

A Recent History of Lehigh University's Inclusion and Engagement Journey

Lehigh's current efforts to promote inclusion and engagement have a strong foundation reaching back several decades. The fall of 1971 was monumental to the future of Lehigh University with the enrollment of 169 undergraduate women students. In September 1981, President Deming Lewis wrote, "The advent of women has made a positive and profound difference in the quality of University life. Their presence and contributions have enriched our lives together in many ways: academic, social, cultural, and athletic." In January 1989, President Peter Likins appointed two Presidential Commissions: a Commission on Minorities and a Commission on Women, and gave them an 18-month charge to examine and make recommendations for improving the quality of life for African American, Hispanic American, and female members of the Lehigh community. Recognizing that Lehigh is a single community and that all members of this community are interrelated, it was firmly stated that improving the quality of life for minorities and women would greatly benefit everyone.

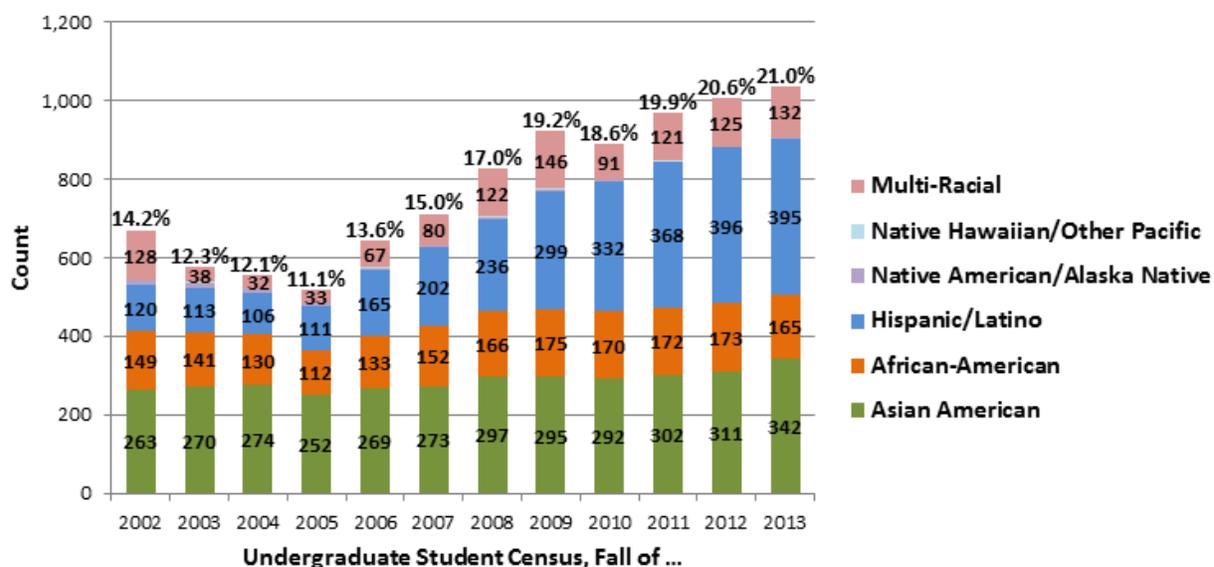
Over 100 faculty, staff, students, alumni and members of the Board of Trustees served on the two commissions. In March 1990, the commissions submitted 104 recommendations to the President and the Board of Trustees in the areas of academic programs; institutional climate and campus life; employment conditions; recruitment, retention and advancement; sexual harassment; and childcare. New programs and offices were created as a result of the work of the commissions including creation of the African American Studies Program (now known as Africana Studies), Women's Studies Program (now known as Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies), Childcare Center, President's Council on Women, Hispanic/Latin America Studies Program, Women's Center, Office of Disabilities Services, the launch of UMOJA House, and Lehigh's participation in the Posse Program.

Since this time, Lehigh has continued to create and develop programs and initiatives aimed at improving the campus culture and climate and ensuring that policies and procedures uphold our values. We can characterize these efforts in terms of those aimed at (i) *enhancing diversity of our campus community*; (ii) *changing culture and climate*; (iii) *reviewing and modifying policies and procedures*; and, (iv) *promoting education and engagement of the community*.

Diversity in Our Faculty, Staff, Students

One of the highest priorities has been to attract a more diverse student body and hiring and retaining a more diverse faculty and staff. The development of diversity-focused recruiting events, outreach programs, summer programs and transition assistance for students has resulted in increases in the population of minority students as shown in the graph below.

**Domestic Minority Undergraduate Students
(Headcount & Percentage of Total UG Students)
(Does not include "International" or "Race Unknown)**



Since the climate and culture at the university is so significantly driven by the faculty, we have focused on recruiting a diverse faculty as the top priority. In 2011, we created the position of Vice Provost for Academic Diversity, with a primary charge to focus on improving faculty recruiting, including work with faculty search committees to diversify their candidate pools and increase success in hiring. The Vice Provost position reports to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs and is a member of the University Senior Officers' leadership team.

Lehigh was one of seven 2010 recipients of a five-year **NSF ADVANCE Institutional Transformation Grant**. Lehigh's proposal, "Building Community Beyond Academic Departments," focuses on harnessing the strengths of interdisciplinary research and teaching to enhance recruitment, retention, and the advancement of women faculty in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) fields. While the charge from the NSF under the ADVANCE program is to focus on women faculty in STEM fields, many, if not most, of the interventions created through this grant have been applied across the campus to benefit all faculty.

In the 2011-2012 academic year, Lehigh launched a yearlong 40th anniversary celebration of undergraduate women at the university.

Support of new faculty and staff is important to their success in their careers and their retention. **The Faculty and Staff of Color Network (FSCN)** was launched in 2011. FSCN's mission is to create a community of interrelated faculty and staff, contributing to an environment that welcomes communities of color and underrepresented communities. Because this mission contributes to quality of university life for these communities and to retention, it is aligned with the goals and mission of the university. Wherever possible the group collaborates with ERAC, HR, the Ombudsperson and others to allow for a more positive sense of place at Lehigh.

The **Social Justice Faculty Scholars group** was formed in the fall of 2011 based on the idea that as an institution of research and learning, as we approach diversity and bias-related issues on campus, we need an intellectual effort to match the important policy efforts. This group was formed to create an opportunity for interdisciplinary and cross-college work that not only engages faculty, but will allow students, staff, and community members to become more aware of the diverse body of academic work being done on this campus that relates to addressing social justice issues and to disparities linked to group memberships (religion, ethnicity, race, gender, sexual orientation, nationality, etc.). Over forty faculty members from all four academic colleges are represented and the co-leaders for the group include a senior faculty member from each college. There are a significant number of people on campus with research and scholarship relating to diversity, prejudice, morality, social change, social justice, innovation, disparity in health, poverty, behavioral economics, touching all the colleges on Lehigh's campus.

In the absence of a "Center for Diversity, Social Justice and Social Change," such a group helps the institution achieve its goals of promoting diversity at multiple layers and in different formats. It capitalizes on one of our existing strengths – the established scholarly work of our world class scholars. The goals of the group are to provide opportunities for scholarly discussion surrounding issues of social justice through seminars, lunches, and town hall type meetings.

Culture and Climate

In order to improve the climate for underrepresented groups on campus, one needs to understand it. The Movement, a student-led group, was active at Lehigh University in the beginning of spring 2006 in response to concerns about the lack of cultural acceptance and sense of a growing presence of racism, homophobia and sexism on campus. The expressed goal was to create an environment where all students, faculty, and staff could feel welcome to express their individuality in a safe community atmosphere. The Movement submitted a list of demands to the Administration focused on specific improvements in the following areas: Academic, Social, Financial Aid and Student Recruitment. Some of the demands in the proposal have been met.

As part of its overall mission of developing a welcoming climate on campus, in June 2006, the University Diversity Leadership Committee (UDLC) contracted with Rankin, an outside consultant, to assist in identifying successes and challenges with respect to underrepresented groups by developing and conducting an internal assessment. The climate survey took place in the fall of 2006 and the results were presented in a report in March 2007 and widely discussed in a series of meetings on campus and with the Board of Trustees.

The climate survey's quantitative and qualitative findings identified four primary challenges at Lehigh that revolved around "power and privilege." First, faculty in science and engineering are perceived to have greater status and privilege than other faculty, while staff who participated in the survey felt devalued for their work and that they had a lower class status. Second, many students of color had experienced racial profiling and felt ignored, excluded, and subject to offensive, hostile or intimidating conduct due to their race. Third, women students had concerns about safety related specifically to sexual assault. Fourth, some respondents experienced offensive, hostile, or intimidating conduct due to their sexual orientation.

Outcomes from this survey led to specific strategies for addressing these challenges and supporting positive diversity initiatives at Lehigh, including creation of the LGBTQA Office, the development of the Bias Response Team and new organizational structures in Student Affairs. As a result of these findings, Lehigh instituted a harassment policy, a re-launch of a bias response protocol, and a series of workshops for faculty by ADVANCE and the Provost Office. Despite all these efforts, some of the challenges persist. Learning from successes and failures of past efforts informs new efforts that are underway to address each of the four challenges identified in the study.

In the 1984-85 academic year, a summer program known as Challenge for Success was launched. This was a six-week summer residential bridge program, designed to assist predominantly minority first-year students to make a smooth transition to the Lehigh campus. In 2003, under new staff leadership, the program was named Summer Excel; however, it was discontinued in 2005/6 due to lack of interest among students. There is a renewed effort to start a more comprehensive summer program with a focus on first-generation college students, again benefitting from the successes and failures of past programs.

A 2007-2008 faculty-led study “Getting to Global Lehigh” outlined goals to double the international undergraduate population and develop an Office of International Affairs. Many of the other recommendations included in “Getting to Global Lehigh” have also been accomplished, some completely and some in part. Related to the campus climate, one of those recommendations was to increase the number of international students in our undergraduate population, and that number has doubled in the past five years.

Improvement in culture comes from a variety of approaches and the creation of UMOJA House, the enhancement to celebrations of Martin Luther King’s birthday, and the staging of cross-cultural events has made the idea of embracing differences and enjoying our diverse community a much more visible and real sense on campus. Recent all-campus events like the “Fire and Ice Ball,” the dance marathon and DanceFest bring together students from the Greek and non-Greek living groups and build ties across groups on campus.

Prior to the Strengthening Greek Life initiative, only one culturally based chapter, Kappa Alpha Psi, was in existence at Lehigh. It was noted in the 2005-06 System Wide Assessment Committee (SWAC) Report: “There is a major void in the Lehigh Greek System in the area of National Panhellenic Council (NPHC), National Association of Latino Fraternal Organizations (NALFO) and/or other traditional multicultural Greek Letter organizations.” SWAC made expansion of culturally based chapters and the formation of a Multicultural Greek Council a priority. Since that initial recommendation, Lehigh has welcomed the following chapters to campus.

- Spring 2008 - Lambda Theta Alpha (Latina sorority)
- Spring 2009 - Lambda Sigma Upsilon (multicultural fraternity)
- Fall 2009 - Omega Psi Phi (African-American fraternity; currently inactive due to lack of membership)
- Spring 2012 - Mu Sigma Upsilon (multicultural sorority)
- Fall 2012 - Alpha Phi Alpha (African-American fraternity)

The Multicultural Greek Council was founded in 2009, as a way for Lehigh's culturally based chapters to have a common support and governance structure. As stated by the Council: "The Multicultural Greek Council (MGC) at Lehigh University is charged with the collective purpose of cohesively uniting all culturally-based Greek organizations on campus. Through the open discussion of ideas, the implementation of programs, and the dedication to providing service to others, the members of the council promote diversity across the university." The Office of Fraternity and Sorority Affairs works with the council to support both collective initiatives, as well as initiatives of each organization. Additionally, OFSA works with SWAC to provide additional opportunities for chapter growth, where a void is directed. Currently, OFSA is working with students who are attempting to bring an African-American women's organization to campus.

The culture and climate must also be promoted clearly from the top. The 2006 endorsement by the Lehigh University Board of Trustees of a diversity statement was an important step and sent a powerful message. An even more powerful action was the creation in 2008 of the Board of Trustees Subcommittee on Diversity and Inclusion. This subcommittee reports to the Board of Trustees Academic Affairs and Student Affairs Committees.

Also in 2008, President Alice Gast formed the Council for Equity and Community (CEC) with faculty and staff member co-chairs; membership of the committee was initially identified by university elections. The CEC was charged to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion work on campus, and the co-chairs reported to the President. In 2012 the CEC was restructured to improve its impact, enhance its visibility, and engage institutional leadership in its membership and work.

Groups, events, and living spaces cannot fully change a community culture. An important step came in 2011 when the entire university community endorsed the "Principles of Our Equitable Community" and pledged to uphold these values. These principles serve as a foundation for our future collective efforts to support inclusion and engagement at Lehigh. <http://www4.lehigh.edu/diversity/principles>

Lehigh's Human Resources department worked with the Employee Relations Advisory Committee (ERAC) to develop programming aimed at enhancing faculty-staff relations, an important aspect in the quality of our campus climate. As a result, in July 2011, noted faculty-staff relations expert Dr. Susan Christy visited campus to conduct staff workshops on the topic. Having developed strategies for improvement, ERAC and HR representatives met with the Provost's Council and other senior leaders to discuss effective ways to engage their college in a heightened understanding of the value of effective faculty-staff working relationships. As of the spring of 2013, 30 such volunteer faculty-staff partnerships have developed and will be interviewed by Dr. Christy regarding their effective collaboration in and between departments. With the help of the committee, we will identify themes and practices that have modeled desired outcomes. The *Faculty-Staff Relations Committee* will present and discuss the finding with the Provost's Council and together will discuss ways to disseminate and apply this information across campus.

Policies and Procedures

Policies and procedures ensure that people are accountable for their actions, help to protect people who might be targeted, and help in setting expectations for members of the community. Below is a list of some of the primary resources available to the community.

- Anonymous reports of bias, discrimination or harassment can be filed using the **Bias Incident Reporting Form** on our website which was re-launched in 2012 and supported by a Bias Response Team:
<http://www.lehigh.edu/~inprv/initiatives/biasform.html>. More information on the University's Bias Response Policy is available here:
<http://www.lehigh.edu/~inprv/initiatives/BiasResponsePolicy020912.pdf> the
- For student related issues of gender violence, Advocates, specially trained staff and faculty members, monitor a 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year hotline: 610-758-4763 or <https://studentaffairs.lehigh.edu/content/advocates-0>.

An anonymous reporting form, as well as an authenticated faculty and staff reporting form for incidents of gender violence can be accessed at:

<https://cf.lehigh.edu/sa/secure/gender/>

Break the Silence gender violence prevention peer educators provide a variety of campus events, workshops and programs, as well as operate a peer resource line Thursday through Monday 5 pm to 9 am each day during the fall and spring semesters: 610-974-HOPE (4673) or <https://studentaffairs.lehigh.edu/content/break-silence>.

- **The University Ombudspersons** serve as a neutral, independent and informal conflict resolution resource and can help resolve problems or complaints. More information on this resource is available here: <http://www.lehigh.edu/~inombuds/>.
- The **Ethics and Compliance Hotline** is an anonymous reporting resource to confidentially report activities that may involve alleged misconduct or alleged violation of Lehigh University's or governmental policies and regulations. Reports can be made by phone at 888-924-4450 or online at <https://secure.ethicspoint.com/domain/media/en/gui/35968/index.html>
- **The Informal Complaint Resolution Network** is a group of individuals across campus who can offer confidential guidance to any campus community member regarding a concern or complaint. A list of network members organized by college, stem and department is available here: <https://hr.lehigh.edu/complaint-resolution-network>

Education and Engagement

In 2012, the first university-wide comprehensive guideline/handbook was developed and a web site was launched to support search committees and advance Lehigh's efforts to recruit the best and the brightest faculty from diverse backgrounds. The goal of this work was to set the

expectation of diverse pools of faculty candidates for departments to consider and to provide support to help search committees build those pools. As an extension of this effort, we invited the Cornell Interactive Theatre Ensemble Group to offer a series of workshops for faculty search committees and administrators on best practices for an effective faculty search process. In addition, a university-wide faculty search orientation workshop was launched in fall 2013 designed to advance best practices for effective faculty searches. As a result of the combination of these proactive efforts, Lehigh is recruiting outstanding faculty from diverse backgrounds across the four colleges. For example, in the College of Engineering and Applied Science, all of the departments now have at least one female tenure track or tenured faculty member.

Efforts have also been underway since late fall 2013 under the leadership of Henry Odi, Vice Provost for Academic Diversity (VPAD), to assist each academic department to develop a strategic action plan. The initial work includes meeting with department chairs to assess current initiatives and new opportunities to advance and sustain diversity and inclusion.

In our continual efforts to provide a best-in-class Student Life experience, the Division of Student Affairs has recently launched a new initiative called bLUeprint. This initiative was a way for Student Affairs to bring the Core Competencies to students. bLUeprint is an intentionally sequenced learning experience in which students will **discover, explore, connect, and apply** their learning in 5 main learning outcomes, or Foundations for Student Success:

Creative Curiosity – Students will ask big questions, seek mindful solutions and develop an inquisitive outlook on the world.

Identity Development – Students will develop into their own unique person and live out carefully chosen values and beliefs.

Collaborative Connections – Students will build positive relationships and engage in dialogue, utilizing their values.

Inclusive Leadership – Students will take action and contribute in ways that are purposeful, socially just, and built on integrity.

Professional Growth & Success – Students will create and enact a personal definition of success at Lehigh and beyond.

By engaging students deeply into the principles of bLUeprint early through the first year seminar, hall programming, reflective conversations with Gryphons, conduct reflections, and bLUeprinting with their peers (i.e., creating their own personalized plan for success at Lehigh), students are introduced to a framework they can use to shape and reshape their learning journey at Lehigh. In addition, students receive coaching and feedback from staff and peer mentors and are able to better navigate their Lehigh journey in a way that reflects their personal definition of success. As a common experience for all Lehigh students, bLUeprint is inclusive of all students yet it is also personally tailored for each student's involvements, interests, and level of development. Among the many benefits of this initiative for Lehigh and our students, one important opportunity has been the ability for us to further highlight diversity and inclusion as key elements of learning for students while at Lehigh. While concepts of multiculturalism and global awareness are imbedded within the overarching Core Competencies for Lehigh, this operational step of creating the Foundations for Student Success in bLUeprint have allowed us to bring these critical issues further to the forefront for dialog and reflection among students.

After a number of very positive experiences sending a few students each year to the [LeaderShape](#) Institute, a nationally recognized six day, intensive leadership experience that provides dialogue and interactive self-discovery, we are bringing the program to Lehigh. Occurring from May 11 – May 16, 2014 at Camp Canadensis, Lehigh University’s inaugural LeaderShape Institute will “challenge participants to lead with integrity while working towards a vision grounded in their deepest values.” Within the program, more than 50 Lehigh students will engage in discussion surrounding inclusive leadership, explore their own identity development, and create a blueprint plan for action with the intention of returning to campus and implementing their blueprint.

The overarching strategic outcome we intend to achieve is that a greater number of students, faculty and staff from a diversity of backgrounds and experiences will have a(n):

- strong foundation of knowledge about leadership development;
- commitment to leading with integrity and personal relationships with one another;
- ability to examine the role that diversity and inclusion plays in community leadership; and
- the collective will to utilize that knowledge to build a more inclusive community of leaders on campus who seek opportunities to empower their peers and strengthen the communities of which they are a part.

Ensuring that Lehigh provides accessible and attractive social opportunities for all students is an important factor in promoting student success. In the fall of 2012, we launched Lehigh After Dark (LAD), which supports healthy student behavior by expanding the vibrant and exciting social environment at Lehigh.

The Lehigh After Dark Activity Fund provides support for programs that offer undergraduate students quality social, cultural, intellectual and community development activities that do not focus on alcohol and are open to the entire Lehigh community. Now in its second year, students are recognizing the LAD brand and becoming more engaged with the program – that is, by attending LAD activities as well as by helping to promote and execute LAD activities.

In fall 2013, 92.0% of Lehigh students indicated that they knew that Lehigh offers Lehigh After Dark activities; 46.5% of Lehigh students attended at least one LAD activity during that period. The number of LAD programs has increased significantly since Lehigh After Dark debuted at the start of the 2012-13 academic year (49 programs in fall 2013 as compared to 19 programs in fall 2012 and 30 programs in spring 2013). Our ongoing assessment efforts indicate that interest in LAD events is significant among underrepresented students. Attendance records indicate that 43% of African-American students, 29% of Asian students, 24% of Hispanic students, and 21.6% of International students attended at least one LAD event.

Learning must also occur at the highest levels. The senior leadership team and the Council for Equity and Community (CEC) are undertaking training with consultants from VISIONS. The goal of this training is to develop a common language and a more comprehensive view of culture and cultural change while improving our ability to work effectively across levels in the institution.

Our community goes well beyond our campus boundaries. Lehigh's 2009 Strategic Plan was the first to explicitly embrace the South Bethlehem community as a central area of focus. Goals for engagement and revitalization of the community are included and the 2012 Campus Master Plan was the first to include South Bethlehem as part of the university's capital improvement goals. Many student, faculty and staff groups engage in collaborative efforts in the South Bethlehem community and the community leaders can serve as resources for our campus as well.

As an important grass roots effort, our undergraduate student senate subcommittee on diversity and inclusion has embarked on a collaborative initiative with our graduate student senate and faculty to propose a diversity and inclusion requirement in the curriculum of each college and to integrate diversity and inclusion across the curriculum. VPAD Henry Odi is providing the necessary support for this initiative.

Lehigh continues to expand efforts to advance diversity and inclusion through education and engagement. The College of Business and Economics (CBE) will host CEO-in-Residence James Adamson for one week, March 30-April 4. Mr. Adamson was the CEO for Adventica Restaurant Group, parent company of Denny's, and is known for his effective work overcoming racism in the restaurant chain. His visit will include talks and roundtable discussions with our faculty. In addition, Mr. Adamson will host a Corporate Diversity and Inclusion Roundtable for corporate executives in the Lehigh Valley.

This history recounts some of the events and efforts undertaken at Lehigh to increase diversity and improve inclusion. It is evident that despite some successes, Lehigh still has work to do, particularly in the area of developing a culture that is visibly welcoming to the differences we see among people in our on-campus community and in the off-campus community. With the growing campus interest and concern about the climate for diversity and inclusion, we are hopeful that more on campus will be engaged in addressing these issues. The reenergizing of the CEC and the full engagement of the campus senior leadership in a more focused way on the issues of on-campus climate will allow us to progress in ways we have not been able to in the past. Many experts in this area emphasize that to attain the progress can require a long journey, and confidence in the persistence and determination of the campus to continue the journey is critical to near-term achievements and long-term success.