

New Jersey Statewide Network on Cultural Competency
Minutes, October 6, 2005

Bill Gaventa welcomed participants to The Boggs Center, with apologies for his problems in getting the email messages about the meeting out to the whole listserv. It is a reminder, that if you are on the NJSNCC listserv, you send an email to njsncc@listserv.state.nj.us. You have to be enrolled on the listserv to send a message.

After introductions, our major presentation for the morning was on the UMDNJ Cultural Competency initiatives funded by the Bildner Family Foundation. UMDNJ was one of eight universities and colleges to get grants from this foundation to focus on cultural diversity. The others are Bergen Community College, Bloomfield College, County College of Morris, Rowan University, Rutgers University, and The Richard Stockton College of NJ. To see more information on their initiatives, go to <http://www.aacu.org/bildner/participants.cfm>.

Catherine Bolder, Director of the Office of Affirmative Action, and Project Director, was the presenter. She noted some facts about UMDNJ: 40% of staff are from minority groups. Over 50% are women. Student population around 50% from minority backgrounds. The University is charged with the developing the newly legislated training for physicians in NJ on cultural competency. She talked about the initiatives in the grant, which include training, a resource center, and website. For more information on the project and resources, go to <http://www.umdj.edu/culturalcompetency/> The resource center is online at that site as well, with a link into the UMDNJ library, where there is even much more, including health and cultural statistics in NJ.

Some of her points:

- * Visible endorsement by top leaders of an institution is critical
- * New strategic planning for UMDNJ now includes cultural competence.
- * Accountability for behavior related to cultural competency is not easy.
- * People need to be clear what it (cultural competency) is.
- * Workforce needs to be respectful over all.
- * Two interpreter programs are happening, the one at RWJ Hospital in New Brunswick which uses students from Rutgers and a Volunteer Interpreter Program among staff at University Hospital in Newark. More than 70 volunteered for the first training series.

Other points in the discussion.

- * Tonya Joyner from Office of Minority Health noted that New Jersey Hospital Association has a task force that is working on statewide guidelines/standards for interpreting services, which will include training of health care providers on how to work with interpreters.

Other updates:

* Javier Robles presented news about the Latinos with Disabilities and Employment conference, a first project for the Latinos and Disabilities Network that grew out of the Latinos and Disabilities conference last year. PDF versions of the brochure will be distributed shortly. For a copy, contact Cynthia Mapp at Cynthia.mapp@dhs.state.nj.us.

* Asima Haider spoke about the South Asian Health Project, which has been working in New York, but is now moving into New Jersey and working on a directory of services and supports. Their website: www.southasianhealth.org.

* Bill Gaventa noted that the coordinators of the cultural awareness series (first one was last year's Latinos and Disabilities Conference) will soon begin planning the second, that will focus on Southeast Asian families and people with disabilities.

* Celia Abalos and Abdelfettah Elkchirid talked about the Cultural Competence conference sponsored by the New Jersey Mental Health Institute on December 9.

* Mr. Elkchirid also talked more about the International Institute of New Jersey, their teams of translators, and the outreach being done with a number of communities.

Their website: www.iinj.org.

Lunch was provided by the UMDNJ Office of Affirmative Action.

After lunch, the discussion was on the activities and goals of the Coalition. The following points and notes were made in the discussions.

* Participating members in the Coalition are those who send representatives on a regular basis to the meetings.

* We decided to put up minutes from the NJSNCC on the website, after they have been approved by the membership at subsequent meetings.

* Zenaida Steinhauer and Diane Garzio have been the ones working on the website database.

* Organizations who have not entered their information on the data base are encouraged to do so. There are currently 181 listed. The data base can include only non-profits because it is a publically funded web-site.

* We need to develop criteria for what it means to be on the Executive Committee, a small group of 5-7 who helps guide the planning., with work done by email. Diversity on this committee is crucial, as well as representatives from different domains of health and human services.

* The listserv is working well. See the reminder at the opening of these minutes as a reminder about how to send a message.

* We will work on an upcoming events component of the web site, both upcoming events for the Coalition and also a calendar of other events sponsored by others.

* We will also work with Celia Abalos and UMDNJ on planning an event that would recognize and celebrate creative initiatives in cultural competence.

Upcoming Meetings of NJSNCC: Mark these dates for the next ten months.

January 12. 2-4

March 23, 2-4

June 8. 2-4.

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