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"RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OF FACULTY OF COLOR IN HIGHER EDUCATION"

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"The faculty of the future must reflect the diversity of the population served by colleges and universities. For this reason, immediate action needs to be taken to ensure that the faculty position is attractive to minorities."

Even though the millennium is here, the country continues to struggle with the challenge of becoming a diverse society. Our society takes pride in the opportunities for mobility offered to its citizens, however, inequities based on ethnic and racial differences continue to exist, particularly in higher education. With affirmative action gradually losing support, race-based scholarships under inspection, and efforts to achieve diversity and equity in higher education contested, there is an immediate need to reexamine the issues of successful recruitment and retention of faculty of color in academia. For this reason, the purpose of this paper is to discuss the issue of recruitment and retention of faculty of color in higher education.

Statistics show a small participation rate of minorities in the educational system. In 1995, data from the U.S. Department of Education showed that twelve point nine percent (12.9%) of all minorities were full time faculty in higher education. African Americans accounted for 5% (half of these are at Historically Black Colleges and Universities), Asian Americans accounted for 5.1 %, Hispanics accounted for 2.4%, and American Indians accounted for 0.4%. This disparity commands urgent attention by every institution of higher learning in the country.

Nevertheless, it is known that there are many challenges to the successful recruitment and retention of faculty of color. These challenges include significant barriers within academia itself that discourages people of color from becoming productive and satisfied members of the professorate. These barriers include (1) isolation and lack of mentoring, (2) occupational stress, (3) devaluation of "minority" research, (4) the "token hire" misconception, (5) racial and ethnic bias in recruiting and hiring, and (6) racial and ethnic bias in tenure and promotion practices and policies.

There are three prominent factors that help to explain the underrepresentation of people of color as faculty members in higher education. These factors are the pipeline problem, the market-forces problem and the "chilly-climate" problem.

In their efforts to recruit faculty of color, there are a variety of ways in which universities can be effective. Some effective strategies are keeping an open mind in evaluating the

credential of minority candidates, having minority professionals on search and interview committees, using minority media in recruitment campaigns, and implementing programs that aggressively seek well-qualified minority candidates.

Not only is it necessary to recruit faculty of color, but more importantly, it is essential to devote resources for their retention. Activities should be schedule that requires all faculty members to interact, such as diversity training and staff development programs. Minority faculty should be incorporated in the decision making process of the university, teaching assignments should be mainstreamed, and they should be included in all facets of campus life and activities.

The faculty of the future must reflect the diversity of the population served by colleges and universities. For this reason, immediate action needs to be taken to ensure that the faculty position is attractive to minorities. Quite a few organizations, foundations and universities have developed graduate school pipeline programs to recruit, fund, retain and position people of color to join the professorate. These programs include the Preparing Future Faculty Program, the Mellon Minority Undergraduate Fellowship and the Ronald E. McNair PostBaccalaureate Achievement Program. Universities should advocate for the continuation of these preparatory programs because they facilitate the link of minority students to the professorate.

With a diverse faculty, student would be allowed to learn how to overcome stereotypes and prejudices from childhood. However, for faculty of color to succeed in higher education, supportive networks and mentoring opportunities are needed. Administrators and faculty members at institutions of higher learning, particularly those who serve on tenure and promotion committees, must educate themselves to recognize the value of nontraditional scholarship, teaching and service. When responsibilities are placed on new faculty to adjust, accommodate and sacrifice to traditional scholarship, teaching, and service, the institution risks losing the intellectual vitality faculty of color have to offer.

Presenters:

Kimarie Engerman is presently pursuing a Doctor of Philosophy degree at Howard University. She has earned a Master's of Education in Educational Psychology from Howard University in May 1999. Additionally, she earned a Bachelor of Science in Psychology from Bowie State University in May 1997. Ms. Engerman has been named a Frederick Douglass Scholar in the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences at Howard University. Ms. Engerman has made a firm commitment to obtain a doctoral degree and to join the professorate upon graduation. She is a fellow in the Preparing Future Faculty Program at Howard University and was a Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Scholar at Bowie State University. Ms. Engerman also was a participant in the Summer Pre Graduate Research Experience (SPGRE) program and the Minority Undergraduate Research Assistant Program (MURAP) at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Ms. Engerman's research interests are peer relationships, academic achievement, and drug abuse.

Ms. Rhonda Waller is currently enrolled in the Ph.D. program in Educational

Psychology at Howard University in Washington, D.C. She is a graduate of Spelman College and Clark-Atlanta University in Atlanta, Georgia. Ms. Waller's research interests include Learning and Cognition of Pre-School Children; Brain Development; Prenatal through Age Three; and Recruitment and Retention of Faculty of Color at Institutions of Higher Education. Ms. Waller is currently a fellow in the Preparing Future Faculty Program at Howard University and is focusing on entering the professorate once she completes her doctoral studies. She currently works as a Family Service Coordinator for the Edward C. Mazique Parent Child Center-Early Head Start Program in Washington, D.C. and is the mother of a very active 3 year old.