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Honoring diversity: empowering personhood

Two programs combine to serve diverse student body

One-on-one and community-wide, the Office of Multicultural Affairs and Student Support Services (OMA/SSS) is working to make Bowling Green a positive place for students—particularly students of color—to live, learn and succeed.

The goal of the newly restructured office is to empower students by providing them with the academic, social and cultural support that will enable them to complete their college careers, said Celeste Bland, director.

The office also contributes to University-wide recruitment efforts and helps academic and administrative departments devise and implement policies, programs and activities that will attract multicultural students.

On an even broader level, the office is working to "build an environment on campus where multiculturalism is understood and embraced," said Bland.

Last May, the OMA and SSS programs were joined and placed under a single umbrella office within student affairs, and an employee from financial aid was transferred into the new office.

The combined office plans to work closely with a grant writing team in the provost's office to enhance and expand services.

Bland has overseen the blending of the two programs. She had been associate director of SSS since 1994 and has worked with student recruitment and retention for 15 years.

"Merging the two comprehensive support programs will eliminate duplication of services and allow the programs to complement one another in achieving their ultimate goal: retention," Bland said.

The office advocates equal opportunities for students, she emphasized. "Both programs provide a holistic approach in their efforts."

Multicultural Affairs provides academic support services to students but also works to educate the campus community about multiculturalism and diversity. "This latter goal will be accomplished by providing diversity training throughout the academic year to faculty, staff and students," she said.

Student Support Services is a federally funded program which provides academic support services to eligible students based on their disability status, and their parents' educational background and income. "Office staff work to retain students as well as provide an environment conducive to learning," Bland said.

"My goal is to create a 'one-stop shop' for the students we serve," said Bland.

"I do not want students of color to ever feel that they have been accepted to BGSU for cosmetic reasons. I want students to know that we value them. My goal is to make students feel connected to the University."

— Celeste Bland

"Students are frustrated when they have to visit numerous offices to solve a problem," she explained.

Therefore, the OMA/SSS office will provide the following services: academic advising and counseling; career counseling, financial aid counseling, tutorial services, mentoring, peer advising, graduate school counseling, developmental instruction and study skills.

To aid the retention of students of color, the office works to empower students and provide them with the tools they need to be successful, Bland said. "The office will focus on students' personhood," she said. "I want students to know that we care about them. I do not want students of color to ever feel that they have been accepted to BGSU for cosmetic reasons.

"I want students to know that we value them. My goal is to make students feel connected to the University.""

To empower 'personhood,' several initiatives have been established, such as self-esteem workshops, leadership seminars, multicultural and multi-ethnic programs, lecture series, alumni networking workshops, and community service projects, Bland said.

Retention of students is a University-wide effort that requires assistance from various colleges and departments," Bland emphasized.

Her office works closely with the colleges and departments to help ensure students' academic success.

"We assist many academic and administrative departments on campus in developing and implementing policies, programs and activities to attract and retain students of color," Bland said.

"I am confident that if we continue to collaborate, the retention of students, and particularly students of color, will increase." (See box.)

Specific services offered by the OMA/SSS office include the following:

• Freshman Development Program: facilitates academic and personal adjustment for freshmen;

• Success Through Excellence: facilitates continuing students with academic support services to help ensure academic success to the third year;

• Partners In Excellence: offers a series of on-going evening programs that facilitate career development;

• Diversity Achievement Award: provides partial tuition and on-campus room scholarships to eligible students from diverse backgrounds;

• Diversity training coordinates diversity training efforts for the Division of Student Affairs. Requests for workshop presentations should be made to the OMA/SSS Office, 2-2677.

• Leadership development seminar: helps students develop and assess their potential to become campus leaders and role models;

• Financial Aid advising: provides individual assistance with applications and review of financial aid packages; and

• Pre-College Enrichment Program: a six-week summer program for highly motivated students of color who are high school juniors and seniors.

The MCA/SSS Office is located in 474 Saddlemire Student Services Building. For more information, contact Bland at 2-2642.

— by Shannon McFarlin

Multicultural students: By the numbers

• The student body: Of 17,000 students last school year, about 5 percent (some 850) were members of minority groups. Some 450 were African-Americans, with the remainder composed of Hispanics, Native Americans and persons of Asian-Pacific descent. (OMA/SSS)

• First-to-second-year retention rates: In 1995-96, 71.4 percent of freshmen students of color returned, compared with 73.8 percent of whites. The previous year, 67.9 percent of students of color returned, compared with 76.4 percent of whites. (Office of Institutional Research)

• Differing experiences: A 1997 survey of freshmen living in residence halls (the BGSU Undergraduate Experience Questionnaire), found that less than half (47 percent) of students of color, compared with 67 percent of whites, felt "very or extremely sure" they had made the right choice in coming to Bowling Green.
Learn to be an effective student advocate. "Being an Effective Advocate in a Learning Community" is the theme of a day-long professional development symposium being sponsored by higher education and student affairs Sept. 26.

The symposium at the Holiday Inn French Quarter, Perrysburg, is in honor of Audrey Rentz, who recently retired after 22 years of service with the University. The goals of the symposium are:

- to better inform participants about issues surrounding advocacy in higher education and student affairs, and
- to provide participants with strategies and action plans to enhance their own effectiveness as advocates.

The keynote address at 9:30 a.m. features Kristin Moore from Michigan State University.

Wellness Center coordinator hired

Afterwards, eight prominent college student personnel faculty members from throughout the region will lead roundtable discussions on selected aspects of advocacy, such as being an advocate for a given student subgroup or cause.

The day continues with a plenary session conducted by the facilitators. Participants are invited to stay after the training for an evening retirement banquet in honor of Rentz beginning at 5 p.m. The symposium itself (including lunch) costs $45 (or $25 for students). The training plus the banquet costs $65 (or $35 for students).

To register, contact continuing education at 2-8181. For more information, contact Barbara Henry, higher education and student affairs, at 2-3932 or email: hesa@mailserver.bgsu.edu.

Opening Day Meetings

Monday, August 25th

Faculty meetings (all 11 a.m.)
- Arts and sciences, Lenhart Grand Ballroom of the Student Union
- Business administration, 1007 Business Administration
- Education and human development, Jenson Auditorium, Education Bldg.
- Health and human services, Town Room, Student Union

Adviser Meetings
- Arts and sciences: 1-3:30 p.m., 121 West Hall
- Health and human services: 1:30 p.m., 246 Health Center
- Education and human development: 1:30 p.m. Jenson Auditorium, Education Bldg.

Faculty and staff, Libraries and Learning Resources
- 1:30 p.m., Pallister Conference Room, Jerome Library

Graduate faculty
- 2:30 p.m., 117 Olscamp Hall

Department meetings
- 3:30 p.m.
Classified Staff Council meeting

‘Change is coming all over’

"Faith [Olson] and Jay [Samalek] are doing an excellent job of representing your positions," said Rebecca Ferguson, assistant provost for human resources. As a guest at the Aug. 16 Classified Staff Council meeting, Ferguson outlined some of the initiatives her office is taking to address a "full plate and full agenda" for classified staff.

I, "she said, adding that "you’ll see a different face," one that is more customer-centered, in human resources.

"It takes a very long time for change to happen very quickly," she said. "A lot of it is going to be driven by your priorities."

Initiatives involving classified staff will include conducting a classification and salary review and encouraging professional development and expansion of human resources.

In addition, a comparison of policies/procedures for all three University constituent groups is planned to assess where they differ and why. In some cases, differences, especially for classified staff, may be tied to state law, she said. If it is, we can ask, 'is it some... consideration include providing employees with a statement showing the value of each benefit received and establishing an internal pool of on-call employees, including retirees, to provide temporary help.

"Change is coming all over," she said. "We’re talking about changing a culture."

"It’s the same pie. If we’re not all working together, we’re working against each other."

— Rebecca Ferguson

view points

James McBride, 84, died Aug. 16 in Huron, was instrumental in establishing Firelands College and served as its first dean. Memorial contributions can be made to the McBride Arboratum, Firelands College, One University Dr., Huron, Ohio 44839. The following tribute was written by Tim Smith, director of public relations at WBGSU-TV, who used to work at Firelands.

"A gentle man died August 16. He was one of the nicest people I have ever known or probably ever will know. Bright, articulate, energetic, a genuine leader, a born educator, and a true gentleman, Jim McBride was the driving force that led to the establishment of Firelands College.

Over the years there have been a few articles about Firelands in At BG and in Monitor, usually on an anniversary of the institution. We’ve told of the incredible success story that led to building the campus—how everyone worked so hard to see the idea of a BGU branch become a reality; it was a real grassroots fundraising effort.

But behind every initiative such as this, there is someone leading the way, working tirelessly to see the dream become a reality. That person was Jim McBride. Knowing the history of the birth of Firelands, it is easy to imagine that the campus might not exist without him.

Jim taught many things. When I was considering coming back to work for the University and taking a substantial pay cut, Jim helped me make the decision. He told me that when he took the job to head a campus that didn’t even exist, he took a 30 percent pay cut from his superintendent position. Despite leaning toward taking my current job, Jim’s reasoning in his own situation made the difference. But, in his usual way, it was not even a gentle push he gave me. It was, rather, fatherly advice, wise guidance for someone whose life seemed temporarily clouded.

This paper could be filled with wonderful stories of Jim McBride by those who have known and worked with him since he became part of the BGU family. I feel honored to be able to tell one that I think is indicative of his genuinely gentle nature.

On Thanksgiving day, while most of us are eating to the point of discomfort, Jim and his lovely wife Margaret, an equally wonderful human being, always did something radically different. Nature lovers, they took a hike in a favorite woods and returned home to a meal of bread and soup. While they were eating, they gave thanks for all that they had and reflected on those in the world who had far less than that bread and soup. Few folks, these two.

Jim’s qualities of perfectionist, teacher, leader, sage and gentle man can serve as a model in our interactions with colleagues and friends. Jim’s name will live on at Firelands in the auditorium and in the campus map carrying the McBride appellation. He’d be happy if those who knew him, respected him and loved him would remember him with a gift to the arboretum on the campus that could well be called McBride College."
After the strike, books are arriving for fall classes

It wasn’t an act of God, but it brought much of the nation to a virtual standstill. And how can a school year begin without textbooks? So when John Buckenmyer, director of the University Bookstore, 

"We’re processing and shelving hundreds of cartons of books each day. We’re dealing with each publisher on an individual, almost order-by-order basis.”
— John Buckenmyer

learned that the 15-day UPS strike ended Aug. 18, he responded with one word: "Yes!" He knew help was on the way.

"It’s very typical to say, ‘Let’s ship it UPS,’” he said, adding that the strike affected the entire shipping industry, causing other delivery services to limit the amount of cargo they would pick up from a given site.

At the bookstore, the strike “affected all deliveries,” he said, creating frustra-

Get the point?

Janice Mentrup, a freshman from Cincinnati, receives some pointers from Tom Piccirillo, head coach of the women's soccer team, just in time for BGSU's first-ever varsity women's soccer competition. The inaugural scrimmage game took place Aug. 22 against Siena Heights at Cochrane Field. The action continues against Findlay (Aug. 25, 6 p.m.) and the first regular-season home game, against Louisville (Aug. 31, 2 p.m.).

job postings

FACULTY
Assistant professor - psychology. Four full-time, tenure-track positions in clinical (behavioral medicine); cognitive (computational/neural networks); developmental (adult development and aging), and developmental (child/adolescent social development). Call 2-2301. Deadline: Nov. 2.
Please contact human resources, 2-8421, for information regarding the following listings:
Classified
Posting expiration date for employees to apply: noon, Friday, Aug. 29.
Student Services Counselor (8-29-1) - bursar's office. Pay grade 7.

ADMINISTRATIVE
Assistant Registrar (M-052) - registration and records. Deadline: Sept. 12.
Coordinator of music admissions (V-050) - arts and sciences. Deadline: Sept. 30.
Development officer (V-046) - arts and sciences. Deadline: Sept. 8.

Continuing Events

August 24-30
Welcome week. For a complete list of welcome week activities, visit the BGSU Web site at http://events.bgsu.edu/bin/list?search=welcome+week.

‘August 27 – September 18’
Art exhibit, Northwest Ohio Collects It, contemporary art showcasing treasures of the fine art collectors of northwest Ohio. Gallery hours: Tuesday-Saturday, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., Sunday 2-5 p.m., closed holidays, Dorothy Uber Bryan Gallery, Fine Arts Center.

Art exhibit, A Certain Style, "Sound Suits" and "Fetish Works" by Chicago artist Nick Cave and photographs by Dennis Haggerty documenting "biker" style. Hours: see above item, Willard Wankelman Gallery, Fine Arts Center.

Administrative Staff Council
Fall 1997 Reception
Wednesday, September 10
3-5 p.m., Miletii Alumni Center

- Welcome to all new administrative staff members
- Refreshments
- Presentation of 1997 Michael Ferrari Award
- Recognition of past chair and secretary
- Recognition of ASC scholarship recipients

— Monitor Staff

Bob Walker, University Bookstore, checks in the latest shipment of books. With the UPS strike over, more books are on their way.

In two weeks and two days, the store received a paltry 27, Buckenmyer said. But the store and its suppliers kept books coming through alternative arrangements, such as second-day delivery and motor freight.

"Also, the Post Office had many more cartons for us than ever before," he added. The result? "I think we'll be able to provide the majority of books for classes this fall," Buckenmyer said, although "it's hard to say if books for a particular course or class or order will be available.

"A lot we already have," he added, explaining that the big orders and used books purchased through wholesalers tend to arrive through motor freight, not UPS.

"Used books typically can be delivered more quickly than books ordered through a publisher so we will continue to use used books," Walker said. "We're processing and shelving hundreds of cartons of books each day," he added. "We're dealing with each publisher on an individual, almost order-by-order basis, and publishers are trying to get books to us as quickly as they can.

The brown UPS trucks, of course, have already begun returning to the bookstore loading dock, just in time for BGSU's first week. For a complete list of welcome week activities, visit the BGSU Web site at http://events.bgsu.edu/bin/list?search=welcome+week.

Monday, August 25
Opening day convocation, 9 a.m. refreshments. 9:30 a.m. President's address, Lenhart Grand Ballroom of the Student Union. Free.

Tuesday, August 26
All-campus picnic, lunch and entertainment for students, staff and faculty, 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m., front lawn of University Hall. Free.

Wednesday, August 27
Classes start.

Saturday, August 30
Movie, Private Parties: Sponsor: University Activities Organization, 8 p.m. and 11 p.m., 111 Oscamp Hall. Free.

Friday, August 29
Movie, Private Parties: Sponsor: University Activities Organization, 8 p.m. and 11 p.m., 111 Oscamp Hall. Free.

Monday, September 1
Labor Day holiday. No classes.

Thursday, August 28
Comedian/juggler Bill Fry, 8 p.m., Lenhart Grand Ballroom, Student Union.

Wednesday, August 27
Classes start.

Saturday, August 30
Movie, Private Parties: Sponsor: University Activities Organization, 8 p.m. and 11 p.m., 111 Oscamp Hall. Free.

Monday, September 1
Labor Day holiday. No classes.