

THE BOSTON COLLEGE  
**Chronicle**

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March 16, 2006 • Volume 14 Number 13

## New AHANA Director Sees Mission Unchanged

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For nearly three decades, the term "AHANA" has been a point of pride at Boston College. Developed in 1979 by two BC students who were dissatisfied with the use of "minority" to describe people of color, the acronym was trademarked by Boston College in 1991 and has been used by other institutions.

But with the myriad social and cultural changes that have taken place since then, at BC and in American society, has AHANA's time - as has sometimes been discussed in the BC community - come and gone?

Ines Maturana Sendoya, Boston College's new director of the Office of AHANA Student Programs (OASP), is aware of the debate over the acronym, which refers to individuals of African-American, Hispanic, Asian or Native American heritage. But Maturana Sendoya disagrees that the term has lost its relevancy: If anything, she says, there is still progress to be made toward realizing the vision that originally inspired the term.

"When the acronym was first explained to me, what I liked about it - and what I think is still not completely actualized - was the fact that different peoples of color came together in a coalition to support one another here on campus in terms of learning about each others' issues and causes, and really getting behind each other in terms of the journey here at BC," she said.

Maturana Sendoya, the former associate director of OASP who officially took up her new role last month, explained that certain cultural events at BC have tended to draw a fairly homogenous crowd, and that she would like to see more racial and ethnic variety at such events.

"When I go to the Asian Scholarship event, I would like to not only see Asian students but a good representation of students from other cultural backgrounds and ethnicities, and when I go to the Organization of Latin American Affairs Culture Show, most of the students are Latinos," she said.

"I would like to see the multi-cultural nature of the AHANA community reflected in these events, and I haven't seen that happening yet. So in the sense that it hasn't been actualized yet, I see that the term AHANA still has meaning and validity."

Maturana Sendoya said that in her new role as OASP director, she aims to build on the work Donald Brown achieved during his 27 years on the job. Brown, with whom Maturana Sendoya worked since she joined BC in 2002, left last year to take a position in California.

"The mission of the office of AHANA students programs is to help the students in their academic, social, cultural and spiritual development, and I believe in that mission so I see myself and the rest of the staff here in the office working toward strengthening those aspects of our mission," she said.



Ines Maturana Sendoya

Maturana Sendoya's colleagues express confidence in her ability to accomplish that goal, and more.

"Ines brings great vision for the varying needs of AHANA students on campus," said Associate Vice President for Student Affairs Sheilah Shaw Horton, a former administrator in OASP.

"She's a collaborator and has engaged with faculty and administrators on creating new programs and maintaining some of the standard services that are currently being performed in the office. We look forward to working with her to further develop her vision."

Maturana Sendoya said her main goals are to continue serving AHANA students by providing them with holistic support, and to serve the whole university by offering leadership training on diversity and racial issues and by fostering dialogues about race.

She said OASP must develop programs to meet the needs of what she called "new millennials" - students who have arrived at Boston College since 2000 and who tend to be demographically different from their predecessors, but also bring with them attitudes and understanding of race and racism, gender and sexism, and social justice issues different from previous generations.

"In high school, these students have already been talking about issues of diversity, and so they come to college with a certain level of sophistication in terms of understanding, but that does not necessarily mean that they have had relationships with students from different backgrounds," Maturana Sendoya said.

"We need to be looking at the characteristics of these students and be developing more programs based on those," she said. "In the 1980s and 90s the approach to diversity was more like doing festivals and celebrations, which I think still has a place, but we need to move more toward having conversations about social justice issues, and how do you really relate with each other and how do you develop the skills needed to prepare students for a multicultural workplace."

A native of Colombia, Maturana Sendoya received her doctorate in higher education administration from the University of Massachusetts-Boston, where she worked for seven years before coming to BC. She also earned a master's degree in intercultural relations from Lesley University. •

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[top of page](#)