

# DOROTHY AND BILL COHEN HONORS COLLEGE DEI ADVISORY BOARD PROPOSAL

*This proposal outlines the idea of a board that would serve the Honors College in the capacity of providing ideas, establishing community connections, providing insights and guidance, and offering a general overview in assisting the Honors College with growing diversity and continuing to nurture a community that encourages and embraces inclusive excellence. In the spirit of believing that education has the power to change generational trajectories, Honors education differentiates education even further, creating transformative academic and social experiences and the intent of the Honors college is to provide access and awareness to students of all backgrounds and ethnicities.*

## **Overview:**

*The intent of this proposal is that of justifying the recruitment of an advisory board to assist the efforts of the DEI Director with recruiting initiatives and cultural awareness programming. The belief is that the board should be one with access to the communities that are underserved and influential in getting the Honors College message out to diverse populations both on campus and throughout the at-large community. The goal of the Honors College is to grow its student population in a manner to where its mix of ethnicities and racial backgrounds mirror that of the at-large campus community. The board will consist of university faculty and staff, community members, local school professionals, and existing Honors College students. Since the biggest area of underrepresentation exists in the areas of international students, Black students, and Native students, these factors will be taken into consideration when reaching out to potential advisory board members.*

## **Objective:**

*In attempt to align its mission with that of Wichita State University, the Cohen Honors College recognizes the importance of being “an essential EDUCATIONAL, CULTURAL, and ECONOMIC DRIVER for Kansas and the greater public good.” While the sustainability of our city and our state rely heavily on the university’s ability to educate students in a manner that speaks to the ECONOMIC and CULTURAL tenets expressed in the university mission statement, success is also contingent on empowering populations who have been historically silenced, marginalized, and deprived of access and agency. The Honors College will assist in this area by being intentional in reaching out to stellar students from these populations and communicating the value and transformative nature of honors education. In doing so, we intend to focus on the five needs listed below:*

*Need 1: Increase population of all ethnicities with focus on Native, Black, and international students.*

*Need 2: Maintain and continue to grow the existing robust Hispanic population.*

*Need 3: Network with community groups and organizations who serve Native communities for ideas on how to better engage and empower the Native populations.*

*Need 4: Collaborate with ODI (Office of Diversity and Inclusion) and PDC (President's Diversity Council) to communicate goals, ideas, and initiatives of the Honors College with regards to DEI.*

*Need 5: Through board activity and other outreach initiatives, create stronger community engagement between Honors College and the Wichita community-at-large.*

**Commitment:**

*The proposal requests that we begin acting as a board April of 2022, with board members selected by March 2022 (Spring Break). Meetings will be held by-monthly and will include updates from the community, updates on student recruitment efforts, discussions of new ideas, discussions on marketing DEI initiatives of Honors College and discussion of ideas to engage potential Honors College students.*

Meetings: Quarterly (dates to be announced)

Board Composition:

- 2 to 3 community members who represent the areas where we are underrepresented (International, Black, Native).
- 1 community member who represents area we are represented well but wish to maintain focus (Hispanic)
- 1 community member who represents USD 259
- 1 community member representing pipeline programs (GEAR UP, TRIO, etc.)
- 3 faculty members/administrator professionals
- 1 to 2 Honors college student

## **Board Goals:**

- 1. Work with community stakeholders to create diversity pipelines for the Honors College. Board members will assist in identifying such stakeholders and assisting with building the desired relationships.**
- 2. Work with programs where Wichita State serves as host campus to create diversity pipelines for the Honors College (GEAR UP, TRIO, etc.). The idea is to become involved with events and activities sponsored by programs that prepare students for college.**
- 3. Assist Honors Faculty Council with diversity initiatives as needed, including assistance with finding a student to serve as Director of Diversity Initiatives. The Directory of Diversity Initiatives would also serve on the DEI Advisory Board.**
- 4. Promote the Honors College throughout the local community by (a) having a board presence that represents the diversity of the community-at-large; and (b) becoming involved with local events and functions such as tabling events and community functions – 1 per quarter or as they arise.**
- 5. Board members encouraged to promote the Honors College through each of their respective circles of influence.**