

Greetings! I am a former member of the BSU at IUPUI (1996-97 VP) and I just want to congratulate you all on your efforts.

I recently heard about your efforts as I was speaking to one of my mentors on my way to Vincennes (I am currently doing some consulting there). I was not only pleased to hear that the BSU is still active and thriving, but also that you all are standing up for what is right. Thank you!

Just for your information... (something that you all might consider sharing with individuals who feel that this is just an effort for "blacks" to get something that is undeserved, unwarranted, or gain some privilege) The BSU has a history of engaging in events that promote diversity and multiculturalism on campus. In 1998, the BSU organized an event entitled C.O.L.O.R.S. (sorry, I can't remember what the acronym stands for, but hopefully there is still information retained in the files about this event). The event was developed to create awareness about difference and showcase various cultural groups on campus. I believe we were granted 10,000 for the event and it was a success! The following year, I believe that student affairs was to assume responsibility for the event as they felt that they could be a bit more thorough in planning and organizing such a large and impactful event. I am not sure if this event remains something that the campus sponsors, but FYI, it was the dream and initiative of African American leaders on campus and it was a great success.

Again, Congratulations on your efforts! I was quite pleased and proud to hear that we are uniting for change. When this happens, they must listen.

If you all are in need of any additional support, please do not hesitate to contact me as an alumni representative and supporter.

Sincerely,

Dynesha D. Mason, MA

Hello all-

For those who do not know me, my name is Kristi Reuille. I am a PhD candidate in nursing, a grad student at IUPUI since 1997 and I finished my BSN here in 93-94. My experience as a former member and officer in the IUPUI Graduate Student Organization has afforded me the opportunity to interact with many different constituencies at IUPUI and throughout the University, from undergrad students and staff leaders in student services, to Chancellor Bantz, President Herbert and the Board of Trustees. I am proud to be a member of the IUPUI community. As an out lesbian, I am also a member of a different minority, with different struggles, than those presented so eloquently by the BSU.

I strongly support the BSU in their efforts to increase diversity at IUPUI, and I believe their issues are completely valid, as far as they go. I also support the effort of IUPUI administrators in quickly responding to the BSU's concerns and in opening a dialogue with the BSU and its constituents.

However, I want to remind everyone at IUPUI that students come and go. Whether due to graduation or attrition, unless a student takes forever to finish graduate degree(s) [e.g., moi], the average life-cycle of a student at IUPUI is probably around five years. By contrast, other

members of the IUPUI community - faculty, staff, administrators - can have a life-cycle upwards of forty years, and the physical neighbors/neighborhoods of IUPUI, (i.e. Ransom Place, Haughville, etc.), even the ones that were forced by eminent domain across the river, north of 10th street, east of Indiana Avenue or "anywhere but here" will be here for as long as IUPUI remains, and longer.

Therefore, while I want to explicitly state belief in the validity of the concerns of the BSU students, I believe it is imperative that they be recognized as the symptom a larger problem: IUPUI tends to take shortcuts

Meaning: The "the powers that be" at IUPUI, [not only the administration, but any individual or group with power, and where appropriate, I'd include Indiana University as a whole], tend to not follow through with their best ideas by allowing them to grow until they reach a critical mass or tipping point.

Example 1: Explore IUPUI

It is my understanding that because (a) "only IUPUI people" were attending Explore IUPUI and (b) it was deemed too expensive to continue an annual festival for "the IUPUI community" the event was cancelled. If Explore IUPUI had continued, attendance likely would have risen annually, with Explore IUPUI becoming a celebration of IUPUI and Indianapolis at large. I strongly believe this, because nearly anywhere I travel in Marion and the surrounding counties, I see (not to touch on a sore subject) IUPUI parking hangtags in car windows. The reach of "the IUPUI community" extends far beyond the physical boundaries of campus.

Although I don't have actual statistics, when considering the loss of Explore IUPUI, I wonder: How many people ran in the first Mini? How many people attended the first Three Rivers Festival in Fort Wayne - my hometown, or Talbott Street, or the Broad Ripple Art Fair... the list goes on. My guess is that each of these popular events had low attendance or participation in their first few years, but with consistency and dedication to planning and implementing an annual event, each of these has become a fixture in their communities.

Example #2(a): Racism Study Circles

Several years ago, we did racism study circles at IUPUI. I believe the imitative for this effort came from what is now CCL, and the participants, as I recall, were primarily students. Participants in my study circle were (in general) strongly affected by the experience. I believe that, properly implemented, these study circles had the potential, within a few semesters, to create a critical mass of individual members of the IUPUI community whose awareness of bias, prejudice, and privilege were such that the entire IUPUI community would be gently - or not so gently - pressured to create an environment where individual interactions are based on an environment of mutual respect for the dignity of others, going a long way toward accomplishing the BSU's goal of cultural competence at IUPUI. This would not only make diversity a priority for IUPUI as a whole, but would help shift all of those yellows and reds in the annual diversity report to green.

What do I mean by properly implemented?:

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Involve the entire IUPUI community, students, faculty, staff of all varieties and administration.

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Harness the collective powers of IUPUI HR, Faculty, Staff and Student governance.

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Encourage the participation of all students [class/service learning credits], faculty [recognize as teaching and campus service for the purposes of P&T], staff [allow/encourage/incentivize attendance on IUPUI time] and administration.

Example 2(b): Diversity alphabet soup

Since the racism study circles, numerous diversity initiatives have been initiated. Not implemented (in my opinion), but imitated. In the early 2000s, it seemed that IUPUI had turned a corner in its diversity programming. A full-time staff member dedicated to diversity programming, with experience in diversity education, [also from Fort Wayne and an alumna of my high school, but I digress :)] developed the IUPUI Diversity Awareness Resource Team (DART) which received training through the National Coalition Building Institute (NCBI, <http://www.ncbi.org> <<http://www.ncbi.org>>). I participated in NCBI train-the-trainer classes through DART. Again, this was a very powerful and moving experience for me, and the NCBI model is a proven commodity in terms of increasing multicultural understanding. Alas, this staff member was so good that she was accepted to an excellent higher-ed administration program out of state. Her position was filled by single-year appointees, and DART idled due to a lack of key institutional and administrative support.

The problem: Although a proven commodity, the right to use the NCBI model cost the campus thousands of dollars per year, not counting the money to bring in the NCBI trainers to "train-the-trainers". Many of you know where I am headed with this... IUPUI dropped NCBI and has invested countless person-hours in an attempt to re-invent the NCBI wheel, presumably without violating the NCBI copyright. With what was left of DART now defunct, and lacking the coherent model provided by NCBI, and (in my estimation) support from key personnel within CCL, a newly hired head of diversity programming moved on to greener pastures after 2-3 years at IUPUI

I can't say that I would not have done the same thing. I count myself as one of the many within the IUPUI community (from students to upper administration) who are dedicated to the notion of IUPUI being a welcoming and inclusive environment for ALL. However, experience has shown me that the Campus has lacked the fortitude [financial and intestinal] to support and cultivate a nurturing and supportive environment for diversity education and programming. The best I've seen over the past few years has been the "minority group of the month" programming, which does less-than-nothing to inspire people to change their way of thinking, being, or acting.

As you have read, I've been working on this "diversity stuff" for a few

years, and I have not yet begun to identify all of my own internal biases and prejudices. I identified about five just yesterday as a poll-worker, all directed toward people who look more like the Reuille family than the Cosby family! Being culturally competent means recognizing power differentials and understanding one's own biases, prejudices and [in my case] sense of white/class privilege. It is hard work!

In summary, for any diversity initiative to be successful, the entire IUPUI community needs to get behind something, anything, that works and has the potential to attract people over time, and STICK WITH IT, rather than giving up after couple semesters because "only IUPUI people" attend, or only one or two study circles could be formed, or because NCBI costs too much money. The time, energy, and yes, maybe even money this will take just goes to prove my point that you get what you pay for, or that IUPUI as a community will reap the rewards of any diversity initiatives only after it is willing, as an entire community, to contribute its time, energy, and - where necessary - money to implement them.

Respectfully,
Kristina M. Reuille, PhD(c), MSN, RN
Indiana University School of Nursing at IUPUI

After much discussion, the members of NASA would like to formally announce that we will stand united with the USB as representatives of the African-American community, the Hispanic Student Association, and the other minority groups at the rally tomorrow, Sunday, November 12, 2006 at Madame Walker Theater at 5:00 p.m. Representatives from NASA will be on hand to speak to the issues of Native Americans as we continue to work towards better communication on campus, a multicultural center to help develop a sense of community and support for our minority students, more funds allocated to cultural minority groups, and a stronger commitment to development of programs in minority studies, which would include a Native American studies program and more Native American faculty and staff.

Our fight is a difficult one and one that many people have lived and died for, a fight for equality. But we must keep in our hearts our leaders who have fought before us, and our children's children who will benefit from our actions and continue to fight for those whose rights are trampled by the dominant majority - whoever that may be!

We hope for the support of the Native American community and look to the creator for strength and patience in the hours, days, and weeks that lie ahead.

In all sincerity and respect,

Charmayne Champion-Shaw
Native American Student Alliance- IUPUI

Mr. Dorsey,

I am writing on behalf of the MSW Student Association. We have been following the news regarding the recent events concerning inequality on the IUPUI campus. As future social workers, we are committed to social justice and advocacy. We would be honored to have the opportunity to support the Black Student Union in your efforts to achieve equality for all students on this campus. If there is anything that our organization can do to assist you, please contact me via email or by phone at 317.***.****

Sincerely,

Amber Linne
MSWSA Representative

Dear Mr. Dorsey and Black Student Union members,

On behalf of the faculty, staff, and students in the Anthropology Department, we strongly support the courage and conviction the Black Student Union has shown in the Through Our Eyes plan, campus and community discussions, and the town hall meeting. We condemn racism, recognize the validity of the charges brought against IUPUI, and support the BSU in your efforts to address these systemic problems in our institution. The racism and injustice that you are addressing is a serious matter, and we would like to work with you addressing diversity issues on campus and in the community.

We take seriously the Chancellor's Vision for Diversity at IUPUI, which indicates that "IUPUI's social and physical environment will enable all of its members to succeed to the fullest extent of their potential." We applaud your willingness to speak the truth as you experience it here on the IUPUI campus, and we want to do all we can to support your efforts to secure the equity the Chancellor's vision pledges. We are preparing a letter for the Administration that outlines our support of the BSU and the many campus and community voices for diversity, and I will forward that to you when we send it. In the meantime, we pledge our support and invite you to contact the Anthropology faculty at any time to let us know how we can support this important initiative.

Paul Mullins

Paul R. Mullins
Chair, Dept. of Anthropology
Associate Professor

Dear Student Leaders:

This letter is in support of recent efforts by the students and the Black Student Initiative that advocate the University take action ensuring equal treatment of all students on this campus. Faculty in the Department of Communication Studies support swift and vigorous efforts to ensure that the voices of all under-represented and marginalized voices are heard on campus.

We are proud that one of our majors has played a significant leadership role in advocating University progress on this issue of promoting true diversity on our campus. Essential to the discipline of Communication is a commitment to social justice and ethical communicative behavior. Implementing the strategies of persuasion, conflict resolution, and movement toward social progress is central to our Departmental mission.

We remain fully committed to our students as they traverse through what is likely a difficult and stressful time, especially for those students who are vociferously advocating change amidst the turmoil.

Sincerely,

Kim White-Mills, Ph.D.
Chair
Department of Communication Studies

IUPUI Black Faculty and Staff Endorse Black Student Initiative

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Nov. 14, 2006

Indianapolis, Ind. -- The Black Faculty and Staff Council of Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis takes great pride in the dedication, courage, commitment and dignity exhibited by the students, on November 2, 2006, when they presented their views to the administration of IUPUI in the document, THROUGH OUR EYES: THE STATE OF THE BLACK STUDENT AT INDIANA UNIVERSITY PURDUE UNIVERSITY INDIANAPOLIS. We fully support the students' efforts to improve IUPUI for all who live, learn and work here. Along with the students, we urge the administration's immediate compliance with the students' requests for the following:

- Communication
- Respect
- Cultural Competence of Faculty and Staff
- More Black Programming
- More Curricular Offerings and a degree in African American Studies
- Increased Funding for Black Programming
- A Black Culture Center

We, as always, are ready and able to contribute to this effort. Together, we can work to help IUPUI become a better place to work and learn.

The IUPUI Black Faculty and Staff Council

"To those who think that suing IUPUI is over the top - I just want to let you know why such extreme measures NEED to be taken. They need to be taken because IUPUI does an EXCELLENT job of SWEEPING issues under the rug so long that action is never taken.

I can whole-heartedly say that Charles Bantz is a great leader but he came into leadership many years into the mess. The key people underneath him have not changed and still have control of the issues that the Black Student Union brought to light - meaning the top leadership of IUPUI has never done anything about the discrimination because the powers that be have kept their dirty work in order.

This is only the tip of the iceberg of the discrimination at IUPUI.- Complacency is preached to lower ranked employees. Educated, lower ranked employees are constantly discouraged not to try to go to the next level.- "Diversity" is so loosely defined that almost every "minority vendor" of IUPUI is a White woman.

One more comment and I'm done - To the administration of IUPUI - Yes, I am biting the hand that feeds me but sometimes you need to so that the feeder can wake up and serve something better. Our own reports have told us that we're doing a poor job supporting all minorities. Remember that it is because of STUDENT dollars that we have jobs with nice salaries. The Black students just got fed up with our mess first. Now it's time to put your power in action to benefit someone other than yourself. "

-IUPUI Employee
