Diversity Catalysts Involvement and Impact

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Recommended Citation  
Kokini, Klod; Buzanell, Patrice M.; Chapple, Clint; Hirsch, Andrew; and Howell, Kathleen, "Diversity Catalysts Involvement and Impact" (2014). ADVANCE-Purdue Gender and STEM Research Symposium. 8.  
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DIVERSITY CATALYSTS INVOLVEMENT AND IMPACT

Klod Kokini, Patrice M. Buzzanell, Clint Chapple, Andrew Hirsch, & Kathleen Howell
Gender & STEM Symposium, Purdue U, 2013

Published by Purdue e-Pubs, 2014
Acknowledgment

We are grateful for the support
Of the National Science Foundation
Through
An ADVANCE IT Grant
To Purdue University
Introduction

- PURDUE-ADVANCE project--major goals:
  1) to increase the number and success of STEM women faculty of color;
  2) to increase the success and leadership of women faculty in STEM,
  3) to educate all the faculty and in particular, the majority, about the benefits of diversity and inclusion
The Diversity Catalysts

“ADVANCE-Purdue Diversity Catalysts are high-impact, senior faculty who engage the faculty and staff in conversations about diversity and inclusion issues in their units and across campus.”

- Clint Chapple, Head & Distinguished Professor of Biochemistry
- Andy Hirsch, Interim Head & Professor of Physics
- Kathleen Howell, Hsu Lo Professor of Aeronautics and Astronautics & Distinguished Professor

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The Diversity Catalysts (DCs)

Organization, training and education of the Diversity Catalysts is conducted by:

• Patrice Buzzanell, Professor of Communication
• Klod Kokini, Professor of Mechanical Engineering and Associate Dean in the College of Engineering
Goal 3: Educating the Majority

- Diversity Catalysts
  - receive in-depth education about diversity and inclusion
  - provide information and advice about best practices related to these issues

- Three-layer educational model for sustainable institutional change
  - inform and gain support from Deans (current administration),
  - educate department heads (current leaders),
  - work with newly promoted faculty (future leaders)
Diversity Catalysts (DCs)

- Originally modeled after the University of Michigan STRIDE Program
- Adapted for Purdue initiative and institutional change:
  - Fewer in number but larger in scope (i.e., broader agenda for change in university policy and processes, rather than primarily search and hiring practices)
  - Centered on leaders (heads and newly promoted faculty)
  - Focus on intersectionalities of difference and corresponding structural inequities, rather than gender
  - Early integration of readings, research, mini presentations, facilitations, deconstructions of events and news items

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Process for Accomplishing Goals

- Phase I: Designing DC Experience
  - Selection of Instructors:
    - Social scientist with expertise in gender, diversity and inclusion, and career research and teaching in engineering teams and with engineering managers in executive education
    - Co-PI of Purdue ADVANCE grant, Associate Dean in Engineering with position oriented toward faculty issues
  - Guidelines for Educational Process:
    - Co-learning or collaborative education
    - Use of intersectional lens
    - Situated in safe space for dialogue
Process for Accomplishing Goals

- Phase II: Recruitment and Selection of Diversity Catalysts
  - Desirable characteristics of DCs:
    - recognized expertise in STEM fields and on campus
    - Willingness to accept and commit to a learning model quite different from their prior experiences
    - Demonstrated interest in and engagement with diversity and inclusion for moral and pragmatic reasons
    - Members of the “majority”
Process for Accomplishing Goals

- Phase III: Education and Engagement of Diversity Catalysts
  - Educational Plan:
    - In-depth reading and discussion
    - gradual involvement of DCs into Purdue events, such as
      » the Conference for Pretenure Women and
      » the Hiring/Search workshop
    - “road trip” to U of MI for meetings with STRIDE
    - Ongoing conversations about who we are, what we do, how we are different from other diversity and inclusion initiatives
The DC Perspectives
“Who we are”

- Coming at this from a personal perspective
- Study of the literature
- Learned a great deal and are still in the process of learning
- Not experts
- Learned to bring their own experiences and perspectives (intersectionalities)
- Want to improve the climate at Purdue
- Want to use our position of privilege to affect change.
The Business Case for D&I

We want:

- To meet the demand of organizations that require a diverse workforce
- To have faculty represent and understand diversity and inclusion and educate students who can work across multiple dimensions of diversity
- To attract and retain outstanding faculty
- To recognize that diversity is a prerequisite for institutional excellence in a global community
Key Learnings

- Letters of Recommendation
- Bias
- Meritocracy
- Chilly Climate
- Sponsorship vs. Mentoring
I strongly supported Sarah’s application for an Associate Professor appointment..., and feel that at the present time she is even more qualified for that level.

While she has not been able to accomplish a lot in academic pulmonary medicine during the past few years due to career changes and other personal issues, she has continued to grow and mature, and am sure she would be an even stronger and more effective member of your department than she was in St. Louis.

Her great gift for teaching, especially in small groups and one on one, . I recommend her without reservation for this proposed appointment. 

(Trix and Psenka, 2003, corroborated Madera et al., 2009).
Data from literature

- All mentoring is not created equal...
  
  - “Women are over-mentored and under-sponsored relative to their male peers”.
  
  - There is a special kind of relationship – called sponsorship – in which the mentor goes beyond giving feedback and advice and uses his or her influence with senior executives to advocate for the mentee.

Process for Accomplishing Goals

- Phase IV: Assessment and Sustainability
  - Movement from formative to evaluative assessment
  - Documentation of Activities
  - Mindful of Dual Outcomes:
    - Bases for success, as defined by NSF grant
    - Institutional transformation (deep-seated cultural change, one conversation at a time)
  - Transition Plan for new Diversity Catalysts
  - Inclusion of DCs into Purdue Structure

(continued)

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Process for Accomplishing Goals

Phase IV: Assessment and Sustainability (continued)

- Incoming DC “Trainer”: TJ Boisseau, Associate Professor & Director of Women’s Studies

- Incoming DCs:
  - Evelyn Blackwood, Professor of Anthropology, College of Liberal Arts
  - Timothy S. Fisher, James G. Dwyer Professor of Mechanical Engineering, College of Engineering
  - Barbara L. Golden, Professor of Biochemistry, College of Agriculture
  - James L. Mohler, Associate Dean of Academic Affairs and Diversity and Professor of Computer Graphics Technology, College of Technology
  - Mark Russell, Professor of Animal Sciences, College of Agriculture

- Continuing DCs: Conversations with Newly Promoted Faculty & formal and more individualized contributions
Closing

- Our impact has been directed toward a twofold agenda:
  - cultural change as evidenced by DCs' constant monitoring of, and interventions in, conversations and other discussions with members of the PURDUE community
  - sustainable practices in the form of workshops and regularly scheduled conversations that invite dialogue about how we can make Purdue culture even more inclusionary than it already is

- As we look to the future, incorporation of others into our DC network is vital since "catalysts" by definition get things going but cannot fully sustain efforts.
- We envision this group as being integral to PURDUE leadership training programs and everyday efforts.