BUILDING ON SUCCESS:
MULTICULTURAL STUDENT RECRUITMENT
Office of Admissions
A Division of the Office of Undergraduate Education
May 2017-2018
Dear colleague,

It is an honor to work side-by-side with University colleagues, community partners, and students and their families to enhance the diversity of the University of Minnesota Twin Cities undergraduate student body and to support student success at all levels. We are privileged to be a part of a transformative season in students’ lives. In our daily work, we have the privilege of working directly with eager young students as they progress to focused high school scholars, to high-achieving leaders on our own campus, to proud graduates who become leaders and advocates in our community.

In recent years, the University has increased its focus on the recruitment, enrollment, retention, and graduation of students of color and American Indian students. We are constantly developing and evolving our work to meet the needs of our students and their families. Staff in the Office of Admissions—in partnership and collaboration with staff and faculty from across the University—work tirelessly to connect with students and families, build personal relationships, and encourage students to take key steps toward enrolling at the University of Minnesota. This report provides a high level overview of some of the University’s comprehensive student of color and American Indian student recruitment efforts. At the heart of each program and initiative described in this report is a strong campus-wide commitment to diversity.

We thank our campus and community partners. Your collaboration and partnership is so important to recruit, enroll, and educate our leaders of tomorrow.

Sincerely,

Heidi Meyer
Executive Director
Office of Admissions
University of Minnesota Twin Cities
Recruiting bright and curious students

As the Office of Admissions at The University of Minnesota, we orchestrate the university’s campus-wide recruitment efforts in collaboration with campus partners. Enrolling an academically qualified, diverse student body is essential to the University’s mission.

A diverse student body greatly enhances the academic and social environment of the campus and helps prepare students to thrive in a global society. One of the University’s Student Learning Outcomes is that graduates are expected to “understand diverse philosophies and cultures within and across societies.”

The recruitment and enrollment of student of color and American Indian recruitment in the freshman class is a top priority of the University and the Office of Admissions. Twenty years ago, the University did not have a formal recruitment program in place. Since that time, the Office of Admissions has built an effective and highly regarded recruitment program. The majority of the University’s student of color and American Indian recruitment efforts are focused in the state of Minnesota.

Student Success Is A Core Value

Student success is at the center of everything we do in the Office of Admissions at the University of Minnesota. Recruitment is the start of that focus. The University’s emphasis on student success over the last decade has resulted in steady increase of the freshman retention rate.

We review each applicant for strong student preparation at the high school level, as academic preparation is key to a student’s college success. We require a student to report all courses and grades from their high school career to confirm they are ready for the U of M’s rigorous university courses.

Although academic preparation is the foundation for a student’s success on campus, we also consider other factors that may lead to a student’s preparation for success at the University. The University’s goal is to provide an educational environment that prepares our students “to be responsible and engaged citizens who, upon graduation, are ready to participate in and meet the challenges of a complex, diverse, and global society.”

Diversity: (Broadly Defined)

A core value of the University of Minnesota. Diversity includes students from different races, economic backgrounds, geographic origins, genders, religions, ethnicities, sexualities, talents, and beliefs.
Our **holistic review** process ensures we look at the whole student, which allows us to admit students who are academically ready for University study and will also benefit from and contribute to our thriving and diverse campus environment.

We do not base our admissions decisions on an automated or numeric process. Our review process considers many factors, including a student’s likelihood of success at the University. We consider those characteristics that lend themselves to the success of our enrolled students and consider characteristics we know enhance success with a likelihood of timely graduation.

Because no two students are alike, students with similar academic credentials may have different interests and experiences. The pool of applicants and fit for a particular program at the U of M can vary by student and freshman-admitting college. Our holistic review allows us to get to know each applicant so that we can make the best admission decision possible for students and the University.

Using the holistic review process allows us to support students. Over the past decade the University has experienced record student satisfaction, retention, and graduation rates. These student success metrics inform our admissions practices as well as our recruitment and outreach practices.

Additionally, the percentage of multicultural Minnesota high school graduates who enrolled as freshmen continues to be strong.

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**A decade of enrollment and academic growth**

**Enrollment progress**
At the University of Minnesota, through the use of our strategic recruitment and enrollment management practices, enrollment of students of color has increased significantly over the last 10 years.

**Academic preparation**
The academic preparation of the freshman class, and students of color, has continued to increase in the past 10 years. Increased high school academic preparation has shown to result in higher college retention and graduation rates.

We have made numerous enhancements to the undergraduate experience and admissions program to directly contribute to the University’s outstanding enrollment success. Despite declining and shifting demographics in Minnesota and surrounding states, the Office of Admissions has consistently met the University’s enrollment targets and worked to enhance the diversity and academic preparation of the incoming freshman class. However, the recruitment environment is highly competitive.

We are recruiting a population of students who have numerous options for their college experience. The University’s ability to continue to meet enrollment goals—especially in the face of shifting demographics—requires that we evolve and improve our recruitment approach.
Percent of Students of Color Among MN HS Graduates, MN ACT Takers, and UMNTC MN Freshmen in 2016

- Minnesota HS Graduates: 23.71%
- Minnesota ACT Takers: 20.84%
- Top 50% HS Rank and Took ACT: 17.92%
- Top 25% HS Rank and Took ACT: 15.08%
- Top 50% HS Rank and Meets ACT Benchmarks: 11.46%
- Top 25% HS Rank and Meets ACT Benchmarks: 10.84%
- UMNTC Minnesota Freshmen: 26.65%

Note: Students of color include African American, Latinx/Hispanic, Asian, Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and American Indian students.

Increasing academic preparedness measures of the last 10 years, incoming freshman class

- Average High School Rank
  - African American
  - Chicano/Latino
  - Asian/Pacific Islander
  - American Indian
  - All SOC

- Average Composite ACT
  - African American
  - Chicano/Latino
  - Asian/Pacific Islander
  - American Indian
  - All SOC
Recruitment Overview

Numerous enhancements made to the undergraduate experience and admissions program directly contribute to the University’s outstanding enrollment success. Despite declining and shifting demographics in Minnesota and surrounding states, the Office of Admissions consistently meets the University’s enrollment targets and enhances the diversity and academic preparation of the freshman class. College recruitment is highly competitive. We are recruiting students with numerous college options. To continue to meet enrollment goals—especially in the face of shifting demographics—we must continually evolve and improve our recruitment approach.

We follow three basic philosophies in our freshman recruitment to ensure we recruit and enroll a bright, curious and diverse (broadly defined) freshman class every fall.

- Conduct early and frequent outreach
- Provide authentic customer service to make enrollment easy
- Sustain campus and community partnerships

CONDUCT EARLY, FOCUSED AND FREQUENT OUTREACH

Early outreach
We develop relationships with prospective students throughout their high school careers and assist them with each stage of the college choice, application, and enrollment processes.

Focused and frequent outreach
We simultaneously target recruitment efforts to high school sophomores, juniors, and seniors to provide key information in the format they want it, when they want it. Managing three freshman classes at a time means communicating with hundreds of thousands of high school students, their families, and high school counselors.

During each phase, we implement strategic marketing campaigns and relationship-building initiatives to encourage students and their influencers (such as parents and school counselors) to take the next step towards enrolling at the University. We also work with transfer students, communicating information about next steps for applying to and enrolling at the University of Minnesota Twin Cities.

Recruitment and Communications are interwoven to provide the most targeted and personal interaction possible with each prospective student and their family.
Recruitment is a campus-wide, collaborative effort led by the Office of Admissions in partnership with University faculty, staff, currently enrolled students, and alumni. Given that college-aged students are being aggressively recruited by colleges in Minnesota and across the country, it is essential that we make it easy for students to take key steps towards enrollment.

Recruitment programs and efforts include:

- **23** on-campus, customized visits and events to help students see themselves at the U of M. Each event showcases the University’s academic programs and opportunities. We roll out the “maroon carpet” to make students and families feel welcomed and special.

- **42** high school visits to schools across Minnesota, sending admissions counselors directly into the school buildings to build relationships with school counselors, career counselors, and college-bound students.

- **27** Minnesota college fairs attended across the state and a commanding and engaging presence at the National College Fair in the Minneapolis Convention Center.

Targeted communications are designed to support a recruitment strategy to provide extra-mile customer service and develop personal relationships to bring a diverse and academically prepared student body to campus.

Targeted recruitment communications include:

- Showcase the benefits of attending the University of Minnesota Twin Cities
- Distinctly convey the inspiring tone surrounding curiosity and discovery
- Contain a clear call to action to facilitate next steps in admissions/enrollment process
- Use multi-channels and contain appropriate messaging to both students, families and high school counselors

Examples of Recruitment Activities include:

- Application Workshops hosted at high schools each fall.
- Community-specific recruitment events like: Multicultural Connections: A University of Minnesota event for Young Men; VIP Leadership Workshop
- Group visits coordinated together with partners like La Raza, Hmong Student Association, American Indian Student Cultural Center, TRIO Program and more.
- Alumni Ambassador outreach to connect recent alumni with prospective students within multicultural communities.
Our Admissions team is set up to provide exceptional customer service to build 1:1 relationships with students. This approach makes it easy to access and interact with the University and is often noted as a key differentiator for prospective students exploring our institution.

We strive to have personal outreach between students and our professional admissions counselors throughout the college search, application and enrollment steps. This approach is strengthened by expansive communications outreach and cross-campus collaboration for events and visits.

**Phone calls**

A unique component of our Customer Service involves phone calls from our Admissions Counselors, student-staffed call team and Admissions Ambassadors. In addition to our tours, visits, mailings and emails, we reach out to students who’ve expressed interest in the University via phone for 1:1 communication and information sharing.

**Multicultural student call outreach:**

| 61,427 |

**Dedicated Multicultural Recruitment Team**

While the entire Office of Admissions staff is committed to the recruitment of students of color and American Indian students, there is a team of five full-time, professional staff members and one shared position working 25-percent time in the Office of Admissions and 75-percent time in the Center of Indigenous Nations.

The work of these staff members includes specific responsibilities for outreach to and recruitment of high school students of color and American Indian students. These staff members serve as personal contacts for students and their families. They build relationships with students and frequently visit high schools with high enrollments of students of color and American Indian students throughout the academic year. They also take the lead in coordinating the Office of Admissions’ involvement at community events.

**Our admissions counselors serve as a highly visible connection point between prospective students and families, community leaders, and campus communities. Our admissions counselors’ relationship building efforts are at the heart of our work.**
Student staff component: Authenticity and engagement
The Office of Admissions also staffs a team of student territory managers. These currently-enrolled students build relationships with prospective students of color and American Indian students. They refer questions to professional admissions counselors and work closely with the student of color recruitment team to ensure that students receive quick answers to their questions. Student territory managers also follow-up by mail and email with students they cannot reach by phone.

Student group partnerships
The Office of Admissions continues to work closely with several on-campus student groups and involves current students in all aspects of student of color and American Indian student recruitment including:
» Student panels both on- and off-campus
» Recruitment events
» Student calling outreach
» Student visit experiences.

One example of these partnerships is with the Minnesota Multicultural Recruitment Society, a professionally advised, registered student organization that was created in February 2015. The mission of the Recruitment Society is to incorporate the student voice into recruiting efforts to attract and retain underrepresented student populations at the University of Minnesota. Recruitment Society members work to recruit culturally diverse high school students to campus by participating in student panel discussions and connecting with prospective students at recruitment events.

SUSTAIN CAMPUS AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

On-campus collaboration
In orchestrating the University’s recruitment efforts, the Office of Admissions collaborates closely with all seven of the University colleges along with key departments to plan events and communications with prospective students.

By working closely with the University’s colleges, we can leverage resources and increase touchpoints with students. Personal interaction with prospective students and collaborative efforts are central to effective student recruitment and enrollment efforts.

Campus Partners:
» Seven U of M freshman admitting colleges
» Office for Equity and Diversity
» The Multicultural Center for Academic Excellence (MCAE)
» Student cultural centers
» Ethnic studies programs
These partnerships have also been key to connecting prospective students with faculty, staff, and enrolled multicultural students, while also showcasing the academic, experiential, and social opportunities at the University.

**Specialized recruitment events**

We coordinate targeted events to engage prospective Minnesota students and help them explore all that the University of Minnesota has to offer. Events are family-oriented and showcase the University’s current students, faculty and staff, academic programs, and student groups.

This approach ensures everyone is working toward a shared focus of attracting Minnesota’s students to the University of Minnesota.

**Strong community partnerships**

We are proud to partner with many community colleagues and organizations in our expanding access to students and in support of the University’s enrollment efforts. A cornerstone of the University’s commitment to Minnesota student outreach and recruitment is a focus on working with community members to support student college exploration and preparation as we encourage students to consider the University of Minnesota for their college home.

Our community partnerships ensure that students gain important access to the opportunities that exist at the U of M, and provide the University with opportunities to connect and build relationships with students so they may fully consider the University of Minnesota as one of their college options. The interactions fostered through our partnerships provide students with the experiences and interactions that give students the information and tools they need to prepare for a successful undergraduate experience at the U of M.

**A path for the future**

The University has also teamed up with seven public two-year campuses around Minnesota to offer the Minnesota Cooperative Admissions Program (MnCAP), a guaranteed admissions program offered to transfer students only. Students who enroll in the

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**Community Partners:**

**My Brother’s Keeper (MBK) Initiative (Minneapolis Public Schools)**

A call to action to communities to enact “sustainable change through policy, programs, and partnerships

**Educational Opportunities (CPEO), Parents of Power program (POP), and Parent Academy**

The Office of Admissions collaborates with MCAE and the College Readiness Consortium to host the families of high school students and provide an overview of post-secondary options and next steps.

**St. Paul Public Schools Mentoring Excellence Program (MEP)**

The Mentoring Excellence Program serves American Indian students and students of color in 10th-12th grade in the St. Paul Public Schools.

**The Tazel Institute**

This program exposes African-American male students to career opportunities. Over the past three years, the Office of Admissions has hosted more than 120 male students from the Rosemount, Apple Valley, and Eagan School District to share information about admission into the University and the opportunities that exist at the University.

**Indian Education Program High School and Campus Visits**

The University’s American Indian Recruitment Coordinator works closely with Indian Education counselors in select high schools, and also with educators at Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe, Red Lake Band of Chippewa Indians, Fond Du Lac Band of Lake Superior Reservation, Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux (Dakota) Community, White Earth Reservation, and Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe to host students on campus and learn about academic programs.
Program are guaranteed admission to select majors within University colleges so long as they complete an AA degree or the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum, complete appropriate prerequisite and introductory courses within the intended major while maintaining a minimum GPA, and meet the priority application deadline.

The University has also partnered with Minneapolis Community and Technical College (MCTC) to offer a first-year experience course. Taught on the MCTC campus, Gopher Path FYST is designed for students planning to transfer. The course introduces students to college structure and expectations, resources, learning approaches, and provides academic and career exploration specifically as they relate to the student’s intention of attending the University of Minnesota.

Even though great progress has been made in recruiting students of color, further progress is needed. Recruitment of this critical community remains a top priority.

The Office of Admissions continually works to expand and enhance the effectiveness of its recruitment efforts.

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