

DIVERSITY UPDATE

Spring 2006



Special Assistant to the President for Diversity
and Vice Provost

MESSAGE FROM MAC

Dear Friends of Ohio State,

The forsythia bushes have started to bloom across campus. These bright yellow flowers always herald the start of spring, and all of you know that Ohio State is never more beautiful than it will become in the next six or eight weeks. There is so much good news related to diversity that the renewing bright season seems appropriate to the activities we can report. I am very pleased with achievements on several initiatives that I would like to mention in this cover note.

Although other imperatives forced Henry Lewis Gates to cancel his February lecture, I was absolutely delighted to announce that John Hope Franklin, one of the most important African American scholars of our time, spoke here this month. Franklin's presentation followed the appearance

of Harvard Professor Peter J. Gomes, who spoke on "Race, Anti-Semitism, Feminism, Homosexuality: The Challenge of Inclusion." It is not an overstatement to suggest that April brought two of the leading African American intellectuals to campus.

A high point was reached earlier this year with the lecture of Dr. I. King Jordan, president of Gallaudet University—the first deaf president of the nation's leading institution of higher education for the deaf. Crowds of excited university and community audience members filled our spaces to overflowing and showed their enthusiasm in many ways.

Adding to the distinction brought to our campus by these guests were a number of speakers and events related to the Native American communities of Ohio and

beyond. Daystar, a dance ensemble, celebrated a rare moment in the contemporary history of the ancient mounds at Newark, and a number of later speakers brought what is the most distinguished academic series of American Indian guests to our campuses in recent history.

While we continue to have much to work toward in matters of diversity, I am pleased to share these highly visible efforts this year.

Sincerely,

Mac Stewart

Mansfield Campus Honored with Diversity Award

by Rodger Smith,
Mansfield University Relations

Ohio State Mansfield faculty and staff attending the NAACP Mansfield Branch Freedom Fund Dinner were pleasantly surprised when the campus was named the recipient of the organization's 2005 Community Service Award. It was presented in recognition of "its community involvement with diversity educational programs, seminars, and workshops."

"Even though we'd never before given an award to a university, we felt that Ohio State had been very generous and diligent about furthering diversity, not just with students and faculty but with our community," said Cynthia O'Neal, president of the NAACP's Mansfield branch. "I'm looking forward to continued collaborations with them."

The event highlighted the local NAACP's accomplishments throughout the year and drew about 200 people.

"We were very surprised and deeply honored to be chosen for this important recognition by the local NAACP branch," said Evelyn Freeman, dean and director of the Mansfield campus. "We are committed to continued involvement with the minority community as an integral part of our educational mission."



Evidence of that commitment can be seen in the ongoing meetings and dialogue between campus leadership and representatives of the minority community in Mansfield. The campus has worked with a multicultural consultant to develop a plan for recruiting more diverse students. In addition, the NAACP is planning an event for the summer that will bring elementary students to the campus for a week in an effort to encourage them to consider the possibility of pursuing higher education.

"We need to let these younger people know that the goal is well within their reach."

Cynthia O'Neal, president of the NAACP's Mansfield branch

"We need to let these younger people know that the goal is well within their reach," O'Neal said. "The effort is there at Ohio State, and we as a community have to do our part."





Faculty and Staff Recruitment and Retention

Rebecca Nelson was promoted from associate director to director of Ohio State's Multicultural Center (MCC), replacing Christine Ballengee-Morris, who resumed full-time faculty status as a professor of art education. As associate director since 2002, Nelson has provided leadership for the Multicultural Center's outreach and engagement efforts as well as development and oversight for three program areas. Prior to joining the MCC, Nelson served Ohio State for 12 years in a number of capacities, including program manager for community development with the OSU Medical Center, assistant director of the Office of Minority Affairs, and academic adviser for honors students.

Julian Thayer joined Ohio State's Department of Psychology as an Ohio Eminent Scholar in Health Psychology. He is one of the university's few African American faculty to hold the title of eminent scholar. Previously, he was on the faculty at Penn State University, the University of Missouri-Columbia, and the University of Bergen, Norway.

Since 2000, he has been an investigator at the National Institute on Aging. Thayer has received numerous awards for his research, including a Fulbright Fellowship, the Early Career Award for Contributions to Psychosomatic Medicine, election to the Academy of Behavioral Medicine, and the Wakonse Scholar Award for Excellence in College Teaching. He also has served on numerous grant panels, on the editorial boards of major journals in the field, and is currently associate editor for *Psychosomatic Medicine*. Dr. Thayer has published two books and over 125 refereed journal articles and chapters. Thayer earned his bachelor's degree from Indiana University and his master's and Ph.D. from New York University.

Jean E. Schelhorn has been named associate vice president for technology transfer and commercialization efforts at Ohio State. Schelhorn will oversee the university's efforts in identifying, protecting, and commercializing intellectual property developed by faculty, students, and staff. She also will serve as primary spokesperson on technology transfer and will build collaborations with public and private entities to commercialize intellectual property and foster economic growth. Most recently, Schelhorn was vice president for intellectual property strategy and development at Battelle, one of the premier technology development and commercialization companies in the world. Prior to joining Battelle in 1999, Schelhorn held various technical and management positions within Owens-Corning, including director of technology for the roofing systems strategic business unit, an activity that spanned 20 manufacturing sites and

supported \$1 billion of the company's annual sales. During her 18 years with Owens-Corning, she directed or participated in projects in North America, Europe, and Asia. Schelhorn is an accomplished inventor with 11 awarded and eight pending U.S. patents, accompanied by roughly 30 associated international patents. She earned a B.S. degree in biochemistry from Queens College, and M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in chemistry from Northwestern University.

David Graham, formerly the director of student-athlete academic support services and learning programs at Miami University, has been named the director of Ohio State's Student-Athlete Support Services Office (SASSO). Previously under the auspices of the Department of Athletics, SASSO was moved to the Office of Undergraduate Studies to integrate student-athlete advising with the academic structure, goals, and spirit of college advising. Graham's duties will include strengthening SASSO relationships with the academic colleges to implement sound academic support and communication strategies. Plans also are under way to expand current efforts to ensure an intensive and personalized academic support plan for student-athletes. Additionally, Graham will work to integrate the academic support provided by SASSO with the heightened life skills efforts of the athletics department, with the goal of ensuring that student-athletes build career goals that maximize their academic and athletic experiences.



Afeni Shakur was the kick-off speaker for United Black World Month.





Student Recruitment and Retention

The **retention gap between majority and minority students** at the university has nearly closed: 88.1 percent of first-year African American students and 87.4 percent of Hispanic students returned for their second year, both all-time highs. The improvement in African American student retention was particularly dramatic, rising by nearly eight percent in a single year.

A campus gathering to address the Latino academic achievement gap in Ohio was held in late January. School superintendents and administrators, college representatives, Hispanic/Latino community leaders, elected officials, and education experts from around the state recently gathered on the Ohio State campus to address the challenges and pose solutions to close the Latino academic achievement gap in Ohio. The roundtable—titled “**Soluciones**”—addressed the following questions: What are the challenges to closing the academic achievement gap for Latino students? What solutions are working to close the Latino academic achievement gap? Where can we go from here to implement some of the identified solutions to closing the Latino academic achievement gap? Goals of the session included building communications networks between participants, exploring all education opportunities for Latino students, and building coalitions with African American and Appalachian communities to address many of the same issues.

Working with the university’s Office of Disabilities Services and the ADA Coordinator, the Office of Information Technology (OIT) is undertaking a number of actions—involving both **assistive technology devices** and user support—to better accommodate the needs of persons with disabilities.

Assistive technology includes any aid or device used by individuals with disabilities to help them effectively navigate, from a simple pencil grip to a Braille printer or a wheelchair to a text telephone. OIT is focused on the assistive technologies used to access computers, which include text-to-speech screen readers, alternative keyboards and mice, voice recognition software, and screen magnification software. OIT support staff also have been trained in the use of assistive devices to better answer users’ questions. CIO Ilee Rhimes and ADA Coordinator L. Scott Lissner began this collaborative effort to ensure that technology is a bridge and not a barrier for students, faculty, and staff with disabilities.

The Young Scholars Program recently held a **Summit on Urban Education**. The Ohio State University Office of Minority Affairs Young Scholars Program hosted the 5th Annual Summit on Urban Education, and the theme for the event was “Focusing on Minority Female Success—Fueling Our Future.” The goal of the conference was to develop a framework for supporting minority women students in college and beyond, and educators and administrators were among the attendees from across the state as well as the university.

The Ohio State **Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender (GLBT) Alumni Society** offered seven scholarships for Ohio State GLBT students and allies who have demonstrated dedication and commitment to the GLBT community. Of the seven scholarships, one is for those who have financial need, one is for incoming Ohio State students, one is for those who have provided leadership and service to the HIV/AIDS community, and one is dedicated to music majors. The others are general GLBT/ally scholarships.

The Bell Resource Center on the African American Male was featured on ESPN’s “**Where Are They Now, The 1985 Chicago Bears.**” The segment focused on the impact that the late Todd Bell, program coordinator for the center who played for the Bears, had with students at the university and in the community. Eric Troy was featured on the segment regarding the center being named after Todd Bell and his legacy with the students. Additionally, **National Public Radio’s “News & Notes”** program with Ed Gordon recently featured a nationally broadcast interview with Vice Provost Mac Stewart and Eric Troy, which dealt with the disparity between the number of African American females and males who are entering college (three females for every male), and steps Ohio State is taking to address the issue. The creation of the Bell Resource Center is just one example of the university’s efforts.

Academic Programming, Scholarly Activity, and Research

The American Indian Studies Program announced its inaugural lecture series: **Native Ohio: Leaders and Landscape in the Cradle of American Indian Studies**. The first lecture, held in February, “Black Hawk and Keokuk: Intertribal Politics of Leadership,” featured Donald Fixico, a premier Native American scholar who is professor of history at Arizona State University. His tribal affiliations are Sac and Fox, Creek, Seminole, and Shawnee from Oklahoma. Ohio is the Shawnee homeland. Future lectures are: April 26 and May 10. The lectures are free and open to the public and will be held in 210 Main Library, on the Columbus campus from 7-9 p.m.



States that sentence the most criminals to death also tend to be the states that had the most lynchings in the past, according to an Ohio State researcher. The study suggests that the number of death sentences for all criminals—black and white—were higher in states with a history of lynchings. But the link was even stronger when only black death sentences were analyzed. The results weren't surprising to sociologists who study the racial aspects of the death penalty, said David Jacobs, co-author of the study and professor of sociology at The Ohio State University. "Our results suggest that the death penalty has become a sort of legal replacement for the lynchings in the past," Jacobs said. "This hasn't been done overtly, and probably no one has consciously made such a decision. But the results show a clear connection." Another study finding reinforces this idea. Results showed that the number of death sentences in states with the most lynchings increased as the state's population of African Americans grew larger, at least to a certain point. The researchers believe that is because, as their numbers increase, the white majority sees blacks as a growing threat.

A new Ohio State study conducted by the **Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity** suggests that Ohio policymakers adopt policies that promote the economic integration of public schools in order to increase student achievement and decrease the numbers of failing schools. "Economic Segregation: Challenging Ohio's Public Schools" examines consequences of racial and economic segregation in Ohio's six largest metropolitan areas and concludes that the economic integration of public schools is the most viable remedy. A full copy of the report can be found at kirwaninstitute.org/documents/FinalEconSegregation-Report.pdf.

James Moore III, professor of physical activity and educational services, was co-editor of the February issue of *Teachers College Record*, which looks at the situation of African American boys and men. He wrote the introduction, "African American Males in Education: Endangered or Ignored?" with Jerlando F.L. Jackson, University of Wisconsin, Madison. He also wrote a chapter on his study of African American males who enter engineering, "A Qualitative Investigation of African American Males' Career Trajectory in Engineering: Implications for Teachers, School Counselors, and Parents."

Jane Elliot, best known for her classroom racism exercise, "Blue Eyes/Brown Eyes," was the keynote lecturer as part of a three-day series of events on understanding prejudice on the Mansfield campus. Her presentation, "**The Anatomy of Prejudice**," was held at the Renaissance Theatre in Mansfield to accommodate an audience of more than 1,100 people. Elliot spoke candidly about racism as well as her 1968 classroom experiment. The day after the Martin Luther King Jr. assassination, she challenged her all-white third-grade class to label classmates as inferior or superior based on the color of their eyes so that they might better understand discrimination.

Leadership/Recognition

David Harrison, director of the Office of Minority Student Services at the Fisher College of Business at Ohio State, received the 2005 MBA of the Year as named by the National Black MBA Association (NBMBA). The NBMBA gives the award annually to an individual for professional leadership and for supporting the organization's mission. Harrison joined Ohio State as a recruiter and counselor in 1987 in the Office of Minority Affairs. Prior to joining the Fisher College in 1993, he was assistant director of recruitment and development in Ohio State's minority affairs office. The NBMBA was founded in 1970 with a mission to increase the representation of blacks in the business community and in the nation's business schools, and Harrison is the immediate past president of the Columbus chapter of the NBMBA. Under his leadership, the chapter doubled its membership and established the Leaders of Tomorrow mentorship program, which provides support to high school students with a grade point average between C-minus and C-plus who have exhibited leadership potential.

The Modern Language Association of America recently announced it was awarding its third annual MLA Prize in United States **Latina and Latino and Chicana and Chicano Literary and Cultural Studies** to Frederick Luis Aldama, professor of English, for his book *Dancing with Ghosts: A Critical Biography of Arturo Islas*. The prize is awarded for an outstanding scholarly study of Latina or Latino or Chicana or Chicano literature or culture. The MLA Prize in United States Latina and Latino and Chicana and Chicano Literary and Cultural Studies is one of 18 awards presented during the association's annual convention.

(continued on back panel)

Awareness

In March, the **Wexner Center** for the Arts presented the world premiere of *The Gender Chip Project*, a documentary film that follows five young women majoring in math, engineering, and the sciences. Begun in 1997 as one of four films commissioned by the Wexner Center to document Ohio State's class of 2001, *The Gender Chip Project* offers a glimpse into the challenges and barriers faced by these young women. Last year the film was awarded one of 12 Informal Science Grants by the National Science Foundation. The March event also includes two forums featuring leading thinkers on the subject of women pursuing studies and careers in traditionally male-dominated fields, including President Karen Holbrook (herself a scientist), Battelle scientist Joyce Durnford, and Diane L. Foster, one of the Ohio State professors featured in the film.

Judge Robert L. Carter, U.S. District Judge, Southern District of New York, was the keynote speaker for a symposium titled *All Deliberate Speed, Brown II: The Promise Deferred*. Presented by the Kirwan Institute, the Moritz College of Law, and the Office of Minority Affairs, Carter addressed the significance of *Brown v. Board of Education* in a symposium that also featured a panel discussion including civil rights attorneys and law professors from across the nation, as well as Jefferson Thomas, a member of the "Little Rock Nine." Carter, whose recently published memoir, *A Matter of Law: A Memoir of Struggle in the Cause of Equal Rights*, also was available for a book signing at the event.

The **Anti-Defamation League (ADL)** recently launched a national partnership with the retailer Abercrombie & Fitch to promote diversity on six college campuses throughout the United States, including Ohio State. The ADL offered its "A Campus of Difference" anti-bias diversity train-



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ing institute at Ohio State through a campus partnership between the Multicultural Center, the Fisher College of Business, the campus affiliate of the National Coalition Building Institute, and the Office of Student Affairs. Nationally, the program seeks to foster greater cohesive and cultural understanding at more than 250 colleges and universities through providing practical, experiential, and hands-on skills to challenge prejudice and discrimination and to create a more inclusive campus environment.

Johnnetta Cole, president of Bennett College for Women in Greensboro, North Carolina, delivered the keynote address at the university's 34th Annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. celebration. "Legacy: Building the Beloved Community" was the theme of the 2006 celebration, which also featured musical selections from the Ohio State African American Voices Gospel Choir. Cole's career as an educator and humanitarian spans more than three decades. She was the first African American woman to serve as president of Spelman College and was the first African American to serve as chair of the board of United Way of America. Her published works,

speeches, and community service address issues of race, gender, equality, and human rights.

Tony Coelho, chairman of the board of the Epilepsy Foundation and former member of the U.S. House of Representatives, delivered the keynote address at the **Disability, Narrative, and the Law** conference in February at the Moritz College of Law. The conference was organized by the Center for Interdisciplinary Law and Policy Studies at the Moritz College of Law, the Department of English, the Institute for Collaborative Research and Public Humanities, and the ADA coordinator.

Rick Kittles, associate professor of molecular virology, immunology, and medical genetics at Ohio State and a specialist in the area of human population genetics, led "**The Many Faces of Us**," an examination of ethnicity and race relations. Immediately afterward, a student discussion panel explored the influence of identity development on self perceptions and interactions with others. The event was sponsored by the Bell Resource Center on the African American Male, the Office of Minority Affairs, and the Multicultural Center.