The Office of Multicultural Student Services (MSS) is central to Washington State University's mission and goals. MSS programs and services reflect WSU's "commitment to provide students with a transformational experience with a focus on enhancing the quality and relevance of the learning experience, providing more personalized student services, expanding learning opportunities outside the classroom, and developing a more cohesive student community."

These programs and services are imperative given the dramatic increase in the enrollment of diverse student populations (92% since 2010) and the high percentages of 1st Generation (55%) and Pell eligible (48%) students. In addition, many of these students have had fewer opportunities to prepare well to navigate a higher education institution and are more challenged in experiencing the institution as welcoming and affirming. It is well documented that these and other factors explain trends at a national and local level of persistence and graduation rates lagging behind for these students compared to the entire student body.

Throughout this report, the “high impact” culturally relevant programs and services offered by MSS will be highlighted as significant WSU efforts that reflect the institutional understanding of the unique needs of these students and the commitment to their educational success.

The Student Centers: A WSU historical hallmark effort to welcome, support, and affirm the multicultural student experience

At the Centers, students receive holistic guidance and advising. It is through the African American, the Asian American and Pacific Islander, and the Chicana/o student Centers that many multicultural students begin to establish and maintain their connection to the university.

The MSS staff, with close support from colleagues and units across campus, design and provide culturally relevant services for students. At the Centers students are closely tracked on their academic progress, offered advising, tutoring, access to study tables and workshops to support the accomplishment of their educational goals. Each Student Center provides a unique experience to the students while fostering cross cultural collaboration and interaction. These centers help make WSU a university destination for 1st Generation, multicultural and other underrepresented students.
Building a Community of Support and Welcoming Social Climate

Community Relations and Outreach

Outreach and Visitations
- 7,009 Visitors
- 39 Tours and Presentations by MSS Staff

Cultural and Social Events
- 202 Events
- 10,408 Participants

La Bienvenida
- WSU orientation for Spanish speaking parents: 217 participants

Working with, supporting, and advising student leaders and organizations to improve the climate and build community

Advising Student Organizations
- African Friendship Association, Crimson Group, La Hermandad de OMT, ChiILASTAL, Hawaii Club, Chi Delta Sigma, Sigma Lambda Gamma, Filipino American Student Association, Mitamitaga O Samoa

Multicultural Student Leaders Summit
- 120 student leaders came together to explore cross-cultural interaction and collaboration

Pacific Islander Student Initiative
- A collaborative effort with community leaders and WSU Athletics to address the unique needs of this student population

Student Conferences
- VIBES, SHAPING, CASH

Cultural Awareness Programs
- Hispanic Heritage Month, Black History Month, AAPI Awareness Month, Semana de la Raza

Community Relations Meeting
- Monthly meeting that brings together representatives from the WSU and Pullman Police Departments, MSS and other Student Affairs staff, and students to build common understanding and collaboration

Supporting Student Learning and Development

Tutoring
- 557 received tutoring, 51% were multicultural students
- 56% had a 3.0 or better GPA at the end of the year vs. 43% for all students served by MSS

Study Tables
- 323 students participated
- 59 study table sessions hosted by Student Mentors and supported by the AEC Tutors

Workshops and Trainings
- 4,318 students participated
- 199 workshops and trainings offered by MSS staff and partners

Cross Cultural Leadership Development
- Training of MSS student employees with clear intentionality to prepare them in intercultural and global competencies

Support for Undocumented Students
- HRS Webinar: Online Training at http://hrs.wsu.edu/training/
- Research Project - Making DREAMs Come True: A resilience intervention to increase academic persistence among undocumented students
- Multiple presentations and collaborations with campus and off-campus partners including the University of Idaho Immigration Clinic

“MSS is not just a job location for me or a place for an occasional workshop, it houses the people and resources that have developed me into the young professional I am today. The retention counselors, staff, and students actively work to create an inclusive environment that reflects home and motivates students of color to stay and graduate. From mentoring to tutoring, I could not have asked for better opportunities than what MSS has provided me so far.”

Camille Sessoms, Junior, Sociology
Multicultural Student Mentor Program (MSMP)

60 Student mentors made 43,185 mentoring contacts (personal and social media) reaching out to their assigned 1,391 freshman mentees (49% were active in the Program). High need (46% Pell eligible) and 1st Generation (53%) mentees were more inclined to be active in the program vs. those not active (40% and 48% respectively). Active mentees had a higher fall to fall retention (84.4%) vs. those not active in the Program (75.1%).

The Smart Start Program

152 students were selected to be part of the program. 140 of them were actively engaged. Of these, 80% enrolled at WSU for the second year vs. 72% of those in the comparison group (1st Gen and QValue equal to or below 2,200 and not in the Program).

Transfer Student Ambassadors

3 students were selected to serve in this role. Throughout the year, they reached-out to 270 transfer Students. Through their efforts students were connected to MSS services and programs, campus resources, and made aware of relevant transfer student information.

Student Graduation and Preparation for Graduate or Professional School or the Workforce

- The WSU graduation rate for the 2011 Freshman cohort is **62.3%** and the overall graduation rate for multicultural students in this cohort is **56%**. Unfortunately this is a significant decrease compared to the 2010 cohort.
- When analyzing the graduation rates for multicultural students based on their level of engagement in the Mentoring Program during their freshman year, those who were active in the program have graduated at **58.6%** vs. those not active at **51.3%**.

Honoring and celebrating graduating students

- 241 students were recognized during the fall and spring graduation celebrations
- Over 1,200 guests (other students, families, community, faculty and staff) joined in the celebration

“I'm a first generation student, and the Smart Start Program was my main source of help for academics, financial aid, and life in general.”

Gloria Pelupelu, Sophomore, Criminal Justice, Smart Start Scholar
To accomplish its mission, MSS enjoys the ongoing support and partnership of many campus and off-campus friends who share their expertise and commitment for the success of students. Many thanks to the faculty and staff who year after year generously contribute their time and expertise to present, help train, mentor, and guide the students. Special recognition to the faculty mentors, departmental liaisons, workshops facilitators, and those who invested their time to assist MSS in securing funding to maintain a vibrant MSS operation.

The MSS programs and services are only possible thanks to funds provided by the University through the Division of Student Affairs, partnership and support from campus units and departments, and the generous contributions of industry, alumni, faculty, staff and other MSS friends.