OHRM Initiates “Faculty Diversity Dialogues”

On May 16th, OHRM’s Office of Recruitment and Diversity (“ORD”) launched a new initiative to promote the recruitment and retention of a diverse faculty at The City University of New York: the “Faculty Diversity Dialogues.” Representatives from each of CUNY’s campuses participated, including Brooklyn College President Michelle Anderson, campus Chief Diversity Officers, members of the University Advisory Council on Diversity, and representatives of college faculty diversity councils.

“When diverse perspectives are linked to a common purpose, organizations thrive,” said Dr. Arlene Torres, University Dean of Recruitment & Diversity. “People who collaborate and bring a range of perspectives to the table can better navigate the intricate layers that constitute the fabric of the academy. Collectively, we have the power to leverage the best in our faculty, staff and students to create new tapestries and to change culture.”

A diverse panel of CUNY faculty members with particular expertise also addressed the group, offering strategies to address implicit and inherent bias in the search and recruitment process. The panel was comprised of Joyce Moy, Executive Director of the Asian American and Asian Research Institute (“AAARI”); Dr. Virginia Valian, Distinguished Professor of Psychology and Co-Founder of the Gender Equity Project at Hunter College; Dr. Martin Ruck, Professor of Developmental Psychology at the Graduate Center and Senior Advisor to the President on Diversity & Inclusion; and Dr. Shelly Eversley, Associate Professor of English at Baruch College and Director of the CUNY Faculty Fellowship Publication Program.

“Asian Americans face implicit bias because characteristics embodied in the supposedly positive model minority stereotype of being quiet, studious, respectful of authority, etc., are antithetical to what we think are leadership qualities such as outspokenness, being good on your feet, and being willing to challenge and question others,” said Joyce Moy. “This, along with being treated as ‘forever foreign’ or ‘not one of us,’ creates a bamboo ceiling, stunting the ability of Asian Americans to move up the leadership pipeline even when there is exemplary performance.”

ORD supports the need for faculty diversity by continually introducing a range of best practices in the search process and providing training to college administrators, Chief Diversity Officers, search committee chairs and faculty. The goal of the Faculty Diversity Dialogues will be to develop programs to foster faculty engagement in the recruitment and retention of a diverse professoriate and build an inclusive intellectual community. Said Dean Torres, “By doing this, we will enhance the education of our students, who are after all members of a global citizenry.”

For more information on the Faculty Diversity Dialogues, contact ORD@cuny.edu or Victoria.Stone-Cadena@cuny.edu.