



## Diversity Appraisal January 2004

**The UWAA endorses diversity in the broadest sense. This includes race, gender, disability, class, sexual identity/orientation, religion, age, ethnicity, culture, region/geography, and indigenous status.**

Diversity is at the forefront of our Association. It is crucial that we are willing exchange ideas and information and make a difference in reaching, connecting and celebrating our diverse alumni body. Historically, one perception of our Association has been that we are a predominately "white" organization with little outreach to communities of color and managed by a limited number of staff and volunteers of color. This has been changing in recent years; now our organization is more active and inclusive than ever before. We have made progress, but still have much work to do. We are fortunate to have staff and volunteers who are motivated to make a difference and support our diversity efforts and those of the University.

### **1. How is diversity a visible and active part of the UW Alumni Association?**

Diversity is one of our core values. We value a climate that fosters understanding of and value for diversity, including our support for UW diversity initiatives. We value lifelong learning through cultural activities.

**Population:** Currently 20% of our staff, 30% of our Board of Trustees and 15% of our general volunteer base is of color. Our staff and volunteers represent a wide range of ages; we have a 50/50 ratio between males and females with varied ethnic backgrounds and lifestyles. We are proactive in staff recruitment yet must continue to figure out strategies to attract quality candidates from underrepresented minorities. This issue continues to challenge us to be creative in our recruitment and retention strategies. Our turnover rate in recent years has been very low, which has decreased the number of hiring opportunities. Further, we value our employee professional development and internal promotions for qualified individuals are taken seriously. As a result of this value, the number of employment opportunities can be limited.

As we continue to build our visibility in the community and reputation for inclusive events, programs and benefits, we expect that our diversity efforts – especially to underrepresented minorities will grow even stronger.

**Communications:** Our best and widest-reaching communications vehicles are *Columns* magazine and *The Fountain* (UWAA member newsletter). We work to represent the diversity of our alumni population in both publications by covering stories about people of color and people with diverse backgrounds and lifestyles. The editors and volunteer advisory committees take this effort very seriously. However, to some members of our community, we have not reached an optimal level of diversity coverage. We will continue our work to fully represent the entire UW community.

**NEW INITIATIVE:** We are currently exploring the idea of producing a new publication that will highlight UW programs and people of color and promote the diversity of our alumni body. It's

mission is to cover the activities currently taking place on campus and in our community that reach, connect and celebrate alumni and friends of diverse backgrounds. This is not a publication designed just for alumni of color; it is designed for all people who have an interest in diversity. A volunteer committee of campus, community and UWAA leaders would guide this new publication, which we hope to begin in September 2004.

Content ideas (not all ideas would be in every issue):

1. Memo from the UWAA Executive Director (defining UWAA's diversity position, highlighting work being done, speaking to a vision of growth and development, celebrating diversity in a holistic sense).
2. MAP news and event promotion
3. Article from Rusty Barcelo or OMA administration
4. Essay by a UW professional about a social diversity/justice issue
5. Calendar of diversity related events (campus, UWAA, regional, community. Must have some tie to UW)
6. Profiles: alumnus, student scholarship recipient, UW cultural and international registered student organization, international or immigrant student
7. Profiles of diversity advisory committees to UW
8. Share OMA/EOP news
9. Highlight GO-MAP activities
10. Announce specific scholarship opportunities for students of color
11. Jackson School/Evans School/Ethnic Studies – highlight international diversity programs on campus
12. Honor alumni making a difference (local, national or international)
13. Feature guest alumni columnists writing on some social justice issue (that has a tie to UW)
14. Highlight students and outreach programs (student service projects)
15. Class notes
16. Alumni photos (collection from events, like Alumni Paparazzi page in The Fountain)
17. Invitation for readers to make recommendations of stories, people and programs to highlight in future issues.
18. Share student demographics
19. What UW is doing to encourage high school students of color to apply
20. Call for volunteers
21. Highlight campus diversity award winning programs
22. Promote UWAA member benefits
23. Promote Dawg Deals

What we hope to accomplish with this publication (we will need to determine priority order):

- Better informed alumni and friends about diversity at the UW
- Explain how politics in the state of Washington impact the UW (bring news back so people know and understand how the issues affect the UW)
- Tell stories of alumni of color; celebrate accomplishments
- Let people know that the UW supports social justice
- Celebrate the top UW students of color
- Facilitate diversity communication within the UW/UWAA and between the UW and communities of color
- Provide a relevant forum for discussion of tough issues
- Increase awareness about our scholarship programs for students of color
- Expand outreach nationally
- Increase event participation
- Attract UWAA members and promote UWAA benefits/show value in UWAA membership

## **2. The specific ways that diversity is integrated into our mission.**

### **Our mission:**

We reach, connect and celebrate alumni and friends of the University to build lifelong relationships, and to support the University's mission.

In our 5-year strategic plan (2003-2008), we have the following vision for diversity.

### **Diversity**

The UWAA has a diverse work force and volunteer base and endorses diversity in the broadest sense. The organization works to reflect the ethnic, cultural and gender profile of the University of Washington graduates.

- We have a strong commitment to recruit and retain a diverse staff and volunteer leaders.
- We have an ongoing training program to develop a culturally aware, competent staff and volunteer leaders.
- We have a strong reputation in a variety of cultural communities that help attract diverse volunteers and volunteer leadership.
- We attract diverse audiences to UWAA programs and events.
- We have a defined communication plan to ensure students, alumni, friends and community leaders are aware of the UWAA activities promoting diversity.
- We are pro-active in helping students of diverse backgrounds through mentorship, career development and scholarship programs.
- We offer lifelong learning programs that feature speakers and topics that promote and embrace diversity.
- We have a diverse membership base that is engaged and knowledgeable about the activities of the UWAA.
- We work collaboratively with the Office of Minority Affairs and other campus entities that support minority outreach and partner on efforts when appropriate.
- We sponsor student events/programs that build a supportive culture with student ethnic groups.
- We have access to information in the alumni database that identifies alumni by ethnicity so that we may target efforts effectively.

**MAP (Multicultural Alumni Partnership, an alumni club) and UWAA** – MAP and the UWAA work both independently and collaboratively to create a strong sense of community between alumni of color and the UWAA. The Multicultural Alumni Partnership serves as a strong connection of the UWAA to the University's alumni and friends of color. MAP's programs and events are highly regarded as part of the UWAA's alumni outreach. This sense of community helps reconnect people of color to the university. The UWAA supports and promotes MAP's scholarship program and MAP's involvement in the community. MAP plays an active role in University diversity efforts to assure students of color have a positive campus climate to facilitate their undergraduate and graduate education.

The UWAA supports MAP's mission statement: MAP collaborates with the UWAA, UW students, faculty, staff and the community to influence and support multiculturalism in policies, practices and programs, raise scholarship funds for a multicultural group of students and improve the University's relationship with alumni and communities of color.

**Events, Programs and Partnerships:** We produce more than 150 events every year and support more than 50 alumni affinity groups. These events and groups may be athletic, social, academic or cultural in nature (or any combination). Following are several examples of outreach activities with a diversity focus.

**Alumni Affinity Groups (Clubs):**

The UWAA welcomes any affinity alumni group that wishes to organize itself within our organization, provided that their purpose is aligned with our mission and the group is able to meet our chartering guidelines. We are currently exploring relationships with a Native American group and a GLBT group. Whether or not a group chooses to align themselves with the UWAA, we are more than happy to lend our expertise in getting started and sharing alumni event and communication ideas and strategies.

The Multicultural Alumni Partnership (MAP) was formed in 1995 at the Alumni Association to promote diversity within the Alumni Association and the University community as well as to encourage students, faculty and alumni from diverse or disadvantaged backgrounds in their studies and careers. The UWAA has provided MAP, since its inception, with staff and financial resources to support its activities.

**Alumni Celebration:**

**MAP Awards** – For the past 9 years, MAP has been honoring men and women in our community who have made an outstanding contribution to the community in one or more of the following ways: 1) promoting diversity; 2) supporting educational opportunity programs; 3) assisting in recruiting, mentoring and supporting diverse students faculty or staff at the UW; or 4) promoting participation in the UWAA's multicultural activities. The awardees (generally 5 each year) are recognized at the Bridging the Gap Breakfast on Homecoming Saturday and their stories and efforts are featured in the September issue of Columns magazine.

**NEW INITIATIVE: Alumni Making a Difference:** Beginning in April 2004, we will begin a monthly acknowledgement advertisement series in the NW Asian Weekly to recognize alumni who are making a difference in our region or state in promoting/supporting diversity and multicultural activities. Depending on our available resources, we may expand our reach to other publications. At this time we are fortunate to have a strong relationship/partnership with Assunta Ng, publisher of the NW Asian Weekly.

**Scholarship:**

While we produce many scholarship fund-raising events every year, two events have a diversity program focus and funds are distributed to students of color or economically disadvantaged students.

**MAP Bridging the Gap Breakfast:** In its 10<sup>th</sup> year, the Multicultural Alumni Partnership organizes a breakfast on Homecoming Saturday to honor alumni who have made a positive impact on their communities and raise funds for student scholarships. This event draws more than 600 participants and generally raises more than \$25,000.

**Bon-Macy's Luncheon:** In its 3<sup>rd</sup> year, the UWAA and Bon-Macy's teamed up to bring downtown Seattle business leaders together for the purpose of raising scholarship funds for students of color. Together we have raised almost \$30,000 for diversity scholarships. This event continues to grow. Our program features a keynote speaker who is a prominent person who has made a significant contribution to enhancing the diversity of our community. We also feature a UW student of color scholarship recipient.

In addition, the **UW Alumnae Board** (one of our affinity groups) raises funds through an annual Holiday Fair. They award 28 full tuition scholarships each year, of which many recipients are students of color.

**Student Experience:**

**UWAA/OMA Career Mentor Program:** Since 1989, the UWAA and the Office of Minority Affairs have teamed up to offer the UW Mentor Program to students in the Educational Opportunity Program. The Mentor Program supports these students of diverse backgrounds in making a successful transition to university life, performing well academically, and laying the foundation for

a productive and satisfying career. We typically have more than 60 student and 60 alumni participants.

**Husky Career Advantage – Career Connections:** We currently have a volunteer database of more than 4,000 alumni from very diverse professional backgrounds who are willing to help students or alumni with career networking and guidance. This service is a UWAA member benefit and free for students.

**Husky Career Advantage – Career Discovery Week and Husky Career Lunch:** In its 4<sup>th</sup> year, the UWAA has teamed up with the Center for Career Services and more than 50 campus departments to offer students a week-long career exploration extravaganza. We offer more than 60 free sessions encompassing a wide range of fields and more than 300 UW alumni and friends of the UW serve as panelists and table hosts for the Husky Career Lunch. We work hard to recruit alumni from all walks of life to be part of this outreach to students. The alumni participants range in class year from 1950 to 2003 and represent varied races, classes and lifestyles. We are very proud of the diversity this program has brought to our Association.

**NEW INITIATIVE:** This spring, we will sponsor study breaks for students at the Instructional Center and Ethnic Cultural Center. We are also pursuing the possibility of sponsoring graduations for student groups including Black graduation, Filipino graduation, Raven's Feast, and La Raza.

**Community Partnerships/Sponsorships:**

It is important to us to support local community activities and as opportunities arise that are aligned with our mission, and if resources allow, we do so.

**Spring 2005 sponsorships:**

- Friends of EOP Celebration Dinner *Purchase table and sponsor two scholarships.*
- Women of Color Empowered Luncheon Series *Purchase table. Assist in finding alumnae speakers, staff UWAA booth at one lunch. Invite volunteers to attend.*
- Diversity Makes a Difference Dinner *Partnership with NW Asian Weekly. Purchase table and provide 100 UW giveaways to scholarship recipients.*

**Lifelong Learning:**

We are proactive about incorporating diverse topics or references into our lectures (e.g., Lewis & Clark series and the presentation that the Indian story about the expedition is not necessarily the same story as the White man's; Civil War series and the role of slavery and racial issues in the political crisis that culminated in secession), and identifying faculty, alumni and community members of color to participate as presenters. We are active in sending program press releases and calendar listings to ethnic and special publications throughout Puget Sound and Washington State (e.g. NW Asian Weekly, Seattle Medium, La Voz, etc.).

**3. The ways we have structured the Alumni Association so that diversity is institutionalized as part of our criteria for success.**

Diversity is prevalent in our strategic plan and is one of our key performance measures.

Our staff is challenged to incorporate diversity into their individual annual performance goals. Whether it be to increase participation numbers of diverse attendees, recruit new and diverse volunteers, or feature diverse speakers in lifelong learning programs, we expect our staff to make a contribution to our organization's effort.

As part of our annual staff-training program, we include at least one training or experiential learning opportunity with the goal of developing cultural awareness and competence. We make available (and fund) additional opportunities for staff to experience more (e.g. attending diversity events on campus or in the community such as Forum on Race, Living Colors, etc.). We are currently working to introduce our staff to students, faculty and administrators on campus who are involved in diversity programs to gain a better understanding of our campus climate.

We have recently begun to report on our diversity efforts at our Board of Trustee meetings, volunteer councils and committees and staff meetings. We want to ensure that the topic stays at the forefront of our conversations and that we keep people informed about our successes and challenges.

**Alumni/volunteer input:** Volunteers are the heart of our Association and provide the energy, resources and time needed to expand our impact and achieve our mission. We operate primarily by a group-ordered process in that new initiatives, policies and procedures are shared with staff and volunteers for their input and comments. Knowing how to reach, connect and engage alumni of diverse backgrounds in the University and our Association has been a challenge. There is no blueprint for success. We have found that the best way to deliver quality programs and benefits is to ask what people want. Staff and volunteer committees, focus groups and task forces have been the driving force in making change. We do our very best to seek the advice of knowledgeable people, people who represent different communities, listen to what they have to say and commit to responding appropriately.

In June 2003, we hosted a focus group comprised of campus and community leaders and asked specifically what we can do to enhance diversity. The thoughts, ideas and recommendations that emerged from discussion were categorized into four key theme areas: 1) communications; 2) events; 3) partnerships; and 4) campus awareness.

### **Communications**

The UWAA produces *Columns*. UWAA has *The Fountain* (member newsletter), UW News Links and is building out new electronic communications. Utilize those resources to:

- Tell stories, celebrate the accomplishments of alumni of color
- Survey what is happening in communities with alumni and students that we don't know about and share that information
- Let people know that UW supports social justice

**Update:** This spring we will begin a monthly promotion in NW Asian Weekly, celebrating alumni making a difference. This may build out to other community publications. Discussions are beginning with *Columns* editors and its advisory committee on story ideas. We are in discussion about the production of a new communications piece (addressed on page 2 of this appraisal).

### **Events**

The UWAA knows how to produce events. Use talents and resources to:

- Hold a fun event (family gathering) and include as many ethnic groups as possible
- Hold an open house for EOP alumni (show them all the new stuff going on)
- Develop cross-cultural events
- Host regional EOP alumni gatherings

**Update:** Held two regional EOP alumni gatherings in conjunction with our Warm Ups held before away football games. Supported MAP's Bridging the Gap Breakfast. Developed and implemented Asian Athletes Dinner Celebration at China Gate Restaurant. Alumni dinner in Honolulu planned for February to draw local Hawaiian alumni. Beginning to talk about holding an EOP graduate open house.

### **Partnerships**

There are many organizations on campus and in the community that already have activities which engage alumni of color. UWAA can be a strong partner. Use volunteers, staff and resources to:

- Find out what's happening on campus
- Find out what's happening in the community
- Figure out how to get racial and ethnic information from the alumni database – accurate and relevant information is key
- Work within existing groups – let them know that UWAA can bring something to them that will help their efforts, but not get in the way
- Build a partnership with OMA and the EOP program

**Update:** Research is beginning on what's happening on campus and in the community. Student leaders from key ethnic student organizations will meet with UWAA in February to talk about partnerships. Database issue continues to be a problem.

### **Campus Awareness**

The UWAA's presence on campus is growing but is the UWAA growing in its knowledge of groups and cultural issues on campus?

- Hold meetings in other places on campus (i.e. Ethnic Cultural Center)
- Educate staff and volunteers on the groups that exist on campus
- Educate staff and volunteers on cultural issues on campus (past and present) so everyone has common understanding

**Update:** Scheduling staff and Board meetings for ECC this spring. Rusty Barcelo will speak with staff in January. Will involve staff in an experiential learning/training this spring (had discussion with staff and this is what they want). Beginning relationship with ECC director Victor Flores and IC director Barry Minai.

### **Strategies to consider as we move forward:**

- Connect with community specific groups. People reconnect in groups they feel comfortable with.
- Hold some focus groups and find out what alumni want. Community by community.
- Follow up – be sure your actions are consistent with your words.
- Do what we do best – but tailor it to specific groups.
- Give the personal touch – make time for this, it is really important.
- Join the community – don't expect the community to come to you.
- Be humble in communications and connections; we must come across as genuine and authentic.

### **How will we measure success?**

It is important that we have measurable criteria to evaluate the success of our efforts and investments. This is how the UWAA Board, staff and volunteers will determine our success with regard to our diversity initiative:

- We don't have to talk about it anymore (the ideal situation!)
- Our membership numbers increase
- Our membership becomes more diverse
- We have raised more scholarship money for students of color
- We have enhanced the student experience for students of color
- We have more alumni of color participating in our events and programs
- We have more people of color on our staff and in our volunteer program
- Affinity groups (Native, GLBT, Black, EOP, disabled, etc.) will desire to organize themselves as chartered UWAA alumni clubs.

**Big Challenge:**

Our alumni database is woefully inadequate when it comes to identifying alumni of color. We would like to emphasize the challenge of not knowing the true diversity make-up of our alumni population. We can make assumptions, but we may be far from accurate. We would like to see an investment in obtaining and maintaining alumni demographic information. Understanding alumni race statistics would better help us ensure we are appropriately reflecting the profiles of UW graduates in our activities, communications and membership. We would like to collaborate with the University in an effort to obtain better information.

Thank you for the opportunity for us to share our work. We would be more than happy to discuss any of our plans, efforts or strategies with you further. In turn, should you have any recommendations for us, please know that they are most welcome.