

9-30-2016

[Email from Allen Green to the Community, September 30, 2016]

Allen Green
Sarah Lawrence College

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[REDACTED]

From: SLC_Community@slc.edu on behalf of Al Green, Dean of Equity and Inclusion <agreen@sarahlawrence.edu>
Sent: Friday, September 30, 2016 7:20 PM
To: SLC Community
Subject: #BlkOutSLC initiatives: Community Update

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
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TO: The Sarah Lawrence Community

FROM: Al Green, Dean of Equity and Inclusion

DATE: September 30, 2016

RE: #BlkOutSLC initiatives: Community Update -- REVISED TO IMPROVE FORMATTING

After the #BlackOutSLC walkout on November 16, 2015, which was organized by students of color to strive for racial equity on our campus and across the country, President Karen Lawrence, Dean [REDACTED] and I met with student organizers to discuss their concerns and the list of demands they presented to the community. Through the rest of the Fall term and the Spring 2016 term, [REDACTED] and I met with students in an effort to work together to make progress on these issues, as well as those concerns noted in the past by Concerned Students (1989) and Dangers of a Single Narrative (2012). Below you will find a summary of the efforts made as we continue to work to improve the climate of equality on campus.

A major request from students was for the College to create a million dollar, need-based scholarship fund for underrepresented students of color. The President and I are working with Advancement to raise more funds for our diversity scholarships. There are currently three endowed funds to support diversity on our campus: the Carol Graham Stewart Memorial Scholarship, The Horncrest Endowed Diversity Scholarship, and the William Randolph Hearst Endowed Scholarship. Given ongoing fundraising efforts, their current value is slightly over \$2 million dollars. These funds are targeted at enhancing diversity in the incoming class; recipients of the scholarships are identified by the Enrollment and Financial Aid offices.

Students also expressed a strong interest in providing a Multicultural Housing option for students. Working with student leaders, the office of Residence Life and Dean [REDACTED], students created and implemented a cooperative living option available for all interested students known as the Social Justice Coop. The house opened this fall, and students living in the coop develop and provide programs, lectures and other activities associated with social justice issues.

With the creation of the position of Dean of Equity and Inclusion, I have been working with Graduate Studies to address the concerns raised by students in the graduate programs. I am available to any graduate student who has any concerns. I will continue to monitor all faculty and staff searches to ensure that they include diverse candidates.

Students also emphasized the importance of providing more workshops and educational initiatives for first-year and transfer students as they transition to our community. Initiatives to assist with student transition and support were enhanced in a manner intended to have a positive impact for all students. For example, the Peer Mentoring

program was re-envisioned to work closer with students as they transition to the College, and it includes a residential component that places mentors in close proximity to their mentees in their residential areas. The International Arrivals program also ran for the third summer to assist international students in their transition to the College and the cultural differences they might experience coming to the United States. A new program called Leadership Exploration and Discovery (LEAD) began this summer by providing a week of pre-orientation activities and continues to support students through yearlong programs, meetings and activities. The program supports students who are the first in their family to attend college.

Since January 2016, [REDACTED] and I have been working with students to develop a five-year retention strategy for underrepresented students of color. Through this work, we emphasize the importance of improving both retention rates (first year to second year of college) as well as graduation rates among our students.

A demand of the Concerned Students (1989) and Dangers of a Single Narrative (2012) was to increase the number of both faculty and students of color. The diversity of the first year class entering in 2014 was 27.5% while the class entering in 2015 was 30.2%. We will know more about the class entering this year after our census date in early October. The Admission Office and I will continue to monitor the enrollment of students of color with an eye towards maintaining the positive gains we have seen.

The institutional data show that we have made significant gains in the number of faculty of color hires since 1989 and continued progress since 2012 in the number of full-time, part-time and guest faculty. The College will conduct four faculty searches this year and diversity is always a priority. I have been in contact with the chairs of the searches to discuss my role in the search process.

Finally, bias related incidents are maintained as part of our security statistics. You can see the annual report of our crime statistics at <http://www.slc.edu/crimestats>. In light of student concerns regarding recent reports of bias on campus, we have sought and integrated student input regarding how such incidents are communicated to the community, as well as the follow up process to support the community in response to such incidents.

All of this work requires a unified approach among all members of our community. Please join me at the Town Hall meeting on this subject in Reisinger Concert Hall on October 4th at 7:00 pm. As always, I encourage all members of our community interested in contributing to these important efforts to contact me with ideas and suggestions, and I look forward to updating you on our continued progress as we work together.