



State University of New York

MAR 22 '89

Dr. Mc Amin

Memorandum to Presidents

Date: March 15, 1989 Vol. 89 No. 5
From: Office of the Chancellor
Subject: Reaffirmation of University Affirmative Action Goals
To: Presidents, State University of New York

Attached is a statement that will appear in the next issue of the SUNY News and will be released for publication in student newspapers. It is intended to reaffirm the University's commitment to affirmative action goals and principles, particularly in these times of budgetary uncertainty. I am aware that the real work of affirmative action takes place at the campus level and requires your leadership. Thus I hope you will feel free to make use of the statement in the activities of your own campus community.

Your many efforts to date in pursuing our affirmative action goals are very much appreciated, and I know that you will join with me to protect our present program and move it forward. If members of my staff or I can be of help to you in this regard, please let me or Dr. Komisar know, or call Dolores Barracano Schmidt, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Affirmative Action, at (518) 443-5101.


Dr. Bruce Johnstone

Attachment

This memorandum addressed to:

Presidents, State-operated Campuses
Presidents, Community Colleges
Deans, Statutory Colleges

This memorandum for information to:

President Coll
Vice President Nesheim

March 15, 1989

It is always appropriate to reaffirm the University's commitment to affirmative action principles and goals and never more so than in a time of budgetary uncertainty. I am taking this opportunity, therefore, to thank you for the many efforts being made throughout SUNY to recruit and retain more minority students and students with disabilities, as well as for the parallel efforts to increase the number of minority faculty and other professionals and staff. Your increased sensitivity to improving the campus climate to make our campuses safe and supportive environments for all students, environments free of violence and bias, are also very heartening.

We have made much affirmative action progress in the past twenty years, enough, at least, to know how much better we can become. It is especially important in these trying times that we protect what we have achieved and build upon it. It is important that enrollment limits not be used to shut the gates that have so recently swung open for minority students, women, and people with disabilities. Maintaining diversity, even though total numbers may decline, is our new affirmative action challenge. It is one we must meet with creativity and good will.

The very word "university" connotes oneness and totality, a place where many different people, ideas, and cultures come together for common purposes: to learn, to search, to serve, according to our motto. In these difficult days, when plans and priorities are being reexamined, I urge that affirmative action remain important in all of our considerations. The question, "What will the affirmative action impact be?" should inform every discussion concerning delays in programs and cutbacks of resources, including personnel. It is important to maintain the excellence we have

worked so hard to achieve, and there can be no excellence without diversity. Unless we can continue to offer all of our students an environment with an exciting mixture of races, cultures, ideas, and lifestyles, an environment in which to learn and grow and experience the nature of a pluralistic society, we will be defeated and diminished -- diminished in a sense having little to do with dollars or numbers.

As Chancellor of the State University of New York, I do hereby reaffirm the University's commitment to affirmative action. I ask each of you to join me by pledging a personal commitment to our program and goals despite the hard times ahead. Through our combined efforts, we can indeed continue to create a more perfect SUNY.