October is Disability Employment and Diversity Awareness Month

Disability Employment Awareness Month: America’s People, America’s Talent ... America’s Strength

Patrice Miller

Congress has designated October as National Disability Employment Awareness month. This year’s national theme is America’s People, American’s Talent . . . America’s Strength. According to the U.S. Department of Labor, “individuals with disabilities represent one of the largest untapped pools of skills and talent in the U.S.”

The U.S. Census Bureau reports that just over 60 percent of men ages 16 to 65 who have disabilities were working in 2000, compared to 80 percent in that age group who do not have disabilities. For women in the same age group, the numbers were 51.4 and 67.3 percent respectively. These potential employees have skills and abilities that will allow them to make strong contributions to the University community.

Penn has a strong commitment to recruiting and retaining a diverse workforce and actively works to tap into the pool of qualified workers with disabilities.

The Division of Human Resources and the Office of Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity Programs can provide information to help managers recruit qualified employees with disabilities. If you have questions or need additional information, please contact Pat Miller, Associate Director of Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity Programs at (215) 898-6993.

October is Diversity Awareness Month!

Ralph De Lucia

October is officially designated as Diversity Awareness Month. Penn sponsors myriad programs and activities that demonstrate the University’s commitment to affirmative action, equal opportunity, equity and diversity. In its broadest context, diversity is defined as recognizing, appreciating, understanding, valuing, and ultimately utilizing the unique talents and contributions of all individuals regardless of race, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, color, national or ethnic origin, age, disability, veteran status, perspectives, educational backgrounds, socioeconomic status, language, learning styles and an array of other dimensions of difference.

The University’s Board of Trustees has adopted the following resolution affirming its commitment to diversity:

RESOLVED, that the Trustees of the University of Pennsylvania adopt in principal and practice the following statement on diversity:

Penn rejoices in the rich diversity of persons, groups, views, and academic disciplines and programs that grace the campus of the nation's first university. Tapping our diversity to strengthen ties across all boundaries enriches the intellectual climate and creates a more vibrant community. Fostering and nourishing this diversity, especially among students, faculty, staff, and trustees must remain central to the core missions of the University.

Though October is designated as Diversity Awareness Month, at Penn diversity awareness is a year-round endeavor. Here are a few examples of the many programs and activities that help to foster and support Penn’s commitment to diversity.

• The University has established “family-friendly” policies to support the recruitment and retention of faulty members and graduate students.

………………………………Continues on page 3
Hispanic Heritage Month: Its Origins and Why We Celebrate

Johnny Irizarry, Director, La Casa Latina

In 1968, Congress authorized President Lyndon B. Johnson to proclaim National Hispanic Heritage Week. In 1988, in recognition of the rich history and contributions of Hispanics to the U.S.A.’s heritage, the celebration was expanded to a month (September 15 to October 15).

Hispanics are 42.7 million of the U.S. population, 14% of the nation’s total, now the largest ethnic minority in the country (U.S. Census Bureau, 2005). Hispanic presence in North America precedes that of the British as Spanish conquistadors explored and established missions, trade posts and permanent forts and settlements in what we know today as the south, southwest and western United States.

Although the term Hispanic is the official federal term used since 1970 to describe people in the U.S. whose heritage is from the Spanish speaking Caribbean, Mexico, Central and South America; during the Civil Rights era, Latina/o activists began using the term “Latino” as a term that was more inclusive of the true racial mix that make up the great majority of “Hispanics,” (namely African, indigenous and European/Spanish).

Latino/a students, staff and La Casa Latina at Penn name our celebration, “Latino Heritage Month” (LHM). La Casa Latina works closely with the Latino Coalition, the Latin American and Latino Studies Program and Latino/a student groups and other partners to put together a diverse celebration that includes cultural educational presentations, performances and receptions between September 15 and October 15. We invite the entire Penn community to participate in these exciting events. Please contact La Casa Latina at lacasa@upenn.edu, (215) 746-6043, or visit us in the ARCH Building at 3601 Locust Walk for a calendar of events, more information, to volunteer or to suggest activities you would like to see in the future during Penn LHM.

Penn’s Native Community

Wendy Green, Graduate Student, Member of Six Directions

The Native Community at Penn is made up of graduate and undergraduate students in the group Six Directions as well as the Association of Native Alumni (ANA).

Six Directions was founded in 1994 by alumni Desiree Martinez and Bryan Brayboy. It is a student interest group at the University of Pennsylvania that is dedicated to raising awareness about Native Americans on Penn’s campus. Six Directions has worked to bring attention to issues and concerns centered around the recruitment and retention of Native American students, faculty and staff as well as the creation of a Native American studies program (or minor).

The last two years have been particularly successful in raising awareness of Native American issues at Penn. In April 2007, Six Directions hosted an academic conference with the theme “Raising Visibility and Voice.” It was attended by over 100 indigenous scholars and undergraduate and graduate students from across the Ivy League and its peer institutions.

In addition, the newly-founded Center for Native American Studies successfully sponsored a conference highlighting revival strategies for America’s indigenous languages in May 2008. This event brought together tribal leaders and indigenous language scholars to discuss some of the pressing issues related to language facing their communities.

To observe Native American Heritage Month (November), Six Directions is co-sponsoring with Greenfield Intercultural Center a provocative month-long discussion series featuring contemporary indigenous voices. The series will include weekly discussions of films, articles, and works of fiction related to the Native American experience. Please look for future updates on this series at Six Directions’ website: www.dolphin.upenn.edu/six-d. For questions, contact Mia King at noemia@sas.upenn.edu or Wendy Green at mwendy@dolphin.upenn.edu.

Fulfilling a Prophecy: The Past and Present of the Lenape in Pennsylvania

October is Diversity Month! (Continued from page 1)

- The Center for Africana Studies, the Annenberg School for Communication, and the Institute for Advanced Journalism Studies at North Carolina A & T University co-sponsored “Kerner-Plus 40,” a symposium commemorating the 40th anniversary of the issuance of the Kerner Commission Report.

- The Division of Human Resources has produced a Diversity Recruitment Resources Manual to assist hiring managers.

- The Graduate School of Education hosts a monthly lecture series, “Race in the Academy.”

- The School of Nursing co-sponsored the “International Conference on Women’s Health Initiatives” in Gaborone, Botswana in July 2008. A follow-up conference, planned for 2010, will be hosted at Penn.

- Purchasing Services in the Division of Business Services, through its Supplier Diversity Program, provides new business opportunities to qualified diversity-owned businesses.


As President Gutmann stated in the Penn Compact “in a democracy and at great universities, diversity and excellence go together.” We encourage you to take advantage of the academic and social programs offered at the University that provide insights and information about people and cultures that are different than your own.

U.S. House Passes ADA Amendment Act

Ralph J. DeLucia

The U.S. House of Representatives overwhelmingly approved legislation on June 25, 2008, that would amend the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). The proposed ADA Amendments Act (H.R. 3195), which passed the House by a vote of 402-17, would change the ADA’s definition of "disability," add rules of construction rejecting past Supreme Court interpretations of the Act, and make changes to the ADA’s codified findings and regulatory authority.

A companion bill has been introduced in the U.S. Senate (S1881) and action is anticipated in the near future. More detailed information on this amendment can be found at:

The Office of Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunities offers training on the ADA. If you have any questions concerning the ADA, or would like to schedule a training session, contact Ralph De Lucia at (215) 898-6993.

The Staff Affirmative Action Compliance Form is now available on our website. The form and directions for its use are available at:
http://www.upenn.edu/affirm-action/ONLINE_AACF.pdf.

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The University’s Sexual Harassment Policy will be published in its entirety in the Almanac on September 16, 2008. The policy underscores the wide array of resources available to provide information and support and to respond to complaints. Penn’s Sexual Harassment Policy and its Sexual Harassment Policy Handbook are available at http://www.upenn.edu/affirm-action/introsh.html. If you have questions regarding the policy, or concerns about inappropriate behavior in the workplace, please contact the Office of Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity Programs.

In The Know......

The voluntary self-identification process provides employees with an opportunity to identify their disability and/or covered veteran status in order to participate in or take advantage of Penn’s affirmative action programs for people with disabilities and covered veterans. Penn faculty and staff who are veterans or have a disability are invited to self-identify. For more information or to obtain a self-identification form, please visit our website at www.upenn.edu/affirm-action/VetSelfIDform_vet100_ltr.doc.

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Veterans Upward Bound at Penn

Diane Sandefur, Director, Veterans Upward Bound

The TRIO Veterans Upward Bound Program (TRIO VUB), which is part of the Department of Equity and Access Programs in the Division of University Life, is completing its 30th year at the University of Pennsylvania. The federal government funds 45 TRIO VUB programs across the nation, through the Office of Post-Secondary Education within the U.S. Department of Education. TRIO VUB programs offer intensive pre-college courses as well as an array of support services to ensure that eligible veterans participating in the program are fully prepared to successfully enroll in college with the ultimate goal of attaining a bachelor’s degree. The services offered by TRIO VUB programs like Penn’s are free of charge to the veteran enrolled in the program.

Penn’s TRIO VUB program serves 120 military veterans annually. Federal regulations require that two-thirds of the program’s participants be both low-income (less than 150% of the poverty level) and first-generation college students. Also, to enroll in the program, veterans must have served a total of 181 days on active duty (or if less than 180 days, he or she must have received a medical discharge), have any discharge other than dishonorable, and reside in the Greater Philadelphia region.

Once accepted in the program, veterans are offered intensive pre-college courses at either an average pace or accelerated path of learning in math, literature, English (grammar, punctuation, writing skills), laboratory science, Spanish, and computer skills. The program also includes a life skills workshop that offers instruction in goal setting, time management, and financial aid as well as other presentations designed to support the veteran’s academic interests. Tutoring is available to all program participants. The program also has two academic counselors to help each participant set academic goals, determine career aptitude, apply for financial aid, and identify colleges or universities that will enable them to pursue their academic interests. Additionally, culturally enrichment activities, such as visits to local colleges and museums and attending the theater, are offered to all participants.

Penn’s Veteran’s Upward Bound Program holds three sessions each year – fall, spring and summer. Each cycle lasts for fourteen weeks with classes being held Monday through Thursday from 5:30-9:30 p.m. and the advanced computer class being held on Friday from 5:30-8:30 p.m. For more information please contact the program’s director Diane Sandefur, at (215) 898-6892, or Sandefur@exchange.upenn.edu or visit www.vpul.upenn.edu/aap/vub/index.php.

Minority Enterprise Development Week: Opening Minds to Diverse Opportunities

Ralph J. DeLucia

A series of workshops and special events will mark Philadelphia’s 23rd observation of Minority Enterprise Development (M.E.D.) Week. This year’s theme, “Opening Minds to Diverse Opportunities,” will offer workshops hosted by various agencies and organizations and thought-provoking discussions on topics such as succession planning, website development, financial management for the entrepreneur, networking and relationship building, and economic parity for minority businesses. For the fourth straight year, Penn will host a workshop called, “Providing Business Opportunities for Local Community-based & Diversity Suppliers,” which will focus on understanding how suppliers can develop a more strategic relationship with Penn. This workshop will again be presented by Penn’s Chief Procurement Officer, Ralph Maier.

This year’s M.E.D. Week celebration will be held from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. on Thursday, October 9th at the Sheraton Philadelphia City Center Hotel. The award reception and luncheon will be held at the hotel on Friday, October 10th from noon until 2:00 p.m. Philadelphia’s mayor, the Honorable Michael Nutter, will be the keynote speaker. For more information, visit the website: www.philamedweek.com, or contact the Office of Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity Programs’ website http://www.upenn.edu/affirm-action/.

Please Remember…

Please be sure that your official school or center website as well as other publications and brochures include the University’s current nondiscrimination statement. The most current version of the statement is available on the Office of Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity Programs’ website http://www.upenn.edu/affirm-action/.
SEPTEMBER is National Hispanic Heritage Month (September 15 through October 15)

September 1, 2008: Ramadan (Islam): The beginning of a month-long fast and prayer that Muslims keep during the daylight hours. It commemorates the first revelation of the Qur'an.

September 11, 2008: 9/11 observances & remembrances

September 30, 2008: (4th Friday in September) Native American Day, celebrated (observed) many different days

September 29, 2008: Rosh Hashanah (Jewish New Year): The beginning of the Jewish year 5768. Opens the Ten Days of Penitence, which close with Yom Kippur.

OCTOBER is Diversity and Disability Employment Awareness Month

October 8, 2008: Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement): This day marks the end of the Ten Days of Penitence that began with Rosh Hashanah. Synagogue services begin the preceding sundown, resume the following morning, and continue until sundown.

October 9, 2008: Diwali (Hindu) One of the most celebrated festivals in India. Diwali is a major Indian and Nepalese festival celebrated as the 'Festival of Lights'.

October 13, 2008: Columbus Day (2nd Monday in October): Columbus Day was first celebrated on October 12, 1792 to commemorate the day Christopher Columbus landed in the Americas in 1492.

October 13, 2008: Thanksgiving (Canada) (2nd Monday in October): A day to give thanks for the things one has at the close of the harvest season. Coincides with American Columbus Day

NOVEMBER is Native American Heritage Month

November 1, 2008: All Saints' Day: A Roman Catholic and Anglican holiday celebrating all saints known and unknown

November 11, 2008: Veterans' Day (November 11 every year) is a federal and state holiday honoring military veterans. It is also celebrated as Armistice Day or Remembrance Day in other parts of the world and is the anniversary of the signing of the Armistice that ended World War I.

November 27, 2008: Thanksgiving Day (U.S. 4th Thursday in November) A holiday to celebrate the fruits of the harvest.

DECEMBER

December 1, 2008: World AIDS Day: World AIDS Day is a day when people from around the world come together within a single effort to raise awareness about HIV and to express global solidarity with people living with HIV.

December 22-29, 2008: Chanukah/Hanukkah: Hanukkah, which means "dedication" and is also referred to as "The Festival of Lights", is a Jewish festival which begins on the Hebrew date of the 25th of Kislev and lasts eight days, through the 2nd of Tevet.

December 25, 2008: Christmas: The day Christians celebrates the birth of Jesus.

December 26 – January 1, 2009: Kwanzaa This secular seven-day holiday was created by Black studies professor Dr. Maulana Karenga in 1966 in the U.S., to reaffirm African values and serve as a communal celebration among African peoples in the diaspora. Modeled on first-fruits celebrations, it reflects seven principles, the Nguzo Saba: unity, self-determination, collective work and responsibility, cooperative economics, purpose, creativity, and faith.

December 26, 2008: Boxing Day Celebrated in the United Kingdom, Canada, New Zealand and Australia. Historically it was a day for giving gifts to those who are less fortunate.

December 31 [every year]: New Year's Eve:
To register to receive our publication electronically, please send an email with your name, department and email address to:
monicajo@upenn.edu

OAA Mission Statement

The mission of the OAA/EOP is to provide central leadership and support for the University’s efforts to achieve an educational and work environment that is diverse in race, ethnicity, interests, abilities and perspectives.

The office will work to ensure the implementation of equal opportunity, affirmative action and non-discrimination policies through education, training and active partnership with others from the campus and the broader Philadelphia communities.

“Supporting Diversity through Education, Training and Active partnership”

University of Pennsylvania Nondiscrimination Statement

The University of Pennsylvania values diversity and seeks talented students, faculty and staff from diverse backgrounds. The University of Pennsylvania does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, color, national or ethnic origin, age, disability, or status as a Vietnam era veteran or disabled veteran in the administration of educational policies, programs or activities; admissions policies; scholarship and loan awards; athletic, or other University administered programs or employment. Questions or complaints regarding this policy should be directed to: Executive Director, Office of Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity Programs, Sansom Place East, 3600 Chestnut Street, Suite 228, Philadelphia, PA 19104-6106 or by phone at (215) 898-6993 (Voice) or (215) 898-7803 (TDD).