A WORD FROM THE VICE PROVOST

The spring semester is nearly upon us, and the campus will once again come alive with the arrival of our students. As we embark upon this new semester, I am pleased to highlight the wide range of opportunities offered the campus community to become engaged in advancing our diversity, equity and inclusion.

For too long KU has been remiss in having a role in the celebration and honoring of the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday. No longer. Monday, January 21, KU sponsors a celebration not only to honor MLK but also to remind us of what he worked so hard to accomplish for each of us. We will begin at 4:30 in the Rotunda of Strong Hall with a brief reading of excerpts from the “Letter from the Birmingham Jail,” followed by a candlelight vigil walk from Strong Hall to the Kansas Union. At 5:30 in the Union’s Big 12 room, food, refreshments and entertainment will be provided to the Lawrence and KU communities in a free event open to all. Senior Vice Provost Sara Rosen will provide the welcome, with Hannah Bolton, student body president, serving as master of ceremonies. Winners of an essay writing contest will be recognized with the reading of their brief essays and the keynote remark will be given by Blane Harding, KU’s Director of Multicultural Affairs. In addition, the community-service element—a school supply drive—will be announced. Additional entertainment will round out the program, which concludes at 6:30 p.m.

Several other initiatives continue to progress. These include, but are not limited to: an exploration of a captioning policy for KU; securing a more accurate demographic trend/pattern of first-time freshman who may have a disability—academic or non-academic; the spring Symposium on the Scholarship of Diversity, March 28; Kauffman Scholar Advisory Council; Haskell/KU partnership; Langston Hughes Visiting Professorship; benchmarking for diversity; and diversity advisory council meetings.

As always, I welcome your comments or questions at fredrod@ku.edu.

BEYOND THE HILL

The annual Langston Hughes Creative Writing Awards will be presented in a public celebration, Feb. 1, 7 p.m., at the Lawrence Arts Center. Celebrate the poet’s birthday with cake, readings, music and cash awards for poetry and prose writing to as-yet-unpublished local authors. This joint project of the LAC and the Raven Bookstore honors the writer, a leading figure of the Harlem Renaissance who spent his childhood in Lawrence.

VIEW & USE RECRUITMENT TOOL

The newest tool to help bring the best people to work at KU is the recruitment video for faculty and staff. All units of the campus community are encouraged to use it to tell our story of what makes KU a special place. The video, a compelling portrait of KU, the people who work here, and the local community, is at employment.ku.edu/why-ku.
SCHOLARSHIP OF DIVERSITY

Report projects high school graduating classes will be smaller, more diverse

The eighth edition of Knocking at the College Door: Projections of High School Graduates, just released January 10 by the Western Interstate Commission on Higher Education (WICHE), indicates that the population of U.S. high school graduates is entering a period of modest decline after nearly two decades of sustained growth. In addition, the pool of future college students is rapidly growing more racially and ethnically diverse. This puts pressure on policymakers and practitioners to address educational attainment gaps among many traditionally underrepresented populations.

“These two trends will define the ‘new normal’ for our colleges and universities—and will require those of us working in higher education to change the way we do business,” says David Longanecker, president of WICHE, which publishes Knocking at the College Door.

Institutions can no longer rely on increased funding fueled by growth in the number of traditional-aged students. At the same time, the changing demo-graphics of high school graduating classes means greater demand for college from populations not traditionally served well by higher education. “Higher education must commit to finding innovative, cost-effective ways to prepare those students to succeed in our 21st-century global economy.”

The report, published with support from ACT and the College Board, and individual state profiles are posted at www.wiche.edu/knocking-8th.

Source: Hispanic Outlook in Higher Education, 1/13/2013