



**IWCA Diversity Initiative
Approved by the IWCA Executive Board
November 20, 2006**

Writing Centers are inherently multicultural and multilingual sites that welcome and accommodate diversity. Writing centers inclusively serve all students, including members of underrepresented groups such as people of color, lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people, and people with a range of abilities, economic needs, and linguistic expression. Writing center work is also conducted by a diverse population of tutors and administrators. The International Writing Centers Association values diversity among its membership and seeks to serve a diverse membership responsibly and well.

The IWCA acknowledges the material impacts of structural inequalities that directly affect the quality of education and professional life for historically underrepresented groups including those obstacles standing in the way of our organization serving a diverse membership. The IWCA seeks to address these barriers in meaningful ways. Such obstacles include the largely homogenous composition of our current membership particularly with regard to race, the absence of a significant body of research and scholarship addressing diversity matters in our discipline, and a lack of organizational outreach to communities typically underrepresented in the field and in education writ large.

As a complement to the IWCA Position Statement on Disability and Writing Centers and to implement and extend the NCTE Policy on Involvement of People of Color, the International Writing Centers Association seeks to address these issues while attending to the following principles:

1. The IWCA recognizes the necessity of cultivating and honoring the participation and leadership of historically excluded or marginalized peoples.
2. The IWCA recognizes that its outreach efforts to historically excluded or marginalized communities must be shaped by the expressed needs and interests of those communities.

Action Items to Begin IWCA Diversity Initiative:

- Create a subcommittee of the Executive Committee (perhaps as part of the Membership Committee priority for recruitment and outreach) to identify writing centers and writing center directors at historically underrepresented institutions (high schools, two-year colleges, and four-year colleges and universities) and to talk with them about the IWCA and about how a relationship between the IWCA and their institution might be mutually beneficial. Such institutions might include historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), tribal colleges, uninvolved high schools, two-year colleges, and colleges and universities designed to serve students with disabilities.
- For the purposes of this particular outreach, create a subcommittee of the Executive Committee to identify and contact writing centers at institutions that may serve

historically economically disadvantaged students, or predominately serve students of color, or students with disabilities, to develop a sustained relationship between IWCA and the institution that might be mutually beneficial.

- Offer free two-year institutional memberships in IWCA including a subscription to *The Writing Center Journal* to interested historically underrepresented educational institutions.
- In collaboration with the Finance and Scholarship committees, develop a proposal for a scholarly support and research grant program (modeled on NCTE Scholars for the Dream) to benefit:
 - scholars of color presenting at IWCA conferences for the first time.
 - writing center scholars addressing diversity as first time presenters at IWCA conferences.
 - writing center scholars researching issues related to diversity and writing centers.
 - writing center directors from historically underrepresented groups, particularly directors of color.
- In preparation for IWCA meetings, give strong consideration to venues with excellent accommodations for people with disabilities, records of equitable service to customers, and demonstrated fair labor practices.