

Equity Award Nomination for  
Howard Community College Board of Trustees and  
President, Dr. Kathleen Hetherington

ELIGIBLE RECIPIENT: Any governing board or governing board and president of an ACCT member two-year postsecondary institution board or state board for two-year postsecondary institutions is eligible to receive this award.

CRITERIA

Demonstrable evidence of leadership in setting policies that promote and enhance opportunities for institutional diversity, inclusion, and equity for women, persons of color, LGBTQs or members of any other underrepresented or underserved population that has occurred within the last five (5) years regarding the following:

***Increases in access by underrepresented or underserved populations and increases in completion of the educational objectives (attainment of a degree, certificate, credential, transfer or gainful employment) of those populations.***

In 2012, College President Kate Hetherington and President's Team assessed the college's academic standing policy. Results from that review showed that minority students, males, and students needing developmental education were more at risk for being placed on academic warning than white students, females, and college-ready students, respectively.

As a result, the college president and her team established a committee to further investigate the issue, and the need for enhanced academic support services for minority male students was identified. Institutionalizing a support program for minority male students evolved into a strategic initiative for the college in 2013 and the success of that initiative continues to be a priority of the college's current strategic plan.

Created as a Black male success initiative, Howard P.R.I.D.E. encourages the continued academic, professional, and personal development of Black male students. This program aims to increase the math completion, retention, and graduation rates of Black male students. Students who have benefited from Howard P.R.I.D.E. since its inception know that it has become about much more than courses and grades. Along with tutoring, academic monitoring and advising, and the development of academic plans, Howard P.R.I.D.E. also provides students with leadership and success workshops that help students develop and hone skills needed to successfully navigate both the college and work environment.

Howard P.R.I.D.E. was initially established to serve about 50 students. The Howard P.R.I.D.E. program has increased from 58 students in fiscal year (FY) 2013 to a high of 159 students in FY17.

Outcomes assessment indicates that program participants outpace other Black/African American students in degree completion. Assessment data from the 2008-2017 entry cohorts show that after three years, 30.8 percent of Howard P.R.I.D.E. students completed degrees, compared to 4.4 percent of all Black/African American men. In FY 2017, 15 Howard P.R.I.D.E. participants graduated, as compared to seven participants in FY16. As of summer 2017, the fall-to-spring retention rates of Howard P.R.I.D.E. participants (78%) outpace those of their counterparts (all African-American/Black men 65%; first-time, African-American/Black men: 66%). Howard P.R.I.D.E. students who seek tutoring in developmental math have higher success rates than the general population of students seeking tutoring (FY17: 66% v. 58%).

Along with Howard P.R.I.D.E., the college fosters equity through a number of other programs aimed at successful completion, transfer, and/or employment. A sampling of them include:

Ambiciones is a supportive community designed to meet the unique needs of Hispanic/Latino students. The Ambiciones program was designed to support first generation college students and their families throughout the college experience – from application to graduation. Ambiciones builds community among Hispanic/Latino students by providing networking opportunities, educational and recreational activities, and workshops with other Hispanic/Latino students and campus organizations. Students can also receive specialized guidance and assistance with academic advising and tutoring; mentoring and coaching; financial aid, scholarship, and work-study opportunities; career counseling and internships; and personal counseling.

As early as the senior year of high school, Ambiciones is available to help guide prospective students through the application and enrollment process. It also provides assistance to undocumented students enrolling in college under The Dream Act and the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) Program, by helping students and their families understand the various steps required to ensure compliance with these programs.

Ambiciones also works with the Maryland Hispanic Affairs Advisory Council and the Howard County (Maryland) Public School System manager of teacher recruitment and hiring to provide opportunities for students to learn about career opportunities and network with professionals in the community. Additionally, the program works in partnership with the Foreign Born Information and Referral Network (FIRN) to provide support for many HCC students. Ambiciones served 45 students in fall 2017 and is actively recruiting students for the fall 2018 semester. The program has a fall 2016 to fall 2017 retention rate of 88 percent, as compared to a 62.9 percent retention rate for all Hispanic students for the same time period. In FY17, 87.5 percent of program participants had at least a 2.0 GPA, and seven students graduated. The program started in FY16 and did not have any graduates.

Career Links helps single parents and displaced homemakers achieve their educational goals. As parents, students' college experiences are unique as they try to balance the obligations of work,

school, and family. The Career Links program assists students in managing these challenges during the course of a semester by working one-on-one with them to identify and access the resources necessary for academic, career, and employment success. In fall 2017, the Career Links program served 115 credit students and six non-credit students who are displaced homemakers and single parents. In FY17, seventy-nine percent of program participants achieved a GPA over 2.0 and 19 students graduated, a 19 percent increase in graduates from the previous year.

The Student Support Services TRIO Program provides customized academic support services to students who are low income, first generation college students, or have documented disabilities. The goal of the program is to increase student success toward transfer and/or completion of a degree or certificate. Student Support Services TRIO served 232 first generation, low income students and students with disabilities in FY17. More than 75 percent of program participants had a GPA of 2.0 or higher, and 43 students graduated, a 43 percent increase from the previous year.

***Increases in the institution's workforce and leadership positions by underrepresented or underserved populations.***

The college believes that to create and support a culture that fosters equity, it is critical to have a diverse workforce. The college strives to recruit and retain a faculty and staff that reflect the demographics of Howard County. A strategic priority for the college has been to increase the percentage of its minority employees to 24 percent for both faculty and administrative/professional staff. In FY17, the college was at 28 percent ethnic minority for full-time faculty and staff.

In order to recruit a diverse faculty and staff, the college purchases online subscriptions to advertise positions in *Diverse Issues in Higher Education*, *Veterans in Higher Ed*, *Hispanics in Higher Ed*, *Blacks in Higher Ed*, *Career Builder*, and *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. An affirmative action email blast through *HigherEdJobs.com* is also utilized. To support diversity initiatives, human resources staff attended job fairs in the Baltimore/Washington metropolitan area held at *Historically Black Colleges and Universities* and other high minority schools. In addition, the college works with search committees each year to promote a diverse workforce in its candidate selections. Each recruitment seeks out applicants from underrepresented groups in order to provide a diverse applicant pool.

Equally important as recruitment, retention is the key to maintaining a diverse, high quality faculty and staff. Annually, the college surveys its faculty and staff on its satisfaction. More than 88 percent of HCC employees completing the QUEST survey indicated that they would recommend HCC as a place to work, with a 4.32 rating on a five-point scale. This rating is even more impressive when compared with a recent Gallup survey that found only 43 percent of US workers strongly agreed with the statement, "I would recommend my company as a place to work."

The turnover rate for HCC in FY17 was 8.4 percent, compared with the Bureau of National Affairs average of 13.5 percent nationwide. When an employee separates from the college, the human resources office conducts an exit interview to determine if there is anything the college could have done to better serve its employees. The results of those interviews are shared with the college's leadership team in order to improve the work environment of the college. This year, HCC was recognized for the ninth consecutive year as A Great College to Work For by the Chronicle of Higher Education.

***Success of the institution's community engagement or outreach efforts in attracting and maintaining the interests of underrepresented or underserved populations regarding the institution.***

A commitment to diversity and equity originates with the board of trustees and college president and filters throughout every facet of the institution. The Board of Trustees of Howard Community College has committed the college to an ongoing diversity program, which the board approves and receives updates on annually. The college president, Kathleen Hetherington, appoints and oversees the diversity committee to implement and manage this plan. HCC's diversity programs encourage respect of and equity among all ages, genders, sexual orientations, races, religions, ethnic backgrounds, abilities, and disabilities, as well as the values of equal rights and access. As part of their annual performance plan, all members of the college community engage in diversity and equity education and training in support of the college's strategic priority to incorporate diversity and equity into the fabric of the institution.

There are myriad ways the college community engages in the pursuit of equity for its students and employees. The following provide a few examples. The college board of trustees has dedicated its retreat experiences over the last two years to the study and understanding of cultural proficiency, which fosters critical conversations and resulting action to promote equity at the college. The college president and her senior leadership team participate with the trustees in their retreats.

Monthly, President Hetherington and her leadership team meet with groups of students in presidential dialogues. The student groups this year ranged from members of the LGBTQIA community to student athletics to developmental mathematics students to DACA students. During these intimate conversations, Dr. Hetherington and her team listen to the students' stories and concerns. Following each dialogue, the president's team debriefs to identify and enact changes that need to be made to better service students and support equity of opportunity.

The college's educational foundation, the fundraising arm of the college, has engaged in extensive outreach this year in order to recruit more diversity to its board of directors. President

Hetherington and the foundation board chair have gathered with leaders from Howard County's ethnic communities to engage a broader reach of individuals in the work of the college.

The board of trustees of Howard Community College is comprised of seven members. Members are appointed by the Governor of Maryland at the recommendation of the General Assembly of Maryland. HCC president Dr. Kate Hetherington has advocated for an increased diversity of representation in the board of trustees in order to reflect the very diverse population of HCC students and the community. Recent board appointees include a representative of the African American community and a board member of Latino/Hispanic heritage.

In addition to efforts on campus, the colleges' work to support diversity and equity extends beyond the campus walls. #OneHoward is an initiative of Howard County Executive Allan H. Kittleman "designed to promote community dialogue and reinforce the county's shared goals of diversity and inclusiveness through a series of community conversations and educational events. The goal of #OneHoward is to advance the shared values of County residents while addressing concerns of racism, intolerance and bigotry that have surfaced recently, particularly on social media" (#OneHoward website, <https://www.onehoward.org/about-us>).

Howard Community College has played an integral role in two initiatives that have grown out of the #OneHoward program. Both last year, and again this year, the college has been host to Howard County, Maryland's Longest Table event. This event draws approximately 500 community members together for a shared meal and conversation about myriad issues ranging from race relations to cultural infusion in the county.

As part of the #OneHoward Steering Committee, the college hosted eight HCC #USPEAK dialogues during the 2017-18 academic year. These dialogues provided students with the opportunity to participate in conversations about the dynamics, relationships, and systems that impact faculty, staff and students at HCC. A member of the HCC community is also a representative on the #OneHoward Steering Committee.

On the state level, HCC is an active participant in the Maryland Community College Diversity Roundtable. This organization brings together community college faculty, administrators, and diversity and multicultural affairs specialists to advance diversity and multiculturalism at Maryland's community colleges. The objectives of the Maryland Community College Diversity Roundtable are to recruit individuals from all Maryland community colleges to participate in the organization; create a space to exchange information and best practices on issues of diversity, equity and inclusion; and assist community college "Diversity Committees" with advancing the work of diversity at their respective institutions.