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Achieving Administrator Diversity. ERIC Digest.

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Community colleges are enrolling significant numbers of students from Latino, African American, and Asian American backgrounds. However, community colleges have not achieved the same degree of diversity among their leaders as they have among their

students; administrators have remained predominately white. One of the key challenges facing these institutions in the 1990s is the development of leadership that represents the diversity of these schools' students and local constituents.

Based on the publication, "Achieving Administrative Diversity, New Directions for Community Colleges, Number 94," this digest reviews the current status of minority administrators, describes pathways to administration for minorities, discusses steps community colleges can take to improve minority administrator recruitment and retention, and offers resource programs and organizations.

STATUS OF MINORITY ADMINISTRATORS

In a 1991 survey of 1,097 community college presidents, Vaughan (1996) found that 89% were white, 4.5% were African American, 3% were Latino, 1.8% were Native American, and 1.7% belonged to other minority groups, including Asian American. He also found that there were few minorities on the traditional path to the presidency; 57% of all community college presidents had been a chief academic officer before becoming president while only 7% of all chief academic officers were minorities. Furthermore, there were few minorities in the teaching ranks; in 1990 only 10% of all full-time community college faculty were minorities.

Why is there a lag in minority representation? According to Phelps and Taber (1996), there are several reasons: weak or indifferent recruitment practices, lack of commitment to diversity, lack of training programs, and institutional racism. Moreover, the majority of community colleges are located in predominately white suburban and rural areas.

PATHWAYS TO ADMINISTRATION FOR MINORITIES

There is no single pathway to administration. Two current minority administrators who wrote for this volume "accidentally" found themselves in leadership roles. Bowen (1996) was an assistant professor of biology when, during the unrest of 1968, students requested an African American administrator on campus. He was asked to become the Special Assistant to the President for Minority Affairs. Similarly, in the late 1960s Cortada (1996) was teaching and researching medieval and modern European history when he was asked to join the Associate Provost's office. As Cortada observes, "the next generation will have to structure their careers more deliberately" (p. 63).

Several programs have been established to help minority group members structure their careers and become community college administrators. Pierce, Mahoney, and Kee (1996) found three types of professional development opportunities: university-based programs, programs offered by higher education associations, and those offered by minority higher education organizations.

In the U.S. and Canada, there are approximately sixty graduate programs that

emphasize the study of community colleges. Some courses of study devoted to leadership are also based at universities, such as the Community College Leadership Program (CCLP) at the University of Texas, Austin (which leads to an Ed.D. or Ph.D.), the Leadership Institute of a New Century (LINC) at Iowa State University, and the University of Kentucky Community College System Leadership Academy.

Several higher education associations offer seminars, internship programs, and workshops designed to improve management and leadership skills. The American Association of Community Colleges (AACC), the American Council on Education (ACE), and the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) all sponsor programs that range from workshops held at their national conventions to year-long Fellows programs.

To recruit and encourage prospective minority administrators, minority-centered higher education groups have offered professional development opportunities. Among these groups are the National Council on Black American Affairs (NCBAA), the National Community College Hispanic Council, the Asian and Pacific Islanders Council, and the American Association for Women in Community Colleges.

IMPROVING MINORITY ADMINISTRATOR RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

Phelps and Taber (1996) offer several recruitment strategies that would allow community colleges to improve minority representation. Recommended strategies include:

- Identify and publicize college goals and timetables for diversity; reward compliance.
- Maintain clear policies and procedures for hiring, tenure, and evaluation.
- Require regular progress reports.
- Enlist the help of consulting organizations that specialize in minority recruitment.
- Give the Equal Employment Opportunity officer enough authority; he or she should report directly to the president and should be taken seriously by the human resources department, appointing authorities, and other administrators.
- Advertise openings in minority community publications; communicate with professional minority organizations, church groups, and other community organizations.
- Offer diversity training for current faculty and staff to create a cordial and inviting workplace.
- Institute sensitive new employee orientation and employee integration plans.

Phelps and Taber indicate that not all members of minority groups are committed to diversity, nor are they necessarily experts on affirmative action.

Vaughan (1996) adds to this list the following recommendations:

- Search for administrative candidates from sources other than the traditional academic pipeline, such as public school superintendents and retiring military officers.
- Provide mentors and sponsors for potential minority candidates.
- Seek qualified candidates; eliminate the words "best qualified".

In addition, Fujimoto (1996) offers the following tactics:

- Encourage minority faculty to participate in administrative activities, such as academic senates and unions.
- Provide professional development leadership opportunities in local, statewide, and national community college organizations.
- Work with the private corporate sector to find funding for innovative projects.

CONCLUSION

By the year 2000, one out of every three Americans will be non-white (Muller, 1996). As the United States becomes more diverse, community colleges have an obligation to teach about and to serve as a model of diversity. Minority leadership in the community college will facilitate achieving these objectives.

REFERENCES

This digest was drawn from "Achieving Administrative Diversity, New Directions for Community Colleges, Number 94," edited by Raymond C. Bowen and Gilbert H. Muller; published in June, 1996. The cited articles include: "Paradox and Promise: Leadership and Neglected Minorities," by George Vaughan; "From the Projects to the Presidency: An African American Odyssey," by Raymond C. Bowen; "The Powers of the Presidency," by Rafael L. Cortada; "The Community College Presidency: An Asian Pacific American Perspective," by M. Jack Fujimoto; "Urban Community Colleges: Gateways to Administrative Diversity," by Gilbert H. Muller; "Affirmative Action as an Equal Opportunity Opportunity," by Donald G. Phelps and Lynn Sullivan Taber; and "Professional Development Resources for Minority Administrators," by David R. Pierce, James R. Mahoney, and Arnold M. Kee.
Professional Development Resources (from Pierce, Mahoney, and Kee, 1996, p. 141-143)

Programs



Community College Leadership Program



University of Texas at Austin



Education Building 348



Austin, TX 78712-1293



John Roueche, Director



512/471-7545





Community College System Leadership Academy



University of Kentucky Community College System



17 Breckinridge Hall



Lexington, KY 40506



Arthur Stumpf, Director



606/257-8607





Leadership Institute of a New Century



Iowa State University



College of Education



Ames, IA 50011



Norene Daly, Director



515/294-4111



Organizations



American Association of Community Colleges



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Washington, D.C. 20036



David Pierce, President



202/728-0200, ext. 238





American Council on Education



One Dupont Circle, N.W., Suite 800



Washington, D.C. 20036



Robert Atwell, President



202/939-9300





American Association of Women in Community Colleges



Amarillo College



P.O. Box 447



Amarillo, TX 79178



Diana Hester Cox, President



806/371-5175





Association of Community College Trustees



1740 N Street, N.W.



Washington, D.C. 20036



Ray Taylor, President



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Asian and Pacific Islanders Council



West Los Angeles College



4800 Freshman Drive



Culver City, CA 90230



Evelyn Wong, President



310/287-4325





National Community College Hispanic Council



Coast Community College District



1370 Adams Avenue



Costa Mesa, CA 92626



William Vega, President



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National Council on Black American Affairs



Wayne County Community College



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