

**Year 4 Quarterly Report**  
*2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter: October - December 2006*

**Significant accomplishments**

**General**

- In response to the NSF site visit report, received in September 2006, the ADVANCE Leadership Team met with President Carothers and Provost Swan. Report recommendations and institutionalizing ADVANCE initiatives were discussed. The President and Provost endorsed statements to promote progress in the areas of grant administration, dual career opportunities, and faculty recruitment. The commitment to provide state funding of the ADVANCE Fellow positions was affirmed, and the President has agreed to identify a permanent space for an ADVANCE Center that will serve the university after the NSF grant has ended, as well as course release for a faculty member.
- The Administration endorsed the continuation of the Incentive Fund program through the Council for Research and agreed to support several of the other successful initiatives: an institutional mentoring program, topical lunches, career and climate workshops, and a chairs' discussion forum.

**Evaluation**

- New committee member: Liliana Gonzalez, Associate Professor, Computer Science & Statistics.
- ADVANCE has been meeting regularly with the Center for Human Services to develop an external program evaluation. It is expected that a full plan will be completed by the end of January.
- Planning is underway for the second Climate Survey. The goal for distribution is the end of the spring semester.
- ADVANCE established a university-wide committee, IDEA (Institutional Data Enhancing Academics) to implement institutionalization of benchmark data collection. The Committee consists of representatives from Institutional Research, the Provost's Office, Human Resources, the Equity Coalition, Affirmative Action, the Graduate School, and ADVANCE. The various campus data needs are being determined, along with a means of funding.
- Three papers have been completed and will be submitted for publication in January.

**Recruitment**

- Monthly breakfast gatherings with the ADVANCE fellows took place in November and December. Conversation was open to any and all concerns, comments, and questions. Gatherings have been scheduled through the second semester.
- ADVANCE Fellows Bethany Jenkins, Tatiana Rynearson, Kathleen Donohue, Rebecca Robinson, and Yan Sun presented their research during URI Research Week, October 20, 2006. A new-faculty reception followed.
- Letters from the Provost to ADVANCE deans have been sent as reminders of transition dates of their respective fellows.

- The Human Resources Office is making regular notifications to the ADVANCE Office of upcoming tenure track faculty positions to allow opportunity for ADVANCE to make Best Practices search presentations to the respective search committees.

#### **Faculty Development:**

- Year 3 Incentive Fund projects continue.
- The University Provost formally endorsed the absorption of the ADVANCE Incentive Fund into the University's Research Awards program. Funding for this program will come from the Council for Research. In December, the Council for Research RFP was issued for Career Enhancement and Proposal Development grants. \$50,000 is to be targeted to ADVANCE principled proposals.
- The following Topical Lunches were hosted:  
*Josie and the Technicolor Labcoat: The Experiences of STEM Faculty from Under-represented Groups*, October 12, 2006; *Research Productivity and Impact: A Discussion with Dr. Stephanie Pfirman*, November 3, 2006; and *Hold on - I Didn't Know Gender was a Verb!*, December 6, 2006. Attendance to these events ranged from 17 to 24.
- ADVANCE hosted three events during URI Research Week, October 16- 20, 2006: Interdisciplinary Research Networking Breakfast, attended by 20 junior and senior faculty; and a Post-Award Grant Workshop, attended by 10 researchers and grant managers (attendance to this second event was low due to competition with other events during the week), and the Fellows Presentation followed by a New Faculty Reception.
- Development of a Mentoring Policy: With the assistance of 2 Faculty Development committee members from within their college, the Dean and Assoc. Dean of the College of Environment and Life Sciences developed a mentor policy to promote high quality and consistent mentoring of assistant professors and assistant research professors in the areas of teaching, research, and survival skills at the University of Rhode Island. The proposed policy was presented to the Dean's Executive Council. Department chairs have solicited comments from their faculty. ADVANCE developed an overarching mentoring program statement: *All URI colleges shall implement a mentoring policy that provides for effective mentoring for new faculty. These policies shall include the provision of one or more mentors to each new faculty member, some form of mentor training, and regular "checking in" to ensure that the needs of junior faculty are being met.*
- The University Provost requested written statements of mentoring procedures from each college Dean, in order to facilitate this mentoring program. The Provost subsequently endorsed our program in writing.

#### **Work-Life**

- New members joined: Bob Gillis, Director of Affirmative Action Office, Dorothy Donnelley, Professor of English, and Mercedes Hudec-Rivero, Professor of Chemical Engineering.
- Dual career assistance program: URI President Carothers' reservations about this program were addressed by consulting with Bob Gillis, the Director of Affirmative Action, about how such a program would best work in concert with other affirmative action hiring practices. Language was added to the proposal that clarified the point that this program was not a guarantee of employment, and the conditions under which a "search waiver" would be considered. The revised proposal was a clearer, stronger, and more acceptable document for URI. The policy statement reads: *The University of Rhode Island acknowledges the importance of supporting dual career partners in attracting and retaining a quality workforce, and in its long-range economic benefit to the University, and is committed to offering placement advice and assistance whenever feasible and appropriate."*
- The committee plans to meet with President Carothers in January 2007.
- Plans continue for a one-day work-life conference. The idea has been met with great enthusiasm. Offloading this endeavor to a university-wide, non-ADVANCE committee will aid in incorporating the

ADVANCE efforts into business-as-usual at URI. This agenda item will be a major focus of the work-life committee during spring 2007.

- The Work-life-family web site was launched in summer 2006, and during fall 2006, we continued to refine it. We envision this web site to be useful to URI faculty, staff, and students, as well as to the larger local and state community. A flyer has been produced to make this new site well-known to the campus.
- Helen Mederer was named to the AAUP Negotiating Team to ensure that work-life issues are part of the new AAUP faculty contract for 2007 – 2010.

### **Climate Change**

- Developed mission for a permanent ADVANCE Center, which was approved by the President:  
*The mission of the ADVANCE Center is to synthesize, streamline, and sustain campus initiatives that promote diversity, inclusion, climate change, and overall employee well-being, to the ultimate betterment of the University.*
- Met with URI Space Committee and developed proposal for permanent ADVANCE Center post-award, which will include:
  - Faculty Recruitment & Retention Office
  - Work-Life Office
  - Equity Committees Office
  - the University's first lactation center
  - conference room
- The URI Equity Coalition was formed, consisting of 5 organizations: President's Commission on the Status of Women, President's Commission on the Status of People of Color, Harassment Committee, Affirmative Action Committee, and ADVANCE. The purpose of the Coalition is to synthesize and streamline diversity initiatives across campus. It is planned that they will have office space in the ADVANCE Center.
- With ADVANCE guidance, College of Engineering Diversity Commission revised its mission statement and identified specific recruitment and retention goals, including a plan to oversee the implementation of the college's Recruitment and Retention Plan that had been submitted to Affirmative Action a year prior.
- Resurrection of Chairs' Discussion Forum begun. First lunch will be held next month.
- ADVANCE had a significant presence during URI's well-attended Diversity Week 2006:
  - *Women in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics: Where Are They?* Barb Silver, Joan Peckham, Karen Stamm
  - *Gender, Work, and Family Life.* Helen Mederer,
  - *How Colorful are the Sciences?* Padma Venkatramen, Barb Silver, Ashima Singh
  - *Multicultural Science Quiz.* Padma Venkatramen
  - *"Minorities in Higher Education: Opportunities and Barriers for Success in Math and Science."* Catalina Martinez, Darryl Keith
- 4 Proposals accepted at 2 conferences: Association for Women in Psychology, March 2007, and Winter Roundtable Conference, Teacher's College, February 2007.

### **Challenges**

- Although the concept for a permanent ADVANCE Center was approved, identifying its specific functions as a separate entity outside Human Resources and Affirmative Action is challenging, as is securing any commitment to funding at this point in time.

## **Best Ideas**

- Commitment by the Administration to promote progress in the areas of grant administration, dual career opportunities, and faculty recruitment.
- Affirmation of full state funding of the ADVANCE Fellow positions.
- Endorsement of the continuation of the Incentive Fund program through the Council for Research.
- Agreement to support an institutional mentoring program, topical lunches, career and climate workshops, and a chairs' discussion forum.
- The plan for a permanent ADVANCE Center serves many purposes and many constituencies, increasing the likelihood of it becoming a reality.
- The new Equity Coalition has provided cohesion and renewed energy, as well as efficiency to diversity initiatives. ADVANCE has been helpful in providing well-developed thinking on several agenda issues, such as dual career hiring program, mentoring, and improving the parental leave policy.
- The Faculty Fellows presentation during Research Week was very impressive, and highlighted the "cohort" characteristics of the second round of hires. Four of the five women were affiliated with the Graduate School of Oceanography and presented intersecting research, providing clear evidence of close collaborations, networking, and social support.
- A proposed Lactation Center, to be piloted in the ADVANCE Center, is badly needed and a long overdue action item. This will bring increased attention to our center on the parts of faculty, staff, and students, and will break the ground for future sites on campus.
- The Institutional Data Enhancing Academics (IDEA) Data Collection Committee is being enthusiastically endorsed by its members, who all have a vested interest in its success.