

# *Magazine* Change



SPRING 2019



# Director's Note



The Director, Tatiana Diaz (M) with Anyi Ye (L) and IA Sulakshmi Vaid

As we close this third year of the Center for Diversity and Inclusion, I'm thrilled to share that once again we have had an eventful year with 115 events and thousands of participants. This would not have been possible without the hard work of our Inclusion Advocates, Graduate Assistant, interns, and collaborators. The year has not been without social unrest. As a community, we have had many conversations about issues like immigration, interfaith relations, and hate crimes. We have also taken the time to celebrate our journeys and find self-care opportunities.

At the CDI, we work to provide opportunities for personal growth that are not easily achievable in a time when polarization and avoidance is so common. Yet we persevere and we are thankful to those that have joined us in these events, and that have challenged us to do more. As we close this academic year, we are ready to celebrate our new graduates, who for the first time in our college's history, will be able to wear stoles that symbolize their diverse identities. This step in showcasing who we are, was a key request of our Student Diversity Council this year to President Meade. What a great way to close out the year with an example of our student leader's advocacy.

Congratulations class of 2019 for all you have achieved, and all that is to come!



# Editorial



IA Haley Smith (L), IA Ravneet Kaur Sandhu, IA Francisca Sepulveda, and Kayla Smith

## *CCC Diversity Statement*

Founded under the mission to expand women's access to higher-education, Cedar Crest College values difference in a diverse, inclusive, and equitable learning environment. The College is committed to educational excellence, leadership, and civic engagement in a pluralistic society. We thus embrace an inclusive community that brings together students, faculty, and staff of different racial and multi-racial, ethnic and multi-ethnic, gender and sexually diverse, economic, religious, and national identities and ages, including students of color, first-generation college students, international students, students of varying ability/disability, and other students underrepresented in higher education.

I remember coming to Cedar Crest College as a naive freshman in 2015, with my life packed in two suitcases. It is amazing to think about how much the college landscape has changed in regards to the conversation on diversity. In my four years here, I have witnessed the increasing efforts by the college regarding multicultural awareness and gender and sexual diversity and how it has helped make the campus a more inclusive place.

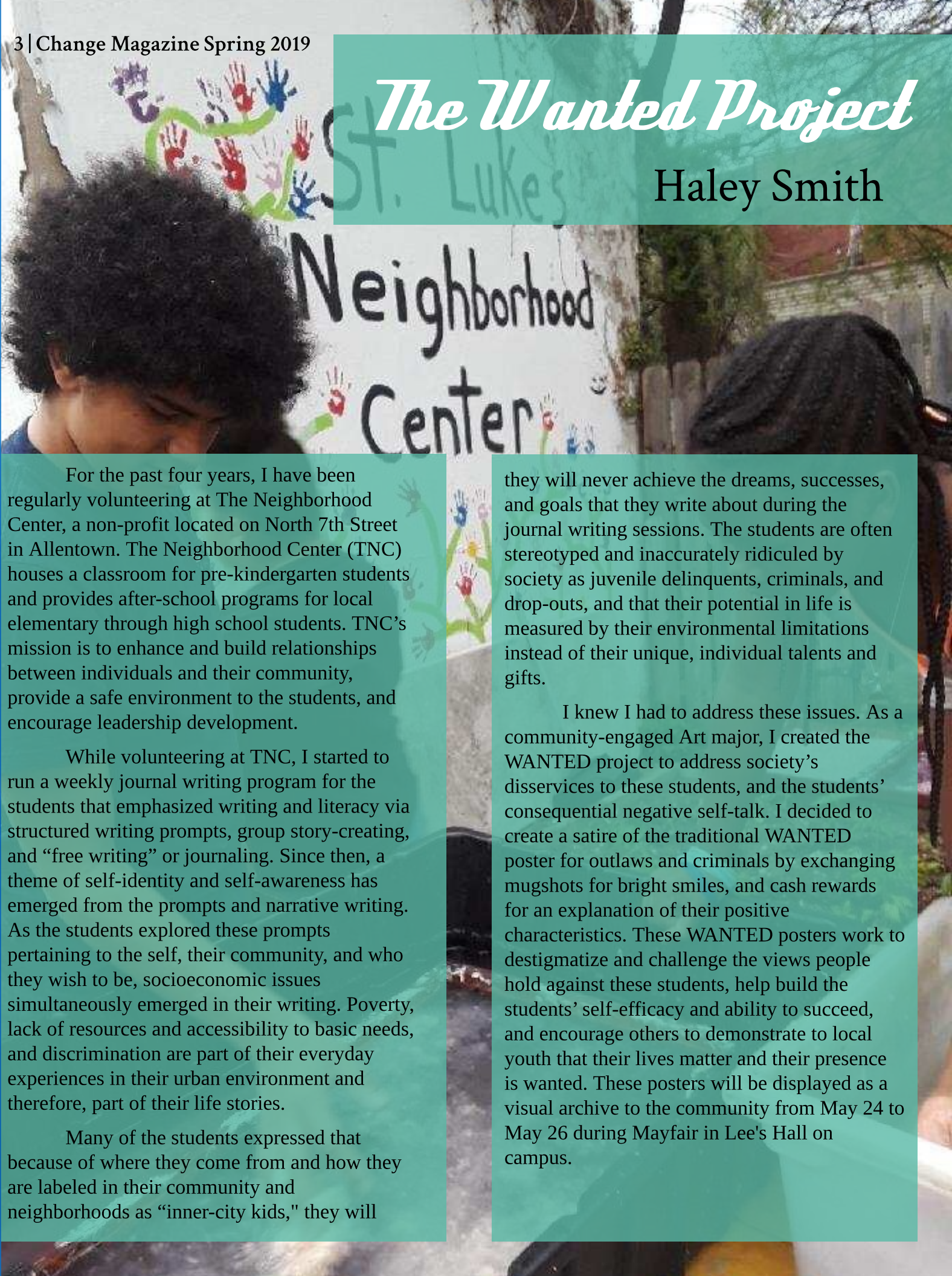
When I came on campus, the Multicultural Center was in the bottom of Butz and most of the diversity student organizations were defunct. Slowly, with the efforts put in by the administration, the students and concerned faculty, the amount of programming on campus related to diversity and inclusion has increased. Now, the Center for Diversity and Inclusion is proudly housed in the Allen House. The Student Diversity Council is composed of all the diversity-related organizations on campus, from the Amnesty International to OutThere, and puts on the International Banquet every year. The Resource Pantry, that provides food and basic necessities to students, has been warmly welcomed by the students.

As the academic year comes to the close, I would like to thank the people who helped make the CDI successful by interacting and hosting events with us. I would also like to thank those who put in work daily to make the college a place where everyone is welcomed. Here's to the future of the CDI- bright, fun and educational.



# *The Wanted Project*

Haley Smith



For the past four years, I have been regularly volunteering at The Neighborhood Center, a non-profit located on North 7th Street in Allentown. The Neighborhood Center (TNC) houses a classroom for pre-kindergarten students and provides after-school programs for local elementary through high school students. TNC's mission is to enhance and build relationships between individuals and their community, provide a safe environment to the students, and encourage leadership development.

While volunteering at TNC, I started to run a weekly journal writing program for the students that emphasized writing and literacy via structured writing prompts, group story-creating, and "free writing" or journaling. Since then, a theme of self-identity and self-awareness has emerged from the prompts and narrative writing. As the students explored these prompts pertaining to the self, their community, and who they wish to be, socioeconomic issues simultaneously emerged in their writing. Poverty, lack of resources and accessibility to basic needs, and discrimination are part of their everyday experiences in their urban environment and therefore, part of their life stories.

Many of the students expressed that because of where they come from and how they are labeled in their community and neighborhoods as "inner-city kids," they will

they will never achieve the dreams, successes, and goals that they write about during the journal writing sessions. The students are often stereotyped and inaccurately ridiculed by society as juvenile delinquents, criminals, and drop-outs, and that their potential in life is measured by their environmental limitations instead of their unique, individual talents and gifts.

I knew I had to address these issues. As a community-engaged Art major, I created the WANTED project to address society's disservices to these students, and the students' consequential negative self-talk. I decided to create a satire of the traditional WANTED poster for outlaws and criminals by exchanging mugshots for bright smiles, and cash rewards for an explanation of their positive characteristics. These WANTED posters work to destigmatize and challenge the views people hold against these students, help build the students' self-efficacy and ability to succeed, and encourage others to demonstrate to local youth that their lives matter and their presence is wanted. These posters will be displayed as a visual archive to the community from May 24 to May 26 during Mayfair in Lee's Hall on campus.



# *Eye of the Tiger*

Nisha Bhatt

Remember what you must do when they underestimate you

When they misunderstand you

When they make assumptions about you

When they knock you down until you get scrapes and bruises

When they take your kindness for weakness

When they dismiss your strength

You awaken the tiger that sleeps inside you

And they stare into your eyes

The eyes of your tiger are reflected back

They can see the passionate fire

And you don't doubt your worth

And you stay free in your authenticity

No matter what they do or say.



# *The Big Break*

## Sulakshmi Vaid

Photograph provided by Sulakshmi Vaid

Over Spring Break, I was given the opportunity to travel to Greece for a week. I got to see beautiful sights, have fun experiences with my group and friends, but most of all, I got to begin anew mentally with the biggest reality check I've ever received.

Greece was my first, real vacation in a very long time. While I was there, I started feeling anxious. As I tried to enjoy the gorgeous scenery that constantly surrounded me, my brain kept racing a million miles an hour. Slowly, I realized that my brain had been under so much stress and wired to run at such a rapid pace, that my habitat was a constant state of anxiety. I got so caught up with all my assignments and obligations that I forgot the bigger picture. I forgot about the value of happiness in my life.

After waking up to that, I decided to just live in that moment. I got to laugh and smile like a child would. Sometimes we forget to stop looking at the screen in front of us with work and look around us; to enjoy the moment and breathe. When we start to live at a more comfortable pace, we can see the value in just living life; choosing happiness as the route to take.

Returning home, classes begun again, and old habits die hard. However, I realize that I can take a break. I can ask for help. I am allowed not to be stressed. Now, the semester is starting to finish, and I feel all the pressure on my shoulders, but then I remember the sight of the Greek mountains, the blueness of the Aegean Sea, the sacred sites of Delphi and the Acropolis. I now strive to not overburden myself and remember the big picture of my happiness. I am young and have only one life to live, so I am going to make sure I make more happy memories than stressful ones.



# Second Languages

Francisca Sepulveda

Learning another language is hard, but I feel a special pressure to reach fluency in Spanish. Being from a Puerto Rican family, both of my parents are fluent in Spanish. I, however, was raised speaking, reading, and writing only in English. My parents did that in fear that I would confuse the two languages. It was a valid fear considering I was in predominantly white schools where English was the only language spoken in the halls and classrooms. I still remember how confused students in kindergarten were when I called my uncles *tio*. I learned young that saying *tio* was wrong in those spaces and something only my “weird” family did.

Now that I am older I want to reach fluency in the language my family grew up speaking. It's a beautiful language with so much culture that I want to partake in. The problem is it's extremely hard to learn a second language when you are no longer a child. Every time I mess up a word I am extra hard on myself because of the expectations that come with my ethnic identity. After years of Spanish classes in middle school and high school I should have been better, but I still started college at the beginner's level. I studied and memorized vocab and conjugations, but it never clicked. I was so frustrated with myself. I thought all these classes were hopeless.

Then, I studied abroad in South Korea and it helped me get closer to learning how to learn Spanish. Towards the end of my stay, I was able to read signs and say simple sentences. I was nowhere near fluency, but the amount I learned was way more than any class I have taken for a month. I wasn't even in a Korean language course while in the country. Everything I learned was possible because I didn't pressure myself to be perfect in the language. I was simply having fun.

The main lesson I took from my trip was that I should take learning Spanish at my own pace. I need to remember that I am slowly getting there and learning a new language doesn't have to be unbearable. Currently, I am not fluent in Spanish, but I practice daily to get closer.

Here are some additional tips I wish I knew before.

- Listen to the language as often as possible
- Don't forget to read often
- Listen to audio-books while reading novels
- It's not weird speaking to yourself in a foreign language!
- Find a pen-pal or keep a journal/blog
- Memorize phrases more, words less
- You will mess up and that's okay. Keep trying! *Sí, se puede. ¡Creo en ti! 화이팅!*



# *Christchurch, NZ*

Nora Mahmoud

The day after,  
Waking up with aching eyes and an anvil heart  
Calling family, saying - I love you. Be safe.  
These words have been our refrain since before this nightmare,  
before these gunshots,  
Since we began to feel the target on our backs.

The day after,  
it sinks in, again.  
I think of my mother and father, and weep.  
I think of my brother, and weep.  
I think of my sisters, and weep.

The day after that,  
I walk through my weeping.  
I call my family saying - I love you, be safe.  
I carry the pain into the next day, and the next, because I can't put it  
down,  
But I can't stop walking either.

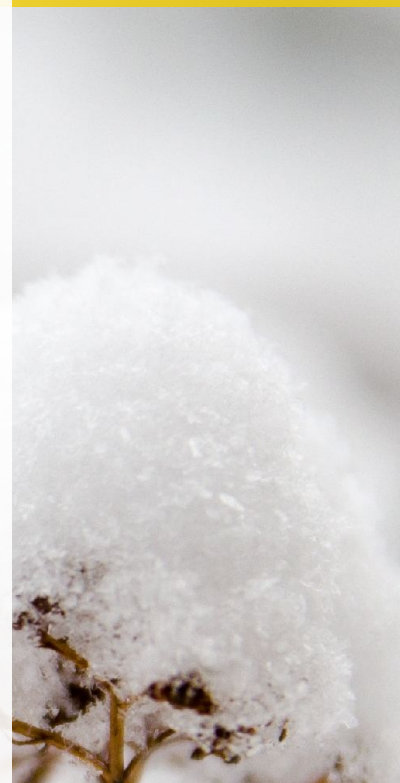
Weeks after,  
We say our prayers louder. We hold each other closer.  
We carry the ones we've lost with us, and we keep going.



*The Falling Snow*

Elizabeth Oleksa

Children have gathered together to patiently await the falling snow.  
 Sitting in the front windows, watching for the first flake to drift from the sky.  
 Then it finally begins.  
 The beautiful white flakes,  
 Dancing through the air, landing gracefully upon the bitter cold ground.  
 A child asks her friends, "Is it here?!?" but none answer her.  
 She sits patiently waiting, a look of longing in her eyes...  
 She tries to smile as the other children squeal with joy at the falling snow.  
 "Is it finally here?" she asks her friends again,  
 Her voice is muffled by the bubbling rambles of the other happy children.  
 She sits alone, with tear filled eyes...  
 But there comes a voice, breaking the silence she so often knew...  
 "Come, let's go see the snow!"  
 The friend gently grasps her hands, leading her to the window.



The young girl can feel the cold drifting through the thin panes of glass.  
 The little girl closes her eyes with a smile on her face and tears rolling down her cheeks,  
 She imagines the icy cold snow falling from the sky  
 The snow falling and wrapping her up in angel wings...  
 She opens her eyes, that now sparkle and shimmer like the falling snow.  
 Her friend gathers their coats, mittens and hats, bringing them over to her.  
 "Let's go out and see it. Feel it. It's magical!"  
 The little girl brightens up like the rising sun on the first frost of the season.  
 This is her first experience of the snow since moving to a colder climate, and her first  
 experience of a friend caring enough to look past her blindness.  
 The first time she felt like she could actually see, because someone took enough time to  
 describe the beauty of the falling snow.  
 She reaches out, removing her mittens and hat, arms out-stretched and face upwards to the  
 sky.  
 She feels the flakes dancing around her and melting as they settle on her cheeks  
 A feeling of joy, beauty, and magnificent wonder.  
 All it took was a kind, descriptive word and a caring heart to let the blind truly see...



# *Drag Queens at CCC*

## Jordan Allen

On Wednesday April 10th, the Center for Diversity and Inclusion held an Early Pride Festival for the students, staff, and faculty of Cedar Crest College. This day-long festival ran from noon at the Allen House all the way up to midnight in the TCC. Kicking off Early Pride was a picnic and a social mixer for CCC GSD and Ally Staff and Faculty. For the first few hours of Early Pride there was a steady stream of folks at the Allen House getting food, making s'mores, and hanging out with friends.

As the day grew long and the sun set, the festival relocated to the TCC for a relaxing evening of watching queer television shows and movies while enjoying a rainbow candy bar. Students were encouraged to grab their dinner and their homework and spend some time chilling out in the Conference Center until the big event of the evening began: Drag Bingo.

The CDI invited local drag queens Sharron Ann Husbands and Carol Ann Carol Ann to campus to put on a show like none the students had seen before. The Clan Ann queens were raunchy, vulgar, and sassy to an extreme. It was everything you'd expect from the drag scene! The room was packed with seldom a free seat in sight as the students competed to win the coveted prizes including a plush uterus, a pair of eggplant emoji fuzzy slippers and a "love wins" tote bag! By the end of the night, Sharron and Carol Ann had everyone howling with laughter and leaving the TCC with memories they won't forget any time soon!





*Tommy Now*  
STARRING  
TOMMY X ZENDAYA

## *Inclusive Fashion*

Tony Williams

Dancer, actress, and singer, Zendaya Coleman, better known as Zendaya, decided to dab into the fashion industry and collaborate with noted fashion designer, Tommy Hilfiger, for a 1970's Disco meets Battle of Versailles themed fashion show. This show took place during the 2019 Paris Fashion Week.

This fashion collaboration is not only gaining attention for the stylish pieces in the collection, but also for the impact that it has had on the modeling industry. The show featured an all-black runway cast that consisted of 59 models that ranged from 18 to 70 years old and displayed diverse body figures. When she was provided this opportunity with Hilfiger, Zendaya stated that she was committed to casting only women of color and she would be celebrating size diversity and age inclusivity.

Legends such as the first black supermodel, Pat Cleveland, walked the show, among other well-known models like Grace Jones, Winnie Harlow, Jourdan Dunn, and Beverley Johnson. Collaborations like these exemplify the importance of representation.

I could see models with skin conditions such as albinism and vitiligo as well as models wearing their natural hair in afros and a variety of other styles and also women just celebrating their age and body types. All while looking flawless! This collaboration has been in the works since October 2018, so to see the end-product is a proud moment for fashion fans that wish for diversity. We are excited to see what else Zendaya has in store for us! We will be staying tuned to what Zendaya does next!



# Inclusion Advocates 2018-2019



From left to right: Nisha Bhatt (Graduate Assistant), Sulakshmi Vaid '21, Haley Smith '19, Francisca Sepulveda '19, Nora Mahmoud '20, Tatiana Diaz (Director) and Ravneet Kaur Sandhu '19

<b>CDI</b>	<b>2018-2019 END OF YEAR HIGHLIGHTS</b>		<b>1736 PARTICIPANTS</b>
	<b>5 STUDENT INCLUSION ADVOCATES , 2 INTERNS , 1 GRADUATE ASSISTANT</b>		
	<b>ATTENDEES FELT THAT THE PROGRAMING HELPED THEM:</b>  <b>LEARN THEIR ROLE AS MEMBERS AND LEADERS OF A DIVERSE COMMUNITY 74%</b>  <b>RECOGNIZE, RESPECT, AND CELEBRATE THE DIVERSITY OF MY COMMUNITY 70.6%</b>	<b>31 % IDENTIFY AS LGBT</b> <b>19% ASIAN, 23 % BLACK/AFRICAN AMERICAN,</b> <b>20% LATINX, 23% WHITE,</b> <b>12% OTHER</b>	<b>115 EVENTS</b>