



# **Report on Institutional Programs of Cultural Diversity MSAR #8751**

## **Volume 1**

**December 2018**

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**MSAR # 8751**  
**Report on Institutional Programs of Cultural Diversity**  
**2018**

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## 2017 Cultural Diversity Report

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Maryland Education Article §11-406 requires that each public postsecondary institution in Maryland develop and implement a plan for cultural diversity. These plans must include a description of how the institution addresses cultural diversity among its student, faculty, and staff populations; a discussion of how the institution plans to enhance diversity; and a summary of resources needed to recruit and retain a culturally diverse student body. Each institution must submit an annual progress report to the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) regarding the implementation of its plan. MHEC is required to review these progress reports to monitor compliance with diversity goals established in the State Plan for Higher Education, and to report on institutional compliance. These institutional progress reports are included in Volume II of this report.<sup>1</sup>

In addition, Education Article §10-211 requires that all state-aided independent colleges and universities submit an annual report to the Maryland Independent Colleges and Universities Association (MICUA) describing the institution's programs to "promote and enhance" diversity. Using these reports, MICUA provides MHEC with a report detailing best practices being utilized to enhance cultural diversity at independent colleges and universities.

The 2017-2021 State Plan for Postsecondary Education, *Increasing Student Success with Less Debt*, focuses on improving access to and success in higher education for all students. It also identifies many groups of students as populations that merit special attention when considering issues of access and success in higher education. Most institutional plans address many or all of these populations.

While each institution offers a variety of unique programs designed to increase cultural diversity on their campus, many programs have at least some common elements. Institutions work to recruit diverse student populations through outreach targeting underrepresented students making them aware of both educational opportunities and financial supports that might be available to them. In order to recruit a diverse faculty and staff, they seek to increase the diversity of the candidate pool through conducting outreach to underrepresented populations and supporting the success of minority graduate students to equip them with the credentials necessary to enter into the field of higher education. Retention strategies for both students and faculty and staff have utilized two approaches: providing additional support to underrepresented populations and creating an environment on campus that results in enhanced awareness of cultural diversity, including information and training for faculty, staff, and students.

Maryland's colleges and universities continue to make strides to ensure that diversity is valued and embraced as a fundamental priority in Maryland's postsecondary environment. Throughout the State, Maryland colleges and universities continue to utilize and develop new initiatives to enhance cultural diversity on their campuses.

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<sup>1</sup> All 29 of Maryland's public institutions are currently compliant with the statutory requirement that each college and university operate a plan for cultural diversity; however, Baltimore City Community College was unable to submit the statutorily-required progress report in time for inclusion in this report.

## INTRODUCTION

Maryland Education Article §11-406 requires that each public postsecondary institution develop and implement a plan for cultural diversity, including strategies for implementation and a timeline for meeting goals established by the plan. Plans created in accordance with this statute must include:

- (i) A description of the way the institution addresses cultural diversity among its student, faculty, and staff populations;
- (ii) A description of how the institution plans to enhance cultural diversity, if improvement is needed;
- (iii) A process for reporting campus-based hate crimes, as defined under Title 10, Subtitle 3 of the Criminal Law Article and consistent with federal requirements under 20 U.S.C. §1092(f), known as the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act; and
- (iv) A summary of any resources, including State grants, needed by the institution to effectively recruit and retain a culturally diverse student body.

Each year, these diversity plans and a report detailing progress towards implementation are submitted to institutional governing boards for approval. Institutional governing boards submit these progress reports annually to the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC). These reports provide MHEC with a mechanism for monitoring compliance with the diversity goals established in the State Plan for Higher Education. MHEC is required to submit an annual report to the legislature detailing the extent to which institutions are compliant with the diversity goals of the State Plan.

In addition, Education Article §10-211 requires that all state-aided independent colleges and universities submit an annual report to the Maryland Independent Colleges and Universities Association (MICUA) describing the institution's programs to "promote and enhance" diversity. Using these reports, MICUA provides MHEC with a report detailing best practices being utilized to enhance cultural diversity at independent colleges and universities.

The 2017-2021 State Plan for Postsecondary Education, *Increasing Student Success with Less Debt*, focuses on improving access to and success in higher education for all students. It also identifies many groups of students as examples of notable populations when considering access and success in higher education. These student groups include, but are not limited to, racial and ethnic minorities, low-income students, students with low English proficiency, homeless youth, students who are currently in or are aging out of the foster care system, home-schooled students, veterans, and first-generation students. Most institutional plans address many or all of these populations.

This report consists of two volumes. Volume I provides a description of types of programs and initiatives at public and independent institutions, along with brief highlights of each type of program. Volume II contains institutional narratives as submitted to MHEC, presented unedited by Commission staff. These reports include program descriptions, review of plan implementation and progress, and information regarding the institution's process for reporting hate-based crimes in accordance with the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act.

## INSTITUTIONAL INITIATIVES

Maryland institutions have developed a wide array of initiatives aimed at increasing cultural diversity. Many programs focus on increasing the numerical representation of students, faculty, and staff of traditionally underrepresented groups through focused recruitment and retention efforts. There are also many programs designed to foster welcoming and inclusive environments for these groups by creating positive interactions and enhancing cultural awareness among faculty, students, and staff.

### **Underrepresented Student Recruitment and Retention**

Institutions have identified a number of populations underrepresented in higher education. Consistent with the State Plan goal of reducing achievement gaps, public and independent colleges and universities continue to enhance recruiting efforts focusing on reaching these populations. These efforts are generally designed to increase outreach to venues that serve targeted populations, such as schools with a large minority population, churches, and community events. Additionally, a number of community colleges and some four-year institutions offer on-site registration days at local high schools during which students are able to register to attend and take placement exams.

#### *Programs of Note:*

- As many parents have never attended college, Chesapeake College visits elementary schools to increase college awareness and provide skills and future job assessment at an early age.
- Hagerstown Community College operates a College for Kids program to middle school age females to encourage them to pursue education and careers in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math fields.
- The Office of Admissions at Salisbury University partners with the Office of Multicultural Student Services to hold a multicultural Alliance Day and Reception. This program for prospective students and their families is designed to highlight the diversity that exists at the University and specify the valuable resources that exist for students of varying backgrounds.
- Because large populations of underrepresented students often live in urban environments, many institutions, particularly four-year colleges and universities, target urban high schools in their high school visits.
- The University System of Maryland Baltimore Power, or B-Power, Initiative is designed to encourage and expand dual enrollment at the University of Baltimore (UB) for students from Baltimore City high schools.
- Johns Hopkins University's H.O.M.E. (Hopkins Overnight Multicultural Experience) program is a fly-in program aiming to bring to campus a diverse group of students who otherwise would be unable to see firsthand the academic and co-curricular experiences they might have at the institution.

### **Institutional Partnerships**

Partnerships among institutions have also served as important mechanisms for reaching out to traditionally underrepresented populations. Many programs focus on increasing student

preparation for and readiness to succeed in college, particularly at the middle and high school levels. Some four-year colleges and universities have also formed partnerships with two-year institutions to help ease the academic and social transition from one institution to another. Many of Maryland's historically black institutions and traditionally white institutions have partnered to create dual-degree programs, in order to increase underrepresented students' presence on both campuses. There are also a number of programs in place intended to increase representation for underrepresented students at the graduate level.

*Programs of Note:*

- Chesapeake College created an ESL afterschool program offered in Caroline and Talbot county schools for immigrant students in their last year of high school to improve their readiness for college.
- Community College of Baltimore County partnered with Baltimore County Public Schools to offer Transition Day, a program that provides students with disabilities with information on making the transition from high school to college.
- Harford Community College joined five other Maryland community colleges, as well as community colleges throughout the country, in becoming an Achieving the Dream campus, an organization which focuses on evidence-based change to help eliminate achievement gaps.
- The University of Maryland, Eastern Shore (UMES) has established honors-to-honors articulation agreements with community college honors programs to increase the representation and success of underrepresented students in the UMES honors program. This program provides students with a number of additional academic and personal supports as well as the opportunity to participate in unique extracurricular opportunities.
- Both two- and four-year colleges and universities continue to develop dual-degree and dual-admission programs, under which students fulfill parts of their degree requirements at multiple institutions.
- A number of institutions offer "Green Zone Training" programs designed to help faculty and staff understand challenges veteran and military students face during their educational pursuits.

## **Financial Aid**

The growing price of higher education remains a significant concern for underrepresented populations. Financial aid outreach programs conducted at venues with large numbers of underserved populations, particularly in urban areas, serve as important tools in reducing the perception of cost as a barrier to enrollment. Additionally, many institutions offer financial aid programs specifically targeting underserved populations.

*Programs of Note:*

- In Spring 2018, Carroll Community College announced the Carroll Promise program to provide a bridge for students prior to the 2019 launch of the State's free community college program the Maryland College Promise. The Carroll Community College Foundation funds this last-dollar program for local high school graduates who meet GPA and income requirements.

- University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC) awards Superintendent's/CEO Awards to selected students from both ethnic and socio-economically underrepresented populations who attend schools in Baltimore City and Prince George's County.
- The George's Brigade Scholars program at Washington College targets students who otherwise would be unable to afford to attend a private institution. In addition to other support programs, the Brigade Scholars are provided funding for the full amount of financial need.
- The 13 members of the Maryland Independent Colleges and Universities Association continue to operate the Guaranteed Access Partnership Program, which provides students who qualify for the State Guaranteed Access grant with matching funds.

### **Additional Needs**

In addition to those programs designed to reduce cost as a barrier to enrollment and success in higher education, there are a number of programs designed to support success of students from underrepresented groups both academically and socially. For example, while nearly all institutions have historically operated academic support programs offering supplemental tutoring assistance to specific groups of students, in recent years many institutions have formed or expanded partnerships with local community organizations to provide food banks for students who may be homeless or food-insecure.

#### *Programs of Note:*

- Montgomery College's Refugee Training Center provides a number of services to recently-arrived immigrants, focusing on issues such as language attainment, cultural norms, independent living, and career development.
- The Summer Academic Success Academy at Coppin State University is a six-week residential program that provides at-risk students with the opportunity to earn college credits during the summer prior to matriculation while also equipping them with social and academic skills needed for success in college.
- UMBC has a Trans Support Group for students who identify as transgender, genderqueer, gender fluid, non-binary, bi-gender, and those questioning their gender identity. This group is intended to provide support from peers and explore issues related to gender identity.
- St. Mary's College of Maryland established the First-Generation Student Initiative, providing students who are first in their families to attend college with a peer support group.
- The Capitol Institute for Student Success at Capitol Technology University affords students it has identified as most at-risk the opportunity to take developmental math and English courses prior to the beginning of their first semester.
- The Mount Cares Committee at Mount St. Mary's University brings together representatives from a variety of departments across the institution to ascertain students who have been identified as at-risk by faculty or other staff members. Representatives from the Committee reach out to those students to refer them to additional resources that may support their success.

## **Underrepresented Faculty and Staff Recruitment and Retention**

Historically, one contributing factor that has limited the pool of minority faculty and staff members at Maryland colleges and universities is a lack of individuals possessing the credentials required to work in higher education. In an attempt to address this problem, institutions have created partnerships and programs specifically focusing on increasing the number of individuals from underrepresented populations who might be eligible to serve as faculty or staff members at a college or university. Some of these programs operate at the undergraduate level, designed to increase student preparation for graduate education. Many programs also incorporate additional academic and social support for students once they have entered into their graduate studies. Common elements among both types of programs include enhanced advising, mentoring, and supplemental training for minority students.

In addition to increasing the number of individuals from underrepresented populations who have the credentials needed to enter into the professoriate, it is also critical to enhance the recruitment process to increase minority representation. Institutions advertise job openings in a number of venues that attract large numbers of members from underrepresented groups. There are a number of publications focusing on diversity within higher education, such as *Insight into Diversity*, *Diverse Issues in Higher Education*, *Minority Update*, *Journal of Blacks in Higher Education*, and *Hispanics in Higher Education*. Additionally, a number of academic organizations focus on increasing the representation and professional success of minority groups within academic specialties or the professoriate in general, such as the National Society of Black Engineers and the American Association of Hispanics in Higher Education, to which institutions conduct outreach regarding faculty positions. In addition to increasing inclusivity among the applicant pool through targeted recruiting, institutions also provide supplemental training to faculty and staff serving on search and hiring committees to ensure that members follow federal and institutional equal employment opportunity guidelines.

### *Programs of Note:*

- Carroll Community College, located in a county with few underrepresented minorities, utilizes Skype interviews for distance candidates to increase the pool of potential candidates.
- The Meyerhoff Graduate Fellows Program at UMBC is supported via a National Institutes of Health grant to promote the number of underrepresented minorities in leadership positions in STEM research, academia, and industry. This program focuses on recruitment and retention by providing academic, research, and postgraduate support.
- Several four-year institutions utilize the REGISTRY, a national database of diverse candidates seeking to transfer from another higher education institution, when recruiting for new faculty and staff positions.
- Salisbury University participated in a grant-writing team for a National Science Foundation grant that would provide funding to host two underrepresented minority postdoctoral students in positions that would convert to tenure track upon completion.
- Johns Hopkins University, Morgan State University, UMBC, and UMCP received grant funding to form the PROMISE Engineering Institute, designed to accelerate career preparation for graduate students and postdoctorates in engineering programs to assist with eligibility for tenure-track positions.

Institutions do not solely focus on increasing diversity among faculty and staff through the recruitment and hiring processes. A number of institutions also operate initiatives focused on faculty and staff retention to ensure continued diversity. Many institutions have programs that include mentoring of new faculty and staff members to assist with the transition into the university community and increase professional success. Additionally, many professional development opportunities are provided that allow new faculty and staff members to pursue topics of special interest while further increasing their engagement with the broader university community.

*Programs of Note:*

- All academic departments within the College of Natural and Mathematical Sciences and the College of Engineering and Information Technology at UMBC have departmental diversity plans that address the challenges of recruitment and track overall faculty composition as well as retention and promotion activities.
- University of Maryland, University College created the SPARKS internship program, which provides staff the opportunity to temporarily rotate to another department within the institution. The program is intended to both provide staff with the opportunity to engage with and gain an understanding of other departments and to provide increased chances for professional and career development.
- Three institutions (Towson University, University of Maryland, Baltimore, and UMBC) are members of the National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity, which focuses on professional development, mentoring, and enhancing diversity for graduate students, postdoctorates, and faculty.
- Frostburg State University operates an Annual Development and Leadership Series program, designed to provide management training that will assist in employee retention and promotion.
- The University of Maryland, Baltimore provides career development consultations, computer classes, and internal professional internships to employees whose positions typically have few to no advancement opportunities or make a wage equal to the living wage. These consultations are intended to improve the career options for qualifying employees.

### **Faculty and Staff Cultural Training Programs**

Diversity and inclusion programs are a critical component of training and professional development for faculty and staff members. At the time of hiring, all employees are required to complete training regarding issues such as equal employment practices, diversity within the campus community, and the importance of creating a diverse and welcoming environment for all students, faculty, and staff. In accordance with the State Plan goal of increasing access and success for students of all populations, the critical role that diversity plays in enhancing student success is highlighted. Additionally, a number of institutions provide substantial professional development opportunities for faculty interested in incorporating diversity issues within the classroom and curriculum.

*Programs of Note:*

- Carroll Community College created the Intercultural Teaching and Learning Fellows program for selected faculty and Student Affairs staff to provide them the opportunity to both attend regional and local conferences and participate in focused on-campus sessions.
- Community College of Baltimore County hosts a Culturally Responsive Teaching Conference that draws K-12 and college educators from the CCBC campus and across the country.
- Howard Community College developed a diversity working guide for faculty and staff that focuses on issues of cultural sensitivity, including privilege, gender and racial equity, microaggression, and social justice.
- UMB hosts a workshop on Advancing Language Diversity in the Classroom to faculty across all seven of its professional schools.
- Towson University has a Diversity Faculty Fellows program designed to provide faculty members with the skills needed to incorporate diversity in the curriculum, improve social dynamics within the classroom, and develop strategies for enhancing a culture of inclusiveness with the campus community.
- The Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning at Morgan State University hosts a training institute with several modules for faculty and graduate teaching assistants on integrating active learning into courses with large section enrollments, of which three modules specifically focused on issues of diversity and equity.

**Initiatives to Promote Cultural Diversity in the Classroom**

All institutions include some form of cultural diversity studies within their general education requirements. At some institutions, this includes a course utilizing interdisciplinary approaches to focus specifically on concepts of diversity. At other institutions, students have the opportunity to complete coursework in subject areas – such as sociology, anthropology, or history – that incorporate cultural diversity into the curriculum. Similar to general education requirements, programs preparing students for fields requiring certification and licensure, such as health programs, are often required to include courses focusing on working with diverse populations within a practical setting. Many of these programs offer additional coursework beyond the requirements for professional certification and licensure. Additionally, there are a number of academic programs that utilize a similar interdisciplinary approach to explore topics related to diversity. Many institutions offer majors, minors, or other programs in fields such as social or cultural studies.

*Programs of Note:*

- The Cultural Diversity Committee at Harford Community College identifies diversity topics and concepts relating to one particular country each year that faculty can incorporate into their coursework. For the 2017-2018 academic year, the country of focus was Syria. Concepts included topics such as Islamophobia in America, immigration, and the refugee crisis.
- The University of Baltimore School of Law's Human Trafficking Prevention Project is a clinical law program designed to provide post-conviction legal services to survivors facing legal consequences from their involvement.

- The Social Justice Workgroup at St. Mary’s College of Maryland developed learning outcomes that would be required of courses to satisfy a potential social justice general education course requirement.
- Goucher College instituted a new curriculum incorporating a “Race, Power, and Perspectives” requirement within its general education program.

Study abroad has been shown to provide a wealth of benefits to not only the participant through immersion in another culture, but also the broader community. This, along with increasing globalization, has led to institutions increasing their emphasis on study abroad as a vehicle for exposing students to diverse worldviews. Institutions provide study abroad opportunities in a wide variety of ways. Some offer institution-specific programs, such as operating through campuses abroad or facilitating trips led by faculty and staff. These typically are short-term opportunities designed for students who would be unable to fulfill longer-term study abroad programs due to curricular requirements, finances, or personal reasons. Additionally, institutions have worked to increase international student representation as another method of promoting cultural diversity on their campuses.

- UMES held an international service learning showcase that focused on both service and study abroad opportunities. The showcase was led by students who had previously participated in programs abroad.
- With the goal of bringing additional international students to campus, Frostburg State University has developed cooperative degree programs with several overseas institutions. Through these programs, students will earn degrees from both Frostburg and the partnering institution.
- Salisbury University’s Community Health, Social Work, and Nursing programs collaborated to create a global health seminar that included a study abroad trip to South Africa. This trip was intended to focus on issues such as the impact of cultural, socioeconomic, and political forces on health.
- University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB) is creating a formal International Exchange program to connect UMB students to meaningful opportunities abroad and provide a fellowship program for international students to study in the USA.

### **Co-curricular Programming for Students, Faculty, and Staff**

Co-curricular programming plays a significant role in highlighting diversity issues to students, faculty, staff, and the surrounding community. This programming takes a number of different forms. Many institutions offer speaker series, forums, or film festivals which are focused on a common theme but which examine various pertinent issues through different lenses over time.

A number of programs also provide the campus community with the opportunity to educate about and celebrate aspects of a specific culture. These frequently fall within the days and months designated nationally or internationally to acknowledge the contributions of a particular heritage, such as Black History Month or Hispanic Heritage Month. There are also a number of activities that take place surrounding events which highlight ongoing issues on topics related to diversity, such as International Women’s Day or World AIDS Day. However, there are many other programs held throughout the year that do not fall into one of these categories.

- Anne Arundel Community College’s Rainbow Network partnered with organizations throughout the community to hold a Rise Above Hate vigil in response to the tragedies occurring in Charlottesville during the August 2017 “Unite the Right” rally.
- UMES held an end-of-semester program within freshman male communities called “Go Home, Mon,” which featured Caribbean food, music, and dance.
- Towson University has a multi-week program, Intergroup Dialogue, that bring together students from a variety of social groups to discuss issues concerning social identity, multiculturalism, and cultural diversity. Faculty and staff serve as facilitators for these sessions designed to build bridges across a diverse array of student populations.
- UMBC’s Commuter Assistants partnered with the Women’s Center and the Mosaic Center to host a commuter event focusing on understanding a variety of demographic identities.
- The Diversity and Culture Center of the University of Baltimore held a program celebrating holidays around the world, which featured countries from Africa, Europe, and the Middle East.

## **CONCLUSION**

As noted in the introduction, the programs described above represent a very small subset of the various initiatives currently offered by Maryland institutions to enhance diversity on campuses. Volume II of this report contains the full institutional narratives, which provide substantially more detail regarding the specifics of each institution’s programming. While oftentimes the discussion of diversity within an institution focuses on the racial, ethnic, and gendered composition of the population, curricular and co-curricular programs also play an important role in shaping the culture of a campus.

As this report shows, institutions continue to develop and implement new and innovative programs to address issues of diversity on their campuses. As concerns regarding diversity and multiculturalism remain topics of national and international discussion, the role that Maryland colleges and universities play in encouraging an environment celebrating inclusivity and diversity will continue to grow.