Message from the Director

Welcome to the inaugural issue of the Office of Diversity and Institutional Equity’s (ODIE) newsletter. ODIE leads the University’s strategic efforts of achieving institutional excellence through diversity and inclusion. The newsletter will serve as a mechanism to communicate ODIE initiatives and to recognize significant campus and community efforts undertaken that align with the department’s mission.

This edition focuses on initiatives by ODIE over the 2013-2014 academic year. You will learn more about the multi-dimensional approach engaged in to assist with the continuous pursuit of creating a climate that is supportive and respectful and that values various perspectives and experiences. Additionally, highlighted in this issue are the efforts of Dr. Tera Kirkman and student Meggin Major to enhance campus diversity as the 2013 Diversity Award recipients.

Thank you for assisting in all initiatives to achieve inclusive excellence.

Roar Lions,

Joan Williams, Director
The UNA Diversity Award is an annual award established in 2011 to recognize significant achievements of faculty, staff, students and academic or administrative units toward developing a more culturally diverse, competent and inclusive university community and is presented annually by the President at the Awards Gala.

The 2013 Faculty Diversity Award Recipient was Dr. Tera Kirkman, Associate Professor of Nursing in the College of Nursing, Traditional BSN program and Project OPEN Director. Dr. Kirkman serves on various department, college, and university committees and has participated in activities that promote a more diverse and inclusive university community. She is a member of the Multicultural Advisory Committee, Presidential Mentors Academy Advisory Committee and advisor to the Student Nurses Association, where she has promoted culturally diverse programming. As director of Project OPEN, she manages a 2.1 million dollar grant to recruit and retain under-represented and disadvantaged students majoring in nursing. Dr. Kirkman is working to embrace inclusiveness by supporting diverse programs, service projects and mentoring in nursing. Dr. Kirkman donated her $500 diversity award back to UNA to support under-represented students.

The 2013 Student Diversity Award recipient was Meggin Major, nursing major. Meggin graduated in May 2013 with a BSN from the Traditional BSN program. She was selected based on her contributions to working with UNA International students. She was involved in international education and outreach as a Navigator in the Office of International Affairs where she assisted in integrating international students with the domestic student culture. Her nominator wrote, “she is unafraid to fight ignorance, but at the same time she has the gentle hand that nurtures students who are adapting to a new culture, a culture that is not always as welcoming as it should be”.

President Cale will present the 2014 awards at the University Annual Awards Gala on April 28, 2014. Twelve nominations were received for the 2014 awards. Stop by the Hall of Fame on the 2nd floor of the GUC to view the plaques with names of past award recipients.
ODIE sponsored a workshop focused on strategies to increase faculty from under-represented populations in September 2013. All department chairs were invited to attend along with faculty, and administrators. Dr. Sonel Shropshire of The Academic Network, a leader in the field of recruitment of diverse faculty, was the workshop presenter. Dr. Shropshire has assisted other institutions in Alabama and across the country. Below are some strategies from his presentation:

- Developing partnerships with institutions graduating diverse doctoral graduates
- Evaluating composition and process of search committees
  - Reviewing the job posting language
  - Developing “grow your own” programs

Generally, UNA currently posts positions in the Minority Applicant Database (MFAD) and in Diverse Issues in Higher Education along with the Chronicle of Higher Education, Inside Higher Ed and Higher Ed Jobs. Departments may request to post job openings in other areas. View the link under Faculty resources at www.una.edu/diversity for professional associations serving under-represented populations.

(Information below is from OIPRA Common Data Set 2013-2014 for Fall 2013, p22)

- Total Number of Instructional Faculty: 335
- Total Number who are members of minority groups: 54

Remember:

ODIE is part of your Search Committee team along with HR. Committees are requested to follow the External Search Protocol.

Committees Should use the following tools:
- Application Evaluation Rubric
- Interview Evaluation Rubric
Diversity Education Day was held on Monday, April 14th. It was an entire day dedicated to offering intentional educational opportunities focused on diversity, inclusion and cultural competency to increase understanding, respect and awareness among faculty, staff, students and members of the community. Diversity education is an important component of preparing students for the global workplace and creating an inclusive living and learning environment. The theme for the day was “turning our differences into strengths”.

Dr. Derek Greenfield of Alcorn State University was the workshop leader for the interactive diversity training sessions for faculty, staff and students. One attendee wrote, “Best workshop on diversity ever”; another wrote, “I thought the training made excellent use of participatory activities to illustrate key concepts in a meaningful, lasting way.” Ninety members from the UNA faculty and staff and community attended the diversity training.

Other events included a Study Abroad Education Session, GLBT Panel Discussions and the Auburn University Mosaic Theatre Company. GLBT panel discussions were moderated by UNA professors, Dr. Andrea Hunt, Assistant Professor in Sociology and Family Studies and Dr. Quinn Pearson, Professor in Counselor Education. Panel participants included faculty, students and members of the community. The GLBT session provided an opportunity to learn strategies to support students, friends and family members who are GLBT and how to create safe places, especially in educational settings. Some of the panelists included counselors, Dr. Angela Stowe, of Mountain Brook Elementary and Michael Lebeau of Birmingham Southern. The day’s events included partnerships with UNA SAFE (Student Alliance for Equality) and the Office of International Affairs.

Student Diversity & Inclusion Climate Survey

ODIE collaborated with the Office of Institutional Research Planning and Assessment (OIPRA) to design a survey to administer to all UNA students to assess students’ perceptions regarding campus diversity and inclusion. The survey addresses sexual orientation, race/ethnicity, disabilities and gender identity. The survey is being administered to students during the end of the spring 2014 semester. The survey results will be shared with the university community during the 2014-2015 academic year.
CultureFest: Promoting diversity through music and food. ODIE presented Culture Fest during Welcome Week on August 2013. The event served as an introduction and welcome to the diverse campus community for new and returning students. Over 300 faculty, staff, students and members of the community enjoyed diverse music, food and live entertainment. Attendees enjoyed sushi that was donated by Mein Bowl. Special guests were the Flamenco Dancers from Birmingham, AL. This year’s event is Monday, August 25th from 6:00-9:00 pm at the Amphitheatre.

Diversity Student Ambassadors (DSA)

Spring 2014 five students were selected to participate in the DSA program. The program accepts eligible UNA students who are interested in advancing diversity and inclusion among their peers.

Students traveled in April to the Pink Palace Museum in Memphis to participate in the exhibit and dialogue, Race- Are We So Different? Additionally, DSA participants will attend summer training to develop skills necessary to lead peer discussions around broad topics of inclusion.

Congratulations to James Carr, Brianna Jordan, Ruby Villalobos, Kamisha Garner and Isabella Roland. Applications will be accepted again in Fall 2014.

*Pictured Left: The Flamenco Dancers from Birmingham, Alabama at CultureFest 2013