in long-term success.

There was some discussion of Dr. James Castleberry’s presentation of the four communication styles as symbolically depicted by four different birds: the dove, the eagle, the owl, and the peacock. This workshop emphasized the importance of tailoring one’s communication to fit the style of the person with whom one is communicating, hence ‘the platinum rule, ‘do unto others as they wish to be done unto.’

Several mentioned having enjoyed Mr. Lester Brown’s moving account of his early life. Mr. Brown’s remarkable turn around began with his learning to read at age 30. He then went on to complete a two-year degree while in prison and later started his own consulting business. Mr. Brown has worked closely with Native-American tribes and has provided extensive training for corporations, state agencies, professional sports teams, etc. His overall message was one of great hope.

Dr. McBride mentioned the overall theme of the conference “Workplace Diversity: Creating a Culture of Character, Caring and Commitment” and noted that as each individual presented and adhered to that theme, a central message seemed to emerge: “diversity starts with you.”
Diversity Statement

The Our Commitment to Diversity statement was revisited in order to review the changes suggested by the College Council. The College Council made the following suggestions: The 4th and 5th statements of the original definition allude to the common goal — that all want and deserve a quality educational experience. The statements should be strengthened (indicating a strong commitment) and moved to the beginning. The statement was further broadened to include a global perspective in our organization. After a brief discussion, the statement was unanimously accepted with the understanding that it will go back to the Council for final approval. (see attached)

Upcoming Diversity Activity

The consensus of the committee was to invite Mr. Brad McClain to come speak to us the morning of our Christmas luncheon. Two possible dates were suggested: either Wed. Dec. 13th or Thu. Dec 14th. If Mr. McClain has conflicts with the December dates, February 19th (Presidents’ Day) was suggested as another possible date for the diversity activity.

Diversity Bingo

Each committee member revealed his/her two statements from the Diversity Bingo card. There was some discussion of the possibility of having a Diversity Potluck with each person bringing a dish related to a culture or ethnicity from his/her own diverse background.

Next Meeting & Reading Assignment

Our next meeting is scheduled for October 23rd at 1:30 in the Library MMRC. The reading assignment for October is Chapter 5, Understanding the Change Process.
Our Commitment to Diversity

Our goal for diversity at JDCC is to provide an inclusive community of mutual trust, acceptance, and respect that reflects the individuals—employees, students, and visitors—who bring varied human characteristics, interests, and points of view. We commit to creating an environment where all people, regardless of differences can achieve their highest potential, whether through a quality educational experience, work experience, or other interaction, thus contributing to the overall success of the College.

We strive to move beyond simple tolerance to embracing and celebrating the rich dimensions of diversity contained within each individual.

We acknowledge that core differences—such as age, body size, color, ethnicity, gender, language, marital status, mental and physical abilities, political views or other ideologies, race, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, socio-economic status—can create hierarchies of privilege which we must avoid.

We recognize that learning is enhanced by interaction with diverse individuals who bring multiple perspectives and a variety of approaches to the learning process.

Developed by Diversity Council, July 24, 2006
Presented to College Council for approval, August 17, 2006
Changes suggested by College Council, September 14, 2006
Modified by Diversity Council, September 25, 2006
[To be presented to College Council for final approval.]