

**Profile of  
Community Liaison Counselors, Admissions Office  
University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh  
2011 Regents Diversity Award – Team Category**

**Synopsis**

- In 1998, UW-Oshkosh initiated a program aimed at increasing the representation of students of color on campus. This commitment resulted in the Community Liaison Counselor position, a role divided into four functions: 1) identification of students of color; 2) recruitment of the student; 3) enrollment of the student; and 4) initial efforts of retention and support of the student, including connecting the student to academic support services, academic advising and career counseling, as well as TRIO services. Often, this process includes the family unit.
- Program reviews identified the need to have admissions community liaison counselors that specialized in the recruitment of distinct racial/ethnic communities. Thus, in its current structure, four community liaison counselors service the African-American, Latino and Hispanic, Hmong/Asian, and Native American communities. The office also reaches out to low-income and first-generation students that are part of the target communities.
- Assessment of recruitment practices has identified differences in the recruitment of students of color compared to the recruitment of majority students:
  - The need to connect to and be seen as a partner with the student's community. (This resulted in the creation of the Milwaukee Satellite Office, an outreach facility serving prospective undergraduate, graduate, and pre-college students to increase the enrollment of Milwaukee-area, academically qualified students of color.)
  - The need to connect with the student's family before, during, and after the admissions process.
  - The need to provide services such as transportation to and from the campus during the recruitment process, as well as support in the completion of admissions and financial aid paperwork.
- Director of Admissions Jill Endries oversees the small but dedicated team of four full-time and one part-time staff members:
  - Beverly Benston, Admissions Counselor/Milwaukee Outreach;
  - Brian Jackson, Admissions Counselor/Student Recruitment Specialist;
  - Quincy La Grant, Admissions Counselor;
  - Marie Flora Valtierra-Stapel, Admissions Counselor/Hispanic Community Liaison; and
  - Thomas Xiong, Admissions Counselor

**Sustainable Impact**

In the last 10 years, from 2001 to 2010, UW-Oshkosh has experienced:

- a 313% growth in the number of applications received from students of color (from 392 to 1,229);
- a 272% increase in the number of students of color admitted (from 254 to 692); and

- a 238% increase in the annual number of first-time enrolled students of color (from 140 to 334).

### **Accountability**

- Metrics measure the number of student applications, student admits, and student enrollments. They are reported to the Enrollment Management Team and the Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs.
- Annual program assessment tracks the number of students contacted by college fairs and parent nights; mailings; diversity scholarships awarded; campus visits and programs; telemarketing efforts; the Milwaukee Satellite Office; and community events.

### **Intersections and Collaboration**

- While the primary focus is on four distinct ethnicities - African American, Native American, Hmong/Asian, and Hispanic/Latino - considerable overlap exists with low-income and first-generation students.
- Community Liaison Counselors partner with other government agencies, other colleges, various colleges on the UW-Oshkosh campus, and student organizations.
- The program has significantly increased the representational numbers of students of color and placed the university as a community partner. The Community Liaison Counselors become a part of the support system for the student and their family. They serve as the initial contact to the campus and bridge the transition of the student to other support services and activities.
- Highlighted activities and recruitment initiatives for 2009-10:
  - More than 103 high school visits
  - 24 diversity college fairs, college nights, parents programs
  - Personalized mailings to nearly 3,100 prospective students of color
  - Diversity scholarships valued at more than \$40,000 given to 42 students of color
  - More than 1,500 students of color visited UW-Oshkosh through organized visits
  - Phone calls from community liaisons and current students of color to prospective students and parents

### **In the words of colleagues:**

- "The Admissions Office and its Multicultural Liaisons' dedication and commitment to diversity initiatives, education, and advocacy have been impressive. Their work is grounded in recruitment best practices coupled with cultural competency, empathy and caring. The team and its members have significantly contributed to a more diverse, open and compassionate campus climate/culture." *–Petra M. Roter, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, UW-Oshkosh*
- "Any effort to create an open and inclusive campus community must start with the actions taken by the institution's admissions office and staff. At the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh, we are fortunate to have the talents of very committed personnel in our Admissions Office. By reaching out to students from diverse backgrounds, the Admissions Office helps us to effectively communicate the aspirations of our campus community to have diversity that reflects the communities and populations we serve." *–Richard H. Wells, Chancellor, UW-Oshkosh*