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Upcoming Events:

- March 18, 2005:
The 2nd Annual Conference on Student Recruitment, Admission and Retention, for Inclusive Excellence (Ballroom)
- April 23, 2005
Diversity Scholarship Luncheon

KENT STATE WELCOMES NEW FACULTY AND STAFF MEMBERS

Good afternoon, everyone! Personally and on behalf of the entire Kent State community, I extend my warmest welcome to each of you as you begin your membership in Kent State's unique learning community. One of the greatest strengths of this community -- and a great source of institution-wide pride -- is the wealth of talent that abounds among a faculty, staff and student body that reflects myriad backgrounds, all parts of the country and nearly 90 nations.

Given the reason for this gathering, I'd like to turn to another source of pride: the steady results of Kent State's ongoing commitment to increasing diversity. Let me be more precise, because increasing diversity is more than a commitment. It's one of Kent State's top priorities. And it's a critical part of the new university strategic plan -- a plan based on more than 100 unit discussions in which more than 1,400 individuals participated; and one that we will begin translating into action this semester. In fact, the plan specifies that "valuing people with diverse backgrounds and strengths as the center of our work" is among Kent State's core values.

I encourage those of you who are new to Kent State to take time to familiarize yourself with the university strategic plan, as well as related initiatives such as the Academic Quality Improvement Project. Detailed information about each is a mouse click away on the university's Web site.

Both these blueprints for building Kent State's future direct us to provide an environment that enhances learning and supports success. As I see it, and as the university's leadership sees it, building such an environment must include building diversity -- in our curriculum, in our classrooms and in our workforce.

In addition to what we know instinctively -- that every member of our community deserves to feel welcome, included and respected -- research confirms that diverse campuses and diverse classrooms yield important benefits. For example, *emerging research shows a strong link between diverse learning environments and students' development of critical-thinking and problem-solving skills*. Employers support these findings, noting that diverse work groups generate more innovative solutions to problems than homogeneous groups.

As part of ongoing efforts to create an optimum environment for all who live, study and work on our eight campuses, we've been working diligently to recruit minority faculty, staff and students. For example, Provost Paul Gaston has been spearheading a multi-faceted staffing initiative focused on hiring for diversity. With the added leadership of deans, chairs and directors on every campus, this effort has yielded results that signal we're heading in the right direction. For example, although budget realities did not permit us to hire a large number of new faculty members, 22 percent of the 96 full-time faculty members who joined Kent State during the last year are colleagues of color, as are 11 percent of the newest full-time administrative staff members. Of course, as we work to increase these numbers, we're equally intent on increasing the ranks of students of color. In the last five years, the number of minority students here on the Kent Campus has increased nearly 20 percent.

I would note that keeping every one of our new students and new hires is as important to us as getting you here in the first place. This reception is one of several activities that reflect a commitment to supporting you from the day you arrive. In addition, our vice provost for Diversity and Academic Initiatives, Dr. Steve Michael, is a "doctor" who makes house calls! In this case, he makes it a point to meet with every minority faculty member during the fall semester to ensure that your transition to life at Kent State is going smoothly.

(Continued on Page 2)



Dr. Carol A. Cartwright
President

Provost Corner

Since the establishment of the Office of Diversity and Academic Initiatives, many diversity activities have become permanent features of our Campus. These activities include an annual minority faculty and staff reception, a diversity retreat for members of diversity advisory committees, retention meetings with new minority faculty, exit interviews, Martin Luther King, Jr. celebration, diversity workshops, diversity-related mini conferences, diversity scholarship luncheon and dinner, and supplier diversity program. All these activities, commendable as they are, will amount to very little without concrete improvement in our institutional culture. While Kent State's climate affects every member of the community, each of us has a role in transforming the culture by ensuring a more inclusive workplace, promoting civility among members of the community, and advocating the richness that only diversity can bring. Each of us has a role in creating an environment in which everyone feels welcome and appreciated. Let us move beyond a climate that tolerates differences to a climate that welcomes and affirms differences.



Dr. Paul L. Gaston
Provost

Let Freedom Ring: A Reflection on the January 27th Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration

President Carol Cartwright said that the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was important for Kent State University and its surrounding community. Therefore, she established a task force charged with the planning of the MLK celebration three years ago. This January Kent State University enjoyed its third annual celebration.

For those who attended this year's event, there was a common theme in responses to the question, "Did the day represent who Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was?" Overwhelmingly, the answer was "Yes." Ms. Shana Lee, Director of the Student Multicultural Center said, "A broader picture of Dr. King's vision was represented." She felt that the day took a new direction and was representative not only of black issues, but issues of today that Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. would have had an interest in, such as same sex marriages and the war in Iraq. (Continued on Page 3)

KENT STATE WELCOMES NEW FACULTY AND STAFF MEMBERS, Continued from Page 1

As part of your transition, I encourage you to take time to continue to explore all that Kent State has to offer. As I'm sure you're finding, this is a campus -- and a campus community -- that not only provides a beautiful physical environment, but that provides a remarkable range of educational, cultural and recreational resources for you and your families. We want you to enjoy them!

As you become more familiar with Kent and Kent State, I'm confident that, like me, you'll be glad that you joined this dynamic community. As I said in my inaugural address: "I am happy to be a part of the Kent State mosaic: always reconstructing itself from an endless variety of complementary talents -- an abundance of ethnic, racial, economic and social histories -- and a wealth of intelligences, personalities and glorious idiosyncrasies. Their mingling ensures invigorating conflicts, joyous resolutions and delight in every flash of color, reflection, perception, as each element of the mosaic preserves and enhances its own identity and integrity, while simultaneously enhancing the identity, integrity and beauty of the whole."

Those words are as true today as they were when I spoke them more than 13 years ago. Whether you are among the newest members of our community or one of the many faculty and staff members who have made a life here, you are a vital part of the magnificent mosaic that is Kent State University.

Thank you.

Remarks at the New Minority Faculty and Staff Luncheon on October 15th, 2004.

Carol A. Cartwright

University Policy Regarding Unlawful Discrimination and Harassment

The Board of Trustees recently approved a new university policy regarding unlawful discrimination and harassment. The new policy which became effective on February 10, 2005 consolidates the harassment and sexual harassment policies; specifies behaviors that constitute racial/ethnic harassment, sexual harassment, disability discrimination and other discriminatory harassment; and provides a single process for handling all complaints related to unlawful discrimination and harassment.

The university policy was developed with the leadership of the Director of Affirmative Action, Ann Penn, and the Vice Provost for Diversity and Academic Initiatives, Dr. Steve Michael, who sought input from a broad spectrum of faculty, staff and student representatives.

(Continued on Page 3)



Ann Penn
Director,
Affirmative Action

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Supplier Diversity: What is it?

If you have never heard of the concept called “supplier diversity,” this is a good opportunity not only to learn about it but to become an ally. Simply put, supplier diversity is an institutional plan aimed at broadening relationships with the business sector by increasing the participation of underrepresented businesses such as Minority Business Enterprises, Women Owned Business, and Historically, Economically, and Socially Under-utilized Businesses. Ohio law requires government agencies (including public institutions) to set aside 15 percent of their annual expendable budget for Minority Business Enterprises and to report annually on this initiative.

In line with our *commitment to becoming a national model of diversity at its best*, we have undertaken a model supplier diversity program at Kent State University. A full detail of this plan can be accessed on our supplier diversity website: <http://www.kent.edu/procurement/supplier-diversity>, I encourage you to visit the website.

Model supplier diversity programs have certain features in common:

- a) they are derived from institutional mission and they reflect institutional values,
- b) they are fully supported by institutional leadership (from the President to department chairs, and from the Provost and vice presidents to unit coordinators),
- c) they are flexible and adaptive to a unit’s situation. Therefore, in a decentralized procurement environment, each unit sets its own annual goal to achieve, but all units work toward incremental progress,
- d) they have provision for internal and external educational programs aimed at increasing awareness and changing behaviors of buyers or decision makers as well as of vendors,
- e) they contain strategic indicators, an accountability plan, and a progress report that is made public annually, and
- f) they lead to richer and expanded relationships with underrepresented businesses, increased choices, improved product quality, a better service quality, lower procurement costs, and stronger and deeper goodwill.

You can become an ally by i) spreading the news of this program and recruiting Minority Business Enterprises and Women Business Enterprises to do business with Kent State, ii) encouraging vendors to visit the website provided above, iii) helping your unit set supplier diversity goals and assisting in achieving these goals, and iv) contacting me or Vice President David Creamer or the Procurement Office with suggestions and comments that can improve Kent State Supplier Diversity Initiative.

Steve O. Michael



Dr. Steve O. Michael
Vice Provost

Let Freedom Ring, Continued from Page 2

The day long event began with a competition of area high school students whose work represented the message of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The submissions were divided into three categories: poetry, essay, and fine art, and were reviewed by a panel of judges. Prizes were awarded in each category for first through third places. Performances by the Crestwood and Buchtel high school choirs were the highlight of the morning.

The afternoon featured keynote speaker Pastor Aaron Wheeler, Sr., Chairman of the Ohio Civil Rights Commission, who spoke on the need to return to family values and how children should be rewarded for resisting the “pop-culture” influence. Also in the afternoon, a distinguished panel discussion focused on the question, “Is Freedom in Peril?” and many students were in attendance. The evening activities were also well received, as local church choirs were spotlighted with their heartwarming performances. Mr. Alfred K. Leak gave a recitation of the “The Drum Major Instinct.” Graduate Student Bryan Bedford stated that, “If you closed your eyes and listened you would swear it was Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. speaking.” Chas Baker and the KSU Jazz Ensemble wrapped up the event with featured selections such as “Small Talk” by Sammy Nestico/Count Basie, “Even The Flowers Are Weeping” by Joze Privsek, and “Cub Tones” by Chas Baker.

Dr. Steve O. Michael, Vice Provost for Diversity feels that Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was represented through this event, “By focusing on the message of freedom, non-violence, and community progress.” He further stated that, “You cannot separate Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. from his message. Every time we focus on his message we are indeed honoring his life and legacy.”

Pamela Davis
Graduate Student
Higher Education Administration

University Policy Regarding Unlawful Discrimination and Harassment, Continued from Page 2

Considerable time and effort was invested in reviewing unlawful harassment policies and practices from comparable institutions, meeting with various campus groups and individuals, participating in policy debates and editing draft documents.

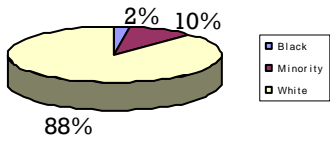
The policy prohibits unlawful discrimination and harassment based on race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, age, or identity as a disabled veteran or veteran of the Vietnam era. The policy emphasizes Kent State University’s commitment to providing a discrimination-free environment for students and employees and encouraging an atmosphere in which the diversity of its members is understood and appreciated.

Ann Penn

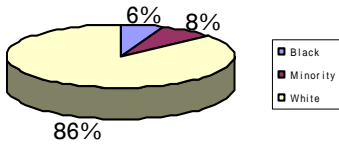
The Data Speaks

Total Minority Tenure by Race

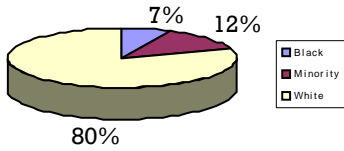
Full Professor



Associate Professor

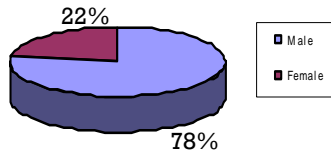


Assistant Professor

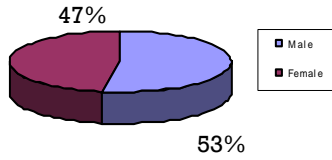


Total Minority Tenure by Gender

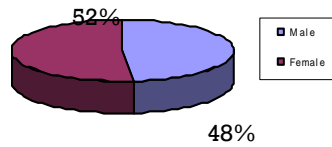
Full Professor



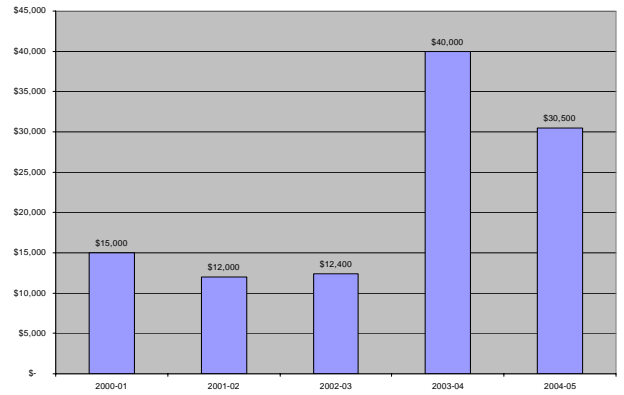
Associate Professor



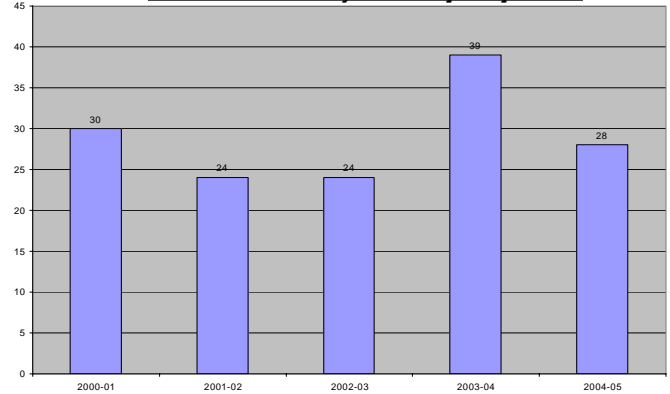
Assistant Professor



Total Scholarship Amount



Number of Diversity Scholarship Recipients



RPIE, 2004



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Office of the Provost

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