



State Council on Affirmative Action Report

July 1, 2008 – June 30, 2009

Issued May 2010

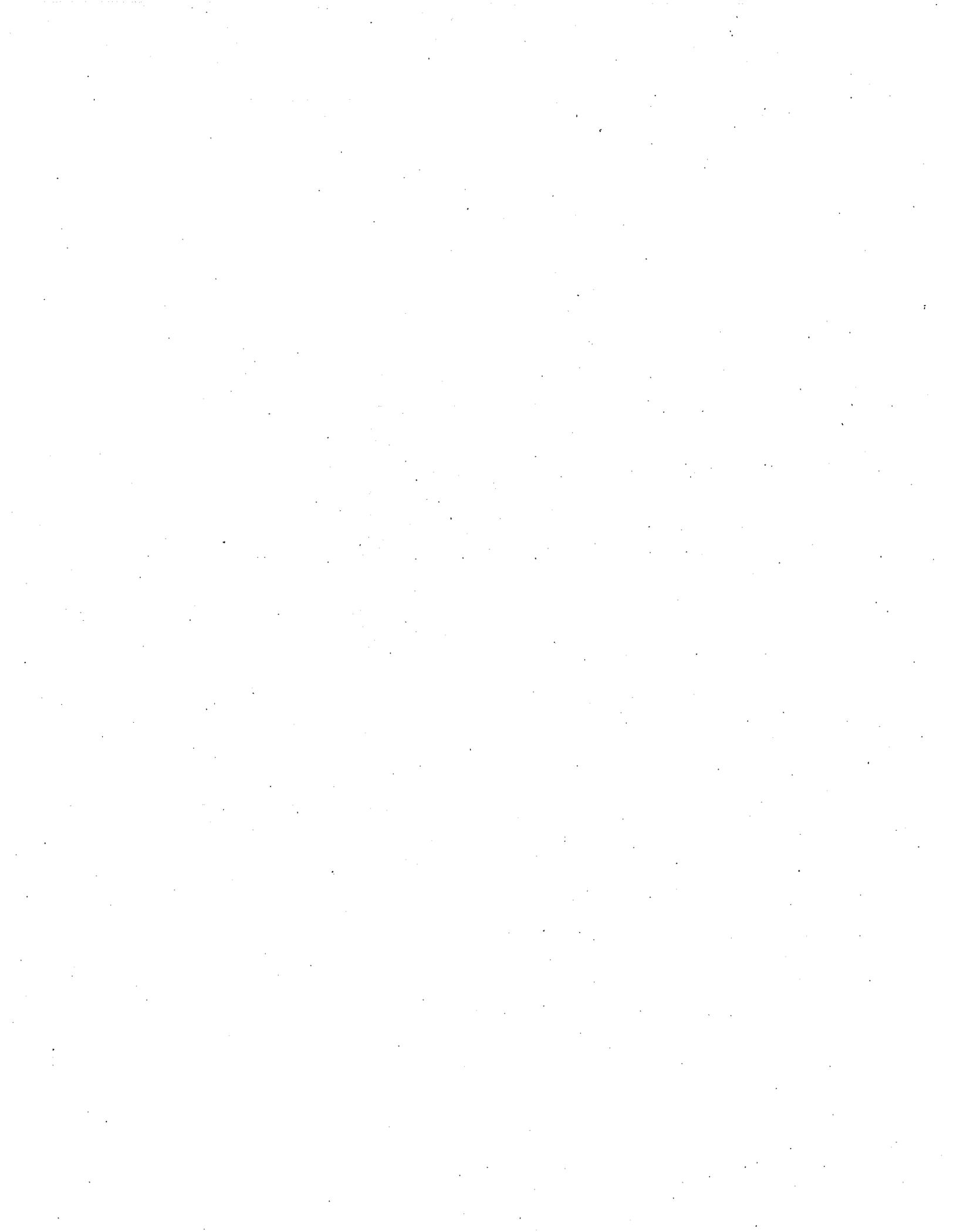
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May 2010

The Honorable Jim Doyle
Governor, State of Wisconsin

The Honorable Fred Risser
President, Wisconsin Senate

The Honorable Michael Sheridan
Speaker, Wisconsin Assembly

Gentlemen:

Please find attached the annual report of the State Council on Affirmative Action for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2009. This report is submitted in accordance with Section 230.46 Wisconsin Statutes.

The Council's purpose is to foster measurable progress towards an equitable and diverse work force in state government. This report summarizes the Council's activities, observations and recommendations aimed at enhancing affirmative action, equal opportunity, and diversity in state government. In addition, the report highlights the Ninth Annual Diversity Awards, which recognized agencies and universities with outstanding initiatives and best practices in the areas of affirmative action and diversity.

We look forward to our continued working relationship with the State Council on Affirmative Action as we pursue the goals of increased employment opportunities, productivity, and innovation resulting from the development of a talented, diverse workforce.

Sincerely,


Sheila Conroy
Director

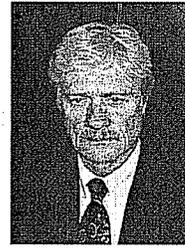


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May 2010

*Message from the State Council on Affirmative Action
Chair James Parker*



On behalf of the membership of the State Council on Affirmative Action, attached please find our Annual Report as required by Wisconsin Statutes.

Over the past several years the Council has held hearings for both the Universities and state agencies in which 15 University Affirmative Action Officers (AAOs) and 17 Agency AAOs provided testimony. Following those hearings, the Council reached a number of parallel conclusions with accompanying recommendations for state and university officials.

During this past year, at the Council's request, I further publicized our recommendations as the invited keynote speaker to the University of Wisconsin Annual Race and Ethnicity Conference at UW Milwaukee. I also addressed the membership of Women's Studies Annual Convention at UW Madison as providing the keynote address to the Wisconsin Association of Equal Opportunity in the Dells in May. Furthermore, the Council has continued to discuss and meet with both University and Agency Affirmative Action Officers hosting a reception at the May meeting of Affirmative Action Officers Convention in an effort to build an even closer relationship with the Officers.

Additionally, the Council hosted the largest reception for the Council's state award winners held in the state legislative Assembly at the Capitol in November attended by more than 150 participants, a testimony to the Division of Affirmative Action & Workforce Planning and OSER's efforts.

The Council remains concerned in a time of budgetary crisis that the staffing and resource allocations for affirmative action initiatives not be compromised and sees as its primary obligation the effort to assure those initiatives be adequately funded. In that respect, the Council will continue to communicate with affirmative action professionals and advocate on their behalf in whatever venues it seems necessary in the most collaborative terms possible.

State Council on Affirmative Action Report
July 1, 2008 - June 30, 2009

MISSION

The State Council on Affirmative Action (SCAA) was created by Chapter 196, Laws of 1977, s. 230.46, Wis. Stats., describes the duties of the Council as follows:

“The council on affirmative action in the office shall serve in a direct advisory capacity to the director and as part of that relationship shall evaluate the progress of affirmative action programs throughout the civil service system, seek compliance with state and federal regulations and recommend improvements in the state’s affirmative action efforts as an employer. In carrying out its responsibilities, the council may recommend legislation, consult with agency personnel and other interested persons, conduct hearings and take other appropriate action to promote affirmative action. The council shall report at least once per year to the governor and the legislature.”

The Council’s overall purpose is to foster measurable progress towards an equitable and diverse work force in state government.

GOALS FOR THE COUNCIL

- A. Continue to monitor and evaluate affirmative action progress for state agencies.
- B. Continue to develop and strengthen the working relationship with agency and university affirmative action officers and affirmative action advisory committees.
- C. Continue follow-up discussions with state AA/EEO Officers to ensure that proper leadership and support is available to perform job description functions.
- D. Further increase the number of state agencies participating in the diversity award process.

Ninth Annual Diversity Award

The State Council on Affirmative Action and the Office of State Employment Relations recognized three state agencies and five university campuses in a ceremony at the State Capitol for their innovative efforts to promote workplace diversity. The award was created to reinforce effective affirmative action programs, promote diversity in the state, and recognize affirmative action best practices.

State agencies and UW campuses were encouraged to self-nominate a program or initiative that impacted overall diversity achievements. For the Diversity Award, selection was based on the applicant's ability to demonstrate excellence in the following three areas:

1. Successful state agencies and university campuses will have demonstrated a strong commitment to the retention of a diverse and/or multi-lingual classified workforce as measured by the creation of programs, initiatives, and practices.
2. Successful state agencies and university campuses will have measurable and innovative recruitment efforts/initiatives that may include multi-lingual components implemented to attract and provide access for a broader base of racial and ethnic minority applicants in order to increase its classified workforce above and beyond the available labor force. This will be done according to the state's labor force statistics in proportion to the agency's or campus' size relative to minorities, women, and persons with disabilities.
3. Successful state agencies and university campuses will have demonstrated improvements in upward mobility for racial and ethnic minorities, women and persons with disabilities in management positions as measured by workforce reports from 2006-2008.

The Diversity Awards ceremony was held on October 30, 2008 at the State Capitol, Senate Parlor, in Madison. Following are the state agencies and university campuses that received recognition with descriptions of their award-winning programs:

The University of Wisconsin-Whitewater was selected to receive the Ann Lydecker Educational Diversity Award for its successful King/Chavez Scholars program. The program began in 1997 and was designed to enhance recruitment and retention of "exceptional undergraduate scholars." Participants in this program go through academic enhancement activities to help prepare them for college. Once enrolled at UW-Whitewater, they are involved each semester in a seminar to explore important social issues, do research projects and attend conferences. Students are "encouraged to become educational leaders" and become informed about critical questions facing contemporary American society.

In order to qualify for the program, a student must be a member of a targeted multicultural or disadvantaged group, maintain a 3.0 high school GPA or have an ACT score that is at least 20, and complete the other academic enhancement activities. These selection criteria help ensure that students of the program will achieve success in college. This success is reflected in improved enrollment and retention rates, as well as increased participation in campus activities.

The University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point was selected to receive the Ann Lydecker Educational Diversity Award for its Literature Circles Diversity Collaboration. This project is an innovative collaboration among the University, Milwaukee Vincent High School and Adams-Friendship High School. University and high school student participants read five novels by African American authors and discuss them online. The last day of the project is set aside for student presentations.

UW-Stevens Point students also interact directly with the high school students, taking them on tours of the campus and teaching them in-person for a day. The project is valuable for all of the students. UW-Stevens Point students experience reflective growth in their teaching practice and gain insight into the "African American experience" through literature, as well as their interaction with the high school students. The high school students gain cultural awareness and a valuable academic experience.

The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee was selected to receive a Program Achievement Award for its Life Impact Program. The purpose of this initiative is to "help disadvantaged students with children break the cycle of poverty through education." Program participants receive extensive support services, including the help of a Life Coach and a \$5,000 yearly scholarship. The Life Impact Program reflects UW-Milwaukee's commitment to multicultural students at all levels by focusing on recruitment efforts and program initiatives that will attract and retain minority parents in our community and on our campus. All 13 graduates from the 2005-2006 and 2006-2007 academic years are employed or are attending graduate school.

The University of Wisconsin-River Falls was selected to receive a Program Achievement Award for its USDA Multicultural Scholars Grant Program. The University's College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences started this initiative in 2006 with funding from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The College awards scholarships to students from multicultural backgrounds who are pursuing degrees in agriculture-related fields, thereby exposing the students to fields they may not have otherwise explored.

This past year, three of the five full scholarships available for incoming freshmen were awarded to graduates of Milwaukee Vincent High School. The students from Vincent High School were introduced to UW-River Falls while still in high school as part of a pre-college program. The scholarship recipients later returned to their school to share their success stories with other students, teachers and parents.

The Department of Workforce Development ("DWD") was selected to receive the top diversity honor for noticeably positive demographic outcomes. From July of 2007 to July 2008, targeted group representation increased and remained well above both the statewide average and the available workforce. In 2008, DWD's staff was comprised of 16.69% minorities while the statewide average was 9%. Women made up 64.41% of the agency workforce while they comprised 51.1% of the statewide population. People with disabilities represented 11.7% of DWD employees and only 6.5% of Wisconsin residents.

DWD's participation in several programs contributed to its achievements in the area of diversity. The agency participated in TOPjobs, a state sponsored summer affirmative action internship program. It also expanded its recruiting efforts and improved the recruitment process to better reach targeted population groups. In addition, DWD offered managers training on how to

conduct hiring interviews and promote and retain diverse staff. DWD also increased opportunities for upward mobility, which resulted in greater retention and promotion of qualified females and minorities. Finally, DWD planned a celebration for Disability Awareness month in October and invested several million dollars in hiring and training people with disabilities.

The Office of the State Public Defender (“SPD”) was selected to receive the top diversity honor for its implementation of “The Respectful Workplace” training program to assist in the retention of a diversified staff. The participants attend a two and a half hour program, which includes exercises and discussion. Participants examine scenarios relating to disability, race, culture, sexual orientation, and general respect and courtesy. The discussions facilitate awareness of these issues. After each training program, SPD collects participant evaluations which help monitor the success of the program.

“The Respectful Workplace” was presented ten times in eight different locations around the state (SPD has 37 statewide offices.) SPD stated, “By encouraging a more welcoming and respectful place to work, we will assist in the retention of minority staff and, through word of mouth, improve recruitment as well. Diversity makes us a stronger agency, and increases our public value.”

The Department of Natural Resources (“DNR”) was selected to receive a Program Achievement Award for its outreach efforts towards the Hmong community. DNR established a call-in center with Hmong speaking representatives to serve the Hmong community. This call center also trains Hmong hunters through the Hunters Education Program. DNR has reached out to the Hmong community in other ways, as well. DNR representatives appeared on a local Green Bay Hmong radio talk show and set up exhibits and informational tables at Hmong New Year events. Other DNR programs complement these outreach efforts. At its Hmong Conservationists Meeting, the DNR encourages Hmong conservationists and community leaders to discuss conservation-related issues. DNR also developed an initiative called “Harmony in the Woods” in response to ethnic tensions that arose following several inter-ethnic homicides in 2004 and 2007.

The University of Wisconsin-Madison was selected to receive a Program Achievement Award for its Learning Communities (LC’s) program administered by the Office for Equity & Diversity and the Office of Human Resource Development. The four Learning Communities are: Leadership Institute; Seeking Educational Equity & Diversity; Excellence through Diversity Institute; and Leadership at Lunch. These LC’s provide a forum for discussion about creating working, learning and teaching environments where everyone feels included, valued and heard. Though aimed at slightly different segments of the campus community, all of the LC’s share the same framework. Participants gather in small groups made up of a cross-section of the University and the greater Madison community, including classified and unclassified staff, faculty and students from multiple departments and disciplines.

Discussions, which begin as responses to readings, become group explorations of personal histories and belief systems. In a safe, supportive environment, each member is invited to examine the concepts of identity that he carries and how these have affected choices he has made personally and professionally. It is at the crossroads of intersecting stories that people come to understand their own experiences and those of other people. The goal is to help participants develop an ability to examine and effectively respond to everyday conflicts and other challenges.

Report on AA Officer Criteria and Position Description

The Chair invited the state and university affirmative action officers to share their thoughts, insights, comments and ideas on the affirmative action officer's job description and required skill set at the SCAA meeting, which was held in conjunction with the WAEO Conference. The following key points summarize the meeting discussion:

- Creating a standardized position description for all affirmative action officers is not feasible due to the variety of duties performed by officers at different agencies.
- Developing best practices and creating an effective training curriculum for affirmative action officers are critical components to strengthening the affirmative action function.
- Engaging management in affirmative action and equal employment opportunity efforts is key.
- Expanding outreach efforts to University Chancellors and agency leaders could help increase their involvement in affirmative action efforts.
- Developing consistent processes to evaluate affirmative action and equal employment efforts should be a priority.

Report on SCAA Survey Questionnaire

Information captured in the recent SCAA survey questionnaire generated ideas that the Council may explore in the future.

- The Council wants to continue building relationships with state and university affirmative action officers and practitioners by sponsoring the reception and conversation session at the WAEO Conference.
- The Council expressed interest in having an active role at the WAEO Conference by conducting workshops on best practices and other relevant topics.
- Council members expressed concerns about the reduced role of affirmative action and the move towards diversity. The affirmative action function sometimes stands outside the mainstream of institutions.
- Council members also expressed concern about declining levels of participation in the Diversity Award program. The Council discussed ways of engaging more participation from campus and agency leaders, such as announcing the Diversity Award before the school semester ends and giving a Leadership Award to chancellors and agency heads.
- Council members plan to examine training needs, core competencies, and orientation programs for new affirmative action officers and staff. The Council discussed exploring options such as distant learning, web cast, and working with training councils.
- The Council discussed ways to increase the impact of its recommendations and observations.

SCAA Reception & Conversation at the WAEO Conference & Other Outreach Activities

The State Council on Affirmative Action and the Office of State Employment Relations sponsored a reception and conversation with state agency and university AA Officers, AA Advisory Committees and AA practitioners. The primary purpose was to update the participants on the Council's initiatives and to discuss topics of mutual interest. In addition to networking, the Council solicited suggestions on how to improve communication and strengthen the relationship between the Council and AA Officers. The event was well attended and was a success.

Chair James Parker has been very active in advocating the principles of affirmative action with numerous presentations: a discussion on Affirmative Action at the Conference on Social Justice at UW Oshkosh; a presentation entitled: "Affirmative Action in Wisconsin: The State of the State" at the UW System Annual Women's Studies Conference; and as the keynote luncheon speaker at the UW System Institute on Race and Ethnicity Conference at UW Milwaukee speaking on "The Endangered Future of Affirmative Action." James Parker conveyed the same message as the luncheon speaker at the WAEO Conference. The purpose of these presentations is to highlight the Commission's work over the course of the past four years.

New Division of Affirmative Action & Workforce Planning

In November 2008, OSER realigned some functions within the agency to better serve its constituents. In particular, OSER moved the training, workforce planning and recruitment functions into the Division of Affirmative Action. With these additional components, the division was renamed the Division of Affirmative Action and Workforce Planning (DAAWP). The workforce planning functions in DAAWP will focus on strategic efforts to address the State's recruitment and retention challenges.

The Office of State Employment Relations offers several training programs on human resource topics, including two programs which satisfy the statutory training requirement for new state supervisors. OSER also offers other training programs on State of Wisconsin human resource/personnel procedures and programs, including staffing, classification, labor relations, AA/EEO, EAP and civil service advancement. OSER has collaborated with the Wisconsin Certified Public Manager (CPM) program to offer two leadership development programs: the Enterprise Management Development Academy (for aspiring and new supervisors) and the Enterprise Leadership Academy (for more experienced supervisors). Participants in OSER training programs include supervisors, managers, and staff with human resource/ personnel job duties. OSER is also a member agency of the Wisconsin State Training Council, a training association with members from state government agencies, including the University of Wisconsin, and other public-sector organizations.

Human Resources Alignment

In June 2008, the Legislature passed and the Governor signed into law 2009 Wisconsin Act 28 (biennial budget). Act 28 included a provision directing the Department of Administration to submit a plan for consolidating state human resources functions within OSER. With the alignment of human resource functions, OSER will provide overall direction and leadership across the enterprise and will identify areas of cost savings and efficiencies. OSER will work

with stakeholders and affected parties to improve efficiency and consistency of routine HR services; standardize HR administration, as appropriate; maximize HR best practices; and position HR as a strategic partner in business and customer service delivery.

MEMBERSHIP

“There is created in the office of state employment relations a council on affirmative action consisting of 15 members appointed for 3-year terms. A majority of the members shall be public members and a majority of the members shall be minority persons, women, and persons with a disability, appointed with consideration to the appropriate representation of each group.” s. 15.105(29)(d)1.a., Wis. Stats.

“The president of the senate, the speaker of the assembly, the minority leader of the senate, and the minority leader of the assembly each shall appoint one member and the remaining members shall be appointed by the governor.” s. 15.105(29)(d)1.b., Wis. Stats.

Members of the Council on Affirmative Action from July 1, 2007 – June 30, 2008:

James Parker

Professor Emeritus, History and Women’s Studies
University of Wisconsin - La Crosse
La Crosse

Sandra Ryan

Program Assistant
State Department of Public Instruction
Sun Prairie

John Magerus

Dean Emeritus, College of Liberal Studies
University of Wisconsin - La Crosse
Racine

Janice K. Hughes

Organizational Effectiveness Consultant
American Family Insurance
Madison

Nancy Vue

Assistant Public Defender
Office of State Public Defender
Madison

Yolanda Santos-Adams

President and CEO
Urban League of Racine and Kenosha, Inc.
Racine

Thresessa Childs

Principal
Green Bay Avenue School - Milwaukee
Milwaukee

Ronald Shaheed

Director of Education
Clara Mohammed School
Milwaukee

Lakshmi Bharadwaj

Associate Professor of Sociology
University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee
Shorewood

David Dunham

Equal Opportunity Specialist
State Department of Corrections
Madison

Roland Wetley

Dispatcher
Milwaukee County Transit System
West Allis

Roger L. Pulliam

Assistant Vice Chancellor Emeritus for
Academic Support Services
University of Wisconsin - Whitewater
Whitewater

Adelene Greene

Director of Workforce Development
Kenosha County Department of Human Services
Kenosha

Chris Zenchenko

IS Business Automation
State Department of Natural Resources
Evansville

MEETING SCHEDULE AND STAFF

Meeting Schedule

The Council meets from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. every other month or upon call of the Chair or any five members. The Council met five times between July 1, 2008 and June 30, 2009.

Council Staff

Staff services to the Council are provided by the Office of State Employment Relations, Division of Affirmative Action & Workforce Planning, 101 East Wilson Street, 4th Floor, Madison, Wisconsin 53703. Staff includes:

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