Published on *Hillsborough Community College News* (https://news.hccfl.edu) on 01/05/18

HCC in the News: More Community Colleges Are Hiring Chief Diversity Officers

Terms:

Published Date and Time:
01/05/18

http://diverseeducation.com/article/107862/?utm_campaign=DIV1801%20DAI... [1]

News Organization:
Diverse Issues in Higher Education

A dilemma for CDOs

While strides are being made to increase the number of chief diversity officers hired at community colleges in the U.S., many current officers worry that the role as it is now does not have the executive or presidential ties that it needs to make effective changes.

Duffield says NADOHE's national standards are helpful to him because he currently faces questions around the existential role of his position within the larger Tarrant County College District. He wonders if the role is "a support system for the district" or if the CDO should be in charge of all diversity efforts.

Still, in terms of authority, his position at the director level is not comparable to people at similar positions at most four-year colleges. He says, "In community colleges, there is not a lot of administration that understands that this position needs to actively be in the executive staff of an institution" in order to have "the positional authority or positional power within the district to create the cultural change that needs to happen."

Dr. Joan B. Holmes, special assistant to the president for equity and special programs and Title IX coordinator at Hillsborough Community College in Florida, echoes this sentiment. She says that the current community college CDO model can somewhat limit ambitious diversity plans for a community college if the diversity, equity and inclusion officer does not report directly to the president.

"Historically, or at least in the state of Florida, many of the diversity officers were located in Human Resources," she says. Other diversity officers may be embedded in the office of the provost, the compliance office, the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) office or a multicultural office.

"Philosophically, even at the university level, that is not a good model because it does not give the independence of the office to address diversity issues in a proactive way," Holmes warns. "The employees are many times reticent or resistant to pursue HR but more willing to pursue an independent office of a chief diversity office," she adds.

Holmes believes efforts at the national level to elevate community college diversity officers will give them a greater voice at their institutions. She plans to attend a timely AACC convening this month that brings CDOs together to brainstorm and identify a preferred CDO model that will get more officers working independently and reporting to higher leadership.

Language:
English

Source URL: https://news.hccfl.edu/news/hcc-news-more-community-colleges-are-hiring-chief-diversity-officers

Links:
[1] http://diverseeducation.com/article/107862/?utm_campaign=DIV1801%20DAI...