

THE MINORITY RECRUITMENT REPORT
1993-94

OAKLAND COMMUNITY COLLEGE
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MINORITY RECRUITMENT AT OAKLAND COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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I. OVERVIEW/NEW RESPONSIBILITIES

The first six months of Minority Recruitment at OCC was full of surprises and challenges. It all began with the Minority Teacher Initiative (MTI) as my major thrust was to initiate dialogue with various individuals and community groups regarding the significance of minorities entering the teaching profession. The fact that out of 9,800 teachers in the classrooms of Oakland County schools, only 65 (less than one percent) are black males is cause for concern. And out of 12,000 county teachers and administrators, only five percent are black females. Statewide-wide, statistics indicate only four black males under 26 years old were teaching in Michigan schools in 1992. Thus the Minority Teacher Initiative is a very necessary step to improve the plight of minorities in the teaching profession. Additionally, most studies indicate that minorities across the board are not attending college at desirable rates.

I was informed by Dr. Richard Saunders on July 1, 1993 that my duties and responsibilities at OCC had changed. I was no longer a contractual employee, hence forth I was to be considered a full-time permanent staff. I would continue to be involved with the Minority Teacher Initiative Program on a limited basis, however my major thrust will be college-wide minority recruitment. Communication with WC3 and selected high schools in Detroit (Invitation) and Southfield were also encouraged. I realized that I had become the official salesman for all of OCC's minority related programs. I discovered early on that minority recruitment requires a uniform strategy in order to attract minorities on a continual basis. This is particularly important since minorities represented only 21.87% of students in Public Universities throughout the State of Michigan in 1993. The increasing scarcity of minorities entering Higher Education is cause for alarm. Which prompted OCC to embark upon a concerted effort to do its share to recruit minority students.

It is a given that education provides enormous opportunity for personal and professional growth that extends to the whole society. A comprehensive Minority Recruitment effort would reflect OCC's commitment to provide competent minority individuals to the US workforce as well as other areas in the academic and professional arena. My initial goals for the first year were as follows:

- 1) To develop networks with various individuals/organizations whose work impacts students of color at OCC in an effort to assess the support services available to such students college wide. (i.e. day care center, MTI Program, Pass Program, IICs, etc.)
- 2) To establish contacts with administrators at local high schools, churches and community organizations to begin developing area networks for recruiting purposes.
- 3) To review OCC services (i.e. counseling, financial aid) to assess their effectiveness with students of color and to begin helping them become more responsive to the needs of such students.
- 4) To create a tracking system to monitor the academic progress of students of color.
- 5) To develop a strategic plan to recruit, retain and graduate students of color.

Meetings with the leadership of the various campuses resulted in the following suggestions, ideas and basic direction toward minority recruitment:

Royal Oak/Southfield

- Adult Education should be included in my recruitment priorities
- Get involved with those in the recruitment process ie. recruiters, student activities coordinators and those involved in the enrollment process
- Work closely with others that are willing to provide whatever form of support at their disposal
- Develop understanding of the financial aid process to better assist with the needs of minority students
- Familiarization with the day-care process to articulate the availability to potential students with children so that they will know that an education is possible even with children.

Highland Lakes

- Highlight whenever possible the very popular Nursing Program
- Work very closely with the student activity coordinator to develop a strategy to impact the minority population and to periodically discuss the need to attend selected college related activities
- Maintain consistent tracking of student success as a selling point of OCC. It should be pointed out that in the event that a student is experiencing academic difficulties early intervention is possible to make the necessary corrections.

Orchard Ridge

- Should consider working with the Diversity Committee at OCC to become aware of discussions and issues relative to multiculturalism and other minority related concerns.
- Take a close look at the cultural arts programs (may be attractive to minorities)
- Take a lead role in the promotion of the Legal Assistance Program to start in 1994-1995
- Work closely with others involved in student/affairs minority related issues
- Focus on students success beyond OCC's five campuses as best possible. Students should be aware of the transfer process and opportunities available at the various four year institutions and the numerous career choices.

Most of the president's agreed that I should keep a close watch on enrollment statistics, particularly as they relate to minorities. They also felt that communication and support from counselors, other recruiters and student activity coordinators are vital to my recruitment efforts. All of the information gathered from the various campuses should be shared at the admission council meetings and other college related programs and activities, as well as to other concerned individuals. I will also act as

a resource person to assist each campus with overall plans to reach the maximum number of potential minority candidates to enroll at OCC.

II. BASIC FUNCTIONS AND SPECIAL ACTIVITIES

The overall activities as they relate to recruitment are varied. While the basic responsibilities are directed toward the recruitment of minorities campus wide, it is important that a great deal of attention continue to be focused on the following to achieve maximum impact on the minority population.

- Admissions Council - As the new minority recruiter/coordinator for the Minority Teacher Initiative Program, I began to broaden my horizons even further as a member of the Admissions Council. The experience was very informative and quite beneficial. Everyone was eager to assist with my concerns. I immediately became knowledgeable of what other recruiters were doing and other important issues and concerns that were being dealt with.
- Bi-monthly (or monthly as needed) meetings with representatives and students from the Minority Teachers Initiative (MTI) Program. Attend other programmatic related activities i.e. Speakers Forum, Round Table Discussions etc. All of which allow for an opportunity to reinforce the advantages of attending OCC and ultimately graduating from a four year institution.
- Advocates for Latino Student Advancement in Michigan (ALSAME). Will attend meetings (when possible) and communicate with members of this organization to recruit and inform its members of our programs. And wherever possible will highlight the advantages of attending OCC as a viable alternative.
- Visit Pontiac Central and Northern as well as Southfield Lathrup and Southfield High School on a weekly (or bi-weekly) basis to recruit and to speak to students groups whenever possible. When time permits I will accept invitations throughout Oakland County and Detroit (invitation) to recruit at College Nights and similar recruitment oriented activities.
- Oakland University - Dr. Saunders, Gordon May and myself have met on several occasions with officials from Oakland University to fine tune a partnership to establish a Minority Teacher Initiative Program identical to the articulation agreement we currently have with Eastern Michigan University (EMU). The program is in place thus minority students now have options to attend EMU or Oakland University after graduating from OCC to pursue their teaching career.
- MTI Task Force - The MTI Task Force meets on a quarterly basis to receive an update and review all programs activities. The group is comprised of a variety of very committed individuals from OCC, Pontiac Schools, EMU, and Private Industry.
- Martin Luther King Celebration - Assisted with the coordination of the MLK celebration at the Auburn Hills Campus. This was a very successful event! There was a very enthusiastic response from the staff at OCC and the minority community at-large.

- First Annual Pontiac Superintendents' Banquet - Participated as member of committee to make this a reality. Fortunately, the banquet was a resounding success. I was overwhelmed with the out-pouring support from the parents and the community-at-large. Meeting the various parents and interacting with administrators in the Pontiac School system provided me an opportunity to reaffirm OCC's commitment to be involved in the community. The high visibility I received from this activity has solidified OCC's position as a true partner working to make a positive impact in the community. I was also able to promote our efforts toward minority recruitment and the importance of minorities entering the teaching profession.
- Open house committee for the Auburn Hills Campus - Worked with colleagues to plan a campus open house to highlight the viability of attending OCC and all of the various programs offered by OCC.
- Scholarship program - Met with colleagues to design a scholarship program for the Minority Teacher Initiative (MTI) program. Our past successful fund raising efforts generated approximately \$20,000 to be used to provide full and partial scholarships to qualified participants.
- OLSHA - The Oakland Livingston Human Service Agency has invited me to speak to participants in their adult education program. A very lively discussion took place regarding the importance of college, particularly community college. I was successful in spreading the word about OCC which hopefully will have an impact on their future choices. Adult education is an often overlooked population. I truly feel that they are also a significant part of our future. We must include them in our recruitment efforts in order to make a real difference. We should continue our efforts to recruit from this very important population.
- PTA/PTO - In speaking to the parents of the potential OCC students at the various high schools and community meetings, I have discovered that they are the most impressionable entity in our recruitment scheme. I attend PTA's/PTO's as often as time will allow because if I can impress upon the parents the virtues of OCC my recruitment efforts will be less cumbersome. I average one PTA/PTO meetings a month.
- Clark/Atlanta University - I spoke with the Registrar regarding the ultimate alternatives to be offered to minority students once having graduated from OCC. Of course, some would opt to go to Eastern Michigan University or Oakland University via the MTI program. "What if a student wanted to attend a historical black college" was the question that I posed. To make a long story short, the Registrar contacted one of his former colleagues to discuss this issue. After a few months, a representative from Clark/Atlanta University met with many of us to explore the possibility of developing a 2-plus-2 program similar to the articulation agreement that we have with Eastern Michigan University for the MTI Program. We are currently waiting on a response to this very important and potentially exciting program to be offered at OCC. What a viable alternative. Giving minority students an option to attend an Historical Black College (HBC) is a dream-come-true for many. OCC as a conduit for the road to an HBC would enhance our image and recruitment efforts quite significantly in the minority community.

- Tours - I periodically take student groups and adults on tours throughout the campus. This experience has proven to be quite enjoyable. It affords me an opportunity to show off our campus and answer any question or concern regarding OCC.
- Community Collaborative - As a member representing OCC we meet on a monthly basis to discuss a number of important issues related to the community. This group is comprised of persons from the business, religious, social and educational sectors of the Pontiac community. This is a valuable opportunity to promote minority recruitment and OCC to a broad sector of the community. It is this type of exposure that makes OCC a true partner in the quest to make a positive impact in the community and to show that we are serious about OCC'S commitment to the Pontiac community and the recruitment of minorities
- Optimist Club - I have spoken to the Optimist Clubs in Pontiac and Detroit. The concept of minority recruitment and the MTI program was quite pleasing to many of the people that I spoke with. Both groups asked for future visits for periodic updates on programs at OCC. What wonderful and well connected groups. The only problem is that they meet at 7:30 in the morning!!!
- Birmingham Task Force on Race Relations and Ethnic Diversity - This group meets on a monthly basis to discuss race relation oriented issues (Oakland County) to sensitize the community on matters of race relations. The group is quite appreciative of OCC'S involvement to working toward better relations between the various races. The group allows for a golden opportunity to highlight OCC as an institution working to recruit minorities into higher education.
- Highland Park High School - The college fair was a huge success. This was the very first time that OCC was a part of their program. The response from the students and teachers was quite overwhelming. OCC was invited back to participate in future programs.
- College Nights - I attend as many college nights as possible. They have afforded me an opportunity to gain a realistic perspective on the unique dynamics of each campus.
- OCC'S Men's Basketball Team/Orchard Ridge - I was approached by the coach to talk with the team regarding the importance of college beyond the basketball court. I was told that there are a number of athletes that lose interest in college upon being released from the basketball team. The coach was concerned that someone talk to them about life beyond basketball. I met and talked with them for about forty-five minutes. Many appeared to be quite receptive to my message. I extended an invitation to the coach to call upon me at any time to come and talk to the players, for they must understand that an education beyond the basketball court is vital to their future.
- Kettering High School Career Day Speaker - Spoke with three different classes on the importance of a college career and OCC as a viable alternative. Most of the students were not familiar with the programs at OCC and were delighted with such a viable option (OCC) so close to home.

- Central High School - I attended a college fair at Central High School along with to other community colleges. I must admit that the other's presentations were very informative. However, I was told that OCC's presentation was by far the most impressive and less intimidating. This prompted one counselor to invite me back to speak to the senior class one-on-one. This was a very productive meeting. We were received quite well.
- Ethelene Crockett Voc-Tech Center - Many of the students had some idea as to the type of direction that they were headed, which made my job a lot easier. I discussed the various programs offered at OCC with an emphasis on the technical areas. Most were quite receptive and wanted to know more about OCC.
- Walled Lake High School - I was invited to this school by Ken Urban. I found this experience to be quite interesting and informative. I spoke to a majority non-minority group which allowed me an opportunity to diversify my approach. Everything went quite well with all three classes we spoke to. Ken would start off and I would close with another perspective. Recruiters of different ethnic backgrounds sends a very positive message to potential OCC students.
- Open House at Royal Oak Campus - I was assigned to man the booth as part of an overall team effort of the admissions council. We serviced a very large number of students. This was also a very enjoyable experience.

There are a number of areas worthy of in-depth examination and speculation. I found the following to be of utmost importance based solely on my experience to date.

III. OBSERVATIONS/CHALLENGES

- Need for individual minority recruitment at each campus. As the campus-wide minority recruiter I attempt to be as visible as possible to strategically impact minority recruitment. There are some instances whereby I would like to be at several places at one time. While I am very much aware of the scarce resources, the various meetings and activities at each campus warrant the use of additional minority recruitment personnel.
- Necessity to recruit minorities at the pre-high school level. Recruitment should begin at the very early stages of a students career. We should ideally work very closely with the junior high schools as well.
- We should explore and recruit "Special Needs" population. They have a definate stake in our future.
- Cautions must be taken as not to cause some students to be over reliant on recruiters. Many students become too dependent on us and refrain from taking their own initiative to resolve issues. They must realize that we have extensive responsibilities however we are willing to help as best we can.

- Time must be committed to give to those students on the verge of mis-direction and disaster. While I have several meetings, functions and other college related obligations I'm often placed in a situation to assist a student or parent in a situation that requires my immediate and undivided attention. I must make the time to avert a disaster that may cause a parent or student to lose sight of the importance of education.
- Must maintain a positive attitude to succeed in the minority recruitment arena. Minority recruitment is by no means an easy task. We must deal with the various dynamics unique to the minority population and transform them into mechanisms to combat the many social ills of society. Please be mindful of the following barriers that I have encountered in my recruitment efforts:
 - Money is perceived as a problem
 - Impossible to pass classes (College is too hard)
 - OCC is too isolated
 - No family support (ESPECIALLY PARENTAL)
 - College is not realistic
 - The few that go to college attend four-year institutions
 - Financial Aid Process is too complex
 - They are not willing to help me
 - College is not the norm (I feel awkward)

However, through it all we must maintain a positive attitude to be successful in this arena.

- I've found my college fraternity and previous academic and work related connections have been immensely helpful in breaking ground in many of the areas necessary to recruit. Many of my fraternity brothers keep me informed of the various opportunities to speak to minority students.
- Community based organizations/businesses/churches and civic groups must continue to be in the fore-front in the overall scheme to recruit students of color and to educate and improve the entire community. Communication lines must remain open.
- Intimate group (round table) discussions relating to college and other real-world experiences tend to go over very well with most students. They feel less intimidated and are quite comfortable when discussing their concerns in a peer-oriented environment.
- Statistics current and past are quite helpful in accessing and gauging our recruitment efforts. Although it is very difficult to determine if a specific presentation or visit generated a certain number of applicants periodic evaluation is important. A continued effort to discuss OCC to as many entities as possible can have a long-term positive impact on the college.
- Very pleased to see that there has been an increase in minority enrollment at OCC.

- Multi-culturalism and diversity is not a welcomed concept to some. Many feel that it is a replacement for affirmative action and an attempt to exclude contributions of others in American society. Unfortunately this poses an additional burden on those attempting to make a difference and a better place for all. Nevertheless, we should continue to strive to make a difference for the betterment of all.
- Tech Prep Programs should be highlighted more extensively - not enough focus -I plan to become more knowledgeable as to present an intelligent perspective. Many are not aware of the relevance and the viability of Tech-Prep.
- Work has begun to complete a video highlighting the Minority Teachers Institution Program - I look forward to its completion. It will be an excellent tool for the recruitment minorities to be involved in the MTI process.
- Mentors are a very important element to the ultimate success of minority students. Mentorships should be encouraged for any student experiencing difficulty at OCC.
- We must focus on time management and other personal enrichment and enhancement skills of minority students if we are to truly maintain and retain minorities once recruited.
- Institutional commitment is imperative in order to make inroads into the minority recruitment arena. If the administration of OCC is tolerant of anyone's rude or unwelcome attitude or behavior toward any ethnic group, then all of our recruitment efforts will be null and void. We can recruit our hearts out, but if students feel unwanted they will go elsewhere or more tragically go nowhere at all. The entire workforce of OCC serves as a recruiter by virtue of their behavior.

Communication and commitment from the various student activity coordinators of each campus is extremely important to minority recruitment. I will work to establish and maintain an on-going dialogue with all of OCC's student coordinators.

IV. GOALS/PLANS

In light of the aforementioned activities there remains obstacles to overcome and goals to be achieved. It is my intention to do the following during the 1994-1995 recruitment year.

- 1) Impact minority recruitment through appearance on local radio to highlight the importance of community college education.
- 2) Quarterly (or whenever needed) meetings with the president's of each campus. This will allow me an opportunity to discuss any concern or problem related to minority recruitment with the leadership of each campus. I look forward to the exchange of ideas and goals which will give me an opportunity to gauge and evaluate the impact of my efforts from the presidents' perspective.

- 3) Complete recruitment training process outlined by the dean of AH and the enrollment services coordinator.
- 4) Do a mass mailing to minorities in our targeted areas.
- 5) Strategically distribute new program brochures to reach large numbers of people of color.
- 6) Engage in more in-house publication activity i.e., Occurances, Campus Newsletters etc. to highlight minority recruitment efforts and activities.
- 7) Seek as many professional development activities as possible to enhance my recruitment and academic skills.
- 8) Meet with School Administrators on a periodic basis to reinforce the importance of minority recruitment and OCC's commitment to educate the entire community.
- 9) Give tours to minority students to make them comfortable with the OCC campuses and to discuss any problems or concerns that they may have.
- 10) When possible attend as many non-minority recruitment activities to broaden perspective and to assist other OCC staff with other more general recruitment goals.
- 11) Identify and recruit at High Schools and other educational institutions with significant minority populations of at least 15%.
- 12) Communicate with minorities that have graduated from OCC to assist with recruiting.
- 13) Hold a Minority Recruitment Night (Details to be worked-out).
- 14) Periodic communication with the Churches to assist with our recruitment efforts.
- 15) Make the local governments aware of our efforts and appeal for opportunities to support and promote on a continual basis.
- 16) To become more computer literate to expedite program operations and elimination of so much paper work. This will allow me a chance to expeditiously file data and letters etc.
- 17) Assist as possible (when available) with the enrollment service process, i.e. phone calls and answering students questions at the front desk.
- 18) Continue to utilize personal contacts and past organizational affiliations to promote and highlight OCC. (Very helpful).
- 19) To continuously update and improve my presentation to apply to the varied audiences that I encounter. The better my presentation the more credible the message.

- 20) To continue to read journals circulated by OCC colleagues that highlight important issues related to higher education and minorities in particular professors activity.
- 21) Hold bi-monthly (or as needed) meetings with student coordinator from all campuses.
- 22) When possible involve successful minority students and alumni in my recruitment activities.
- 23) Recruitment and Visitation Schedule: 1994-95

High Schools	48
Community Groups	74
MTI Activity	48
College Nights	4
Recruit Fairs	12
Tours	12
Open House	2
Career fairs	12
Special Events	12
Voc-Tech Ctr.	12
Adult Educ.	12
Mentorships	4
Conferences etc.	2
PTA/PTO	8

I realize the various perspectives offered as to how a college-wide recruiter should function. And I would like very much to appease all and meet the various goals and expectations of all five campuses. However, I do feel that I can only be productive with guidance and direction of the various individuals involved in the recruitment process to best focus on the most strategic manner to accomplish the aforementioned goals. I am encouraging any and everyone to provide ideas and suggestions as to how they think we can effectively strategize to reach the minority population in our five campus recruitment area. Additionally, I will work to develop numerous ways to evaluate the impact of minority recruitment efforts at OCC.

CONCLUSION

As I reflect back on my experience at OCC there have been a number of observations and challenges. So often I've found myself having to convince students that there are some real advantages to be gained from the community college experience. In fact, it happens over and over again. Nevertheless, I continue to perfect my craft as best possible. I often wish that I can go into a school and captivate the group without having to extol the virtues of the community college. Unfortunately, that is not the reality -- In most cases I must talk with students on a one-on-one basis in order to make a real impact.

There is truly no big mystery to minority recruitment. Our major obstacles are resources and manpower and a plan. If money and personnel were in place with a cohesive comprehensive plan we could reach the targeted group very quickly and make a lasting impact on the minority community.

We must continue to work and change the unrealistic perspective that so many have regarding the Community College Movement. We must continue to work with the churches and community based organizations to spread the word as to the virtues of community college, particularly Oakland Community College. We are not the Only Chance College and there are numerous success stories at OCC that prove differently. And they should be told as often as time allows.

While many of us are hopeful for better relations between the races, there continues to be major challenges before us. I have encountered persons that don't quite understand the need to emphasize and focus on the minority population to recruit in the various colleges and universities throughout the United States. Nevertheless, we must spread the word that Multi-culturalism and diversity is the key to bringing about ultimate harmony in our society. Just as OCC is a leader in providing technological advancement in Robotics and etc. We should also set the pace for the education of the entire community by availing ourselves to everyone.

I truly believe that the bottom-line is increased minority enrollment and a harmonious college environment conducive to learning and preparing our students for the future. We can reach such goals by working together. If we in the community college community back away from opportunities to work together we will only encourage hopelessness and despair and no one will prosper. We must extend a helping hand with a smile in all areas at the college which will serve as the ultimate recruitment base and position us to be poised for the future as a model serving the entire community. A model to be duplicated throughout the country.