Marketing and Student Recruitment Plan

The National Hispanic University

August, 2008

Student Outreach and Recruitment Services
Introduction and Executive Summary

The National Hispanic University (NHU) is dedicated to the challenge of anticipating and meeting the unique requirements and demands of more than just its student population, but also the Latino community it serves. In order to fulfill this lofty goal, recruitment of well-qualified undergraduate students to all programs is a major priority of NHU. This plan is important to the University’s future success in creating a basic student recruitment and marketing program to manage new student enrollments as it incorporates what the University wants to achieve, how it will be accomplished, and what resources will be required to implement the plan.

Since the Fall 2005 total enrollment at NHU has been at over 500 students, a continuation of the pattern of slightly fluctuating enrollments occurring over the past four years. NHU registered a peak enrollment of 558 students during the Fall 2006, but the University has not reached that level again nor surpassed it for a variety of reasons, including the presence of two comprehensive community colleges in the metropolitan area, tuition costs, and lack of awareness of NHU’s academic programs in the area. Despite the short amount of time to formulate a revamped outreach and recruitment office and all the additional challenges this may present, NHU administrators, faculty, and staff believe that the University can attain an enrollment of approximately 200 new freshmen in 2009 by devoting resources to implement this marketing and recruitment plan.

During its 27-year history, NHU has devoted most of its resources to high-quality academic programs and instruction and has been successful in providing services beyond what labeled Hispanic Serving Institutions have been able to do. Student recruitment and marketing, though, needs to be funded to continue to build on these successes and to create an image for the institution that will allow it to be effective through its competitive advantages.

The focus of this plan is the provision of staff and resources to implement fundamental student recruitment and marketing practices. Complete action plans will be included as a separate document. These action items are ambitious for NHU, but the proposed approaches have proven successful at universities across the country and represent the foundation of a basic student recruitment program.

The following is a list of strategies to achieve the NHU 2008-2009 student recruitment goals:

1. Re-create and design an institutional branding image to establish an NHU market position.
2. Launch a comprehensive marketing campaign, and promote the NHU image.
3. Develop and implement an internal communications campaign to promote successes and strengths, reinforce campus image, and address any negative stigma of the campus.
4. Increase data collection, tracking, and reporting to more consistently evaluate the recruitment program by student target groups, including freshmen, transfers, and students from various regions.
5. Generate and track at least 600 freshman inquiries of the right type and mix to achieve enrollment goals.
6. Implement a segmented, systematic, and sequential written communication program designed to coordinate with phone and electronic communication plans.
7. Develop a targeted and strategic recruitment outreach visit program that includes on-site enrollment.
8. Develop relationships with high school and community college counselors.
9. Create a family of high-quality marketing/recruitment materials that focus on NHU benefits and points of distinction.
10. Conduct special events and campus visit programs that include administrators, faculty, staff, and students to maximize the number of personal contacts and enrollment rates.
11. Create a targeted recruitment plan to reach transfer student populations.
12. Administer a financial aid program that supports the achievement of new student enrollment goals.
13. Evaluate the Admissions and Records staff and organizational structure so that the needs of prospective and current students are met.
14. Restructure 1st floor lay out to become more student-centric.
15. Design and conduct an ongoing program of staff development and training by providing outreach training for groups and individual staff.
16. Conduct ongoing research to evaluate enrollment potential, and distribute results.
17. Develop a sustained tele-counseling program aimed at building relationships with prospective students at critical points in the student’s decision-making process.
18. Develop a strong Web site by incorporating marketing messages and redesigning navigation, content, and design to correspond to the new marketing theme, messages, and look.
19. Implement a full territory management approach to building relationships through the recruitment process.

**University History, Mission, and Goals**

The National Hispanic University was established in 1981 to serve the needs of Hispanics, women, other minorities and other learners. Dr. B. Roberto Cruz, the founding President of NHU and its academic visionary for 22 years, helped shape the framework for the different types of Hispanic learners. This framework coupled with the research conducted on Historically Black Colleges and Universities identified high expectations, role models and academic support systems, as effective strategies to graduate African American students. It is through this framework that the institution can address the unique challenges of its students.
The purpose of providing the opportunity for a multicultural education to qualified individuals is expressed in all phases of the University’s operations, from the selection of professors to the design of the curriculum. The undergraduate academic programs provide students with a general education, as well as specialized knowledge in a chosen field. While the National Hispanic University realizes the necessity of offering students a large quantity of available information, it also believes that its primary task is to develop the student body’s skills in critical thinking and inquiry.

Since spring 2005, the University has had a consistent enrollment of 500 students. NHU offers 3 bachelor degrees, 5 associate degrees, and numerous certification programs. Throughout its history, the University has maintained high academic standards and an emphasis on teaching excellence and personal interaction between students and a highly qualified and experienced faculty and staff. The University is a leader in providing service to the east San Jose area. NHU provides services to and cooperates on numerous projects with local businesses, governmental agencies, educational institutions, and members of the non-profit sector.

The mission of The National Hispanic University (NHU) is to enable Hispanics, other minorities, women, and others to acquire an undergraduate degree or certificate using a multicultural educational experience to obtain a professional career in business, education, or technology.

The fundamental goal of NHU is to help students to acquire a liberal arts based-knowledge, to develop the competencies needed in their chosen professional field, and to develop the attitude of personal responsibility necessary to function effectively as a citizen in an increasingly complex and interdependent world.

Goals: Listed below are some of the goals and objectives related to student recruitment that the University must explore given its history and mission:

Increase total student enrollment by:

- Increasing NHU faculty and alumni involvement in student recruitment.
- Conducting Orientation Sessions or NHU Information evening program for prospective students and community.
- Increasing contact with high school counselors.
- Increasing mailings and emails to prospective students in the San Jose area.
- Contacting applicants regarding admissions status within two weeks of application receipt to document needed information.
- Providing online application for admission through NHU website.
- Developing a recruitment and retention reporting system.
- Improving the quality and variety of student recruitment materials.
- Establishing a telemarketing campaign to reach prospective students.
Develop a university marketing program which:

- Maintains a university presence in the local print and electronic media and demonstrate the excellence of faculty, academic programs and community outreach efforts.
- Enhances the university’s image through coordinated and strategic marketing.
- Places attractive advertising in a variety of media to promote the visibility of the University.

Situation Analysis

The situation analysis is derived from numerous sources, including input from a majority of NHU faculty, staff, and student leadership.

Overall Summary of Driving Forces (strengths and opportunities)

- Market penetration opportunities will support increased NHU enrollment goals. Local community members from our primary market are unaware of NHU stand as an accredited 4-year private university. This demonstrates the untapped recruitment potential in the immediate region.
- NHU has a student faculty ratio of 13:1 and an average class size of approximately 20 students; therefore, faculty are able to provide individualized instruction in all academic programs.
- NHU students agree that the institution has having high academic standards and highly qualified faculty.
- NHU has excellent, modern facilities with all buildings constructed within the last 5 years. Facilities can be an important college choice factor; therefore, NHU should feature facilities as a strength.
- NHU’s location in the east San Jose area makes the campus attractive to faculty, staff, and students who are interested in the recreational, internship, and employment opportunities of a large city. A large number of potential students reside within driving distance of the NHU campus.
- The NHU continuing education program provides an opportunity for the University to cultivate adult students who might be interested in pursuing a degree.
- The University has new student orientation, TRiO programs, and other support services that have been effective in helping students succeed in a challenging academic environment.
- NHU has low-cost tuition for what it offers, but according to many students, the public is unaware of or has an exaggerated perception of specific tuition costs. NHU has the opportunity to promote affordability by informing the public about costs, scholarships, and financial assistance. Also, cost-benefit propositions must be made about what it means to invest in an NHU education.
- New program development, primarily in the teacher education area, presents additional growth potential at NHU.
- NHU is respected by local education educators and can provide a significant growth in the number of Latino professionals in the area. Alumni from NHU can
definitely become advocates and can help sustain the reputation and work of the institution

Demographic Trends

**Overall Enrollment Goals**
While the NHU community has a vision of becoming a substantially sized campus of 1,200 in the future, the immediate priority is to arrest declining and fluctuating enrollment trends, strengthen the University image, and improve positioning to stabilize enrollments.

- Aim for 1,200 overall student enrollment in the future.
- Arrest any declining enrollments and increase overall enrollment.
- Increase the freshman-to-sophomore (first time, full-time cohort) retention rate.
- Increase the number of transfer students from local community colleges.
- Improve the image and market position of NHU.

**Planning Assumptions**
The recruitment plan was designed with the following assumptions:

- Additional staffing and budget resources will be necessary for new initiatives.
- The plan will first address investment in fundamentals because there has been a lack of investment in basic strategies to date.
- Planning is based on current program and facility offerings.
- Buy-in and support from the entire University community will be necessary to achieve enrollment growth.
- Student retention is expected to add to enrollment growth but is not part of this planning project.
- The future viability of NHU will be enhanced by enrollment growth.

**Key Target Markets**
The planning team identified key student target markets and primary, secondary, and tertiary geographic markets based on historical trend data and institutional priorities:

- Regional, traditional-aged high school students.
- Primary geographic region: east San Jose;
- Secondary: rest of San Jose, Santa Clara, Milpitas, Sunnyvale, and Mountain View;
- Tertiary: All other places in the bay area; and
- Other: out-of-region, out-of-state areas within 60 miles.
- Transfer students, primarily from the primary region;
- Adults from the primary region.

**New Student Recruitment Goals**
The following recruitment goals were established in response to overall institutional enrollment goals. Growth goals are modest, as the University has experienced several years of decline and/or fluctuation and must first reverse this trend. Declines across
student segments indicate an overall institutional image problem that implies a need to shift public perception. This plan proposes a slower growth strategy which is imperative for NHU. The planning team believes that there is greater growth potential from the primary market in 2006 and beyond, once image and product issues are addressed.

- Reverse the stagnant and/or fluctuating enrollment, and increase new undergraduate student enrollment to 200 freshman in 2009
- Increase the number of transfer students to 40, all coming from local community colleges
- First-time freshman profile will have an average ACCUPLACER test result

**Strategies to Support Recruitment Goals**
The following strategies have been identified by Outreach and Recruitment to achieve new student enrollment goals. Each strategy supports one or more of the goals. Strategies are prioritized for 2008, 2009, and beyond.

The following action strategies are priority items for 2008:

1. Create and design an institutional branding image to establish an NHU market position:
   a. An institutional branding image, theme, slogan, and tag line will be developed to strengthen the NHU image.
   b. A creative design firm will be contracted to assist with graphic development of theme, messages, University name (signature) and logo.

2. Launch a comprehensive marketing campaign, and promote the NHU image to support student recruitment:
   a. A year-long, multi-media campaign will be developed to ensure a consistent presence in the primary market using cost-effective marketing media: radio, newspaper, Web site, television, theaters, magazines, news releases, etc.
   b. The campus signage will be redesigned to provide consistency with the institutional image campaign.
   c. “NHU” brand will be visible and easy to see.

3. Develop and implement an internal communications campaign to promote successes and strengths, reinforce campus image, and address any negative stigma of the campus:
   a. A new theme and key marketing messages will be presented to the entire campus.
   b. Will feature individual faculty, staff, and student successes and stories that reinforce and illustrate key messages.

4. Increase data collection, tracking, and reporting to more consistently evaluate the recruitment program by student target groups, including freshmen, transfers, and students from various regions:
   a. A student database will be maintained, and inquiries will be tracked by implementing the recruitment modules as an interim solution and modifying inquiry codes.

5. Generate and track at least 600 freshman inquiries of the right type and mix to achieve enrollment goals:
a. Names of prospective students will be purchased from ACT and gathered from all recruitment activities. Inquiries will be tracked, and follow-up communications will be conducted efficiently and effectively.

6. Implement a segmented, systematic, and sequential written communication program designed to coordinate with phone and electronic communication plans:
   a. A segmented communication flow will be developed which will provide a mix of mail, telephone, and electronic contacts that will build and sustain student interest (minimum 6 pre-and 4 post-application contacts).

7. Develop a targeted and strategic recruitment outreach visit program that includes on-site enrollment:
   a. The student recruitment plan will focus on primary, secondary, border, and the North of San Jose area markets. South San Jose visits will be limited to Articulation Workshops and one or two large high school fairs.
   b. Students will attend information sessions, interviews, and will file their applications on-site.

8. Develop relationships with high school and community college counselors.
   a. Schedule and attend meetings with all principals.
   b. Host counselor meetings at NHU and allot time to present and promote the campus to elicit administrators to open their doors to NHU.

9. Create a family of high-quality marketing/recruitment materials that focus on NHU benefits and points of distinction.
   a. High-quality materials will be developed as an essential part of a comprehensive marketing/recruitment plan. The materials will have a commonality, while exhibiting a unique appearance for each piece.

10. Conduct special events and campus visit programs that include administrators, faculty, staff, and students to maximize the number of personal contacts and enrollment rates:
    a. NHU will conduct numerous open houses during the fall. These open house events will include a comprehensive information presentation; brief presentations by students and available administrators; campus tours; and highlights from the academic departments and campus. An evening open house targeted to the adult and transfer markets will be conducted.

11. Create a targeted recruitment plan to reach transfer student populations:
    a. A transfer recruitment plan will be developed that responds to transfer student needs which encompass targeted communication flow, coordinated recruiting visits, and utilization of the Transfer Articulation Agreements.
    b. Attend all transfer dates in local community colleges.

12. Administer a financial aid program that supports the achievement of new student enrollment goals:
    a. The financial aid application process will be streamlined, and students will be encouraged to apply earlier in the recruitment cycle to receive financial aid scholarships and loans;
    b. The scholarship program will be redesigned to simplify application procedures and to effectively recruit students with desired academic credentials;
13. Evaluate the Admissions and Records staff and organizational structure so that the needs of prospective and current students are met.

14. Restructure 1st floor lay out to become more student-centric
   a. Create a Computer Cluster/Work Station to promote application completion at NHU.
   b. Provide Outreach and Recruitment with space to become the first point of contact with students.
   c. Improve signage through the first floor to provide more clarity and information.

15. Design and conduct an ongoing program of staff development and training by providing professional growth opportunities for groups and individual staff:
   a. All new staff will be involved in a training program during their first week of employment, and they will participate in continuous in-service training thereafter;
   b. The University will develop and implement a student/customer service training program reinforced by administration and required for all faculty and staff; build in student/customer service as a personnel performance indicator; and solicit and use student feedback on student/customer service.

16. Conduct ongoing research to evaluate enrollment potential, and distribute results:
   a. A non-enrolling survey will be conducted to identify students' reasons for applying, determine where they are enrolling and ascertain whether there was anything NHU could do to encourage enrollment. Respondents will be coded by market, entry status, and ethnicity;
   b. An alumni opinion survey will measure student satisfaction, solicit current status, and identify inspirational success stories for publications;

The following items are second-tier priority for 2008:

17. Develop a sustained tele-counseling program aimed at building relationships with prospective students at critical points in the student’s decision-making process to influence conversion and yield rates.

The following strategies should be targeted and funded for 2008 implementation, but they will likely reach full implementation in 2009:

18. Develop a strong Web site by incorporating marketing messages and redesigning navigation, content, and design to correspond to the new marketing theme, messages, and look.

19. Implement a full territory management approach to building relationships through the recruitment process:
   a. A system will be developed to implement a territory management plan and ensure accountability in recruiting areas.

Action Items/Resource Requirements

Theme and Image Development
- Milagros Marketing--New Theme, Slogan, Tagline
- Design and print stationary.
- Develop and publicize graphics standards, Web site graphic elements, name treatment, digital video graphics, etc.
- **Requirements: Marketing/PR Budget**

**NHU Campus Signage**
- Determine style, design stationary.
- Print and place on campus.
- **Requirements: Marketing/PR Budget**

**NHU Internal Communication Campaign**
- Identify on-campus media and other marketing vehicles to promote new theme and key marketing messages including, but not limited to, Web site, bulletin boards, campus signage, e-mail, Student Activities, Student Government Association, Faculty Senate, NHU Bookstore, electronic media, etc.
- Design and order promotional banners, placards, tent cards, etc, and blanket campus with new theme and messages.
- **Requirements: Marketing/PR Budget**

**Student Search Inquiry Pool Development**
- Respond to inquiries from all sources within 72 hours, and input data to system for communication flow and follow-up.
- Generate inquiries from high school visits, college fairs, etc.
- Contact university departments to establish procedure for making referral of inquiries to admissions (create phone in-take form and distribute to departments).
- Enter to prospect system student names obtained through phone calls, walk-ins, e-mail, Web form, application, FAFSA/no app, letter, response cards, etc.
- **Requirements: Outreach Officers, In-house costs**

**Prospective Student Communication Flow**
- Develop phone follow-up script
- Create interview logs and questions
- Create onsite appointments log
- Create a Computer Cluster/Work Station
- Respond to any inquiries within 72 hours
- **Requirements: Outreach Officers, In-house costs**

**Special Events & Campus Visit Programs**
- Analyze the travel territory by reviewing past year's travel summaries and a list of high schools/fairs where students who have enrolled in the past few years were contacted.
- Review the College Fair schedule, and assign territories and schools, including articulation workshops.
- Confirm appointments at all articulation workshops and college fairs as invitations are received.
• Mail “Coming Soon” postcards to each student who has expressed interest in the University, letting students know NHU will be at their high school.
• Conduct tele-counseling with prospective students on the evening before the visit, as a reminder that NHU will be at their school.
• Arrive at school/fair early, and meet with the high school/college counselor to make sure that they have enough material in the guidance office, answer questions, and provide updates.
• Distribute prospect cards, and give presentation to students. Distribute appropriate information, and answer any questions.
• Flag very interested/outstanding students, and mail a postcard that evening or the following day.
• Schedule and conduct interviews of prospective students at their school site.
• Mail letter of interest to student and schedule a time to meet to complete the application.
• Submit finish application to Bursar’s Office; encourage student to register.
• **Requirements:** Outreach officers, in-house costs, mailings, postcards, letters, etc.

**Transfer Student Recruitment**

• Confirm appointments for all college fairs, with local community colleges, and with employers.
• Mail “Coming Soon” postcards to each student who has expressed an interest in the University, letting students know NHU will be at their school.
• Call prospective students on the evening before the visit. Evening before visit
• Distribute prospect cards, and make presentation to students.
• Distribute all appropriate information, and answer any questions.
• Implement Communication Flow for Transfer and Adult Inquiries/Applicants.
• Post transfer equivalency guides on Web site. October 2002
• Ensure that transcripts are received in advance of priority transfer orientation/registration in order to create transcript evaluations.
• **Requirements:** Outreach officers, in-house costs, mailings, TAA’s, postcards, letters, etc.

**Financial Aid Enhancements**

• Evaluate the current system the student uses to apply for financial aid and streamline to take advantage of web processes.
• Develop a “Financing Your Education” brochure including web options and deadlines for filing.
• Mail letter to area high school counselors offering financial aid workshops for students and parents.
• Mail letter to all inquiries and applicants explaining the application process for financial aid. Priority packaging deadline of March 1 for April packaging will be emphasized.
• Develop a “Financial Aid Packet” for prospective students containing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, Loan Application, Loan Counseling and a detailed instruction sheet.
• Mail reminder postcards to all prospective students encouraging them to apply for financial aid and emphasizing the June 1 processing deadline.
• **Requirements:** Financial Aid administrators, new materials, mailings, etc.

**Admissions and Records Staffing and Organizational Structure**
• Document needs of office to include: professional supervision to manage greater emphasis on admissions and recruitment, increased data collection and entry, communication flow, report generation, and tele-counseling.
• Conduct operational audits in Admissions and Records to evaluate all student service processes for effectiveness.
• Develop new office structure based on hiring of additional staff.
• **Requirements:** HR Trainings

**New Admissions Staff Training**
• Develop training session for admissions counselors, student ambassadors, and all A&R staff.
• Produce training manual for all admission staff.
• Conduct training sessions using above materials (3 sessions). First week of employment
• College fair and high school visit training and observation.
• Schedule meetings with representatives from all academic and administrative departments to orient new staff concerning programs and services.
• **Requirements:** HR Trainings

**Admissions Staff Professional Development**
• Conduct weekly staff meetings with all admissions and records staff to ensure excellent communication.
• Conduct regular planning and evaluation meetings involving Assistant Director, Admissions Counselors, and Student Ambassadors.
• Develop series of informational meetings with all academic and administrative departments to ensure that admissions staff members are aware of new developments.
• Secure funding to ensure that each admissions staff member attends at least one local, state, regional or national professional development workshop each year.
• **Requirements:** HR Trainings

**Campus-wide Recruitment and Student/Customer Service Training**
• Assign responsibility for training and evaluation activities to the vice chancellor for each division.
• Develop plan for each division, which ensures that each faculty and staff member participates in a minimum of one formal student/customer training program per year.
• Design/purchase training program, and develop evaluation instruments.
• Add question concerning student/customer service to all surveys administered to enrolled NHU students.
• Conduct training programs and offer quarterly.
• Develop new staff orientation workshop that includes student/customer service training.
• Add questions concerning student/customer service skills to all faculty/staff evaluation instruments, and ensure that each employee’s student service skills are evaluated annually.
• **Requirements: HR Trainings, Student Service Center, Computer Cluster, etc.**

**Campus Web Site Redesign**
• Develop proposals for Web design needs
• Meet with design firm to outline goals of both internal and external communications plan.
• Meet with design firm to review first draft of web design.
• Review design changes and updates.
• Roll out new Web site.
• **Requirements: Webmaster, In-kind costs**

**Outreach Territory Management**
• Determine territory assignments, and set new student enrollment goals by territory.
• Conduct territory management training session with admissions counselors.
• Develop and implement recruiting plan based on assessment of historical enrollment and recruitment activities.
• Submit counselor generated plan to the Director.
• Assign student ambassador to counselor to help implement plan.
• **Requirements: Outreach Officers, In-kind costs**