

COLLECTIVE VOICE

October 12, 2007

News from the Division of Student Affairs, Equity and Diversity

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Be a good neighbor

WSU Dean of Students Luci Loera joined Pullman Mayor and WSU Communications Professor Glenn Johnson in handing out refrigerator magnets and coffee coupons to students. The magnets describe 10 ways students can be good neighbors in our community — including taking a new friend out for coffee.

LIVING-LEARNING COMMUNITIES

Residence halls key to Freshman Focus

BY BEVERLY MAKHANI
OFFICE OF UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION
AND HONORS COLLEGE

How do freshmen study these days? Do you think they toil endlessly at their residence hall desks with only books, highlighters and a reading lamp to keep them company? Not if they are members of WSU's nationally recognized living-learning community called Freshman Focus.

Rather, they might be in a hall lounge with dozens of classmates, dipping bread into a nutmeg-based Italian cream sauce prepared by their world civilizations teacher and resident adviser (RA), and enthusiastically discussing the spice trade, imperialism and what the wealthy ate in the 1400s.

They could be pursuing hands-on exploration of the Holland and Terrell Libraries with their RA and an instructional librarian. Or they could be in the piano room watching a recent-run film, like "The 300," talking with their professor about the Spartans. Or they could just be studying together for their shared classes.

Bridging class and life

The point is that study options are wide open for today's nearly 2,500 Freshman Focus participants living in 15 residence halls. Since August, more than 50 special events have brought teachers, students and their RAs together to continue academic lessons in some pretty innovative venues beyond the classroom.

Freshman Focus is designed so that first-year students, who live together on certain floors of residence halls, also typically take two general education courses together. Their professors in those "linked" courses work together so that topics taught in a world civilizations course are also discussed in the partner course; say, a fine arts or science course.

National accolades

In the 2008 "America's Best Colleges" online report by U.S. News & World Report, Freshman Focus was listed among "Academic Programs to Look For" in the category of "Learning Communities."



Students in linked Freshman Focus classes taught by Trevor Bond, center, and Andrew McCarthy, right, gathered in Stephenson North on a recent evening to watch "The 300." Hosts were RA Aubrey Kiemnec and RED Kate Gannon, standing, left.

In the three years of WSU Freshman Focus, more than 100 Residence Life administrators, hall directors and RAs have worked to build the academic bridge between classroom and living space for these students.

"Residence Life carries a lot of the weight for arranging these events," said **Karen Weathermon**, learning communities/Freshman Focus director.

"They have really reached out in welcoming faculty into the halls and are fabulous hosts."

Creative and engaged

Freshman Focus nicely fits the Residence Life goal to incorporate scholarship programming into the residence halls, said Coree Newman, assistant director of Residence Life.

"It extends opportunities to create a real living-learning community without distinct lines between class and home," she said.

A goal this year was to set an academic tone in the halls early, said **Kate Gannon**, residential education director (RED) at Stephenson North. She oversees the efforts of RAs there to collaborate with teachers and build student interest in the events.

"The RAs have been very creative and intentional in their efforts, and I believe the programming is helping residents build community and increase their knowledge."

"The Stephenson complex has a large freshman population, so it is gratifying to see the number and quality of engagement activities taking place there," said Weathermon.

"Residence Life is truly a partner in the success of the whole Freshman Focus program."

Tan named first diversity fellow

Position will focus on faculty recruitment

BY STEVE NAKATA
THE DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS,
EQUITY AND DIVERSITY

Longtime Washington State University professor and administrator **Alexis S. Tan** has been named a diversity faculty fellow — a new position created to bolster the university's success in recruiting faculty of color.



Alexis S. Tan

The most recent data provided by the Office of Institutional Research show that in 2005 more than nine percent of the faculty were ethnic minorities. Twenty-seven percent of faculty did not report their ethnicity that year.

Tan's goal is to have a comprehensive draft strategic plan completed this spring to share with faculty and administration.

He is going about his work with a sense of urgency, because his appointment is only until Aug. 15, 2008. He has formed an advisory committee and is researching best practices at other universities. He is meeting with deans and administrators to see if some strategies can be implemented this academic year.

Tan's half-time position is sponsored jointly by the Office of the Provost and the Division of Student Affairs, Equity and Diversity.

Long-term diversity goal

"Diversifying the faculty is a process that will take place over several years," said Provost **Robert Bates**. "The proposed strategic plan should provide direction and guidance to the faculty and take advantage of university opportunities in terms of faculty attrition, new positions, pipeline development and regional campus development."

"It is an honor and privilege to serve WSU as diversity fellow," Tan said.

"Diversity of thought, cultures and life experiences is at the core of all great universities. I am looking forward to developing and implementing a plan that will make WSU a model of faculty diversity."

Tan left Texas Tech University in 1986 to accept the position of professor and chair of the Department of Communications at WSU. In 1990 he became the founding director of WSU's Edward R. Murrow School of Communication. During his tenure, the school was the largest academic area at WSU, building a national reputation in both undergraduate and graduate programs.

He continues as professor on a half-time basis in the school, where he is conducting research on communication and prejudice, writing research grants, assisting in fundraising, and directing doctoral students.

Over the course of his career at WSU, Tan has been involved with efforts to diversify both the student body and faculty ranks.



"Butch" and a WSU student hold a \$250,000 check from Bank of America to support WSU's Future Cougars of Color Program. Pictured, from left to right, are: Akiko and Paul Carr; Milton Lang; Allan Belton; Tami and Kurt Walsdorf; Linda and Ron Mittelhammer; John Austenson; and Michael J. Tate.

BANK OF AMERICA GIVES \$250,000

Donors support Future Cougars of Color

BY ROBERT STRENGE
WSU NEWS SERVICE

A unique program that supports high-achieving Washington students of color in their pursuit of a WSU education recently was given a grant of \$250,000 over two years from the Bank of America Charitable Foundation.

The Future Cougars of Color (FCOC) Program provides financial and academic support services to allow these students to attend, succeed at and graduate from WSU.

A total of 216 WSU students — including 105 new this fall — are receiving support from the FCOC program.

"Bank of America has partnered with us in our pursuit of access and opportunity for all individuals who are qualified students but cannot afford their dreams of a college education," said **Michael J. Tate**, WSU vice president, The Division of Student Affairs, Equity and Diversity. "We welcome them to the Cougar family of opportunity-makers."

"This is a model program for universities across the nation in providing critical educational, support and counseling services to help more minority students excel in their academics and graduate in higher numbers," said Peter Joers, president, Bank of America Washington State. "Bank of America is excited to provide this \$250,000 grant to help expand this important program."

Bank of America first made the announcement during the Macy's Fifth Annual Future Cougars of Color Diversity Scholarship Luncheon in Seattle on Sept. 7. Many other corporations and individuals pledged significant support for the FCOC program during the luncheon.

In addition, the Sixth Annual Chateau Ste. Michelle Diversity Scholarship Dinner and Concert in August in Woodinville netted \$1.1 million in pledges and gifts, to be split evenly between WSU and the University of Washington.

WSU wants best for its Greek community

BY ANITA CORY
CENTER FOR FRATERNITY
AND SORORITY LIFE

Washington State University's aspiration for the Greek community is that students in fraternities and sororities, along with alumni, have an excellent experience.

President **Elson S. Floyd**, a lifelong member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., has invited the chapters, alumni and other stakeholders to engage in discussions that will move the Greek community forward in a positive direction. An on-campus meeting led by Floyd, Vice President **Michael J. Tate** and other administrators, provided for conversations with Greek alumni during Homecoming weekend.

More than 2,300 students enjoy membership in more than 50 fraternities and sororities at WSU, with the number of women registered for sorority recruitment in August reaching a high not seen in more than a decade. Fraternities are working hard to recruit with new and improved strategies.

Membership in a fraternity or sorority at WSU has been associated with several positive benefits. Fraternity and sorority members are more likely to graduate and become loyal and

generous alumni and donors. The academic performance of our chapters has improved dramatically over the last five years, and the physical condition of the chapter facilities has become a priority area for all chapters.

The Center for Fraternity and Sorority Life provides value-added experiences for fraternity and sorority leaders. Whether it is through experiential leadership opportunities, classes, educational programs or one-to-one mentoring, the staff is available to positively influence the lives of students.

Across the nation, campus Greek communities are facing major challenges. Facility issues, academic performance, upper-class leadership, financial and other common issues of higher education are reflected in Greek communities. At WSU, our chapters are not immune to these issues.

However, the new administration is supportive and is willing to engage and invest in a second century of Greek life at WSU. Future planning will be led by The Division of Student Affairs, Equity and Diversity including the Center for Fraternity and Sorority Life. The ultimate goal is to make WSU's Greek community truly excellent in every respect.

UNDER THE BIG TENT SERIES

Promoting a culture of civil discourse

BY MELANIE BROWN
CENTER FOR CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Under the Big Tent (UTBT) is a public debate series started at Washington State University in spring 2007. Initiated and promoted by **Chuck Pezeshki**, Faculty Senate chair in 2006-07, UTBT quickly was embraced by the campus community in the form of a planning group of faculty, staff and students.

The goals of the series are to provide a public forum for debate about complex issues; to consider those issues within local, national and global contexts; and to model civil debate in the interest of student civic engagement. An additional objective of UTBT organizers is to establish a simple structure that is responsive to emergent issues of relevance to the university community.

Response to the series has been positive, as measured by debate audience turnout and walk-up traffic, panelist

and participant reflections, as well as unsolicited inquiries relative to topic suggestions and requests for involvement.

The first topic of this academic year, "What's Up with Textbook Prices?" sparked a lively debate that pushed participants to consider opportunities beyond the status quo on issues of authorship, publishing and sales of textbooks.

UTBT is held on the Glenn Terrell Mall at noon on Tuesday three times each semester. Dialogue will continue after each debate on the Ideology Forum, **ONLINE @ www.ideologyforum.com**. During inclement weather, debates will be held in the Holland and Terrell Libraries atrium.

Sponsors of the UTBT series include the Center for Civic Engagement, Compton Union Building and WSU Libraries. More information and a schedule of events can be found **ONLINE @ www.cce.wsu.edu**.



Are textbook prices unreasonable? Sociology Chair and Professor Gregory Hooks gets the debate started during the semester's first "Under the Big Tent" event on Terrell Mall.

NEWS BRIEF

Pride Week Oct. 11 at WSU

The week of Oct. 11 is recognized as Pride Week at WSU by the Gender Identity/Expression and Sexual Orientation Resource Center and the ASWSU Committee for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender and Allied students.

Oct. 11, 1987, was the first gay march on Washington, D.C., to promote government and public awareness of gay, bisexual, lesbian and transgender (GLBT) rights. One year later, Robery Eichberg and Jean O'Leary founded National Coming Out Day to celebrate that first march and to publicly express pride in the lives of gay, bisexual, lesbian and transgender people everywhere.

Many people choose this day to come out to themselves and to their family, friends and co-workers. When a close friend or family member, or even a colleague, tells you that he or she is gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender — either directly or indirectly — that person is also telling you that you are someone who matters.

Most GLBT people who come out feel a wide range of emotions — from fear, to relief, to pride. Often, they don't know how their friends, family and others will react. But they do know that they want their relationships to be honest and genuine.

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WASHINGTON STATE
UNIVERSITY

World Class. Face to Face.

Card connects students with wellbeing services

BY THERESA LEHMAN
UNIVERSITY RECREATION

The Division of Student Affairs, Equity and Diversity has introduced the Wellbeing Network Referral Card — a way for faculty and staff to connect students to campus services that will support their personal and academic development as well as assist with problem solving.

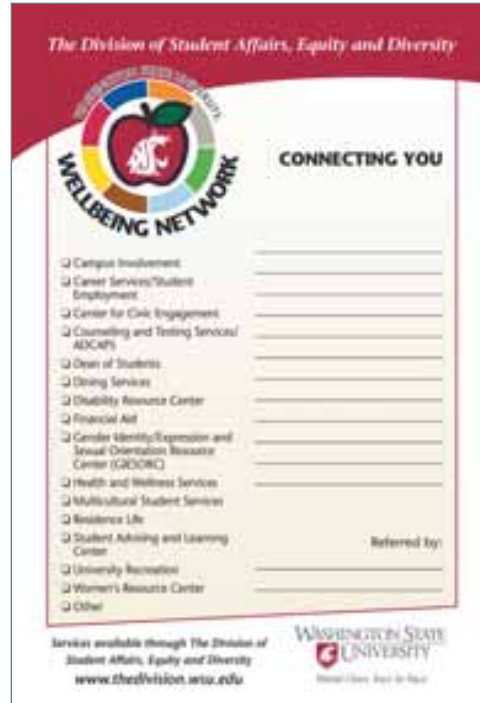
Each card contains contact information and a campus map for all of WSU's Wellbeing Network partners (see list on card). There is a space for the person making the referral to check which partners he or she thinks the student should contact. There's also room for a note and for the person making the referral to sign his or her name and contact information.

The idea is for the student to be encouraged and informed by the card in order to pursue the recommended

contacts. Additionally, the goal is to increase collaboration among various units that provide programs and services for students to enhance their wellbeing.

The Wellbeing Network is growing. It includes such partners as Campus Involvement, Career Services/Student Employment, Center for Civic Engagement, Center for Human Rights, Counseling and Testing Services/ADCAPS, the Dean of Students, Dining Services, Disability Resource Services, Financial Aid, Gender Identity/Expression and Sexual Orientation Resource Center, Health and Wellness Services, Multicultural Student Services, Residence Life, Student Advising and Learning Center, University Recreation, and the Women's Resource Center.

For more information, or to request or print cards, see **ONLINE** @ <http://thedivision.wsu.edu> and click on the Wellbeing icon.



STUDENT CONDUCT CASES SOAR

Proactive approach paying off for WSU

BY ELAINE VOSS
OFFICE OF STUDENT CONDUCT

The Office of Student Conduct (OSC) plays a vital role in student development. Its guiding principle is to ensure students conduct themselves in a manner supportive of high community standards that advance knowledge, learning and individual rights.

Members of the student conduct team sponsor educational programs, develop policy from a proactive position and respond to students in crisis.

Five years ago the OSC made the decision to move away from practices that had begun to lose effectiveness with students.

The vast majority of poor decisions made by students are the result of substance abuse. After researching practices of other universities, the decision was made to begin an alcohol policy with a progressive discipline approach for violations.

Along with the new policy, OSC also purchased a software package shared by the Department of Residence Life. All residence hall incident reports are reviewed by a conduct officer, which allows for a consistent response to behavior.

Critical to accomplishing our mission are partnerships with community members, police agencies, residence life, staff and faculty.

An anticipated consequence of the changes is that conduct case loads have increased dramatically. These increased contacts with students provide OSC the opportunity for face-to-face interactions where mentoring and meaningful didactic conversations about behavior and personal responsibility take place.

Recent case load trends suggest that, as WSU's admission standards rise and higher ability students are admitted, student conduct will continue to moderate. But with our fluid student population, conduct is unpredictable and often ambiguous. Whatever changes occur, the OSC will continue to support the holistic development of WSU students.

New division identifies six areas of focus

BY MICHAEL J. TATE, VICE PRESIDENT
STUDENT AFFAIRS, EQUITY AND DIVERSITY

When I joined WSU President **Elson S. Floyd** in announcing the merger of the offices of Equity and Diversity and Student Affairs last May, we articulated a number of reasons why this was a good idea — ranging from increased collaboration between units to streamlined processes for serving students, faculty, staff and alumni. At the time, I told our staff members that the new Division of Student Affairs, Equity and Diversity was laden with talented people, and that bringing them together under one cohesive area would surely result in great things for WSU — more good ideas, stronger programs and a chance to travel down roads we've never traveled before.

Now just four months later, and following a series of internal discussions, leaders in our division have identified six major areas of focus. We call them clusters. These clusters are areas we feel, with proper planning and focused effort, can (and should) become "areas of greatness" for WSU.

We have challenged each other within the division to create significant, measurable progress in these areas by July 2008.

The clusters are:

- Academic advising
- Student leadership/engagement
- Student access to WSU
- Campus climate
- Wellbeing
- Divisional strategic planning

We have done some preliminary work in terms of defining the scope of these clusters and identifying leaders who are creating teams to address each one. There is not enough space to provide details here, but please know we recognize that progress in these areas largely will depend on the involvement and cooperation of many people across the university.

If you are interested in knowing more about the clusters, please contact **Melynda Huskey**, assistant vice president, at 509-335-2193. She is providing central leadership for the cluster initiatives and works closely with our team leaders.

We welcome the collaboration, energy and transformation this set of initiatives is generating for WSU.



Michael J. Tate

Student ambassadors showcase WSU Vancouver

Team of 12 creates first impressions for prospective students, faculty and staff

BY MICHELLE McILVOY
WSU VANCOUVER

A group of WSU Vancouver students is promoting access to higher education while also developing as leaders. Ambassadors — students serving in a year-long leadership role — have the opportunity to recruit students one day and take faculty candidates on a tour of the scenic campus on another, with multiple opportunities in between.

Ambassadors provide campus tours, serve as Registration, Orientation, and Advising Resources (ROAR) leaders for new students, assist in events hosted by academic departments, travel with admission counselors to regional recruiting events, and plan the annual all-campus dodge ball tournament.

In its third year at WSU Vancouver, the ambassadors program offers unique chances for peer-to-peer interaction, a vital component for recruiting future students and for making new underclassmen feel welcome and successful. It is not uncommon for these leaders to develop a tour for middle school students, make phone calls to prospective students regarding an upcoming Preview Day or e-mail their GE 101 (general education) group a reminder about the student government-sponsored bonfire at the beach.

Ambassadors provide current, realistic insights to the university. They showcase academic offerings, point out wi-fi hot spots, highlight the art on campus and suggest ways for others to get involved. Campus tours are offered on a daily basis and serve as an open door to tomorrow's college students and their families.

A competitive annual selection process is held in the spring to select the top 12 candidates.

Faculty and staff members nominate students they feel have the necessary attributes, and an open call for applications is announced. Interested students apply, advance through group and individual interviews, and are selected



Student ambassadors like sophomore Denise Eyerly, shown here giving a campus tour, are important to the process of recruiting students, faculty, and staff at WSU Vancouver.

at the end of spring term. Each ambassador is chosen for skills, value added to the overall group, and ability to convey the importance of a postsecondary degree to a wide spectrum of individuals.

Ambassadors participate in training throughout the summer months, enroll in a two-credit leadership course during the fall term, and enhance their skills by working with one another throughout the year.

The role of the student ambassador at WSU Vancouver will undoubtedly grow and mature along with this campus.

ADMINISTRATORS TEACHING

Honors students simulate 'think tank'

COURTESY OF
THE DIVISION OF STUDENT
AFFAIRS, EQUITY AND DIVERSITY

This fall, it is back to school in a new way for the Division of Student Affairs, Equity and Diversity. Vice President **Michael J. Tate** and Assistant Vice President **Melynda Huskey** are teaching University Honors 300 — a seminar in equity and diversity policy in higher education.

The course gives students a taste of what it's like to work for a think tank, researching policy and making recommendations. At the end of the semester, the class will host a public roundtable to share their policy analysis.

"It's pretty cool, to have a vice president for a teacher," said student Derek En'wezoh. "We get to hear about things from behind the scenes."

The eight students in the seminar use innovative technology to facilitate their collaborations; the Center for Teaching, Learning and Technology's **Kimberly Green** has partnered with Tate and Hus-



Melynda Huskey, left, and Michael J. Tate, center, listen intently to student Kimberly Petty during their Honors 300 class. As busy administrators, both Tate and Huskey are enjoying their time in the classroom this semester.

key to support a course design that makes the most of the available technology — including an online course space with regularly updated assignments, a discussion list, and space to share pictures, Web

links and documents. There are also individual e-portfolios for students to use in future career, graduate school and fellowship opportunities.

"Our goal was to give students as authentic an experi-

ence of policy research and development as we could," said Huskey. "We wanted a very collaborative seminar with the kinds of assignments and opportunities that students might encounter in the

real world of higher education policy."

"It's great to be back in the classroom," said Tate. "At a certain level in the university, we don't get too many chances to interact with students in this sustained way. There's a lot of give and take."

"The students ask the hard questions; they really want to know the why's and how's of WSU's decision-making. By using current and local events as a springboard, we can talk about all kinds of important issues in higher education."

"I've missed teaching," Huskey said. "It's been terrific to get back into the classroom and to see what new opportunities and approaches there are."

"And it's been great to have this chance to make WSU more intelligible to students — to explode some of the myths and misconceptions students have about administration and about how the university works. I'm expecting some amazing things from these students."

FACULTY FAMILY EXTENDS WARM WELCOME

Growing international student contingent enriches Spokane

BY JUDITH VAN DONGEN
WSU SPOKANE

WSU Spokane nearly doubled its international student population this fall, as compared with last year's number. Thirty-three international students are pursuing degrees in the design disciplines, nursing, health policy and administration, and speech and hearing sciences.

The students come from all corners of the world, including China, Ethiopia, India, Iran, Ireland, Japan and Turkey. A few have not been in the United States before.

Several members of the Spokane campus community readily provided temporary housing and helped these students find their way around their new home town.

Among them were criminal justice faculty member **Mike Erp** and his wife Karen, who recently retired from WSU Spokane's human resource services office. They hosted two students from India — Harshad Hapse and Abhishek Savant — for several weeks. In addition to helping them with practical matters, such as finding an apartment, the Erps also introduced them to people and places in Spokane.

While Hapse and Savant learned about life in the United States, the Erps increased their understanding of Indian culture.

"They were so open and shared so much about their life and friends," said Karen Erp.



Michael Erp, Executive Director of the Washington State Institute for Community Oriented Policing at WSU Spokane, enjoys a walk with students Harshad Hapse and Abhishek Savant along the Spokane River.

"They are no longer our host family — they are family,"

Harshad Hapse

Mike Erp fondly remembers how they helped celebrate his birthday.

"They like to celebrate birthdays at midnight. So when they learned that it was my birthday, they came downstairs at midnight, woke

me up — I had fallen asleep watching television — and took me outside. They had a bottle of champagne, and they shook it up and popped the cork. So we drank some champagne and told stories," he said.

Although Hapse and Savant eventually moved out, they are still very close to the Erps.

"They are no longer our host family — they are family," said Hapse of the Erps. "On weekends, we like to have them over at our place for dinner, or we go to their house for dinner. We try to keep in touch."



This house on Pullman's "B" Street was originally built in 1927. The university renovated this house, along with two others in the neighborhood, transforming them into cultural and heritage houses.

Cultural heritage houses to open soon

BY FELICIA GASKINS
THE DIVISION OF STUDENT
AFFAIRS, EQUITY AND DIVERSITY

By the end of October, three culture and heritage centers will open on the WSU Pullman campus. The centers, located on "B" Street, are dedicated to the preservation and promotion of learning as well as the appreciation of African/African-American, Chicano/a-Latino/a and Native American history and culture.

The centers provide a central location for the collection of books, art, films and artifacts. Located in historic houses, the centers provide gathering spaces where the university community and community at large can experience a comfortable learning and social environment dedicated to cultural understanding and inclusion.

Each center has a fully furnished kitchen, dining spaces, meeting spaces and a bathroom. The facilities

are maintained by an on-site manager and a team of student employees.

Each of the houses has unique features. For example, the Latino house has space for visiting scholars. The Talmadge Anderson (African/African-American) house will be the new location for the university's diversity education team. The team will host a variety of educational programs there.

Once officially opened, all houses will be available for scheduled events and meetings. A grand opening celebration and dedication of the houses will take place early in 2008.

For more information and to schedule an event in one of the houses, contact **Maureen Smith**, maureens@wsu.edu, or **Felicia Gaskins**, fgaskins@wsu.edu.

At a later date, a fourth house in the same vicinity is expected to be available to accommodate an Asian American and Pacific Islander culture and heritage center.