Numerous research studies show that students—60 to 70 annually—not only in which they will find themselves after thriving in the diverse, interconnected world preparing students to understand and better bring hope to the world by bringing the F has been helping prepare students to in a supportive environment.

The freshman-year program emphasizes preparing for Hope. The program is named for the Rev. Philip Phelps, the college’s first president, who made international outreach an institutional priority in the college’s earliest years. This fall, the Phelps Scholars Program was recognized nationally as an exemplary program by the Association of American Colleges and Universities, the Phelps Scholars Program takes a holistic approach in linking academics and residence life for first-year students interested in studying issues related to diversity. Although across its first decade the program has earned praise from students on many counts, one stands foremost among the others: the enduring, strong network of friendships that they form as participants. Pictured this spring from left to right alone are Diane Hawks, Rebekah Cline, Esther Moon, Michelle Bryant and Joshua Williams. At lower left last year are Derek Terrell and Anabay Mamo.

Recognized recently as an exemplary program by the Association of American Colleges and Universities, the Phelps Scholars Program was an integral approach to linking academics and residence life for first-year students interested in studying issues related to diversity. Although across its first decade the program has earned praise from students on many counts, one stands foremost among the others: the enduring, strong network of friendships that they form as participants. Pictured this spring from left to right alone are Diane Hawks, Rebekah Cline, Esther Moon, Michelle Bryant and Joshua Williams. At lower left last year are Derek Terrell and Anabay Mamo.

Students with diversity-related experiences do better academically and achieve greater personal development than students without those experiences,” said Dr. Chuck Green, professor of psychology, who has directed the program since it began in 1999. “The underlying purpose of the program is to give people the opportunity to get to know a wide variety of folks, to work on developing relationships and to explore cultural diversity in a supportive environment.”

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Over the last 10 years, we have developed a rich array of opportunities for students who are interested in pursuing issues pertaining to race and culture,” Dr. Green said. “Part of what we’re trying to do is take what we have to offer and cooperate with other offices on campus.”

In March, working in cooperation with the department of economics, management and accounting, the program hosted a panel on cultural competence in the workplace that took place on campus during a lecture from Dan Pink. In April, the program and the department of psychology co-sponsored the address “Identity-management environments: How positive environments can unlock latent ability” by Dr. Steve Spencer ’89, professor of psychology at the University of Washington.

Dr. Spencer’s address was a particularly appropriate anniversary highlight. As a member of the Hope psychology faculty from 1997 to 1999, he had originally proposed the Phelps Scholars Program based on his previous work at the University of Michigan, during which he studied the university’s “Twenty-first Century” program, which also brings together minority and majority students in a supportive residential situation. “The Phelps Scholars Program is near and dear to my heart,” Dr. Spencer said as he addressed a standing-room-only audience in VandenWend 104. “I think it’s a credit to Hope that they put the work into it. Certainly it’s a credit to Chuck and the other people that work on it that they have put together such a successful program.”

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“I like to host prospective students. I feel like the Phelps Scholars Program is one of the best places I can show.” – Grace Olamiju ’11 of Brooklyn, N.Y.

News From Hope College

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