

**University of Washington School of Nursing  
Diversity Inventory 2004**

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## **University of Washington School of Nursing Diversity Inventory 2004**

This report is an inventory of current programs, scholarships, and outreach initiatives that focus on diversity in the UW School of Nursing, at the pre-college, undergraduate, and graduate levels, in our staff and faculty ranks, and in our articulation of the School's mission. While this report is structured around the seven Office of Minority Affairs-designated diversity target areas, the School views its diversity work as a continuum, wherein overlap between one area and another is not only intentional and beneficial but is required in order for a comprehensive diversity effort to be successful. Thus, although School of Nursing activities have been described below as discreet activities fitting in one particular section, many of these efforts are consciously directed at more than one target area.

### **1. Student Access and Opportunities**

The School of Nursing strives to reach out to students and prospective students in multiple and ongoing ways. In 1998, the School of Nursing Academic Services staff, led by Carolyn Chow, Coordinator of Recruitment and Admissions, spearheaded the development of a Five-Year Recruitment Plan, launched in 1999 and continuing through the end of academic year 2004. The plan features a renewed commitment to student-oriented information sessions and application processes, as well as targeted efforts to prime the pipeline of under-represented applicants to the School by reaching out to prospective students at community festivals with large populations of prospective students of color, minority-rich middle and high schools, and community colleges.

Activities of the Five-Year Recruitment Plan are designed to educate and introduce not only students, but also guidance counselors and teachers, to a realistic image of the nursing profession, with the additional intent to demystify and improve relationships with the UW and the School of Nursing. High school students interested in health careers are annually invited to become part of the School's Kids Into Health Careers program (KIHC), funded by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) and the School. KIHC brings high school students to the UW campus and matches them to faculty and student mentors throughout an entire quarter. KIHC participants are then introduced to the six UW Health Science Schools, exposed to faculty, and introduced to health career opportunities. In addition to these efforts, the School is fortunate to be participating in outreach to diverse students on a national scope, recruiting underrepresented students annually at national conferences for Latino, Native American, and African American nurses. Additionally, prospective students are offered advising about careers in nursing and the UW School of Nursing before entering the University and/or community college. Diverse pre-applicants are also offered individualized advising in an effort to enhance a personal connection between the applicants and the School.

Moreover, middle-school, high-school, and community college guidance counselors and teachers are targeted as a vital building block toward the creation of a pipeline of multi-cultural students to the School of Nursing. The School sees counselors and teachers, in their day-to-day interactions with students, are perhaps best positioned to facilitate student awareness of how to use the middle and high school years to prepare for college and for a future career in nursing.

Providing them with in-depth information so that they may better mentor and advise students has assisted the School in formulating personal relationships with them, effectively bridging the distance between multi-cultural families and the School. Buttressing these efforts are faculty, students, and staff who actively make themselves visible as role models by volunteering in outreach activities that include quarterly visits to minority-rich middle school and high school classrooms and after-school events.

On campus, the School establishes a presence with campus-wide cross-cultural organizations and at their events in order to reach out to current UW undergraduates. Activities on campus include providing information sessions for students who are members of specific registered student organizations, in addition to partnerships with the Office of Minority Affairs (OMA) and Undergraduate Advising to provide an annual workshop for pre-nursing students at the ethnic cultural center. For students who come to the workshop, the School follows up with individualized appointments and offers to review applications before they are submitted. The School also offers an annual Freshman Seminar focusing on nursing careers. All students who enroll in the freshman seminar stay in touch with Dagmar Schmidt, instructor, via individual appointments. The seminar is advertised through OMA, Undergraduate advising, the School Web site, and the UW time schedule. These recruitment activities have served as a means of responding to the fact that 41% of the 20 most popular majors for under-represented minority students at the UW were in business, science, engineering and nursing. Local students are successfully attracted before they are admitted to the BSN program and reassure them that the School values individualized advising and solid student services that result in retention and successful completion of the program.

The School of Nursing has also developed extensive Web resources for potential students, applicants, and students, emphasizing that the School seeks stakeholders with diverse experiences and deep multicultural awareness. The School of Nursing Home page (see <http://www.son.washington.edu>) prominently features the faces of diverse students and links directly to our Diversity Web page (<http://www.son.washington.edu/diversity/default.asp>), which in turn facilitates students and applicants to access the School of Nursing Strategic Plan Diversity Goals (see <http://www.son.washington.edu/diversity/stratplan.asp>), Climate Statement (see <http://www.son.washington.edu/diversity/climate.asp>), Diversity Statement (see <http://www.son.washington.edu/diversity/diversity-statement.asp>), Diversity Task Force (see <http://www.son.washington.edu/diversity/diversity-taskforce.asp>), Diversity Archives (see <http://www.son.washington.edu/diversity/diversity-archives.asp>), and Diversity Resources (see <http://www.son.washington.edu/diversity/diversity-resources.asp>). Applicants to the School's four degree programs are asked to address multi-culturalism in their applications. The School explicitly intends these multiple features to underscore to the community that diversity is not only a goal, but a value.

In conjunction with its independent efforts, the School aims for a high level of integration and coordination with UW-wide resources for underrepresented students, including OMA, GOMAP, EOP, and UW undergraduate advising. This coordination helps the School maximize its relationships with the community and reduce potential barriers to the School for under-represented students, in addition to accessing outstanding support services for current students. Example activities include: offering an annual information session about the BSN program at the

Ethnic Cultural Center, presenting the profession of nursing annually at an undergraduate health careers class for minority UW students, offering an annual Freshman Seminar to introduce UW students to nursing, and utilizing the Minority Name and Western Name Exchange lists to send letters and initiate personal follow-up with diverse students from around the country. Supplementing these efforts is the School's participation in and leadership of CAN-DO, the Collaborative Access Network on Diversity Outreach, a campus-wide, grass-roots network focusing on coordination of outreach and recruitment efforts from the University to the diverse communities the University serves, in an effort to avoid overlap and use resources effectively.

Cooperation and collaboration with the nursing community is another extremely important factor in reducing perceived barriers to the UW School of Nursing. The School has thus established partnerships with local medical centers wherein a student agrees to work as a Registered Nurse at that medical center upon graduation from the UW School of Nursing in exchange for tuition (or tuition + stipend) while a student. These programs have been established at UW Medical Center, Harborview Medical Center, Evergreen Healthcare, Swedish Medical Center, and Virginia Mason Medical Center (see [http://www.son.washington.edu/eo/bsn\\_costs.asp](http://www.son.washington.edu/eo/bsn_costs.asp)), in addition to the existing VALOR program at the Veteran's Administration Puget Sound Health Care System. Given the national nursing shortage, benefits to Medical Center partners include the creation of a pipeline of guaranteed, diverse, new nurse employees every year and cost-savings in recruitment budgets and in cost and length of time for orientation. For the UW School of Nursing, the partnerships serve as a tool for meeting student financial needs and allow us to support student success in the BSN program by diminishing student need for full-time work, providing consistency in employment, and making accessible a vast array of patient care experiences and professional nursing roles as the student builds a relationship with the partner institution.

These efforts have successfully produced an increase in matriculation of diverse students over the past five years, in spite of a plummeting economy, I-200, and the growing shortage of nurses locally and nationwide. On the undergraduate level, overall applications to the BSN program increased dramatically from 247 in 1999 to 406 in 2003. Though the number of minority applicants dropped from 27% in 1999 to 22% in 2003, the competitiveness of minority applicants increased: 23% of admitted students in 1999 were minority students, while in 2003, 32% of admitted students were minority students. The School attributes this increase in part to its post-I-200 renewal of efforts to reach out to high school and community college students.

On the graduate level, the School has experienced several significant challenges to the recruitment of minority students, most of whom must be prepared as Registered Nurses to qualify for graduate programs in nursing. First, there is an extreme shortage of minority nurses: approximately 90% of all RNs in the United States are Caucasian; 4.2% are African American; 3.4% are Asian or Pacific Islander; 1.6% are Hispanic; and only .5% are American Indian or Alaskan Native. Second, the severity of the national nursing shortage has resulted in guarantees of competitive salaries as well as bonuses to current RNs who stay in the work force. These benefits serve as a deterrent to returning to school. Finally, a graduate degree in nursing does not ensure increased earning potential, which, combined with tuition increases and decreased work hours, makes graduate programs in nursing understandably less desirable for most nurses. Thus, the School has experienced a slight drop in graduate applications over the past five years, from 227 in 1999 to 192 in 2003, with a corresponding drop in minority applications from 13% in

1999 to 12% in 2003. These decreases in enrollment may also be partially attributable to the implementation of graduate programs in nursing at the UW Tacoma and UW Bothell campuses. However, recruitment efforts targeting prospective minority graduate nursing students were intensified, and despite the drop in overall applications, the number of admitted minority applicants rose from 15% in 1999 to 17% in 2003. These statistics are consistent with graduate programs at other top-ranked schools of nursing across the nation.

These trends inform the School's development of renewed recruitment and access efforts. In particular, it is intended that relationships can be built with a continuous stream of diverse students, from middle school to high school to community college to the BSN program and to the graduate programs. Diverse BSN students are being encouraged to pursue graduate degrees in nursing before they even begin the BSN program! Through these and like means, and through the provision of culturally sensitive retention services, it is hoped that the diversity of BSN-prepared RNs can be increased and thus increase the pipeline of diverse students to the masters and doctoral programs, and eventually to faculty and academic leadership positions.

## **2. Student Development and Retention**

Similar to its multi-faceted efforts in student outreach, the School of Nursing is committed to offering multiple levels and types of services that enhance student development and retention. Funding for students of color is aggressively pursued and awarded from sources ranging from private donors who support African American students to Federal traineeships, from graduate fellowships to School of Nursing scholarships to the tuition-paying hospital partnerships mentioned above.

While provision of funding for tuition enhances student retention, financial relief cannot be constituted as a retention effort in and of itself. The School recognizes that nursing education is an all-consuming, mental, physical, and psychological challenge, and that under-represented students often face additional trials in the School context. Thus, individual personal counseling is provided for all students, free of charge, by Kathleen Jennings, M.C., LMHC, who provides personal, school-related, and professional counseling to undergraduate and graduate nursing students, as well as referrals to outside services as needed. The service is free and strictly confidential, with students assured that no record of any counseling is made in their academic records. Additionally, individual academic advising is provided for BSN students by Dagmar Schmidt, Assistant Director of Academic Services, who also coordinates the BSN program, schedules student clinical assignments, and acts as an advocate on behalf of the BSN students with faculty and other UW departments. The scope of this role, coupled with targeted sensitivity to minority issues and advocacy for multi-cultural students, allows advising to be both comprehensive and effective.

Student development is further enhanced by the availability of School of Nursing Learning Lab, directed by Gaylene Altman, PhD, RN. The Learning Lab is a state of the art learning resource center serving faculty, undergraduate students, and graduate students. It includes print and practice materials for the performance of nursing health care therapeutics, including high-tech equipment and computers for computer-assisted instruction and interactive video-disc programs. The Lab allows for structured small group instruction and practice during regular week day hours

as well as the opportunity for students to do self-tutorials, practice with other students, or practice with a TA (see [http://www.son.washington.edu/students/all\\_learninglab.asp](http://www.son.washington.edu/students/all_learninglab.asp)).

Retention of diverse students is also sustained by direct efforts to address and normalize diversity, starting from the first moment the student is exposed to the School. Diversity workshops are offered annually to all new students. Emphasis is not only on cultural awareness, but also on how to reach end goals even when the student's expectations of the environment may not be met. Web resources for students are extensive and emphasize that the School values diverse experiences and multicultural awareness. Links to support networks for underrepresented students are included in all students' on-line handbooks (see [http://www.son.washington.edu/students/all\\_resources\\_soc.asp](http://www.son.washington.edu/students/all_resources_soc.asp)). Faculty members are told to expect difference, and many of them implement diverse pedagogic techniques, modes of communication, and mentoring styles in order to meet student needs. Students are prompted and supported in gaining multicultural experiences, be it through the Citizens of the World Scholar Award that provides funding to students seeking experiences of immersion in health care and society in a culture very different from their own (see [http://www.son.washington.edu/students/all\\_cotw\\_default.asp](http://www.son.washington.edu/students/all_cotw_default.asp)), or through the School's commitment to establishing affiliation agreements with community agencies where students can practice and study in diverse communities.

As a result of these ongoing efforts to enhance student development and retention, the School's enrollment of students of color in the BSN program has risen from 29% in 1998 to 32% in 2003, and in the graduate programs from 11% in 1998 to 12% in 2003. According to the Revised Edition of Emile Petrie's February, 2003 Descriptive and Longitudinal Analyses of Enrollment, Graduation, and Retention Data for UW Seattle, under represented minority students in nursing achieved graduation rates that were comparable to Caucasian students. The BSN program has an overall student retention rate of 98%, and BSN graduates pass the NCLEX, the national nursing licensure exam, at a 96-99% pass rate. Additionally, the School is proud to note that the percentage of men in the undergraduate program has risen from 10% in 1998 to 18% in 2003, and from 6% in 1998 to 11% in 2003 in the graduate program. Since the percentage of men in nursing nationally is approximately 10%, the School considers it an important diversity issue to encourage and support men in the field.

### **3. Engagement with the External Community**

The School of Nursing has an ongoing commitment to community outreach and involvement, as evidenced by a wide range of activities and aims in the School. One important conduit for community interface has been CAN-DO, the Collaborative Access Network on Diversity Outreach, which facilitates attendance at community festivals to establish grass-roots UW-community linkages. Additionally, School of Nursing students, staff, and faculty of the School attend diversity events reaching out to Northwest communities of color, offering free blood-pressure screening, building a foundation for ongoing conversations with communities of color, and personifying a message of access and service. Collaboration with ethnic health care organizations such as Mary Mahoney Professional Nurses Organization, Washington State Black Professionals in Health Care, and the Chicano Latino Mentorship Network serves as a way for the School to support current students of color and to establish meaningful community partnerships.

Web resources for the public are extensive and emphasize that the School values diverse experiences and multicultural awareness, as described in Section 1 above. The School's Continuing Nursing Education (CNE) program offers an annual conference on Health Care/Concerns of Diverse Populations, with approximately 100 attendees. In fact, topics related to health care of diverse populations are included in all CNE conferences. Additionally, the School's diversity efforts have been brought to national and local media contacts for further exposure. Interviews have stressed School emphasis on inclusion of underrepresented students in nursing, including students of color and men. Articles featuring School efforts have appeared in the *American Journal of Nursing*, *Minority Nurse*, *The Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, and *Northwest Cable News*.

In addition to these levels of engagement with the community, the School's efforts to integrate and institutionalize diversity can perhaps be best demonstrated by its relationships with the local nursing community. The School is committed to working with a wide variety of community agencies, particularly those with diverse ethnic, cultural and socio-economic populations, and those in medically underserved and rural areas. To that end, faculty and staff members are supported and encouraged to seek personal relationships with practitioners working in such settings: the School not only provides central staff support for establishing affiliation agreements with these partner agencies and practitioners, and for tracking them via the on-going development of a complex, relational database, but has also developed on-line resources that guide affiliated practitioners through the process of becoming clinical faculty in the School and provide tips for precepting students in their busy practice settings (see [http://www.son.washington.edu/faculty/support/teaching\\_preceptor.asp](http://www.son.washington.edu/faculty/support/teaching_preceptor.asp)). With quality clinical sites and preceptors at a premium, these activities have served the School's aims well and are the subject of continuous quality improvement efforts.

The School has also continued to facilitate relationships with the external community via the Nursing Practice Advisory Board (NPAB), which convenes on a quarterly basis with the Dean, Associate Deans, Department Chairs, and Chairs of the School's Curriculum Coordinating Committees. In addition to these faculty members, representatives of the professional community make up the large majority of the board: they are the Chief Nursing Officers of agencies that employ nurses throughout the region, ranging in scope from large, tertiary care centers to small, independent home-care agencies. The NPAB helps the School define target audiences, admissions standards, the curriculum and, on an ongoing basis, monitor the progress and quality of the program. They are key stakeholders in the School's mission, including its diversity goals.

One last example of partnering with the external community – in addition to those noted above and in Section 1, wherein the School partners with local medical centers to provide funding for students – is the School's innovative Loaned Faculty program, launched initially with the Veteran's Administration Puget Sound Health Care System and now expanded to include partnerships with four other agencies. In this program, a partner medical center retains an experienced advanced practice nurse, but though the medical center pays his/her regular salary, the nurse teaches a section of UW nursing students rather than doing his/her regular clinical work. This arrangement allows the partner to retain a much-valued nursing employee in a highly competitive nursing market while obtaining an outstanding pipeline of diverse UW nurse

employee recruits (recall that 30% of UW BSN students are non-white) and realizing a huge cost savings in recruitment, retention, and orientation budgets. Meanwhile, the School of Nursing avoids reducing the number of BSN students parallel with state/university budget reductions and saves dollars in clinical instructor salaries. Students report a high rate of satisfaction with this model, citing consistent mentorship, ability to build on previous knowledge without the interruption of orientation to new sites/systems, accessibility to a vast array of patient care experiences, and exposure to multiple professional nursing roles.

#### **4. Staff and Administrative Diversity**

The School of Nursing's senior administration consists of the Dean; three associate deans: for research, for academic services, and for educational outreach; and a department chair for each of the School's three departments: Biobehavioral Nursing and Health Systems, Family and Child Nursing, and Psychosocial and Community Health. There is a very low rate of turnover in the administration, with deanships lasting an average of eight to ten years and chair positions being held for approximately five years. Each of the School's senior administrators reflects the national trend in nursing, wherein approximately 90% of all RNs in the United States are Caucasian women. This demographic is also consistent with the median age of the nursing faculty at the University of Washington (55 years), suggesting that nearly half of the School's faculty will approach retirement over the next decade, making room for more diversity in the faculty and administrative populations.

Among the approximately 100 staff employees in the School of Nursing, 87% of contract classified and 83% of professional staff employees are female. Ethnic and racial diversity among contract classified staff employees has increased from 25% staff employees of color in 2000 to 28% in the current year, while amongst professional staff positions, staff employees of color have remained at approximately 12% for the past four years. This lack of change in staff diversity is likely linked to the high retention rate of staff in the School of Nursing. For example, the central Academic Services unit that supports the School's students, prospective students, faculty, staff, the community, and international programs, consists of 12 full-time and 3 part-time staff employees. Over 60% have been employed in the School for eight years or more, with 53% being employed by the School for over 15 years. Another 33% have been employed in the School for four to eight years. As current employees retire, the School hopes to meet its goal to recruit a diverse staff by receiving and reviewing applications from UW Human Resources from an increasingly more diverse pool of applicants.

#### **5. Faculty Diversity**

As mentioned in the preceding sections, the School of Nursing's Strategic Plan Goal 7 states: "Recruit and retain a diverse student body, faculty, and staff in order to enhance excellence of teaching, scholarship, and community service" (see <http://www.son.washington.edu/diversity/stratplan.asp>). In order to achieve this goal, the School has implemented a multi-faceted approach, including the leveraging of technology to assist search committees in recruiting diverse faculty candidates (see <http://www.son.washington.edu/faculty/support/recruiting.asp>), broadening the spectrum of print venues in which the School advertises faculty openings, coordinating with other schools of similar size across the UW campus to share ideas and strategies for recruiting faculty of color, and last, increasing the School's interaction with professional and academic associations for

underrepresented nursing groups in an attempt to identify community leaders who can support recruitment and retention of a diverse nursing faculty.

Despite these efforts, the School of Nursing experiences significant challenges in recruitment and retention of under-represented faculty. The School's faculty population consists of 21 research faculty members, 60 tenure/tenure track faculty members, and 585 clinical faculty members. In academic year 2000-2001, approximately 94% of the School's research and tenure-track faculty members were Caucasian, while only 5.7% were African American, Asian or Pacific Islander, Hispanic, or American Indian/Alaskan Native. In 2001-2002, the number of faculty of color increased from 5.7% to 6.15% of the faculty population, and last year, 2002-2003, faculty of color increased again to 10.64. Approximately 7% of faculty members are men, slightly under the national trend of 10% in nursing. Some barriers to recruitment and retention, such as stagnant faculty salaries at the UW and the high cost of living in Seattle area, affect all disciplines, including nursing. For example, two Latina faculty members in the School have been forced to leave the state in the past five years due to spousal job offers in other parts of the country. The massive under-representation of nurses of color across the nation mentioned in Section 1 supplements these problems. Thus, the School sees its efforts to recruit and retain diverse students in part as a means of addressing the long-term problem of under-representation in nursing: the students of today are the nurses and faculty members of tomorrow. The School is concerned about finding additional ways to increase and retain its numbers of faculty of color in order to build a quality learning climate that supports and affirms diverse students, promotes culturally competent learning and care provision, and moreover, where faculty of color serve as positive role models for those learners who are the potential pool of future faculty members.

## **6. Curriculum and Research**

School of Nursing curricula have included cross-cultural content since 1974, when the Masters in Cross Cultural Nursing was instituted. The following year, an undergraduate 'Cultural Variation & Nursing Practice' course was first offered and, in a very changed and updated format, continues to be offered to this day. Starting in 1991 and continuing to the present day, the School has also heavily collaborated with the UW Curriculum Transformation Project (CTP), wherein School of Nursing faculty members use CTP resources to change their curricula so that they include the study of race, gender, ethnicity, nation and nationhood, class, disability and sexuality in course work. As a result of these collaborations, transformation in courses from the undergraduate through the doctoral level, taught by many different faculty members, have occurred. Further, many courses offered by the School involve critical thinking about issues of diversity, including NURS 202: Who am I here: Difference and Identity at UW, NURS 550: White Privilege and Racism in Health and Human Services, NURS 504: Culturally Competent Care, NURS 561: Clinically Applied Anthropology, and NCLIN 409: Partnerships For Community Health.

Assessment and integration of diversity content in the School's curricula has also been propelled by the Department of Psychosocial and Community Health (PCH)'s taskforce on diversity, founded in 2000. Members include students, faculty, and staff who envision PCH as "a just environment that is pluralistic, inclusive, and free of discrimination", and whose mission is to help "create a climate that fosters mutual respect and to increase a sense of inclusion so that all people can fully participate" (see <http://www.son.washington.edu/departments/pch/diversitytf/>).

When PCH voted to regularly review all courses taught by its faculty for their contribution to supporting the department's diversity mission, the task force actively supported the process by developing and pilot testing a student feedback form that asks students to comment on a range of diversity issues within each course. The task force is also in the process of developing a "checklist" of curricular diversity issues that will guide the department's discussion of the courses taught by departmental faculty. It is hoped that, in conjunction with the School-wide Diversity Task Force described in Section 7, these tools can be presented to the faculty and staff of the two other departments within the School of Nursing for similar application.

In addition to these specific endeavors related to course work, the School embeds multi-cultural content into the curricula by directly integrating diversity goals in its degree programs. For example, graduates of the BSN program must 'Demonstrate cultural sensitivity as shown by thought processes and behavior.' The Master of Nursing program has five objectives, one of which is to 'utilize knowledge and skills in professional practice among diverse and multi-cultural populations'. PhD graduates are expected to 'be informed by social, cultural, and political issues related to their area of scholarship'.

Diversity is also entrenched in all of the School's program evaluation strategies. For example, the Master of Nursing program objectives are assessed via curricular threads that prescribe how the School measures the achievement of each objective. The 'Cultural Competency' thread is cross-listed with five outcomes: I) Value and articulate different ways of knowing including ethical, esthetic, interpersonal, & empirical; II) Demonstrate consideration of cultural, socio-economic, & political factors in the design, implementation, management, & evaluation of individual & population-based health services, &/or health policy issues and trends; III) Value and use the clients experience in a collaborative style of advanced nursing practice with diverse populations and/or communities; IV) Develop, design, &/or implement inquiry relevant to culturally competent practice, education or administration in collaboration with other nurses, providers, and other health care professionals; and V) Identify strategies that facilitate practice within a multi-cultural workforce. The overall evaluation plan includes assessing student competency at entry into the program, at the end of the program, and at specified intervals following graduation. The Masters Coordinating Committee (MCC) reviews the program evaluation data annually, and when indicated, appoints work groups to address areas of desired curricular change (see [http://www.son.washington.edu/students/mnms\\_program\\_evaluation.asp](http://www.son.washington.edu/students/mnms_program_evaluation.asp)).

In the research arena, the School of Nursing has a base of research that includes diverse populations and has a long history of investigating issues of health disparities related to these populations. For example, the Seattle Midlife Women's Health Study, which has been ongoing since 1990 and is led by Drs. Nancy Woods and Ellen Mitchell, pioneered methods to encourage the participation of women of color. Currently, investigators Dr. Frances Lewis and Dr. C. June Strickland are examining barriers and facilitators to participation in cancer screening in African-American women and Native American women in Washington State. Further, the School of Nursing was prominent in the development of the Health Science schools statement of principles of community-based research, which respects and promotes the diversity of community values in jointly carrying out research. Additionally, over the past two years, Dr. Noel Chrisman has served as an advisor to the National Cancer Institute in the principles and practice of community-base participatory action research.

This diversity-sensitive approach is evident in multiple School of Nursing research initiatives. For example, the Center for the Advancement of Health Disparities Research (CAHDR), launched in 2003, is a collaborative partnership between the UW and the University of Hawaii at Manoa Schools of Nursing aimed at fostering sustainable mechanisms for scholarship development in health disparities, including those related to racial and ethnic, gender and disability status (see <http://www.son.washington.edu/centers/hdc/>). The CAHDR is mentoring nurse researchers through learning institutes, guided research studies, and dissemination of new knowledge. Both Schools of Nursing are working toward unearthing cultural, institutional, political, linguistic, and economic roadblocks to care and bringing that knowledge back to both those who can benefit from and those who can act on such insights. Recent meetings, facilitated by Dr. Bobbie Berkowitz, CAHDR Director & Principal Investigator, and Dr. Pamela Mitchell, CAHDR Research Director, have supported pilot and external funding proposals that incorporate a focus on health disparities and health disparities research, including the sharing of knowledge, skills, and experience needed to enhance funding success.

## **7. Climate**

Perhaps one of the most challenging arenas in which the School strives to make diversity work visible and active is in its climate. Diversity of students is the norm, including students across the spectrum of age, race, country of origin, culture, religion, gender, and sexual orientation; students with diverse learning styles and needs; students with a variety of first languages; students with families; and students ranging in nursing experience from novice to expert. However, given that the composition of the School's staff and faculty populations are quite different than the student population, and that diverse student demographics alone cannot be interpreted to mean "success", a major target of diversity climate efforts has been the creation of School-wide forums and an environment that facilitate all School stakeholders to interface and effectively address diversity issues.

After the gradual decline of a dean-appointed Diversity Advisory Council in the early 1990s and a fiery discussion of the celebration of Christmas in the School that brought an end to quarterly Diversity Forums in the late 1990s, the School has recently taken significant strides toward building a climate that is receptive to 'diverse thoughts, views, and feelings in order that they may become a single, but many dimensional reality' (School of Nursing Climate Statement). The School's mission is, in part, to 'provide service that promotes the health and well-being of diverse individuals, families, communities, populations, and systems' (see <http://www.son.washington.edu/about/mission-statement.asp>). The School's 1999-2004 Strategic Plan includes three of seven goals with diversity objectives (see <http://www.son.washington.edu/diversity/docs/goal567.doc>). In 1999, the annual autumn Faculty Retreat focused on diversity, including planning of diversity activities to be initiated and overseen by the staff of the School's Academic Services office.

In 1999 - 2000 an Admissions Diversity Statement written by Assistant Dean Julie Katz was approved by each curriculum coordinating committee for the purpose of enhancing accessibility to School of Nursing degree programs by underrepresented applicants (see [http://www.son.washington.edu/eo/info\\_diversity.asp](http://www.son.washington.edu/eo/info_diversity.asp)). It was rapidly followed in Spring Quarter, 2000 by a Climate Statement created by the School's Governing Council (see see

<http://www.son.washington.edu/diversity/climate.asp>), and by a school-wide diversity climate survey, created and implemented by Craig Lewis, Assistant to the Dean. Concerns about the survey that asked for outside analysis and a more politically visible process of data-gathering were expressed directly to Dean Nancy Woods, perhaps demonstrating a new level of 'safety' in the climate. In November, 2001, the School sponsored a public lecture by Dr. Lois Price-Spratlen, a School of Nursing faculty member and author of "Seattle African-American Nurses: How They Have Overcome." At the lecture, Dean Woods addressed how early UW nursing school admission policies adversely affected African-American nursing students and issued an apology for the experiences of Mary Mahoney Professional Nurses Organization members in the past. This open acknowledgment of past racism served as a means for the School to take responsibility for its history, and to commit itself actively and publicly to working with the current community of African-American nursing students and nurses to continue to increase the number of African-Americans in nursing.

These multiple diversity initiatives demonstrate a commitment by the School's leadership to integrate diversity issues into all levels of the organization, and set the tone for the School's activities vis-à-vis diversity today. In 2001-2002, the School committed itself to a conceptual framework for proceeding with the work of enhancing diversity in a systemic fashion. The framework emphasized consideration of the context in which change in a complex system such as the School of Nursing would be implemented: inputs from students, faculty, and staff; processes, such as instruction, research, and day-to-day communication; and outcomes (see <http://www.son.washington.edu/diversity/activities-2001.asp>). In tandem with the framework, the Staff Advisory Council and Faculty Council joined forces to plan four sessions on diversity, sponsored by the Dean and facilitated by Margarita Suarez, RN, MA, Director of Avanta, a non-profit organization that works to facilitate and model processes of communication, healing, growth, and change. An initial session was held with faculty and staff, followed by a session for students alone, with the year culminating in two sessions held with the entire school - students, staff, and faculty. The sessions provided a safe environment with an outside facilitator, and were an important means of initiating a School-wide conversation about diversity.

As follow-up to those sessions, a School-Wide Diversity Task Force (DTF) was established in 2002, chaired by Dr. Mary Salazar. This group of students, faculty, and staff met monthly to advance the conversation about diversity, identify needs, and learn about diversity resources available to them in the UW system. In addition to creating a DTF mission and vision statement (see <http://www.son.washington.edu/diversity/diversity-taskforce.asp>), the first year of the DTF provided an important forum for participants to vent about incidents and issues of concern, including the effects of power differentials in the School and navigating the conflicting viewpoints that arise based on one's experience as a white person or as a person of color.

The DTF, now chaired by Assistant Dean Julie Katz, continues in the current 2003-2004 academic year. Its annual goals, in addition to ongoing long-term goals, include: cuing diversity discussion School-wide, using a variety of methods, including featuring a diversity scenario or challenge each month of the academic year; holding a Café Club/Round Robin for students on diversity issues; establishing Diversity Bulletin Boards on each of the four floors of the School to feature DTF work/scenarios; and initiating a Diversity Assessment of all School of Nursing Courses (see <http://www.son.washington.edu/diversity/dtf-goals.asp>). It is through the DTF that

the School's Diversity Web site, featured prominently on the home page and offering a variety of diversity resources to students, faculty, staff, and community members, was launched in Autumn Quarter, 2003 (see <http://www.son.washington.edu/diversity/default.asp>). Its next challenge is the embedding of the DTF into the committee structure of the School via a change in the School's by-laws, a proposal that will be brought to the School's Governing Council later in 2004.

In conclusion, the School of Nursing is working very hard and on multiple levels to attract and retain diverse student, staff, and faculty populations, to institutionalize diversity in its structure, to integrate diversity into the curricula, and to make diversity a visible, active part of the School. With an eye toward increasing awareness of the need to seek assistance with appropriate approaches to accomplishing this work in a culturally sensitive and competent manner, the School hopes to strengthen and expand the concrete steps it has already taken.