

**Master Plan for Fostering Diversity and Inclusion**  
*One Vision, One Community, One Destiny*  
2009 – 2013



**Draft Report by**

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**On behalf of  
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**Submitted to**

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DRAFT

## I. INTRODUCTION

Since its inception in 1962, Onondaga Community College (OCC) has attracted students and employees from diverse cultures, ethnic groups, and socio-economic backgrounds—generally reflecting the demographics of the five-county region of Central New York (Onondaga, Cayuga, Oswego, Cortland and Madison) that makes up the College’s service region. As an open admission, open access institution of higher education, diversity is at the very center of the College’s identity and mission. Over the years, the local community has become increasingly multicultural and global; therefore, identifying and implementing new and more effective inclusive practices throughout campus operations will further advance the mission and vision of Onondaga Community College and serve the community.

At Onondaga, we are committed to the ongoing development of a campus environment that values and respects human dignity and differences. The College seeks to be an inclusive educational community that values differences and provides individuals with the opportunity to explore and discover their potential to advance the mission of the college and enhance overall institutional effectiveness. In support of the College’s strategic plan, *A Framework for Success*<sup>1</sup>, the Diversity Master Plan is data-driven. The purpose of the Diversity Master Plan (Master Plan) is to provide a framework for fostering opportunities for students and employees to reach their fullest potential by identifying and removing barriers to success. The Master Plan will be used to manage the increasing complexity of student and employee diversity and inclusion, as well as serve as a roadmap to ensure a campus environment characterized by a healthy mix of individuals with diverse backgrounds, life experiences, approaches, skill-sets, and understandings. We believe that our commitment to inclusive practices is imperative to the success of all students and employees, and our success will be impacted by the actions we take now and in the future to be a more inclusive community.

The overall goal of the Master Plan is to enable Onondaga to publicly declare its commitment to diversity and inclusion. It also presents the principles, policies, and values that would guide the college to leverage diversity as an asset for institutional transformation throughout the entire organizational system of the college. Onondaga’s Diversity Master Plan specifically seeks to:

- Advance the vision of diversity and inclusiveness inherent in the College’s mission and vision
- Establish principles, policies, and best practices for advancing diversity and inclusion
- Remove barriers and create opportunities for access and success
- Foster an inclusive campus environment that respects the dignity of every person, seeks similarities, understands differences, and celebrates diversity of its students and employees

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<sup>1</sup> See the college’s website [www.sunyocc.edu](http://www.sunyocc.edu) for the Strategic Plan of the College

- Position the College regionally and nationally as an employer of choice, as a great place to work, and great people to work with
- Make the College's programs and services relevant to community needs
- Demand accountability for inclusive practices that promote student and employee success
- Cultivate a culture of assessment and continuous improvement of diversity and inclusion

### **What is Diversity?**

The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language defines diversity as: *the fact or quality of being diverse; difference. A point or respect in which things differ.*

*Diversity is a commitment to recognizing and appreciating the variety of characteristics that make individuals unique in an atmosphere that promotes and celebrates individual and collective achievement. (The University of Tennessee Libraries' Diversity Committee – 2001, 2008)*

*Diversity is "...who we are. It is quantitative... it is determined by race, gender, and culture. On a more subtle level...class, sexual orientation, religion, ability and appearance" (National Association of Independent Schools website - NAIS)*

Diversity and inclusion is a core value at Onondaga as is evidenced in the college's mission, vision and Principles of Community.

### **College's Mission and Vision**

#### **Mission**

Onondaga Community College makes high quality educational programs and services accessible to our diverse citizenry, empowering individuals to **explore** and **discover** their inherent potential and to **transform** themselves to live, work and thrive in our global community.

#### **Vision**

Onondaga Community College will be recognized as a dynamic leader in higher education and as one of the nation's most innovative community colleges. Students will discover at Onondaga highly credentialed faculty who have chosen to dedicate their careers to teaching, employees who focus on the value of and service to a diverse student body, and an inclusive and welcoming environment that supports achievement of highest potential. Lifelong learning will be nurtured by personal connection, innovative technology, global perspectives and open minds. Through its unique stewardship and public responsibility to prepare citizens for productive careers in this region, Onondaga will serve a primary role in enriching and enhancing the quality of life for all who live and work in Central New York.

## Principles of Community

Respecting the *dignity* and *diversity* of others is fundamental to the educational process, as well as the hallmark of citizen participation and interpersonal relationships. *Respect* knows no bounds whatever our differences in socioeconomic status, race, age, gender, sexual orientation, ability, ethnic heritage or religious conviction. **Therefore, I will respect the dignity and diversity of all people.**

Personal *integrity* is a highly held value to be consciously chosen by an individual both in the classroom and throughout the campus community. **Therefore, I will sincerely pursue knowledge with honesty.**

We are all in this life and community together. And each of us is 100% *responsible* for our own actions. **Therefore, I will learn to work as a member of the community as well as independently.**

We each affect one another; we are *interdependent*. We are role models for each other. What happens to one affects us all. A community characterized by *civility* and decency brings out the best in each of us. **Therefore, I am committed to act with the greatest compassion and deepest wisdom.**

## II. DIVERSITY COUNCIL

In 2002-2004, the College engaged with Cornell University researchers as a pilot for a new way of measuring diversity, one that measures institutional effectiveness in *utilizing* diversity to achieve its mission and goals. In 2005, Dr. Debbie L. Sydow, President of Onondaga Community College, acted to establish a council to facilitate dialogue among key leaders of the college and local community around issues related to diversity and inclusion. The purpose, vision, mission, and charges of Onondaga Community College's Diversity Council were as follows:

### Purpose:

- To promote cross-cultural understanding, communication and cultural competence among employees and students.
- To gather, analyze and monitor relevant information and data concerning diversity at OCC and to set specific goals and objectives for achieving and enhancing diversity awareness and cross-cultural understanding, and to adjust those goals and objectives as needed.
- To recognize excellence in diversity education, awareness and promotion on campus.
- To facilitate timely communications, when necessary, about issues adversely affecting students, faculty, administrators and staff of color.

## **Vision and Mission**

- **Vision:** The Diversity Council aspires to build and sustain a college community where the quality of education of all students and the work experience of its employees is enhanced and enriched by our diverse backgrounds and perspectives.
- **Mission:** In keeping with Onondaga Community College's mission and strategic goals relative to diversity, the Diversity Council will promote respect for the inherent dignity and worth of all College constituents in the learning and work environments and will seek to create a climate that values diversity, inclusiveness, acceptance, equity, and social justice, and is free from prejudice, discrimination and hate campus-wide.

## **Charges**

The Diversity Council was charged to advise and make recommendations to the College President about ways to fulfill the College mission and improve college operations through greater inclusion of diverse perspectives. The Council focuses on 6 core objectives:

1. Improve recruitment, retention and graduation of students from diverse and/or underserved backgrounds
2. Improve the employee recruitment and orientation process to attract and retain a diverse workforce and leadership team that reflects the diversity of the College's service area
3. Improve campus culture relative to inclusion, tolerance, and respect for human dignity through diversity awareness programs and activities
4. Infuse multiculturalism, pluralism, and global awareness into the educational curriculum
5. Improve college-community connections through community outreach

## **Structure**

The Council comprises of representatives of constituent groups on campus and in the community:

- Committee Chair: College President or designee
- ALANA (African, Latino/a, Asian, and Native American) representatives (3)
- Faculty Association representative (1)
- Staff Association representative (2)
- Administrators Council (2)
- Student representatives (4): at-large, international, cultural clubs, student government
- EOP representative (1)
- Special Needs representative (1)
- Gender representative (1)

- Community representatives (maximum of 3)

*Ex-Officio/Administrative Support:*

- Human Resources representative
- Associate Vice President for Diversity/Chief Diversity Officer (formerly known as the Director of Multicultural Resources and Diversity)
- Institutional Research & Planning representative
- Provost & Senior Vice President (formerly known as the Vice President of Student and Academic Services)
- President's Office staff member

### **III. ONE VISION, ONE COMMUNITY, ONE DESTINY**

**Diversity Master Plan Purpose: Sets targeted goals and strategies to advance the Strategic Goals outlined in the Framework for Success and Key Performance Indicator A3:**

*Onondaga Community College, at all levels, will be an inclusive environment that celebrates and promotes understanding and respect within a diverse student body, staff and community.*

#### **A. Access and Equity**

#### **Goal 1. Improve recruitment, retention and graduation of students from diverse and/or underserved backgrounds**

**Outcomes:**

1. A 3% increase in the enrollment rate of minority, first-generation, and low-income students achieved by 2013
2. At least 85% of students from targeted groups indicate admissions/recruitment process was inclusive/engaging
3. Annual increase in availability of evening, weekend, and online courses over previous year, with a target of 65% of classes offered daytime; 10% evening; 2% weekends; 10% online; 5% off-campus and 8% other (late day, independent study, etc.).
4. Annual increase in retention, graduate rates, and transfer rates of minority, first-generation, and low-income students over the previous year to close the gap to within 5% the rates of the general student population by 2011, with a retention rate of at least 65% and graduation rate of at least 25%.
5. Increase international student population. A total of 200 students will be in attendance by 2012.

**Action Plan/Strategies:**

- Enhance communications with K-12 schools through school visits, campus visits, electronic communications.

- Increase promotion of LSAMP, CSTEP, EOP, S-STEM and other programs to K-12 schools to attract students and to current OCC students.
- Strengthen partnerships with community partners.
- Expand availability of evening, weekend, and online courses to meet needs of diverse populations.
- Expand mentoring program for targeted groups.
- Utilize the Presidential Scholarships Program to attract promising underrepresented students in the region.
- Conduct a targeted analysis to better understand success strategies for traditionally underrepresented populations

**Accountability:** Provost and Senior Vice President

**Goal 2. Improve employee recruitment and orientation process to attract and retain a diverse workforce and leadership team that reflects the diversity of the College’s service area**

**Outcomes:**

1. The average number of applications submitted by minority/under-represented individuals will increase over previous year
2. Annual increase in yield rate among diverse applicants over previous year, to achieve workforce diversity that aligns with or exceeds the diversity of the service area
3. At least 90% of new hires indicate recruitment/orientation process was inclusive/engaging

**Action Plan/Strategies:**

- Establish collaboration between Human Resources and Public Affairs to establish a diverse employee branding strategy aligned with Onondaga’s overall marketing branding strategy\*
- Implement standard HR electronic applicant tracking system\*
- Enhance the search committee process and continue to monitor to ensure each committee includes ethnic and gender diversity\*
- Create database of job candidates not selected who might be qualified for future positions\*
- Expand orientation program
- Create ongoing professional development and mentoring program
- Leverage social networking sites such as Linked-in, Facebook, and in particular alumni groups of Historically Black Colleges to identify diverse talent candidates
- Recruit for key positions nationwide\*
- Leverage ALANA and diversity council to welcome and conduct outreach to diverse new hires\*

**Accountability:** Provost and Senior Vice President and Director of Human Resources

## **B. Teaching & Learning**

### **Goal 3. Improve campus culture relative to inclusion, tolerance, and respect for human dignity through diversity awareness programs and activities.**

#### **Outcomes:**

1. Improve the quality and increase the number of cultural programs and activities per academic year.
2. A 3% increase in the number of participants at cultural programs and activities per academic year, with at least 80% of participants indicating that their participation had an impact on their cultural awareness.
3. 70% of students and employees surveyed will indicate their engagement in cultural related activities.

#### **Action Plan/Strategies:**

- Recognize and reward “best practices” of diversity and inclusion among students, faculty, administration, staff, and departments across the campus (i.e. Board of Trustees, Ann Felton Multicultural Award).
- Establish President’s Diversity Speaker Series.
- Expand celebrations of cultural/ethnic heritage and other events that recognize diversity of students and employees.
- Increase faculty, staff, and student participation in the Arts Across Campus series.
- Provide employee and student development diversity training and education.
- Create departmental diversity action plans that are aligned with the overall college diversity master plan.
- Hold supervisors at divisional and departmental levels accountable for improvement of climate in their respective areas, and inclusive of their annual evaluation.
- Periodically conduct employee engagement survey, such as Gallup Q12\*
- Utilize e-learning for diversity training, in addition to exiting face-to-face trainings\*

**Accountability: Provost and Senior Vice President and Director of Human Resources**

### **Goal 4. Infuse multiculturalism, pluralism, and global awareness into the educational curriculum.**

#### **Outcomes:**

1. The number of faculty who successfully complete “diversity in curriculum training program” facilitated by the Teaching Center with the support by Diversity Services, or other diversity training programs, will be tracked and monitored.
2. The percentage of faculty incorporating diversity content in their courses will increase annually by 5-10%.

3. Maintain or increase international experiences among students and employees, with about 3-5% of students and employees participating in either study or travel abroad each year, and at least 70% indicating their experiences had a major impact on their understanding of another culture.

**Action Plan/Strategies:**

- Secure scholarships for students to participate in education abroad activities and programs.
- Establish a Global Ambassador Program (international students in the classroom and community).
- Establish a Curriculum Transformation Institute (faculty development program).
- Establish/strengthen partnerships with overseas colleges/universities.
- Participate in Visiting Scholar programs.
- Encourage Faculty development abroad.

**Accountability: Provost and Senior Vice President**

**C. Community Outreach**

**Goal 5. Strengthen college-community connections.**

**Outcomes:**

1. Annual Report on successful collaborations and co-sponsored programs, including descriptions of outreach and community service activities and the number of students and employees participating in outreach efforts, with an increase of between 3% and 5% in the number of employees and community members participating.

**Action Plan/Strategies:**

- Encourage student and employee engagement with internships, community service and volunteerism in the community.
- Recognize student and employee service to the community.
- Identify and collaborate with groups that seek to promote diversity and inclusion, and increase involvement of those groups through mentoring, employment referrals, and program development/implementation.
- Develop partnerships with educational, financial, economic, and cultural institutions in the community that support the College's diversity initiatives.

**Accountability: Provost and Senior Vice President**

**\*Denotes recommended by VIRTCOM.**