

**Diversity Council**  
**Thursday, April 28, 2011**  
**Dogwood B**  
**11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.**

**Attending:**

Patty Blackwell, Facilities Services  
Pam Davis, Director of Human Resources  
Jan Hargrove, Director of Teaching Fellows  
Danny Green, Associate VP for Enrollment, Diversity Council Chair  
Donna Knott, Secretary to Council  
Miranda McCall, Assistant Director of Financial Assistance  
Kevin Morrison, Associate Director of Study Abroad & International Student Advisor  
Tomecca Sloane, Director of Commuter Life and Diversity Programs

**Not Attending:**

Dorothy Ashworth, Alumna Representative  
Brittany Frieson, Student Representative, SGA Unity Chair  
Cameron Johnson, Art Instructor  
Sarah May, Apartment Manager, The Oaks  
Wetonah Parker, Professor, School of Education and Director, Teacher Education  
Allyna Stone, Alumna Representative

**Guest:**

Kagure Wamunyu, International Student, Zuwadi Education Fund Program

**S Y N O P S I S**

**Welcome-** Danny welcomed members and guest Kagure Wamunyu to the meeting.

**Lunch Discussion** – Members debriefed on the committee involvement with Celebrating Student Achievement Day. Another successful event, members shared ideas for improvement which included identifying a specific location for pre-purchase of lunch tickets and expansion of involvement with the Meredith Hues organization.

Danny also shared a request from Cindy Edwards for grant funding for summer scholarships on several students whose awards need supplementing. These undergraduate projects will be on diversity topics and will afford nine students the opportunity for expanded research. Members were in agreement to support the request. Danny will contact Cindy Edwards with the response and the final details will be shared with the council.

**Student Experiences and Diversity Grant** – Kagure Wamunyu shared her experiences as an international student at Meredith. Kagure noted that Meredith is a friendly place where it is “easy to feel

at home.” Appreciative for the many opportunities provided at Meredith, Kagure did want to apprise the council on some of the challenges faced by the international population.

- Some members of campus perceive international students as being inferior. Language transition can be a challenge however, “ESL is not a disability.”
- Academic Advising- For graduate school, many faculty are uninformed on international issues.
- Housing- Increased concern of housing during winter holiday--accessibility and affordability of staying with friends or family.
- Transportation- The availability of ZIP Cars has increased mobility for all students who do not keep a car on campus but for many (not just international students) this is not a long-term affordable solution. Public transportation limits the internship options for these students to very local opportunities.
- Employment- Students’ earning power is limited. Work-Study positions are limited; off-campus employment is likely limited due to transportation and VISA limitations.
- Residence hall restrictions on guests and visitor hours present issues for some.
- The above factors also have an impact on the overall costs of a student remaining on campus. Dining service hours are a challenge and create the need to supplement meals and food purchases through limited resources within walking distance of the school.

Strategies were discussed for each of the areas of concern. Council members will raise the awareness of other campus constituents to these concerns as the appropriate opportunities present.

Kagure also shared information about the International Flag project that will be funded by a Diversity Grant. Placement for the display is being considered but the presence is intended to demonstrate a respect for the culture of others to all campus guests.

**Strategic Planning** – Looking specifically at areas of diversity, members reviewed Meredith’s Strategic Plan 2011-2016 which is in draft form. Discussion revealed clarity for the areas of retention, leadership, financial aid, living/learning environments, and research should be considered. The new President will be working with the Strategic Planning Committee when she arrives and it is anticipated that greater input will be expected. Member input will be shared during those opportunities.

**Series of Diversity Discussions for 2011-2012** – The intent of the series will be to educate the campus on diverse issues and generate discussion on those topics. Catalyst discussions will be needed to develop buy-in with colleagues. The goal will be to offer a total of four discussions—two each in the fall and spring. Should this program be in place of Study Circles?

Considerations for sessions-

- 2:00 day sessions
- Certificate Program
- Members recruit participants
- Involve “stakeholders” of topics
- Sell the outcomes (be good to one another)

Possible topics-

- Multi-faith Community
- Classism
- Race
- Gender Identity
- Undocumented Immigrants

**Art Procurement** – Volunteers were solicited to view the current student artwork and make recommendations for purchase. Recommendations should be directed to Danny Green. Purchased must be finalized by mid-June to allow for budget year closeout.

**Announcements** – Danny advised members that the new portrait of Dr. Maureen Hartford has been placed in the President’s Office. Also, Dr. Hartford donated two pieces of art to the Diversity Council for placement on campus.

Recommendations for faculty representation on the Diversity Council were discussed. Names will be shared with the Faculty Council for consideration in serving on the committee on behalf of faculty.

**Next meeting** – Fall 2011

The meeting adjourned at 1:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Donna Knott