

AASC Letter in Support of the Faculty Diversity Initiative

June 30, 2003

Mr. Albert Carnesale
Chancellor
Murphy Hall
UCLA

Dear Chancellor Carnesale,

On behalf of the over thirty-five members of the Faculty Advisory Committee of the Asian American Studies Center, we write to express our enthusiastic and unequivocal support for the Faculty Diversity Initiative, which was proposed by the directors of the university's four ethnic studies centers in February, 2003.

We believe this Initiative, which resulted from extensive discussions involving faculty, staff, and students on campus and alumni, community leaders, and elected officials in our communities provides the university with a positive and highly constructive plan of action for enriching the research, teaching, and service activities of not the only the four ethnic studies research centers, but also departments throughout the campus. We believe this initiative goes hand-in-hand with the university's commitment to academic excellence, with your bold vision for "UCLA in LA" in forging strong partnerships with Los Angeles' diverse communities, and with recently launched efforts by your administration to address serious concerns raised by many groups on campus about the need to have greater diversity among the faculty. We believe this initiative should serve as an indispensable building block in making UCLA the preeminent public university in the nation and world in the 21st century.

In 1969, when a group of UCLA students, staff, faculty, alumni, and local community leaders presented a proposal to the UCLA administration for the creation of what would become the Asian American Studies Center, they wrote the following mission statement:

"The Center will hopefully enrich the experience of the entire university by contributing to an understanding of the long neglected history, rich cultural heritage, and present position of Asian Americans in our society."

In 2003, we believe that this mission statement remains compelling, timely, and still unfulfilled,. We believe there are still many departments and professional schools at UCLA, which do not have any faculty experts on the rapidly growing and diverse Asian Pacific American population, who represent 13% of all Californians.

During the winter and spring academic quarters of 2003, we undertook a series of discussions with an array of department chairs and professional school deans across the UCLA campus about the Faculty Diversity Initiative, and our interest in pursuing joint institutional faculty searches with them if the proposed FTEs became available. The Center's Faculty Advisory Committee

selected these academic units because we currently do not “share” a faculty expert with these important fields of research and teaching. For your information, we have included letters of support and interest from public policy, world arts and cultures, library and information studies, public health, arts and architecture, and social welfare.

We urge you to give the most serious consideration possible to the Faculty Diversity Initiative, and in particular the allocation of another round of 24 institutional faculty FTEs to the four ethnic studies centers so that they can work with academic units to “enrich the experience of the entire university.”

Sincerely yours,

James Lubben
Professor Emeritus, Department of Social Welfare
Chair, AASC Faculty Advisory Committee, 1988 – 2003

Paul Ong
Professor, Department of Urban Planning
Chair, AASC Faculty Advisory Committee, 2003 – 2004

Cc: Claudia Mitchell-Kernan
Directors of the ethnic studies centers
AASC Faculty Advisory Committee