

BENITA D. WOLFF

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CHIEF DIVERSITY OFFICER

Results-oriented and visionary higher education leader with extensive experience designing and implementing high-impact diversity and inclusion programs to increase access and equity for historically underrepresented groups. Proven success in recruiting and retaining diverse faculty, staff, students, and trainees and developing systems to support inclusive excellence in higher education, emphasizing academic medicine and science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields. Highly collaborative, interfacing well with executive leaders, colleagues, and a wide range of internal and external constituents.

AREAS OF STRENGTH AND SKILLS

- Long-Range Strategic Planning
- New Program Development
- Inclusive Communication
- Inclusive Recruitment and Retention Practices
- Budget Development and Management
- Community Engagement
- Process Improvement and Change Management

EDUCATION

Doctor of Education, Education and Leadership in Healthcare

Nebraska Methodist College, Omaha, NE

Master of Education, Higher Education Administration

University of Toledo, Toledo, OH

Bachelor of Science, Business Administration

Lincoln University, Jefferson City, MO

Certificate, Diversity Management

Cornell University, New York, NY

EXPERIENCE

Director, Diversity and Inclusion

University of Nevada, Las Vegas, Kirk Kerkorian School of Medicine, Las Vegas, Nevada

July 2016 - current

The University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) is classified as a research university with high research activity. UNLV, tied as the most diverse undergraduate campus in the United States, is designated a Minority Serving Institution (MSI), Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI), and an Asian-American and Native American, Pacific Islander-Serving Institution (AANAPISI). The Kirk Kerkorian School of Medicine (SoM) welcomed a charter class in July 2017 and is the first public allopathic medical school in Las Vegas, Nevada.

Selected Contributions:

- Advise the Dean, Vice Dean for Academic Affairs and Education, and other senior leaders on issues and opportunities related to inclusive excellence across the UNLV SoM enterprise
- Design, implement, and evaluate a comprehensive strategic plan for diversity and inclusion at UNLV SoM

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- Guide the development of the UNLV SoM response to the Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME) accreditation standards related to diversity
- Establish and lead UNLV SoM's Office of Diversity and Inclusion
- Recruit and retain underrepresented faculty and staff to UNLV SoM, in collaboration with Faculty Affairs and Human Resources
- Develop outreach initiatives and pipeline programs to identify, recruit, and support students from groups historically underrepresented in medicine
- Design and implement seminars related to diversity, inclusion, and equity in health care
- Represent UNLV SoM on the Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Council (EDIC) and other System-wide and University-wide committees and working groups

Visiting Equity and Inclusion Administrative Fellow

Harvard University, Faculty of Arts and Sciences, Division of Science and Department of Physics
October 2019 – October 2020

Harvard University is a private Ivy League research institution. The Faculty of Arts and Sciences (FAS) is the largest division of the University. The Division of Science is home to 21 science departments and centers, and the Department of Physics is consistently ranked as one of the top 5 physics programs in the United States.

Selected Contributions:

- Led diversity, inclusion, and belonging initiatives for the FAS Division of Science and the Department of Physics as a member of the FAS Dean for Science's senior leadership team
- Partnered with FAS Faculty Affairs and FAS Human Resources to implement evidence-based strategies to improve the recruitment and retention of diverse faculty, staff, and postdoctoral scholars
- Monitored national initiatives designed to identify and recruit diverse graduate students and introduce "best practices" to the FAS Division of Science and the Department of Physics
- Guided the development of baseline climate assessments across the FAS Division of Science and within the Department of Physics
- Partnered with the FAS Division of Science leadership team, FAS Faculty Affairs, and FAS Human Resources to develop interventions to address issues related to the culture and climate within the Division of Science
- Represented the FAS Division of Science and Department of Physics on committees to support the development of University-wide inclusive excellence strategies for science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields
- Served as a visible resource and partner for FAS Division of Science faculty, staff, students, administrators, and other stakeholders on a range of issues related to diversity, inclusion, and belonging

Director, Inclusion and Diversity, Office of the CEO

ACT, Inc., Iowa City, Iowa
May 2012 – July 2013

ACT, Inc. is an independent, non-profit organization committed to "helping people achieve education and workplace success." Best known for producing the ACT, a standardized college entrance exam, ACT, Inc. provides various education and workforce solutions.

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Selected Contributions:

- Advised the Chief Executive Officer and Executive Leadership Team on inclusion and diversity strategies related to the workforce, workplace, and marketplace
- Established and led ACT's Office of Inclusion and Diversity
- Developed the roadmap for ACT's first Office of Inclusion and Diversity, including recommendations to expand into the current ACT Center for Equity in Learning
- Designed and implemented an enterprise-wide plan to tie inclusion and diversity to ACT's business model, mission, and values
- Developed strategies to recruit and retain a diverse workforce, in partnership with the Chief Talent Officer
- Led ACT's "Inclusion and Collaboration" initiative, communicating its value to internal and external stakeholders in collaboration with the Chief Corporate Strategy and Marketing Officer.
- Raised awareness of ACT's mission, products, services, and solutions by expanding outreach to national minority organizations and education advocacy groups
- Served as ACT's representative to key regional and national community organizations and provided regular status reports to ACT's Board of Directors

Associate Dean for Diversity

University of Iowa, Roy J. and Lucille A. Carver College of Medicine, Iowa City, Iowa
February 2008 – May 2011

The University of Iowa, the 34th best public university in the United States, is the major research institution for Iowa. UI Health Care comprises the Roy J. and Lucille A. Carver College of Medicine (CCOM) and the University of Iowa Hospital and Clinics (UIHC). UIHC is consistently ranked as one of the top hospitals in the United States.

Selected Contributions:

- Led the design and implementation of the first strategic diversity plan for the UI Carver College of Medicine as the inaugural Associate Dean for Diversity and Chief Diversity Officer for CCOM
- Advised the Vice President for Medical Affairs, Dean of the College of Medicine, Hospital Chief Executive Officer, and other senior leaders on a range of issues related to inclusive excellence in academic medicine
- Executed the strategies and tactics articulated under the "Diversity" goal in UI Health Care's integrated strategic plan; aligned diversity efforts with the research, education, and service missions of the academic medical center
- Launched and led the CCOM Office of Cultural Affairs and Diversity Initiatives
- Develop programs to increase the diversity of M.D., Ph.D., and M.D./Ph.D. applicant pools
- Partnered with the Office of Student Affairs and Curriculum (OSAC), the Medical Scientist Training Program (MSTP), and the Bioscience Program to support underrepresented M.D., Ph.D., and M.D./Ph.D. students
- Collaborated with the Office of Faculty Affairs and Development (OFAD) to develop "best practices" for conducting inclusive faculty searches
- Partnered with departmental executive officers and program directors to identify, recruit, and retain faculty from groups underrepresented in the UI Health Care community
- Launched the UI Health Care Distinguished lecture in honor of the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

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- Participated in local, state, and national efforts to increase diversity in the healthcare professions; served as the institutional representative to the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) Group on Diversity and Inclusion (GDI)
- Collaborated with the Office of Scientific Affairs to provide content for proposals to the National Institutes of Health (NIH), National Science Foundation (NSF), and other grant funding agencies
- Coordinated CCOM's institutional response to the enhanced diversity standards from the Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME) during the accreditation process (2009)

Pre-Professional Advisor (*part-time*)

Mercer University, Office of Academic and Advising Services, Macon, Georgia
Fall 2007

Mercer University is a faith-based private institution that enrolls over 8,000 undergraduate, graduate, and professional students.

Selected Contributions:

- Provided resources and counseled students interested in pursuing post-baccalaureate education in Medicine, Pharmacy, Dentistry, Physical Therapy, and other professional degree programs
- Designed and implemented educational seminars for pre-professional students to increase awareness of post-baccalaureate training opportunities
- Assisted students with submitting competitive graduate and professional school application materials
- Coordinated the application submission process to the Mercer University Health Vocation Advisement Committee and advocated for students interested in receiving a composite letter of recommendation from this committee

Manager, Diversity Programs and Community Outreach

Washington University, Division of Biology and Biomedical Sciences, St. Louis Missouri
September 2004 – December 2005

Washington University in St. Louis is a private research institution. The Division of Biology and Biomedical Sciences (DBBS) is housed in the Medical School. The Washington University School of Medicine is consistently ranked as one of the top ten medical schools in the United States.

Selected Contributions:

- Managed the administrative and operational aspects of the Division of Biology and Biomedical Sciences (DBBS) Office of Diversity Programs and Community Outreach
- Recruited and retained students from groups underrepresented in DBBS, in collaboration with program directors and admissions committees
- Increased the racial and ethnic diversity of the applicant pool for the M.D./Ph.D. and Ph.D. programs through strategic recruitment practices (e.g., pipeline development)
- Directed the Biomedical Summer Research Apprenticeship Program (BioMedRAP), recruited students, identified faculty mentors, hired and supervised staff, and managed the budget and other administrative aspects of the program
- Prepared prospective students to submit competitive applications to the M.D./Ph.D. and Ph.D. programs

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- Collaborated with University Relations to design electronic and print diversity publications; developed and edited text for diversity-focused publications

Director, Graduate Recruitment

University of Arkansas, Graduate School, Fayetteville, Arkansas

June 2000 – June 2004

The University of Arkansas, a land grant institution, is the major research institution for Arkansas. The Graduate School is comprised of over 140 graduate programs.

Selected Contributions:

- Designed, led, and executed a strategic plan to increase the quality and quantity of applications received for over 140 graduate programs
- Oversaw and directed operations for the Office of Graduate Recruitment; supervised and evaluated three full-time staff members
- Researched and identified internal and external funding sources to support graduate recruitment initiatives targeting underrepresented groups
- Developed and facilitated “best practices” recruitment workshops for department chairs, graduate coordinators, faculty, and staff
- Instituted collaborative agreements with faculty and administrators at partner Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) and Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSI)
- Managed and directed the George Washington Carver Summer Research Internship program, recruited students, managed the budget, identified faculty mentors, hired program staff
- Represented the University of Arkansas Graduate School at regional and national recruitment venues and the Graduate School by serving on campus-wide committees, including the Chancellor’s Recruitment Task Force and the Chancellor’s Diversity Task Force

Selected Presentations

- 2020, co-presenter: “From Conversation to Action: Advancing Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging” Princeton University Department of Physics and Department of Astrophysics Seminar Series on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, virtual.
- 2018, co-presenter Poster Presentation: “Mind, Body, and Spirit: Launching a Women in Medicine and Science Group at the New UNLV School of Medicine,” American Association of Medical Colleges Annual Meeting, Austin, Texas.
- 2017, presenter: “Understanding and Mitigating Unconscious Bias,” University of Nevada, Las Vegas School of Medicine, Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Las Vegas, Nevada.
- 2010, 2011 presenter: “Diversity in Healthcare” University of Iowa, College of Public Health Issues in Health Management and Policy Capstone Seminar, Iowa City, Iowa
- 2009, panelist: “Making Change Happen,” University of Iowa Health Science Women’s Conference, Iowa City, Iowa
- 2009, co-presenter: “Cultural Competence Resources: UI Health Care,” Department of Internal Medicine Grand Rounds, University of Iowa Health Care, Iowa City, Iowa
- 2008, presenter: “Importance of Diversity in the Health Professions,” Roy J. and Lucille A. Carver College of Medicine 60th Annual Pre-Medical Conference. Iowa City, Iowa

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- 2005, panelist and presenter: "Applying to Graduate School," Undergraduate Research Symposium, Universidad Metropolitana, San Juan, Puerto Rico
- 2003, co-presenter: "Institutional Linkages as a Race Neutral Alternative," American Council on Education Educating All of One Nation Conference, Atlanta, Georgia

Selected Memberships and Community Contributions

- Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) Group on Diversity and Inclusion
- Nevada Minority Health and Equity Coalition
- Las Vegas Mobile Health Collaborative
- Board Vice President, Diversity Focus
- Board Member, Corridor Women Connect
- United Way Drive Prize Committee co-chair (ACT)
- Iowa City Noon Rotary Club