

## MSU AGEP Faculty Working Group Conference



EAST LANSING, Michigan - Wednesday September 5 through Saturday September 8: Michigan State University hosted the 2012 Michigan State University AGEP Faculty Working Group Conference and faculty from numerous Minority-Serving Institutions (MSI's) were in attendance. Specific faculty members from following institutions were represented, Richard Whittington (Tuskegee University), Erick Ellis (Alabama A&M University), Scott Harrison (North Carolina A&T State University), Cass D. Parker (Clark Atlanta University), and Carolyn Caudle (Tennessee State University), Willietta Gibson (Bennett College), Carleitta Page (Virginia Union), Ralph Noble (NCAT), Jennifer Swann (Lehigh), Mark Lee (Spelman), Lekan Latinwo (FAMU).

The conference began on Wednesday evening with reception at the Kellogg Conference Center State Room. During the reception faculty discussed barriers and opportunities for institutional collaboration. The Thursday activity involved a full day of working group discussions to identify specific opportunities for collaboration including: Student development, Faculty development and Curriculum design. This year our goal was to engage in a discussion of strategies and possible new mechanisms to meet challenges concerning recruitment, retention and collaboration. Those mechanisms may range from course sequence changes at MSU; to modified course content at the feeder university/college; to the generation of joint proposals to NIH or NSF for bridging to doctoral programs; to the development of joint Master's programs coupled with guaranteed admission to a PhD program following successful completion of a M.S. at a collaborating university. "This was a great session to brainstorm about the three key areas faculty development, student development and curriculum development that we can include in a memorandum of agreement," said Dr. Willietta Gibson, Assistant Professor of Biology at Bennett College. Michigan State University representatives included, Steven Thomas (The Graduate School), and Drs. Judi Brown-Clarke (BEACON), Kimberly Lebbby (Plant Biology), Percy Pierre (College of Engineering), Julius Jackson (Microbiology), and Tony Nunez (Psychology).

Following the working group session, faculty members were escorted along a guided tour by AGEP community members, who are also alumni from HBCU's: Sherrae M. Hayes (Doctoral Student, African American and African Studies (AAAS), Tennessee State University Alum), James Holly Jr. (Masters Student, Department of Mechanical Engineering, Tuskegee University Alum), Jelani Zarif (Doctoral Student, Cellular and Molecular Biology Department, Jackson State University Alum). After the tour, faculty representatives were able to participate in the September AGEP Learning Community meeting. Approximately 50 people were in attendance.

Many of the visiting faculty remained in East Lansing Friday and Saturday (September 7-8) to actively participate in 2012 Fall AGEP conference. Many of the faculty representatives participated as panelists and facilitated in many of the conference workshops and panels.

As a follow-up to the meetings in September, the visiting faculty formed subcommittee groups to develop a strategic plan between their universities and MSU in regards to Student development, Faculty development and Curriculum design. Currently, faculty representatives are sending The Graduate School nominations for adjunct faculty from their institutions. These potential adjunct faculty members played key roles in the implementing initiatives discussed during the Faculty Partnerships Conference.

For more information, please contact Steven Thomas at [deshawn@grd.msu.edu](mailto:deshawn@grd.msu.edu) or at 517-353-3262.