Diversity Enrichment Programs in the office of Admissions and Recruitment focuses its recruitment efforts on first-generation college students, students of color, and students with low socio-economic standing. Every initiative and program exist for the growth and inclusion of more underserved communities being represented in higher education as students and future leaders. The Diversity Enrichment Program is led by a team of five in Norman. Dorion Billups as director, Clyde (Trey) Moore III and Kayla Storrs as associate directors, Jarrod Tahsequah as assistant director and Graciela Ramirez as an admissions counselor. Our areas typically cover the Oklahoma City Public School and surrounding schools where there are more underrepresented students in higher education by volume. We also serve Native populations throughout the state of Oklahoma on our team as well as the southwest area of Oklahoma.

Our focuses include, but are not limited to, creating programming for first generation students in events like First Sooner I and First Sooner Tulsa. These events provide information to families whose parents and grandparents did not attain a university degree. The First Sooner event connects students to academic, scholarship and financial aid resources. Let’s them know about the application process at OU and how best the students can position themselves for success in the process. In the Spring, this event is followed up with First Sooner II, where admitted students can come back, receive scholarships from OU and learn more about some of the incredible on-campus resources available to them that will improve their time in college. They can also do some of their post-admission checklist items that ensure they are ready to enroll to OU in the summer. Kalya Storrs heads up the First Sooner team alongside our events coordinator, Brittany Leehue.

Some other incredible initiatives offered are led by Jarrod Tahsequah. Jarrod coordinates our American Indian recruitment efforts. Right now, that means he largely does all the Native student recruitment himself. He leads an event called American Indian Visitation Day. It is a staple in the DEP office and often features over 100 Native students from around the state who come to visit OU on that one day. They are also connected to resources, including a college fair or academic college visitation. The point of this event is more than letting students see resources and opportunities at OU, but it is an opportunity for students to feel connected to their Heritage in an institution of higher education. It is an opportunity for connection with others and to let the students know they are not coming into college alone. There are more events for Native students on campus, but where Jarrod really excels is in discovering and attending off-campus college fairs and other American Indian college readiness events, letting the state of Oklahoma know that OU cares about its indigenous people by doing more than bringing them to our space, but by going to where they are and helping them think about life after high school.

Some of DEP’s great partnerships are with Student Life at OU. Student Life and DEP have teamed up for events such as the Tomas Rivera Educational Empowerment Conference, the Latinos Without Borders Fall Camp and Spring Informational, as well as Day of the Dead Festival and more. It is important for our offices to connect as there are so many incredible leaders.
between the two offices who can connect our current students and prospective students through mentorship, encouragement and simple representation. These events see over 100 students attend easily and often our role is to provide transportation by charter bus for these students.

We do have some recruitment initiatives that are national in scope. We have the Weekend, which is led by C. Don Bradley who is based in Houston. The Weekend brings students up from all over the country by bus or by plane to visit OU over the course of a two-day trip to Norman. The Weekend is for diverse students that have applied to OU. It takes place in December. In the Spring, we have George McLaurin & Sylvia A. Lewis Leadership Conference. We partner with University Community that hosts over 120 students for a weekend. The conference is for African American seniors who have been admitted to OU. It is also available to high achieving junior students thinking about OU. The conference has been in existence between University Community and DEP for a number of years now, and it has been awesome seeing how it has grown year over year.