Title of Project: Recruit, Retain and Empower Faculty & Staff of Color in Inland Northwest: Conference and Communication Network

Grant Category: Faculty and Staff Recruitment and Retention

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Bob Bartlett, Interim Director & Visiting Assistant Professor, Africana Education Program,

Sean Chabot, Associate Professor, Department of Sociology & Justice Studies

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EWU Mosaic maintains their group e-mail: ewu-mosaic@googlegroups.com
(registration is required to participate)

** Letters of support from Gonzaga and Spokane Falls Community College forthcoming
PROJECT SUMMARY

The proposed United Faculty and Staff of Color Conference in the Inland Northwest will provide the opportunities for members of EWU and other colleges to come together and establish a much-needed support network for faculty & staff of color in a region that lacks racial and cultural diversity. By building a “home” and an extended family across colleges, we hope to alleviate the sense of isolation and marginalization that faculty & staff of color might experience within their institutions and in the larger communities. We would also like to have more senior or “seasoned” faculty and staff of color to give advice on professional development and provide mentorship to the new generation. We hope to help retain faculty & staff of color at EWU and our partnering institutions through the relationships and the community that we build at the conference.

By pulling the resources and networks from institutes across the region, we will expand the opportunities for mentorship & plant seeds for future collaboration. We will be able to learn from each other’s experiences and become more effective in our efforts to promote institutional changes with regards to diversity. We hope the relationships that we develop through the conference will allow us to coordinate our efforts in making the Inland Northwest a more open and inclusive environment for people of color.
DETAILED PROPOSAL

The Statement of the Problem

How do faculty and staff of color survive and thrive at a predominantly white institution in an overwhelmingly white region without losing their soul? Faculty and staff of color in the Inland Northwest face unique challenges due to the demographics of the region. Building community within this group could help to overcome these difficult issues.

Eastern Washington University (EWU) has been a catalyst for diversity issues in this region under the current university leadership. As a result of our continuous efforts, we indeed begin to see changes in our campus demographics, especially in that of our student population (over 20% of them ethnically diverse background in 2009). Unfortunately, the diversity of faculty and staff still lags behind in comparison. Moreover, faculty and staff of color are often left to “sink or swim” in isolation while they dedicate themselves to students and the university community.

Unlike their colleagues who live in more racially diverse areas, faculty and staff of color in a predominately white area like Spokane-Cheney face the issue of having no “home” to return to within the community. The greater Spokane area, the heart of Inland Northwest, is one of the least diverse areas in the nation. According to the US Census Bureau, the population of Spokane County is by 91.4% white, whereas 75.1% is the national average. This is an obstacle that we will need to overcome if we want to improve the recruitment and retention of faculty and staff of color.

Dialogues among faculty of color led to the birth of EWU Mosaic in Fall 2008. The primary goals of Mosaic were to provide a support network and mentoring for faculty of color at EWU. Mosaic has held monthly meetings for more than a year. Faculty of color and their family members gather at each other’s homes, sharing food from our respective cultures and enjoying each other’s support. More important, we have engaged in ongoing discussions on how we can make EWU a more inclusive and welcoming environment for faculty and staff (as well as students) of color. The following challenges faced by faculty of color have been identified:
1. Difficulty in navigating the corporate/institutional culture of the university.
2. Their sense of “otherness” we feel working and living in a predominately white environment.
3. The need to find a home - “a home” where they find a sense of familiarity, security, comfort, and camaraderie in this region.

At the 14th Annual Washington State Faculty and Staff of Color in Higher Education Conference (FSOCC2009), held in Spokane, WA in November 2009, some of the EWU Mosaic members organized a workshop to share their experiences of working at a predominantly white institution in an overwhelmingly white region. We also discussed the strategies to improve retention of faculty and staff of color and how we could promote changes in the institutional culture and practices of the university. The workshop was well received and passionate discussions sparked. In our conversations with colleagues from other institutions in this region, we realized that we faced similar challenges and shared a strong desire for a local faculty and staff of color conference to address the issues of retention and to strengthen networks.

It is critical for us to respond to the collective desire for a conference. Not only will this conference provide the much needed networking opportunities, it will give us a forum in which
we can develop local strategies to retain and empower faculty and staff of color. Through this conference, we will expand the support networks and resources for faculty and staff of color at EWU and other institutions and therefore improve our success in retention. Ultimately, the conference and the resulting collaborative efforts will help raise awareness on diversity issues in our respective home institutes and in our communities. We expect the conference and the resulting communication networks will have long-term, sustainable impacts on the success of recruitment and retention of faculty and staff of color at EWU and the Inland Northwest.

We believe EWU, as the catalyst for change in this region, should demonstrate its leadership through its support of this conference. Given its cultural, racial and academic diversities of members, EWU Mosaic is the best qualified team to take up this task, and thus proposes this project on behalf of the university. Let EWU Mosaic ‘Start Something Big’ through this conference!

**Project Objectives**
United Faculty and Staff of Color Conference in Inland Northwest (UFSCC for short) will:

- Create dialogues on the challenges faced by faculty and staff of color and brainstorming on strategies for those
- Showcase successful professional development of faculty and staff of color in the region
- Facilitate networking among faculty and staff of color in the region
- Share effective practices in teaching, student advising, etc. among faculty and staff of color that cater to the specific needs of students of color in the Inland Northwest
- Enhance coordination of diversity efforts across colleges and universities in the region
- Affirm EWU’s commitment to diversity and inclusion and position EWU as the region’s catalyst

**Project Design**
UFSCC will be organized on EWU Cheney campus for one day in Spring 2010 as follows:

- The committee(s) will be formed through collaborative efforts of administrators, faculty and staff across different disciplines, departments and institutes in Inland Northwest. The committee members will be invited and selected from stakeholders in Inland Northwest such as EWU Mosaic.

- The program will consist of a keynote lecture/panel, workshops, an open forum and networking opportunities. Speakers and panelists will be selected and invited from Inland Northwest by the program committee.

- This conference will utilize existing services, facilities and infrastructures of EWU. This will also utilize EWU students to assist marketing, planning, registration and other administrative tasks.
• Post-conference proceedings will be produced and distributed among participants. This will consist of the program, abstracts, presentation materials and dictations of the panel; as well as information of speakers, panelists and organizers.

Tentatively, the following plan is considered:

**Date:** May 15th (Sat) or 22nd (Sat), 2010 – the 7th or 8th week in Spring 2010.
**Venue:** an auditorium on EWU Cheney Campus
**Fee:** $25 per participants.
**Estimated Participants:** 50

**Tentative Program:**
8:30-9:00 Registration
9:00-10:00 Keynote Lecture/Panel on the empowerment of faculty & staff of color - how to survive and thrive at a predominantly white institution (preferably by a leader on diversity issues who understands local challenges)
10:15-12:15 Workshops (possible topics: successful professional development for faculty and staff, effective practices for serving students of color; collaboration between community college & 4-year college)
12:30-2:00 Luncheon meeting for networking (buffet lunch will be served)
2:00-4:00 Open forum on local challenges in higher education & diversity
4:00-5:00 Committee meeting to discuss next conference organization

**Project Organization (Role and Expertise)**

UFSCC will be organized by forming the following committees under the direction of **Conference Co-Chairs**, Dr. Pui-Yan Lam (Chair and Associate Professor, Sociology and Justice Studies, EWU; Founder of EWU Mosaic). Dr. Atsushi Inoue (Associate Professor, Computer Science, EWU). They will manage the budget and oversee the entire project.

1) **Organizing Committee** (to manage logistics – catering, venue, equipments, IT support, advertisement, registration, and proceedings – and to develop the program) consisting of
   - **Faculty and Staff Member volunteers** from EWU Mosaic, and
   - **Student Associates** to be hired upon the approval of this project.

2) **Advisory Committee** (to provide consultation and advising as deemed necessary or upon request)
   - To be invited from higher education administrators and/or participants of FSOCC2009.

Currently, the following EWU Mosaic members have agreed to serve on the organizing committee:
Deidre Almeida, Director & Associate Professor, American Indian Education Program
Terrie Ashby-Scott, Interim Director, Multicultural Student Services
Bob Bartlett, Interim Director & Visiting Assistant Professor, Africana Education Program
Sean Chabot, Associate Professor, Department of Sociology & Justice Studies
Martin Garcia, Assistant Professor, Chicano Education Program
Pui-Yan Lam, Chair & Associate Professor, Department of Sociology & Justice Studies
Vernon Loke, Assistant Professor, School of Social Work
Sarah Lee Monroe, Assistant Professor, Department of Film
Majid Sharifi, Assistant Professor, Department of Government
Rayette Sterling, Outreach to Special Populations Librarian, Libraries
Christina Torres-Garcia, Academic Counselor, McNair Scholars’ Program
Duanning Zhou, Associate Professor, Department of Accounting & Information Systems

Dr. Atsushi Inoue, Computer Science, Ms. Rayette Sterling, Libraries, and Dr. Duanning Zhou, Accounting & Information Systems, will lead on the various IT support (web and mailing list) and post-proceedings production.

Dr. Majid Sharifi, Government, and Dr. Martin Garcia, Chicano Education, will lead on the development of program.

Dr. Christina Torres-Garcia, McNair Scholar's Program, will lead on the coordination of refreshments and the lunch.

Dissemination Plan

We will recruit potential participants by (1) contacting participants of FSOCC2009 in Inland Northwest, (2) word of mouth through the personal contacts of the members in Organizing Committee and Advisory Committee, and (3) requesting relevant administrative or academic units in local colleges and universities distribute conference announcements and invitations.

After the conference, the post-proceedings and an action plan will be posted at the conference webpage, and a directory of participants will be sent to each individual. A conference website and listserv will be maintained to promote ongoing discussion and facilitate future collaborations.

Timetable

December 2009 – Recruitment of committee members outside of EWU; target institutions will be contacted; list of potential conference participants will be compiled; fund raising for the conference will continue.

January 2010 – Student assistants will be hired; initial call for participation will be sent out to local colleges and universities; guest speakers will be invited & confirmed.

February 2010 – Conference website created; marketing/recruitment efforts continue.

March 2010 – Conference program finalized; registration materials will be sent.

March - April 2010 – Conference registration; logistics of conferences arranged.

May 2010 – tentative schedule of UFSCC (5/15 or 5/22); the actual date will be determined in consultation with representatives from other participating colleges & universities

May - June 2010 – directory of conference participants will be sent out to all participants; email list will be created

July – August 2010 – the post-proceedings of conference will be compiled.
DETAILED BUDGET

Itemized Expenses Cost

Speaker Honorarium (MOA and invoice) – $500

  • $250 per speaker or lecture – 2 guest speakers

Student Associates (8.6 * 300 * 1.03) – $2657.40

  • Minimum wage: $8.60 per hour.
  
  • 3% overhead to purchase insurances

  • 300 hours (3 associates, 100 hours per associate)

Stationary & Communication – $628

  • Photocopy and printing (10 cents per letter page * 5000 pages = $500)
  
  • Postage (64cents per mail, 200 direct mails = $128)

Refreshments (water, coffee and snacks) – $500

  • Throughout the entire conference ($10 per participant, 50 estimated participants)

*** Total Amount Requested from Diversity Initiative Grant: $4285.40

Explanation of Other Expenses (not covered by the Diversity Grant)

Buffet lunch and soft drink – $2000

  • Conference fee revenue ($25 per participants, 50 estimated participants = $1250)

  • Fund raising ($750) – contributions will be solicited from relevant academic & administrative units at EWU and participating universities

EWU Reference Person

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