

# Drums of Diversity

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Welcome to the Office of Minority Student Affairs (MSA) and the second issue of the *Drums of Diversity*.

As Iowa State University (ISU) students, faculty, staff, and administrators await the public release and results of the *ISU 2004 Campus Climate Survey*, ongoing university recruitment, retention, and graduation efforts for students of color remain a challenge.

In addition to the typical identity and development issues that many first-year students face, students of color are confronted with the more cumbersome issues of fitting in or acclimating to a new environment and culture that has not fully embraced the idea of DIVERSITY.

ISU students, faculty, and staff appeal to the ISU community-at-large to do better in its efforts to increase diversity education on this campus.

*Shhhh... Let us LISTEN!*

**-Leonard Perry,**  
Associate Dean of Students  
and Director of Minority  
Student Affairs

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## Campus Climate for Diversity: A Journey

By Howard Shapiro, Former Vice Provost for Undergraduate Programs

I am deeply honored to be a guest contributor for the second issue of MSA's *Drums of Diversity*. I was asked by the editors to respond to the question "Why is it important that the University (as a whole) take responsibility in creating/promoting and supporting a diverse campus climate for students of color?" The question itself evokes responses at many levels—consistent with the complexity of the underlying issues. On the surface, the question implies that the entire university community *should* have a role—indeed has a *responsibility*—for the campus climate with respect to diversity. It rightly assumes that the entire university community should embrace diversity.

Diversity is more than something that describes us. It *defines* our culture. Intellectual inquiry, discourse, and curiosity form the core of a university. Having a multiplicity of experiences,

people of difference in a broader sense, have unique challenges on this campus. I also recognize the importance of providing various types of support for individuals who encounter a campus environment that is unfamiliar and unwelcoming—perhaps even hostile. These issues create enormous challenges for the entire university community and they need to be addressed specifically and directly whenever possible. I contend, however, that the ultimate goal is a community where people embrace diversity, in its broadest definition, as the foundation upon which we build our academic endeavor. If we can join together as a community to approach the goal, the journey itself will be a true accomplishment.

### How are we doing?

The recent Supreme Court case regarding admissions to the University of Michigan confirmed that establishing a diverse community on a college campus is a legitimate educational goal. The justices



***“Creating and promoting a rich campus community that embraces diversity is fundamental to our learning mission.” Dr. Howard Shapiro***

values, backgrounds, and cultures engaged in the pursuit of learning is essential to a vibrant learning environment.

We strive to be an excellent university. Creating and promoting a rich campus community that embraces diversity is fundamental to our learning mission.

Less obvious is the other part of the question: Should we embrace the issue of diversity *for students of color*? In my opinion, this aspect suggests a more narrow view of diversity than I suspect was intended. It evokes the notion that diversity is somehow *directed* at students of color. I recognize that people of color, and

acknowledged arguments from many constituencies that leaders of society need to seek and understand diverse perspectives. My understanding of the ruling is that this principle was the basis for allowing race to be considered a factor in admissions, providing certain legal tests were met. The fact that this concept was supported by a majority of the Court speaks to its centrality for achieving our educational mission and the goals of our society. Regretfully, most of us are too focused on our narrow disciplines or too self-absorbed to enter vigorously into conversations about diversity. We might not care enough to address it, or we might think it is someone else's problem. According to surveys we administer, our incoming students are more politically conservative and less (cont. on p.2)

### Shapiro (Campus Climate, cont. from page. 1)

involved in political affairs than national comparison groups. They are less likely than national groups to believe that diversity is essential or very important to promote racial understanding. At the same time, they are much less likely to have socialized or engaged in serious conversations with students of different races or ethnicities before coming to ISU. Although I don't have survey data to back this up, it is my observation that faculty and staff in general don't engage much in issues of diversity either.

We do seem to have good participation in President Geoffroy's Diversity Conversations, and on the face of it, *ISCORE* has been a resounding success. The Lectures program brings speakers who address many aspects of diversity, and the Sun Room is often filled for those talks. However, when you look around the room or speak to the regulars, everyone agrees that we are often "preaching to the choir" in these settings. Further, conversations with people of difference will reveal that they continue to face many challenges here.

There are undoubtedly many hallway conversations, even debates, on matters of diversity. But I would speculate that departmental and college faculty meetings rarely address such matters.

We have had U.S. Diversity and International Perspectives requirements in our curriculum for all students for over seven years. The Faculty Senate passed the requirements after vigorous debate, endorsing the importance of these issues for all students. Many students seem to view the requirements as boxes they need to check on a curriculum sheet, and not as opportunities to engage in important self-reflection or discourse. In fact, the result of our National Survey of Student Engagement tells us that seniors are no more likely to report having engaged in serious conversations with students of

different race or ethnicity than our first-year students, despite our long-standing curricular requirement.

Some good news was contained in a faculty survey completed by a task force to review the U.S. Diversity/International Perspectives requirement in the Fall of 2003. Faculty believed the requirement is important and should be continued. They supported the educational objectives fostered by the requirement and asked that the implementation be reviewed and improved. The Faculty Senate Curriculum Committee has been working on such an improved system during the current academic year.

So, we have the responsibility to value and hear all voices in our academic community if we are to be a true university. We have the intellectual and legal mandates to do so. We have taken some responsibility, but we have a long way to go.

#### Who must lead?

I made the point above that I agree with the premise of the question I was asked to address, namely that the university as a whole *should* own the issue of diversity. Too often, though, the majority defers to people of difference to promote the issue. This creates insidious barriers to progress that must be overcome.

First, it presumes that the purpose of creating/promoting and supporting a diverse campus climate with racial and ethnic understanding is the responsibility of students of color. Or, that women in under-represented professions should be the ones to stand up against sexism. Or, that people of different sexual orientations must lead the fight for equal rights. Or, that differently-able people must advocate for accommodations that simply allow them to level the playing field so they can be successful students or employees. The attitude that defers to people in these situations to "blow the whistle" blames *them* for their differences and sheds the mantle of responsibility we must all share.

Second, as emphasized heavily in the literature, if those in power are members of the majority, by definition they are the ones who can really change the system. Conversely, if they don't the system won't change. Several years ago, when I first went into university administration, women's rights activist Gloria Steinem gave a lecture on campus. She talked about the "glass ceiling" for women and called upon the (white) men in power to take the initiative to shatter it. I felt as if she were speaking directly to me, and the hundreds of others in the auditorium retreated into the darkness. I had just started as a member of the President's cabinet, and the arrow of her admonition pierced my consciousness.

I had long fancied myself as a sensitive kind of person. At that moment, I realized more than ever that being in a position of high power in an institution brings with it an extra responsibility to raise the issues and not rely on others to bring them up. Position carries with it a responsibility: to take action and not just talk; to be a role model for others of the majority, or what some of our colleagues call being an "ally;" to use the "bully pulpit" whenever possible to raise the consciousness of others.

I think university leaders have taken some responsibility and we have made some progress. Without talking about others, though, I will say that I have not done enough. Even though we have numerous "programs," we will not have made a difference until people who are different *feel* a change in the climate. For that to happen requires a proactive approach beyond our current efforts.

There is much left to do. If we embrace the vision of a diverse academic environment and work toward it, we will all benefit immeasurably. In fact, truly joining together on a journey in the pursuit of our vision may be the most important thing we can do.

## A Student's Perspective

### *Altering the Threads of Iowa State's Campus Climate "Fabric"* by Erin Hughes

Iowa State University is going through a huge transformation – one that will never be truly “finished.” Under the direction of President Geoffroy and his [Diversity] Advisory Committee, we are evaluating and rebuilding our campus atmosphere.

The first campus climate survey since November of 1993, was implemented in the early Spring semester of 2004 by Dr. Susan Rankin of Rankin & Associates, Consulting. Dr. Rankin recently presented the preliminary survey results on October 14 to the ISU community. In an open forum, the survey results were revealed and showed that approximately one-half of survey participants witnessed “offensive or hostile conduct that interfered with their ability to work or learn” on campus. This alone illustrates the need for active changes in how members of the university community view, work, live, and interact with one another.

But, how can Iowa State University truly understand the depth of this challenge? How can we [at Iowa State] alter the very threads that, woven together, form our campus climate “fabric”? Dr. Rankin suggests education — a one-credit required freshman seminar on social justice issues as the ideal way to educate students with an ultimate goal of transforming the campus climate.

My thoughts: Education of this sort cannot be a one-time-thing for students. It must be continual and repetitive for students, faculty, and administration. Workshops/discussions need to be enacted for administration and faculty on a permanent basis. Students may deal with questions and emotions birthed from the social justice seminars; so, optional discussion groups should be available in every residence hall each semester.

Ultimately, self-examination of one's own beliefs, multiple identities, (because we all have several, not just one), and harbored stereotypes, must happen if there is any hope of changing this campus for the better. Hopefully, with well planned educational opportunities, this will happen naturally, and the results will be realized and consciously enjoyed down the road to come.

Quote: "Resistance begins with people confronting pain, whether it's theirs or somebody else's, and wanting to do something to change it."

— Erin Hughes is an ISU student and participant in the NCORE/ISCORE project\* at ISU.

\*NCORE stands for the National Conference on Race and Ethnicity. It is the leading and most comprehensive national forum surrounding issues of race and ethnicity in higher education. NCORE is held annually in June.

ISCORE or Iowa State University's Conference on Race and Ethnicity, held locally is designed to model after NCORE. By providing an opportunity for university-wide participation in a day of workshops, training, and discussion on parallel issues in race and ethnicity, ISCORE seeks to bring the more salient ideas and concepts of the national conference to Iowa State University.

## College Perspective

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### College of Design:

Meet MLO Patience Lueth

As the *Minority Liaison Officer (MLO)* for the College of Design, Patience objectives are to 1) promote an environment that aids in the recruitment, academic success, career development, and graduation of students of color, 2) coordinate college orientation programs and the Core Design Program, as well as develop strategies that respond to the unique needs of first-year students, international students, student of color and students with disabilities, 3) help facilitate work and collaboration between the Design Student Services, College Advising Board, the Office of Minority Student Affairs and Office of Admissions, 4) identify outcomes regarding, academic success, and graduation, regarding the student groups previously mentioned.

Patience Lueth's current semester include:

- 1) Getting to know students of color in the Core Foundations Program (a first-year program for Design students).
- 2) Becoming an effective resource for students, faculty and staff concerning student affairs, by providing information about departments previously mentioned.
- 3) Developing a mentor program for College of Design first-year students of color.
- 4) Developing an assessment strategy that can be used to evaluate the first-year design studio, facilitating improvement in teaching and learning between design disciplines.

Originally from Uganda, Patience has lived in the United States for 8 years. With both a Bachelor's and Masters of Science in Architecture, Patience is currently working toward a Doctorate in Higher education.

Patience interests are in excellence in teaching and learning and scholarship. Focusing particularly on design majors, she wants to develop design studio teaching methods and pedagogy surrounding culture. Patience also loves to play basketball, swim, sing and read.

Stop over at 295 Design Building and say "Hello" to Patience Lueth.

# MSA Program Updates

## Campus Org News: The Multicultural Taskforce

Created in 1996 and supported by both the ISU Office of the Provost and Division of Student Affairs, the ISU Multicultural Taskforce (MTF) is committed to raising awareness and educating the community on multicultural issues. As an advising committee\* and funding source for projects and events that promote diversity awareness and education on campus, MTF supports registered students organizations in their collaborative efforts to encourage an environment of respect for cultural diversity and to build unity through academic, social, and cultural events at Iowa State university.

MTF meets weekly to make decisions about proposals (applications\*\*) for funding.

Funding requests must:

- ▶ Encourage collaboration and interaction between different student organizations
- ▶ Be initiated by a student organization
- ▶ Have an educational focus
- ▶ Be aimed at increasing sensitivity and understanding across different backgrounds and reducing acts of bias and insensitivity
- ▶ Advance multicultural issues through academic, cultural, and/or social means
- ▶ Have a long-term continuous impact on campus
- ▶ Be free to ISU students and open to the general public

\* Interested in serving on the MTF committee? Please email us at [omsa@iastate.edu](mailto:omsa@iastate.edu).

\*\* Funding applications are currently being accepted. MTF application are available at MSA in **Room 2080 Student Services Building**.

## The Carver Academy

In an effort to help recruit, retain, and graduate students of color at Iowa State University (ISU) and to honor Dr. George Washington Carver and his commitment to education and research, the GWC Scholarship Award was established. Each year this scholarship is awarded to 100 academically talented freshmen students of color and covers the costs of tuition for eight semesters. In their first year, these students become a part of what is called *The Carver Academy*.

The Carver Academy, specifically designed for the GWC scholars, offers guidance and enrichment to its participants and fosters continuous learning, achievement, diversity and integrity. The program strives to support Iowa State University, faculty, staff and students to meet the everyday challenges that ultimately lead students of color to success. The Carver Academy relies on the university and its community resources for helping student participants to:

- Adjust or adapt to student life at ISU
- Meet the ISU challenge of academic excellence
- Take advantage of opportunities that aim to enhance leadership skills
- Broaden perspectives and develop an appreciation for diversity
- Become competent professionals, global citizens, and leaders in their respective communities

## The Cargill Corporation\*

In partnership with the ISU Foundation, the Cargill Corporation has contributed to the leadership and professional development of the Carver Scholars by funding and supporting internships, trips to leadership conferences, and other opportunities for students selected and designated as *Carver-Cargill Scholars*. The Carver-Cargill Partnership Program is currently in its second year.

## Carver-Cargill Scholars

Each year the Carver-Cargill Scholars have the opportunity to visit the Cargill Corporation Headquarters in Minnetonka, Minnesota. This year, along with students from the ISU Multicultural Business Network, the Carver-Cargill Scholars traveled to the headquarters for a tour and overview of the company, a panel discussion with new employees, and a presentation of the Cargill Leadership Model by the President and Chief Operating Officer, Greg Page. He talked to the students about the importance of ethics, understanding other cultures, and focusing on developing themselves as "whole person[s]." Thad Stanley, Organizational Development Specialist for Cargill, concluded the day by encouraging the Carver-Cargill Scholars to apply for internships and positions with Cargill. The students were very impressed with the Cargill culture and thought that the visit was a great experience.

**A WARM THANKS TO THAD STANDLEY AND THE CARGILL FAMILY FOR HOSTING OUR VISIT!!**

\*Cargill is an international marketer, processor and distributor of agricultural, food, financial and industrial products and services. They provide distinctive customer solutions in supply chain management, food applications and health and nutrition. With 101,000 employees in 60 countries, the company is committed to using its knowledge and experience to collaborate with customers to help them succeed.

## COMING SOON!! CARGILL

### MOCK INTERVIEWS

Interested in having your résumé critiqued and getting honest feedback on your communications skills?

**Cargill Corporate Recruiters**  
will be at ISU on

Monday, November 15, 2004.

For more details, contact Emily Blake at [emmysue@iastate.edu](mailto:emmysue@iastate.edu).

**Only 25 interview slots available.**



## MSA Program Updates

### MVP\* News

#### *Help Wanted:*

#### *Sophomore, Junior and Senior MVP Scholars!!!*

MVP Seminar Leader applications are now being accepted. If you are interested in developing as a leader and helping Freshman MVP Scholars transition to ISU, please apply!

Stop by 2072 Student Services Bldg. to pick up an application.

*Application deadline has been extended to Friday, November 5<sup>th</sup>, 2004*

### MVP Leadership: Seminar Leaders and Peer Mentors

**Peer Mentors.** When MVP participants reach the sophomore level, they may apply to serve as *Peer Mentors* for first-year MVP participants. They help first-year students acclimate to university-life and the program and direct them towards the resources needed for academic success.

**Seminar Leaders.** Once MVP participants reach the junior or senior level, they can apply for a Seminar Leader position, which offers an opportunity to facilitate the MVP Seminar— a one-credit University Studies or UST 115 course that offers MVP freshmen an extended orientation to the college experience in an atmosphere less formal than traditional college courses.

To become official *MVP Seminar Leaders*, MVP juniors or seniors must take the MVP Leadership Seminar (UST 311) —a two-credit course designed to help participants gain effective skills to become successful leaders in their communities and direct the success of those around them. The seminar covers developing and implementing lesson plans, leading group discussions, and facilitating activities under a multitude of topics including the history and traditions of ISU, study skills and time management, test taking, stress management, identity development, time management, diversity issues, and adapting to change. After completing an intensive training program prior to fall semester, these *Seminar Leaders* continue to serve as *Peer Mentors* and role models for our first-year students and become hosts for our MVP Family Visits.

\*The Multicultural Vision Program (MVP) is a scholarship program created to assist in-state African American, Asian American, American Indian, Latino American, and bi/multiracial students throughout their academic careers. The Multicultural Vision Program Scholarship Award covers the cost of tuition at Iowa State University for a maximum of eight semesters of undergraduate study (for fall and spring semesters only). For more information, visit the MSA website at [www.msa@iastate.edu](http://www.msa@iastate.edu).

### *MSA Reminders !!!!!*

**Students Contact Your Minority Liaison Officers (MLO) in Your College Today for...**

**Tutoring**— if you are having difficulties in your courses or would like to stay ahead of the game.

**MLK Emergency Loans**— if you are faced with an extenuating financial situation that may likely affect your academic goals.



*Come! Listen! Learn! Have Fun!*

### *MSA Calendar of Events*

#### November 2004

- 1<sup>st</sup> : ISU Campus Climate Survey Online
- 2<sup>nd</sup>: Election Day!! Make Your Vote Count!
- 2<sup>nd</sup>: President's Forum on Diversity  
11:30 am; MU Great Hall
- 5<sup>th</sup>: MVP Seminar Leader Applications Due
- 5<sup>th</sup>: Applications for Multicultural Taskforce Funding \$\$ Begins; Pick up an application at MSA in 2080 Student Services Building
- 8<sup>th</sup>: MSA Dinners w/Campus Leadership  
Dean of Business College, Labh Hira
- 10<sup>th</sup>: "Myths, Lies, and Stereotypes: Media and the Visual Enslavement of Black People" Drake University Community Lecture Series; 7:30 pm
- 12<sup>th</sup>: MSA Friday Nites @ Clyde's  
8 pm to midnight; UDCC
- 13<sup>th</sup>: MSA Mall of America Trip  
8 am departure time
- 15<sup>th</sup>: Cargill Corporation Mock Interviews

\*\*\* To add your organization or office event to our next calendar of events, please submit to [omsa@iastate.edu](mailto:omsa@iastate.edu) no later than November 8<sup>th</sup>. \*\*\*

*For more information, Visit the MSA website at*

[www.msa.iastate.edu](http://www.msa.iastate.edu)