



**The Mercer Group, Inc.**

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## **GAINESVILLE, FLORIDA EQUAL OPPORTUNITY DIRECTOR**

June 9, 2015

Summary

**Gayla D. Thomas**

- **Master in Business Administration; Bachelor – Workforce Education**
- **Director, Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action/ADA/Title IX, Washington University**
- **Salary: \$89,000**
- **Internet Research**
- **Director of Equal Opportunity, Affirmative Action, Title IX, ADA Compliance Office of President**
  - <http://www.ewu.edu/about/administration/president/presidents-staff/gayla-wright>
- **Various news articles - neutral**

**THE MERCER GROUP, INC.**

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**LETTER OF INTEREST  
&  
RESUME**

**THE MERCER GROUP, INC.**  
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April 20, 2015

Dear Sir/Ma'am:

Please consider my qualifications for the City of Gainesville Equal Opportunity Director position within your organization. My resume indicates that I have a Master's degree in Business Administration and a Bachelor's degree in Workforce Education, Training and Development and over 20 years considerable executive leadership, management and supervisory experience in the U.S. Navy, Department of Defense, and over 6 years in Higher Education experience.

I previously worked for the City of Gainesville Florida, Office of Equal Opportunity from November 2005 to July 2007, as the Affirmative Action Officer, under the supervision of Mr. Jimmie Williams. My reason for leaving the City of Gainesville in July 2007, was due to health issues concerning a family member. I truly enjoyed working for the Office of Equal Opportunity and would have made it a career, if my daughter's health had not been an issue during my time of employment. After my daughter's health improved, I took a promotion and relocated to the West coast, as the Director of Equal Opportunity, Affirmative Action, ADA, and Title IX Compliance and have remained here for the past seven years.

Throughout my career I have provided great leadership and a variety of strong technical functions within the organizations I have served. I have a strong business acumen, exceptional planning and program management skills, proven training/mentoring/mediations/coaching skills and enjoy working in a fast paced, dynamic environment. During my military career, I have supervised greater than 300 personnel throughout my career, and throughout my civilian career have supervised staffs greater than 5 personnel. I have conducted discrimination, Title IX and disability investigations and mediations in accordance with Federal, State and University policy and guidelines for over 20 years, and maintained budgets for my unit.

My current role reports directly to the President of the University. Eastern Washington University serves a population of 14,000 students and 1400 faculty and staff. During my time here at Eastern Washington University, I have facilitated trainings in areas of executive leadership, EO/AA/ADA (reasonable accommodation process)/Title IX, conflict resolution, mediation and diversity for the University faculty, staff and students.

As Chair of the President's Committee on Diversity, I was recently awarded an Equity and Diversity award (May 22, 2014) by the President and committee members for outstanding work throughout the campus in implementing an annual "Diversity Week

Festival," which is currently in its 4th year of operation. This event unites faculty, staff and students through diversity lessons and diversity information booths, and various cultural foods. As a member of the President's Executive Committee and Cabinet, I have been involved in the University's strategic planning efforts related to diversity and inclusion on campus regarding faculty, staff and students. I regularly engage with student leadership on campus, numerous student groups, clubs and organizations in working to promote diversity in all aspects on campus. Since our campus does not currently have a Chief Diversity Officer/Office, my office has taken a role in working with faculty, staff and students on campus.

My goal has been to engage faculty, staff and students in programs and activities developed and implemented to help foster and create a diverse and inclusive campus. As the Director Equal Opportunity, Affirmative Action, ADA, and Title IX compliance, my role and responsibility regarding Affirmative Action has been very interactive in working with Human Resources to develop and implement strategies that will attract diverse and the "best qualified" pool of applicants for faculty and staff recruitments. Developed a recruitment analysis tool for certification of applicant pools for managers to use as a tool to monitor diversity of the recruitment pool.

I have excellent oral, written, presentation and interpersonal communication skills, and often provide Affirmative Action and Diversity reports to Board of Trustees, as well as my colleagues that serve on the President's Executive Cabinet and attend the President Cabinet meetings. I have demonstrated throughout my career excellent leadership and supervisory skills. I possess strong computer skills to facilitate preparation of written and statistical reports, investigative reports, and I am proficient in using the Microsoft Office Suite (Word, Excel, Access, and Outlook), Banner, Peoplefluent (AAPlanner) programs. I offer and demonstrate a high degree of interest, ability and experience promoting diversity and cultural competency.

As the Director, University Equal Opportunity and compliance programs, my goal is to build trusting and lasting relationships between faculty, staff and students with myself and staff in promoting equity, diversity, and inclusion throughout the campus. My leadership ability allows me to supervise, motivate, develop, and train staff in accomplishing department and University goals.

In addition, I am currently a doctoral student at Gonzaga University, enrolled in the Leadership Studies Doctorate program. My current status in the program is one more class in summer and I will be "All but Dissertation," with an expected graduation date of May/June 2016. This will in no way have an effect on my ability to accomplish the duties of this position. Accepting this position will not have an effect on me fulfilling my responsibilities and punctual for work for the City of Gainesville. Work has always been a priority.

I am excited to have the opportunity to apply for a position within your organization, and as indicated in my resume, I am definitely qualified to handle the duties and

responsibilities of this position. I look forward to hearing from you in the near future and would certainly like to interview for this position.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Gayla D. Thomas

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## **EDUCATION**

Master Business Administration: Webster University, July 2005.

Bachelor of Science: Workforce Education, Training and Development, Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, January 2002.

## **Certifications:**

Affirmative Action and Diversity, Cornell University, Manhattan, New York, NY, March 2007.

Equal Opportunity Investigator training, Office Federal Contracts and Compliance Programs, Seattle Washington, January 2009

Equal Opportunity Employment Manager, Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute, January 1997.

Title IX Coordinator, University Puget Sound, July 2012.

Conflict Resolution and Mediator, November 2009

Diversity Facilitator. July 2009

## **WORK EXPERIENCE**

*Director, Equal Opportunity/ Affirmative Action/ADA/Title IX Compliance Eastern  
Washington University* *2008- present*

## **Leadership responsibilities:**

- Responsible for Equal Opportunity and Diversity programs for over 20 years; to include Affirmative Action.
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- Direct report to the President.
- Serves on and attends the President's Executive Committee and Cabinet meetings.
- Advises the President, Board of Trustees, Provost and the Vice Presidents regarding compliance with Equal Opportunity, Affirmative Action, ADA, and Title IX.

**Equal Opportunity responsibilities:**

- Responsible for administering the programs and policies for Equal Opportunity, Affirmative Action, American with Disabilities (reasonable accommodation-faculty and staff), and Title IX compliance.
- Responsible for investigations, mediation, and response to claims and complaints both internally and externally(HRC, EEOC, OCR) of discrimination or actions alleged to be in violation of federal, state and university laws, regulations and policies; and other investigations as assigned.
- Review and investigates complaints of discrimination, sexual harassment, and compliance with Title IX, and generates reports, conducts training, and advises the campus on all areas related to EO/AA/ADA/Title IX compliance matters, and diversity initiatives.
- Develops, implements and reviews policies, procedures, publications for compliance and appropriate statements; participate in the development and review of recruitment procedures ; review exit surveys and provide summary to the President;
- Assist/monitor corrective actions instituted as a result of violations
- Provide assistance to university departments, units, administrators in the resolution of problems relating to Equal Opportunity/AA/ADA and Title IX.
- Supervise staff to include developing job descriptions, performance expectations, and essential function analysis, conduct performance evaluations, establish salaries, approve leave, resolve grievances and take appropriate corrective or disciplinary actions.
- Represents the university on the Inter-institutional Council of Affirmative Action Officers, and at proceedings and meetings relating to Equal Opportunity, Affirmative Action, ADA and Title IX; in collaboration with colleagues throughout the state of Washington.
- Develop and conduct training on EO/AA/ADA/Title IX policies, procedures and practices.

**Affirmative Action responsibilities:**

- Prepares Affirmative Action plans and reports in accord with federal and state agencies; prepares reports as requested by the President; reviews and approves all recruitment documents to ensure compliance with affirmative action policies and plans.
  - Works closely with the Office of Institutional Research and Demography in creating workforce analysis and diversity reports.
  - Develops an annual recruiting plan working with the Human Resource Services to assist the university in meeting its established affirmative action goals; establishes a strategy based on each job category; develops and implements a communication strategy to inform departments; identify potential costs associated with plan.
  - Developed a recruitment analysis tool for hiring managers to monitor diversity of the pool, from start to finish of the recruitment.
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- Developed a recruitment resource list of diversity resources for which to advertise faculty, staff and student position.

**Human Resources:**

- Development and implementation of recruitment plans, retention strategies and resources to meet federal and state requirements in using “good faith” efforts to attract diverse candidates to apply for positions.
- Possess a thorough knowledge and understanding of recruitment, hiring and retention processes for faculty and staff.
- Responsible for training search committees on Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action guidelines as related to recruitment and hiring.
- Understanding of Faculty, Professional and classified staff collective bargaining agreements.
- Understanding of FMLA, employee policies and guidelines related to faculty and staff.
- Work closely with HR Labor Relations Manager relating to employee grievances and arbitration.
- Developed a recruitment analysis tool for hiring managers to monitor diversity of the pool, from start to finish of the recruitment.
- Work with Banner to retrieve reports as related to IPEDS, VETS 100/100A, and Affirmative Action data.
- Facilitate new faculty and staff orientation and policy workshops.

**Title IX responsibilities:**

- Certified Title IX Coordinator. Oversees two Deputy Title IX Coordinators.
- Responsible for development and implementation of the Title IX program on campus, to include training and reporting of all sexual assaults, misconduct and encompassing Title IX areas of responsibilities.
- Collaborate in reporting of Title IX cases with Campus Police, Dean of Students Office, and the Victim Advocate. I work very closely with all parties in the handling of Title IX complaints.

**ADA responsibility:**

- Reviews and coordinates requests for reasonable accommodations and prepares accommodation plan for review and approval for faculty and staff on campus.

**Budget responsibilities:**

- Manage the budget to include projecting needs and approving expenditures.
- Approval of time sheets for staff.

**Diversity responsibilities:**

- Facilitates diversity and cultural competency lessons on an as needed basis.
  - Members of the following campus committees: President’s Committee on Diversity (PCOD), and the President’s Advisory Committee on Intercollegiate Athletics (PACIA).
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***Affirmative Action Officer****City of Gainesville Florida**2005 – 2008*

- Reports directly to the Director of the Office of Equal Opportunity.
- Prepares Affirmative Action plans and reports in accord with federal and state agencies; prepares reports as requested by the President; reviews and approves all recruitment documents to ensure compliance with affirmative action policies and plans.
- Responsible for filing EEO-1 reports, VETS 100/100A and higher education affirmative action reports.
- Responsible for recruitment of underrepresented groups in effort to meet Affirmative Action goals. Attends job fairs and performs community outreach with
- Responsible for developing recruitment plans and working with the Human Resource Services to assist in meeting its established affirmative action goals; establishes a strategy based on each job category; develops and implements a communication strategy to inform departments; and identifies potential costs associated with plan.
- Responsible for providing annual Affirmative Action reports to City Commissioners and Executive Leadership.
- Developed and implemented the City of Gainesville Affirmative Action Plan in compliance with Federal and State laws.

***Executive Leadership, U.S. Navy******1983-2005******Command Managed Equal Opportunity Manager******U.S. Navy******1991-2005***

- Responsible for investigations, mediation, and response to claims and complaints both internally and externally (EEOC, OCR) of discrimination or actions alleged to be in violation of federal laws, regulations and policies; and other investigations as assigned.
- Review and investigates complaints of discrimination and sexual harassment compliance, and generate reports, conducts training, and advises the Chain of Command and leadership on all areas related to EO compliance matters, and diversity initiatives.

**TEACHING**

Facilitator, Diversity/Cultural Competency

Eastern Washington University

2008 – present

- Facilitates diversity awareness and cultural competency for faculty, staff and students on and off campus.

**COMMUNITY/CAMPUS OUTREACH:**

Chair, President's Committee on Diversity, Eastern Washington University, Cheney WA.  
December 2008 to present.

Intercollegiate Athletics, Eastern Washington University, Cheney, WA December 2013  
to present.

National Association of Diversity Officers in Higher Education, August 2013 to present.

National American Association for Affirmative Action (AAAA) member, May 2011 to  
present.

NAACP member, Spokane, WA December 2011 to present.

The Governor's Affirmative Action Policy Committee (GAAPComm), Olympia, WA  
January 2010 to present.

Faculty and Staff of Color Conference Committee member, Spokane, WA December  
2008 to January 2010.

#### **WORKSHOPS/PRESENTATIONS/AWARDS:**

Presenter, for the International Leadership Association Conference, Quebec, Canada,  
October 28-November 1, 2013.

Awarded, Associated Students of Eastern Washington University Mentor of the  
Year for 2012.

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