

CAREER & EDUCATION

Urban Planners Recruit Students with Eye on Diversity

In these challenging economic times, partnership between organizations is critical. In Vancouver, the American Planning Association is working with the city of Vancouver to support and encourage diversity in local government, urban planning and related professions.

The APA has established an Ambassador Program which is designed to connect students, particularly students of color, with

practicing planners in two main efforts: to expose them to the field of planning and related community development careers.

The program provides a unique opportunity for planners to become directly involved in the recruitment and development of a diverse new generation of future planners that positively reflect the diversity of the communities they will serve.

Matching up with Vancouver's

diversity initiatives, the program strives to build a workforce that reflects the diverse community and is respectful of diversity. Through this outreach, Vancouver and the American Planning Association hope to inspire students to consider careers in public service and the planning related professions.

As part of the partnership, Larry Vasquez, a planner for the City of Vancouver has teamed up with

Portland area consultant and former Oregon APA president Greg Winterowd of Winterbrook Planning, to develop a network of interest and support for community and educational outreach to diverse student in the greater Portland/Vancouver region and link them to university and community colleges programs in Washington and Oregon.

For more information on the Oregon APA Chapter's program,

contact Ann M. Pytynia at 503-618-2859 or

Ann.Pytynia@ci.gresham.or.us. For information on the city of Vancouver's diversity initiatives, contact Nancy Pionk at 360-619-1148 or nancy.pionk@ci.vancouver.wa.us. For information on careers in planning and community development at the city of Vancouver, contact Larry Vasquez at 360-487-7811 or larry.vasquez@ci.vancouver.wa.us.

Faculty Internships in College Teaching



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Future Teachers Complete Degrees

Grads fill gaps

The 2010 graduates of the Portland Teachers Program will be honored Friday, May 28, at Portland Community College's Cascade Campus, 705 N. Killingsworth St., with a celebration in the Moriarty Arts and Humanities building from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

The graduates this year are Quiana Allen, Meriba Asencio, Jalia Campbell, Reginal Cole, Tina Dang, Yolanda Flores, Sarah Gonzalez, Antoinia Griffin, Rosina Hardy, Mario Interian, Tawanda Jones, Martha Rodriguez and Andre Washington. They have spent the past five years earning first their bachelor's degrees, and then completing a year of graduate work and student teaching to get an Oregon teaching license.

The program was created to place more culturally and ethnically diverse teachers in local public school classrooms, an important tool in addressing lingering inequities in our society, said Deborah Cochrane, the program's director.

"I think that placing more teachers in the classroom who are committed to social justice is one of the ways in which we can get at the systemic aspects of racism and inequity that still plague our culture," said Cochrane.

This year's celebration also marks a milestone in the program's history. Sarah Gonzales is the first Portland Teachers Program graduate to arise from the program's partnership with the Beaverton School District, first established in 2007. Gonzales, who attended grade school and high school in Beaverton, will return there to assume her teaching duties.

Nearly 60 aspiring teachers and a host of alumni will also be recognized at the celebration. The future teachers range from freshmen to

graduate students, and the alumni represent teachers and administrators who have graduated from the program over the past 20 years.

Also in attendance will be participants' families; leaders from the African American, Native American, Latino and Asian American communities; and representatives from education, business and government.

The celebration honors a culturally diverse group of people who have chosen a career that will benefit their communities and society as a whole. The event recognizes participants in the program for the positive choices they have made, and highlights the program's graduates for the effort and sacrifices they have made to complete the long journey to become educators.

"Good teachers shape the minds of our future leaders and citizens," Cochrane said, "so we need to support and encourage good teachers, those who have the courage, patience, dedication and love to do this important, challenging work. Teachers are the single most important factor in the classroom in terms of academic achievement, and yet as a society, we place far too little value on teachers and teacher education."

The Portland Teachers Program is a partnership among Portland Public Schools, Portland Community College, Portland State University, the University of Portland and Beaverton School District, designed to increase the number of culturally competent teachers for Portland and Beaverton schools, with a focus on the recruitment of underrepresented groups.

Since 1989 the program has graduated nearly 140 teachers, most of whom continue to teach or administer in Portland schools.

For more information, call Deborah Cochrane, 503-978-5444.

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