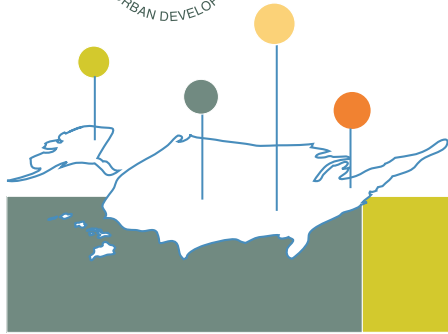




U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development  
Office of Policy Development and Research



# Diversity Works

Office of University Partnerships

Minority-Serving Institutions Developing Partnerships, Building Communities

VOL. 1, ISSUE 1

## Announcing Diversity Works

*Sherone Ivey, Associate Deputy Assistant Secretary for University Partnerships*

Welcome to the inaugural issue of *Diversity Works*, a publication dedicated to describing and celebrating the accomplishments of minority-based programs funded by the Office of University Partnerships (OUP).



Previously, we published individual newsletters for each program—Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU), Hispanic-Serving Institutions Assisting Communities (HSIAC), and Alaska Native/Native Hawaiian Institutions Assisting Communities (AN/NHIAC)—that featured interesting program projects and compelling profiles. However, we felt that there were common program themes, lessons learned, and best practices that could be shared among grantees across all three programs.

Whether we were examining the establishment of a Mercado in South Texas or a shopping center in Alabama, a childcare center in the San Joaquin Valley or an after-school program in Hawaii, it was evident that many of our minority-based institutions share common experiences. To address these issues in individual publications was to deny this shared experience, so we decided to consolidate these newsletters into one publication.

*Diversity Works* will enable us to share grantee achievements with a broader audience in a single format. Also, by combining three individual newsletters into one

semiannual publication, we hope to enhance OUP's dissemination strategy, bringing useful and timely information to current and potential grantees.

If diversity makes for a rich tapestry, as American poet Maya Angelou says, then grantees of the OUP's minority-serving programs are the threads in this tapestry. We are extremely proud of their work of empowering individuals from a wide variety of cultures, ethnic groups, and socioeconomic backgrounds.

*Diversity Works* will show us how they achieve this.

## Preserving the Past for the Future

"Culture ... is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society," says Edward Burnett Tylor in *Primitive Culture: Researches into the Development of Mythology, Philosophy, Religion, Art and Custom*. Tylor's definition has been embraced by anthropologists and folklorists for more than a century.

But is it important to preserve culture—those beliefs, arts, and customs that Tylor emphasizes? And how can we prevent a population's heritage from fading away? Richard C. Shepard of the University of Miami (UM) School of Architecture and Karen Ladegard of the Interior Aleutians Campus University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF), both dynamic supporters of preserving cultural heritage, address these issues daily.

Shepard and Ladegard represent two OUP grantees engaged in separate projects to document and secure the history and cultural heritage of their constituents.

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Their projects, including West Coconut Grove (WCG) community and McGrath Museum, show an appreciation for the past and the importance of preserving it and also demonstrate that through commitment and community partnerships a population's heritage can be retained.

## University of Miami: West Coconut Grove Revitalization and Preservation

"We are bound to make the same mistakes repeatedly if we do not preserve our history to study and learn from it," Shepard says. "Observing our past provides a guidebook as to where the future should take us. The priorities and the rules are right there in the places and events and decisions that have gone on before."

"Besides climate and placement, history and cultural heritage are the only things that differentiate one place from another. If local characteristics are obliterated by neglect or by new development that's indistinguishable from that of other places, the culture and the history of that place disappears," says Shepard. That is why since 1999, he and the University of Miami's Department of Architecture have spearheaded a revitalization and historical preservation interdisciplinary project in WCG, a historic Miami neighborhood. They are using the university's Hispanic-Serving Institutions Assisting Communities (HSIAC) program grant as a catalyst to further revitalization activities and preserve the architectural and cultural heritage of the neighborhood.

### Community Partnerships

"We selected WCG due to its readiness to work with the university on revitalization efforts and due to its proximity to us," says Shepard. "We saw the neighborhood as worthy of preservation as a historical place in Miami with sixth- and seventh-generation descendants of the original Bahamian settlers still living there. There are vernacular architecture structures typical of worker



Traditional Southern dogtrot house in Frow Avenue, Coconut Grove

housing or shotgun homes, and a scale and pattern of development that, if not protected, would be replaced by the type of commercial and residential buildings and density of adjacent developments."



Two-story shotgun house in Thomas Avenue, Coconut Grove, designed by a team of UM architecture students

In addition to preserving WCG's heritage, this project provides students with opportunities to work with community partners to build and rebuild the neighborhood, thereby improving the quality of life for its residents.

"We hoped to find ways to increase home and local property ownership so that residents would take care of their own blocks, streets, and buildings," says Shepard. "We also set out to change the zoning to prevent denser and higher buildings [from being built]."

Shepard believes that if the neighborhood is protected from development like that in the surrounding area, it will remain distinct and preserve the values on which it was founded.

To date, more than 279 University of Miami students have been involved in the project. Their accomplishments include:

- Architecture students have proposed designs for the community that resonate with the residents' heritage, culture, and needs. They have designed houses, a community K-8 school, new retail and residential prototypes, and a theater renovation. They have also created CD-ROMs, photography exhibits, and oral histories, and presented them to the WCG community. They hope to encourage residents to become architects of change.
- Photography, film, and multimedia students document elements of the area's physical and social fabric to create a living portrait of WCG.

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- History students record and archive oral histories and current viewpoints from community residents to help them better understand their Bahamian heritage.
- Sociology students, particularly those in the Afro-American Studies program, study WCG's community, family structure, and values as it faces gentrification and the potential loss of identity.

### Reflection on the Project's Contributions

"We have helped residents and local community groups to design and build historically appropriate homes, conduct oral histories, photograph places and events, assist with legal problems, provide children's art programs, and make video documentaries," says Shepherd. He believes this appreciation of the past has a definite impact on the future.

### Interior Aleutians Campus University of Alaska Fairbanks: McGrath Museum Showcases History and Culture

Staff of the Interior Aleutians Campus University of Alaska Fairbanks, McGrath Center believe that establishing partnerships with local agencies is the best way to ensure successful projects. In this spirit, they collaborated with a variety of community agencies and used their Alaska Native/Native Hawaiian Institutions

Assisting Communities (AN/NHIAC) program grant for a project titled Revitalizing History Through Community Partnerships.

Initially, their historical preservation project involved restoring two historical buildings, one in Anvik and another in McGrath, two villages within

the McGrath University Center service region. After environmental reviews of both sites, project staff determined that it was not feasible to complete either project with the designated funds, so they decided to construct a museum in McGrath, where there is an active historical society.

The goal of the project was to construct a local museum to house historical artifacts and develop museum studies. Construction began in July 2004 and was completed in November 2004. The museum features three display rooms, one office and storage room,



Karen Ladegard.

exhibit areas for natural history, Athabaskan indigenous culture, gold mining history, aviation history, oral history, historic photographs, art-of-living artists, and traveling/rotating exhibits. The McGrath Center serves a region encompassing nine Athabaskan Indian villages along the Yukon and Kuskokwim Rivers.

### Museum Development

"The Tochak Historical Society has been active in McGrath since 1980 and has collected oral histories, historical documents, and historical photographs and artifacts from various time periods and the indigenous Athabaskan culture," states Ladegard, project manager for the university's AN/NHIAC grant. "They have wanted a museum to display these collections and



McGrath Museum near completion.

develop museum studies programs. We decided to join them in the construction of a local museum and with the development of museum educational programs." After researching available land and confronting site control issues, project staff agreed that constructing additional space on an existing building would increase sustainability of the museum and alleviate issues of land site control.

"The Iditarod Area School District was most interested in increasing their partnership with the university through this project," states Ladegard. "They saw this project as an opportunity to merge educational programs for school-aged students with the activities of the museum. After several monthly meetings of all McGrath agencies and with members of the Tochak Historical Society, architectural plans for the new museum were drawn up as an addition to the school district office building."

In December 2004, the university, in partnership with the Tochak Historical Society, hosted an open house of the new museum. The event was attended by more than 80 people, including members of the Iditarod Area School District Board.

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“We have offered classes in oral history collection and transcription to begin assembling an oral history display,” states Ladegard. “We have also offered a taxidermy class that was attended by adults and high school-aged students. Museum and live mounts were prepared during this class, all of which will become part of the natural history display. We are in the process of collecting materials for a gold mining exhibit.”

The McGrath Takotna Nikolai Telida, an Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act corporation serving the four Athabascan villages, has provided the funding for a 4-x-8-foot map of historical and traditional trails to be prepared by professional cartographers and displayed in the museum. The museum also hosted a series of parties where elders share stories about their old photographs. This information is recorded by audio and, where possible, on videotape. Photographs are copied and placed on a digital file for future use.

### Impact on Surrounding Community

Since construction of the McGrath Museum, two other villages in the McGrath region, Holy Cross and Anvik, have sought funding to construct their own cultural centers.

“Visitors to our museum now see that having such a place can be a reality, and they are motivated to construct their own,” states Ladegard. “Several individuals from neighboring communities have expressed an interest in the museum studies classes we offer, and there is strong interest in learning Project Jukebox, a computer program designed for displaying oral histories. Since oral histories have been collected throughout our villages for several years, this project will provide an opportunity for residents from surrounding villages to learn the program and begin displaying their oral histories.”

In addition, people from surrounding communities are interested in learning taxidermy to display local wildlife. They will have the opportunity to participate in classes that McGrath offers, knowing that their mounts will become part of the museum collection. The Iditarod Area School District and the university will use the museum as a training ground for individuals interested in a career in museum studies as well as an opportunity to excite students about the rich local culture and history of this region.

### Thankful for HUD Support

Being awarded the AN/NHIAC grant has opened several doors for the people of McGrath and the surrounding villages.

“First, it has created another career area for students of all ages. Volunteers with diverse interests and talents have come together to work at the museum, and several people are now seeking classes in a variety of areas of museum studies,” states Ladegard. “Second, this grant has given the upper Kuskokwim people a place to showcase their rich history and culture. Since the completion of the museum construction, people have offered personal artifacts, historical documents, and other items for display. It would have to be said that this museum has helped to raise the self-esteem of a small community. It has also given the community of McGrath another reason to continue holding brown bag luncheons for the purpose of planning future museum projects.”

For more information on the West Coconut Grove historical preservation project organized by the Center for Urban and Community Design, University of Miami School of Architecture, contact:

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*Richard Shepard is an architect, adjunct faculty for UM's School of Architecture, and director of the Center for Urban and Community Design at the school of architecture.*

For more information on the McGrath Museum, contact:

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*Karen Ladegard is Interior Aleutians Campus of UAF's project manager for the HUD AN/NHIAC grant and has overseen the building of the McGrath Museum and the development of educational programs related to the museum.*

## Current Literature on Community Engagement

### New Directions in Civic Engagement: University Avenue Meets Main Street

*A publication of the Pew Partnership for Civic Change.*

How does a civically engaged college or university benefit its students and community? According to *New Directions in Civic Engagement: University Avenue Meets Main Street*, a recent Pew Partnership for Civic Change publication, engagement enables students to connect classroom learning and hands-on, real-world experiences while building stronger communities by aligning the institution's resources with local needs.

Many universities articulate public goals in their mission statement. The collection of essays in this publication contends that engaged institutions live out those commitments in their structure, values, and behavior.

*New Directions in Civic Engagement* is organized in four sections of essays, which thematically represent pressing issues surrounding university and community partnerships, including the following:

- Section I: Engagement Through University-Community Partnerships includes the essays "Key Features of Successful Partnerships," "A Public Citizen: The Civic Role of an Educational Institution for the Betterment of Society," and "A Partnership That's Making a Difference: The University of Pennsylvania's West Philadelphia Initiatives."
- Section II: Engagement Through Civic Education includes the essays "Educating for Citizenship in a Diverse and Interdependent Society," "The Role of Higher Education in Preparing Undergraduates for Lives of Civic Responsibility," and "Brown University and Civic Engagement: A Recent Graduate's Perspective."



**Congratulations to all of  
the 2005 HBCU, HSIAC, and  
AN/NHIAC Grantees!**

For a complete list of the new grantees and a description of their projects, please see the OUP Web site at [www.oup.org](http://www.oup.org)

- Section III: New Perspectives on Engagement includes the essays "The Public Engagement of Theological Education," "Heavy Lifting: Bridging Main Street and College Avenue," and "Mutual Benefits That Can Accrue to Universities and Communities From Their Interactions with Each Other."
- Section IV: Is It Working? Three Universities Take on Assessment includes the essay "Assessment Strategies in Civic Engagement and Higher Education."

The nine essayists in this publication are representative of leaders in the field of higher education and community development. They include university outreach officers, distinguished scholars working in the field of civic engagement and higher education, community practitioners, former and current theological seminary faculty, two college presidents, and a recent university graduate. They all believe that civic education and career preparation need not be seen as mutually exclusive, but instead can be mutually reinforcing. Their varied perspectives offer a clear picture of the importance of civic engagement in higher education, describe the state of engagement efforts at several institutions, and suggest various ways to foster the civic mission of colleges and universities for the betterment of students, institutions, and communities. The concluding essay identifies some of the key lessons of the publication and offers recommendations for scholars and practitioners committed to enhancing the civic role of colleges and universities.

To view or download this publication, visit the Pew Partnership for Civic Change Web site at [www.pew-partnership.org/newdirections.html](http://www.pew-partnership.org/newdirections.html). To order a copy, contact:

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The Pew Partnership for Civic Change was established in 1992 and is a civic research organization that provides consulting and program support to communities, governments, foundations, and nonprofit agencies.

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## Funding Resources

### *Historical Preservation and Culture Grants*

The profiles in this issue have highlighted the proactive participation of OUP grantees in cultural and historical preservation. Following are foundations and organizations that support historical preservation projects.

#### **American Express Foundation**

##### *Cultural Heritage Grants*

The foundation's cultural heritage grants support art and culture unique to countries and regions. They also emphasize public awareness of the importance of historic and environmental preservation; direct support for important cultural institutions and major projects in the visual and performing arts representative of national, regional, and local cultures; preservation and management of major tourism sites; and access to the arts and assistance to organizations in developing new audiences. For more information or to apply for these grants, visit the foundation's Web site at [http://home3.americanexpress.com/corp/giving\\_back.asp](http://home3.americanexpress.com/corp/giving_back.asp) and click on the *cultural heritage* link.

#### **National Park Service (NPS)**

NPS awards Historic Preservation Fund grants in several categories, including:

- Indian tribes, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiian organizations that support cultural and historic preservation projects and promote their unique cultural heritage and traditions. For more information on the next grant cycle, award amounts, or the application process, contact Bob Ruff at (202) 354-2068 or at [bob\\_ruff@nps.gov](mailto:bob_ruff@nps.gov), or visit the NPS Web site at <http://www.cr.nps.gov> and select the *grants* option.
- Historically Black Colleges and Universities, which help grantees repair historic buildings on their campuses. Repairs should address wood rot and termite damage; leaking roofs and water damage; asbestos and lead paint abatement; masonry work; electrical rewiring; heating, air conditioning, and ventilation systems; and physical accessibility for disabled persons. For more information on the next grant cycle, award amounts, or the application process, contact Linda Hall at (404) 562-3171, ext. 513, or visit the NPS Web site at <http://www.cr.nps.gov> and select the *grants* option.