Welcome to the first edition of the Auburn University Diversity News! I am excited about our office and its mission. Auburn University is committed to institutionalizing diversity and the Office for Diversity and Multicultural Affairs aims to implement programs that fulfill this commitment. In addition, each one of us at Auburn University must endeavor to play a role in diversity. So on a daily basis, each one of us should set forth to make diversity and the recognition of it evident here on our campus, in our local communities, and in the world around us.

This being our first diversity newsletter, I want to make sure you are familiar with our diversity vision, goals, initiatives, and staff. As you read this newsletter, please identify areas where you feel you can assist the Office of Diversity and Multicultural Affairs to make our vision and goals a reality.

Please feel free to contact our office at 844-4184 or send us an email at diversity@auburn.edu.

Looking forward to working with each and every one of you,

Overtoun

Vision
The Office for Diversity and Multicultural Affairs will offer a comprehensive range of exemplary educational programs that will foster and sustain an environment that promotes academic excellence, respects differences, and accepts inclusiveness.

Goals
• Create, promote, and encourage a supportive and friendly campus environment that is welcoming and attractive to people of all races, ethnicity, nationalities, religions, gender, sexual orientation, and those with disabilities.

• Assist Auburn University in its efforts to recruit and retain minority and women faculty, students, and staff at all levels.

• Develop and strengthen alliances with external communities to support diversity in and outside of Auburn University.

• Develop efforts that enhance external support for diversity programs and scholarships.

• Foster a campus community that values diversity through educational, cultural, and social programs.

• Regularly monitor and assess Auburn University’s diversity efforts for effectiveness, identify new and better best practices for success, and submit annual reports to the provost.

Board of Trustees Reaffirms Commitment to Diversity and Desegregation Case Ends
On November 10, 2006, the Auburn University Board of Trustees reaffirmed its commitment to diversity and endorsed the implementation of the Strategic Diversity Plan, which outlines current challenges, solutions, and accountability measures. In the endorsement, the board of trustees recognized that enhancing diversity is a dynamic process and encouraged the president to continue efforts to ensure that the Strategic Diversity Plan is periodically reviewed and revised as appropriate to provide an enriched learning environment.

After 25 years, the Alabama higher education desegregation case ended on December 12, 2006. As part of the settlement agreement, Auburn University will implement the Strategic Diversity Plan.

To see the Commitment to Diversity resolution and the Knight Settlement Agreement, visit www.auburn.edu/diversity.
New Scholarship Program to Boost Diversity

A new innovative scholarship program is under way within the Provost’s Office. This scholarship program, The Provost Leadership Undergraduate Scholarship (PLUS), has been awarded to 40 students in this fall’s freshman class. The students are receiving $2,000 scholarships per academic year that are renewable for up to three years.

As part of the diversity office initiatives, the PLUS program awards scholarships to academically qualified students that exhibit financial need by the federal guidelines and/or add to the diversity of the Auburn student body. As recipients of the scholarships, students also participate in peer mentoring, leadership training, workshops, and counseling services.

An essential component of the scholarship program is the cohort system, in which groups of PLUS scholars take classes together during their freshman and sophomore years. This approach will provide students with a built-in network of peers who can encourage and help each other in and out of the classroom. The program will help Auburn increase the diversity of its student body, produce more graduates from diverse backgrounds, and help ensure that all Auburn graduates thrive in a diverse society and global economy.

Women’s Initiatives

Donna Sollie, the assistant provost for women’s initiatives, leads the efforts to establish and foster programs that improve opportunities for women throughout the university. Current initiatives underway within this unit include a mentoring program for women faculty, a campus-wide survey of child care needs, development of a Women’s Resource Center that will address health and safety needs, and the creation of an Auburn University Women in Science and Engineering Institute.

For more information, check out www.auburn.edu/diversity.

Multicultural Center

Formerly the Center for Diversity and Race Relations, the Multicultural Center is well on its way to fulfill its mission and goals in alignment with the AU Strategic Diversity Plan. The Center, which is housed in the Foy Student Union, is dedicated to providing quality services and programming for the Auburn University community that promote education and understanding across cultures.

Under the direction of its director, Juanyce Taylor, the center, with its full-time staff houses various opportunities for all Auburn students. These include multicultural advisement, the Peer Mentoring Program, Cultural Heritage Month and Celebrations, and other forums and workshops.

To learn more about the Center and its programs, visit www.auburn.edu/diversity/multicultural.html
Diversity Training

The Office of Diversity and Multicultural Affairs, in partnership with the Office of Human Resources, has implemented the Just Be Fair Diversity Training Program. The program is consistent with the university’s commitment to institutionalize diversity as a core value. Participation in the diversity training program will initially be required of all supervisors of regular university employees. In subsequent phases of the program, all remaining faculty, administrative/professional, and university staff employees will be asked to participate. Selected university employees have been trained to deliver the program to supervisors. The initial training is taking place within the respective colleges, schools, and major administrative divisions of the university. Arrangements for the training are being made directly through the deans’ offices and other key administrative units by the Office of Human Resources.

Auburn University President, Dr. Ed Richardson recently forwarded a memo to all vice presidents, deans, directors, and department heads strongly supporting this diversity training initiative. He believes that this will provide an opportunity for Auburn employees to develop competencies that will allow them to build better working relationships and assist them in meeting their personal and professional goals.

GK-12 Fellows in Sciences and Mathematics in East Alabama Schools

Outreach is another area in the Office of Diversity and Multicultural Affairs that is important to our mission and goals. One of the latest outreach efforts includes the GK-12 Fellows in Sciences and Mathematics in East Alabama Schools Project, which is funded through the National Science Foundation. Auburn University, in partnership with Tuskegee University, sends 15 graduate students from the College of Sciences and Mathematics (COSAM) daily into classrooms in six Lee and Macon county schools to assist mathematics and science teachers.

Supervised by a mentoring teacher, the GK-12 Fellows assist in laboratory experiments, develop curriculum modules, and design research activities and demonstrations. GK-12 Fellows are also expected to participate in after-school enrichment activities, work one-on-one with students, and serve as mentors and role models.

Professors Asheber Abebe, Jack Feminella, Overtoun Jenda, and Anotida Madzvamuse serve as co-principal investigators from Auburn University while professors Mohammed Qazi and Roberta Troy are the co-principal investigators from Tuskegee University. Florence Holland, the special assistant to the associate provost for diversity, serves as the project coordinator.

For further information, please see the GK-12 web site: www.auburn.edu/diversity/gk12.html.

Other Diversity Programs

Other programs in the Office of Diversity and Multicultural Affairs include:

* College is Possible (CIP) Program
* College/Department Recruitment and Retention Programs
* Faculty Recruitment and Retention Programs

If you have interest in any of the areas mentioned in our newsletter, be sure to contact our office: (334)844-4184, diversity@auburn.edu, or visit www.auburn.edu/diversity.
Meet The Office of Diversity and Multicultural Affairs Staff

Donna Sollie
Assistant Provost for Women’s Initiatives

Florence Holland
Special Assistant to the Associate Provost for Diversity and Multicultural Affairs

Juanyce Taylor
Director, Multicultural Center

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Diversity Analyst

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Multicultural Affairs Advisor

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We’re on the Web!
www.auburn.edu/diversity

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“Diversity: the art of thinking independently together.” - Malcolm Forbes