



## **The Office of Diversity and Educational Equity (ODEE)**

The Office of Diversity and Educational Equity was established in August 2007 with an operating budget of \$300,000 and Dr. Pedro Cabán was appointed Vice Provost to direct this office. In September of 2007, Carlos Medina joined the office as Assistant Provost.

Dr. Cabán has been singularly focused on developing a new model for diversity and in meeting with legislators and government officials to obtain their support for the requisite funding from the State to implement this model. SUNY graduates must have the cultural competence and cognitive skills to successfully live and work in New York State's increasingly diverse communities. Our goal is to diversify SUNY's academic human resources and integrate diversity related instruction and research into ongoing SUNY system-wide initiatives to enhance academic excellence.

New York State is undergoing an economic and demographic transformation that is unprecedented. Our state is the third most populous in the Union and one of the most racially and culturally diverse. One of the great challenges of our time is how to successfully manage these dynamics to promote our State's development, while providing economic security and equity for our residents. SUNY, the largest and most comprehensive public higher education system in the nation must play a pivotal role by preparing a new generation of leaders and decision makers who can work effectively in a culturally diverse environment and in an increasingly globalized economy. Success in our fast paced, internationally competitive world depends on developing the knowledge, cognitive skills and cultural competence to respond to new opportunities and challenges. Our state can enhance its success by investing in SUNY so that it can recruit faculty and students that represent the rich diversity of this state. SUNY must embark on new areas of academic research and teaching that will prepare a highly qualified leadership and workforce for our increasingly diversified and knowledge driven economy.

The diversification of SUNY's human academic resources entails recruiting professors, graduate and undergraduate students from diverse backgrounds, including from groups that have been historically underrepresented in higher education. The synergy between academic excellence and diversity will be achieved through a variety of programs. With funding, the Office of Diversity will support curriculum reform that promotes diversity, fund new research directions, as well as a regionally based faculty diversity research initiative. The Office of Diversity will provide financial support and organize best practices workshops for deans and department/division chairperson. In addition, campuses that have successful diversity programs will receive support to further develop and expand these programs. We intend to encourage campuses to stimulate an ongoing dialogue among scholars engaged in diversity related research; and in the process to create intellectual communities. These communities will serve to attract new faculty and graduate students from diverse backgrounds. By creating an intellectually supportive climate, faculty will be much more inclined to retain their appointments in SUNY's colleges and universities.