

UWF receives national honor for excellence in diversity

Pensacola, Fla. – Oct. 10, 2016 – For the second consecutive year, the University of West Florida has received the Higher Education Excellence in Diversity, or HEED, Award from INSIGHT Into Diversity magazine. The award recognizes colleges and universities across the U.S. that demonstrate an outstanding commitment to diversity and inclusion.

“Right now, there are many diversity-related challenges in this country, and our hope is that as a community, we can come together to do better and support one another,” said Dr. Kim LeDuff, UWF’s chief diversity officer, associate vice provost and dean of University College. “There is always work to do. Hopefully, as a community, we can identify best practices that we can share with other institutions around the country.”

UWF was one of 83 institutions selected for this year’s award and will be featured in the November 2016 issue of INSIGHT into Diversity, the oldest and largest diversity-focused publication in higher education. The 2016 honorees were selected based on their exemplary diversity and inclusion initiatives that focus on all aspects of diversity, including gender, race, ethnicity, veterans, people with disabilities, and members of the LGBTQ community.

During her time at UWF, LeDuff has established the Office of Equity and Diversity and worked with the President’s Council on Diversity and Inclusion to draft the UWF Diversity Plan, with a message of “Awareness, Acceptance, Respect.” In 2015, the Office of Equity and Diversity was moved under University College.

“We are thrilled that inclusion is now at the core of all we do for students as they enter UWF,” LeDuff said.

UWF’s commitment to diversity is showcased through on-campus activities and programs. In 2015, the Office of Equity and Diversity established Professionally Empowered and Ready for Life, or PEARL, a women’s empowerment initiative. Other notable university-wide diversity efforts include:

- UWF Men’s Empowerment Network, or UWF MEN
- The Women’s Studies Collective
- Cross-Cultural Competency certificate program for faculty and staff
- Monthly events highlighting diverse and multicultural communities
- Active student organizations dedicated to diverse issues and causes

For a complete list of 2016 HEED Award recipients and to learn more about this honor, visit www.insightintodiversity.com.

For more information about diversity at UWF, visit uwf.edu/respect.

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