



## Equal Employment Opportunity Advisory Committee *MINUTES*

September 6, 2012

The meeting of the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Advisory Committee was held on Thursday, September 6, 2012 in room A-1. John Tortarolo called the meeting to order at 3:05 pm upon establishment of a quorum.

### **Roll Call**

Members Present: Miriam (Joan) Allen-Hart, Shawna Hearn, Lisa Hornsby, Charles Ingham, Diane McAllister, Russell Thomas, Fari Towfiq

Members Absent: Johnathan Farmer, Francisca Gonzalez, Karen Robinson, Mary SanAgustin

Recorder: Jennie Vastola

### **I. Approval of Minutes**

The minutes from the May 3, 2012 meeting were approved (MSC: CI/SH). The minutes will be posted on the Palomar webpage at: <http://www.palomar.edu/committees/eeoc/>

### **II. 2012-2013 Projects:**

#### **• EEO Plan**

The Chancellor's Office has issued a letter asking all Districts to update their EEO Plans no later than June 28, 2013. The new plan is being written and is almost complete. Upon completion, the HRS Planning Council and the EEO Advisory Committee will have an opportunity to review the new plan and provide input.

#### **• Diversity Event**

Charles Ingham shared an article taken from *Inside Higher Ed* regarding a study that suggests students grow less interested in promoting racial understanding. A discussion followed on how to reach Palomar students at the annual diversity event. Charles also shared a story about an interfaith group in Richmond, VA who placed an Arabic message in various public places and got a great deal of negative feedback. People automatically assumed that because the message contained Arabic script, it had to be linked to terrorism. As it turned out, the message only said "Rock, Paper, Plastic". Several theme ideas were shared for the 2013 diversity event:

- Unity of religions (not just Muslim)
- Inter-belief dialogue (including Atheism)
- Long term strategy (tolerance, acceptance, recognition, appreciation, understanding)
- Racial diversity

There was a discussion about ways to promote diversity in the classroom and examples were given. Further discussion revolved around how society views Caucasians as a minority group. A comment was made that, by definition, "diversity" is constantly changing; it's important to open people's minds. Vice President Tortarolo asked everyone to keep developing theme ideas to bring to the next meeting.

#### **• Discrimination Case Reviews**

The process and timeline for discrimination investigations were outlined. Three different discrimination cases were used as examples. (Names and departments were not divulged to protect the privacy of the people involved.)

- o Case #1 involved a student who filed a complaint against an instructor regarding an accommodation issue. The case was resolved successfully and serves as a reminder to faculty to contact DRC when there are any questions regarding student accommodation.
- o Case #2 involved a faculty member who filed a complaint against another faculty member regarding racial discrimination. A private investigator conducted a thorough investigation and found no evidence of discrimination.
- o Case #3 involved a student who filed a complaint against a group of faculty members regarding unlawful discrimination based on race/ethnicity. A thorough investigation was conducted and no evidence of discrimination was found.

The learning taken from these cases is we are in a more volatile environment, there is heightened awareness of discrimination issues, and it is a much more competitive world. It was noted that there is an increase of student complaints against faculty members. At the next meeting, cases where evidence was found will be discussed.

### **III. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:15 pm.