

**President's Commission on Affirmative Action, Equal Opportunity and Diversity
General Meeting
October 1, 2014**

Attendance: E. Abreu, A. Alvarez, M. Cascarano, M. Coleman Carter, M. Colon, J. Cutler, J. Delete, E. Delgado, C. Drost, N. Duarte, B. Edwards, R. Gano, A. Gomez, H. Haines, D. Harris, F. Hines, A. Jeffers, D. Keiser, S. Mahoney, J. Malloy, C. Meneghin, B. Milton, R. Narasimhan, L. Petrozzello, J. Penney, D. Phillips-Clark, W. Poon, M. Re, C. Reyes-Cuevas, D. Rodak, D. Rogers, T. Seaboch, K. Smith, N. Vastola, L. Whitaker, R. White, A. Wilson

I. Welcome:

Meneghin called meeting at 12:05 p.m.

a. President Cole's Annual Charge

President Cole noted that MSU graduates report positively on the diversity of our campus community and the quality of MSU's education. President Cole believes we can do more by offering in order to support the University's goal. She emphasized that we each have a role at the University.

President Cole recommend that the Commission think about 2 to 3 practical goals we can accomplish this year as a way to contribute to a better campus environment. She ended by stating that she values the work we do and that it is important to the campus community. President Cole welcomes our ideas and proposals.

II. Old Business

a. Sponsorship

Cottle reported that sponsorship funds will be provided for two EOF conferences- the Young Women's Leadership Conference in November and the Boys to Men Conference in March 2015. A motion was accepted to support both conferences with a \$750 contribution for each. Additional sponsorship funds are available, and members were encouraged to inform the Commission if a sponsorship opportunity is available.

b. Justice Sotomayor

Meneghin updated that the Commission continues to try to get Justice Sotomayor to visit MSU. VP Cutler sent an email request to President Cole's office personnel. The goal is to schedule the visit, even if it occurs next in Fall 2015.

c. Lactation Room(s)

Milton updated that the Commission has been dealing with this issue since 2010. The problem is that we need a room that can be used on evenings and weekends. Cutler suggested we look at benchmark institutions to see what they are doing in regards to lactation rooms. He further suggested that we look at the law and also see what the needs are. It was emphasized that this issue be acted on quickly, since staff members have been approached by students regarding the lack of adequate lactation rooms. Members Cascarano, Hines, Milton and Cutler will work on a proposal for review in November.

d. Holiday Display Procedure

The issue stems from an inconsistent notification to employees by their supervisors on the displaying of holiday decorations. Currently, there is no formal State policy, nor does the University have one. The proposal is that there should be some acknowledgment that people should be comfortable as long as they do not make others uncomfortable. The Commission would only make a recommendation, not a mandate. It was suggested that this matter be presented to University Counsel for consultation purposes, as well as the University Senate.

e. The Ph.D. Project; Similar for Asian-Pacific Islander

Jeffers reported that this project, supported through KPMG, encourages African American, Hispanic and other minorities to enroll in a PhD program in business related degrees. It also encourages them to pursue an MA degree and allows MSU to post open positions on the PhD Project's website. In prior years, the School of Business Dean's Office and the Office of the Provost provided membership funding.

The Asian-Pacific Islander constituency was encouraged to look for similar programs to share with the Commission.

III. New Business

a. Campus Pride

Edwards described the Campus Pride Index, owned by Campus Pride, a national non-profit organization which lists the best LGBT colleges and universities. The goal is to increase MSU's rating by meeting the criteria in the survey. At MSU, some of the issues are: Academic Life (new faculty/staff issues need to be better oriented on the LGBT programs, etc.); technical issues (not able to use the preferred name on SIS); insurance coverage (for hormone replacement therapy); and scholarship opportunities.

IV. Other

Rodak explained that “The Combat Paper” is a 3-credit course available to veterans. It allows veterans to deconstruct their military uniform and through a papermaking process reclaim themselves by expressing their stories on the paper.

Abreu updated that Diversity Week will celebrate its 10th year anniversary during the first week in November. A sponsorship request will be requested.

Abreu noted that the Wallsee Exhibit in Life Hall will open next week, which will display postcards the Germans used to send out to families of Jewish deportees.

Edwards updated that the Safe Space Conference will be held on March 20th. He will seek sponsorship of \$500 for lunch.

Rogers requested a review of the access by vehicles in Lot 17.

Malloy updated that the “Isn’t it Time You Know Your Rights” program, sponsored by the OSAU, University Police, HSA and NAACP was well attended.

Keiser thanked Rodak and Petrozello for their efforts during last week’s Annual Day of Mindfulness.

Rogers mentioned that World Religions Day will be held on January 26th.

Meneghin encouraged students to share upcoming events with the Commission.

Meneghin requested that Cottle, Hines and Milton look at the food budget for the upcoming year.

Meeting was adjourned – Motion made by Keiser; Seconded by Haines; Meeting Adjourned at 1:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted by M. Colón