Director’s End-of-Year Report  Spring/Summer 2016

Dr. Cirecie Olatunji

During the Fall of 2015, Dr. Rosalind Hale met with me several times to provide a history of the Xavier University Community Outreach Center. She asked me to consider taking over the role of director that was half of a dual role she held as XUCOC director and chair of the board of directors. I eventually agreed to be nominated for the position. At the March 8th meeting of the XULA board members, Dr. Hale recommended that the directorship be transferred to me as of the end of the academic year and that I also serve on the board as a voting member (but not as president). The XULA board members consented to Dr. Hale’s idea and then, at the full board meeting on March 23, 2016, I shared my vision for the center with the board members and was voted in unanimously.

My vision for the Outreach Center focuses on four main areas of programmatic activity: (1) Gert Town residents, (2) community partners, (3) XULA faculty/staff and (4) XULA students with three ideals: sustainability, empowerment, and evidence-based programming. I am very pleased to serve as a board member and as the XUCOC director.
- Created social media sites: Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook to promote the center’s activities and interact with interested individuals and organizations.

- Requested a XUCOC email account from XULA IT. The email address is xucoc@xula.edu. The email account is managed by the director.

- Met with library staff member, Mr. Herb McGuin to discuss possible collaborations with XUCOC, such as creating information literacy workshops for Gert Town residents.

- Created the design of the XUCOC website (currently still under construction) and began populating the website with content.

- Developed the biannual XUCOC newsletter (vol. 1, no. 1) that will be uploaded to the website. A few hard copies will be printed for distribution on campus, among the board members, and displayed at the center.

- Digitized all of the documents in the file cabinet on site to make documents more accessible to board members.

- Created a database of the books in the XUCOC library.

- Gathered statistics on the Gert Town community to merge with the existing needs assessment results provided by Dr. Judith Mirangi.

- Had several meetings with Pharmacy PEP faculty, Dr. John Okogbaa and Ms. Adrianne Mitchell, to continue discussions initiated by Dr. Rosalind Hale to develop an ongoing partnership with them. The goal is to eventually offer clinical services to Gert Town residents.

- Participated in a telephone meeting with Mr. Bertrand Laurent of The Caribbean Institute for Sustainable Development to discuss his proposal to partner with the Outreach Center. He is offering the possibility of part-time use of a program coordinator who would be housed at the Outreach Center and the institution of a 3-pronged program to address civic engagement, economic development, and crime reduction. They, in turn, would receive free use of our building space, resources, & materials to operate their program.

- Had several meetings with XULA History professor, Dr. Sharlene Sinegal-DeCuir, to discuss the development of an Oral History project in Spring 2017 in which her students research the history of Gert Town.

- Met with Dr. Rachel Thomas, Assistant Vice President for Research and Sponsored Programs/Director of Title III, to explore funding opportunities through federal grant programs that align with the mission of the center.

- Provided oral updates to the board of directors at meetings.

- Met weekly with our undergraduate work-study students (Spring: Dahlia Daniel, Terra Simpson and Summer: Thien-Nhi Tran) and unpaid graduate assistants (Spring: Halima Dargan and Summer: Hasaan B. Reeder) to provide training, oversee tasks to completion, and monitor reporting to Financial Aid office.
- Met with Counseling faculty member, Dr. Ariel Mitchell, to explore opportunities for clinical service delivery on Saturdays during Fall and Spring semesters.

- Coordinated the monthly Utilities Assistance Program with TCA representative (2nd Monday of the month, 9:00-11:00am).

- Developed job descriptions for the director and program coordinator positions.

- Began constructing a Handbook of Policies and Procedures that will provide: (a) protocols for training work-study students, graduate assistants, paid staff, (b) a description of the responsibilities and duties of the board of directors, (c) procedures for interacting with the XULA administrative offices, (d) a organizational chart to represent XUCOC’s internal relationships and connection to other organizations.

- Met with Ms. Karen Hodge-Nathan in the XULA Credit Union to transfer fiduciary responsibilities to the XUCOC treasurer, Ms. Typhanie Butler, and director.

2016-2017 (proposed) Activities

- CSLS-MAX Homework Clinic (weekly M-W, 3-6pm)
- Graduate Counseling Courses (weekly W, 3-9pm)
- Center for Traumatic Stress Research (weekly R, 1-9:30pm)
- Tutoring (weekly Sa, 9am-12:30pm)
- XULA Annual Recovery workshop (W, Sept 7th @ 3:30pm)
- Oral History Project (Spring 2017)
- Needs Assessment Project (Spring 2017)

Plans for Next Year (2016-2017)

- Finalize the Spring 2016 newsletter (v.1, no.1) and upload to website
- Develop the Fall 2016 newsletter and distribute
- Complete basic website content and begin working on additional web pages
- Develop & submit grant proposals
- Continue seeking partnerships with related entities
- Continue soliciting XULA faculty to develop research projects related to XUCOC mission
- Continue developing service learning opportunities for XULA students
- Continue to develop/solicit community programs (e.g., workshops for Gert Town residents, practitioners, other community stakeholders)
- Create & upload resources that disseminate our activities (podcasts, reports, newsletters, Practitioner Briefs, YouTube videos, etc.)
XAVIER UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY OUTREACH CENTER

Board of Directors

Community Representatives:
Mrs. Almedia Phoenix
Mr. Eugene Simmons
Mr. Thaddeus Stansbury
Wynda Azeez
Coach Desmond Lewis
    Coach Douglas Patterson

Community Organizations:
LaToya Cantrell District B – Councilperson
Mr. Julius Feltus, Rep. Gert Town Community Development Center
Rev. Kaseem N. Short Gert Town Enterprise Economic Redevelopment
Mr. John McKnight Total Community Action
    Mrs. Thelma French
    Mr. James K. Terry
    Ms. Ashley Thomas

Ministerial Representatives:
Mr. John Conkerton St. Rita of Cascia Catholic Church
Rev. Jeffery Connor Philips Memorial United Methodist Church
Rev. White/Mrs. Emily White Greater King Solomon Baptist Church
Sis. Suzanne Brauer, O.P. Dominican Sister of Peace

Xavier University Representatives:
Mr. Ron Bechet
Dr. Cirecie A. Olatunji
Mrs. Typhanie Jasper-Butler
Mrs. Deidra Jones
Dr. Judith Miranti

Dr. Rosalind Pijeaux Hale, emeritus board member

For more information about the XUCOC, contact: Dr. C. Olatunji (x-5392, xucoc@xula.edu).

"The ultimate purpose of the University is to contribute to the promotion of a more just and humane society by preparing its students to assume roles of leadership and service in a global society."