

Cedar Crest College Multicultural Center



Newsletter
Spring
2012

Volume 1 Issue 1

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Letter from the Director: *Kenza Glass*

Spring 2012

The Multicultural Center (MC) is focused on building a strong foundation to support the campus community on issues of diversity and difference. We are in the middle of our second full semester of programs and events and have had some exciting new developments. One such development is the use of MC programs in the curriculum. Talking Circles, for example, is an ongoing program to promote dialogue about identity and difficult topics such as race and disabilities. In collaboration with Dr. Precious Yamaguchi and her Intercultural Communication class, we have brought a diverse group of speakers to campus. Additionally, Dr. James Scepanzky has added Talking Circles to the Cross-Cultural Psychology syllabus as a means for developing skills in cultural competence. With about 20 participants each week, I am so proud to say we are moving successfully toward our goal of encouraging intercultural competence in our community! If you have not had a chance to attend yet, I hope you will stop by any Wednesday at 11am or come to a heritage month event.



Another exciting development is the addition of student staff. Thanks to the Title III grant, the MC is now fully staffed with six student assistants. This support not only allows the MC to manage administrative duties, but also brings life and spirit to our space in the lower level of Butz Hall. ALANA (African-American, Latino, Asian, Native American) students at Cedar Crest can expect to find a friendly face and a support system. Please stop by if you need to talk, would like academic assistance, or just want to hang out, especially at ALANA Socials.

If Cedar Crest is going to achieve its mission of educating the next generation of women leaders prepared for life in a global society, then developing the skill set necessary to live that vision must begin in your dorms, among classmates, and with your neighbors. Strategies that allow you to communicate with those who are different from you are gained through ongoing exposure to different world-views, identities, and cultures. The MC offers that opportunity to all students, faculty, and staff in a safe and welcoming environment. I hope you will take advantage of all the resources that we are working hard to provide to our community.

One Love,

Kenza Glass



Welcome Our Student Assistants

By: Brittney O'Neal

Student Hours

Monday: 1-6 pm

Tuesday: 11-6pm

Wednesday: 5-9 pm

Thursday: 12-4pm

Friday: 11-5pm

This semester the Multicultural Center has hired six new student assistants. Under the guidance of the Multicultural Center director, Kenza Glass, and thanks to funding from the Title III grant, the student coordinators have been able to provide the campus with a number of educational and social programs including the Black History Month events that took place on campus, a trip to see "Red Tails" a film about the Tuskegee airmen on opening weekend, and also a trip to Moravian College to hear Rev. Jesse Jackson speak on poverty and inequality.

These student assistants are dedicated to providing a welcoming environment for students of all backgrounds. Student coordinators are responsible for hosting the Multicultural Center's weekly events Tea Time, Talking Circles, and ALANA Socials, all of which encourage students to participate in an engaging conversation with an open mind.

Along with programming student assistants complete a number of administrative tasks during their staffing hours including creating promotional materials, updating social media, and providing peer support services. During peer support hours, student assistants can meet with students if they are not feeling comfortable on campus, an incident occurred that was racially motivated, or for guidance and advice about college in general. Please feel free to stop by anytime a student assistant is available.

Student Assistants:

- Jade Abston: Senior, Communication/Media Studies major
- Adley Alezy: Sage Student, Nursing major
- Demi Barzana: Freshman, Art Therapy major
- Solinah "Rae" Kinney: Sophomore, Business major
- Natalia Martinez-Colon: Transfer, New Media major
- Brittney O'Neal: Senior, Criminal Justice major

Also you can contact and get connected with us through our social media sites as well:

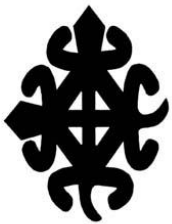
Facebook: The Cedar Crest College Multicultural Center

Twitter: @CedarCrestMCC

Tumblr: <http://thecedarcrestcollegemcc.tumblr.com>

*"It is brave to be involved
To be not fearful to be unresolved."*

Gwendolyn Brooks



Jesse Jackson:

Poverty and Inequality

By: Jade Abston

On Feb. 14, 2012 the Student Coordinators had the opportunity to see Rev. Jesse Jackson Sr. at Moravian College having a conversation about Poverty and Inequality.

Jackson is most notably known as one of America's civil rights, political, and religious figures. He is also the founder and president of the Rainbow PUSH Coalition.

During this conversation with Jackson he shared some of the most profound theories and ideas on poverty and equality through equal education.

The hall was filled with many young students and many of the points Jackson made had to do with education. He spoke about the rising problem of student loan debt, inequality of education based on physical location, and the importance of education.

One of the most profound statements that Jackson made that stuck with most of us was that due to the inequality of education in different regions, we may be missing out on a genius because that child is not given the opportunity to have a quality education.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau "In 2010, 46.2 million people were in poverty, up from 43.6 million in 2009—the fourth consecutive annual increase in the number of people in poverty."

When analyzing and studying the poverty rates, race does become a factor. Jackson also mentioned in his conversation many of the misconceptions about government aid, mainly food stamps. About 50 percent of recipients of food stamps are whites.

A major point Jackson also made was the importance of de-racializing poverty and not focusing on certain races, but on poverty as a whole in order to fight the war on poverty.

Being in the presence of a great legend of American history was a humbling experience for us all. Many of the issues raised in this conversation are also conversations we have in the Multicultural Center.

"There were two types in the Movement...those who were just in the Movement and those whom the Movement was in them"

-Bob Mants



Black History Month

“Students explore photography and journalism during Black History Month events”

By: Solinah Kinney

B

lack History Month is an annual opportunity to reflect upon and celebrate the achievements of Black Americans. Every U.S. president since 1976 has officially designated February as Black History Month. Across the country, African Americans have come together in their own special ways to commemorate the prestigious lives of those who have gone before them. Many household names include Rosa Parks, Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X. This past February the students and staff of the Multicultural Center were able to celebrate Black History in their own way. Events pertaining to Black History were planned throughout the month. These included a documentary viewing, a journey in time through photography, an intimate conversation with a political figure, and a lesson of a rich past in almost forgotten Black press.

Faculty and staff were able to join in as well as host some these events held on campus. Dr. Fulford, for example was able to facilitate a discussion following the viewing of Soundtrack of a Revolution. This film was a documentary which tells the story of the American civil rights movement through its powerful music -the freedom songs protesters sang on picket lines, in mass meetings, in paddy wagons, and in jail cells as they fought for justice and equality. Students from all different backgrounds were able to participate with the discussion which mainly focused on the idea of and building acceptance of breaking down walls of intolerance.

In the week that followed Estizer Smith presented “Back to Lowndes County” a photo documentary about the Civil Rights Era in Alabama. Not only was the group graced by Smith’s photography, but Smith was also able to share her captivating personal journey. Each piece in her documentary captured an essential part of her story. Smith’s journey was truly one of passion and inspiration. On Valentine’s Day the staff members of the Multicultural Center were able to travel to Moravian College to listen to talk on Inequality and Poverty with political activist Rev. Jesse Jackson. It was quite an experience to be the presence of such an influential figure in African American History. To bring Black History month to a close, Dr. Kim Gallon, a professor from Muhlenberg College, presented on the topic of The Black press during the 1920s and 30s. This was quite an influential part of the Great Migration during which many Blacks traveled from the Deep South to the cities of the North. The early publications of these Black newspapers served as the beacon of “The New Negro” as Gallon explained. They gave hope to those seeking a better future and gave insight African- American as a dynamic and complex people; no longer would they be resolved to the stereotypes created by White society. This discussion was quite an experience for everyone involved. It brought light to a little known and almost forgotten era in Black History. February 2012 was just the beginning of many more Black History Month



Estizer Smith



Kim Gallon



Talking Circles By: Demi Barzana

During Talking Circles, students here at Cedar Crest have so far had the opportunity to speak with and learn from six amazing individuals from different cultures and backgrounds. Our first guest was a woman named Ibi Balog. She is a professor in the Cedar Crest Business Department who teaches accounting. She talked about emigrating to the U.S. from Europe in 10th grade and speaking Hungarian, Serbo-Croatian and several other languages. She had to accomplish a lot to get where she is now like learn English right when she got to the states. Learning her story made us realize that all around us there are people with unique cultures and backgrounds and we can benefit ourselves by taking the time to just listen to their story and learn about their culture. Our second guest was a journalist for the Morning Call named Milton Carrero. He writes for the health section and seeks to write about things that inspire him. His inspirational talk taught us that anything is possible and if you believe in yourself then you will go far. Our next guest was Beth Stibrany, Social Work major, and Karen Schoenborn, Assistant Director of Accessibility at Cedar Crest. They came to talk about disabilities and Beth talked about her experience living with M.S. Their talk made us think about being more open minded about people who have disabilities and that in reality they really are able and not disabled like society believes them to be. Our fifth guest was a woman named Pamela Varkony. Pamela is a journalist with a passion for helping the country of Afghanistan through her agency, Power of Women. She visited the country of Afghanistan twice and she does a lot to help out, especially the children. She is an inspirational person who showed us that anyone can make a difference, even if it is just one person, you can change a person's life, a community, or maybe even a country itself. Our most recent guest Robin Riley-Casey, Director of Multicultural Life at Muhlenberg, shared her perspective of being an African-American woman as well as her work towards social justice through multiculturalism. She was very candid with the students and shed light on how people often do not really see past skin color and miss out on seeing all the qualities we may have in common with another person from other race and ethnicity. Each of these guests taught us something new from inspiring us to do something for others or just be more open-minded. They all taught us something special and that even though we all may seem different, we are all very alike and capable of doing great things.

Speakers



Pamela Varkony
Power of Women, Founder



Ibi Balog
Professor of Accounting



Milton Carrero
Health Writer Morning Call



Robin Riley-Casey



Dr. Precious Yamaguchi
Assistant Professor



Mohamed Rajmohamed

At Talking Circles in the second half of the semester, students and faculty had the chance to learn from seven more guests who shared their culture and stories. One guest was Simon Garcia, a Mexican-American artist and graphic designer, who showed us his artwork and shared his story about how he got to where he is now. Greatly influenced by the city of Los Angeles, the themes of his artwork include graffiti, hip-hop, and backdrops include the city of Los Angeles.

Robin Riley-Casey, the Director of the Multicultural Center in Muhlenberg College, came to talk to us about her life from being in the military to becoming Director of Multicultural Life at Muhlenberg College. Her friendly and outgoing personality made it easy to talk to her about race, gender, and sexuality.

Professor Precious Yamaguchi presented two different ethnographies, one about the experience of Japanese Americans in internment camps during World War II. Through interviews stories of Japanese Americans we learned how generations of families were affected by the discrimination they faced even though they were citizens of the United States. The other ethnography was about Dr. Yamaguchi's research in Ghana. We had the chance to video chat with one of her close friends, Franklin Yartey, who is from Ghana. He talked to us about the culture shock he experienced moving to the U.S. and also about some of the culture and traditions of Ghana like the traditional dances.

Mohamed Rajmohamed, an Adjunct Professor of Religious Studies here at Cedar Crest, talked to us about South Asian cultural values and shared his story of how his family was forced to emigrate from Uganda to America. We also learned about the Islamic communities living in the Lehigh Valley.

Our last guests were the Korean students Eunjee Chung and Woojin Song who talked about the differences and similarities between Seoul, South Korea and the U.S. We learned many things such as differences in transportation, social life, and different ways to act polite. EunJee and Woojin told us about some of the things that surprised them about American food and some of the things they really like such as pickles!

Talking and interacting with all our guests taught us a lot about different cultures and be more open minded and knowledgeable about the different people around us.

Women's History Month

“For most of history, Anonymous was a woman.”

– Virginia Woolf

By: Adley Alezy

In the spirit of Women's History month, on Friday, March 23 The Multicultural Center got an opportunity to have Kate Culkin PhD talk about her book "Harriet Hosmer: A Cultural Biography". Harriet Hosmer was one of the first American women sculpturers of the 19th century. You may recognize some of Hosmer's most popular sculptures, Zenobia in Chains and Zenobia Queen of Palmyra. She was known as one of the pioneers for women rights because of her ability to excel in a male dominate field. Because of this she was able to inspire a lot of women to be great in their own right. With the support of other women activists like Lydia Maria Childs and Susanne B. Anthony, Hosmer became a successful woman of her time both in the United States and abroad. Making her social situation even more interesting and inspiring, Hosmer was also a proud lesbian. In Culkin's presentation she explained the type of relationships Hosmer had with the special women in her life, which were somewhat socially accepted, and was very open about her long-term relationship with the woman she referred to as her wife. Through the Harriet Hosmer biography, Culkin shared a lot of insights in terms of history and gender in the world of art and the role of women in the 19th century.



The Role of Women in Native American Life

By: Brittney O'Neal

“The Role of Women in Native American Life” presented by Carla Messinger and her husband provided insight into the importance of women throughout Native American history. The event began with a showcase of traditional clothing, toys, and descriptions of the Lenape heritage traditions. The wardrobe that was modeled displayed its usefulness, and addresses why it is an important factor throughout generations. Each piece of clothing was designed with a purpose for the tribe who wears it. Certain feathers or beads may just be decoration to an outsider but has a historic meaning to the person wearing it. The fact that a design pattern on a belt may also be used as references notes for storytellers was an interesting take-away fact. The more essential lesson of the day was learning what major roles women have and still play in Native American culture. Unlike what we've learned in our history books, Native Americans have a matriarchal society, where women are the governing leaders. Knowing that women were the majority or the leaders who decided how and who should lead their tribes was the most valuable lesson of the day. As students at an all women's college there is something inspiring in knowing that there are successful societies that place great importance on a woman's perspective.

William Allen High School Leadership Mentoring Program

By: KENZA GLASS

The phenomenal students who work and volunteer in the Multicultural Center are truly making a difference in the lives of others and in the community. This academic year, the Multicultural Center hosted women leaders from the William Allen High School Latino Leadership Club and their advisor, Christina Phillips, at two different events. In the fall, students from Allen spent the day on campus, learning about leadership among women of color, learning how best to present themselves when networking, and learning more about the college experience. This spring, we hosted a screening of Miss Representation. After watching the documentary and enjoying comida de Puertorriquena (muy deliciosa!) ten Cedar Crest students facilitated a discussion on gender and media literacy. It was an inspirational evening, and we all left more enlightened and with a commitment to keep in touch and continue our new friendships. We were grateful to be invited to Noche de Gala, a formal event at the Center City Holiday Inn to honor Latino leaders at Allen. Faculty and students from Allen publicly thanked Cedar Crest College for our mentoring partnership and we were able to spend one-on-one time with one student who will be attending Cedar Crest in the fall as an intended nursing student. Together we celebrated and danced the night away! We are all looking forward to building a strong connection through future programs.

Making a Difference





Community

Thanks for all your support this semester!!



Evening with John Legend By: Jade Abston

On March 21, 2012 the Multicultural Center student workers and several other Cedar Crest students were given the opportunity to see John Legend at Moravian College.

We know Legend to be a nine time Grammy winner, but he is also a very passionate philanthropist. In 2007, he launched the Show Me Campaign. This campaign is a non-profit organization that is fighting to reform education in the United States.

Along with his campaign, Legend has furthered his involvement in education and poverty by serving on the Boards of The Education Equality Project, Teach for America, Stand for Children and the Harlem Village Academies' National Leadership Board.

The speech that Legend gave centered around social activism, education, and eradicating poverty. The message that was powerful was how education is vital and that each and every college student in Johnston Hall has the power to change the world through the knowledge we have learned from our education.

It was inspiring to see someone who makes a huge impact in the world of music also inspire others, especially college students to give back to the community and help fight a cause whatever it may be.





THE MULTICULTURAL CENTER

The Multicultural Center at Cedar Crest College is grounded in the shared values of community, equality, and social justice. The Multicultural Center acts as a clearing house for initiatives, programs, academic support, and policies that are directly relevant to diverse student populations on campus.

The mission of the Multicultural Center focuses on the following key concepts:

- The Multicultural Center at Cedar Crest College encourages and supports all community members in the development and exploration of their unique individual and group identities by providing a safe and welcoming space.
- The Multicultural Center at Cedar Crest College works toward the retention and success of traditionally underrepresented, underserved populations with a focus on ALANA (African-American, Latino, Asian, Native American) students.
- The Multicultural Center promotes inclusive campus climate through dialogue, awareness, professional development, academic excellence and leadership.
- The Multicultural Center collaborates with every campus office to ensure that all members of the community have access to the benefits and resources offered by an institution grounded in the liberal arts and dedicated to educating future generations of women leaders.

The Multicultural Center is located in the lower level of Butz Hall and includes a lounge with large screen TV, a meeting area, an office and a kitchenette. While students, faculty, staff and campus organizations who share the mission of the Multicultural Center will be encouraged to use the space regularly, it will always be available to all community members through the campus-wide reservation system.

Multicultural Center
Cedar Crest College
TheMC@cedarcrest.edu
Butz Hall, lower level
Ext. 3596

Design by: Natalia De Jesus Martinez-Colon