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UA3/7/1/2 President's Correspondence - Memo Re: Minorities

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WESTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY

BOWLING GREEN, KENTUCKY 42101

September 30, 1987

Office of the President

Faculty, Staff, and Students:

With the opening of the 1987-88 school year, there are many objectives which the University hopes to accomplish. Among these objectives is the need to further enhance the educational and social opportunities for minorities who are at Western or have an interest in joining the University in the future. I am writing to request your assistance and support in making Western an attractive institution for all members of society, particularly black students, faculty, and staff.

During the 1986-87 school year, significant progress was made toward the goal of equal opportunity and personal cooperation. There were, of course, individual situations which caused concern and will require increased sensitivity in the future. On balance, however, I believe we have made a good deal of progress. Listed below are examples of specific affirmative efforts to further strengthen Western's commitment to equal opportunity.

- . For 1987-88 the University will have thirteen black teaching faculty holding full or partial academic appointments.
- . During the past year, a black staff member has been promoted to the position of Dean of Student Life.
- . The Junior Black Faculty and Staff Program is a new endeavor which has been developed to recruit minority individuals to the faculty and university management. Through this program the University provides special support to assist these individuals to complete terminal degrees, adding to their individual scholarship and to their ability to contribute to the University's programs.
- . Black Scholars Program - This program is committed to awarding academic scholarships to outstanding black students.
- . AWARE Scholarship - This is a scholarship fund in honor of AWARE (a black community organization). Beginning in the fall semester of 1987, the award will be made to a black Western student.
- . Minority Retention Program - This program provides black students access to a variety of student support services designed to enrich academic and personal opportunities.
- . Minority Mentor Program - Minority students are assigned a minority faculty or staff member for special assistance. The primary goal is to assist the student in making a smooth transition from home to college and to help close the gap between faculty and students.
- . Mid-Term Deficiency Counseling - Mid-term deficiency reports and academic standing reports are sent to the Director of Minority Affairs each semester. Conferences are held with those students who fall below a 2.0 grade point average.

- . Junior and Senior Program Enrollment Sessions - Conferences are held each semester with students who have not filed their degree programs. Conferences are also held with the departments so that they can further assist students with major degree requirements.
- . Freshmen Advisors - Members of the Black Scholastic Achievers, an honor organization, serve as peer advisors for beginning freshmen.
- . Minority Alumni Reception - The reception is held every fall for WKU alumni. The alumni are asked to assist with recruitment and retention activities.
- . Data Bank for Minority Scholarship and Financial Aid Sources - The listing is available in the Director's office and publicized to all minority students.
- . Minority Awards Program - This program is held each spring semester to recognize minority students who have a record of academic achievements.

As I stated in my inaugural address:

" . . .an overarching objective must be for us to utilize the university to mitigate inequality in our society. . . . Western has always been an institution concerned with the need of the common man and woman, an institution founded on the principle of equality and the desirability of social mobility. A belief that was asserted eighty years ago and continues today is that all the children of the state should have the education that would enable them, with honest effort and earnest labor, to be successful, contributing members of society.

"In this regard, Western as an institution, and we, as individuals, should at all times inveigh and stand as a bulwark against artificial restraints on the expansion of education. We must examine and reexamine our conduct to avert our natural and human complacency toward injustice."

While much has been done, we must continue unabated in our efforts to make Western the best educational institution possible for all members of our society. If we work together in combining the many talents available on this campus, I am confident we can make Western an even better place to work and study for all faculty, staff, and students.

I am grateful for your support and look forward to working with you during the coming school year.

Sincerely,



Kern Alexander
President