

CHANGE

A CENTER OF DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION PUBLICATION
SPRING 2017



FEATURING:

MAKING THE CASE
FOR SINGULAR THEY
A CALL TO ACTION!



Cedar Crest students visiting Philadelphia to attend The Philadelphia Dance Company (Philadanco) performance at the Kimmel center

Photo : Taylor Doran, Kaelee Venditti ; Sherlee Velazquez, Mailaika Colson

CONTENT - Spring 2017

Cover artwork: Gumdrops, Lollipops and Diet pills, By Katie Brown
Graduate Art Therapy Program,
medium: polymer clay and found
objects

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CEDAR CREST 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 .



**CEDAR CREST
COLLEGE**

Center for Diversity
and Inclusion



Hello,

As we close on the first year of the Center for Diversity and Inclusion I can say that it's been a good year of growth. We have had the opportunity to establish ongoing programming from the center and really start to bring awareness to the campus about what a center of this nature can bring to their college experience. We have also had numerous discussions with students, staff and faculty as we respond to new national policies and international developments. Allowing us to embody our goal to create brave spaces for discussion and growth. As I close this first year at Cedar Crest College I have to thank every member of the community for a warm welcome and for your willingness to engage in the journey of diversity & inclusion with us.

Tatiana Diaz, Director of Diversity & Inclusion

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Making the Case for Singular They

BY:
Michelle
Chavez

Many people, if asked, would say that they do not care for grammar. But suggest the use of singular they in cases where an individual does not identify with any third person singular pronoun, and suddenly years of apathy over grammar gets pushed aside to assert that there are only two pronouns for people; “she” and “he”. The implications of this thought process are certainly unpleasant, with people either mis-gendering the person they are talking about, or, perhaps even more sinister, dehumanizing the person by referring to them as “it”.

People have been using “they” as a singular pronoun for people for centuries, since the linguistic shift from middle to modern English in fact. Ever since, the hole that our language left has haunted our minds and English papers.

The common fill-in for the hole has, unsurprisingly, been referring to the person in question as they. This is particularly common when using words that imply more than one person, such as “everyone”, “people”, or “every”. While highbrow grammarians say “he” is the grammatically neutral option, almost everyone realizes that it is anything but. Of course, there have been numerous attempts at creating a new pronoun, neopronouns as they might be referred to, but none have taken off, largely because it does not “fit” our natural tendency.

Language is fluid and is alive, the speakers dictate how the language works, not the other way around. It’s the reason that words such as “meme” or “bae” exists. It’s the reason that the phrase “worth a grain of salt” has changed from meaning highly prized and expensive to commonplace and cheap. It’s the reason that the second person pronoun is “you” for both singular and plural cases without class distinction. We use language to express ourselves and if we can’t properly express ourselves, we feel trapped, nonexistent, and unable to connect or convey our thoughts properly.

Perhaps the most convincing argument is that Sweden, a language that is similar in structure to English, has successfully introduced a gender-neutral pronoun into their language, clearly filling in a hole in their language too. They already had *han* as a male pronoun and *hon* as a female pronoun, so to get a gender-neutral pronoun they borrowed a pronoun from the genderless language Finnish and, since it was similar in construct to Swedish pronouns, *hen* was officially adopted by the country and used by officials and citizens alike.

The most common arguments rejecting the use of they as a singular pronoun largely rests in sexist and classicist arguments. There are more than two genders, language is not owned by the grammarians, and our words have an effect and have meaning. We see it is not impossible to create a true, gender-neutral pronoun. You already use they as a singular pronoun, why not use it for those who don’t use “he” or “she”?

Our Inaugural International Banquet

BY:
Sasha Blair

On March 15, 2017 Cedar Crest College hosted its first International Banquet. The banquet was hosted by the Center for Diversity and Inclusion's Student Diversity Council. Encouraging students to learn about the different cultures in the world. The Student Diversity Council also wanted to show appreciation to Cedar Crest's international students. Council members were excited to be able to put the event together because it was their first big event on campus. Pitching their menu ideas were many of the council members' favorite part, because they were able to share a piece of their culture with the college community. The CDI and Student Diversity Council is definitely excited about making this a new Cedar Crest Tradition.

Students wore different traditional garb. At the banquet, various food dishes and desserts from different cultures were present. During the event, the Saudi Student Association hosted the 'Saudi Student experience.' This allowed for students not familiar with Saudi Arabian culture to learn about it. During the banquet the Saudi students wore their robes. Also, they allowed students to taste items such as; tea, dates, grape leaves, and rice dishes. Students could have their names written in Arabic, which they could take with them on a small card.



Photo: Francisca Sepulveda, Natacha Reyes

For next year, the Student Diversity Council and the CDI would like to improve the event even more. For example, we would like to encourage our students to be more hands on with; taste testing the food, and having live entertainment. If you know of anyone who would be willing to perform, please email the Center at inclusion@cedarcrest.edu. If there are any suggestions or changes you would like to see in next year's International Banquet please email the CDI. For those interested in getting involved in next year's Diversity Council to help with planning events, please contact Tatiana Diaz for information at tadaiz@cedarcrest.edu.



Photo: Yvonne Jallah



Photo: Kaelee Venditti , Adaliz Gonzalez, Taylor Doran Aginetta Mulima



LVAIC LGBTQ+ Student Leadership Conference

By Aginetta Mulima

In the sky-arching dining hall of Muhlenberg, students from the LVAIC LGBTQ+ conference (Lesbian, Gay Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Questioning +) continued conversations held in their workshops. Attended by students and faculty from surrounding colleges, the vitality of how essential it is for a community to heal but also embrace dialogue was the forefront message.

Cheetah, leopard, and zebra print snap bracelets allowed students to break off into groups toward the end of the conference. Basically, this increased chances for students to speak with other students they did not arrive with. In the room for cheetah-print wearing individuals, students digressed their frustration in making activist strides despite pushback from peers and other external sources. However, soon individuals leaned forward in their chairs and spoke of the representation programs happening at their own institutions. With an exchange of emails, and a flyer for the 'Second Chance Dance' held at Moravian; students continued in building community between one another. One of the riveting takeaways from this conference included a chance for students to speak on their personal identities and stories in the LGBTQ+ community, and as allies. One person I met at the conference had a hat adorned in various buttons and ribbons. In their words, this is how they begin the conversation on inclusivity on campus at Moravian.

For me, the reassurance of my fellow LGBTQIA/GSD (Gender & Sexuality Diversity) folk living freely and unapologetically; solidified how essential the human spirit is. Amidst a politically charged climate, where the discussion on identities can be intimidating and secretive, coalition building energizes students from the LVAIC community to engage in diversity work. Future endeavors depend on the current student leaders, students, faculty and wider community. How we expand our table so all can share their story strengthens the future.

Aneesah Smith, the keynote speaker referenced continually that our intersecting identities affirm our willingness to engage in dialogue. The black, lesbian poet, Audre Lorde, once stated: "It is not our differences that divide us. It is our ability to recognize, accept, and celebrate those differences."

Photo:(top LR) Frances Boshell, Noalani Hendricks, Madison Detwiler, Rogae Jean Francois, (bottom LR) Michelle Chavez, Aginetta Mulima, Tatiana Diaz



No Mas Bebés
No More Babies
Screening & Discussion with Renee Tajima-Peña, Director

Thursday Oct. 13 6-8 p.m.
Samuels Theater

The story of immigrant mothers who sued county doctors, the state, and the U.S. government after they were prodded into sterilizations while giving birth at the Los Angeles County-USC Medical Center during the 1960s and 70s

CEDAR CREST COLLEGE
Center for Diversity and Inclusion



CEDAR CREST COLLEGE

Center for Diversity and Inclusion

Searching and Striving for Liberty

February 8th 5-6 p.m.
Alumnae Hall Auditorium



Learn about current time sensitive issues and what are some avenues to make your voice heard



Co-Sponsored by the Center for Diversity and Inclusion, the Lutz Center, & Political Science Program

CEDAR CREST COLLEGE

International Banquet
March 16th 4:30-7 p.m. Canova Commons, TCC

Cost: Student-1 meal swipe • Adult-\$9 • Child age 4-12-\$6
• Faculty/Staff-\$9

HAVE A GREAT IDEA FOR A DIVERSITY EVENT? THEN APPLY TO

INCLUSION GRANTS

For more info and to apply <https://goo.gl/6ek0kh>

FEB. 15TH 4:30 • CDI (LL B)

#PERSIS ACTIVISM 10

LEAD BY: ROXANNE AMICO, CHRISTIN GARRING, SHARON JUNG, NANE



93 events
1987 Attendees

Aprox. 1618 students
369 Staff & Faculty

90%
VERY
SATISFIED
RATING

2017-18 END OF YEAR HIGHLIGHTS

- With the help of 6 student Inclusion Advocates (IAs) and one Graduate Assistant the center this past year held 93 events/trainings attended by approximately 1987 people (1618 students & 369 staff faculty).
- Evaluations of 38 of these events show, that on average, participants were very satisfied with the content, facilitator and activities 90% of the time, and that the session was very helpful in providing the participant with a better understanding of diversity 84% of the time and social justice 71% of the time.
- Cedar Crest Students participated and presented in both the LVAIC Diversity Bridging the Gap Conference and the LVAIC LGBTQ+ Conference,
- 5 Student Inclusion Grants were given out this inaugural year to; the Muslim Student Union, Spanish Club, Saudi Student Association, Amnesty International, and one to an individual student. These grants provided funding to attend nearby diversity events, to support students attending conferences, to host movie nights and to commemorate a religious celebration event.
- The student Diversity Council was launched; comprised of all the CCC diversity related student organizations with the mission to discuss critical issues that affect our students and strategies to address them. The council lead three events this year; Thanksgiving potluck, a call to action on MLK day and an International banquet.

A CALL TO ACTION!

BY: TAYLOR DORAN

These past few months have been turbulent, to say the least, with a multitude of changes being made in the wake of the most recent presidential election. Since the 2016 Election Day, the rate of hate crimes has risen a staggering amount. There's been a 115% increase in biased crimes in NY during December 2016, according to the Observer. Tensions run high as Anti-Trump protesters collide with supporters in multiple arenas; ranging from social media to live televised interviews, each adding to the growing turmoil on public forums.

There have been protests and marches, riots and fires; as civil unrest has the nation in upheaval. It has been decades since the country has been so openly and widely divided about the current political standing. Of course, this is not the first time, nor will it be the last, when the people have risen up in protest of what they believe to be an assault upon their rights. One of history's greatest examples was the Civil Rights Movement, led in part by Martin Luther King Jr.

Each year on the third Monday of January, we celebrate the birthday and legacy left behind one of the most recognized and iconic figures in our nation's history, a man who called for nonviolent activism throughout the protests held against racial discrimination in federal and state law.

On MLK Day, we remember a leader who stood up against the oppression and mistreatment that existed in the very foundations of the nation in which he lived, calling people together to fight for a common cause and dreaming of the day when people of any color under the sun could live together in harmony. This year on January 15, MLK Day, the CCC Center for Diversity and Inclusion held a Call to Action in honor of this powerful message and lasting dream. Staff, student leaders and even President Ambar were encouraged to wear the t-shirts and pins that were given out in support for the continuing effort to work toward the beautiful dream that MLK had for the future. We were proud to see so many from the Cedar Crest community participating.





The purpose of this event was to remind people that while changes have been made in the way of racial discrimination, there is also much to strive for. We must continue to work toward achieving the reality that is possible through hard work, love and perseverance.

Through these difficult times, the most important thing we can do is stand together, hold one another closer rather than pushing apart, and choose to love even when it would be so much easier to hate. MLK had a dream and we were all inspired by the purity and the hope in his message. And so, Cedar Crest College, as an institute for the

advancement of women's leadership and higher education, this Call to Action was held as a solid reminder of the goals and the challenges that we still have set before us.

Sources used:

<http://observer.com/2016/12/nypd-reports-huge-spike-in-hate-crimes-since-donald-trumps-election/>

Photo : Tatiana Diaz, Aginetta Mulima, Sasha Gaye Blair, Francisca Sepulveda, Natacha Reyes, and Taylor Doran

Queer Art Exhibit Premieres at The Bradbury-Sullivan Center

BY:
Tomey'cia Scott

The Bradbury-Sullivan LGBT Community Center is hosting an art exhibit featuring artist artwork from all who identify as part of the LGBT community. The exhibit went live in the center on Monday and will be open to the community for a month until May 15.

This project was made possible through a grant which was funded by Puffin Foundation West. Each of the artists that have a piece in the gallery are either from the local or regional area, with many coming from Easton and Bethlehem.

When visiting the center, we had a chance to speak with Adrian Shanker, who is the Founder & Executive Director of the Bradbury center. "We decided to do this because of the election and the increase of presidential appointments of LGBT people as well as just a growing concern about needing to resist new policies that undermined the long and hard fought rights that we have secured. These pieces are LGBT artist responding to that and pushing for resistance in different ways"

When looking on the Bradbury-Sullivan website, it explains how this exhibit is "a response to public displays of bigotry that paralleled the election of Donald Trump and White House policies that feed on racism and xenophobia."

Junior, Aginetta Mulima, who is an Inclusion Advocate at the CDI expressed her love for art exhibitions. She said that,

"One thing I like about art exhibits is that a message is delivered."

She explains how this message can "validate and heal a community." Mulima has not had the chance to see the exhibit yet, but hopes that from this "pieces will lead to conversation starters on how people can become allies, and/or find strength within their own identities."

There will be a reception for the exhibit held on August 20, 2017 from 6pm-8pm with all the artists. This will give guests an opportunity to meet the person behind the artwork and even purchase pieces that they find moving. This reception is free and is open to the public.

For more information or to register for the event, go to <http://www.bradburysullivancenter.org/queerresistance>

The Bradbury-Sullivan LGBT Community Center is located at 522 West Maple Ave Allentown, PA. The center is always open to the public and hosts many educational and informational events for everyone to check out.



Drumming and the African Diaspora Cultural Café

By: Jamillexe Soto Roman

Photo: Katelyn Moeser, Sarafina Woolridge-Burns, Jamillexe Soto-Roman, Shannon Barriteau, Sue Bin Lee

What is the Cultural Café?

The Cultural Café provides students with the opportunity to explore diversity through intentional experiential programming. Each month a different topic is selected with speakers and artists visiting the campus.

Why should you participate in the Cultural Café?

It is a great way to be engaged with the campus community and meet other students who are interested in expanding their knowledge about the world. The Cultural Cafés are unique because every event brings a new discussion about culture, traditions and their impact in our society. As a result I have become aware of different topics, listened to the ideas of others, and was challenged to be more open minded. Enabling you to learn and create new connections between staff and other students from the Cedar Crest Community, the experience is priceless. As long as I am a CCC student, I will continue to participate in the Cultural Cafés.

Drumming and the African Diaspora Cultural Café

My favorite Cultural Café of this past semester was the 'Drumming and the African Diaspora.' This event was significant because I had the opportunity, along with my peers, to learn about the music and



significance of drumming within the African Diaspora. This African Diaspora took millions of people from Western and Central Africa to different regions throughout the Americas and the Caribbean.

At this event I also had the opportunity to have a taste of different African dishes. They were delicious! We learned about different African rhythms and had the opportunity to play traditional African instruments. As a Puerto Rican woman, I was able to connect these rhythms with some of my own culture. Such as traditional Bomba and Plena music from Puerto Rico. It was inspiring to hear the instructor express himself about the love he has for music and how he portrays that love when he plays his instruments. The instructor mentioned to us that the music is not just music. Instead it is a culture and in order to be a good musician you have to feel a connection to the music. The instructor taught us different music rhythms and took the time to explain each step. It was so much fun! I hope to continue learning from future Cultural Cafés and other events at the Center for Diversity and Inclusion.



By Aginetta
Mulima

As Ramadan approaches, many Muslims around the world are readying themselves for a month long fast. Their fasting will be a time for self-reflection, increased charity, and divine observance. In particular, Muslims believe that this time marks the month the Qur'an was revealed to Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

This year will be the second time I have celebrated Ramadan, and participated in fasting. Therefore I highly appreciated being able to share this experience with the staff, faculty, students and community members in attendance of our pre-Ramadan Celebration. For some Muslim students, they will observing Ramadan apart from their families due to being away from home. Although, a month early - a few organizers of our campus created this pre-Ramadan celebration to share widely with our campus this significant moment for out Cedar Crest Muslim community. With the hard work from the Saudi Student Association, Center for Diversity and Inclusion, Professor Rajmohamed Mohamed, Muslim Student Association and other partners; Cedar Crest held its first commemoration of Ramadan.

Photo: Top- Saleh Alabbas & Kaniz Kashem
Bottom:- Alicia Shussett,

Additionally, towards the middle of the event, Saleh Abbas, the president of the Saudi Student Association (SSA) regarded those who helped the SSA succeed this past year.

They thanked those students, staff and faculty with gold medals with green ribbons. Finally don't forget that toward the end of May and around the beginning of June, many Muslims around the



Ramadan: A Poem

By Musa Burki

*A time for our hearts to become unsealed
Reflecting on the divine words revealed
The month which we hope to never end
Unable to count the infinite blessings it sends*

*Asked by our Lord to give up our worldly
pleasures*

*So that we may receive His divine treasures
It's a time that comes but once a year
Yet the moments which we hold most dear*

*The nights spent in prayer and reflection
Prepares the soul for redemption
Praying to our Creator for mercy and wisdom
Pleading to be admitted into His kingdom*

*We welcome you, O Ramadan, with joy as our
guest*

*Having to subdue our egos as a test
You mend our hearts and give us tranquility
As we engage in battling our iniquity*

*Solidifying the bonds of kith and kin
Washing away the stain of sin
Fasting not only of body but of speech
It is Your benevolence which we beseech*



Photo: Yesenia Paula & Ibolya Balog ,



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