July 15, 2006

Dear OSU Community Members:

As a system, we are focusing attention on diversity as an institutional core value that guides our actions, as stated in our strategic plan. We ask for your participation in a self-study process designed to develop and implement a shared vision for diversity on our campuses, entitled, “Include Every Voice: Developing an OSU System Diversity Plan.”

An institutional vision for diversity must be communicated, understood, accepted, and translated into individual action. To help institutions achieve this vision, a process was developed by the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU) and the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges (NASULGC). OSU will engage in this self-study process as part of a system-wide diversity initiative.

The success of the plan depends on individual participation. By thoughtfully considering and discussing with colleagues a series of reflective questions, each individual member of each unit of the campus community can enhance diversity efforts. Individual reflection is essential, so that each person can examine the assumptions and experiences that influence his/her decisions and actions.

The process involves two steps:

1. Individually, read and consider the reflective questions.
2. Participate in a discussion (forum) within your unit to develop a document that describes the following three components:
   a. Current efforts under each of the main topic areas (recruitment, retention, partnerships, campus climate, professional development and assessment)
   b. Concerns about current status
   c. Recommendations for improvement in all of these areas

Each discussion session (forum) will be led by a trained facilitator who is responsible for documenting the discussion in the appropriate format. If you prefer, you may submit written responses to the group facilitator at the forum or mail to (can be anonymous): Carolyn Hernandez, Office of Institutional Diversity, 408 Whitehurst - Stillwater, OK 74078.

The results of the forums and any written responses will be incorporated into an institutional diversity self study report that will be provided to the AASCU/NASULGC team in January 2007. This team will review the self study, make a site visit to all campuses in February 2007, and provide a set of recommended actions for each campus. This team does not represent any established accreditation process, but will provide expertise to assist in the efforts to strengthen diversity in the OSU system.

Individual participation is critical to this process; please provide your perspective on these important questions. Thank you for your commitment to this effort.

Sincerely,

David Schmidly Cornell Thomas
System CEO and President Vice President for Institutional Diversity