

Friday, October 30, 2015

## **Saint Louis University Clock Tower Accords**

At an initial meeting of the proposed NADD task force on Social Justice and Racial Violence, I talked about the Saint Louis University Clock Tower Accord and was asked to provide a copy to NADD members.

During what is called by many as the Ferguson protests in October 2014, demonstrators comprised of students and local citizens led six days of teach-ins and conversations about racial equity and social justice while camped outside by the clock tower on Saint Louis University (SLU) campus. On October 18, 2014 the demonstrators peacefully packed up their camp and returned to their homes and residence halls following an agreement with the University President that became known as the Clock Tower Accords. The agreement committed SLU to a program of formal and institutionalized conversations about race on our campus. SLU also committed to devise short- and long-term initiatives that retain and attract more students and faculty of color, to promote equal opportunity, and to advance focused economic development in disadvantaged neighborhoods.

A work group was developed to monitor the progress being made on the Accords, which is comprised of students, staff, faculty, city leaders, and community organizers and called the Access and Success Working Group. This group has been meeting regularly with the University President since the agreement was crafted.

The agreements were consistent with the mission of Saint Louis University, as a Jesuit Catholic institution, and were undertaken to effect change and produce tangible results both at the University and in disadvantaged neighborhoods in the region.

I am proud to say that social work students were part of the demonstrations, and a School of Social Work faculty member was one of three faculty members who assisted the University President in reaching these accords.

Below are the initiatives that comprised the Clock Tower Accords.

1. Increase the budget for the African American Studies Program
2. Increase financial aid resources for retention of African American students
3. Evaluate SLU's current scholarship programs to better serve African American students
4. Offer additional college prep workshops for students in the area's most disadvantaged school districts
5. Establish a K-12 bridge program, including summer programs, in the Normandy and Shaw neighborhoods to help increase the numbers of college-bound students from neighborhoods in those areas
6. Establish a community center
7. Commission mutually agreed upon artwork to be displayed on campus
8. Develop an academic Center for Community and Economic Development to be integrated with the community center

9. Create a Race, Poverty and Inequality Steering Committee
10. Sponsor a national conference on racial equality
11. Appoint a Special Assistant to the President for Diversity and Community Engagement
12. Establish a diversity speakers series
13. Hold bi-weekly meetings with an inclusive group, including the President, to continue to advance SLU's efforts to address inequality and poverty in the community

Please let me know if you have questions. Sincerely, Don

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