

AFFINITY GROUPS

BUILDING EMPLOYEE COMMUNITIES, RECRUITING, & RETAINING DIVERSE EMPLOYEES

WHAT ARE AFFINITY GROUPS?

- Groups of people linked by common interest or purpose
- Voluntary associations of people who have common interests
- Resource groups for current employees
- Groups focusing on developing and improving campus climate by increasing the presence of diverse faculty and staff
- Groups articulating, promoting, and supporting the needs and goals of various communities and organizations
- Created in the 1960s in order to address racial tension in the workplace (aka Business Resource Groups)

AFFINITY GROUP EXAMPLES

- Racial/Ethnicity/Heritage
- Gender Identity/Sexual Orientation
- Parents & Families
- Religious/Spirituality
- Task Force/Collaborations
- Special Interests

WHY THE NEED?

Affinity groups can address:

- Acknowledgement of the needs of underrepresented and marginalized identities
- Resources for diverse and underrepresented and marginalized employees
- Professional and social disconnects, discomfort (the “only one” situation)
- Lack of retention and persistence of diverse employees
- Lack of mentorship/networking for employees of color
- Recruitment and outreach effort to increase employee diversity

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

- Representation (to employees and students)
- Creates “Safe spaces” (for employees and students)
- Community/Togetherness (common interest, goals, and/or ideology)
- Social Engagement/Entertainment
- Networking/Relationship Building
- Professional Development/Leadership Mentoring

COLLEGE BENEFITS

- Aids recruitment and retention efforts of marginalized populations
“People tend to stay in places where they have made connections.”
- Promotes a workforce that values diversity
- Strengthens bonds with the community
- Improves employee and campus morale
- Encourage collaboration and understanding

STUDENT BENEFITS

- Representation
- Mentoring/Role Models
- Relationship Building
- Resource Sharing (Current/Future Development)
- Social Support
- Inclusion

STARTING AN AFFINITY GROUP

- Decide the Purpose
- Ensure Leadership Support
 - Highlight Benefits
 - recognition and celebration of diverse perspectives and experiences
 - increase retention of diverse employees
 - help with diverse applicant recruitment
 - impact on all students
 - Build/Recruit Faculty & Staff Support (identify leaders, representatives, etc.)
 - recognition and celebration of diverse perspectives and experiences
 - a rich and enjoyable professional life
 - impact on all students

GROWING AN AFFINITY GROUP

- Regular and Consistent Outreach
- Address Needs/Interests
- Tangible Impact
 - Social Networking
 - Student Recognition (welcome programs, mentorship, graduation/completion ceremonies)
 - Employee Education/Enrichment
 - Access to College/District Resources
- Create a Shared Purpose
- Have **FUN!**

SUSTAINING AN AFFINITY GROUP

- Recruit New Members Annually or All Members Approach
- Share Often & Be Creative (e-mail, social media, on-campus meet-ups)
- Host Annual Events & Regular Social Activities (guest speaker series, workshops, holiday or cultural events)
- Create Community Outreach Opportunities
- Keep Having **FUN!**
- Form Partnerships (College/District & Community)

MEASURING SUCCESS

- Survey Members
- Survey or Check-In with Students
- Check-In with College/District Leadership
- Correlate Purpose to Output
- Review Annual Events & Activities
- Collect Data on Recruitment Activities
- Collect Date on Mentorship

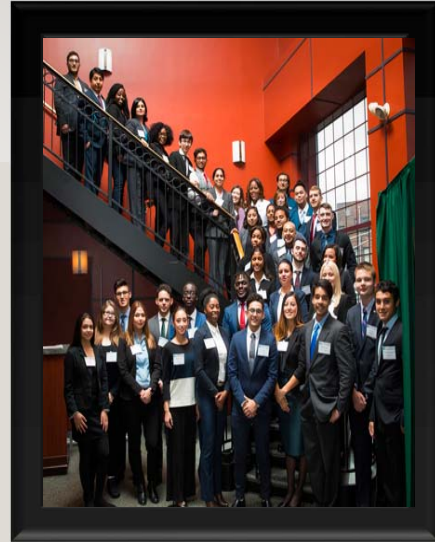
MODELING GROUPS

- Black Faculty & Staff Association (BFSA) · *Los Rios Community College District*
- Asian Pacific Islander (API) Legacy · *Los Rios Community College District*
- Native/Indigenous · *Los Rios Community College District*
- Outfront: GLBTQ Faculty & Staff Alliance · *College of the Holy Cross*
- Faculty Thinkspace on Race & Diversity (ToRaD) · *Loyola University Maryland*



MODELING GROUPS

- Veteran Employee Association · *UC Davis Health*
- Latino Staff & Faculty · *UC Davis Health*
- Outfront: GLBTQ Faculty & Staff Alliance · *College of the Holy Cross*
- Faculty Thinkspace on Race & Diversity (ToRaD) · *Loyola University Maryland*
- Latinx Hispanic Council · *Dartmouth College*
- The Middle-Eastern Employees & Allies (MEEA) · *Boston College*



COMMENTS, SHARING, QUESTIONS?

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