

2012 Diversity Matters Award Recipients

2012 Diversity Matters Awards presented at Annual Town Hall Meeting on Diversity

Five members of the UNI community were honored as recipients of the Diversity Matters Award during the University's annual Town Hall Meeting on Diversity February 1, 2012. The award was established in 2010 and recognizes selected faculty, staff and students for exceptional contributions to the achievement of the university's diversity-related goals. Recipients are nominated by their peers and selected by the President's Diversity Council based on merit and commitment. Presenting the awards were President Ben Allen and Executive Vice President and Provost Gloria Gibson.

Award winners are listed below.

Jonathan Cox

Cox is Coordinator of Minority and Student Diversity programs in the College of Business Administration, and is well known for his mentoring of students, both formally and informally. As his nominator wrote, "To students he is best known for his open door policy, his ability to serve as an anchor for them, his positive attitude and the foundation of hope and support he provides to students every day." Cox also is the founding advisor of EXCEL, a student organization that helps minority students to develop leadership skills; a member of the founding leadership team for the Jump Start Program; and founding advisor for the Black Male Leadership Union. He served as co-chair for the Multicultural Coordinating Council and was instrumental in organizing this year's first annual African American Alumni Reunion.

Eileen (Ellie) Hail

Hail is a senior Communication Studies major and president of Proud, the University's LGBT student organization. She has been a highly visible presence on campus, earning a reputation as a "go to" person for LGBT students. As her nominator wrote, "Not only has she made Proud a strong and respected organization on campus, she has sought to expand education opportunities for LGBT issues within the classroom." In 2010, when the Westboro Baptist

Church threatened to protest a presentation of “The Laramie Project,” Hail helped inspire more than 300 students to respond to that threat by participating in a peaceful gathering that promoted acceptance and tolerance of all people.

Wilfred (Micky) Johnson

An employee of the University of Northern Iowa for more than 23 years, Johnson is Director of the Classic Upward Bound program. In his time here, he has worked tirelessly to improve or provide equal access for those whose socioeconomic status, ethnic or racial background, gender, ability or age has left them without a voice, an opportunity, or hope. One of his nominators wrote that Johnson has “inspired, cajoled, nagged and loved thousands of boys and girls toward life success.” His contributions to building diverse, inclusive academic excellence at UNI go far beyond his job description and his service extends beyond the UNI community, engaging the larger community to ensure that students receive opportunities and encouragement before coming to college.

Douglas Mupasiri

Interim Department Head and Professor of Mathematics, Mupasiri has done much to initiate and encourage the conversation about diversity at UNI. His collaboration efforts span all three state universities, and include serving as leader for the Iowa Alliance for Graduate Education and the Professoriate program that sought to recruit and retain minority graduate students in science, mathematics, and engineering. He is on the leadership team for the diversity portion of the “Broader Impacts” program – a \$20 million Regent’s initiative to enhance the success of all Iowa science researchers in obtaining funded research projects from the National Science Foundation.

Nicholas Pace

Pace, an Associate Professor in the College of Education, is an outspoken advocate for minority students, LGBT students, and immigrant and refugee populations. His book, *The Principal’s Challenge: Learning from Gay and Lesbian Students*, is a must-read for school administrators

everywhere. He has published and produced many other materials advocating for the civil rights of other underrepresented populations as well, and has been recognized by the Friends of Iowa Civil Rights for his outstanding contributions to civil rights in Iowa. As one of his nominators wrote, he “not only lives the intent of multiculturalism, he works to help people see others through gentler eyes.”

Congratulations to all the recipients of the 2012 Diversity Matters Award.

2011 Diversity Matters Award Recipients

The 2011 UNI Diversity Matters award recipients are:

- **Anthony Stevens**, director of the Education Talent Search Program
- **Drake Martin**, assistant director of residence education
- **Inez Murtha**, director of the Academic Learning Center
- **Karen Mitchell**, professor of communication studies
- **Pierre-Damien Mvuyekure**, professor of English language and literature
- **Steve Carignan**, assistant vice president and executive director of the Gallagher-Bluedorn Performing Arts Center

A bit more about the 2011 award winners:

Stevens has successfully written grants bringing millions of dollars to UNI to support the university's outreach efforts in Black Hawk County and especially in the heart of urban Waterloo. He has helped thousands of minority, low-income and first-generation students achieve a postsecondary education. Stevens has worked at UNI for more than 30 years and has quietly worked to ensure that everyone has an equal opportunity for success.

Martin currently serves on the Student Affairs Diversity Committee and has coordinated numerous diversity programs on campus. He is also in charge of training resident assistants and residence life coordinators on diversity. According to his nominator, Martin challenges his peers to be open-minded and think about all sides of an issue, but always ensures a comfortable environment for everyone. His nominator also highlighted that Martin is genuine and caring, and his love of learning is reflected when he is with others.

Murtha has worked at UNI since 1969 when she became a secretary with the UNI Center for Urban Education (UNI-CUE). According to her nominators, developing and empowering staff members are two of her greatest contributions to UNI. Murtha has dedicated her professional life to mentoring multicultural students, people and communities. She has mentored several

staff members throughout their careers and has provided leadership at the state, regional and national levels by presenting at new member training events and editing handbooks for new professionals.

Mitchell's career as a professor did not necessarily have to include a commitment to diversity. However, as her nominators describe, she has committed her life to developing essential human rights and social justice. Her nominator suggests that it is clear that she could have excelled in her work in less political ways, but her commitment to diversity has worked to make a more inclusive environment for everyone.

Mvuyekure has served on the UNI Multicultural Coordinating Council, helping implement several changes that can be seen today, including the Diversity Council. Mvuyekure has contributed to hiring qualified minority faculty and has served as the faculty adviser for the UNI African Union student organization. Additionally, he is the founder of the Black Student Union. According to his nominator, Mvuyekure maintains relationships with underrepresented faculty and staff across campus, helping ensure that their voices are heard.

Carignan has shown leadership in developing social and cultural understanding, as well as an unwavering commitment to diversity. He led efforts to provide a multi-discipline look at lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender issues with the "Standing on Higher Ground" project this year. He is a lifetime member of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and has volunteered throughout the Cedar Valley including developing scholarships for minority families. As president of the Downtown Waterloo Rotary, Carignan made special efforts to recruit African-American members. He serves as a volunteer at UNI-CUE for Upward Bound programs and regularly speaks on leadership, learning and creativity.

2010 Diversity Matters Award Recipients

The Diversity Matters award is designed to acknowledge and honor the efforts of those who have significantly contributed to enhancing diversity at UNI, according to Terry Hogan, UNI vice president for student affairs and UNI Diversity Council chair. Hogan said the award will be presented annually to selected individuals or groups in recognition for their dedication and service to the university's advancement of its diversity-related goals.

The 2010 UNI Diversity Matters award recipients are:

- **Gloria Adams**, a graduate student majoring in school counseling
- **Angel Banks**, a senior public administration major
- **Roland Carrillo**, former director of financial aid
- **Rita Carrillo**, dining services administration

- **Chris Edginton**, director of UNI's School of Health, Physical Education & Leisure Services (HPELS)
- **Janet McClain**, director of the Multicultural Initiatives in Teaching (MIT) Program
- **Reg Pecan**, associate professor of Industrial Technology
- **Martha Reineke**, professor of Religion
- **John Somervill**, professor of Psychology
- **Juanita Wright**, assistant director of financial aid and scholarships

A bit more about the 2010 award winners:

Described as "a strong and vocal proponent of diversity at UNI and around the Cedar Valley," **Adams** has contributed to enhancing diversity in numerous ways. During her time at UNI, Adams has served as a pathfinder for incoming transfer students in the Jump Start Program, worked with girls at Cunningham School for Excellence in Waterloo and helped with the African-American Read-In. She is a former president of the Multicultural Teaching Alliance (MTA) and is one of the founders of Muchas Manos Light Work, a nonprofit organization that raises funds to send scholarship money to students in Nicaragua. She volunteers with the UNI Office of Admissions to recruit students from all backgrounds and has helped international students acclimate to Iowa's culture.

Banks' work has helped "enhance the lives of all UNI students and enrich the multicultural education experience available to them." Banks currently serves as Northern Iowa Student Government's (NISG) Director of Diversity and Student Life. As director, Banks has assisted the College of Humanities and Fine Arts (CHFA) Advisory Council with the recruitment and retention of diverse faculty members. She has worked closely with Awareness for Individuals with Disabilities (AID) and the Coordinating Committee of Disability Accommodations (CCDA). Banks has also started building the Northern Iowa Diversity Coalition, which seeks to mobilize and empower students to effectively address issues of diversity on campus.

As her nominator described, **Rita Carrillo** is a "soft spoken, usually smiling and well-liked individual by all who meet her. Many have no idea of the huge impact she has made on the lives of UNI Latino and Latina students." In addition to her work for UNI's dining services, she frequently provides personal counsel to students. For many years, she served as the adviser for the Hispanic/Latino Student Union, and she continues to play a central role in the campus-wide Cinco de Mayo celebration each year. "Her warm and gracious hospitality allows everyone at UNI to enjoy the richness of the Hispanic/Latino heritage."

Roland Carrillo served the university for 19 years as director of financial aid and three years as executive director of enrollment management. During his tenure at UNI, he developed a unique recruitment program with the Alamo Community College District in San Antonio, Texas. He also recruited students from Chicago and Gary, Ind., in an effort to bring more diversity to UNI. For many years, he facilitated many small and large group sessions on cultural diversity with

students, faculty and staff. Although retiring from UNI earlier this year, he continues to promote and influence students by teaching a class on diversity in America as an adjunct professor at Hawkeye Community College.

Edginton is the founder of the Camp Adventure™ Child and Youth Services program, a nationally award-winning model demonstration program. Since its conception in 1985, the program has provided students from UNI and across the U.S. with field experience in children and youth services around the globe. Since assuming his role as director of the school of HPELS in 1990, Edginton has continuously promoted and facilitated the progress of diversity within the school. Through his efforts, numerous outreach and public services programs have been developed. "He is a dedicated professional, an outstanding scholar and great friend. His commitment to diversity and his exemplary service at UNI are extraordinary."

As her nominator described, **McClain** is "a woman who appreciates and embraces diversity." As director of the MIT Program and the Multicultural Teaching Alliance (MTA) student organization, she promotes an environment that celebrates diversity and shows outstanding leadership in the areas of cultural and social understanding. Through her efforts, MTA has reached out to many individuals throughout the Cedar Valley. She has coordinated numerous events to provide area elementary, junior high and high school students with many diverse and unique opportunities.

Pecen has been described as "a strong supporter of UNI's diversity goals and passionate for diversifying UNI." Pecen has served on the Multicultural Recruitment Team for three years, and he has represented the industrial technology department at UNI's Center for Urban Education (CUE) during UNI-Cedar Valley preview nights. He also has helped showcase industrial technology facilities during Multicultural Super Saturday and during other campus group visits. Pecen serves as adviser to the Turkish Student Association and "actively assists with identifying potential international students and advocates for their success."

Throughout her 25 years at UNI, **Reineke** has chaired or co-chaired 16 university or college-level committees, including the Coordinating Committee for Disability Accommodations (CCDA). She chaired the CCDA from 2004-2008 with, as her nominator described, "such passion, energy and skill that I believe she was instrumental in changing the culture of UNI as it relates to persons with disabilities." Through her efforts, additional professional staff has been added in the areas of student and employee disability services. "Her efforts in raising awareness and making a difference have been tireless, and her work has helped the entire campus become more responsive to the needs and interests of those with disabilities."

Somervill has a long and distinguished career in promoting diversity at UNI. As Dean of the Graduate College (1998-2004), Somervill worked to bring more minority faculty and students to UNI. Working with professors and administrators from historically black colleges and universities, he initiated and sustained a highly successful minority recruitment program. In 1989, Somervill began an exchange program through the American Council of Teachers of

Russian (ACTR), leading more than 100 Russian students to pursue Masters degrees in graduate programs at UNI.

For more than 34 years, **Wright** has served as a recruiter, mentor and counselor for countless minority students. "With her caring attitude and big heart, she goes the extra mile for students, assisting them in all aspects of college life." She helped create the Jump Start Program and helped with planning and event implementation once recruitment programs in Texas and Indiana were established. "By her words and her example, she is a true advocate for multicultural students."