

Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity
Monday, October 27, 2008 – GLC Room B
Meeting Minutes

Present: Kim Beisecker, Craig Brians, Jean Brickey, Shirley Cline, Ross Edmonds, Brad Klein, Kathy Lloyd (for Sheila Carter-Tod), Anna LoMascolo, Maxine Lyons, Taris Mullins, Jonathan Moore, Kevin McDonald, Kelly Oaks, Fred Piercy (for Sue Ott Rowlands), Anita Puckett (for Steven Jackson), Ray Plaza, Richard Shingles, Patricia Smith, Elisa Sotelino, Mikhelle Taylor

Absent: Virgilio Centeno, Hal Irvin, Pat Hyer, Aditya Johri, Yolanda Machado-Escudero, Debby Morgan, Ingrid Ngai, Daphne Rainey-Wittich, Guy Sims, Dennis Welch

Guests: Mark Cartwright, Jamie Penven, Silvia Ramos-Cotton, Virginia Reilly, Maggie Sloane

I. Call to Order

Ray Plaza, substituting for Daphne Rainey-Wittich and Guy Sims, called the meeting to order at 10am.

II. Welcome

Ray welcomed Perry Martin who will be assuming the role of Secretary to the Commission on behalf of the Office for Equity and Inclusion.

III. Campus Activities Update

ADA Executive Committee: Ray complimented on a positive ADA awards ceremony and congratulated Craig for receiving an award. Craig representing the ADA Executive Committee reported that the committee is using Scholar to share information and collaborate. They are preparing for an upcoming ADA Review by outside experts. The Committee is updating their strategic plan and is reviewing their mission. There is also a task force that recently developed an Emergency Evacuation brochure. Virginia also invited ideas for disability awareness and employment week. A Brown Bag Lunch hosted by University ADA Services was also announced for November 4th.

American Indian Caucus: Mikhelle reported on current activities related to American Indian Heritage Month. Programming includes discussions on the relationships between innovation and tradition in relationship to the scientific field. Other programs will explore educational issues as they relate to American Indian communities particularly in Virginia. November 10th will feature Warfield Moose Jr. presenting, "Ben Black Elks Speaks." at Virginia Tech.

Appalachian Studies: Anita representing the Appalachian Studies Program reported on the ongoing work of the program. Particular focus is being directed toward the impact of mountaintop removal on community culture in Appalachia. Links with those who focus on environmental issues, as well as mining technologies are being pursued. Other efforts such as the Appalachian Teaching Project, curriculum-based service-learning, and community outreach are connecting to a variety of local cultural heritage opportunities including the connection between Montgomery County and the coal industry.

Black Caucus: Kathy representing the Black Caucus reported on a successful kickoff and that there will be a continuing focus on outreach and development of a website as they plan for the Black Constituency Conference.

Hispanic Faculty/Staff Caucus: Ray representing the Hispanic Faculty/Staff Caucus, reported on the recent Open House. This event connected Latino/Latina students and families to with Latino/Latina/Hispanic faculty.

International Student Efforts: Kim reported on some challenges in working with international students who attend Virginia Tech for just one semester. Kim also reported on the upcoming Dance of Nations, November 9th. She also invited greater participation in International Week as this event provides many opportunities for connections to resources for international students.

LGBT Faculty/Staff Caucus: Ross reported that there would be an upcoming “Gay in Appalachia” event and he would be bringing flyers on that event.

Women’s Community: Anna thanked everyone for their support of the recent chocolate festival. Anna reported the requests for services related to sexual assault victim support have increased after some declines in the months after 4/16. Anna also related some discussion on the development of a constituent group that will convene to discuss women’s issues on campus. Anna will relate discussion from this group to CEOD as needed.

Undergraduate Students: Taris gave an update on “The Forum” which is an opportunity for students discuss issues of concern at the university.

IV. Presentation by Mark Cartwright, Supplier Diversity Manager for Virginia Tech

Mark Cartwright presented on the Supplier Diversity Program at Virginia Tech. Visibility on campus and beyond is a key concern, greater awareness of the program is needed. Supplier diversity strengthens community economic development as well as competition and can reduce costs for the university. One area of focus is to work with minority and women-owned vendors to help increase their capacity to meet Tech needs. A limited amount of state business is going to women and minority owned businesses. CEOD could help with promoting vendor education events, assistance with alumni events, development of a Supplier Diversity Advisory Council, and could assist in encouraging vendors who are minority or women-owned to be certified by the State of Virginia as such. Some discussion on the definition of minority was held. Concern was also raised over cultural tourism development in Southwest Virginia and the need to be concerned with exclusion of minority-owned businesses in these efforts. Discussion on the limitation of contractual arrangements with Virginia Correctional Enterprises was held. Questions were raised as to whether graduate students could assist with linking with minority or women-owned businesses.

V. Announcements

Ray reported that the Christiansburg Institute Gala had over 200 in attendance. Reminders were made about the upcoming election and the possibility of students needing assistance in learning where to vote as well as options for travelling to precincts, as well as updating them on new rules related to political paraphernalia at the polls. Next CEOD meetings - Nov. 10th, Dec. 8th – 10am Cascades Room - The Inn

The general meeting adjourned at 11:20am with the various task forces convening.

Respectfully submitted,

Perry D. Martin
Secretary to the Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity