Leadership Institute's Inaugural Class of Fellows Named

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As higher education faces continuing challenges and changes nationwide, a new institute at the University of Arizona will prepare the next generation of campus leaders for the road ahead.

The first group of fellows has been selected for the UA Academic Leadership Institute, established by President Robert N. Shelton. Participants will take part in workshops and professional development activities designed to bolster the leadership skills of current administrators and prepare campus employees interested in holding such roles in the future. The plan is for the institute to be held annually.

Faculty members, department heads, associate deans, shared governance leaders (such as faculty senators) and other campus leaders were invited to apply or nominate colleagues for the institute, which will host an orientation, four daylong workshops and four networking lunches with campus, community and business leaders between August and March.

Out of more than 60 nominations, 24 employees from 16 colleges and divisions were selected for the institute, a partnership of the Provost's Office, the Office of the President and Human Resources. (See the complete list of fellows online.)

"The advisory board must have had a hard time choosing among these award-winning teachers, researchers and dedicated leaders," said Provost Meredith Hay.

Allison Vaillancourt, vice president for Human Resources, said the people selected for the first year of the institute are "passionate, imaginative and committed to the UA's future."

"They will have the opportunity to learn from each other throughout the year, and the connections they forge will make them better leaders and the UA a stronger institution," she said.

Here, we highlight four of the employees who hope to hone their skills through the Academic Leadership Institute, which was made possible through outside donations.

Laura Berry
Associate Dean of the Honors College

Berry said she hopes the institute will help her to become a better administrator and to build relationships with other colleges on campus.

"I think it's an investment in the future. It's a forward-thinking approach when a lot of people are focused on the present," she said of the program.

As associate dean of the Honors College, which does not have its own faculty, Berry is in
frequent contact with faculty members from other colleges.

"In my vision of leadership, working collaboratively is probably the most important part, and my hope is to improve in that," she said in an interview.Â

Patricia MacCorquodale, dean of the Honors College, cited in a nomination letter several of Berry's accomplishments, including her efforts to create new honors general education courses, initiate a first-year program for new honors students and to hire and train honors advisers.

Anne-Marie Hall, director of the department of English's writing program, who serves with Berry on the University Wide General Education Committee, wrote that Berry "is always prepared, contributes to moving the discussion forward, and always completes her duties on various committees. When Laura speaks, we all listen."

**Javier Duran**  
**Associate Professor of Spanish and Border Studies**

A member of the UA's Faculty Senate, Duran has served on a number of college and University committees, including the senate's Committee of Eleven and the provost's Strategic Advisory Council for the Fine Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences. He's also credited with designing and implementing a border studies emphasis in Spanish at the doctoral degree level.

Duran is president-elect and chairman of the Association for Borderlands Studies, a scholarly organization that unites leading experts on borderlands studies from throughout the world.

Duran said he's curious about administrative leadership and hopes the institute will give him a window into that world. He also noted that the institute provides a positive opportunity for employees from diverse backgrounds.

"This is a good opportunity for the development of underrepresented faculty in positions of leadership," he said.

Specifically, Duran said he'd like to learn more about fundraising as well as managing budgets, personnel and other resources.

Mary Wildner-Basset, dean of the College of Humanities, wrote in her letter of support for Duran: "His desire to become an active and knowledgeable leader for higher education contexts in this time of great social change and challenges to diversity, especially in Arizona, needs to be supported and nourished."

**J.C. Mutchler**  
**Associate Professor of History, UA South [4]**

"People tell me I'm a leader, but I'm not really sure I know what that means," said Mutchler, who has held several leadership positions since joining the UA faculty just three years ago.

He said he hopes to gain insight into the psychology of leadership through his participation in the institute.

Mutchler currently serves as secretary of the faculty and chairman of the UA's Strategic
Planning and Budget Advisory Committee, and is a faculty representative in the President's Cabinet and a representative to the Arizona Faculties Council, a coordinating body for the three state universities' faculty governments.

"In the Faculty Senate and as Secretary of the Faculty, Dr. Mutchler continues to exhibit the kind of quiet leadership that gets things done, often behind the scenes," wrote nominator Wanda Howell, chair of the faculty and University Distinguished Professor of Nutritional Sciences.

Mutchler said he is grateful for the opportunity provided by the institute and Shelton's willingness to invest internally.

"In spite of all the things going on in the state, I think it's really important we move the institution forward, and this is part of that," he said. "We've got to look ahead 10 or 15 years."

Kendal Washington White
Associate Dean of Students

Throughout her 17-year University career, Washington White has worked extensively with students from underrepresented and economically disadvantaged students in various roles on campus.

Positions she has held include coordinator of Minority Student Services, which included oversight of the MERITS Program, a retention program for first-year minority students, and director of Multicultural Affairs and Student Success, which included oversight of the campus cultural centers.

Washington White said she's excited to participate in the institute.

"I think the â€œgrow your own' type of philosophy is what we really need on campus, especially in these tough economic times," she said.

Washington White, who grew up in rural Virginia, was the first in her family to attend college.

"Kendal is about as diverse as they come, as a first-generation, African American woman raised in the rural south and who understands the needs of underrepresented populations and their communities," wrote nominator Lizzie Schloss, Career Services interim director. "We need the perspectives that this diversity can bring to the University."

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