

Programs Encourage Minority Students To Go To Graduate School

Although the number of Asians enrolled in the nation's colleges and universities is increasing, Black and Hispanic enrollment is on the decline. Of those students who do go to college, only 24 percent of black students and 20 percent of Hispanic students earned a degree after six years, according to a recent study by the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities. Bryn Mawr, like many selective liberal arts colleges, faces the challenge of attracting and retaining more minority students. Through vigorous recruiting, the College has increased the percentage of its minority enrollment from 11 percent to 20 percent over the last ten years; 25 percent of the class of 1993 are American minorities. Eighty-eight percent of Bryn Mawr's minority students graduate — a rate nearly four times higher than the national average.

In addition to attracting and graduating more minority students, colleges and universities must also prepare for a possible shortage of teachers within the next ten to twelve years, because of a dramatic decline in the number of students who receive Ph.D.s, particularly in the arts and sciences. Bryn Mawr has traditionally played a strong role in encouraging its undergraduates to pursue careers as professors; indeed, the College ranks first in the nation in the percentage of undergraduates who earn Ph.D.s in the humanities and fourth in all fields. Now, with the projected shortage of qualified faculty members, Bryn Mawr has redoubled its efforts to familiarize students with all facets of an academic career, including teaching and peer relations, as a means of encouraging more students to become professors. Grants from the Pew Charitable Trusts, the U.S. Department of Education, the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, and the Xerox Foundation, are supporting the College's efforts to further strengthen its progress in these areas.

The \$200,000 component grant from the Pew Charitable Trusts supports a three-year program to increase the number of minority students and faculty members and strengthen programs. The \$76,980 grant from the U.S. Department of Education supports a pilot one-year Minority Research Program. A grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation supports the Mellon Minority Undergraduate Fellowship Program, a six-year program designed to identify undergraduate minority students and encourage them to pursue graduate study, followed by a career in teaching and scholarship. The Xerox Foundation's grant of \$45,000 expands the Minority Women in Science Program which encourages minority women to major in sciences and mathematics and pursue science-related careers after graduation.

The Pew Grant expands the College's student recruitment effort by training twenty to thirty undergraduates each year to recruit in their home towns. This kind of approach uses students' enthusiasm, personal college experiences, and community contacts to reach a larger pool of students and parents.

The grant also provides for campus-wide workshops designed to help members of the Bryn Mawr community participate fully in a society which is increasingly diverse. The workshops encourage participants to identify personal prejudice and misinformation and to change their behavior and attitudes. As part of the normal student, faculty, and staff orientation programs, the workshops establish an institutional means to ensure that the issues of race, socio-economic status, sexual preference, physical capabilities, and religious beliefs are addressed by all members of the Bryn Mawr community.

Bryn Mawr will strengthen its minority faculty recruitment through several programs supported by the Pew grant. Currently nine percent of the ranked faculty members are from minority groups. Two junior faculty members receive additional funds and released time from teaching to pursue research, an opportunity not usually available to beginning faculty members in smaller institutions. Another part of the recruitment effort includes the expansion of faculty research and curriculum development opportunities for minority faculty members who are interested in revising courses to incorporate multi-cultural materials.

The Pew Charitable Trusts consist of seven individual charitable funds established between 1948 and 1979 by the sons and daughters of Joseph N. Pew, founder of the Sun Oil company. The Trusts support non-profit organizations dedicated to improving the quality of life for individuals and communities and encouraging personal growth and self-sufficiency. Grants are awarded in the areas of conservation and the environment, culture, education, health and human services, public policy, and religion.

The Minority Research Program, funded by the grant from the U.S. Department of Education, is a pilot program that introduces minority students to academic research and encourages them to pursue graduate study leading to careers in college and university teaching. Six minority undergraduates are awarded research assistantships, which includes room and board on campus and a grant beginning in the summer after their sophomore year and continuing through their junior year. Students who do well in the program will be encouraged to take part in other programs at the College, such as internships and seminars, that will prepare them for graduate study.

"Too few talented minority students are considering careers in academia, and colleges and universities trying to increase the ranks of their minority faculty members are concerned that the minority hiring pool is too small for the nation's current and future needs," explained Judith Shapiro, provost of the College. "We hope to get undergraduates excited about academic research and teaching early so that they will consider an academic career a viable choice."

Designed to supplement existing programs, the Minority Research Program extends the number of resources already available to Bryn Mawr minority students. Close interaction with faculty members provides a special opportunity for minority undergraduates to learn the rewards of teaching and scholarship.

The Mellon Minority Undergraduate Fellowship Program is a new six-year program for Black, Hispanic, and Native American students who have expressed interest in fields where there are relatively few minority faculty members nationwide. Based on their academic ability and a genuine interest in college teaching each year four undergraduates are awarded Mellon Fellowships at the end of their freshman year.

Beginning in their sophomore year and continuing until graduation, the Fellows learn how research is designed and how to master progressively more complex research. Each Fellow is paired with a faculty mentor, for whom she works as a research assistant. The faculty mentor works with the student to help her recognize her own talents and gain confidence in the research skills she is putting into practice. By the senior year, the Fellows have an opportunity to teach, as well as to learn from their mentors more about the varied responsibilities of college professors. Stipends for the academic year and summer are awarded to the Fellows in recognition of merit and participation in the program. Participants in the program will also be forgiven their undergraduate loans as they proceed through graduate school. After successfully completing their doctorate, the Mellon Undergraduate Fellows will have a maximum of \$10,000 of their undergraduate loan forgiven.

As part of the College's effort to use its strong science program as a base for expanding educational opportunities for minority students, Bryn Mawr began the Minority Women in Science Programs with a grant from the GTE Foundation in 1987 for Philadelphia high school students and Bryn Mawr minority undergraduates with an interest in science. The new three-year grant from the Xerox Foundation will be used to expand several areas of this program.

The High School Science Days bring minority students from Philadelphia high schools to the Bryn Mawr campus. Twice a year, the high school students meet faculty members, current science majors, and alumnae who have successful science careers and learn about the extensive science programs available at the College.

The grant supports a number of Bryn Mawr student "mentors", junior and senior science majors who act as science tutors and

special guides for incoming minority students. During the school year, the student mentors, each of whom receives a stipend, tutor and advise younger undergraduates. The new minority students benefit from the advice and encouragement of peers and the student mentors gain valuable insights into the rewards of teaching.

A series of informal luncheons for Bryn Mawr science faculty and minority science students has been expanded to include social occasions with visiting scientists. Spring internships and summer jobs are developed with the help of minority alumnae scientists in the Philadelphia area. In addition, students are encouraged to participate in the activities of professional associations, including organizations established for minority scientists.

Bryn Mawr offers an excellent setting in which minority women can prepare for graduate education. A 1988 study by the Great Lakes Colleges Association ranks Bryn Mawr in the top five percent of 1,513 schools in the proportions of students who go on to earn doctorates in all fields; a similar study by Georgetown University ranks Bryn Mawr number four in the nation in the percentage of students who earn Ph.D.s.

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NEW YORK — Former Philippines first lady Imelda Marcos, carrying flowers presented to her on arrival at Federal Court, makes her way into the court for the start of jury selection in her fraud trial. (UPI Photo)

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