Diversity and Community Engagement

Name of Presenters
Strategic Planning Task Force Open Meeting
July 14, 2011
Major Accomplishments

- Hired Multicultural Librarian for Outreach Services (2006)

- Offered 2-3 workshops and training sessions per year to help employees improve their knowledge and understanding of diversity efforts (2006-)

- Created a Diversity Statement for the Library (2010)

- Library received NEA grant to host Big Read focused on Mexican literature (2010: included extensive outreach and partnerships with campus and community)

- Library’s participation in LAMP, an IMLS funded program to recruit and mentor diverse students to librarianship

- Establishment of numerous campus and community partnerships, e.g. Office of Minority Student Affairs, McNair Program, Summer Research Opportunities Program, International Students and Programs, campus cultural centers, local public libraries, community high schools
Impact

• Public Engagement activities of the Outreach Librarian for Multicultural Services, the Library Diversity Committee and other units have increased awareness of library services and encouraged opportunities for collaboration on campus and in the community

• Training offered by the Diversity Committee has helped improve awareness and knowledge of diversity issues among Library employees

• Supporting LAMP and receiving a LAMA Cultural Diversity Grant lead to the recruitment of more diverse students into LIS

• Collaboration and outreach to various programs serving undergraduates, graduates, and the public supports the retention of a diverse student population
Opportunities

The report “Project 2012- Transforming Illinois: Re-envisioning Diversity and Inclusion” http://www.inclusiveillinois.illinois.edu/reports.html identified four broad thrusts of which the Library can take advantage.

1. Enhance Education and Workplace Environment: The Library must continue to create a welcoming climate for all including addressing issues of civility and cultural competence in the workplace

2. Increase Representation Thrust: The Library must work to recruit and retain a diverse work force especially among the faculty—take advantage of programs on campus, such as TOP, Spectrum and LAMP, on campus. Create a residency and internship program targeted to underrepresented groups.

3. Enhance Scholarship Thrust: The Library must continue to provide funding for collections and services that represent a broad range of viewpoints, voices and varieties of experience

4. Expand Community and Public Engagement: The Library should continue to build partnerships across its own units, across campus, and throughout the community, including seeking out grants and collaborate on programs and public engagement opportunities
Initiatives

• Continue to create a welcoming environment for all members of the community. **Metric**= administer a workplace climate survey to provide baseline of perceptions regarding library climate and commitment to diversity

• Enhance teaching, learning and research by improving access to information resources that serve the needs of a diverse academic community **Metric**= increase collection resources for diversity, international and area studies; increase our online presence and accessibility to be more accommodating to diverse cultures

• Recruit and retain faculty from diverse races, cultures, and ethnicities. **Metric**= Begin administering exit interviews to gain information about the library culture; submit *all* job postings to listservs serving diverse populations; provide search committees with training for interviewing candidates from different cultural backgrounds; educate PRCs in working with diverse faculty
Resources Needed

• Bolder commitment and individual accountability to diversity goals from administration, staff, librarians, and students. Membership of Diversity Committee should be increased.

• Commit to fill the Outreach Librarian for Multicultural Services position.

• Increased collections money to support funds for multicultural/diversity areas.

• Commitment by Administration and Human Resources to actively pursue candidates from unrepresented groups and with diverse perspectives to fill open positions, especially faculty positions.

• Commitment from Administration, HR, SDTC, DC and individuals to mentor newly hired librarians from underrepresented groups.
Impact

• Increased awareness (and opportunities for collaboration) of campus and community issues related to diversity and multiculturalism;

• Collections (and services) to meet the needs of a diverse clientele

• A more diverse faculty and staff to reflect the demographics of the campus and society

• Increased opportunities to provide innovative programs, training, and workshops for the Library thus improving the workplace climate and increasing understanding around diversity
Task Force Questions and Discussion