

# **WILLIAM WINTER INSTITUTE FOR RACIAL RECONCILIATION**

## **AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI**

### **STRATEGIC PLAN**

**January 17, 2007**

*“As never before in our history, we are called upon to sustain and expand our commitment to building up the communities where we live. As far as we have come, we must understand how much more we have to do. For unless we continue to work to bridge the fault lines of race and class and the educational and financial disparities that still divide us, we can never expect to reach our true potential as a state and as a nation.”* Former Governor William F. Winter, speaking to graduating seniors at the University of Mississippi on May 10, 2003.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Racism has scarred our national experience since the beginning. As former Mississippi Governor William Winter has said: “The problem of race, despite all the progress we have made, remains the thorniest, trickiest, and most difficult barrier that we confront to achieve a truly successful and united country.”

Mississippi and the University of Mississippi have played unique and often tragic roles in the continuing struggle for the American ideal of racial equality and respect for the dignity of each person.

In recent years, the University has embraced the special burden and opportunity of its history, and has become a leader in building bridges of understanding among the races on its campuses and beyond. Since its formation in 1999, these initiatives have become the singular mission of the William Winter Institute for Racial Reconciliation at the University of Mississippi.

In 2005, the Institute’s staff and Advisory Board, with support from the University administration, undertook a strategic planning process to (i) evaluate the Institute’s work, (ii) identify the Institute’s strengths, challenges, and opportunities, (iii) revise the Institute’s mission statement and vision, (iv) expand the Institute’s core values and essential competencies, and (v) develop strategies and goals for the next 5 years. During this process, over 85 community, business and educational leaders and participants in Institute projects offered comments and advice.

### **HISTORY AND OVERVIEW OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

On March 16-17, 1998, over 160 delegates from Oxford, Lafayette County and the University participated in a conference at the University as part of President Clinton’s “One

America: The President's Initiative on Race." The conference was a model of multi-racial participation, candor and informed dialogue.

Building on that experience, the University determined to form an institute to promote racial reconciliation as a permanent commitment by the University to the betterment of our communities, state and nation.

The Institute for Racial Reconciliation was formed in August 1999, and named for former Mississippi Governor William F. Winter on February 20, 2003, in honor of his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday. A distinguished historian and alumnus of the University's College of Liberal Arts and Law School, Governor Winter has been an outspoken champion for racial reconciliation throughout his public career of over fifty years, often providing strong leadership in difficult times and circumstances. Prior to being elected Governor in 1979, Governor Winter served in the Mississippi Legislature and as State Tax Collector, State Treasurer and Lieutenant Governor. As Governor, he overcame strong opposition to enact landmark public education reforms. Governor Winter served on the Commission appointed by President Clinton to guide "One America: The President's Initiative on Race," and continues to devote his considerable energy and wisdom to the cause of racial reconciliation.

From the beginning, the Institute's work has been demand driven. The Institute's modest staff has been overwhelmed with requests from Mississippi communities and local organizations seeking assistance on specific problems and issues marked by race.

In response, the Institute has been actively involved in twenty-one Mississippi communities, including several with a history of violent opposition to integration. Some projects have been explicitly identified as racial reconciliation efforts. Other requests have involved helping communities to recognize and overcome racial attitudes and divisions which underlay and defined local economic, education, justice, and social equity issues.

The Institute has served as a truth teller, bridge builder, facilitator, convener, interpreter, and resource for best practices. The process has always been inclusive, participatory and collaborative.

Where appropriate, the Institute has linked the local community with outside public policy analysts and experts, other educational institutions, faith-based organizations and churches, civic groups, research sources, public and private leaders, and other organizations with needed expertise or skills. However, the focus has always been on helping the local community find its own solution to the immediate challenge, and in that process, develop local leadership, strategies and tools to sustain reconciliation through different issues over the long haul. The ultimate goal has always been a more enlightened, cooperative, respectful, and civil civic culture.

The Institute has also drawn upon the University's resources to develop academic programs, publications, curricula, conferences, and seminars to promote racial reconciliation at the local, state and national levels, as well as within the University itself.

A few examples demonstrate the breath and depth of the Institute's impact:

- The Institute assisted the majority African American Mississippi Delta hamlet of Rome secure political support from surrounding white political and business leaders

and financial assistance for a local sewer system, which was completed in 2001. This essential first step toward community stability and growth led to conversion of a former drug haven into a youth community center with a children's library, a youth arts program, a local oral history project, and new affordable housing.

- The Institute has played a leadership role in the University's reconciliation with its own past. In 2002, the University celebrated the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its integration with a year-long observance. The University held a moving commemorative ceremony for all involved in the University's tumultuous integration in 1962. Over 2500 people attended, including James Meredith, former Justice Department officials, members of the National Guard who restored order, and local, state and national political and civil rights leaders. University departments hosted a series of conferences and symposia on race and racial relations, and the Institute initiated an oral history project on the University's integration, with over 70 histories collected to date. An International Conference on Race, hosted by the Institute, culminated the year's events in October 2003, with over 300 participants. A permanent memorial to the integration of the University and the University's commitment to diversity and inclusion is under construction in the heart of the Oxford campus and will be dedicated in the fall of 2006.
- In 2003, the Institute assisted Newton County, Mississippi, in a local civil rights history project which culminated in the first official local recognition and memorial for Medgar Evers, a native of Newton County, who became President of the Mississippi Chapter of the NAACP and a national civil rights leader before being assassinated in 1963.
- The Institute spearheaded three statewide conferences on diversity awareness and racial understanding for college and university student leaders in Mississippi, creating a foundation for better understanding and cooperation among the races at Mississippi's public and private colleges and universities.
- In our own local community, the Institute facilitated formation of the Oxford-Lafayette Amos Network in 2004, a faith-based coalition of over seventeen congregations working together for systemic social and economic change by training local leaders and identifying and resolving community issues influenced by race. The Network has made significant gains in developing affordable housing, promoting excellence in local public schools, and helping the working poor manage debt.
- The most comprehensive local reconciliation project has been in Philadelphia, Mississippi, the site of the murders of three civil rights workers during the 1964 Freedom Summer. At the community's request, the Institute facilitated formation in the spring of 2004 of the Philadelphia Coalition, a multi-racial group of local African American, American Indian (the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians resides in Philadelphia), and white citizens committed to honest and frank communication, reconciliation, justice and multi-racial community leadership. The Philadelphia Coalition commemorated the murders with a memorial service on June 21, 2004, the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the murders, attended by over 1000 civil rights veterans, state and national leaders, and local citizens. The Coalition also began a local oral history project, and created a civil rights tour for the local chamber of commerce. As a direct

result of the Philadelphia Coalition's efforts, the State of Mississippi sought and secured the first state conviction for the murders in June 2005. The Coalition is now developing an educational curriculum to teach what happened in the local schools so it will never be repeated. Toward that end, the Winter Institute and the Philadelphia Coalition co-hosted a teacher's summit in June 2005, attended by more than 100 Mississippi public school teachers, which focused on teaching civil rights history, conflict resolution, and diversity awareness.

- In the fall of 2004, the Mayor of McComb asked the Institute to initiate a community dialogue on race. McComb was a site of fierce resistance to the civil rights movement and was infamous for numerous bombings during the Freedom Summer of 1964. The initiative evolved from sharing personal histories to development of a local civil rights curriculum for area schools, which led to the McComb School District hosting the second annual civil rights summit for teachers in June, 2006, which was attended by over 100 teachers from across Mississippi. The City and School District recently held a reconciliation summit, which included granting honorary diplomas to African-American students who had been expelled from their segregated all-black high school for civil rights activities during the 60's.
- In the aftermath of the 2005 conviction in the Philadelphia case, the Institute convened a series of meetings among faith-based and community organizations, which culminated in the formation of the Mississippi Coalition for Racial Justice, a group of over thirty organizations devoted to seeking justice and social equity as essential elements in racial reconciliation in Mississippi.
- The Institute helped develop a civil rights history curriculum, and in 2006 helped persuade the Mississippi Legislature and State Board of Education to authorize the first statewide initiative in the country to teach civil rights history in public schools. The legislation created a Mississippi Commission on Civil Rights Education, which will help develop guidelines for the new curriculum. The Institute is a permanent member of the Commission.
- The Institute has published and distributed over 200 copies of a handbook for communities on best practices for inclusion and equality entitled *We Are The People We Have Been Waiting For*, and produced and distributed over 1000 copies of a documentary film on the 1961 Freedom Rides entitled *The Children Shall Lead*. The Institute publishes *Wellspring*, a quarterly newsletter of the Institute's activities, and is sponsoring development of a new civil rights textbook for high school and college.
- In March 2006, the Institute convened a meeting of over 100 leaders from over 50 like-minded groups from across the southeastern region to share strategies and tools for racial reconciliation and justice, such as truth commissions, memorials, curriculum development, and prosecutions of old civil rights cases. The groups formed an umbrella regional organization to network and pursue policy initiatives to enhance and expand the work of reconciliation, with the Institute as the logistical hub of the new consortium.
- In the spring of 2006, the Tallahatchie County Board of Supervisors formed an Emmett Till Memorial Commission, in the county of his murder in 1955. The

Commission asked the Institute to assist in educating the local community and schools about the county's racial history and the murder of Emmett Till, documenting and preserving significant historical sites, and hosting a conference and memorial service in September, 2006.

These efforts have earned the Institute a reputation for producing tangible results at the grassroots level and enabling local communities to develop their own capacity for healing and progress.

These accomplishments are even more impressive when measured against the limited number of staff and students who carry out the Institute's ambitious work load. The Institute is led by its Director, Dr. Susan Glisson, and staffed by one part time employee, one part time scholar in residence, two part time graduate assistants, and three part time student interns.

The Institute is governed by the University, which provides the Institute with a small office of approximately 980 square feet, utilities, and other in-kind support on the Oxford campus. The University's administrative liaison to the Institute is Dr. Gloria Kellum, Vice Chancellor for University Relations. The University of Mississippi Foundation provides a vehicle for financial contributions and assists in fundraising. An Advisory Board of supporters provides advice and support, and raises funds for the Institute.

The Institute's current annual operating expenses are approximately \$250,000. The Institute is working to establish an endowment of \$3 Million, and has an invested endowment of approximately \$400,000. Financial support has come from over 277 individuals and organizations. The Hearin Foundation and Walton Foundation have provided extraordinary financial support for the Institute's activities.

### **STRENGTHS, CHALLENGES, AND OPPORTUNITIES**

The strategic planning process identified the following strengths, challenges and opportunities.

#### **1. STRENGTHS**

- The Institute benefits from Governor Winter's national reputation as an advocate for racial reconciliation.
- The Institute's location at the flagship University in the State of Mississippi, with its history of mass resistance to integration, opens doors and draws attention to the Institute and its work.
- The Institute has a proven track record of producing results, especially at the grassroots level with local communities.
- The Institute is led by a dedicated and respected Director, Dr. Susan Glisson, who has a special gift for listening to others and getting others to listen to and work with each other despite long standing differences and suspicions.

- The Institute and its mission enjoy strong support from the University's administration, faculty and students; the Advisory Board; and the local communities in which the Institute has worked.
- The Institute has excellent access to other resources and like-minded organizations.

## **2. CHALLENGES**

- Outside its Director, the Institute has no full time senior and support staff, limiting the Institute's capacity to respond to requests for assistance and causing administrative inefficiencies and work overload.
- The Institute lacks sufficient office space to house additional staff and host work teams and small conferences.
- Clarity is needed on governance issues, such as the responsibilities of the Advisory Board, the relationship between the Advisory Board and the staff, and the relationship between the Advisory Board and the University.
- The absence of an academic home for the Institute within the University and the Institute's almost exclusive focus on outreach and service are obstacles to a closer relationship with the academic core of the University.
- The ad hoc nature of the Institute's financial support has made budgeting difficult.

## **3. OPPORTUNITIES**

- The Institute receives more requests for assistance from local communities and organizations than the Institute can currently meet.
- The Institute has barely tapped its potential to promote racial reconciliation and provide diversity awareness training directly to businesses and trade associations, not-for-profit and non-government organizations, and government entities.
- There is a growing awareness in Mississippi and elsewhere of the essential connection between strong local multi-racial public education systems and broad based, sustainable local economic development, and a need for hard data to verify the connection.
- The Institute's existing projects and programs could be enhanced by more support from the University's academic departments, for example, in the areas of curriculum development and teacher education and in demonstrating the correlation between race and educational expectations and economic opportunity.
- There is a compelling need for a comprehensive center of excellence at a deep South university with (i) world class multi-disciplinary scholarly research, study and teaching on race and racism, joined with (ii) effective outreach and service programs which promote racial reconciliation in local communities and other organizations.

## **THE PLAN**

To build on its strengths, address its challenges, and seize its opportunities, the Institute's Executive Director, staff, and Advisory Board and the University administration have revised the Institute's mission, vision, core values and competencies, and adopted new strategies and goals as set out below.

## **1. MISSION STATEMENT**

The William Winter Institute for Racial Reconciliation shall foster reconciliation and civic renewal wherever people suffer as a result of racial discrimination or alienation, and promote scholarly research, study and teaching on race and the impact of race and racism.

## **2. VISION**

The William Winter Institute for Racial Reconciliation shall be:

- A trusted and effective national resource and facilitator for communities, businesses and trade associations, not-for-profit and non-government organizations, and government entities seeking to understand and reconcile past and present inequities and achieve fuller cooperation among the races; and
- A world class multi-disciplinary center for scholarly research, study, and teaching on race and the impact of race and racism across traditional academic areas.

The two faces of the Institute will complement and enhance each other. The needs of communities served by the Institute will help identify research projects for the Institute. The research capacity and accumulated knowledge of the academic arm will provide hard data to ground the community building programs and provide protocols to measure results and verify best practices. The teaching function of the academic center will support the Institute's education outreach programs, and assist in developing curriculum on matters of race. The Institute's local programs will maintain the Institute's focus on achieving tangible results in the everyday world, provide field verification for academic research, expand the University's definition of teaching and education to include service programs, and bring local communities and other non-campus constituencies within the University's mission. The Institute will provide a setting where educators, scholars, business and professional leaders, policy makers, politicians, local community leaders and members, and grassroots activists can meet to listen to and learn from each other on matters of race and racism.

## **3. CORE VALUES**

To accomplish its mission and achieve its vision, the William Winter Institute for Racial Reconciliation shall adhere to the following core values and beliefs.

- America has been, is now, and increasingly will be a multi-racial nation. But racism has diminished every aspect of our society. We have no choice but to speak the truth about race and racism, and seek equality, justice and reconciliation.
- Despite the tragedies of the past, or perhaps because of them, both black and white Mississippians and Southerners have a profound sense of place, of being rooted in our neighborhoods and local communities. Accordingly, the Institute has and always will

focus special attention on local community, grassroots reconciliation between blacks and whites in Mississippi and the South.

- Although grounded in Mississippi and the South and the unique challenges confronting reconciliation between blacks and whites, the Institute recognizes that the need for reconciliation extends to all races and aspires to be a resource for the nation and the world on matters of race and racism.
- The Institute believes that the racial diversity of the University, our local communities, state and nation is a strength if we treat each other with mutual respect, fairness and equity.
- The Institute recognizes that racial reconciliation requires individual, person-to-person respect for those who are “other” than us, and is committed to mutual respect, fairness and equity in all dealings with those who are different or “other.”
- The Institute believes that individual and group respect, equal access and opportunity, and justice are inextricably connected to and essential for community wellness and broad based multi-racial economic growth.
- The Institute believes that reconciliation is a participatory process which requires choices and democratic decision making from the ground up, one person, one community and one organization at a time.
- The Institute believes that individuals and communities have to heal themselves. Reconciliation cannot be imposed from the outside or top down.
- The Institute will be non-partisan and will not be directly involved in any political campaign or elective initiative.
- The Institute is committed to involving the University’s administration, faculty and students in both its outreach programs and academic programs.
- The Institute is not merely located at the University of Mississippi, but is grounded in the University’s history and believes that the University has a unique responsibility and opportunity to foster racial reconciliation and the scholarly study of race and racism.
- The Institute believes that if the University is to achieve its goal as A Great American Public University for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, the University must expand its definition of education beyond classroom teaching and campus research to include community service, and embrace the opportunity to educate and serve the community and citizenry beyond the University.
- The Institute believes that education is a collaborative process and that all involved are both educators and educated, especially when scholarly research, study and teaching are complemented by service.

#### **4. COMPETENCIES**

To accomplish its mission and achieve its vision, the William Winter Institute for Racial Reconciliation will seek to maintain the following competencies.

- The Institute will serve as an honest broker and convener to bring together individuals and groups divided by race and thus divided by group history and personal experience.
- The Institute will be an accurate translator to help people connect and understand each other across differences, real and perceived, based on race.
- The Institute will help individuals and groups to recognize the racial underpinnings of economic, political, historical, and social issues.
- The Institute will be a resource of best practices and lessons learned from other communities and organizations.
- The Institute shall develop and maintain collaborative relationships with like-minded individuals, groups and organizations, especially those with different skills and resources.
- The Institute will provide technical and organizational assistance and other resources to groups and organizations devoted to racial reconciliation in their local communities and states.
- The Institute will provide and refer resources and outside assistance where needed, but will encourage local communities and organizations to find their own solutions and develop their own capacity for long term reconciliation.
- The Institute will use efforts in response to a specific problem to help local communities and organizations create leadership, confidence and capacity for long term reconciliation and progress.
- The Institute will be a center of excellence for (i) scholarly research, (ii) multi-disciplinary teaching, and (iv) the development of curriculum and methodologies for teaching on race and the impact of race and racism.
- The Institute will be a trusted meeting ground for business, government, media and community leaders to meet with research scholars, faculty, administrators, students, and others to discuss race and racism.

## **5. STRATEGIES AND GOALS**

The William Winter Institute for Racial Reconciliation has adopted the following strategies and goals for the next 5 years.

### **A. EXPAND OUTREACH PROGRAMS**

#### **i. Community Building**

*“. . . the source of our most urgent need and our highest satisfaction lies in the strengthening of the individual communities in which we live.”* Former Governor William Winter, speaking on Leadership and Ethics to the Kellogg Foundation on February 22, 2000.

If there was one constant in all the interviews and comments received from those outside the Institute and the University during the strategic planning process, it was confirmation of the value of the Institute’s response to requests for assistance from local communities, and an urging to expand the Institute’s capacity to deliver such assistance. In response, the Institute has adopted the following strategies and goals, and adopted separate strategies and goals specifically designed to address economic development and education challenges.

- The Institute will add additional staff qualified to serve as local community facilitators and other support staff to allow the Executive Director more time for such projects.
- The Institute will catalogue and develop teaching materials and model programs based on its own experiences and the “best practices” and “lessons learned” from other local communities and organizations seeking to address racial problems, and make such practices and information available to communities and other organizations with similar goals and the general public.
- The Institute will expand its concept of “community” and market its experience and programs in diversity awareness, conflict resolution, racial reconciliation, and local community development to non-traditional audiences, such as businesses; trade associations; not for profit and non government organizations; local and state governments, chambers of commerce, economic development organizations and leadership programs; and other groups of people who work or live in proximity to each other.
- When involved in any project or program, the Institute will seek to enhance local capacity for long term community healing and progress by developing local leaders with core competencies and skills in racial reconciliation and local institutions and processes to facilitate long term multi-racial communication and cooperation.
- The Institute will become a regional leader in racial reconciliation by fostering development of a regional consortium of organizations devoted to racial reconciliation.
- The Institute will develop a model “service for credit” program for University students, whereby students will receive academic credit for participation in the Institute’s outreach programs, assisting University research and scholarly projects, and interning with local not-for-profit and grassroots organizations.
- The Institute will develop an internationally recognized summer fellowship/intern program for students outside the University to come to the University to conduct research, study, and work in the Institute’s outreach programs. These “Winter Fellows” would return to their local communities and universities as ambassadors for racial reconciliation.

## **ii. Economic Development**

The Institute will undertake a special initiative to demonstrate the correlation between race relations and economic development and to foster multi-racial economic development efforts.

- The Institute will seek grants and use the research and academic resources of the University to document the relationship between (i) race and economic prosperity, such as a recent study by faculty in the University's Department of Economics on the root causes of Mississippi's low per capita income, and (ii) successful local public schools and local economic development.
- The Institute will catalogue and distribute studies and statistics which demonstrate the impact of race and racism on local economic development and overall community prosperity.
- The Institute will spotlight communities where positive race relations can be demonstrated to have contributed to economic progress, and identify and promote particular economic development strategies – best practices - which have moved multi-racial communities forward.
- The Institute will spotlight the correlation between successful public schools and local economic development.
- The Institute will mediate between and help economically disparate racial groups understand each other's expectations and code phrases, such as equal opportunity, economic justice, and economic equity.
- The Institute will proactively market the information it develops and identifies on the relationship between race and economic development to local and state government entities, economic development agencies, leadership programs, chambers of commerce, and the press.

## **iii. Education Outreach**

During the strategic planning process, there was a consistent plea from educators, economic developers, and community leaders for the Institute to play a leadership role in bridging the racial divide that separates the two parallel school systems that exist in Mississippi (and throughout the region and nation): one almost exclusively white, often affluent, and private, and the other largely African-American, under-funded and public. The end products of these separate and unequal systems are students with little personal contact with students of different races, the reinforcement of racial misunderstandings and mistrust, unequal educational opportunities, and teachers and administrators without the support and tools to teach civil rights history and the impact of race and racism on history, political science, literature, economics, business, and other traditional subjects. In effect, the separate school systems perpetuate historical racial divisions in local communities and create long term barriers to cross-racial communication, cooperation, and reconciliation. To overcome these challenges, the Institute has adopted the following strategies and goals.

- The Institute will tell the truth about the immediate and long term financial, economic, educational, and social costs of the two separate school systems, using research and data from University academic sources.
- The Institute will develop and teach special racial reconciliation leadership training programs for young people, and market them to local public and private schools, associations of public and private school administrators and teachers, the State Board of Education, local chambers of commerce, faith based organizations, and local youth leadership programs.
- The Institute will host conferences and opportunities for multi-racial student groups from the two systems to engage in collaborative grassroots programs, student leadership workshops, and student government summits.
- The Institute will work toward making the teaching of civil rights history, diversity awareness, and the role of race and racism mandatory at all levels of public and private education in Mississippi and the region.
- The Institute will host conferences and work directly with teachers and administrators in the two separate school systems on how to recognize and address racial issues, methodologies for teaching about race and racism, cross-racial communication skills, conflict resolution, citizenship training, and building bridges across racial lines in local communities.
- The Institute will catalogue, develop and distribute curriculum and other educational materials on civil rights history, diversity awareness, the impact of racism, conflict resolution, citizenship training, and other issues related to race and racism.
- The Institute will develop strategies and programs specifically designed to combat the “tyranny of low expectations” and negative attitudes about the value of education, especially among young black males.
- The Institute will identify “best practices” in racial reconciliation in public and private school systems and promote those to local public and private schools, associations of public and private school administrators and teachers, the State Board of Education, local chambers of commerce, faith based organizations, and local youth leadership programs.
- The Institute will pursue partnerships with and grants from national foundations to support innovative educational programs to overcome the impact of racism in public education.
- The Institute will catalogue, develop and distribute curriculum on civil rights history, diversity awareness, conflict resolution, citizenship training, and racial reconciliation for the growing home school student population.

#### **iv. Web Site**

Development of the Institute’s web site will be a top priority. The web site will become a centerpiece of the Institute’s outreach effort. In addition to describing the Institute, the web site

will market the Institute's programs and materials and serve as a link to other organizations, educational materials, scholars, research sources, and sites devoted to the study of race and eradication of racism, such as the following.

- The web site will be a one-stop site for access and links to African American history and cultural tours and civil rights movement educational resources, such as civil rights histories of Mississippi's 82 counties, lesson plans, downloadable podcasts, civil rights music and art.
- The libraries of Jackson State University, Tougaloo College, the University of Southern Mississippi, and the University have formed a partnership to digitize each's civil rights collection for internet access. The Institute's web site will be one of several access sites.
- The University will seek to expand a partnership with the Library of Congress on music to include access through the Institute's web site to other materials specific to the Institute's mission.
- The Institute has formed a partnership with Mississippi Public Broadcasting to deliver content in connection with implementation of the civil rights curriculum recently authorized by the Mississippi Legislature, and will make that material available through the Institute's web site.

#### **B. ADVOCATE A CENTER OF EXCELLENCE FOR ACADEMIC RESEARCH, STUDY AND TEACHING ON RACE AND RACISM**

If there was a new idea which emerged during the strategic planning process which transcended the Institute's existing role and vision, it is the creation of an multi-disciplinary center of excellence as part of the Institute for research, scholarly study, and teaching at the University on issues relating to race and the impact of race in traditional academic fields, such as economics, political science, sociology, psychology, history, art, law and medicine.

Creation of such a center of excellence will require its own strategic plan and the full commitment of the University and others outside the strategic planning process, such as the Board of Trustees of the Institutions of Higher Learning, the state board which governs public universities in Mississippi.

The Institute's staff and Advisory Board have endorsed creation of such a center of excellence as a central goal of the Institute, and have asked the University administration to pledge its support and identify the critical steps necessary for establishment of such a center of excellence.

In the meantime, the Institute will undertake the following initiatives, each of which is consistent with the ultimate goal.

- The Institute will seek affiliation with appropriate academic units of the University.
- The Institute will support appropriate academic standing and tenure for its Director.

- The Institute will work with appropriate academic units of the University to develop a multi-disciplinary undergraduate degree program for the study of race and the impact of race and racism.
- The Institute will convene and host academic symposia, conferences, lectures and other events to focus scholarly attention on racism and issues relating to race.
- The Institute will seek grants for University research projects on the impact of race on different aspects of our culture.

### **C. EXPAND ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT FOR THE INSTITUTE**

The Institute will expand and reorganize its staff to attain the competencies and goals and implement the strategies set out in this plan. This process will take a minimum of twelve to thirty-six months and culminate in a staff similar to the following, subject to adjustments because of individual capabilities and funding.

- The position of Director will be retitled as Executive Director, and two Directors will be employed. The Director for Outreach will continue and expand the Institute's extremely effective outreach and community building programs. The Director for Academics will oversee development of the Institute's program for academic research, study and teaching on matters of race.
- An office manager/administrative assistant will be added to the full time staff.
- An individual will be added to the full time staff for communications and documentary education. This person will produce the Institute's newsletter, *Wellspring*, and other publications; provide assistance as needed in all media arts; work with Mississippi Public Broadcasting on educational programs; and develop and manage the Institute's website.
- Two full time, field level community building and outreach facilitators will be added to the full time staff.
- A specialist in children's and youth issues will be added to the full time staff, with special training in diversity awareness, conflict resolution, citizenship training, and leadership training.
- An educator/trainer in conflict resolution, diversity awareness, and leadership development will be added to the full time staff.
- An individual will be added to the full time staff to coordinate educational curriculum development.
- An individual will be added to the full time staff to manage resource development and handle grant writing.
- The Institute's staff will reflect racial and gender diversity.

#### **D. EXPAND THE INSTITUTE'S FACILITIES ON THE OXFORD CAMPUS**

The expanded staff and programs of the Institute will require a substantial increase in facilities and space for offices, work rooms, conference rooms, class rooms, etc. The Institute will work with the University to identify and renovate, if necessary, a building for the Institute, consistent with the Institute's space requirements and commensurate with the importance the University attaches to the Institute and its mission.

#### **E. INCREASE FINANCIAL SUPPORT**

The administrative changes, staff additions, and program expansions outlined in this strategic plan will increase the Institute's annual operating budget from approximately \$250,000 to at least \$500,000 within three to four years. In order to fund these changes, the Advisory Board, University administration, University Foundation, and the Institute's staff will develop a new resource development plan, which will include the following goals and initiatives.

- Annual pledged unrestricted gifts to the Institute will be increased to \$500,000 to fund the annual operating budget.
- The Institute will strive to create an unrestricted permanent endowment of at least \$3 Million.
- The Institute will seek a single corporate or foundation sponsor to fund the anticipated renovation of the Institute's new location on campus. This project may require a gift of \$2 Million or more.
- The Advisory Board, University administration, University Foundation, and the Institute's staff will develop a national prospect list of individuals, corporations and foundations committed to diversity and racial reconciliation. That list will be matched with the Institute's work plan, and specific contribution and grant requests will be crafted for those deemed most likely to make major contributions tied to a particular core value, competency, strategy or goal.
- The Institute's staff, Advisory Board and University Foundation will work together to develop a seamless national data base and system for contribution reports, prospect lists, fundraising event procedures, standard solicitation materials, thank you letters, etc., with special emphasis on regular, informative communications to donors.
- The Institute will implement a national fundraising campaign for prospects who share the Institute's values and commitment to improving race relations, using direct mail, phone solicitations, personal contacts, and other means.
- The Institute will utilize its web site for internet fundraising.
- The Institute will host an annual meeting and awards banquet to promote the Institute's outreach programs, recognize scholarly achievements, and focus the Institute's annual fundraising campaign.

- The Institute will develop a plan to recover out of pocket expenses and charge fees for its programs and services, where appropriate, with special attention to local fundraising to pay for local projects.
- A special Resource Committee of the Advisory Board will coordinate fundraising; assist in grant solicitations on behalf of the Institute; and work with the staff on all aspects of resource development.

#### **F. IMPROVE BUDGETING AND FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY**

With an expanded staff, more programs, and a substantial fundraising challenge, the Institute must exercise proper budget discipline and provide the University, the Advisory Board, its contributors and supporters, and the general public with timely and accurate financial reports.

- The Institute's staff will develop an annual budget, including an accurate analysis of in-kind contributions from the University, and submit the annual budget to the Advisory Board for comment and to the University for approval.
- The Institute's staff will develop an annual work plan, benchmarked to demonstrate progress in achieving the goals of the strategic plan, and submit the annual work plan to the Advisory Board for comment and to the University for approval.
- The Institute will develop and publish comprehensive annual financial reports, and submit the annual financial reports to the Advisory Board for comment and to the University for approval.

#### **G. GOVERNANCE**

The following steps will be taken to clarify governance issues among and between the Institute, the Resource Board, and the University.

- The Advisory Board will adopt Bylaws which will (i) acknowledge that the Institute is governed by the University; (ii) recognize the Board's role in advising the Institute on its annual budget, work plan, and administrative matters, and coordinating resource development; (iii) establish internal operating procedures for the Board; (iv) establish a self-perpetuating Board with representatives from the private sector, the University, and local communities; (v) create an Executive Committee empowered to act on behalf of the Board; and (vi) create a Resource Committee to coordinate the Institute's fundraising and assist in grant solicitations.
- The Chancellor will execute a letter to the Advisory Board and the Institute, which will (i) declare the University's commitment to the Institute; (ii) approve the Board's role and organizational structure as set out in the Bylaws; and (iii) pledge the University's support for the Institute's strategic plan.

## **H. ADDENDUM: Accomplishments through September 2007**

- Created the Mississippi Civil Rights Education Commission, which will implement Senate Bill 2718.
- Kicked-off the Welcome Table: Year of Dialogue on Race (a product of a state-wide, non-profit coalition) in June.
- Cemented the creation of The Alliance for Truth and Racial Reconciliation (ATRR), a regional coalition launched in March 2006.
- In April 2007, we participated in a major conference at Harvard University and Northeastern University resulting in a new partnership with them built around racial justice and reconciliation in Mississippi, as a pilot program. Members of the entities came for a meeting we hosted in July to continue planning and will attend an ATRR planning conference in November 2007.
- Created Respect Mississippi, a student-run organization seeking to promote diversity of all kinds. Respect Mississippi was founded with three fundamental goals at its core: communication, education, and service.
- Developed a partnership with the UM School of Education that produced an all-state grant for an April workshop for English teachers, as well as a writing workshop in June.
- Hosted the 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Civil Rights Summit for Teachers on the UM campus, with a focus on the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of One America, President Clinton's initiative on race.