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ACE Leadership Conference

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ACE Leadership Conference
President John M. Dunn
Panel Participant
June 4, 2013

Text in bold includes the questions panelists will be asked to address.

1. What are the full participation goals that seem most pressing and actionable for your institution?

- Continuing to build a diverse campus community in which we define diversity in the broadest possible way.
- Ensuring that every student leaves our campus with a rich experiential learning credential.
- Providing a platform for every student we accept to persist and succeed.
- Educating not only for success in the disciplines, but helping people reach their full potential as citizens and members of a community.

2. Who are the "organizational catalysts" and drivers of change, and how can the institution facilitate their connection to each other and provide support for their work to advance full participation? Who needs to be at the table in order for the values of full participation to be realized?

- Schools at every level--K-12, and colleges and universities--are critical catalysts for change.
- Community foundations and social service agencies
- Community and economic developers--people whose passion is putting the pieces together in a way that allows a community and the people within it to reach their full potential.

3.a. What are some barriers or challenges you face in advancing full participation under current conditions?

- Budget constraints play a role in every facet of University life also play a role in slowing the progress of full participation goals. Those constraints can affect the availability of scholarship funds and salary adjustments needed to recruit a diverse faculty and student body. Such constraints also mean it is difficult to hire necessary support personnel to help facilitate major campus initiatives, so each wonderful idea, if implemented, comes with an additional set of stressors on those determined to see it succeed.
- Institutional culture can be an impediment as well, but may be changing with the advent of more interdisciplinary work.

3.b. What are some examples of effective strategies you have used for overcoming these challenges?

Good program examples

- Seita Scholars program, which brings young former foster-care youth together in a way that cuts across discipline boundaries and enlists the aid of the total community to address a societal shortcoming in nurturing these young people through their college years.
- Humanities for Everyone--offered through communitywide partnerships
- Bronco Buds--partnership between the University and Kalamazoo Public Schools to ensure the Kalamazoo Promise is used to its fullest potential. Using current WMU Promise students as guides and mentors.

Ways to tackle the personnel issue

- Leveraging the expertise and critical skills of retirees--Lifelong Learning Academy as an example of K College and WMU and local retirees building a communitywide culture of lifelong learning.
- Linking retirees with college students with critical needs, eg. Seita scholars and the residents of Friendship Village as partner/mentors over the course of a year.