Diversity In Action Group

Meeting Notes of March 19, 2013

Members Present: Sylvia Aguirre-Alberto, Makiko Ueda, John Vehikite

Cara Liao, Student Representative

Guests: Krystal Romero, Jeramy Wallace, Dr. Jennifer Mendoza, Jennifer Hughes, Fi Tovo, Ruth Turner, Catherine Firpo

**Review of the Agenda**

Agenda approved as presented.

**Approval of Meeting Notes of February 12 Meeting**

Approval of November 20 Meeting Notes postponed.

**President’s Lecture Series**

Henry reminded the Committee to forward suggestions for the planned President’s Lecture Series which will be implemented in the 2013-14 academic year. He further mentioned that DIAG along with the Basic Skills Initiative Committee and the SoTL Center will participate in coordinating the lecture series.

**Diversity Planning Committee**

Sylvia highlighted that the DPC funds for the current year have been fully expended. She distributed a document that outlined the various events that have been funded during the current 2012-13 academic year noting that four events are planned during the next couple of months and include a Japanese Choral Concert, a Youth Empowerment through Community Organizing program, and several Asian/Pacific Islander Heritage Month events scheduled for late April and May.

**MANA Youth Conference**

Fi Tovo highlighted the very successful “Mana Youth Conference” that took place at CSM on Saturday, March 16 in the CSM Theater. The event attracted more than 350 participants with the majority of them being high school students. Fi noted that “mana” is an indigenous Pacific Islander term that is spiritual in nature and which emanates from within oneself. It is mana that helps one cope and persevere during particularly difficult times. The Mana Youth Conference was held to encourage and motivate Pacific Islander Youth to stay in and complete high school.

**National Student Equity Project**

Krystal introduced two guests from the National Equity Project (NEP), Victor Cary, Senior Director and Lisa Lasky, Senior Director who provided an overview of the NEP. The NEP has been in existence for 20 years and provides services that include coaching and leadership development for various types of educational and other organizations. While NEP works largely with K-12 they can adapt their services to other educational sectors.

Krystal shared that while CSM has been involved with addressing diversity programming and initiatives, what is lacking is an integrated component or plan that provides a specific direction for these efforts. A robust discussion followed with Cary and Lisa guiding the discussion. They noted that identifying the problem is a first step. A second step is to develop corresponding action to address the problem. Further, how information is presented is also critical. For example, the term achievement gap places the burden or blame on the student; the term “opportunity gap” redirects the lack of student achievement on the institution. Thus, the institution has an opportunity to assess its’ policies, practices and procedures and identify any factors that may be limiting student success. As Cary and Linda explained, “Language does matter.”

As a follow up to their visit, Jennifer as IPC Co-Chair suggested that Cary and Linda be invited to attend an IPC meeting to facilitate a similar discussion. Jennifer will follow up with the NEP representatives and schedule their participation at a future IPC meeting.

Next Meeting: April 9