

2011 Diversity Progress Report

The University of West Alabama has continued its ongoing efforts to recruit black students, faculty, and administrative staff. The following is a synopsis of diversity efforts and achievements during the past year.

In 2010, the University achieved national recognition for its efforts toward creating a campus environment that supports diversity upon receiving a 2009 National Role Models Award for Diversity at the 10th Minority Access National Conference in Washington, D.C. The University was given this award for its commitment to diversity, effective interaction and the exchange of ideas.

Kenneth Walker, Director of the University of West Alabama's Division of Outreach Services, received the 2010 Minority Access National Role Models Awards for his exemplary achievement in expanding opportunities for others. Walker was given the award for his commitment as a university administrator in the area of diversity. Through the Division of Outreach, the University works with external organizations and communities in reciprocal learning, teaching and service that increase both the external partner's and the University's capacity to address issues and improve the quality of life.

Throughout 2010, the University of West Alabama worked with eight sister institutions of higher education to form The Alabama Association of Higher Education Diversity Officers. Created to advise its members on issues, policies, and practices that affect diversity at higher education institutions in Alabama, the Association proposes initiatives to ensure that institutions fairly meet the needs of minority faculty, staff and students. The Association reports regularly, directly and through its members, to Presidents, Provosts and the higher education community on the status of diversity in Alabama. Mr. Walker serves as the Chair of the Public Relations Committee and also served as a member of Association's Organizational Committee.

The University of West Alabama Department of Athletics became one of just eighteen Division II schools selected for an NCAA Coaching Enhancement Grant, which provides funding for Division II institutions to enhance diversity and inclusion through the hiring of full-time coaching positions. The grant, which funds UWA's Assistant Cross Country Coach position, addresses the issues of access, recruitment, selection and long-term success of women, racial/ethnic minorities and other individuals in Division II who seek to overcome hiring barriers.

The Julia S. Tutwiler College of Education at the University of West Alabama established a program in 2009 to increase the number of black students entering the teacher education program and eventually becoming master teachers. The Building the Education Strategy of Tomorrow (BEST) Program recruited twenty-four students from ten partnership schools located in the rural Black Belt region of Alabama. The program provides opportunities for the twenty-four BEST fellows to attend an orientation session to the campus, observe master teachers from partnership schools, learn about the impact of current and emerging technology in the classroom, and attend conferences of

professional organizations. The BEST program is made possible through a three-year \$1,052,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Education. The BEST fellows will directly impact the quality of education in area elementary and secondary schools.

The University of West Alabama also encourages and supports a diverse student population. Overall, the total number of black students increased 3% from Fall 2009 to Fall 2010. Although undergraduate enrollment of blacks decreased from 53% to 50%, graduate enrollment of blacks increased from 52.4% in Fall 2009 to 57% in Fall 2010, an increase of 4.6%. The University continues to monitor its admission policies and retention and transfer policies on a regular basis to ensure that all students receive equal treatment. In addition, all literature and informational brochures used in student recruitment and admissions are reviewed annually to determine if they contain clear statements of the University's non-discrimination policy.

On September 18, 2008, the University established the Black Faculty and Staff Association (BFSA) to serve as an advocate for the enhancement of educational equality. The Association works as a visible and viable agency dedicated to addressing the mutual needs and concerns of the University's black students, faculty, and staff. The goals and the Constitution of the BFSA, as well as a calendar of events sponsored by the BFSA, are available at the following website: www.bfsa.uwa.edu. Members of the BFSA participated in several activities during 2010. In commemoration of Black History Month, February 2010, BFSA hosted weekly events on campus featuring the theme "Connections." A luncheon featuring former Livingston University student and 2010 Pennsylvania Congressional candidate Gail Conner was the kickoff event. UWA faculty members Dr. B.J. Kimbrough and Dr. Frank Rogers, along with UWA graduate Lucretia Smith, were highlighted as recent authors during a Book Talk: The Story Within. A health forum on health issues in the Black community was the third event for month. The culminating event was a legacy celebration that honored black history with performance arts. This event was cosponsored with the theatre and music departments at UWA. The BFSA also provided support for events of the traditional black sororities and fraternities and continued to serve in an advisory capacity to the Black Student Union. In addition, BFSA awarded scholarships to two UWA students.

Currently, the University of West Alabama has sixteen full-time black faculty members. The percentage of full-time black faculty is 13.8%. Four of these faculty are tenured, eight are tenure-track, and three are Minority Faculty Development Fellows.

The percentage of black full-time administrative staff is 25%. Minority administrative staff hold the following positions: Facilities Manager for the Bell Conference Center, Director of Campus Security, Director of Auxiliary Services, Assistant Director of the Regional Center for Community and Economic Development, Director of the Small Business Development Center, Director of Outreach Services, Grounds/Moving Supervisor, Coordinator of Retention and ADA, Impact Grant Administrator, Upward Bound Coordinator, Storeroom Manager, and Housekeeping Supervisor.

The University also has black professional staff in the following positions: Head Men's Basketball Coach, Programmer/Analyst for Institutional Effectiveness, Program Analyst for Information Systems, Admissions Counselor, three Assistant Football Coaches, Assistant Men's Basketball Coach, Online Division Advisor, Financial Aid Advisor, PC Technician for Information Systems, Director of Field Experience and Outreach Instructor, Project Director for the BEST Program, and Curriculum Laboratory Librarian (also holds rank of Assistant Professor).