INTRODUCTION

The Office of Human Resources supports the teaching, research and public service mission of the University of Oregon by providing a comprehensive human resources program to university department managers, supervisors and employees. The office serves the university’s mission by recruiting, retaining, and supporting high-caliber faculty and staff with a full range of offerings, including benefits, compensation, employee and labor relations, organizational training and development, work-life balance assistance, and recognition programs. Human Resources (HR) is also responsible for ensuring compliance with a wide range of state and federal laws, university policies, and three collective bargaining agreements.

The Vivian Olum Child Development Center is a program of early childhood care and education serving infants through elementary school age children and their university parents. The center’s primary goal is to provide a foundation of experiences that foster children’s growth and development in a safe and nurturing environment. As a program of early childhood education, the philosophy and approach to diversity planning is based on children’s cognitive, physical and social/emotional development with planning and goal setting incorporating the following components:

- classroom curriculum
- physical classroom environment
- parent-staff relationships
- teacher staff development
- student staff development
- policies and procedures
- staff-staff relationships

Staff members of Human Resources and the Olum Center are committed to providing support to diverse constituencies and will continue to work to ensure the worksite is a welcoming, inclusive and supportive environment that respects and values the varied contributions, skills, abilities, talents and life experiences of all employees in our workforce.
Human Resources’ programs touch nearly all faculty and staff in some way. Decisions made by HR staff have far-reaching implications for employees and their livelihoods. Consequently, it is especially important that we do our work in a way that is welcoming, inclusive, and respectful of everyone, regardless of differences.

**GOALS AND ACTION ITEMS**

The following goals and activities highlight the work done over the past five years, incorporating those occurring the past year (2011).

**Developing a Culturally Responsive Community**

**Goal: Foster an environment within Human Resources that is inclusive and in which employees are valued and treated with respect.**

- Invited speakers to HR all-staff meetings to discuss topics related to diversity, including Chicora Martin- (LGBTQ issues) Emilio Hernandez (Latino and immigration issues); and Carla Gary (creating a welcoming environment for people of color).
- Ensured that performance appraisals for HR employees include a discussion of their work in dealing with diverse members of the community and in applying rules and policies fairly and with sensitivity to the effect on diverse populations.

**Goal: Provide services to job applicants, university employees and other visitors to Human Resources that assist with special challenges in written, verbal, and visual communication.**

- Created the opportunity to provide Spanish translation services for written materials (e.g., job announcements and position descriptions) and Spanish verbal translation services.
- Provide American Sign Language services for hearing-impaired employees for benefits orientation.
- Create job announcements that emphasize diversity as a university value for its workforce.

**Goal: Provide assistance, services, and programming for the campus community that support the university’s strategic directions outlined in the Diversity Plan for the University of Oregon.**

- Incorporated criteria that evaluate creating inclusive work environments and working with diverse communities in performance appraisals for officers of administration and classified staff.
- Provided facilitation and training activities to meet stated goals of departmental diversity plans.
Improving Campus Climate

**Goal:** *Identify ways that Human Resources can contribute to university-wide strategic diversity initiatives to create an inclusive environment.*

- Several HR administrative staff regularly attended OIED campus diversity conversations and the Wayne Morris Center presentations on social justice. In addition, some attended diversity-related sessions offered at professional conferences or in other venues.
- The HR Employment Manager and Organizational Development and Training (ODT) Associate Director participate in the OIED affiliates group to discuss campus initiatives and plan training activities.
- Human Resources staff members regularly serve on campus committees dedicated to promoting inclusion, including the LGBT Concerns Committee, Disabilities Issues Administrative Council, Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership, and Holden Leadership Center Board.
- Collaborated with OAAEEO to begin work on an initiative on respectful workplace (Fall 2011).
- Expanded and improved professional development programs designed to improve the ability to interact respectfully and effectively with diverse members of the university community. Examples of only a few of the numerous offerings over the past five years include:
  - “Creating a Respectful Environment: The Challenge of Inclusion”;
  - Trainings on building partnerships and improving communication to support a welcoming environment (e.g., “Emotional Intelligence,” “Listening Skills,” Bullying and the Bottom Line,” and more);
  - Training on preventing and addressing sexual harassment;
  - Training on meeting diversity student needs and privilege [?] for University Health Center staff;
  - Assisting the diversity plan team in the Athletic Department in designing a climate survey for all staff and assisting in the review of the results and development of next steps;
  - “Understanding the Danger of a Single Story: Opening Ourselves and Our Programs to Complex Identities,” in collaboration with International Affairs and OIED;
  - Numerous trainings and facilitations tailored to departmental requests, often planned to address specific problematic interactions and/or grievances; and
  - Communications training designed to enhance cross-cultural interactions.
- Provide supervisory training that emphasizes supervisors’ responsibility to promptly and effectively address allegations of discrimination and harassment and to create and maintain a respectful and inclusive workplace environment.
Building Critical Mass

**Goal:** Expand our outreach and recruitment to create more diverse applicant pools that include underrepresented populations.

- The HR Employment Manager expanded the number of job fairs attended annually and partners with the Campus Operations diversity committee to bring greater diversity to UO’s representation at these events, which include fairs sponsored by Lane and Linn-Benton community colleges, the Lane Education Service District, and veterans’ groups. Until the program was eliminated due to funding cuts, the Employment Manager participated in WorkNet, a monthly forum that linked local employers, agencies serving job seekers, and job applicants, to attract a broader, more diverse applicant pool.

- The Employment Manager also worked with DePaul Industries and Galt Foundation, QRFs (qualified rehabilitation facilities) to increase use of its services to fill temporary positions on campus with individuals with disabilities. Based in part on this work with the Galt Foundation, the University of Oregon was nominated and selected by the Oregon Rehabilitation Association Board of Directors to receive the 2011 Award for Employer of the Year. The award is given annually to an employer who demonstrates a commitment to job opportunities for people with disabilities.

**Goal:** Pursue initiatives aimed at retaining diverse faculty and staff.

- The Vivian Olum Child Development Center, UO’s child-care center serving primarily faculty and staff, is a valuable employee retention tool. The last five years have seen the regular, informal assessment by Olum staff of Center curriculum offerings that encourage diversity and frequent discussion about staff’s ability to foster and support an inclusive environment. The practices at the Center have supported the UO goals of developing a culturally responsive community for the children and their families, as well as staff, student workers, and university students enrolled in practicums. Training for both professional and student staff has regularly included discussion of the tenets of fostering a culturally responsive and anti-bias program within an early childhood education environment.

This focus supports developing and promoting a culturally responsive community for the children, their faculty and staff parents, the university employees and student workers who comprise the staff of the Center, and UO students assigned there for practicums. Subsequently this activity improves the campus climate, expands and fills the pipeline, and builds critical mass. By creating an environment that values and sustains inclusion and diversity, the Olum program serves as an important retention tool for faculty and staff coming from diverse backgrounds.
Expanding and Filling the Pipeline

**Goal:** Support campus efforts to attract students that represent diversity as found in the “Diversity Plan for the University of Oregon.”

- Collaborated with departments serving students parents and nontraditional students (Office of Student Life, Graduate School, Nontraditional Student Union, ASUO Women’s Center) to support their academic success.
- Job fair participation (described above) not only attracts potential job applicants that represent diverse populations, but also draws high school and community college students who may consider attending UO.
- Half-day training on privilege issues for the faculty of UO’s Young Scholars’ Program in collaboration with OIED staff.

Developing and Strengthening Community Linkages

**Goal:** Identify ways to partner with community employers and agencies on diversity recruitment to the Eugene-Springfield area.

- Participated in WorkNet, a monthly forum that linked local employers, agencies serving job seekers, and job applicants, many of whom represented diverse backgrounds to promote greater opportunities for diverse candidates in the community. Unfortunately, WorkNet was eliminated recently due to budget cuts.
- Human Resources and OAAEO have joined in purchasing a table and attending the annual Blacks in Government banquet.
- Participation in National Conference on Race and Ethnicity in Higher Education (NCORE). Although this national conference occurs outside the local community, university support of and participation in this nationally recognized conference is an important component to diversity work here. According to its website, NCORE is the “leading and most comprehensive national forum on issues of race and ethnicity in American higher education. Its focus is on creating and sustaining comprehensive institutional change designed to improve racial and ethnic relations on campuses and to expand opportunities for educational access and success by culturally diverse, traditionally underrepresented populations.”

The ODT Associate Director is a regular presenter at the conference and served on the NCORE national advisory board. She co-hosted the site visit of NCORE Director to Portland and facilitated President Lariviere’s involvement in both the site visit and participation in the Presidential Symposium at the 2011 NCOR conference. Such involvement by UO administrators raises the university’s profile nationally as an institution with a serious commitment to the inclusion of greater diversity.
Developing and Reinforcing Diversity Infrastructure

**Goal:** Support OIED efforts to create an infrastructure for the university’s diversity efforts.

- Collaborated with and partially funded OIED recognition activities (such as the MLK annual award) that acknowledge work that advances the university’s diversity initiatives.

**MEASURING PROGRESS**

HR’s efforts designed to improve the quality of interactions in the workplace to promote a welcoming and inclusive environment are difficult to measure with quantifiable results. We do have a few measurements to share, however.

A review was conducted of evaluations submitted by participants in courses dealing with topics of illegal discrimination, creating and maintaining a respectful and inclusive environment, effective communication skills, preventing discrimination, and preventing and dealing with sexual harassment. In response to the question, “What I learned in this course has improved my ability to do my job,” all sessions received a score of great than 3 (on a scale of 1-5) with an overall average of 3.23. This tells us that the participants found these sessions helpful in carrying out their work, although it does not indicate if the work performance improved or skills enhanced.

We also compared snapshots of the diversity of applicants for classified positions from 2005-6 and again in 2010-11. In 2005-6, there were 669 minority applicants out of 4,710 total applicants. In 2010-2011, out of 6,802 total applicants, 514 were minority applicants. The percentage of people of color actually employed in the classified workforce reflects better progress: in 2005, that percentage was 10.49%; in 2010, that percentage had grown to almost 13% (12.99%).

Trainings offered by ODT, including those that deal with diversity, are in demand and ODT administrators are regularly asked to assist units with diversity work. We may conclude that the campus community finds the work valuable by the ongoing requests for these services.

The recognition from the Oregon Rehabilitation Association as “Employer of the Year” for 2011 spotlights the institutional commitment to people with disabilities.

**AREAS OF IMPROVEMENT OR OPPORTUNITY**

Increasing the diversity of classified applicant pools needs to be a priority in future diversity planning. Advice and assistance from OIED staff would be most welcome in helping us brainstorm new ways to reach out to the local community.
Continuing the work started by former Vice President for Finance and Administration Frances Dyke on creating a respectful workplace will be valuable. This project solicits input from various campus groups regarding the current campus climate and plans activities or programs that address concerns.

The numerous trainings offered by ODT are obviously most helpful to those who attend and participate. We hope to identify ways to communicate the opportunities more broadly and remove barriers that prevent employees from attending.

**FUTURE DIRECTIONS AND NEED FOR SUPPORT**

The template provided for this report states: “Critical to all of our efforts will be developing a more robust methodology of measurement and assessment.” Developing metrics is indeed a key aspect of diversity work, especially as it applies to a support unit such as Human Resources. Assistance in designing and implementing ways to develop metrics and assess activities that promote the goals of strategic diversity action plans would be extremely beneficial.

Another recommendation regarding infrastructure would be to coordinate central activities that support institutional goals. For example, in the area of training, we might realize efficiencies by formalizing stronger coordination and consultation on training needs and opportunities.

The Office of Human Resources remains committed to building on its past success in promoting diversity and inclusion as well as seeking out creative and effective ways to address those areas in which we could show even greater progress and growth. To these ends, we look forward to collaborating with the entire university community in support of the UO being a leader in diversity and inclusion in higher education.

February 9, 2012