



February 25, 2010

Chancellor Marye Anne Fox
University of California, San Diego
9500 Gilman Drive # 0005
La Jolla, CA 92093-0005

Dear Chancellor Fox:

I am writing to address the need for structural change to promote diversity of the student population and create a welcoming learning environment for all students, especially ethnically under-represented students, at UCSD.

Recent incidents that include the “Compton Cookout” and the SRTV broadcast magnify the need to address longstanding concerns about the campus climate and lack of diversity. These incidents are extremely troubling manifestations, but not the only manifestations, of a campus that has for too long failed to be reflective of and responsive to the diverse state that it was intended to serve.

According to its charter, the University of California is charged with admitting a “representation of students ... [so] that all portions of the state shall enjoy equal privilege therein.”¹ In light of this, UCSD’s goal should be to promote diversity in all appropriate ways, consistent with free speech and other legal rights.

While five percent of UC-eligible students statewide are African American, only one percent of the UCSD undergraduate population is African American.² Over the last ten years, the representation of African American students at UCSD has not improved. As a result, feelings of alienation and isolation contribute to a sense of being unwelcome and unsafe. Notwithstanding Proposition 209, there is much more that UCSD could do to improve this situation. Some of the solutions are found in the university’s 2007 Yield Report and are echoed in the most recent demands by the Black Student Union. Another solution may be to work with community organizations like the ACLU and others that participate in the Education Consortium [www.educatesandiego.org] and with local school districts to explore ways to develop relationships with and expand the eligibility and competitiveness of area students.

The current crisis presents an opportunity to make real change. Towards that end, we offer ourselves as a resource. Should you wish to discuss any of the above, please feel free to contact me at 619-398-4495.

Sincerely,

Andrea Guerrero
Field & Policy Director

¹ Section 14 of Organic Act of 1868, California Stats 1867-68, p. 248.

² Data of UC eligible students come from Dataquest, <http://data1.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/>. UCSD enrollment figures come from UCSD Student Research and Information, <http://studentresearch.ucsd.edu/sriweb/enroll/ugethnic.pdf>.