



### **UW School of Nursing Recruitment and Retention Plan 2004-2009**

The UW School of Nursing completed its first five-year plan to recruit and retain a more diverse student body for 2004. The number of black, Hispanic and American Indian freshman students enrolling at all universities and colleges in Washington dropped in 1999 following the passage of Initiative 200, which outlawed affirmative action in the state. Most of these declines in minority enrollment came at the UW, the state's largest educational institution and the home of the top-ranked School of Nursing. Offsetting these declines, particularly in view of the worsening nursing shortages and new census figures that demonstrate the increasing diversity of America's population, has been a major concern of the School. This first 5-year recruitment plan was developed based on the goals outlined in the School's Strategic Plan. Major goals of the previous 5-year recruitment plan included efforts to proactively have faculty, students, and staff engage in outreach activities instead of waiting for student to come to us, provide as much support as possible during the application process, provide as much financial support as possible to minimize financial barriers, and combat prevailing stereotypes about nursing. The School recognized that recruitment is a long-term process extending over years and that success must be in part measured by how many faculty, staff and current students are involved in the effort.

These efforts successfully produced an increase in matriculation of diverse students over the past five years, in spite of a plummeting economy, I-200, and the growing shortage of nurses locally and nationwide. On the undergraduate level, overall applications to the BSN program increased dramatically from 247 in 1999 to 406 in 2003. Though the number of minority applicants dropped from 27% in 1999 to 22% in 2003, the competitiveness of minority applicants increased: 23% of admitted students in 1999 were minority students, while in 2003, 32% of admitted students were minority students. The School attributes this increase in part to its post-I-200 renewal of efforts to reach out to high school and community college students. According to the Office of Minority Affairs (E. Pitre) February 2003 report "Descriptive and Longitudinal Analysis of Enrollment, Graduation & Retention Data for UW-Seattle", the School is now the third most diverse program on campus (American Ethnic Studies #1 and Material Science & Engineering #2), boasting the highest retention rate of underrepresented students for any other program on campus.

On the graduate level, the School has experienced several significant challenges to the recruitment of minority students, most of whom must be prepared as Registered Nurses to qualify for graduate programs in nursing. First, there is an extreme shortage of minority nurses: approximately 90% of all RNs in the United States are Caucasian; 4.2% are African American; 3.4% are Asian or Pacific Islander; 1.6% are Hispanic; and only .5% are American Indian or Alaskan Native. Second, the severity of the national nursing shortage has resulted in guarantees of competitive salaries as well as bonuses to current RNs who stay in the work force. These

benefits serve as a deterrent to returning to school. Finally, a graduate degree in nursing does not ensure increased earning potential, which, combined with tuition increases and decreased work hours, makes graduate programs in nursing understandably less desirable for most nurses. Thus, the School has experienced a slight drop in graduate applications over the past five years, from 227 in 1999 to 212 in 2004. However, recruitment efforts targeting prospective minority graduate nursing students were intensified, and despite the drop in overall applications overall applicants, minority applications rose from 13% in 1999 to 18% in 2004. These decreases in enrollment may also be partially attributable to the implementation of graduate programs in nursing at the UW Tacoma and UW Bothell campuses. These statistics are consistent with graduate programs at other top-ranked schools of nursing across the nation.

The 2004-2009 5-year Recruitment and Retention plan features five new goals. The first goal builds on the foundations of the first plan involving all School stakeholders in recruitment efforts and providing individualized follow-up to prospective students. Additionally, the remaining goals of 2004-2009 are: to boldly use the Website and SoN databases as recruitment and retention tools; to fortify relationships with professional nursing associations as a means of increasing numbers of diverse and qualified graduate applicants; to build a SoN community that promotes diversity and effectively provides support services for diverse students; and finally, to develop funding as a recruitment tool for diverse students.

Each goal of the 2004-2009 Recruitment and Retention Plan shall be met through the following sample activities.

**Goal 1: Involve all School stakeholders in recruitment efforts and provide individualized follow-up to prospective students.**

- Proactively target outreach efforts nationally, in the community, on campus, community colleges, middle and high schools, involving faculty, students and staff.
- Maintain personalized access to the tag teams of faculty, students, and staff via email, phone, Web.
- Continually streamline application forms, application review and financial aid processes.
- Combat stereotypes of nursing profession, UW, SoN.

**Goal 2: Boldly use the Website and SoN databases as recruitment and retention tools.**

- Establish easier and interactive access for prospective students to self-identify appropriate programs and program information, including current student web diaries, focal area and degree program identifier, application timeline for each academic program, virtual SoN tour.
- Enable 'personalized' brochure and application print-outs.
- Create self-generated career planning interface.
- Develop a Multicultural Student website.
- Develop online applications that output to database for streamlined tracking and electronic review/voting.
- Create focal area follow-up and tracking web interface for faculty and staff follow-up.
- Enable applicant follow-up/status tracking via web interface.

**Goal 3: Fortify relationships with professional nursing associations as a means of increasing numbers of diverse and qualified graduate applicants.**

- Partner with OMA, GO-MAP, MEChA, MAP, MAPS, Undergraduate Advising, UW Ambassadors, CAN-DO to provide access to diverse and current UW students, alumni, and key community leaders.
- Increase involvement with NBNA, NANAINA, NAHN, ONS, NTI, APINA, American Assembly for Men in Nursing, National Coalition of Ethnic Minority Nurse Associations (NCEMNA) to provide national leadership and gain access to current minority RNs.
- Enhance local networking with MMPNO, CLMN, KCNA, PSONS, PSAACN, Sigma Theta Tau, WSNA to increase access to UW SoN.
- Ask UW Preceptors and SoN faculty to recommend former students and current RNs who might be ready for graduate school.
- Meet with NSNA-Graduate RN Recruiters to enhance collaboration with other SoNs.

**Goal 4: Build a SoN community that promotes diversity and effectively provides support services for diverse students.**

- Increase accessibility and point of contact for diverse and underrepresented students interested in the SoN.
- Empower Diversity Committee to build diversity-friendly community and environment at SoN.
- Serve as point of contact for Multicultural/Diversity Affairs so underrepresented students can build a community and on-campus network of support contacts.
- Create a space for underrepresented students to meet and organize, nurture cross-program community.
- Offer pre-graduate school workshops focusing on skills for how to prepare for grad school and submitting competitive applications.

**Goal 5: Develop funding as a recruitment tool for diverse students.**

- Continue to work with OMA, GO-MAP, development, and other sources for funding to attract recruits.
- Establish a few scholarships early on so that we can use them to recruit the competitive applicants before they get a chance to go elsewhere.
- Offer workshops, brown bags, and panels on finding financial aid.

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