



Diversity Action Plan, October 2009

Goal 1: To enroll and graduate American Indians and other minorities in proportion to their representation in the state's population.

Flathead Valley Community College recognizes Montana's American Indians are not represented in higher education in the proportion they are present in the state's population. Further, American Indian students do not graduate with degrees and certificates at the same rate as the general population in Montana or the United States. To promote American Indian and other minority access and success in the College's programs, FVCC plans to continue to increase its efforts to recruit and provide academic and cultural support systems promoting success in the following ways:

- Continue recruitment and marketing efforts in the region and state at high schools primarily serving American Indian populations.
- Ensure students and families understand and are informed about Native American Student Fee Waivers at FVCC.
- Encourage Native American Students to utilize academic and funding resources available in the Native American Affairs Office.
- Create a campus environment in which Native American students can identify through monthly lectures, public events, and involvement with the Multicultural Club.
- Continue to establish relationships with the state's tribal colleges to promote academic and career enhancement degrees and certificates that may not be offered at individual tribal colleges yet increase employability in those communities.
- Present continuing education possibilities, beyond a two-year degree, for Native American students through campus collaborations with Montana's four-year institutions.

2008 Presentation Information:

- American Indian Heritage Day: On September 26th, a presentation and lecture was hosted by Daron Lime, Blackfeet Tribal Elder. Included a Teepee Setup Demonstration, providing a culturally appropriate setting for the discussion in honor of Heritage Day.
- The Anishinabe Nation and the Chippewa Band Lecture Series: On January 29th and 30th, Louise Fischer discussed the relationship between the Chippewa tribe to the Anishinabe Nation. Mrs. Fischer also held a lecture for Working Professions on Indian Customs and Traditions in order to better serve Native American populations in the academic and health care field. An elementary public school presentation was included at Hedges Elementary School.

2009 Presentation Information:

- Little Shell Tribe Celebration: On February 24th, FVCC hosted this event, which included four Native American speakers and their relationship to the Chippewa Tribe. Included was a flute demonstration, potluck dinner, fry bread making class, and Chippewa Tribal



Council information booth. The majority of Native Americans enrolled at FVCC are Chippewa or Little Shell members.

- Hand Drum Competition and Hoop Dance Exhibit: On March 27th, FVCC hosted a Navajo Hoop Dance presentation, followed by a Hand Drum Competition for cash prizes. Two elementary public school demonstrations were included, in addition to the campus function.
- Powwow Presentation “101”: On September 24th, The Two medicine Lake Singers and dancers from Browning, Montana performed an educational show to better inform the public of traditions and customs surrounding contemporary powwow events. In addition, 280 students from several local elementary schools were invited to FVCC on September 25th for an exclusive show to honor American Indian Heritage Day.

Goal 2: Raise “Cultural and Global Awareness” for students and community members in Northwest Montana, developing and appreciating cultural diversity.

This initiative promotes minority student identification with the FVCC campus while increasing an understanding between students and community members who share different heritage, ethnic background, and religious affiliation. FVCC plans to continue raising awareness of cultural and global diversity through the following organizations:

- The Multicultural Club through student organizations welcomes student and community member involvement from individuals who are interested in multicultural issues on a local and global level. The club sponsors and supports various activities and events, honoring all people, places, and cultures of the world. This club holds strong ties to Native American heritage yet includes all races, religions, and cultures.
- FVCC Study Abroad Department has hosted several short and long-term study abroad opportunities to students and community members. In the coming spring semester, 2010, FVCC is offering two study abroad opportunities to students. The first is a four month trip to Venice, Italy through the FVCC Art department. The second is a short term, four week trip to Bali, Indonesia. In the past three years, FVCC has offered other international study opportunities in Nepal, Italy, and Maui, Hawaii.

2009 Cultural Events:

- The Multicultural Affairs department hosted a cultural immersion program over the winter break to Maui, Hawaii. This three-week program worked with Polynesian groups, and organizations on the island of Maui to build appreciation and understanding of the Hawaiian culture. Students were engaged in numerous heritage activities, including taro farming, net throwing, outrigger canoeing, fishing, snorkeling, and many more.
- Through a team effort, Multicultural Services, PTK, College Democrats and Campus Corps, presented “Faces of Diversity” in February to commemorate Martin Luther King, Jr. and Black History Month. A presentation was held the evening of February 12th in



conjunction with an “opening” of a photo exhibit entitled “Faces of Diversity,” which showcased students and faculty from FVCC who represent various cultures and ethnicities.

- The FVCC Multicultural Affairs program hosted a Humanities Montana *Speakers Bureau* program “A Journalist’s Perspective on Wars in the Arab/Islamic World” with Clay Scott on Wednesday, February 25th. The presentation was free and open to the public.
- Mr. Kizuki Matsunaga, the Kumamoto Japanese representative to Montana, was on campus March 13th to promote “sister state” awareness in Montana. His presentation included information about the world’s largest caldera, beautiful national parks, ocean side communities, samurai castles, Japanese culture and more. The event was free and open to the public.
- Middle East Children’s Alliance Founder and Executive Director Barbara Lubin presented “Children of Gaza” at FVCC on March 19th. This event was free and open to the public.
- Women Resisting War in Columbia, a presentation by Nidia Castellanos, was held on April 15th. This event was free and open to the public.
- Paul Rowold, pastor of the Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Polson, has traveled to the Middle East 26 times. He presented a program entitled: “The Plight of the Palestinian Christians” on April 28th. A small bazaar featuring Middle Eastern food to benefit the children of Gaza was available before and after the program. The lecture was free and open to the public.
- FVCC American Sign Language Instructor and Interpreter Toni Cancilla teamed up with FVCC deaf student Amber Lang to present “A Glimpse into a Deaf World” on April 27. The presentation took guests on a short journey into the world of silence. This lecture was free and open to the public.
- Multicultural Affairs coordinated its three annual cultural immersion programs in the Sacred Valley of Peru during summer semesters 2007, 2008, and 2009. The multi-week academic adventures took place in the village of Urubamba outside of Cusco, Peru. Participating students had the opportunity to earn up to 12 credits while participating in a number of activities including exploring significant Inca ruins, visiting Indian Artisan market, sightseeing in the city of Cusco, touring Machu Picchu, staying in a local home on Lake Titicaca and visiting Lima, the capitol of Peru.
- Multicultural Services coordinated Flash Points: Venezuela and Columbia Today by Mark Holston on June 9th. This event was free and open to the public.
- The FVCC Art Department hosted a 19 credit Spring semester in Venice, Italy. This study abroad focused on language, art, theatre, architecture, and Italian culture. Students lived in Venician apartments, attended language classes in the Institutio de Venencia, and toured significant buildings and sites in Venice and other cities throughout Italy.