

Connections

The University of Akron

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Team Building and Diversity

By Lee Gill, J.D. AVP for Inclusion and Equity/Chief Diversity Officer

When building quality teams is the goal of organizations, diversity initiatives become useful as a business imperative. The challenge for organizations is to capture the energy such diverse teams can produce in the most meaningful way for their businesses.

In recent years some organizations have taken a number of steps to promote diversity in its workforce, including diversity awareness training, increasing the number and types of network groups, mentoring schemes, and working towards creative solutions to accommodate requests for flexible working arrangements in line with business needs. Equally important is the ongoing measurement of the effectiveness of the initiatives and programs that are being put into place. Every ounce of intelligence available to the modern organization must be harnessed. To discriminate is deadly. *To be inclusive is good for business.*

Also important to the diversity conversation is diversity of thought which represents the opposite of its true meaning which is “differing from one another.” I believe it was Voltaire who stated that he disagreed with someone's opinion but would defend to the death their right to express it. Diversity of thought is critical to reaching the most innovative, customer-focused solutions to the many issues, problems and challenges confronting organizations. As such, it is the responsibility of every supervisor to value and secure diversity of thought in his/her work unit by employing and developing the highest-caliber individuals differing from one another culturally, intellectually and experientially, as well as by race, gender and other factors.

Annual Alternative Retirement Plan Open Enrollment

If you participate in the Alternative Retirement Plan (ARP), you will soon be offered an opportunity to change carriers during the 2008 open enrollment period – May 1 through June 29, 2008.

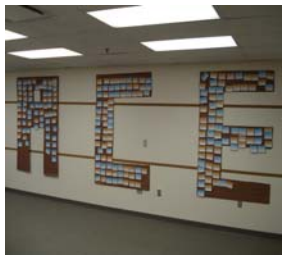
Enrollment forms will be sent via campus mail on May 1. Those who wish to make a change, you must return forms indicating a change to the Office of Benefits Administration by 4:30pm on June 29, 2008. All changes will be effective July 1, 2008. .

A list of current ARP carriers and contact information is available on the Office of Benefits Administration web site <http://www.uakron.edu/hr/docs/ContactSheet.pdf>

If you have any questions concerning this open enrollment, please contact Sarah Kelly at (330) 972-6134 or e-mail at sarah30@uakron.edu

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The ACE Connection



Pictured above is the "Quality Service ACE Wall". Recognition cards were filled out by those who participated in the ACE trainings to showcase excellent customer service interactions they've had on campus.

In May of 2007, the Finance and Administration Division introduced The ACE Connection branding program to its employees and customers.

ACE represents Accountability, Customer service, and Excellence. These principles are rooted in the division's desire to attain an elite level of responsibility and quality in their commitment to serve their customers.

Since its introduction, a widespread campaign has been launched throughout Finance and Administration to encourage employees to get involved in the ACE Connection. Employees are required to attend customized ACE training seminars where they learn applicable skills to successfully implement the action words into their everyday work activities. An ACE website, <http://www.uakron.edu/hr/ace/index.php> featuring newsletters, new employee information, training archives, and an area for em-

ployee and customer feedback is currently being developed.

This summer, The ACE Connection will continue to grow with a new employee orientation/welcoming program, a second phase of professional development training, decorative wall murals in all Finance and Administration offices, and an employee recognition program to reward employees for carrying out the principles of Accountability, Customer service, and Excellence.

Campus Safety and ALiCE Trainings

By Chad Cunningham, SGT UAPD

"We have noticed that in these types of events, the first responders are the people inside the crisis. Utilizing this knowledge The UAPD is implementing the A.L.i.C.E. training program."

What action will you take if an intruder enters the room?

April 16th, 2007 and February 14th, 2008 are two dates that have changed Universities nation wide. You may be thinking to yourself, "what event occurred on these dates which changed Universities?" On April 16th, 2007 a student, Seung Hui Cho entered the Virginia Tech campus and took the lives of thirty three people and wounded many others. Valentines day, February 14th, 2008, will be remembered at Northern Illinois University as the day Steven Kazmierczak walked on stage in a lecture hall and shot 21 people, killing five and himself.

We have noticed that in these types of events the first responders are the people inside the crisis. Utilizing this knowledge The University of Akron Police Department is implementing the **A.L.i.C.E.** training program.

A.L.i.C.E., an acronym which stands for *Alert*, *Lockdown*, *inform*, *Counter*, *Evacuate*, will give our community options to perform as first responders to these crises. *Alert* is getting the word out; *Lockdown* is aggressive use of current procedures; *inform* is the aggressive use of technology, such as Z-alert, reverse 911, and others; *Counter* is confusing the intruder by distracting his/her/their

thought process. We distract by using the weapons which we have at our disposal, for example: pens, pencils, books, laptops, etc. *Evacuate* is simply get out of the area as quickly as possible. This portion can be decided based upon the information being distributed.

The training is tentatively slated to begin in the Summer/Fall 2008. The sessions will last for an hour and a half and consist of lecture and practical application scenarios. As graduates of the program, you will be better prepared, both mentally and physically, to survive a crisis like Virginia Tech and NIU.