

pride week 2011: are U out?

The Student Affairs Diversity Campus Pride Week, sponsored by the LGBT Resource Center, is Oct. 17 – 21 and the campus community is invited to participate. Event organizers say Pride Week, with a theme this year of “Are U Out?”, is an important way to celebrate the diversity within our campus community.

Pride Week events begin with an open house to celebrate the new LGBT office on Monday, October 17, 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., with a ribbon-cutting ceremony

at 3:00 p.m. Other events for the week include films, panel discussions, safe zone training, and a pet pageant; a keynote by Pauline Park, a transgender activist based in New York; a performance by Stacyann Chin, a performing artist and LGBT rights political activist; playwright Doric Wilson’s Street Theater; and a Gay -La and silent auction.

For more information on Pride Week activities, visit: http://www.sa.utah.edu/lgbt/pdfs/pride_poster2011.pdf.

mission statement

The Student Affairs Diversity Council (SADC) strives to cultivate an environment that embraces and promotes the broad scope of diversity within the division.

it's hard to hate someone whose story you know: stories of growth and change

This column features stories by Student Affairs professionals and students who are willing to share an experience (event, book, speaker, etc) which promoted growth, a change in perspective, an awareness of another, or when some knowledge that was previously missing slipped into place.

upward bound

Kathryn Smith Felker

With a freshly minted bachelor’s degree in Sociology, in 1970 I accepted a **temporary** position with the Educational Talent Search Project at the University of Utah. Talent Search is one of several Federal TRIO programs intended to assist low income and first-generation college students to enter and succeed in higher education.

In 1972, I became director of Talent Search along with the newly funded Upward Bound program. Since then, in addition to Talent Search (1972-1977) and Upward Bound (1972-present), I have directed a Veterans Upward Bound (1974-1983) and the Student Support Services (1978 to present) – all Federal TRIO programs.

In 1970, “minority” enrollment at the University was 2.9 percent. In Fall 2011, it is 13.4 percent. In my role as Director

of the TRIO programs, I have had the opportunity of watching (through my TRIO lens) the growing diversity of the University. As I approach retirement this December, I consider having been in the thick of this diversification one of the most enriching and exciting parts of my job.

Upward Bound is a college preparation program for low income and potential first generation college students. When the program began at the University in 1972, we were funded for 50 high school students.



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calendar

An Evening with W.S. Merwin, US Poet Laureate
Wednesday, Oct 5, 7-9:00pm
 Enjoy the work of W.S. Merwin, poet, translator and environmental activist

2011 Fall Career Fair
Thursday, Oct 6, 9am-3:00pm
 Meet employers in a variety of fields.

Pride Week: "Are U Out?"
October 17-21, 2011
 Visit http://www.sa.utah.edu/lgbt/pdfs/pride_poster2011.pdf for more information.

For more events across campus this month please check out
<http://asuu.utah.edu/>

adult, trying to figure out who they are and who they will be. They are making decisions (not always good ones) about school, home, and self that will affect the rest of their lives. My experiences working with youth tell me that despite diversity of race, ethnicity, culture, language or religion, they have more in common than they have differences. They all have a favorite music, they almost all like pizza (some with no pork), and they all have potential to be college students and college graduates.

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upward bound, con't

Although there were a couple of African-Americans and Pacific Islanders in the program, for the first couple of years roughly half of the students were Latino (mostly Chicano) and half were white.

The demographics began to change with the fall of Saigon in 1975. A year or so later, we admitted the first Vietnamese student; within a couple of years, we were regularly

admitting Vietnamese, Cambodian, Hmong, and Laotian students. In 1979, the Shah of Iran was ousted and we admitted some Iranian students. Since

then, wars, civil unrest, and economics have brought Somalis, Bosnians, Serbs, Croatians, Afghanis, Nepalese, Burmese and increasing numbers of Latinos from Mexico, Central and South America, as well as Americans from across the country, to Salt Lake City and to Upward Bound. In the summer of 2011, of 100 youth in the TRIO Summer Programs, 87 were students of color, 23 were born in the U.S. but not Utah, and 28 were themselves

immigrants or refugees from 16 different countries (I have no idea how many are the children of immigrants or refugees). But I can say that we have students from Kabul, Mogadishu, Saigon, Kearns, and Rose Park – a pretty diverse group.

In the early years of the program, many people (mostly administrators) commented that I was crazy to bring so many "minority" youth to campus for a residential summer program and questioned whether I, a woman, could keep things under control. Some questioned whether the

My experiences working with youth tell me that despite diversity of race, ethnicity, culture, language or religion, they have more in common than they have differences.

Upward Bound students were really "college material". And some, mostly members of minority communities, questioned whether a white person should be in charge of a minority program.

How do I answer these criticisms and questions? First, I admit that I was (maybe still am) crazy – not for bringing minority students to campus, but for bringing teenagers to campus. Teenagers are just special. They are somewhere between child and

Salty City Happenings and More

Diversifying the University of Utah is one task, but diversifying the nation's federal branch is quite another. Last month, an article appeared in the Ogden Standard-Examiner highlighting the historic pace at which President Obama is moving to nominate "non-traditional" nominees, in other words, not white males. The article states that more than 70 percent of Obama's confirmed nominees have been minorities, which largely exceeds the past two presidential terms.

There are other incredibly striking statistics in this piece, and we encourage you to read the full article at <http://www.standard.net/stories/2011/09/13/obama-picks-more-females-minorities-judges>.

upward bound, con't

As for being a white woman running a program for minorities, my first line of defense is that TRIO is a program for low income and first-generation college students; there are no racial/ethnic criteria. Even white students who are from low income families or who are the first in their family to attend college are traditionally underrepresented on college campuses, so this is also diversity.

But because students of color are over-represented in the TRIO programs, that may not be enough. I can only say that I am not color-blind; I see the differences in experience and privilege; and I respect, appreciate and celebrate all of those differences. I am very proud of the diversity that is represented in

the programs and grateful for the enrichment of my life that I have gained knowing and working with these young people.

I am not naïve enough to believe that there is no bigotry or discrimination (and sometimes just ignorance) left on campus, or that the work is done. But, the University has changed and continues to change. As a whole, the University now sees diversity as a value to be pursued. Scholarships are available for first generation college students, and recruiting students (and faculty) of color is an objective.

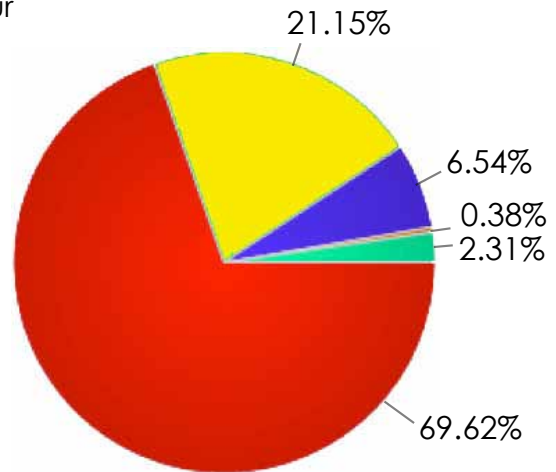
Not all Upward Bound

students enroll at the University of Utah, but many do. And I hope that my 41 years with Upward Bound and Student Support Services and the other TRIO programs has helped to diversify and enrich the University of Utah and, more importantly, helped to enrich the lives of and provide educational opportunities to the individual students, regardless of background, that have participated in these programs.

Kathryn Smith Felker is the director of TRIO Educational Opportunity Programs and Upward Bound and Student Support Services.

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement: I believe that being able to interact with individuals with different backgrounds and perspectives will help me after college.

- Strongly Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Strongly Disagree



N = 314 University of Utah Students
 NASPA Consortium, Civic Engagement Student Survey, Spring 2011

student affairs diversity council

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