



# UNIVERSITY OF EVANSVILLE

*Civic Mission... Sacred Trust*

## **University of Evansville Launches Diversity Initiatives**

*Surveys of students, staff, and administrators; supplier diversity program aim to address UE strategic plan goal of modeling and teaching social responsibility*

April 17, 2012

This spring, the University of Evansville is taking major steps to improve its diversity strategy: conducting two surveys about diversity on campus and developing a campus-wide supplier diversity program.

One of the core goals of UE's strategic plan, "[Transforming Tomorrow: Our Students, Our University, Our World](#)," is to model and teach social responsibility in the local and global community. This includes creating and expanding initiatives related to diversity.

To gather concrete data to better inform these efforts, UE is utilizing the Diverse Learning Environments Survey, created by the Higher Education Research Institute at the University of California, Los Angeles. The survey captures student perceptions regarding the institutional climate, campus practices as experienced with faculty, staff, and peers, and student learning outcomes.

On March 12, all UE students received a personal e-mail inviting them to take the DLE survey. Each respondent who completes the survey before the April 23 deadline will be entered into a drawing for prizes such as an iPad. In the fall, UE will receive a report of the survey results.

"UE has never undertaken a survey of this kind," said La Toya Smith, diversity and equity officer and chair of UE's Institutional Diversity Council. "We look forward to receiving the results, which faculty, administrators, and staff will use to help improve the campus and students' experience at UE."

Staff and administrators will also complete a separate survey to evaluate their experiences at work, level of job satisfaction and engagement, experiences with others, and level of

cultural competence. In addition, this survey will assess UE staff and administrators' perceptions of the institutional practices and the campus climate regarding diversity. The survey will begin next week and end in mid-May. Data will be used to create a detailed diversity action plan.

Finally, UE signed a contract with [Diverse Business Solutions](#) in January to improve its supplier diversity program. Under this contract, DBS is currently assessing UE's purchasing behavior, supplier database, current contracts, and purchasing needs. The company will research and report on the diverse supplier capacity within a 50- and 100-mile radius of UE, and make recommendations. In August, DBS will present a comprehensive report to UE.

"We are pleased and honored to have been selected by the University to assist them in this process," said Jeffrey Rode, the company's president and CEO. Founded by two supplier diversity executives, Diverse Business Solutions provides an array of products and services to the supplier diversity industry — including supplier diversity program development, diverse certification management and preparation, and diversity expos and events. DBS, a diverse business itself, maintains offices in Evansville and Greenwood, Indiana.

For more information, please contact Kristen Lund, UE director of news services, at 812-488-2241.

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*The core purpose of the University of Evansville is to provide students with life-transforming educational experiences that prepare them to engage the world as informed, ethical, and productive citizens.*