

The New AASCU/ NASULGC Office of Urban and Metropolitan Programs

American urban and metropolitan colleges and universities, by their mere location in urban and metropolitan centers, are governed by a mission which inextricably links them to the communities in which they reside. Representing 87 percent of the nation's urban, 4-year public institutions of higher education, AASCU and NASULGC urban and metropolitan colleges and universities are a resource and braintrust well positioned to serve as a dynamic force in the nation's urban and metropolitan communities. The community's need for education reform, skills, technical assistance, job-training, housing and urban redevelopment and the university's need to channel their energies and talents beyond the realm of theory into the world of human and community concerns, has encouraged the increasing development of college and university-community partnerships.

The new AASCU/NASULGC Office of Urban and Metropolitan Colleges and Universities grows out of a longstanding joint commitment both associations have had to assist member institutions in improving their urban and metropolitan community linkages and in remaining at the forefront of national urban and metropolitan issues. Dr. Judith R. James, the new AASCU/NASULGC Director of Urban and Metropolitan Programs, will report to both associations and provide staff support to the AASCU Council on Urban and Metropolitan Universities and the NASULGC Commission on the Urban Agenda. In addition,

she will work with the Coalition of Urban and Metropolitan Universities and other urban and metropolitan interest groups to coordinate the development of an agenda which addresses the diverse needs of AASCU and NASULGC urban and metropolitan member institutions while working with urban and metropolitan interest groups under the auspices of other national associations such as the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC), National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (NAICU), American Council on Education (ACE), American Association of Higher Education (AAHE), the National Association for Equal Opportunity (NAFEO) and the National Urban League.

As we approach the 21st century, the greatest challenges threatening America's quality of life will have to be addressed from within - that is, by the American people and in ways that have not been fully exploited. Hence, in order to meet these challenges, everyone must be a participant in the problem solving process. As citizens of our nation's urban and metropolitan communities, the system of higher education is expected to strengthen cities in partnership with urban and metropolitan community members and organizations; coordinate with the public K-12 educational segment; contribute to revitalizing the economy by producing the "right" kinds of highly qualified manpower and contribute to the further training of the labor force in the context of rapidly changing technologies. Moreover, urban and metropolitan institutions of higher education must promote and sustain greater social equity at a time when the more deprived sections of the population are hardest hit by educational, social and economic realities. AASCU and NASULGC have recognized these challenges and are actively involved in developing and implementing programs and strategies to support urban and metropolitan institutional members in their effort to improve the quality of life in the nation's cities.

The new AASCU/NASULGC Office of Urban and Metropolitan Programs will provide the following services: identify and communicate state and federal budget and policy issues affecting urban and metropolitan institutions; provide technical assistance in developing and implementing advocacy strategies and advocate for urban and metropolitan institutions; develop a clearinghouse of resource materials on urban and metropolitan college and university-community partnerships; plan conferences and demonstration projects to encourage exchange of ideas on topics of interest to urban and metropolitan campuses; maintain effective liaison with major urban/metropolitan-based professional groups; assist member institutions in enhancing community linkages in support of their urban missions. For more information, please contact:

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