

Alfred University to host annual H/EOP leadership conference

11/02/04

Alfred University will play host to the 3rd H/EOP Student Leadership Conference from Friday, Nov. 5 to Sunday, Nov. 7. The conference, which is the only one of its kind in New York state, will allow students enrolled in Higher Education Opportunity Programs and Educational Opportunity Programs to hone their leadership skills and network with peers from across the state. The conference was founded by AU junior Maurice Myrie, and has grown each year since its inception. For Myrie, the conference has more than met the expectations he had when he started it. "I have gained many things from (founding) this conference, but the one thing that sticks out the most is that I have been able to be a part of a conference that has touched the lives of so many students that have attended this conference," said Myrie, who is a communications studies major from Brooklyn, NY. He noted that the conference has been able to call attention to the fact that HEOP and EOP are not just for minority students, and that they do not have to meet the same standards as other students. "We have to achieve the same high standards as everyone else," Myrie stressed. He hopes that the Student Leadership Conference will continue to grow in the coming years. "I would like this to become the one conference in New York State that the governor attends every year. I would like it to continue to grow bigger and better." This year, over 15 schools will be present at the three-day event. This year's conference planning committee is headed up by Tahshauna Williams, an Alfred University junior. Several workshops and presentations are planned for throughout the weekend. One session, titled "H/EOP Works," will be led by Nadine Shardlow, director of opportunity programs for Alfred University. The presentation will give an overview of opportunity programs' history in New York state and explain why they are more effective than ever today. Mark D. Muhammad, an adjunct professor in Syracuse University's communication and rhetorical studies program, will also be lecturing during the conference. His presentation, titled "H.O.P.E. (Having Opportunities, Pursuing Education)," will teach students strategies for getting the most out of their college experience. Keynote addresses will be given on both Nov. 5 and 6. The Nov. 5 address will be given by Milton L. Cofield, who represents the Seventh Judicial District on the New York State Board of Regents. He is also the executive director for undergraduate business programs at the Graduate School of Industrial Administration of Carnegie Mellon University. Cofield, who was a 2000 Fulbright Senior Scholar at National Chengchi University, Taipei, Taiwan and Fulbright American Studies Professor at De LaSalle University, Manila, Philippines, has taught at Rochester Institute of Technology and the University of Rochester. He has served as executive director of the Rochester Educational Opportunity Center and assistant to the president of SUNY Brockport. He began his career as a physical scientist in 1979 in the research laboratories of the Eastman Kodak Company. In 1989, Cofield was awarded an MBA in finance from the University of Pennsylvania Wharton School. He holds a Ph.D. in physical chemistry from the University of Illinois and a B.S. in chemistry from Southern University, Baton Rouge, La. On Nov. 6, the keynote speech will be given by W.L. "Tony" Sawyer, the superintendent of public schools in Topeka, Kan. Prior to working in Topeka, he worked in several administrative capacities for Manhattan High Schools, New York, N.Y. He has received numerous awards and honors for his commitment to education including, most notably, the 2001-2002 Phi Delta Kappa Superintendent of the Year Award, given in the wake of his handling of the Sept. 11, 2001 crisis, and the United Parents Association Parent Empowerment Award. Sawyer is currently completing his doctorate in educational administration at Kansas State University. He holds an M.A. in educational administration from Hofstra University and a B.A. in social studies from Queens College, New York, N.Y. The workshops will be open to all AU students, free of charge. Cofield and Sawyer will both be speaking during dinners at the Knight Club, Powell Campus Center; students wishing to attend will have to pay \$12 for each night to cover the cost of food. Registration forms are available at the Powell Campus Center mailroom. Registration will close at 3pm Wednesday.