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## July 15, 2019 - From the President's Desk

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*Wright State University - Main Campus*

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Dear Campus Community,

It became clear through our strategic planning that we aspire to be a diverse, inclusive university that transforms the educational, economic, and social fabric of the communities we serve. Additionally, we are committed to providing an inclusive, diverse student-centered experience through a holistic support system for all of our students and employees.

As many of you know, Wright State's former Chief Diversity Officer Matt Boaz left the university for a position outside of higher education this spring. Following his departure, Julia Acosta, Director of Latinx, Asian, and Native American Affairs; Petey Peterson, Director of the Office of LGBTQA Affairs; and Nycia Lattimore, Interim Associate Director of the Bolinga Black Cultural Resources Center, also left for new opportunities.

Despite these on-going transitions, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility remain a top priority of mine, and as such, I want to share with you my plans for the future related to this area.

We will begin a national search for the Chief Diversity Officer for Wright State University in the fall. As we have with other executive-level positions, we will utilize the search firm Greenwood/Asher for this endeavor. Greenwood/Asher has extensive experience in hiring for this position, and we are pleased to partner with them. During this search, we hope that you will be as engaged as much as possible and take advantage of opportunities to interact with the candidates in the process.

I also want to update you on the current staffing of the units that report to our Interim Chief Diversity Officer Lindsay Miller. Below is a list of the offices that incurred changes. We anticipate that these individuals will continue to serve in an interim capacity until a new Chief Diversity Officer can be hired and make permanent personnel decisions.

- Office of Latinx, Asian, and Native American Affairs: Mia Honaker, who has been with the university for 13 years, has stepped in to lead day-to-day operations of the office, as the Interim Associate Director.
- Bolinga Black Cultural Resources Center: An internal competitive search for an interim replacement will begin shortly and will only be available to Wright State employees.
- Office of LGBTQA Affairs: Emily Yantis-Houser, who has served as an adjunct professor in the Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Program for the past four years, has agreed to serve as the Interim Associate Director of the office.
- Veteran and Military Center: Seth Gordon will remain the Director of the VMC and will also take on the role of Director of Undergraduate Retention, reporting to the Vice Provost for Enrollment Management/Student Success.

As we prepare to begin a national search, I have engaged the assistance of an independent consultant to help assess our university's diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts in preparation for incoming leadership.

The goal of this assessment is to examine the strengths and opportunities of the units that report to the Chief Diversity Officer in relation to the diversity, equity, and inclusion commitment of the university. Research shows that "a more diverse community improves learning and problem solving, enhances research and innovation, and strengthens organizational culture and teamwork" (Strategic Diversity Leadership, 2013). We need to take a look at what we are doing well and identify areas of opportunity so that we can continue to reach our full potential and serve the Wright State community in the best way possible.

Warmest regards,

Cheryl B. Schrader, Ph.D.  
*President*

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