Diversity Report 2007-2008

This year’s diversity report follows the same format as the most recent report posted for academic year 2005-2006 (a report was not published in 2006-2007). It highlights key areas of accomplishments and continuing concerns for each division of the College for academic year 2007-2008.

Board of Trustees:
Colby’s Board of Trustees currently consists of 33 voting members and three life members, who have voice but not vote. Of those, 36 are male, 10 are female, and two are members of underrepresented minority groups.

Colby’s overseer group is currently composed of 45 members, of whom 28 are male, 17 are female, and three are members of underrepresented minority groups.

The Board of Trustees is a slow-turnover group. Alumni terms are for three years, with the trustee eligible to be elected to a second term immediately after the conclusion of the first. Corporate terms are four years, also with the possibility of immediate reelection. There have been only a small handful of openings on the board in the past several years. However, the Alumni Council Nominating Committee and the Nominating Committee of the Board of Trustees expend considerable effort to identify ALANA candidates for future openings.

Similarly, the overseers serve four-year terms and are immediately eligible for second terms. We are constrained in the number of overseers who should serve at any given time, given that it is difficult to place all of them on visiting committees at least once in their terms. Here too, however, the board’s Development Committee is developing bench strength with ALANA candidates.

Admissions:
Fifteen percent of the Colby class of 2012 is from ALANA backgrounds. Of particular note, 24% of the first-year class did not disclose an ethnicity, thereby skewing the ALANA numbers negatively.

Admissions welcomed three more administrative staff personnel reflecting a genuine commitment to diversity as comprehensively defined by the Colby Statement on Diversity: Sui Kim Cheah ’99 in FY-07, Sammie T. Robinson, a former Colby admissions officer, and Bill K. Jack, both beginning in FY-08.

In the 2007-08 Admissions cycle the ALANA Task Force continued to oversee the planning of ALANA recruitment events, mailings, and school visits. The ATF included Steve Thomas, Chair; Denise Walden, Sammie Robinson, Dory Streett, Lucia Whittelsey, Jamie Brewster, Sandra Sohne-Johnston, Sui Kim Cheah, and beginning in summer ’08, Janice Kassman and Bill Jack.

Admissions continued its efforts to boost ALANA student inquiries by:

• partnering with more community-based organizations (CBOs) such as New Jersey Seeds, Memphis Challenge, Washington Metropolitan Scholars, and 21st Century Atlanta Scholars;
• visiting charter schools, new public schools, and other secondary schools heretofore not visited by Colby admissions staff, that is, schools with large populations of ALANA students, but not yet tapped by Colby. In fact, by June 2008, Admissions had 399 ALANA-serving high schools and 132 CBOs in its database;
• bringing to campus a larger number of ALANA-serving high school guidance counselors, and bringing them to campus early in the college search/application process;
• bringing to campus a larger number of ALANA students via newly cultivated relationships with both majority ALANA-serving schools and CBOs, and bringing them to campus early in the college search/application process (e.g The Ivy League Project and Charlestown High School).

Admissions continues to be a Posse affiliate—now, a relationship of seven years. Additionally, we continue to do Search mailings to ALANA prospects and to invite ALANA students to on-campus “Discover Colby” and “Colby Live” events in the fall and spring, respectively.
Beyond racial/ethnic diversity, Admissions continues to track first-generation college students in a systematic way. Many of these students were in fact ALANA, and in total, 8 percent of the Class of 2012 enrolled from families in which they were the first to attend a four-year college.

Socio-economic diversity has changed from previous years of 1/3 grant recipients, 1/3 non-grant/loan recipients, and 1/3 no aid recipients to a breakdown of forty-twenty-forty percent for the Class of 2012. Noting a shrinking middle, socio-economic diversity is an area in which the college will have to pay particular attention in the near future.

Matriculated Maine students doubled their percentage—to 16%, over the previous year, thanks in large part to the timely announcement of the “No-Loans” initiative by the College. Also, there was a concerted effort by Admissions to visit significantly more schools in Maine than in previous years.

**Dean of Students Office (DOS):**
In conjunction with the faculty, the DOS was able to assign all incoming ALANA and first generation students to academic advisors early in the summer. As a result, these students were able to consult with and receive guidance from faculty prior to their initial course registration facilitating more informed choices.

Campus Conversations on Race (CCOR) was implemented in the spring semester under the guidance of Joe Atkins. CCOR provides a safe small group setting in which students talk with each other about issues of race. The dialogues are run by fellow students who have been trained to facilitate group discussions. CCOR is growing at Colby because many of the students who engage in these group discussions find the experience so meaningful that they expand the discussion to dorms and dining halls and want to become facilitators themselves. CCOR faculty and staff advisors believe that multicultural competence is a vital skill that all of our students will need to be successful in future endeavors.

The DOS provided leadership to the Pugh Community Board (PCB) in guiding the students in their strategic thinking about programming pertaining to campus issues and as result we averaged 200-250 attendance at all five speaker presentations. Collaboration between PCB and the Special Programming Board to support programming for campus-wide multicultural events is an ongoing issue that needs to be addressed in the coming semesters.

Students initiated a new program, SHOUT (Speaking, Hearing Opening Up Together), a three day celebration of cultures including a speaker, Jonathan Kozol, workshops, and small discussions addressing various issues.

**Dean of Faculty:**
Academic year 2007-2008 was the fourth full year in which academic search plans were used to try to increase the diversity of candidate pools for all faculty positions. Since 2004-2005, the use of these plans became a routine, positive part of planning and conducting searches. The dean’s counterparts at Bates and Bowdoin report that they have adapted the Colby search plan for use in faculty searches at their institutions.

There were thirteen new tenure-track or tenured faculty hired during 2007-2008, nine women and four men. Among the nine women, one is a native of China and another, a native of France. Among the men, one is a U.S. Citizen of Hispanic ancestry. We hired new tenure-track women faculty in economics, computer science, and geology, fields in which women have been historically under-represented. There were three additional searches that were not successful. It is notable that in each of these searches a woman was the leading candidate to whom an offer was made.

During the summer of 2007, the Dean of Faculty’s office provided discretionary funding for three course-development grants to reinforce and enrich the presence of Native American studies in the curriculum, and specifically to support the minor in Indigenous Peoples of the Americas in the Department of Anthropology. During the 2006-2007 academic year, it had become evident that the Indigenous Peoples minor needed additional courses in order to remain viable. The discretionary course-development funding provided for
this purpose has helped to insure the program’s viability. In addition, the Dean of Faculty’s Office provided discretionary support to Pat Onion in English to allow her to enhance her teaching on Native Americans by enrolling in a course on Native American dramatic literature* at the University of Maine during summer 2007.

Administrative Vice President’s Office:
Of 947 candidates who applied for administrative staff positions at Colby in 2007-08, 48 percent (457), responded to our request for demographic information. Of those, 18 percent (83) came from under-represented groups. Out of 29 administrative positions hired 24 were filled by white candidates, one was filled by an Asian American, and four chose not to respond – they constitute 18 women and 11 men. Among 32 support staff positions hired in 2007-08, one position was filled by a Hispanic candidate, four candidates did not respond, and 27 candidates were white. Women were hired for 12 positions and males were hired for 15 positions.

The Office of Human Resources hired a new Director in July, 2007. Mark Crosby led the efforts of HR to begin collaborating on several initiatives, including developing a new orientation training program and initiating the new Colby Leadership Program which reinforces best practices for effectively leading a diverse workforce.

HR hopes to develop additional training programs that continue to support Colby’s values surrounding diversity, non-discrimination and non-harassment including regular supervisor development workshops.

The Harassment Advisory Group began work on revising the harassment policies and procedures, as well as reviewing possible improvements to communication materials used to educate the campus; however, with the retirement of Colby’s EEO Officer in December of 2007, the efforts have been put on hold until a new Director of EEO is hired.

The Workplace Advisors continued their work in 2007-08 by attending training sessions on dealing with difficult situations, giving informational presentations to the Colby community, defining their role, goals, and limitations, and reporting to the President on particular trends. The members of the group represent a cross section of the Colby community and members are able to provide confidential and informal assistance to employees wishing to raise and discuss work-related issues. Though not explicitly related to diversity efforts, the group is available for employees who have questions/concerns about the workplace along any lines, including diversity.

Administrative departments continue to follow recruiting guidelines and take proactive steps to inform potential employees about searches in order to increase the diversity of our applicant pools.

College Relations:
The Alumni Relations office continued to partner with the Dean of Students and Admissions offices (Sammie Robinson and Denise Walden) in 2007 to look for ways to engage ALANA and GLBTTIQQ alumni with current students.

Last year the Alumni of Color Network (AOCN) was involved with the Leadership Weekend. The group of 10 attending alumni, connected with current students along with staff who work with the Posse, other ALANA students or perspective incoming students. The alumni were also able to “bond” with fellow alumni and share their experiences within the group.

In March during spring break for the students, AOCN put together a “hometown” event where current students were invited to the home of a member of the AOCN to have a reception and talk in either Boston or New York City. Unfortunately, the RSVP’s were too light and the events had to be canceled. The decision to have this event every-other-year was decided.
This past June, Alumni Relations had a brunch with the alumni of color during reunion weekend. Along with the meal Janice Kassman and Karin Weston discussed with the alumni ways to engage both current students and alumni with ALANA programming.

The Alumni of Color Network has grown to 142 members, representing the classes of 1946-2008, who have volunteered to participate in one way or another in the network. Interested alumni and students can find each other through the password-protected online Colby alumni directory, where members are listed as mentors for alumni or students of color.

Alumni Relations is continuing to develop a network for gay and lesbian alumni. There are currently 73 alumni who, representing the classes of 1961-2008, participate in the network, which is a resource for current students and young alumni. Todd Gordon is currently working with current GLBTTIQ student an on-campus organization to create opportunities for alumni and student to interact and share ideas and experiences.

Alumni Relations continues to offer a GLBTQ brunch during Reunion Weekend and another at Family Homecoming Weekend. These events are intended to welcome and provide an environment in which alumni and students can learn about resources available through the alumni office, and share ideas about diversity programming both on campus and around the country.

This year the Alumni Relations office has been working with Marcie Barnard, Bets Brown and Sue McDougal to develop and implement a network for international alumni. Colby’s affiliation with the Oak Foundation, the UWC Davis Scholars and a number of other international student groups has provided us with a strong network of international alumni.

The office of Corporate, Foundation and Government Relations has worked with the Alumni Relations Office to create and publish an online Oak Alumni Newsletter. Plans are being made to create a similar newsletter for the UWC Davis alumni. Talk has also begun on an overall international alumni network. Work will continue on a Colby International Alumni page and events that target and focus on issues faced by our international alumni.