

Diversity Initiative Community Environment

Goal

Create an engaging and just environment where diverse members of the Morehead State University community, both students and employees, can take advantage of opportunities that foster growth and attainment of educational and personal goals. Provide programs designed to develop more tolerance, understanding, and the ability to relate to diverse members of the community.

Objectives

1. Conduct a series of focus groups to discuss issues of diversity with representatives of the local community including representatives from the professional community, community organizations, small business, large employers, city and local government, the general citizenry and the Hispanic community.

The University partnered with other community institutions in the NewCity Morehead Initiative. The purpose was to bring all community members together to work in the best interest of the community.

Over sixty faculty, staff, and students participated in the NewCities Institute initial Community Building Session April 20, 2006. A listening session was held on the Morehead State Campus April 26, 2006 specifically to seek input from students and other members of the campus community to identify common values and concerns. A concluding Community Building Session was held April 29, 2006 to process information gathered at the listening sessions.

2. Develop and maintain a Web site and publish a list of diversity-friendly services, resources, employment, housing and scholarships.

A diversity site <http://www.moreheadstate.edu/diversity/index.aspx?id=4067> has been created with links to the Committee on Equal Rights Report and the University's response; the Diversity Plan; Resources and Services; and Scholarships.

The Resources and Services links are campus based. Community opportunities are not listed. The site needs to be developed to include community based resources.

3. Expand diversity in the visual and performing arts through the MSU Arts & Humanities Council and local arts & humanities guilds and organizations.

The annual Martin Luther King Unity in the Community Celebration was held on January 15, 2007. This is a – year traditional event. Both community and campus participation has grown in recent years.

2007 marked the inaugural Martin Luther King Unity in the Community Essay contest for school children in Morehead and Rowan County. This event will be continued.

The following campus based programs occurred in 2006-07. The events were open too and the public.

- Black History Month Soul Food Dinner
- Hip Hop Aerobics – ToniCise
- Comedian - Queen Aishah
- Health Fair
- Tuskegee Airmen Exhibit & Lecture
- Frank X. Walker Book Discussion
- Africa's Legacy in America~Theatrical Performance
- "N" Word Discussion

March 12, 2007

Prepared by Madonna Weathers

- Faith Ringgold
- Black Gospel Ensemble “Back to Black History Program”: 2007

African-American student, faculty, and staff participated in the Clearfield Elementary Black History Reading Project in spring of 2007. The Black Gospel Choir continues to perform at area churches and community events as well as campus events.

4. Conduct an annual “Latin American Conference” focused on issues, needs and resources of Hispanic families in the community.

The event is held annually by the MSU Department of Geography, Government, and History.

5. Conduct quarterly inter-agency meetings of representatives from local government, the Chamber of Commerce, University, St. Clare Regional Medical Center, etc., to discuss cultural and diversity issues in the community.

The NewCity Initiative filled this role in 2006-07. There will need to be a coordinating effort to continue these formal discussions.

The President of the Student Government Association, or his/her designee, has been invited to and is attending City Council meetings. This year the Executive VP, Daimeon Cotton, an African American student is filling that role. The SGA has also joined the Chamber of Commerce and the President of SGA actively participates.

Dr. Kimberly Williams, Vice President at St. Claire Regional Medical Center was appointed to the President’s Diversity Council Steering Committee.

Francene Botts-Bulter provided a Diversity Presentation at the Maysville Community and Technical College faculty and staff retreat in fall 2006. Ms. Botts-Butler, with the Black Gospel Ensemble provided a Diversity Presentation at Greenbo Lake State Park.

6. Maintain the present Community Environment Work Group.

Retirement of the Community Environment Work Group chair and change in status of other committee members has left the work group in need of restructuring. This will be accomplished in the next planning cycle.

Evaluation

Progress has been made on five of the six objectives of the Community Environment Work Group. The NewCity Morehead Initiative took time and energy in the first half of the 2006-07 year. The work group will have to work to evaluate if the quarterly meetings specified in the Diversity Plan can be implemented to complement the NewCity plan.

The current Diversity Web site does an adequate job of presenting campus resources and services but is lacking in identifying and integrating community resources and services.

Requests for and opportunities to participate in diversity programs and presentation in the community continue to increase. This could be reflective of more acceptance of diversity by the community.

The appropriate level of community involvement with the Community Environment work group needs to be explored. Relationship building needs to occur.