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**Cultural Diversity Report
Annual Progress Report 2023-2024
Frostburg State University
Prepared by the Office for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
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**Submitted to:
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Content of Report:

This report follows the 2023-2024 Institutional Programs of Cultural Diversity Report Guidance set forth by the University System of Maryland.

- **Section 1:** Summary of the Institution's Plan to Improve Cultural Diversity
- **Section 2:** Summary of Compliance and Impact of the 2023 Supreme Court's Decision to Strike Down Race-conscious Admissions
- **Appendix 1:** Frostburg State University's Cultural Diversity Plan
- **Appendix 2:** Summary of Efforts to Address the Unique Needs of International Students

Section 1: Summary of Frostburg State University's Plan to Improve Cultural Diversity

Frostburg State University's Plan (Appendix 1) continues to provide a framework for university efforts that is specifically monitored and implemented by the Division of Student Affairs, Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ODEI). Each academic year, in concert with the University Council on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, ODEI establishes goals and priorities that are aligned with the Division of Student Affairs and university's Strategic Plans. These goals and priorities are informed by contemporary student needs, university resources, community constituencies, current trends, and a philosophy of equality of opportunity for all. Academic year 2023-2024 goals are aligned with the following Student Affairs goals:

1. Develop programs and services to engage students and provide opportunities for experiential learning and leadership.
2. Facilitate the successful recruitment, transition, and retention of students. by providing guidance, knowledge, and access to experiences, programs, and services.
3. Create a safe, inclusive, and supportive campus community to foster student growth and education.
4. Provide facilities, technology, and services, which enhance students' educational experiences.
5. Provide campus environments that foster student wellness and development.
6. Recruit, develop, and support employees who are well-prepared to meet the increasingly complex challenges that face today's students.

Additionally, ODEI's academic year 2023-2024 goals are aligned with the following university goals:

1. Focus learning on both the acquisition and application of knowledge.
2. Provide engaging experiences that challenge students to excel.
3. Expand regional outreach and engagement.
4. Align university resources - human, fiscal, and physical with strategic priorities.

The University Council on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion focused efforts on the following goals during the 2023-204 academic year:

1. Provide diversity, equity, and inclusion for students, faculty, and staff.
2. Support the success of marginalized students and underrepresented faculty and staff through mentoring and ongoing programming.
3. Increase campus awareness of the resources and services available from the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ODEI).

These goals were supported by the following Action Priorities:

1. The ODEI will provide annual training opportunities for faculty, staff, and students, such as Safe Zone training, first-year student "Introduction to DEI" workshop, as well

as other programming to increase knowledge and awareness during the academic year.

2. ODEI will increase visibility and accessibility of diverse faculty and staff to provide additional support for diverse student organizations during the academic year.
3. ODEI will provide regular campus outreach efforts by updating the ODEI website monthly with "ODEI News" that highlights DEI programming for faculty, staff, and students, while promoting "Times Talk" sessions, and meeting with each individual section of Introduction to Higher Education classes to discuss DEI and the opportunities and resources available on campus during the academic year.

These goals and action priorities were implemented and assessed by:

1. Attendance results, cost, and the number of faculty, staff, and students engaged.
2. Number of eligible individuals identified, number of sessions held, and percentage of participating constituents.
3. Assessment of feedback on news postings, number of Times Talk sessions held with number of participants, and the number of workshops held for ORIE 101 classes.

Evaluation and results were assessed by:

1. The "Safe Zone" introductory workshop was offered twice to the general campus population in the spring semester, during the "Bobcats Against Bias" week. Additionally, a Safe Zone workshop was presented during the fall training of the Residence Life Office student staff with 60 participants. To increase the participation rate of the first-year student DEI workshop, students were allowed to self-select and register for a day and time for a two-hour "Introduction to National Coalition Building Institute (NCBI)" workshop. Those who were unable to attend this workshop were then given the opportunity to complete the "Brave and Bold" online program. This approach also helped to reduce costs of the online program as the costs were reduced to provide access to fewer students. Additionally, each ORIE101 class was visited by ODEI staff. In total, 90% of the first-year students were documented as participating in at least one of these activities. Finally, the annual diversity retreat was held in the fall with 49 participants (40 students, one FSU alum and eight staff). This was an increase over the previous fall retreat attendance of 35. With a staff of seven Black staff and three Latino staff, the students were afforded a unique opportunity to meet individually with BIPOC staff to discuss any questions or concerns the students might have, as well as student's plans for completing degrees, chosen majors, career paths, internships, etc. As a result, several students were able to secure internships, referrals to alumni for mentoring, and letters of recommendation for graduate school or employment applications. The retreat included the full-day NCBI Leadership for Diversity Workshop, with 88% of the participants indicating the effectiveness of the retreat was "Excellent" or "Better than Average."
2. The Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion worked closely with diverse student organizations to provide and support advisors of the same identities or proven allyship. Specifically, the Black Student Alliance, the Latin American Student

Organization, the National Council of Negro Women, and Spectrum. Unfortunately, they continued to struggle to increase their memberships to healthier levels. The ODEI worked closely with a group of faculty and staff to form "FNIF: Frostburg Network for Intersectional Feminism". A spin-off student organization, "W.O.M.E.N." was also created. The first major event of these two organizations along with the ODEI was a "Take Back the Night" (anti-violence against women and anti-sexual assault) rally and march. This was preceded by a "tenting" event at the clock tower where all interested parties could receive information about FNIF and the event to be held that evening. Fifty "TBTN" shirts were given to participants.

3. The Times Talk sessions were held every two weeks in collaboration with the Office of Civic Engagement. As done previously, the sessions were alternately based on Civic Engagement/Civility and DEI. Students were encouraged to submit articles/topic suggestions. Attendance still tended to be low with an average attendance of 12-15 students, faculty, and staff. Significant work was done to update the ODEI webpage, particularly focusing on the ODEI News link. This replaced the monthly newsletter in response to advice from media relations. New this year, during the Hispanic Heritage month, a faculty, staff, and student of Hispanic heritage was featured on the website. This received positive feedback and will be continued next year. In the fall, members of the ODEI and NCBI teams met with all but one of the ORIE classes to speak with students about the goals of the university around DEI, the university's diversity statement, the goal for each student to graduate prepared to work in a global society, and the opportunities and resources available to help them reach this goal. Students were informed about the functions of the ODEI, and what academic and cocurricular opportunities exist on campus to increase inclusion and belongingness. Finally, the ODEI held informational tables in the Lane University Center to keep the campus aware of events, programs, and resources for DEI on and off campus.

Areas of progress, targets for improvement, and future recommendations include offering Safe Zone trainings in the fall at the Hagerstown campus in response to a request and inclusion in the #BobcatsAgainstBias campaign in the spring. This will be two full years since the last successful offering and will hopefully see better attendance. Frostburg will also consider bringing in an outside presenter to offer a fresh experience for those that have attended previously. Alternatively, FSU will consult with collaborating Safe Zone directors at USM affiliates to update materials. If the training is facilitated in-house, the only resources needed are location, staffing and printing. The university will continue to explore ways of increasing the visibility and accessibility of diverse faculty and staff through spotlights in the ODEI News, and consideration of the creation of faculty/staff affinity groups and offering social gatherings.

Section 2: Summary of Compliance and Impact of the 2023 Supreme Court's Decision to Strike Down Race-conscious Admissions

- a. *Outreach and Support Programs:* The FSU Admissions Office has applied for an Opportunity Grant to develop a program to offer transportation, meals, and enhanced campus visit opportunities to students/high schools that do not have the resources

available to experience college visits. College visits are an essential step in the college search process and provides access to information for students to make their best-fit choice. Additionally, the Admissions Office participated in the Common App Direct Admit program. This allowed the opportunity to engage with students who would qualify for admission, but may face an obstacle and have not yet applied. The Common App program was implemented before the Supreme Court ruling and was designed to reach marginalized students. This program helped to shape the overall makeup of Frostburg's applicants and new student class.

- b. *Community Engagement:* Since January 2023, stakeholders at the institution met often to discuss the potential impacts to recruitment efforts. Because the Supreme Court decision largely impacted admittance decisions, Frostburg State took efforts to call special attention to the mission of the institution, reviewed the website to ensure its mission was central and visible across the website, and emphasized that a diverse campus is part of the institutional identity of Frostburg State University. The Admissions Office did not retract any recruitment efforts or initiatives. The Admissions Office has been focused on re-establishing relationships and enrollment opportunities for students from Baltimore City and Baltimore County as well as other areas across the state. Lastly, through FSU's strategic enrollment plan, the Admissions Office leads efforts through a workgroup to engage the campus, alumni, and communities to provide enrollment opportunities in Hispanic/Latino communities.
- c. *Equity and Access:* Historically, race has not been a factor in Frostburg State's Admissions decision process. The university's wholistic admissions process gives students multiple avenues to gain admission to the institution without standardized testing. Additional criteria such as employment, service, extra-curriculars, strength of essays, community involvement, and more are all areas that are reviewed in the process to continue to provide equal access opportunities for all.
- d. *Monitoring and Evaluation:* FSU's strategic enrollment group reviews departmental and institutional reports to monitor, evaluate, and act on changes related to new student enrollment. In the Admissions Office, and institutionally, careful consideration is appropriately focused on processes that may impact underrepresented students who may be disproportionately affected by decisions, or positive impacts that benefit all students are identified as potential growth opportunities. For fall 2023 new student enrollment, there were increases in the number of applications and enrollments from students in underrepresented populations.