

# DIVERSITY UPDATE

A U T U M N 2 0 0 9



## MESSAGE FROM MAC

### Dear Friends of Ohio State:

I am pleased to share a very flattering review about an Ohio State program that is designed to increase retention rates of African American male students. At the recent Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities conference in Washington, D.C., I learned that the university is considered a model institution for our efforts and was held up as an exemplar to others. In a session on access, diversity, and excellence, University of Colorado-Denver Chancellor M. Roy Wilson spoke of our program to retain students from year one to year two. "They raised the retention rate from 68 percent to 91 percent in just seven years!" he said with incredulity to an audience of our national peers.

Of course, we know that Chancellor Wilson was referring to the Todd Anthony Bell National Resource Center on the African American Male. As one of few such academic units in the United States, the Bell Center has been instrumental in the university's steady increase of retention rates. They have done this in part by creating high-quality research and scholarship that inform our policies and practices. But just as importantly, they also have created a sense of community and connectedness that is equally crucial to our students' academic success.

Certainly, our retention numbers are highly positive and we are pleased that others are beginning to take notice. We are very proud of this reputation and know now that our efforts will bear fruit nationally.

Sincerely,

Mac A. Stewart

Special Assistant to the President for Diversity and Vice Provost



## Faculty/Staff Recruitment

**Carol Pitts Diedrichs** has been recommended to serve as **director of University Libraries** at Ohio State, and her appointment will be effective January 5, 2010. Diedrichs is currently serving as dean of Libraries and the William T. Young Endowed Chair at the University of Kentucky. She has vast experience in library administration and at UK provides intellectual leadership for the educational and service programs of 12 libraries; administers a budget of more than \$21 million; and is a member of the Provost's Dean's Council. Diedrichs served at Ohio State from 1987-2003, most recently as assistant director for technical services and collections and professor. She received her BA from Baylor University and her Master's of Library and Information Science from the University of Texas at Austin.

**Ellen Mosley-Thompson**, an acclaimed polar scientist and University Distinguished Scholar in geography at Ohio State, has been named the next **director of the institution's Byrd Polar Research Center**. Mosley-Thompson, along with her husband and research partner Lonnie Thompson, is considered one of the world's leading experts on paleoclimatology, the study of ancient climates. Their work on ice cores retrieved from glaciers and ice caps on at least five continents has provided the clearest evidence to date of global climate change and the effects humans have had on it. A member of the National Academy of Sciences, she assumed her new post October 1.

The College of Social and Behavioral Sciences welcomed its inaugural cohort of Diversity Postdoctoral Fellows. **Christopher Brown's** dissertation analyzed how white male elites understand diversity, success, and leadership. Dr. Brown's faculty mentor

is Osei Appiah, associate professor in the School of Communication. **Tasleem Padamsee's** dissertation examined why two culturally, politically, and economically similar welfare states responded to the similar challenges posed by HIV and AIDS in such different ways. Dr. Padamsee's faculty mentor is Katherine Meyer, professor of sociology and associate provost. **Monica Trieu's** dissertation explored the need to look beyond groups broadly categorized under a singular ethnic category to examine the different ancestral origin ethnic groups hidden within a national origin group. Dr. Trieu's faculty mentor is Zhenchao Qian, professor of sociology.

**Mary Lynn Readey** has been named **associate vice president of Facilities Operations and Development**, effective immediately. Readey has served as deputy general counsel in the Office of Legal Affairs and recently assumed responsibility for FOD on an interim basis. Much of her professional focus in the last 10 years has been in the area of public construction. She is a past executive director of the Ohio School Facilities Commission, the state agency devoted to construction of K-12 school buildings.

## Student Recruitment

Ohio State's **Multicultural Center and the Frank Hale Cultural Center** recently hosted the **Family Affair and Reunion**. A joint venture between the two departments, a Family Affair and Reunion enabled academic departments and Student Life units to highlight the services, support, and program offerings available to minority students.

The newly formed **Women's Career Empowerment Group** will meet six times throughout the quarter to assist women graduate students. Sponsored by the Career Connection at Ohio State, the group provides students a chance to discuss the unique obstacles experienced by women in the workplace and during the job search; to hear from successful professional women in the community about how they overcame obstacles in their careers; and to design a personalized action plan for their career paths.

The College of Social and Behavioral Sciences sponsored the "Surviving Your First Year as an Assistant Professor" workshop. The two-day workshop for advanced **underrepresented graduate students** in the social, behavioral, and economic sciences focused on the successful transition from graduate student to faculty member. SBS will host the workshop again in July 2010.

In 2006, the Department of Art Education developed an online Master of Arts in Art Education for the country of Jamaica. The degree program, coordinated by professor **Vesta A.H. Daniel**, was a response to a requirement from the **Jamaican Ministry of Education** for its advanced education for teachers. At Ohio State's 2009 summer commencement, five of the program's first 14 graduates traveled to Columbus from Kingston, Jamaica, to receive their degrees. They are representatives of the largest group of MA recipients in this discipline and now join the only two PhD recipients in their country, both of whom received their degrees from Ohio State. The program will soon be commuted to its partner institution, The Edna Manley College of Visual and Performing Arts.



Over the summer, the College of Nursing hosted the **Summer Nursing Institute**, three days of hands-on nursing experience to learn what it is like to be a student nurse. This program was available to eligible high school juniors and seniors in Columbus City Schools as a way to increase our enrollment from underrepresented populations.



Thirty-four African American students completed a week-long camp—the **Aviation Career Education Academy**—introducing them to careers in aviation. Certified flight instructors from the university's aviation department took the students on flights over central Ohio. Hosted by the Columbus Regional Airport Authority, the academy provided students with a trip to Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, lunch with Tuskegee Airmen, and tours of several aviation facilities.

## Academic Programming, Scholarly Activity, and Research

Ohio State has developed **rural and urban tracks in its Family Medicine residency program** to address the lack of access to quality care caused by physician shortages in these areas. Urban residents practice on Columbus' near east side and rural residents receive training in the farming communities of Logan County, Ohio. Residents in the urban track focus on prenatal and postnatal care, outpatient management of HIV/AIDS, minor surgical procedures, interpretive services, health promotion, and disease prevention. Residents in Ohio State's rural track are trained to build relationships with patients and to address their mental, social, and spiritual health in addition to their

physical health. Ohio State's rural program maintains a high-volume continuity obstetrics practice.

## Leadership and Recognition

**Caroline Whitacre**, vice president for research at Ohio State, was recently inducted into the **National Multiple Sclerosis Society's 2009 Volunteer Hall of Fame for Researchers**. Whitacre, also a professor in the Department of Molecular Virology, Immunology, and Medical Genetics in the College of Medicine, was one of three researchers selected for this national honor in recognition of her outstanding volunteer support, for making a difference in the community, and for advancing awareness of the society's mission to create a world free of multiple sclerosis. Whitacre has been on the forefront of multiple sclerosis research for more than 30 years.



Molina Healthcare of Ohio recognized eight community heroes at its first annual Community Champions Awards, including **Joyce Beatty**, senior vice president of **Outreach and Engagement** at Ohio State. Beatty, a former Ohio House Democratic Leader, received Molina Healthcare's first Community Champions Award in the Advocacy and Civic Leader category. As a legislator, Beatty secured first-of-its-kind state funding for breast and cervical cancer screenings for working women without health insurance. She also co-wrote the Ohio law requiring insurance providers to cover routine costs for cancer patients enrolling in clinical trials and she championed the Diabetes Cost Reduction Act, which is pending legislation that helps diabetics afford life-saving materials. The ceremony was held at the historic Lincoln Theater.



**Mac A. Stewart**, chief diversity officer and vice provost, was a recipient of the **Alumni Association's Josephine Sitterle Failer Award**. This recognition is extended by the association to alumni who have given sustained leadership, their time, and talent to the university. Specifically, it is presented to those whose voluntary personal involvement has enhanced the quality of student life at the university. Stewart was honored at the annual awards ceremony in September. He also was honored with the establishment of a Distinguished Award for Service named after him. The award recognizes his distinguished career and tireless efforts in higher education, particularly as they relate to African American males. Stewart dedicated his research and practice to improving the retention and graduation rates for these men, especially at Ohio State. The first Mac A. Stewart Distinguished Service Award was presented to former State Senator C.J. Prentiss.



**James L. Moore III**, associate professor of physical activity and educational services, has become the third American to receive the Outstanding Contribution to School-Based Family Counseling Award from the Institute for School-Based Family Counseling. The **international award recognizes Moore's professional work with ethnic minorities**, particularly African American males, in public schools and higher education institutions throughout the United States. In addition to his appointment in the College of Education and Human Ecology's counselor education program, he is director of Ohio State's Todd Anthony Bell National Resource Center on the African American Male. Moore has previously been internationally recognized as a rising academic in school counselor education, support for success of African American boys and men, and improvement of urban schools.





**Melvin Shipp**, dean of the College of Optometry, was **appointed president of the Association for Schools and Colleges of Optometry** at the annual American Optometric Association meeting held recently in Washington, D.C. Shipp has been a member of the board of directors since 2004. As president, he is committed to enhancing the faculty development institutes, promoting programs focused on cultural awareness, and increasing the enrollment, retention, and graduation of individuals from underrepresented populations in optometry and vision science research.

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Ohio State sociology professor **Ruth Peterson** was honored with the **Lifetime Achievement Award** by the American Society of Criminology (ASC). This is the organization's highest award for outstanding contributions to the field of criminology and was bestowed by the Division on People of Color and Crime within ASC.

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**Bill Meezan**, professor of social work, was recently appointed **chair of the Publications Committee of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW)**. During his four-year term as chair, Meezan will lead the committee in making recommendations on all programs related to the NASW Press, publishing, and general communications. The committee is charged with maintaining a comprehensive and integrated view of NASW's publications, including its four journals and book series, and providing general oversight on behalf of the board of directors in developing and implementing an association-wide publications program. Prior to his appointment, Meezan served as dean of The Ohio State University College of Social Work from 2005-09.

## Outreach

The **Ray Miller Institute for Change and Leadership** is in the midst of its autumn class. The 10-week course provides leadership training in critical areas such as identifying community needs and resources; effective communication; ethics and values; grassroots organization; media relations; organizational and business development; relationship building; and philanthropy. The institute is open to anyone aged 21 or older who has a desire to become a change agent within his/her community. The goal of the institute is to cultivate the skills necessary for effective leadership by instilling a new generation of leadership with a sense of social consciousness, as well as a sense of urgency.

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The **James' Hospital Diversity Enhancement Program** developed a **Family Reunion Kit** to help families develop a clearer picture of their health history. Each kit provides information on the risks, common symptoms, and detection methods for the most common cancers, as well as details on Ohio State's research and patient care programs. The Diversity Enhancement Program is dedicated to increasing cancer awareness in the community, with an emphasis on increasing participation in cancer clinical trials, especially by minority participants.

## Awareness

This year marks the **22nd Annual National Coming Out Day** honoring the gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender community at Ohio State and nationwide. In support, the Multicultural Center and the GLBT

Alumni Society have once again produced an advertisement in *The Lantern* with the names of faculty, staff, students, alumni, and community members who give their support to the GLBT community.

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**Ohio State Lima** is seeking to increase **awareness about crimes against the disabled**. "Recognize, Report, and Respond to Abuse" was presented by representatives from the Allen County MRDD, who shared their expertise on the victimization of people with disabilities. The program is grant funded and designed to increase communication, cooperation, education, and training of persons and community members who respond to and want to protect victims with disabilities. Statistics cited during the presentation included:

- Studies consistently show that the level of major crimes against adults with disabilities is 4-10 times higher than against people without disabilities.
- Children with any type of disability are two times more likely to be a victim of any type of child maltreatment than children without disabilities.
- Crimes against people with developmental and other disabilities are reported and prosecuted at a much lower rate than crimes against people without disabilities.

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The **Kirwan Institute** for the Study of Race and Ethnicity hosted an **Opportunity Mapping** lecture with presenters Jason Reece, senior researcher, and Samir Gambhir, geographic information systems (GIS) analyst. "Opportunity mapping" uses GIS to map the location of community resources such as schools, health care, and transportation in relation to populations from various racial and ethnic backgrounds.

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## Roommate Assignments Key in Increasing Interracial Friendships in College



White students generally increased their number of interracial friendships during their first year of college, while black students showed a slight decrease, according to a study at one highly selective private university. Results showed that students were particularly likely to develop more interracial friendships if they were paired with a residence hall roommate of a different race. But white students who joined fraternities or sororities didn't increase their number of friends of other races during their first college year.

Overall, the results support the validity of the saying that "birds of a feather flock together," said **Claudia Buchmann**, coauthor of the study and associate professor of sociology at Ohio State. "White and black students tend to have the majority of friends of the same race," she said.

But factors such as extracurricular activities and, especially, living arrangements, can have a significant impact on the number of interracial friendships that students develop, at least at colleges such as the one studied. "The close ties that college students form when they live together in residence halls seem to break down the racial barriers better than any other experience in college," Buchmann said. "Just having diversity in classrooms is not enough to encourage interracial friendships. Residence halls are a key."

Buchmann emphasized that the study was done at one university and is representative only of students who attend similar, highly selective private universities in the United States. But the study is particularly valuable because of its unique data set that allowed the researchers to see how individual students' friendship networks changed in the transition from high school to college.

Results showed that prior to entering college, white students reported far fewer interracial friendships than did any other group. They also lived in neighborhoods and attended high schools with the highest concentration of whites. During the first year of college, white students' proportion of different-race friends increased from about 11 percent to 16 percent. Black students' proportion of different-race friends declined from about 40 percent to 31 percent.

Findings showed that students who joined groups that were highly segregated also had fewer interracial friendships than those who didn't join those kinds of groups. That was true of students who joined cultural or ethnic clubs, and white students who joined fraternities or sororities. "Many of the fraternities and sororities are predominantly white, so those who join don't get the chance to meet a diverse group of students," Buchmann said.

The fact that students will often choose to join groups, like fraternities and sororities, that are not very diverse shows the importance of colleges trying other ways of getting races to mix—such as roommate assignments, Buchmann noted. "Colleges need to find ways to create opportunities for students to expand their horizons and encourage them to break out of the familiar and comfortable," she said.



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**Mary Ann Mason**, professor and co-director of the Center of Economics and Family Security, University of California, Berkeley, School of Law, recently delivered **“Do Babies Matter in Academia?”** The event was sponsored by The Women’s Place and was followed by the annual reception honoring women’s progress at the university.

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Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack recently announced that Ohio State will receive a \$180,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture to assist farmers with disabilities through the **AgrAbility program**, which helps people overcome barriers to their chosen careers in agriculture. The Ohio AgrAbility Project, a collaborative effort between Ohio State Extension and Easter Seals, promotes independence through rehabilitation to meet the needs of Ohio farm families with disabling injuries. The partnership combines education,

networking, and assistive technology to bridge agricultural clientele to the disability services and appropriate technologies.

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National experts on diversity spoke recently at the conference keynote session for **The Future of Diversity: A College Conference**. Presented by Arts and Humanities, the conference featured George Sanchez, professor of American studies, ethnicity, and history at USC, and Leslie King-Hammond, founding director, Center for Race and Culture at the Maryland Institute for Contemporary Art.

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**Hasan Kwame Jeffries**, assistant professor of history who holds a joint appointment with the Kirwan Institute, discussed his recently released book, **Bloody Lowndes: Civil Rights and Black Power in Alabama’s Black Belt**, at an event at the King Arts Complex. A largely untold story, Lowndes County, Alabama, spawned a new form of political engagement that became a

blueprint for the Black Power movement and originated the Black Panther symbol, later adopted nationally as a symbol of black militancy.

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The President and Provost’s **Diversity Lecture and Cultural Arts Series** hosted “Step Out on Nothing: An Afternoon with **Byron Pitts**,” in October. Pitts is a multiple Emmy Award-winning journalist who has covered some of the top stories, including the war in Iraq, Ground Zero immediately after Sept. 11, and the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. He was recently named contributing correspondent to CBS’ 60 Minutes.