ALISE DIVERSITY STATEMENT PROPOSAL

Introduction

During the September 2012 meeting of the ALISE Board of Directors (September 29-30, 2012, in Chicago, IL), a motion was approved to accept the ALISE Diversity Statement (September 22, 2012 DRAFT), and to present it to the ALISE membership at the 2013 Conference annual business meeting to vote on its approval and adoption. This message serves as a notice of motion and includes a link to the September 22, 2012 draft of the ALISE Diversity Statement, which members will be asked to approve at the ALISE Business Meeting on Thursday, January 24, 2013, from 3:30-4:30 p.m.

Clara M. Chu, Chair of the ALISE Diversity Statement Task Force, has provided the following background as context to the September 22, 2012 draft of the Statement. The ALISE Board thanks the Task Force for its diligence and commitment in completing its charge and in producing this essential articulation of diversity principles, benefits, and competencies. (L.C. Howarth, ALISE Past-President)

Background

Responding to Ismail Abdullahi's prompting to foster diversity during her presidency, 2010-11 ALISE President Lorna Peterson, a steadfast advocate for the equity of information access and an unequivocal proponent for diversity, obtained the approval from the ALISE 2011 Conference Planning Committee for a President's program on diversity. She tapped Ismail Abdullahi, Renate Chancellor (then Co-Chair, Multicultural, Ethnic and Humanistic Concerns SIG) and Clara M. Chu, to work with her on planning the program. Planning began online and during the 2010 ALA Annual Conference, a meeting was held with Miguel Figueroa (then Director, ALA Office for Diversity) and Sandy Littletree (then Manager, Knowledge River Program at the University of Arizona). All agreed that too many years have been spent on talking about the issues and more action was needed, i.e., the need to eliminate any institutional barriers to diversity at ALISE and in library and information science/studies education in general.

When Chu reported back to Peterson the need for enduring action by ALISE, Peterson noted that in 1989 ALISE President Miles M. Jackson appointed a special committee led by EJ Josey to look at the state of affairs in ethnic, multicultural and humanistic concerns in library and information science (LIS). The committee was charged with preparing a special report on:
1. The extent of inclusion of ethnic and multicultural concerns in the LIS curricula in ALISE schools.
2. Respond to these questions: What is being done to recruit minorities to the profession? What library association committees exist for recruiting racial minorities?
3. Explore the possibility of establishing a Special Interest Group (SIG) for ethnic and multicultural concerns in Library and Information Science education.

A preliminary report from the committee was presented at the Board of Directors meeting at the ALISE annual conference in January 1990 in Chicago. The Multicultural, Ethnic and Humanistic Concerns (MEHC) SIG was established one year later at the 1991 ALISE annual conference. (Source: Abdullahi, Ismail. "Library Services to Multicultural Populations," In: *The Encyclopedia of Library and Information Science*, edited by Allen Kent. v. 48: CRC Press, 1991; p. 267)

Embracing the 2011 ALISE conference theme of competitiveness and innovation, interest in celebrating the 20th anniversary of the MEHC SIG and the need to continue the work started in 1989, Chu worked with Abdullahi, Chancellor, and Shari Lee to develop a two-part program. The first part of the ALISE President's program had diversity leaders address diversity as a condition for the success and strength of ALISE, and LIS

education and research. The second part of the program was a celebration of 20 years of the establishment of the MEHC SIG, with initial discussion on the need for an ALISE Statement on Diversity. Such a statement would call for ALISE to incorporate diversity into its mission and consider it a core value by its individual and institutional members. Furthermore, the value of and commitment to diversity should be expressed in practice, including the climate of LIS programs, the make-up of faculty and students, and in the teaching, service and research priorities. Without sufficient time during the program to discuss the framework and timeline to develop a diversity statement, those interested were invited to a subsequent meeting during the conference. The discussion was guided by a framework Chu had drafted to inform the work of developing a statement on diversity, which consisted of four models. Each approach for developing a diversity statement had distinctive characteristics:

Model #1: stand-alone statement of diversity principles that incorporates equity and inclusiveness. This approach provides principles that inform/regulate all actions of ALISE and its membership.

Model #2: a benefits approach (why). This approach is outcomes-based which emphasizes the benefits, thus, providing rationale for a commitment to diversity.

Model #3: a competencies approach (how). This approach is action-based which emphasizes the knowledge and behavior required in an environment committed to diversity and equity.

Model #4: an integrative approach – diversity as an equity and ethical issue. This approach engages existing ALISE policy by proposing to integrate diversity and inclusion more explicitly into the ALISE Ethics Guidelines Statement (Fall 2010) and amend sit as the ALISE Statement of Ethics and Diversity.

Subsequent to the 2011 ALISE Conference, Nicole Cooke created a blog http://alisemehcsig.wordpress.com/ to keep those who met informed of the ongoing work. They included Renate Chancellor, Clara M. Chu, Nicole Cooke, Arglenda Friday, Sarai Lastra, Shari Lee, Sandy Littletree, Jennifer McDaniel, Irene Owens, Beth Joy Patin, and Julie Winkelstein.

Lorna Peterson informed the ALISE Board of the developments from her presidential program, which led the Board to establish the ALISE Diversity Statement Task Force. The task force was initially made up of Clara M. Chu (Chair), then MEHC Co-Conveners Renate Chancellor and Shari Lee, and then Spectrum Doctoral Fellow Nicole Cooke. Working with the input received at the 2011 ALISE Conference meeting the task force explored the various approaches and concluded that the strongest and most compelling approach would be a stand-alone diversity statement that addressed principles (what), benefits (why) and competencies (how). At the 2012 ALISE Conference, Delicia Greene (then incoming MEHC SIG Co-Convener) joined the task force, which held a roundtable/dialogue session, attended by 78 participants, to vet the draft ALISE Diversity Statement. The "Extending ALISE's Reach: Expanding our Diversity Horizon" session, was co-sponsored with the Assistant/Associate Deans & Directors SIG and Multicultural, Ethnic and Humanistic Concerns (MEHC) SIG, which included various presentations, one of which was the preliminary findings of an ALA Committee on Education Diversity Task Force survey on diversity and LIS education.

The feedback from the 2012 conference was compiled and reviewed. Then, over several meetings at the Joint Conference of Librarians of Color in September that included some Task Force members and a number of conference participants, the revised statement was reviewed. The input gathered was incorporated into the final revision of the statement and submitted to the ALISE Board. The ALISE Board approved the ALISE Diversity Statement at its meeting on Sunday, September 30, 2012 and the next step for its adoption is a vote from the ALISE membership.

A session is planned at the 2013 ALISE Conference that will move the statement from merely words to action. "What of Diversity? (Always the Beautiful, and Essential, Question): An Ignite Session on Ideas You Can Use To Advance Diversity" is a session comprised of two parts: (a) introduction of the ALISE Diversity Statement and next steps, and (b) an "ignite" session on diversity action that one can readily implement in the classroom, scholarship or institution.

ALISE Diversity Statement Task Force:

Renate Chancellor, Catholic University of America
Clara M. Chu (Chair), The University of North Carolina at Greensboro
Nicole A. Cooke, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Delicia T. Greene, Syracuse University
Shari Lee, St. John's University