# **Eastern Connecticut State University**

# **Office of Admissions and Enrollment Management**

# **Diversity Matters**

*Strategies to recruit an ethnically diverse student body*

Eastern Connecticut State University, Connecticut’s public liberal arts university strives to be a model community of learners of different ages from diverse cultural, racial, ethnic, and social backgrounds. For this reason, the recruitment of students of color is a high priority. The following strategies will be undertaken by the Office of Admissions and Enrollment Management, and with the ongoing support of the University community, to recruit students of color for the academic years 2010-2012. The enrollment objective for this cohort will be a one percent increase each year.

***Strategies:***

**l. Information Email**

A specifically crafted email promoting the advantages of Eastern’s liberal arts education and opportunities for students will be sent to guidance counselors, community, social and/or educational opportunity agencies, community colleges, Upward Bound Programs, and churches.

**2. Targeted High School Visitations**

The following school systems with significant student of color enrollment will be visited by an Eastern Admissions representative. An admission counselor will meet with seniors and juniors during the fall semester and underclassmen in the spring. Targeted school systems include: Bridgeport, Bloomfield, Danbury, East Hartford, Hartford, Manchester, Meriden, Middletown, New Britain, New Haven, New London, Norwalk, Norwich, Stamford, Waterbury, Windham, and Windsor. Information pertaining to admission requirements, academic programs, Honors/scholarship initiatives, STEP/CAP program, support services, financial aid, and campus visitation options will be discussed. Eastern’s view book and application kit will be distributed.

**3. Early Awareness Program**

Demographic indicators point to a sharp increase in the number of students of color graduating from high school. Studies conducted by the College Board and other educational organizations have sent strong messages to colleges and universities to establish meaningful working relationships with urban school districts to prepare potential applicants for college; students and parents should be informed about educational pathways and financial aid opportunities available at colleges and universities.

* ***On-Campus***

Students of color from targeted middle and junior high schools will be encouraged to participate in an on-campus program designed to introduce the students to Eastern and prepare for college in general. Two “College Knowledge” Days will be held during June each year. The programs are grade-appropriate in focus (5th -7th and 8th -9th grades respectively) and include sessions to help students understand and prepare for college enrollment. Admissions staff will identify and work closely with guidance counselors, community representatives, and alumni who have demonstrated interest in helping students of color pursue post-secondary education. Each year this program is expected to host approximately 1500 students. Students will attend five sessions covering a variety of topics including; but not limited, to financial aid, residential life, academic requirements, choosing a major, and preparing for college.

**4. Agency/Service Relationships**

Admissions representatives will continue to work closely with the following pre-college programs/local and state agencies which have high percentages of minority clients:

1. University of Bridgeport Talent Search Program
2. University of Bridgeport Upward Bound Program
3. The Learning Corridor - Hartford
4. Wesleyan University Upward Bound Program
5. Upward Bound programs in New England
6. Talent Search Programs in New England
7. GEAR UP programs in New England
8. Area churches
9. Urban League
10. College Visions in Rhode Island
11. CONNCAP - A Pre-College Preparation Program sponsored by

Connecticut State University

1. CONNTAC - A College Referral Agency
2. ECSU’s Student of Color student organizations including OLAS, Nubian Society,

West Indian Society, FEMALE and MALES

1. Fairfield University Talent Search Program

##### The Admissions staff will encourage prospective students and staff from these programs to visit the University and play a proactive role in recruiting additional students of color to campus.

**5. Outreach/College and High School Fairs**:

Admissions representatives will participate in college fairs aimed at the recruitment of underrepresented students, i.e., CALAHE/OLAS Annual College Fair, Norwalk schools, Meriden schools, Waterbury schools, Bloomfield High school, National Hispanic College Fair at The University of Bridgeport, Western New England College Fair in Springfield, MA. The admissions staff also collaborates with the Eastern OLAS Club regarding an on-campus student of color information fair during the fall semester.

**6. Community College Visits**

a. Several community colleges with which Eastern has successful admissions agreements and articulations are located in urban areas. A significant percentage of minority students attend these colleges. Visits intended to foster awareness among minority students about opportunities for upper-level work at Eastern will be made to the following community colleges: Capital, Gateway, Housatonic, Manchester, Naugatuck Valley, Norwalk, Quinebaug, Tunxis, and Three Rivers. Students will be encouraged to visit our campus and to meet with our staff and students. Existing admissions agreements which are designed to ease the transition from the two-year to Eastern’s four-year environment will be promoted.

b. To develop greater personal contact with minority students attending community colleges, admissions representatives will arrange to meet with minority student club representatives at their college. During these meetings, general as well as specific information about transfer admissions requirements, transfer articulation agreements, academic programs, financial aid, campus housing, student cultural and social clubs, and other related topics will be discussed. Interested community college students will be invited to come to campus to meet with students and take a guided tour. In order to keep community college student organizations informed about events sponsored by Eastern minority student organizations, their names will be added to Eastern’s event mailing lists.

**7. Follow-up on Applicants**

To promote Eastern’s interest in enrolling students who are serious about academic success, the Admissions staff will review the files of minority freshmen denied admission to Eastern. To demonstrate our interest in assisting with furthering their educational goals, the Admissions staff will identify and send a letter to qualified students encouraging the student to attend a community/junior college and then re-apply for transfer admission upon demonstrating their ability to successfully complete college-level work. Specific criteria will be outlined in the letter so the student will be clearly apprised of steps for admission.

**8. Campus Visitation Program - Project Awareness**

1. Eastern’s successful campus visitation program - Project Awareness will be continued. High School students and counselors from school districts previously mentioned as having a high percentage of students of color will continue to be encouraged to visit our campus and learn about available educational opportunities. In 2009-10, more than 900 students participated in this program. The Admissions staff will arrange and coordinate these campus visits. The following format will be used to bring students to the campus:

1. Fall semester - Seniors and Juniors
2. Spring semester - Seniors, Juniors, and Sophomores
3. Transfer students will be encouraged to visit throughout the year.
4. High schools with high percentages of students of color will be given priority. High school guidance counselors will be sent an email and letter with 10 possible fall dates and 14 possible spring dates and time for their high school’s visit to campus. The counselors will confirm their high school’s appointment by registering online through our online events calendar web page.
5. The program design will consist of speakers from the following departments of the University: Admissions, Administration, Student Affairs, Financial Aid, Housing, Learning Center (STEP/CAP), and student of color clubs’ representatives. Students participating in Project Awareness visits will also tour the campus and have the opportunity to have lunch in the student dining hall.

1. Student ambassadors and members of OLAS, the Nubian Society and

West Indian Club will serve as tour guides. The tour will include: the Student Center, library, a residence hall, a classroom building, Sports Center, Support Services Center, and student dining hall.

1. Project Awareness participants will receive an admission view book and application kit, general information piece, and when appropriate, information about the summer bridge program (STEP/CAP).
2. **Talented Campaign**

Eastern has a recruitment campaign designed to attract high caliber students of color. Through contacts with high school personnel, standardized test score reports, purchased names, and grant funded agencies working to promote advanced placement coursework in underrepresented school districts, students of color with strong academic skills are recruited through visitations to the high school and on-campus programming. Talented students of color and their families are encouraged to visit Eastern to interact with faculty, staff, students and administrators. Additional emphasis is placed on the retention of these students through faculty mentoring.

1. **STEP/CAP**

Students of color who do not meet standard requirements for admission may be considered for Eastern’s alternate admission program – Summer Transition Education Program/Contract Admission Program. The STEP/CAP program is a closely supervised one-year academic support program with a six week summer program component required of all entering STEP/CAP participants.

The Admissions staff, with assistance from The ASC Center staff, will pre-screen applications for recommendation to the STEP/CAP program. The Admissions staff will send a list with name, address, and telephone number to The ASC Center. The ASC Center will send a letter and informational literature to each selected student inviting her/him to attend an interview and testing session with a copy to the guidance counselor. Follow up will be done on students who respond to confirm the appointment to attend the testing session. Admissions counselors will also assist in interviewing these students and render a final admission decision. Telemarketing strategies will be intensified to maintain students' interest in Eastern and to help increase the yield rate of students accepted into the program.

1. **Dual Enrollment Initiative**

The Dual Enrollment Initiative is a program created in 2008 by Eastern, Quinebaug Valley Community College (QVCC) and Hartford Public High School. This unique program enrolls promising students from Hartford Public High School in full-time courses at QVCC during the fall. The students also take one course at Eastern and live in Eastern's residence halls. Coming from low-income backgrounds, the students, although talented, were not planning on applying to college. Students are recommended for the program by guidance counselors at Hartford Public High School and interviewed by Eastern staff members before admission. Nine students enrolled in fall 2008, ten students in fall 2009, and ten students in fall 2010.

1. **Guidance Contacts**

#### Guidance counselors will continue to be cultivated as a valuable source of referral, information, and contact between high school applicants and the University. The Admissions staff will continue to work closely with Guidance personnel to ensure timely information and prompt services to prospective students and applicants. Eastern’s highly successful on-campus “Guidance Appreciation Program” held in November each year will continue.

1. **Community Outreach**

#### The Admissions staff will maintain contact with the following state and local community organizations, i.e., CONNTAC, the Urban League, area churches, and the Mashantucket and Mohegan Tribal Nations.

#### **Direct Mailing to Prospects/Inquiries**

a. Utilizing the student inquiry system, we will send literature and promotional material to students of color who have submitted an inquiry card. This approach ensures that prospective students will be informed early about educational opportunities at Eastern.

b. Students who have requested additional information will be sent

letters/emails inviting the students to meet with the Eastern admissions representative during the visit to their school.

The following information will be sent to students who inquire: a cover letter, Admission view book, and diversity publication.

1. **Diversity Publication – *Updated version PROPOSED***

The Admissions staff will work with the University Relations staff to design and produce a publication aimed at recruiting students of color. The publication will be in addition to and consistent with current recruitment publications. The Admissions staff will collaborate with continuing Eastern students of color to ensure the content of the publication is meaningful from the students’ points of view.

1. **Telecounseling**

Direct telephone communication with prospective students and their parents has proven to be a successful technique for recruiting students. It is an opportunity to proactively engage interested students, answer questions, and share experiences. Telecounseling also provides an opportunity to interact with parents. Coordinated by the Admissions staff, telecounseling campaigns will be conducted throughout the year to students of color who have expressed interest in Eastern. Special campaigns will be done for STEP/CAP candidates.

1. **Student Ambassador Program - *PROPOSED***

a. Currently enrolled students of color are excellent resources for recruiting prospective minority students. Eastern’s "Student Ambassador Program" organizes Eastern students who have expressed a strong interest in working collaboratively with the Admissions staff to help recruit and enroll students of color. Ambassadors from the Nubian Society, OLAS Club, and West Indian Society will work under the supervision of the Admissions Office and perform the following duties:

1. Serve as tour guide leader for the campus visitation program ("Project Awareness")
2. Visit their high schools to inform and recruit prospective students
3. Serve as student representatives at diversity college fairs
4. Telecounseling functions - to establish telephone contact with students and their parents, provide information and maintain follow up.

b. To ensure the quality of this program, student ambassadors will be selected based on their maturity level, knowledge of the University, understanding of diversity, and good interpersonal and communication skills. This student group will receive intense training from the Admissions staff. Under careful supervision, each student ambassador will recruit and train a team of student volunteers to carry out the above-mentioned duties. The long-term benefits to these students are: acquired training and skills, a sense of contribution to the University community as a student leader, and the probability of enhancing their own experiences at Eastern.

### GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**CALAHE**  -- Connecticut Association of Latin Americans in Higher

Education

**CONNCAP** -- Connecticut Collegiate Awareness and Preparation Program

**CONNTAC**  -- Connecticut Talent Assistance Cooperative (Educational

Opportunity Center)

**GEAR UP** -- Gaining Early Awareness Regarding Undergraduate

Programs

**MALES**  -- Men Achieving Leadership Excellence and Success

**OLAS** -- Organization of Latin American Students

###### **STEP/CAP** -- Summer Transition at Eastern Program/Contract

Admissions Program

**FEMALES**  -- Females Excelling, Maturing to Achieve, Leadership, Excellence and

Success

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**LEP/2009**