

Articulating Rochester's Values

Since stepping into the role of president this winter, Richard Feldman has emphasized efforts to better articulate the University community's values of respect and commitment to inclusion and diversity.

Those values have been outlined in a proposed new Vision and Values statement—found online at Rochester.edu/president/vision-and-values. Designed to communicate the University's shared goals and principles, the proposed statement was drafted this spring by a committee of faculty, students, and staff and will be presented for consideration by the Board of Trustees.

The statement is one of several initiatives under way since January, when former federal prosecutor Mary Jo White released the results of her independent investigation of the University's policies and processes surrounding an allegation of sexual misconduct by a faculty member. (See "Setting a High Bar," January–February.)

Feldman says that the community's underlying sense of respect for one another and belief in the value of working together remain sources of Rochester's strength—and success—as an institution.

"Meaningful culture change will take time and effort. But we will do all that's necessary to foster a University community in which every member feels valued and everyone has an opportunity to thrive," he says. "The actions we take and the progress we make must be the result of collaboration and discussion. I look forward to continuing these discussions, not only about the specific recommendations in the White report but also about how to reinvigorate our campus climate, celebrate our diversity, and recognize our excellence."

Feldman has launched a series of communications called "Words from Wallis Hall." You can find the addresses at Rochester.edu/president.

UPDATES

'Beyond Recommendations'

The University has made significant progress on each of the recommendations made by an independent investigation that examined Rochester's policies and procedures surrounding sexual misconduct.

In an update to the University community in early April, President Richard Feldman noted that in evaluating the recommendations made by former federal prosecutor Mary Jo White, the University chose to broaden its response to address a more comprehensive set of issues related to diversity, respect, and inclusion. "In many cases the University's response will go well beyond the recommendations made in the White report," he said.

The culmination of a semester-long review led by White, the recommendations were released in January (see "Setting a High Bar," January–February). White was asked by a committee of the Board of Trustees to review the University's response to allegations of sexual misconduct by a faculty member.

One of the steps taken by the University has been the creation of a website, "Rochester's Culture of Respect," at Rochester.edu/respect, where the April updates—along with updates on several other initiatives designed to highlight Rochester's commitment to a culture of respect and inclusion—can be found.

The April update included work by a newly established University Diversity and Equity Council, the Faculty Senate and its committees, the Commission on Women and Gender Equity in Academia, the Students' Association Task Force to Review Sexual Misconduct Policy, and many others.

Find More Online

Rochester's Culture of Respect

Rochester.edu/respect

Office of the President

Rochester.edu/president

Vision and Values Statement

Rochester.edu/president/vision-and-values/

Commission on Women and Gender Equity in Academia

Rochester.edu/commission-women-gender-academia/

Experts to Offer Designs for Diversity

Nationally recognized experts on inclusive workplaces to help guide University-wide effort.

By Jim Ver Steeg

The University has engaged the consulting firm DeEtta Jones and Associates, considered one of the nation's leading diversity and inclusion educators, to help guide key elements of the University's equity, diversity, and inclusion efforts, President Richard Feldman announced in early April.

The agency's principal and founder, DeEtta Jones, and associate Jerome Offord are scheduled to visit Rochester in late April to meet with campus and community constituents.

Jones brings 25 years of experience as a management consultant, diversity and inclusion educator, and organizational development and training professional. She's one of the most sought-after speakers and consultants in her field.

Mary Ann Mavrinc, vice provost and Andrew H. and Janet Dayton Neilly Dean of University Libraries, worked with Jones on the strategic planning process for River Campus Libraries and says she helped thread diversity and inclusion into the plan from its inception.

"DeEtta is a luminary, and she earned that status from over 25 years of helping individuals and organizations integrate higher-order values into the work they do to realize change that is sustainable, transformative, and compelling," says Mavrinc. "She is intuitive, warm, intelligent, experienced, and insightful. I believe that she will leave an indelible mark on the University."

Jones and Offord are charged with helping frame a new University-wide equity, diversity, and inclusion office. They will



EXPERT IDEAS: DeEtta Jones (left) and Jerome Offord will help guide a University-wide approach to diversity and inclusion at Rochester.

also help draft a position description for a person to lead that office. During their visits, Jones and Offord will meet with the President's Cabinet, the University Diversity and Equity Council, and other members of the campus community who are engaged in the work of equity, diversity, and inclusion.

Jones says she has plans for their first visit to Rochester. "We want to listen and come to a better understanding of Rochester's current efforts and its aspirations for the future," she says. "We also want to identify the organizational and any cultural attributes that will help inform our approach."

NEW FACES, NEW ROLES

Leaders Focus on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

As part of an effort to highlight ways in which the University can bring more attention to improving Rochester's climate for students, faculty, and staff, several people have been tasked with new and expanded responsibilities.

Beth Olivares, the dean for diversity in Arts, Sciences & Engineering, has taken on new responsibilities designed to "give a voice to people in the University community who don't feel their voices are heard."

Reporting directly to Rick Waugh, the interim dean of the faculty of Arts, Sciences & Engineering, Olivares is charged with leading and coordinating efforts to bring more diversity to the unit's faculty and to improve the climate for students. She will continue in her role as executive director of the David T. Kearns Center in Arts, Sciences & Engineering, a position she has held since the center opened in 2002. In that capacity, she reports to Jeffrey Runner, dean of the College.

Kevin Beckford, a former executive at Eastman Kodak and Bank of America, has been named the University's first senior director of staff diversity, equity, and inclusion.

In the new role, he will oversee efforts to build a more diverse staff at the University. He plans to pay particular attention to Rochester's salaried staff positions, a category that represents about 6,000 people in positions that often have significant responsibility and that often lead to senior leadership roles.



Beth Olivares



Kevin Beckford



John Barker

John Barker '09W (PhD), most recently the dean of international education at Tufts University, has been named senior associate dean of the faculty for Arts, Sciences & Engineering.

In the new position, he will lead the creation and implementation of programs to promote faculty professional development, particularly in the context of improving workplace culture.

He also will serve as faculty ombudsperson, a role in which he will provide resources for faculty issues related to climate, family-friendly policies, and career advancement. He also will help to add faculty positions and develop new programs and coursework that support the University's diversity and inclusion efforts.

From 2000 to 2007, Barker was assistant director of the Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Program at the Kearns Center.