Executive Summary

For the Diversity Leadership Council (DLC) 2011-2012 is a time to raise awareness, build capacity, and recognize success. Whether by promoting the causes of specific interest groups or by engaging with the wider community at the Diversity Leadership Conference, the DLC is illuminating issues that matter to the Johns Hopkins Community. At the same time, the DLC recognizes the need to become more self-sustaining and is placing renewed emphasis on capacity building. In particular, the Development subcommittee endeavors to raise funds from external stakeholders while the Assessments subcommittee creates strategy-tracking tools and leverages information technology assets to improve internal communications. Last, but not least, the DLC celebrates the diverse Johns Hopkins community at the Spring Awards Ceremony. This progress report provides an update on DLC activities since August 2011 and previews plans for 2012 and beyond.

Diversity Conference

For the eighth consecutive year, the DLC hosted the Diversity Conference at the Homewood campus on November 9, 2011. More than 350 people attended from various Johns Hopkins University Schools and Johns Hopkins Health System entities. Thirteen different workshops were presented in two concurrent sessions with topics ranging from “Generations in the Workplace” to “Race and Unconscious Bias” to “Filling the Pipeline in STEM fields.” At the plenary session, Dr. Sarah Clever, School of Medicine Assistant Dean for Student Affairs, spoke about the creation of the Johns Hopkins OUTlist, an online list of Lesbian, Gay, Transgender, and Bisexual faculty members, staff, and students who publically identify as LGBT. Howard Ross spoke of “Reinventing Diversity” at the keynote luncheon following remarks by Johns Hopkins University president, Ronald Daniels.
Capacity-Building

To most of the Johns Hopkins Community, the DLC is best known for organizing the annual Diversity Conference and Awards ceremony. The DLC is also recognized for the various “local” awareness efforts championed or supported by its subcommittees. Behind the scenes the DLC has engaged in capacity-building and resource planning in order to create a more sustainable organization. To this end, the activities of the Development and Assessments subcommittees are particularly noteworthy.

Development
The Development subcommittee has been crafting a proposal to attract external parties to fund DLC microgrants. Inspired by Applied Physics Laboratory Ignition grants and similar programs, Development intends to create an awards program to stimulate “local” diversity initiatives throughout the institutions. Departments and student organizations would submit proposals for the DLC to judge. They anticipate developing a funding proposal to present to donors by summer 2012. Similar programs at peer institutions have raised up to $100,000.

Assessments
The Assessments subcommittee has focused on enhancing DLC infrastructure in order to operate more efficiently and effectively. They have leveraged information technology by procuring teleconferencing accounts and a Sharepoint site for document storage and collaboration. They also conducted informal benchmarking research to learn what best practices peer institutions have adopted for diversity content, format and visibility on the web and will publish recommendations separately. Finally, they spearheaded the process to edit this report.

Subcommittee Activities

The majority of DLC work takes place in the subcommittees, which act to generate ideas, raise awareness about particular issues, make recommendations to the leadership, and form action plans.

Disability
Opportunities and challenges associated with community members with disabilities are often overlooked or misunderstood. In many ways, it is difficult to gain a real-world understanding of the issues unless one has to confront them on a daily basis. The Disability subcommittee is a new group created to develop a greater awareness of disability as a component of diversity and inclusion at both the Johns Hopkins University and the Johns Hopkins Health System. As a new subcommittee, the group strategized about what its mission should be and how to best accomplish it. As a starting point, it plans to explore how peer institutions describe the components of their disability programs for students, faculty, and staff and identify best practices in recruitment, hiring, development, retention, and promotion of individuals with disabilities. Additionally, the subcommittee developed five specific goals. First, it plans to provide program planning assistance for the 2012 Diversity Conference that will focus on increasing disability awareness within the Johns Hopkins Community. Second, it hopes to help departments become more aware of the unique challenges faced by employees with disabilities. Specifically, it would like to identify four Human Resources or departmental hiring practices that would facilitate the hiring of qualified individuals. It would also like to identify five new practices to enhance the current faculty and staff recruitment and retention practices for individuals with disabilities. Third, it would like to develop guidelines to assist employees in the process of disclosing a disability and help managers understand the appropriate actions to take and the resources available when an employee does so. Fourth, the subcommittee would like to discover ways to promote greater dialogue and increasing comfort around the topic of disabilities in the workplace in order to reduce stereotypes and bias that often result from lack of education. Fifth, the group intends to make improvements to a website that provides information regarding support services, accessibility, and accommodations for students, staff, and faculty.
Community Partnerships
In a recent address to the Johns Hopkins Carey Business School, University president Ronald Daniels said, “The spirit of enlightened citizenship is in our DNA.” The Community Partnerships subcommittee takes this to heart by acting as a think tank and liaison between the DLC and community leaders. For the past three years, the subcommittee has interacted with various Johns Hopkins representatives who lead major community initiatives in order to better understand how the institution partners with the community, and what the community needs from Johns Hopkins. In particular, they have met with Andy Frank from the President’s office, Deidra Bishop from East Baltimore Government and Community Affairs, Robert Blum from the Urban Health Institute, and Mindi Levin from JHU SOURCE. In addition to meeting with Johns Hopkins leaders, the subcommittee travelled to the Netter Center for Community Partnerships at the University of Pennsylvania where they discussed best practices regarding infrastructure, financial support, incentives, and programs. The Netter Center presents as an example of a cross-disciplinary approach to community engagement, research, and learning. The subcommittee conducted an inventory of existing academic-community partnerships to determine a starting point for committee activities. They asked two fundamental questions: Are Johns Hopkins current initiatives working? Where are we going with our community partnerships? The former question speaks to accountability for results while the latter relates to strategic vision. Community Partnerships is in the process of finalizing a series of recommendations, which will be delivered to Johns Hopkins Leadership and published in a separate document.

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT)
The LGBT subcommittee is writing a proposal for the creation of an LGBT Resource Center at Johns Hopkins. The small subcommittee cast a wide net to bring together a diverse set of stakeholders to form a Resource Center Stakeholder Committee. The Stakeholder Committee includes faculty, staff, and students from each major area of JHU as well as members from LGBT affinity groups such as the Diverse Sexuality and Gender Alliance, Gertrude Stein, The Network, Peabody Gay-Straight Alliance, and Allies in the Workplace. While the committee is still at work, they plan to deliver a proposal and recommendations to Johns Hopkins leadership in Spring 2012.

Training and Education
Training and Education investigates ways to incorporate diversity training and education about diversity resources into various facets of the Johns Hopkins experience. They are currently looking at various divisions to assess what diversity efforts and interventions are occurring. Following a discovery period, they will summarize their findings and make recommendations.

Retention
The Retention subcommittee focused on retention of graduate students by contacting graduate student organizations that serve under-represented groups in order to identify key retention issues. The subcommittee is in the process of prioritizing retention issues and making recommendations, which will be published separately. They are considering whether creating “Community Building” grants would serve as an effective tool in graduate retention.

Stop the Clock
The Stop the Clock subcommittee reviewed tenure track clocks for various divisions and reasons why the clock could be stopped for a faculty member. At this point, they have no additional recommendations.
Awards Ceremony Tenth Anniversary

One of the DLC’s proudest sustained accomplishments, the Awards Ceremony recognizes diversity success stories. More than an awards ceremony, the event convenes the geographically-dispersed Johns Hopkins community and provides participants who might otherwise never have a chance to meet, the opportunity to interact.

On May 4, 2011, the DLC continued the tradition of recognizing diversity initiatives by hosting the annual ceremony. Fourteen individual and one group award were presented. Not only did award winners celebrate diversity with their individual accomplishments, they also represented the full scope of Johns Hopkins Institutions with recipients from the Applied Physics Laboratory, Kennedy-Krieger Institute, Bayview, Johns Hopkins Hospital, Johns Hopkins University, the Bloomberg School of Public Health, and the School of Medicine.

May 3, 2012 marks a significant milestone as the DLC celebrates the tenth anniversary of the Awards Ceremony.

Planning for the Future

Started in 1997, the DLC boasts many accomplishments during its fifteen years of existence: received an $85,000 grant from the Hewlett Foundation, developed the “Health in the City” course in collaboration with Sojourner Douglass College, addressed support of domestic partner benefits, administered the first institution-wide diversity climate survey, and drafted the first University diversity statement, to name just a few. Never content with past success, the DLC is beginning a strategic planning process to re-assess its mission and vision. Under the guidance of the Assessments subcommittee, the DLC will begin by reviewing strategic planning tools that will help the council to update its mission and vision and link strategic goals to subcommittee activities and tactical implementation. Major benefits of strategic planning include the ability to develop manageable goals and associated success factors, which can be measured. In turn, being able to measure progress promotes accountability for the DLC and allows it to "dashboard" success for leadership. The strategic planning process will also help the DLC to determine to what extent its efforts should focus on institution-wide leadership versus support of “local” or regionalized diversity initiatives.

The Council plans to begin reviewing strategic planning tools in late Spring and solidify subcommittee goals and deliverables during the summer 2012 retreat.

Rediscovering Our Diversity

In his book, “Reinventing Diversity,” Howard Ross discusses how diversity training has, over time, shifted from affirmative action-oriented and compliance-based to understanding unconscious bias. The framework has changed. The environment has changed. So too must the methods. Similarly, the DLC is re-examining its role in creating a diverse and inclusive Johns Hopkins Community. While much of the original charge to advise and raise awareness remains the same as at its inception fifteen years ago, the DLC ponders existential questions. Is the DLC most valuable as a central diversity clearinghouse? Or is it more important to act in a supporting role to diffuse and localized diversity activities? Is there a third alternative that combines elements of the other two approaches? What is it about diversity that we value at Johns Hopkins? Whatever the answers, the DLC has earned a proven track record of success. Its current awareness-raising activities coupled with strategic planning and capacity-building confirm the DLC’s earnest belief that this success will continue as we endeavor to rediscover our diversity and foster an inclusive Johns Hopkins Community, a family of most exceptional people.
The 2011-2012 Diversity Leadership Council

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