

## A Diverse and Inclusive Learning and Working Environment

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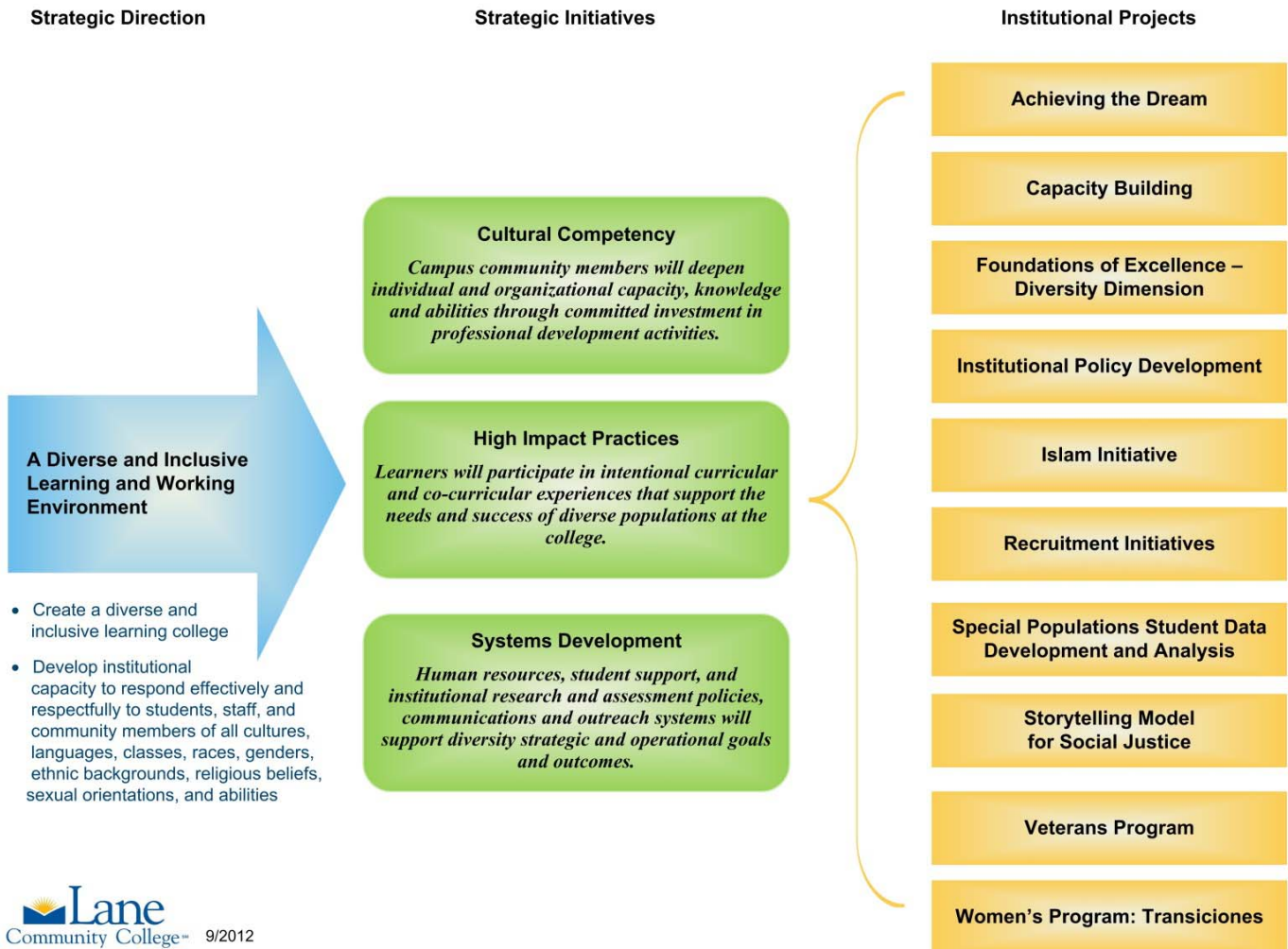
Maintain a safe learning and working environment

Create a diverse and inclusive learning college

Develop institutional capacity to respond effectively and respectfully to students,  
staff, and community members of all cultures, languages, classes, races, genders,  
ethnic backgrounds, religious beliefs, sexual orientations, and abilities

Source: <http://www.lanec.edu/research/planning/StrategicDirections.htm>

### A Diverse and Inclusive Learning and Working Environment Strategy Map



## **Introduction:**

*“Understanding that people within the college reflects a collection of similarities and differences, diversity will gather the power of many and reflect the spirit of one.”*

*~2010-2015 Lane Community College Diversity Plan*

Diversity is more than simply mirroring the demographics of the local population. Diversity is about becoming a higher performing organization that is respectful and inclusive and serves the needs of a diverse college population and community. Unlike traditional approaches to diversity, Lane pursues a social justice framework to guide its diversity efforts. Such a framework goes beyond understanding and celebrating individual differences to actively identifying and addressing the discrimination and oppression within systems, operational practices, and policies, which are critical for creating a diverse and inclusive learning college. Welcoming and respecting students and employees with diverse backgrounds, life experiences, approaches, skill sets, and understandings enhances Lane’s capacity to address the needs of its increasingly diverse community and workforce.

(Source: Strategic Direction Context & Goals)

To achieve goals and objectives for diversity, work has been focused and organized around three strategic initiatives: cultural competency, high impact practices, and systems development. The institutional projects described below directly support these initiatives.

## **Institutional Projects:**

### **Achieving the Dream**

In 2011, the college joined Achieving the Dream (ATD), an evidence-based, student-centered, and results-oriented national initiative dedicated to helping more community college students, particularly low-income students and students of color, stay in school and earn a college certificate degree. As part of ATD implementation planning and development, Lane conducted an Inventory on Diversity and Equity in Spring 2012, followed by a Diversity & Equity Conversation and World Cafe, attended by students from ASLCC, BSU, Trio and International Programs and members of the college’s Student Success Leadership Team, ATD Teams and Executive Team. The ATD project will continue through 2013-2014; work will continue on refining the ability to study and analyze achievement gaps at Lane, develop interventions and high impact practices, and continue conversations and connections with students to explore diversity and equity issues and opportunities.

Leads: Jen Steele, Sonya Christian, Criag Taylor, Ben Hill

### **Capacity Building**

A major challenge to creating a respectful and inclusive learning college is the effective management of conflict within the organization. This requires an organizational culture where employees have the tangible skills and tools to transform conflict into solved problems, strengthened relationships, deepened trust, and increased innovation. To imbed such a culture and build internal organizational capacity for productive conflict resolution among managers and staff throughout the college, ten Lane managers have been trained in the “Break through Conflict” (BTC) systematic, researched-based training system. These

managers will provide “Break through Conflict” training to Lane staff throughout the upcoming years.

In an effort to promote an inclusive and respectful environment for lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, transgender, queer, and intersex (LGBTQI) individuals on campus, “LGBTQI Allies and Safe Space” training was conducted for Lane staff and students during winter and spring terms. Eleven staff and students were also trained in the “Allies and Safe Space” training model, so as to provide ongoing, cost effective, training to Lane staff and students. Another “Allies and Safe Space” training will be held during fall 2012 in-service. Lead: Donna Koechig.

### **Foundations of Excellence**

To determine the extent to which Lane meets its vision of diversity, diversity-related opportunities and programs available to first-year students were examined as part of The First Year Matters: Foundations of Excellence project. Task force members from across campus used local expertise and multiple forms of evidence to guide intellectually substantive and collegial discussions about the campus’ level of excellence in the first year, producing and submitting an evaluation report and resulting action items and priorities. The Diversity Dimension Team concluded that Lane's vision of diversity puts the institution at the forefront of national efforts to understand, foster, and sustain diversity in institutions of higher education, particularly in two-year institutions across the United States. Leads: Mary Parthemer, Lida Herburger.

### **Institutional Policy Development**

One of the tasks of Lane’s Diversity Council is to develop policies related to diversity on campus. This past year, the Diversity Council drafted and submitted to College Council for a first reading a Religious Guidelines Policy. This proposed policy includes basic guidelines for religious expression across campus. In addition the Diversity Council is working on the development of a policy that focuses on improving staff’s cultural competency to respond effectively and respectfully to Lane’s diverse students, staff and community members. Leads: Donna Koechig, Elizabeth Andrade.

### **Islam Initiative**

This project, commissioned by Vice President Christian in 2011, is the outcome of months of collaborative work by Lane religious and peace studies faculty, staff, and administrators in partnership with the University of Oregon. The free lecture and visiting scholars program brings scholarly experts on Islam to campus who represent a diversity of backgrounds and offer a plurality of perspectives to the academic study of Islam. The program will set the tone, provide information, facilitate learning, and engage us in dialogue as the campus community explores and grapples with the complexity of this subject. Attendance is open to the entire community with the objective of deep intellectual engagement, dialogue arising from multiple perspectives and textual, historical and contemporary context, and the ability to challenge thinking and wrestle with complex ideas. Leads: Clif Trolin, Ken Murdoff, Sonya Christian, Jeff Borrowdale, Nadia Raza. <http://www2.lanec.edu/scholarlectures/>

### **Employee Recruitment Initiatives**

The college has made significant progress on Affirmative Action placement goals during the past two academic years through focused recruitment efforts and diligent work with search committees, deans and managers, reducing the number of placement goals in the Affirmative Action Plan from 26 to 22. Human Resources staff will continue to enhance diversity recruitment efforts by exploring new programs and partnerships, such as the Oregon Higher Education Recruitment Consortium (HERC), and maximizing tools and functionality available through the new Lane Employment Opportunities (LEO) system. Lead: Dennis Carr.

### **Special Populations Student Data Development and Analysis**

The college is developing means for identifying student populations based on gender, ethnicity, age, socio-economic status, and also participation in programs such as Women in Transition, Rites of Passage and the Veterans Program for the purpose of understanding issues and opportunities for closing achievement gaps and for assessing the impact and effectiveness of implementing high impact practices and innovations. Lead: Molloy Wilson.

### **Storytelling Model for Social Justice**

In January 2012, keynote speaker, Dr. Lee Anne Bell, introduced her “Storytelling Model for Social Justice” to staff and students at Lane’s Diversity Strategic Direction Conference. Dr. Bell’s unique model is a departure from the traditional diversity training narratives in that it incorporates the arts such as storytelling, music, and poetry. This model, which Lane has begun to utilize for its diversity training, offers a framework for faculty and others to use to actively critique “stock stories” that sustain inequality, while encouraging staff and students to seek out concealed and resistance stories about the history, struggles, strengths and aspirations of marginalized communities. These stories provide materials for developing “transforming stories” that enact and sustain more inclusive and just educational practices. Leads: Jim Garcia, Donna Koechig.

### **Veterans Program**

In 2011/2012, Lane started development of a comprehensive Veteran Programs department to optimally serve the veteran population. Veteran Programs includes several programs and services: Lane’s Integration of Veterans in Education (LIVE), which focuses on campus and community resource and referral services as well as courses for or related to veterans; educational benefits services; and the new Maxwell Student Veteran Center, which provides a computer lab and meeting and lounge space for program participants. There will be a special open house event in November, when the Student Veteran Center will be formally named after Robert Maxwell, Medal of Honor recipient. Leads: Nancy Hart, Helen Garrett

### **Women’s Program: Transiciones**

The Women’s Program has revised and expanded Transiciones to provide students with 9 credits of graded coursework to establish a GPA and therefore become eligible to apply for a variety of scholarships offered through the foundation and in the community. These scholarships are often the only form of aid available to these students and directly impacts their continuation and success. Lead: Barb Delansky.