Diversity Initiatives
Status Report
2008-2009
Brown’s Diversity Action Plan is predicated on the idea that academic excellence can only be achieved by fostering the greatest possible mix of ideas, opinions, and beliefs. Successful implementation of such a plan must address the historical exclusion of women and minorities from the academy. We seek to achieve these ends by recruiting faculty, students and staff members with diverse backgrounds, experiences and perspectives and by providing policies and programs designed to maximize retention.

The University has been making consistent progress toward these goals. The first status report, issued in the fall of 2007, outlined a broad set of achievements in all areas of the plan. We identified leadership to execute the plan and made significant progress in the recruitment and retention of diverse populations on campus. That first report also described the many policies and programs created to support our diversity efforts. The initial status report can be viewed at: http://www.brown.edu/Administration/diversity/documents/div-update-0907.pdf

In this second status report, we highlight additional progress and profile notable campus success stories, which have been dependant on the many individuals who enjoy the challenging work of building a robust and diverse community. Please join me in congratulating colleagues who have made impressive efforts to meet our diversity goals.
Faculty Diversity

The faculty has increased by 17% over the past six years. Currently, there are 229 women on the faculty; the proportion of women has grown by 31%, and women now represent 33% of the total faculty (up from 28% only a few short years ago). Minority faculty have grown by 40% to a count of 126, and now constitute 18% of the total faculty.

The Target of Opportunity Program was initiated to provide a permanent pool of funds to bring significantly distinguished senior faculty to the University outside the regular search process. The University has been interested in using the Target of Opportunity Program as one of many vehicles for increasing the presence of women faculty in the Physical Sciences. This effort began in the fall of 2004. At that time, women represented only 9% of the faculty in the physical sciences (14 of 154 faculty members). Currently, 25 of 182 faculty in the physical sciences are women, representing 12% or a 79% change. Some of this increase is credited to the good work done in the departments during regular hiring seasons (as noted in the example of the Chemistry Department, See Box One) and some is the result of successful recruitments under the Target of Opportunity Program.

Over the past few years, the University has implemented several new programs designed to support faculty retention. Rajiv Vohra, Dean of the Faculty, established a travel fund to support dependent care expenses associated with professional travel and established an “automatic stop the clock” policy to extend the probationary period for primary caregivers who become new parents. Brown has joined the New England Higher Education Recruitment Consortium to provide assistance with job placement for dual career couples and faculty who are relocating to Providence and New England. The University also conducted a study of the child care needs of faculty and staff. The University acted on the report’s findings by establishing access to low-cost back-up care to bridge temporary breakdowns in care arrangements for children or dependent adults. Additional improvements can be viewed on a new website created to highlight the many family friendly policies and programs available to the Brown faculty.

Box One

THE DEPARTMENT OF CHEMISTRY

In 2004-2005, the Department of Chemistry at Brown counted just two females and three minority faculty on its roster of twenty. Today, those counts have more than doubled and much of the progress can be attributed to the leadership of Professor Peter Weber, who assumed the chair of the department in 2004. Under his watch, the department has hired three new women and four new minority faculty members in just four short years.

Professor Weber employed many of the best strategies outlined for increasing faculty diversity. Most notable is his use of active recruitment strategies. Searches to fill assistant professor positions typically combine broad advertisement and inquiries about promising graduate students among colleagues. Weber is deliberate in asking about women and minority candidates during this outreach but is quick to point out that he is always searching for the best scholars. Each time Professor Weber looked to fill a vacancy, outstanding pools made it easy to select the candidate who demonstrated expertise, innovative scholarship, and skilled, enthusiastic teaching. Women and minorities have been well represented in those pools because of his outreach efforts. When faced with great choices, the faculty in Chemistry have consistently ranked women and minorities as the top candidates.

Many have asked about Professor Weber’s leadership in this area and what motivates his efforts. A partial answer may be found in an anecdote relayed to Brenda Allen by one of Professor Weber’s colleagues. This colleague was in the lab the day Professor Weber brought his daughter into work. “The spark in his little girl’s eyes spoke louder and more forcefully than any research article could ever convey about significance of young women seeing women doing science.”

Professor Weber is reluctant to accept praise for improving the diversity of his department. He suggests success is measured by the students who benefit from the mentoring, training, and teaching provided by these new professors.
Diversity Among Undergraduate Students

Brown has long honored the goal of maintaining a diverse student body. These efforts began in earnest in the late 1960’s and continue thru the present. Racial and ethnic minorities make up 31% of the current undergraduates population. Indeed the Class of 2012 was the most diverse in Brown’s history, with students of color representing 35% of the class and first-generation college students representing 15%. Additionally, a record number of international students are in the Class of 2012 (10%), which can be attributed to efforts to greatly expand our international recruitment program. In addition to an array of established destinations, admission officers made trips to schools in Africa, Asia and Central and South America.

The University used a gift provided by Idan Ofer to establish a $5 million fund to enhance the ability of students from Sub-Saharan African nations to study at Brown and return to their countries upon graduation to help address some of the continent’s critical needs.

We have experienced record increases in the number of applications to the College and from African American and Hispanic students in particular. These increased applications have yielded record numbers of Latino students in the last few incoming classes (7.6% in 2001 versus 9.3% in 2008 %). Asian American students in the incoming classes have gone from 12.9 in 2001 to 17.9 in 2007. Increased numbers of applications from African Americans resulted in an initial boost in the number of incoming students (6.7% in 2001 versus 7.5% in 2006), but this increase has not been sustained in successive admission cycles (6.7% in 2008). Efforts to address this trend are highlighted in Box Two.

Since last year, we have enrolled 57 additional Sidney E. Frank ‘42 Scholars bringing the total to 119 students from very low socio-economic backgrounds. Some of this success is owed to the increased number of low-income students who were flown to campus as a part of “A Day on College Hill” during the 2007-2008 admission yield activities. Also, the university recently reported receipt of a $25.6 million gift from the late Eleanor H. Schwartz ’29 and Frederic N. Schwartz to support scholarships for women.

Box Two

INCREASING THE PRESENCE OF AFRICAN AMERICAN UNDERGRADUATES

In a recent survey conducted by the Journal of Blacks in Higher Education, Brown was ranked second to the last in the Ivy League for the percentage of Black students enrolled in its most recent class. Columbia ranked first among its peers with 12.1% Black students in its first year class compared to 6.7% for Brown.

Over the last decade, the number of applications from African Americans has shown a steady increase, as has the number of African Americans offered admission to the College. The yield (number of African American matriculants to Brown) from these offers, however, has not consistently improved. The net result is that the actual percentage of African Americans in the incoming classes has remained pretty constant.

The Office of Admission has recently partnered with members of the Inman Page Black Alumni Council and members of the Diversity Advisory Council to address the yield issues among African American applicants. Plans include increasing alumni participation in the recruitment of African American students, especially their involvement in yield events, as well as efforts to involve more faculty in the recruitment process.

More on Financial Aid is highlighted in Box Three.
Diversity and the Medical School

The Office of Minority Medical Affairs (OMMA) at Brown was established in 1981 to recruit, select and educate minority medical students and to increase awareness around cultural competence and diversity. Currently, 45% of the medical student body are people of color and 17% are underrepresented minorities (URM - African American, Latino and Native American). Other accomplishments and highlights include:

- Our flagship program, Daniel Hale Williams Medical Society (DHWMS) of the Student National Medical Association, recently hosted a successful regional medical conference entitled "The Color of Medicine: Eliminating Health Disparities through Education, Prevention, and Advocacy" with 127 attendees from Harvard, Yale and, Boston University, among others. This spring, we celebrated our annual health fair which provides free health care services to areas that are economically disadvantaged. DHWMS also offers mentorship and support to local high school students through tutoring, shadowing, and the Meet the Cadaver program.
- The Interpreter's Aide Program, established in 1988, under the direction of the OMMA, has over 30 active Spanish interpreters assisting patients and their families at RI Hospital to better navigate the health care system.
- The Diversity Scholars Program (inaugurated in 2007) recognized four students who showed promise as future leaders and agents of change. These students were awarded funds to assist in research or service efforts to promote social, economic, moral and cultural issues that guide public policy and influence health and health care delivery.

A mentoring program is being formalized between existing medical students at AMS and faculty, friends, and alumni.

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**Box Three
Financial Aid**

The Class of 2007 was the first group admitted to the University under the need-blind program. Prior to going need-blind, the percentage of students on financial aid was about 36%. Currently, 41% of undergraduates receive need-based aid.

The University has made further improvements to its financial aid program. In 2008, Brown announced new financial aid policies that eliminate loan requirements for students whose family income is below $100,000 and eliminate family contributions from most students whose families earn below $60,000. In addition, the new policy reduces the need for loans from students in all other income categories. As a result of these improvements, the number of students whose aid packages included a zero annual parental contribution rose from 12% to 34%. Additionally, the number of aided students whose financial aid packages include no loans rose from 6% to 61% of the aided population.

These improvements have increased the average University scholarship award to students with financial need by more than 22%. Recent improvements to the financial aid program supplement existing initiatives such as the Sidney E. Frank '42 Scholars Program that eliminated loans for the neediest students and increased aid for transfer students, Resumed Undergraduate Education (RUE) students and international students.
Diversity Among the Graduate Students

The Graduate School has witnessed success in its efforts to increase the racial/ethnic diversity among its student population. Valerie Wilson, Associate Dean of the Graduate School, oversees programs related to minority graduate student recruitment and retention. The Graduate School has created programs to make Brown more accessible to potential applicants and they sponsor many programs designed to build a welcoming community to new students.

In 2007-2008, Sheila Bonde, Dean of the Graduate School, led a working group charged with assessing various programs in the graduate school. In its review of attrition data, the working group was struck by the patterns of attrition among minority and international students. The dean has proposed an Early Start program that would welcome all interested incoming international graduate students to campus on July 15 for English-language training, cultural immersion and orientation to the American higher education system. It would also provide a structure for all interested incoming minority students or students coming from non-research institutions, enabling a summer laboratory rotation, research experience or other skills training. Finally, it would provide a coordinated venue for departmental training sessions and for summer language training for all students.

Supporting Campus Diversity

Another goal of the Diversity Action Plan is to ensure that the University is providing mechanisms to support its growing diversity. These efforts include the creation of policies and procedures designed to help manage conflict often associated with increased interactions among people from diverse backgrounds as well as programs to support the needs of various groups within the college environment. Chief among these efforts was the creation of Discrimination and Harassment Policy and Procedures, which provide a clear avenues for resolving complaints and fostered the development of policies related to gender neutral housing and restrooms.

Structural improvements have also been implemented in support of diversity. The Office of Disability Support Services was expanded to include the coordination of support for faculty and staff in addition to student support. In this regard, the position of the Director was upgraded and an Assistant Director position was created. Through the Diversity Advisory Board, both the Campus Access Advisory Committee and the Committee on LGBTQ concerns were formed to designate responsibility for reviewing issues in these areas. Positions in the Office of Student Life and the Office of the Dean of the College were created to ensure leadership for these diversity programs. Additionally, the University increased the funding for LGBTQ Resource Center, the Third World Center and the Sara Doyle Women’s Center. These increased resources include additional staffing in the Third World Center and supported an increase in the number of Minority Peer Counselors. The faculty ombudsman position was created to provide the faculty with an impartial, confidential, informal and independent place to discuss problems and seek guidance and support.

Finally, over the past several years, the University has increased opportunities for faculty, students and staff to learn about diversity-related issues. This includes many diversity workshops sponsored by Human Resources, as well as sexual harassment training sessions offered by the Office of Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action. The Office of Student Life and the Third World Center have increased the diversity related training for its leaders and there has been an overall increase in the amount of diversity programming in the residences.
Staff Diversity at Brown

The diversity action plan has a goal of substantially improving diversity among staff members in upper management and specific areas of the University where various groups continue to be underrepresented. The approach to achieving these goals has been to ensure that department heads make concerted efforts to recruit women, minorities, and veterans to open positions. The Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action (EEO/AA) office has worked with several units to devise strategic plans and goals for addressing diversity among the staff. The plans generally call for broad outreach during recruitment and provide resources to help departments think about methods for cultivating relationships with groups and organizations that may support efforts to recruit women and minorities to open positions at the University. Most recently, EEO/AA has worked with the University Library, the Division of Advancement and the Division of Biology and Medicine to design strategies for recruiting applicants to open positions.

Through these and many other efforts, the diversity statistics among the staff continue to improve.

The percentages of women and minorities continue to grow at Brown, but the University continues to fall short of expectations in specific areas. The concept of underutilization defines expectations from the perspective of the federal government. All employers who receive federal contracts are required to monitor its workforce for the underutilization of women and minorities. A workforce is considered underutilized when the percentage of women and or minorities within a specified job category is less than the percentage of these groups available in the general workforce. Special efforts like those highlighted in Box Four are helping Brown make progress in some areas of historical underutilization. The University continues to struggle with gender diversity in areas such as executive managers, athletic coaches, engineers, library professional, physicians, mechanics and food service workers. Racial diversity continues to be a challenge in most mid-level management positions including administrative professional, athletic coaches, computer professionals, engineers, fundraisers, library professionals, physicians and student service professionals. Researchers in biology and medicine as well as protective services also struggle to achieve diversity as expected by the utilization statistics.
Staff and students contributed to this newsletter.

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