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Higher Education and Shifting U.S. Demographics: Need for Visible Administrative Career Paths, Professional Development, Succession Planning & Commitment to Diversity

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Academic Leadership Journal

Introduction

Higher education provides extensive opportunities for individuals seeking careers, career transition, and career advancement. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics projects there are an estimated 6,000 jobs in higher education administration that will need to be filled annually through 2014 (Leubsdorf, 2006). Alice Miller, a consultant with the executive-search firm Witt/Kieffer, "predicts there will be at least a 50-percent turnover among senior administrators (higher education) in the next five to 10 years" (Leubsdorf, 2006, p. A51). Additionally, national research by the American Association of Community Colleges (AACE) (2001) and Fain (2008) reveals that 79% of current community college presidents will retire by 2012 and 84% will retire by 2016.

Nationally, there is a growing need for qualified administrators to fill impending vacancies as a large percentage of the "baby-boom generation of college administrators retires" and the field of higher education continues to grow (Selingo, 2006). However, as indicated through the media, higher education needs to reevaluate how institutions are recruiting and retaining the future leaders of the nation's colleges and universities. Included below are titles of articles and one blog published in the Chronicle of Higher Education reflecting the need to reevaluate recruitment and retention within higher education:

• Higher Education's Coming Leadership Crisis (Appadurai, 2009);
• Higher Education's Career Ladder May Be Broken, Study Finds (June, 2008);
• Colleges Need to Offer Clear Paths to Leadership (Davis, 2008);
• California's Community Colleges Struggle to Recruit and Retain President: As Many 2-year Chiefs Near Retirement, the Leadership Void Could Become a National Problem (Moser, 2008);
• The Accidental Administrator: For the Many Academics Who Wind Up Corralled into Administration, We Offer This Handy Survival Guide (Powers & Maghroori, 2006); and
• Boomers' Retirement May Create Talent Squeeze: With 6,000 Administrative Jobs to Fill Per Year, Institutions Are Finding that the Usual Recruitment Methods Are Not Enough (Leubsdorf, 2006).

With increasing attention on the need for current and future leaders, it is imperative that colleges and universities reexamine recruitment, professional development, and succession plans currently in place to attract candidates seeking new careers or transitioning into higher education as well as to develop leaders internally.

Higher Education in The United States

The Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) reports there are 7,006 accredited higher education institutions in the United States of which 4,488 (64%) are degree granting (associate degrees and above) and 2,518 (36%) are non-degree granting. Of the 7,006 accredited institutions, 3,745 (53%) are non-profit while 3,261 (47%) are for-profit (CHEA 2008). Approximately 60% are

independent (private) colleges and universities while 40% are public (Association of Governing Boards, n.d.). According to AACC (2008), there are 1,195 community colleges in the United States of which 987 are public, 177 are independent, and 31 are Tribal. Among the degree granting institutions in the United States, there are 105 Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), 268 Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs), and 34 Tribally Colleges and Universities (TCUs).

HBCUs are "any historically black college or university that was established prior to 1964, whose principal mission was, and is, the education of black Americans" (NCES, n.d., ¶6). Presently, there are 105 HBCUs that include 89 public and independent four-year institutions and 16 public and independent two-year institutions (Department of Interior, n.d.). A total of 17 HBCUs have land-grant status (Department of Interior, n.d.). "HBCUs graduate more than 50 percent of African American professionals and public school teachers, and 70 percent of African American dentists according to the United Negro College Fund. Half of African Americans who graduate from HBCUs go on to graduate or professional schools" (US Department of State Bureau of International Information Programs, 2008, ¶2-3).

HSIs play a critical role in providing Hispanic students with access to higher education particularly as Hispanic enrollment continues to grow. As defined by NCES, HSIs are degree-granting institutions that have "an enrollment of undergraduate full-time equivalent students that is at least 25 percent Hispanic students" and provide "assurances that not less than 50 percent of the institution's Hispanic students are low-income individuals" (n.d., ¶7). According to the Hispanic Association of Colleges & Universities (HACU) (2008), the number of HSIs has grown from 137 institutions to 268 in 2006. Of the 268 HSIs, "128 (48%) were public two-year institutions, 57 public four-year institutions, 71 private four-year institutions, and 10 private two-year institutions" (HACU 2008, ¶7). The American Youth Policy Forum also shares that "HSIs represent 6% of all postsecondary institutions and enroll almost 50% of all Latinos in higher education" (¶1).

According to NCES, "Tribal Colleges and Universities, with few exceptions, are tribally controlled and located on reservations. They are all members of the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC)" (n.d., ¶18). The American Indian Measures for Success (AIMS) in Higher Education Fact Book states there are 34 Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs) across 15 states that generally serve geographically isolated populations. There is also one TCU located in Canada. TCUs enable American Indians, who may have no other means of accessing post-secondary education, the opportunity to earn degrees, certificates, and diplomas (AIHEC, 2006). All TCUs offer associate degree programs. There are seven TCUs that offer bachelor's degree programs, two TCUs that offer master's degree programs, and most TCUs offer certificate and diploma programs (AIHEC, 2006). TCUs are essential in providing American Indian students with educational opportunities that are uniquely tribal and provide culturally relevant curricula (AIHEC, 2006, vi).

Demographics in the United States and Higher Education

Demographics in United States

In 2007, the US Census Bureau reported the US population reached 301.6 million people of which 34% or 102.5 million were minorities (Bernstein, 2008). According to population projections, minorities will increase from approximately one-third to over half of the US population reaching 54% in 2050, representing 235.7 million out of the total US population of 439 million (Bernstein & Edwards, 2008).

Among all races, only White non-Hispanics are projected to lose population growth between 2008 and 2050 decreasing from 66% to 46% of the overall population.

The Hispanic population reached 46.7 million in 2007 and will continue to rise to 132.8 million by 2050 (Bernstein & Edwards, 2008). The Hispanic population will represent 30% of the US population in 2050 compared to 15% in 2008. The Black population will increase from 41.1 million in 2008 to 65.7 million in 2050 while the Asian population will increase from 15.5 million to 40.6 million. While the White, non-Hispanic population will grow from 199.8 million in 2008 to 203.3 million in 2050, the White non-Hispanic population will represent 46%, less than half, of the US population in 2050. Table 1 provides current data and projections highlighting population increases by race.

Table 1: US Population, Actual and Projected Population for Years 2008 and 2050

US Census Bureau Data	2008 in millions	% Population*	2050 in millions	% Population*	% increase 2008-2050
Hispanic	46.7	15%	132.8	30%	184.3%
Asian	15.5	5.1%	40.6	9.2%	161.9%
Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander	1.1	Not reported	2.6	Not reported	136.3%
American Indians and Alaska Natives	4.9	1.6%	8.6	2%	75.5%
Black non-Hispanic	41.1	14%	65.7	15%	59.8%
White non-Hispanic	199.8	66%	203.3	46%	1.8%
Two or more races	5.2	Not reported	16.2	Not reported	211.5%

'Data as reported by the US Census Bureau is more than 100%.

Demographics in Higher Education

Within the US population 34% of the current population is minority and approximately 35% of the current student population enrolled in higher education is minority (Chronicle of Higher Education, 2008). While these percentages are very similar, there is disparity when comparing current demographics for administrators, faculty, and governing boards with demographics for the national population and higher education student enrollments. Minority representation within higher education includes:

• 35% of all higher education students (Chronicle of Higher Education, 2008);
• 14% of college and university presidents (ACE, 2007);
• 19% of executive, managerial, and administrative staff (Chronicle of Higher Education, 2008),
• 22% of full-time faculty members (Chronicle of Higher Education, 2008)
• 25% of part-time faculty members (Chronicle of Higher Education, 2008)
• 22% of governing board members at public colleges and universities (Association for Governing Boards, n.d.); and
• 12% of governing board members at independent colleges and universities (Association for Governing Boards, n.d.).

Higher Education Students

The American Council for Education (ACE) published the American College President report in 2007 which marked the 20th anniversary since the first report was published. ACE states in the beginning of

the report, "Perhaps the most telling development on college campuses over the past two decades has been the change in diversity, conduct, and mindset of students" (ACE, 2007, p. 1). Demographic shifts in the US population are reflected in student enrollments across the nation's colleges and universities. As reported by the Chronicle of Higher Education Almanac 2008-09 (2008), there were 18.26 million students enrolled in higher education in 2008 of which 35% were minority. It is projected by 2016 that higher education enrollment will reach 20.44 million students of which 39% of the student population will be minority. Student enrollment projections by the US Department of Education reveal a surge in enrollment by minorities through 2016 with a minimal increase for White, non-Hispanics (Chronicle of Higher Education, 2008). Figure 1 highlights projected minority student enrollment increases from 1990, 2004, and 2015. Additionally, Table 2 provides a breakdown of projected student enrollment increases by race between 2004 and 2015.

Figure 1: Projected Minority Student Enrollment Increase by Race 1990, 2004, & 2015

Source: U.S. Dept. of Education, NCES Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment Survey." Various years; and Enrollment in Degree-Granting Institutions Model.
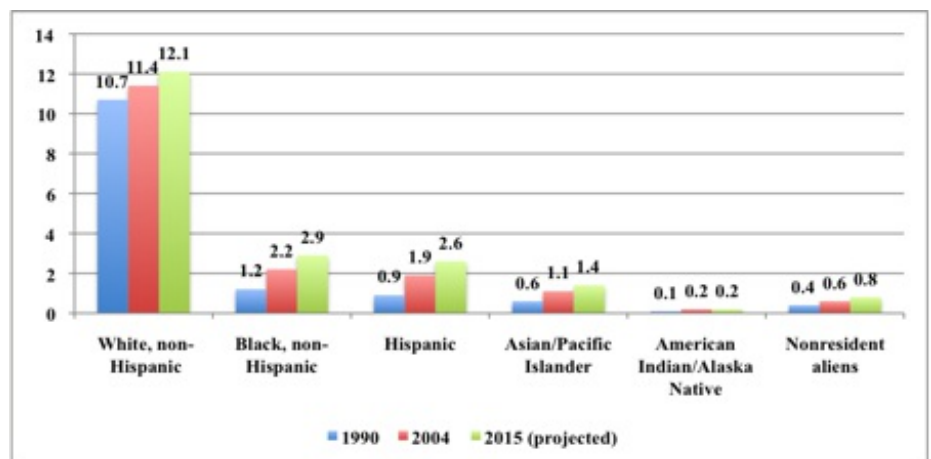

Table 2: Projected Student Enrollment in Higher Education by Race Years 2004 to 2015

Faculty

The Chronicle of Higher Education Almanac 2008-09 reports that in Fall 2005, 22% of full-time faculty members and 25% of part-time faculty members were minorities. Asians represented the largest percentage of minority full-time faculty members at 7% followed by Blacks at 5% and Hispanics at 3%.

Public and Independent Governing Boards Racial composition on public and

Enrollment by Race (NCES Data)	Projected increase between 2004-2015
Hispanic	+42%
Nonresident aliens	+34%
American Indian and Alaska Native	+30%
Asian or Pacific Islander	+28%
Black, non-Hispanic	+27%
White, non-Hispanics	+ 6%

independent governing boards for colleges and universities across the United States reflect modest to limited diversity compared to national demographics and higher education student enrollments. According to the Association of College Boards (AGB) (n.d.), 22% of public board members are minorities while 12% of independent board members are minorities.

Presidents

The most sobering conclusion to be drawn from the data reported here (American College President report, 2007 Edition) is that the demographic makeup of higher education leaders has changed very slowly during the past 20 years. (ACE, 2007, p. 57)

There has been a limited increase in the diversity of college and university presidents over the past twenty years in the United States. According to the American College President report (2008), 8% of college and university presidents were minorities in 1986. In 2006, 14% of the presidents were minorities. As stated in the "Presidents: Same Look, Different Decade" "The remarkable thing about the profile of the typical college president — a married, graying white man with a doctoral degree — is how little it has changed" (June, 2008, p. A23). While current data indicates that a growing percentage of institutional presidents will be retiring in the next five years, there are no projections on who will fill these key positions and lead the nation's colleges and universities. However, according to the American College President (2008):

The likely wave of impending retirements among presidents presents a unique opportunity to further diversify the leadership of American higher education. This will require both that a diverse pool of talented leaders are ready and willing to ascend to the presidency and that institutions become more willing to select leaders that do not fit the traditional profile. (p. 58)

Administration

While national demographic data on faculty, governing boards, and presidents are readily available, there are limited common data sets delineating a demographic breakdown for entry-, mid-, and senior-level positions. The Chronicle of Higher Education Almanac 2008-09 (2008) does provide "collective" higher education data that shows approximately 19% of all full-time executive, managerial and administrative staff positions were held by minorities in 2005. The Almanac (2008) data also reveals that 34% of non-professional staff positions were held by minorities in 2005. With regard to part-time employment in 2005, minorities represented 16% of all part-time executive, managerial and administrative staff and represented 34% in non-professional staff positions. It should be noted that the data provided in the Almanac comes from the U.S. Department of Education which typically releases statistics from its surveys of colleges and universities within a few years after collecting the data; hence, the latest figures are from 2005-06.

In 2009, ACE published the first national census of Chief Academic Officers (CAOs) in the United States. The census revealed limited diversity among current CAO, reporting that 85% of all CAOs are white, 6% are African American, 4% are Hispanic, 2% are Asian American, and approximately 1% are American Indian (ACE, 2009, ¶6). Less than half of CAOs are women (40%). According to ACE, "Only 30 percent of CAOs intend to seek a presidency, despite ACE data that show the most common path to the president's office is through the CAO position" (2009, ¶9).

Need for Visible Careers Paths, Professional Development, Succession Planning, and Commitment to Diversity

As students, faculty, and staff become more diverse, developing a more diverse pool of senior leaders will be increasingly important. (ACE, 2008, p. 58)
While there is a need to recruit and prepare administrators to fill impending vacancies, there is a shortage of qualified replacements (Selingo, 2006; Leubsdorf, 2006; Fain, 2008). In 2008, the American Council for Education published an issue brief entitled "Too Many Rungs on the Ladder?" that reveals there is a "dearth of young permanent faculty who will have the time and opportunity to advance up the academic career ladder into positions of administrative leadership at colleges and

universities" (p. 1). The shortage in rising administrative leaders from academia seems to be the result of three developments: "an aging professoriate, rising numbers of part-time and non-tenure-line faculty, and students completing doctoral education and entering the professoriate later in life" (ACE, 2008, p. 1). As indicated in "Too Many Rungs on the Ladder?," if the current model, traditional administrative ladder, is not working for those "entering the leadership pipeline today" then higher education must find ways to:
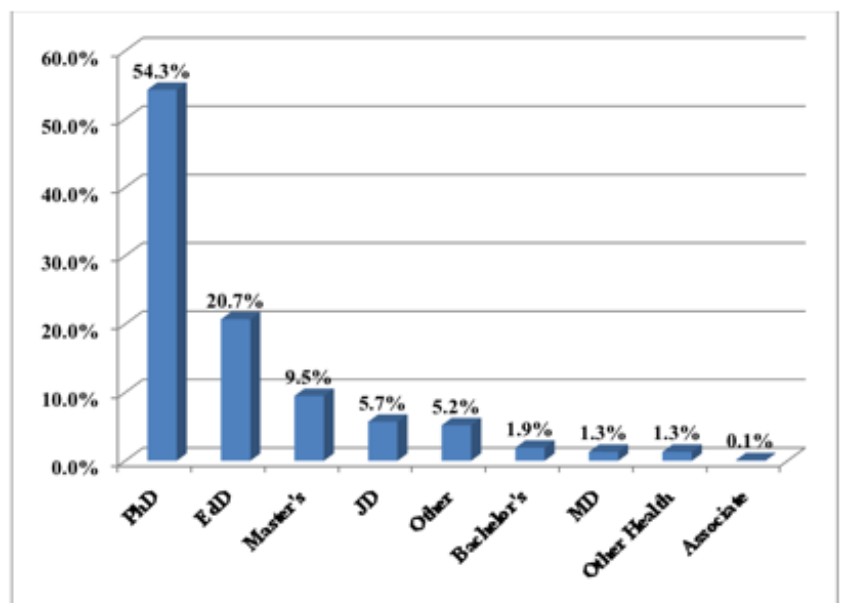
• Bring more young people through graduate school into the permanent faculty and advance them through the academic ranks more quickly;
• Alter the career ladder so that people can skip rungs and rise to the presidency with fewer years of experience; or
• Become more open to individuals with career paths other than the traditional academic route. (ACE, 2008, p. 7)

Recognizing that faculty members represent just under one-third (31%) of all full-time higher education positions, then it is prudent for colleges and universities to "become more open to individuals with career paths other than the traditional academic route" (ACE, 2008, p. 1).

While traditionally, the administrative ladder leading to the presidency was primarily affiliated with academia, data published in the American College President report (2008), reveals a decrease in the percentage of presidents who previously had been faculty members. In 1986, only 25% of college and university presidents indicated they had not been a faculty member previously. In 2006, 31% of the presidents indicated they had not been a faculty member previously. The data also reflects educational diversity relating to the highest degree earned by college and university presidents. While 75% of the college and university presidents had earned their doctoral degrees (PhD or EdD), 25% of the presidents had varying educational backgrounds (master's, JD, MD, etc.) (see Figure 2).

Figure 2: Highest Degree Earned by President, 2006

Within colleges and universities, institutional divisions provide extensive opportunities for individuals seeking careers and career advancement in student affairs, institutional development/alumni affairs, business and financial affairs, enrollment management, etc. Therefore, it is critical to define visible career paths and provide professional development to increase the pool of candidates for the leadership pipeline leading to positions in senior administration across the various divisions as well as to the role of presidency. However, recruitment is central to increasing the pool of candidates. In "Colleges Need to Offer Clear Paths to Leadership," author Erroll B. Davis, Jr., chancellor of the University System of Georgia, states that higher education needs to "create a system

that actively develops leadership skills much earlier in people's careers than we do today" (p. A64). According to Davis (2008):

There is simply no structural focus on leadership. So, what do colleges do? First they seduce someone into becoming a department chair, then a dean, then a provost or a vice president of academic affairs, and eventually a president. Is there any required management or leadership training in the process? Not consistently. Is there any rigorous and continuing assessment of management ability? Not consistently. (p. A64)

Davis suggests that higher education "borrow" strategies from the corporate world for developing leaders that truly benefit colleges and universities. Jane Courson, a consultant with the executive search firm Witt/Kieffer, shares similar views as Davis. According to Courson (Selingo, 2006), "colleges lag behind the private sector in terms of finding and developing talent. In particular, companies do a better job than colleges in identifying visible career paths" (¶6).

Recognizing that the administrative ladder is shifting and there is a need to expand the leadership pipeline, visible career paths are necessary for recruiting and retaining entry, mid-, and senior-level administrators who seek advancement leading to senior administrative positions (e.g., provost, vice president, vice chancellor, associate/assistant provost, associate/assistant vice president, associate/assistant chancellor, etc.) as well as the role of president. Through defining visible career paths within and across institutional divisions, there will be a larger pool of candidates who through professional development will be prepared for senior administrative positions and ultimately the presidency.

Recruitment, professional development, and succession planning in higher education will be key to proactively preparing for the projected turnover in higher education senior administrators through 2014 (Leubsdorf, 2006; American Association of Community Colleges, 2001; Fain, 2008; Selingo, 2006). In "Boomers' Retirement May Create Talent Squeeze," Leubsdorf (2006) examines the concept of growing leaders internally and states that colleges and universities are now looking for strategies to increase their efforts "to find mentors for younger staff members already working at the institution, to prepare them to take on senior roles" (p. A51). However, higher education is not recognized for its proactive approach to succession planning. As shared by William Bowen (2008), president emeritus of the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and a former president of Princeton University, in "The Successful Succession," "an astonishing number of institutions have no succession-planning process in place" (p. A40). As further noted by Miller, a search-firm consultant with Witt/Kieffer, higher education "does not do a good job of planning for leadership successions" (Leubsdorf, 2006, p. A51). Miller attributes this lack of preparation to "being a symptom of the culture of academic administration which does not require leaders to develop their own successors" (Leubsdorf, 2006, p. A51). Welsh and Welsh (2007) provide research highlighting the results of successful corporate succession planning in BusinessWeek magazine:
Certainly examples of outstanding succession planning exist. Just look at Johnson & Johnson, Goldman Sachs, Microsoft, and Caterpillar. Indeed, research shows that well over 50% of companies promote their CEOs from within. Such companies understand a central tenet of business—that a well-crafted succession plan vastly minimizes disruption when the CEO leaves, expected or not. (¶2)

However, succession planning is not necessarily practiced throughout all of corporate America. Welsh

and Welsh (2007) rhetorically ask, "But if good succession planning makes so much sense, why isn't it more common?" (¶3). They stress that for succession planning to be successful, it must be "deliberate" as well as must be "a discipline" (¶8).

As colleges and universities expand the leadership pipeline, it is essential that institutions make a commitment to increasing diversity within administration through the recruitment process, professional development, advancement, and retention. As previously illustrated in Tables 1 and 2 and Figure 1, demographics are shifting within the United States and within the higher education student population. Moreover, as indicated by the US Census Bureau, minorities will represent 54% of the US population in 2050 and represent 39% of higher education enrollment in 2016 (Bernstein & Edwards, 2008).

To increase diversity in higher education administration, institutions must begin by recruiting increased numbers of minorities to work within colleges and universities in defined career paths across institutional divisions. It is through increasing diversity in the leadership pipeline and through professional development that diversity will become more reflective on all levels of administration; ultimately becoming even more reflective within senior administration and the presidency. According to Polonio, in "Colleges Have Blind Spots in Presidential Searches," "What we are doing is recycling a lot of minority presidents. We are not bringing in new ones" (Schmidt, 2008, p. A64). Therefore, it is essential that colleges and universities develop leaders reflective of shifting national demographics and higher education enrollments, not simply recycle minority presidents. One can easily see how the statement shared by S. Graham and Associates (2008) regarding commitment to diversity in the corporate sector reflects the same need in higher education:

In today's global environment, diversity has become a permanent business characteristic with significant economic impact. Diversity is literally changing the face of our nations and transforming traditional cultures globally. Workers of all backgrounds are merging into a global marketplace, while businesses are challenged by a shortage of talent and the need to integrate a wide range of cultures. Most businesses, however, are not doing enough to connect to the growth markets or to their diverse employees. Thus, they stand the significant chance of stagnation or reduced profitability, and the opportunity costs of poor diversity recruitment, performance, and retention. (p. 7)

Institutional commitment to diversity is and will continue to be critical to the future of higher education. Moreover, as indicated by the American College President "the imperative of rapidly changing economic, demographic, and political conditions suggest the need for adaptability and diversity in educational institutions and their leaders" (ACE, 2008, p. 58).

Recommendations

Nationally there is a current and growing need for qualified leaders in higher education to replace retiring senior administrators. Concurrently, demographics are shifting nationally and within higher education. Based on the need for leaders and shifting demographics, there are four key recommendations for higher education institutional leaders: (1) define visible career paths within and across divisions leading to senior administrative positions and the presidency; (2) provide on going professional development across all levels of administration (entry, mid-, and senior-level); (3) make an institutional commitment to succession planning; and (4) commit to increasing diversity in higher education administration through recruitment, professional development, advancement, and retention to reflect the demographics shifts in the United States population and in the higher education student

enrollments.

Similar to the corporate sector, higher education needs to be more "creative and proactive" in recruiting, developing, and retaining administrators (Selingo, 2006). Moreover, college and university administrators need to design and support definitive and visible career paths within and across divisions to increase and expand the administrative pipeline leading to senior administrative positions and the presidency. In defining career paths, career advancement must not be limited to just those who seek to become a college or university president. Not all employees aspire to become an institutional president. Moreover, career paths must reflect opportunities for individuals outside of academia seeking to transition into and advance within higher education.

Lastly, in designing career paths, institutions need to examine and discuss how shifting demographics can be reflected in recruitment and career advancement strategies on all levels, including administration, faculty, and staff. The future of higher education is dependent upon the decisions and actions of today. "Unless campus leaders do more to identify and nurture new talent, higher education will face a leadership crisis in the coming decades" (Selingo, 2006, p. 1).

Conclusions

To proactively address the challenges related to impending retirements of senior administrators as well as recruit future leaders, national attention is needed to showcase higher education as a profession that offers diverse career paths not only for faculty positions but for all administrative positions across institutional divisions. Visible career paths accompanied with professional development will increase and expand the leadership pipeline for individuals seeking careers as well as seeking career advancement leading to senior administration and to the presidency. It will also take an institutional commitment to increase diversity across all levels of administration. Higher education is one of America's greatest assets. Therefore, higher education institutions need to recruit, professionally develop, and retain qualified and experienced administrators reflective of our diverse nation to lead America's colleges and universities.

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