

From the Desk of the Chancellor

Diversity Matters!

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by Charles R. Bantz

As an urban-serving university, we have a very specific mission. Currently, half the people in the world live in cities. The expectation is by 2050, it will be more than 70 percent. And by 2050, given current trends, less than half the nation's population will be white.



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And, why is that particularly important for IUPUI? According to projections by Matt Kinghorn, State Demographer at the Indiana Business Research Center: By 2040, the black population as a percent of the total population of Marion County will be nearly 30%; Hispanics, 16.2%; Asians, about 2%, and two or more races, 5%. We already know that many members of today's minorities go to college and persist to graduation at lower rates than whites, including central Indiana. In terms of the number of people, the IBRC projection for 2040 adds up to about 539,000 individuals, who—if we allow current patterns to continue— will not be going to college at a high enough rate and earning a college degree.

That is a trend that cannot continue if Indianapolis is to be a great city.

Less education also means less wealth. The median wealth of white households is 20 times that of black households and 18 times that of Hispanic households,

according to a Pew Research Center analysis. If the new majority minority of 2050 has less education and less income-earning potential in consequence, the United States will be less successful and not the nation we want to be.

So, in planning for 2025 and beyond, we must be more successful with students that are historically underrepresented in higher education. Our city will be more diverse. Our nation will be more diverse. And we simply must be sure that IUPUI's diversity at least matches the population we serve and most importantly, that we help those students succeed in earning college degrees.

That is why diversity and inclusion must remain a top priority in our Vision 2025 Strategic Plan and in our commitment to Indiana and beyond as an urban-serving university. Diversity is the future of our country, our cities, our world. We cannot afford to fail at educating those who represent our future.

I invite you to share your thoughts on these questions and issues.

Comments? Write chanclr@iupui.edu or plan2025@iupui.edu or visit <http://strategicplan.iupui.edu/>.

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