WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY
ITEM SUBMITTED TO THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

TO: Members of the Board of Trustees

FROM: President Bruce Shepard from
Catherine Riordan, Provost and VP for Academic Affairs
Sue Guenter-Schlesinger, Vice Provost for Equal Opportunity & Employment Diversity
Kunle Ojikutu, Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs and Special Assistant to the President for Diversity

DATE: October 9, 2009

SUBJECT: **Best Practices: Recruiting and Retaining Faculty & Staff of Color**

PURPOSE: Discussion Item

Purpose of Submittal:

Strategies related to Western Washington University's commitment to the recruitment and retention of a diverse work force will be provided members of the Board of Trustees, followed by an opportunity for discussion with a focus on the following questions:

- Given the changing demographics, what would be your advice in meeting our objectives to create a more diverse workforce?
- What have you found works for retention of diverse employees in an organization?

Supporting Information:
Summary of White Paper on *Best Practices: Recruiting and Retaining Faculty and Staff of Color*

Summary of White Paper on
"Best Practices: Recruiting and Retaining Faculty and Staff of Color"

by

Sue Guenter-Schlesinger, Vice Provost for Equal Opportunity & Employment Diversity

Kunle Ojikutu, Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs and Special Assistant to the President for Diversity

Even though Western has made a huge commitment to diversity, it is still under-represented by ethnic minorities among its faculty and staff who compose 13% of the total workforce. (Please see the attached "Dashboard.") The overall representation of minorities has only slightly increased over the last few years, despite a higher availability of minorities in the labor market.

As a preliminary step in enhancing efforts to diversify Western's workforce, a White Paper was developed to identify "best practices" and strategies from higher education institutions across the nation. We identified strategies that produced successful outcomes which can help guide our efforts. In the White Paper, we also identified existing efforts at Western that could be enhanced to more effectively recruit faculty and staff of color.

The following are some examples of strategies other institutions have used successfully:

Recruitment:

- "Bridge Funding" used to hire a diverse candidate in anticipation of a retirement and then use centralized funding to "bridge" financial resources needed until the retirement takes place
- Fundraising campaign to support faculty and staff diversity
- Cluster Hiring: hiring a diverse group of people who can float between disciplines and/or hiring more than one person of color at a time to minimize feelings of isolationism and overload
- Visiting scholar and faculty exchange programs

Retention:

- Enhanced data collection, retention studies, exit interviews with faculty and staff of color
- Leadership opportunities for faculty and staff of color
- Multicultural Resource Directory for candidates and new faculty and staff of color hires
- Mentoring programs
- Campus climate assessment to understand our current climate

Western Efforts that can be Enhanced:

Over the years, Western has undertaken a wide array of diversity initiatives (Please see Western's Diversity Handbook for a compilation of these efforts at: www.wwu.edu/eoo/publications.shtml). Some of these initiatives, including the following, could be expanded to enhance our efforts to recruit and retain more diverse workforce:

- Diversity Fellows Program
- Minority Employee Council and Inter-Group Dialogue Program
- Center for Educational Equity and Diversity, Woodring College of Education
- Search Process to successfully recruit diverse applicants
- Minority Faculty Welcoming Reception

Support from University Constituents:

The White Paper has been presented to and received support from campus constituents and leadership, including the Minority Employee Council, Provost's Council and President's Cabinet.

Next Steps/Future Directions:

- Campus Climate Assessments

One of our first steps will be to conduct a climate assessment of students this year that can be benchmarked against other universities. Next year, a similar assessment will be conducted for faculty and staff. These assessments will guide our efforts, some of which will already be underway, as we move forward to enhance the recruitment and retention of diverse faculty and staff at Western.

- Diversity Initiative

We are currently working to develop a proposal for a campus-wide diversity initiative that will help us meet our objectives to focus on recruitment and retention of a more diverse workforce. In this effort, we define "diversity" broadly, including race, sex, disability, veterans status and sexual orientation.

Advice from Western's Board of Trustees:

We value the tremendous amount of expertise and experience of our Board members, and appreciate their input on our efforts to recruit and retain a more diverse workforce. We pose the following two questions to the Board, to help frame our discussion:

1. Given the changing demographics, what would be your advice in meeting our objectives to create a more diverse workforce?
2. What have you found works for retention of diverse employees in an organization?