CREATING A WORLD OF GOOD

IT TAKES ALL KINDS TO MAKE A WORLD. IT TAKES solidarity and commitment, however, to make a world of difference. And it’s that kind of world – one that represents and accommodates our diverse global community – that the Office of Institutional Diversity is helping create for the College. Fortunately, it has exactly what it takes.

“There is a strong desire for a diverse campus on the part of the faculty, staff and students – and there is, from the top down, a strong commitment to changing the culture at the College,” says John O. Bello-Ogunu, the College’s associate vice president and chief diversity officer, and the head of the new OID. “There is a heightened awareness of the importance and centrality of diversity in achieving both academic and institutional excellence.”

That awareness has only grown since Bello-Ogunu came to the College in January, immediately meeting with various campus and community constituents and setting up a series of town hall meetings for staff, faculty and students.

“I could see right away that it was important that we open up the lines of communication, so we hit the ground rolling with some outreach programs while simultaneously working on a programmatic agenda for this semester and beyond,” says Bello-Ogunu, adding that, with programs like Diversity Week at CoC: Building a More Perfect and Inclusive Campus Community (April 12–16), the OID hopes to provide opportunities for exploring the various aspects and impacts of human diversity and celebrating the College’s own diversity. “We are creating more opportunities to engage in dialogue about our commonalities and discuss our differences in a positive way.”

Of course, it’s not all talk. The OID is putting together a strategic plan not only for improving interracial and multicultural relations on campus, but also for attracting and retaining a diverse student body, faculty and staff.

“This will be a sustained effort over a long period of time. It will take an enormous amount of patience and steadfastness,” says Bello-Ogunu. “We will have to measure our success incrementally while focusing on the finish line, the prize. And that prize is the day when we can boast of the College of Charleston as a model all-inclusive, diverse campus, where our cultural differences as well as our human similarities are seen as something positive.”

Diversity is certainly a positive thing – not just for our campus, but for our students, as well.

“Diversity is essential to enhancing our students’ academic, personal and professional success,” says Bello-Ogunu. “I believe that we have the ethical, moral and professional responsibility to prepare our students to become globally educated citizens who can function productively in today’s global village. If we want them to grow to be responsible global citizens, we must present them with the intercultural realities of today.”

And that means reflecting the world’s diverse cultures in the College’s community, its academic curricula and its administrative policies.

“The overall goal is to integrate diversity into the fabric of life here at the College so that we can create and sustain an environment that is welcoming, supportive and nurturing for every member of the College of Charleston family,” says Bello-Ogunu. “It’s up to all of us – the Office of Institutional Diversity exists to help you be the best you can be, but we are all responsible for creating this community.”

And it doesn’t have to be hard.

“It’s as simple as reaching out to people who are different from you, leaving your cultural comfort zone, making a sincere effort to learn about other perspectives and other cultures. Staff can raise issues in departmental meetings and help educate their colleagues. Faculty can engage minority students in informal conversations, especially outside the classroom,” suggests Bello-Ogunu. “Little things make a big difference.”

Especially if everyone is doing them.

“That’s why we must create a culture of collective responsibility for diversity,” says Bello-Ogunu. “Once that culture is in place and everyone has a part in it, we’ll no longer be sitting around talking about diversity as a strange phenomenon, but as something we’ve proudly embraced.”

After all, Bello-Ogunu says, “Diversity does us all a world of good.”
BALANCING ACT: The Hacks Find Their On-Field Advantage

THEY KNOW THERE’S NO SUCH thing as a level playing field – there are always advantages and disadvantages at the plate. But they also know that if they want to stay in the game, they have to go up to bat against whatever comes their way. And, while they might be considered the underdogs, the Hacks are by no means out of their league. In fact, as the team who’s played in the City of Charleston’s adult recreational co-ed softball league the second longest of any other, they kind of define it.

“We’re not the fastest or strongest athletes in the league, but we’ve lasted longer than most,” says Scott Peeples, English professor (who – as the center-and sometimes right-fielder – considers herself “the Lucy van Pelt of the team, for the Peanuts fans out there”). “At this point, we should be like a well-oiled machine … except that we’re outdated and clunky compared to the newer models we’re competing against.”

But what the Hacks lack in physical ability they make up for in spirit, humor and style. “We’ve gotten flashier as we’ve aged,” says Duvall, explaining that Farrell and her daughter made the team’s signature tie-dyed shirts last season. “They’re the best shirts in the league. There’s no competition.”

Also unchallenged is the team’s quick-witted banter. “Our patter is always wittier,” says Eichelberger, English professor and the Hacks’ scorekeeper/fill-in batter. “We can hit the ball very far,” agrees Duvall, “but our banter goes right over the other teams’ heads.”

“Yes, they tremble in its shadow,” laughs Eichelberger. “Unfortunately,” says Farrell, “there’s just no on-field advantage for having superior banter.”

If there were, the Hacks would certainly have a better record. As it stands, however, they average 2–3 wins out of 10–12 games every season. “The wins are so rare that we never expect them,” says Peeples. “We always play to win, but we never expect to win.”

“That’s what makes it so great when we do – it feels that much better,” agrees Duvall, adding that – despite the steady win-to-loss ratio – the Hacks have significantly improved their game over the years. “The numbers don’t tell the whole story – we’ve accomplished a lot.”

“We hold our own now – we don’t get creamed anymore,” offers Farrell. Their most notable accomplishment, however, occurred in last season’s playoffs, when – after starting at a disadvantage – they knocked out one team after another, eventually losing the last game by just one run in the bottom of the last inning.

As the second-place winners, the team won a rather hefty trophy, which gets passed between the players’ departments every few weeks. But, although the trophy – and the achievement it represents – means a lot to the team, it’s not what really matters.

“The camaraderie and memories we’re building are prize enough,” says Eichelberger, explaining that – whether gathering for practice and a family cookout or for post-game analysis and a couple of beers – they “really just enjoy spending time together and getting out to play the sport.”

“Winning or losing, there’s nothing I’d rather be doing – nowhere I’d rather be – than hanging out with my friends at a softball field,” agrees Peeples. “It just can’t be beat.”

And, with that attitude to their advantage, neither can the Hacks.
and Larry Krasnoff (philosophy) – as well as the team (originally made up entirely playing ball together.”

and the Hacks’ third baseman, explaining who are half our age and twice our speed, made up primarily of agile 20-somethings.

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but this is the stuff that makes the game fun. Once the ball is thrown, the rest is up to us. We try to

our opponents, but we try to make them look silly. We try to get on base and steal, and we try to

We’ve got to keep our speed up with the athletics coaches serving as his male oriented unit, and we all count on each other for help,” says the single mother, whose son grew up with the athletics coaches serving as his male role-models. “Knowing that people were there to help me when I needed it, it made me know that we would be all right. That’s why it feels like home for me. We’re all there for each other.”

And, considering that Clark has been around longer than most of her coworkers, the role of departmental matriarch – or at least house mother – defaults to her. She’s responsible for making sure the department runs efficiently and generally keeping tabs on everyone’s whereabouts.

“My main responsibility is trying to keep track of all my folks,” she says, explaining that, with more than 60 people in seven different locations, it can be harder than it sounds. “We’re spread out far greater than any other department, and you’d be surprised how many people forget to keep me in the loop.”

If keeping up with her coworkers is the most challenging aspect of her job, working with recruits and their families is the most enjoyable.

“It’s when the recruits become student-athletes, however, that Clark really starts to make an impression, offering sweet treats, jokes or whatever else they need.

“I’m the silent fan for the student-athletes – their total advocate,” says Clark. “W e crack at each other, but they also come to me for advice. I love having that relationship with them. I’m kind of their mom away from home.”

That’s why it’s so heartwarming when the former student-athletes and her student-workers come back to visit.

“It’s so rewarding when they follow up with you or they stop in and remember you,” says Clark. “They’re always happy to see me. I’m the only face they recognize anymore. People come and go, but I’m still here.”

That perseverance is due in large part to Clark’s ability to adapt.

“If I can change when change is being needed, there’s no reason for me to feel threatened,” she explains, “This is a vast world. You have to evolve with it.”

Besides, when you’ve found a place like the College, there’s little incentive to leave.

“It’s a good thing to like where you work,” says Clark. “I can say I always like coming to work because I like the people I work with, and that’s not something that you can say in just any workplace.”

Not in any family, for that matter. ¥

GARDENER’S PICK

FRINGE TREE

AKA: Grancy Graybeard, Old Man’s Beard, Chionanthus virginicus.

ON CAMPUS: Found at the Rita Liddy Hollings Science Center’s northeast entrance.

DESCRIPTION: This graceful, slow-growing deciduous tree is a Southern native and usually reaches 12-20’ in height, with an equal spread. It produces lacy clusters of spectacular white, fringelike petals in mid-spring. In the fall, the broad, glossy leaves turn a striking bright-to-deep yellow.

TIPS: This trouble-free tree tolerates both sun (full sun for best flowering) and shade, a variety of soils and air pollution, making it perfect for both urban landscapes and natural settings. Pair male and female plants together for the most success; to identify plants’ sex, purchase in late summer/early fall when females produce dark blue fruit. Prune branches only after bloom season, taking care not to remove last year’s wood, which produces the flowers.

Use the bark and roots to make tinctures, teas and poultices for treating inflammation of the skin, liver and gall bladder, among other things.
PRIZED: Danny Inabinett Changes His Horse Midstream

WANDER A BLOCK OR TWO TOWARD

Market Street, and it’s hard not to see a horse-drawn carriage. The horse-driver-buggy(-tourist)
combo is a dime a dozen in this town.

Even so, it’s not every day the streets of
downtown Charleston see an ensemble quite
like this: the driver, Danny Inabinett – decked
out in the gloves, driving hat and apron
of his competitive livery – sitting tall atop
the distinctive carriage, and the horse, an
uncommonly stunning creature, leading it with
graceful poise.

Clearly, this is no ordinary horse. Yet, while
it may be more exceptional than any horse
many of us have ever seen, it’s just one of
the many show horses Inabinett (pictured above,
left, with a Gypsy Vanner and the horse’s
owner) worked with during his 30 years as a
competitive trainer and driver.

Until relatively recently, Inabinett’s life was
almost entirely wrapped up in the equestrian
world. He lived in the 2,300-square-foot
quarters above the barn on his farm, where
he trained up to 27 of his clients’ horses (not
to mention his clients) at a time to compete
in events like pleasure driving (involving a
carriage) and combined driving (some riding
and some carriage).

“I was up to my ears in horses,” says
Inabinett, now working as the College’s HVAC
Shop supervisor. “I had to take a sabbatical. I
was with them from 4:30 in the morning until
10 at night sometimes.”

All this while running an HVAC business,
serving as president for the Palmetto Arabian Association and director of the American Haflinger Registry and actively traveling the country for
equine shows, demonstrations, clinics and seminars.

Under Construction

In March, Barnes & Noble Booksellers began renovating the bookstore, which will open for business during the first half of this month.

The plans for the exterior repairs to 69 Coming Street were drafted last month and will be finalized in April.

Exterior painting, hardscaping and landscaping is wrapping up at Craig Hall – as are the reception area and presentation room. The building should be accessed only through the entrance on St. Philip Street or through the door to the right of the courtyard until all work is complete.

Exterior repairs to Randolph Hall, Towell Library and Porters Lodge continue, with window sashes being reinstalled on the east and south sides of Randolph Hall in March and April. Stucco has been cleaned and continues to be repaired on Porters Lodge and the south side of Randolph Hall. Structural repairs for Towell Library began in March and will become more apparent through April.
**FLUTE ENSEMBLE CONCERT**
Faculty and students from a variety of academic backgrounds come together to perform classical works in this annual spring concert.
- **When:** Thurs., April 8, 4 p.m.
- **Where:** Simons Center, Recital Hall
- **Fee:** None
- **Contact:** Tacy Edwards, 3.5927, edwardst@cofc.edu

**SCIENCE BUILDING GRAND OPENING**
Take a tour of the College’s new state-of-the-art Science Building after gathering in its courtyard for the official dedication.
- **When:** Fri., April 16, 4:30-6:30 p.m.
- **Where:** Science Building, 202 Calhoun Street
- **Fee:** None
- **Contact:** RSVP by April 9 to Nina Marsh-Thomas, 3.7518, rsvp@cofc.edu

**A CHARLESTON AFFAIR**
Honor the Class of 2010 at this annual alumni gala with music by The Plainfield Project and catering by Jim ‘N Nicks.
- **When:** Sat., April 24, 7-10 p.m.
- **Where:** Cistern Yard
- **Fee:** through 5 p.m., April 19: $45/employee (limit 2), $60/additional; $120/each at the door
- **Contact:** Katie Heath, 3.7108, heathk@cofc.edu

All information is subject to change. Please verify times, places and registration requirements with listed contact.

She’s certainly not the first to fly the coop and land at the College – nor is she the only one to arrive in fine feather – but the chicken living in the WP parking lot on Warren Street still seems a little out of place. Not unlike the countless chickens who’ve puzzled us before her (Which comes first, the chicken or the egg? Why did the chicken cross the road?), this hen has prompted plenty of speculation since she was first spotted over spring break: Where did she come from? How did she get there? Why did she come? When did she arrive?

“She looks kind of young, so I suspect she hasn’t been there long,” says Isaac Green, assistant professor of computer science, who – as a volunteer with the Center for Birds of Prey in Awendaw – has worked with plenty of displaced birds, and attempted to catch this chicken early last month. “She could be an escapee from a backyard house…. Or, it could be a contraband dorm pet that got bigger and messier than expected.”

Based on her cautious but curious approach when visitors toss chicken feed (or cereal or fruit) in her direction, it appears that – wherever she hails from – there were people there to feed her. That doesn’t mean, however, that she can’t get by without them. “There’s actually a lot of food for chickens – they eat bugs, grass, clover and other things that we have plenty of downtown,” says Green. “They are pretty adaptable.”

This spring chicken certainly seems well adjusted and, having evaded every attempted capture thus far, she’s shown she can handle the free range of campus life. Besides, ultimately, there’s nowhere better to be than the College when it’s time to spread your wings.

**NEWS BRIEFS: News You Can Use**

- The National Science Foundation’s Partnerships for Innovation awarded the College a two-year $599,969 grant for the Lowcountry Partnership for Biomedical Innovation.
- The School of Business received a commitment from Jack Tate, who will donate up to $1 million to the College Foundation over the next two years if the College matches his financial gift to help fund School of Business programs and initiatives.
- The Consortium for Enterprise Systems Management donated $20,000 to the Department of Computer Science’s computer camp.
- The S.C. Commission on Higher Education named Lt. Nestle Grimes the 2010 Campus Safety Officer of the Year.
- Staff and faculty may claim one free ticket to each of this season’s Friday-night baseball and softball games with a valid Cougar Card at the Patriots Point ticket office. Other seasonal baseball/softball promotions include two tickets for $5 for Tuesday games, free entry for two children with an adult ticket purchase to Saturday games and up to four free tickets with military ID for Sunday games. For more information, contact Kelly Mottola, 3.2632 or mottolak@cofc.edu.
Thanks to everyone who participated in the last photo quiz, and congratulations to Quanya Grant, postal clerk in the Office of Mail Services, who was the first to guess that the object in question was one of the 180 old mailboxes installed last year on the back hall of Mail Services. Originally located in Buist-Rivers Residence Hall, the boxes had been removed in 2008 when the hall’s laundry room was enlarged.

Take a look at the picture above. The object can be found on campus. Do you know what it is? The first person to submit the correct answer will win a tasty lunch for two at Liberty Street Fresh Food Company, compliments of ARAMARK. Good luck!

Send your submission to lutza@cofc.edu by Friday, April 16, 2010. The contest is open to all College faculty and staff. One submission per person, please.

Narayanan Kuthirummal
Assistant Professor of Physics
“My favorite place to relax on the campus is the Cistern Yard. The big, mature oak trees always remind me of several huge mango trees we had in our yard back in India. I used to play hide-and-seek behind these trees with my friends during my childhood.”

Vanessa McNamara
Administrative Assistant, School of Sciences and Mathematics
“The third floor of the Addlestone Library. They have nice, comfy chairs and footstools so you can get good and settled for a nice lunchtime read. I go there a lot in the summer when it is not so crowded and too hot for outside. There is a great view, even when it is raining.”

Ijuana Gadsden
Office Manager, Student Affairs
“I like to go into the Stern Center Garden. When it’s not mosquito season, it’s just really calming and soothing back there in the back. I can see the little pond, and there’s just something about water that makes me feel good. It’s very calming.”