

January/February  
2015  
Volume 4, Issue 3

## 2015 Important Dates

### Student Safe Zone

Saturday, Feb. 28, 2015  
Corey Union, Exhibition  
Lounge, 1-4

### The Star We Don't Know So Well: An Examination of Jewish Histories of Oppression

Monday, March 9, 2015  
Sperry 304  
Hosted by: Aaron Lober

### The Image of Black Women in the Media

Monday, March 23, 2015  
Sperry 304  
Hosted by: Jahtasia Davis

### Diversity Conference

Saturday, March 28, 2015  
Corey Union

### Kente Celebration

Saturday, April 11, 2015  
Corey Union

If you would like to contribute to the MLDO Newsletter, please email [rachael.forester@cortland.edu](mailto:rachael.forester@cortland.edu) with submissions. Submissions in any language will be accepted.

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## Welcome Back from Multicultural Life and Diversity

Spring 2015 is in full swing at SUNY Cortland. The weather is certainly a reflection of the tumult we are experiencing as a state and system around equitable budgeting and access. There is a particularly unsettled and frigid political climate in state and federal government. We cannot ignore the stormy racial dynamics in the United States which are being played out in the media and social media arenas. All of these examples of disquiet have one important thing in common: people not listening to people. We seem to have lost sight of the foundational reality that we are all human and in that humanity each person deserves basic dignity and respect. When we think of inclusion and equity, we imagine all people getting what they need and having access to basic life sustaining interactions with each other, the government, and the world. What is a basic life sustaining interaction? For me, it is seeing the humanity in another person and wanting that person to have enough of what they need because their need is my need. Basic life sustaining interaction suggests that every life matters and that our actions validate and support how much each life matters. Our intentions no longer matter. We are living in a time where our impact will either move us forward or move us deeper into isolation. Contact with other human beings is how we learn about difference and acceptance. I am inspired by the many ways the SUNY Cortland community is working to foster a welcoming, safe, inclusive, equitable climate. We know it takes everyone working on this to achieve cultural wellness. The work of diversity, equity, inclusion, access, impact, and social justice is an everyday job. I am sincerely thankful to get to do that job here. This edition of the newsletter highlights many of the ways that SUNY Cortland is trying harder, doing better, and holding ourselves accountable. Have a wonderful semester.



### A Letter from the President

To the SUNY Cortland Community,

Working together to increase, support and retain diversity in our student population is an ongoing priority at SUNY Cortland. Dr.

Noelle Chaddock, newly appointed Chief Diversity Officer at the College, has been tasked with benchmark assessment of diversity efforts on campus. One of her first responsibilities is to conduct a "Listening Tour" with chairs and department heads to discuss current diversity practices, identify challenges and strategize for the future. The individual discussions will take place during spring 2015 semester.

To arrange an appointment with the Chief Diversity Officer, chairs and department heads are asked to contact the Multicultural Life and Diversity Office at [multicultural.life@cortland.edu](mailto:multicultural.life@cortland.edu), or at 607-753-2336. Interested students, faculty and staff who would like to become involved in this important dialogue are also encouraged to participate.

Thank you for participating in this important initiative.

Erik J. Bitterbaum  
President

### Chief Diversity Officer's Plan for the Spring Semester

My first semester as a Chief Diversity Officer for SUNY Cortland came and went very quickly. During that time, I was able to draft an outline of diversity strategies for SUNY Cortland, the first steps of which are being implemented this semester. The President's office sent out an email inviting the campus community to spend time with me on my Diversity Listening Tour. I am looking to meet with all departments, student organizations, and interested individuals by the end of August 2015. The goal of the DLT is to gather perspectives and requests for support from across the institution. Although I have been here since Fall 2008, I have never really had the opportunity to develop truly proactive strategies for inclusion and equity. As the CDO, supported by amazing staff and collaborators, I am now able to do that. Please think about contributing to these efforts by sharing your time and experiences.

The Diversity Equity and Inclusion Council has been appointed and charged by Vice President Sharer and Provost Prus. The DEIC will be working through subcommittees to address issues of Cultural and Campus Climate, Institutional Diversity and Inclusion Profiles used for attracting and recruiting faculty/staff/students, Welcoming and First Point of Contact Behaviors that new community members experience when they join our institution, and bias related protocol and prevention strategies. We welcome those with expertise and/or interest in these areas to contact me at [noelle.chaddock@cortland.edu](mailto:noelle.chaddock@cortland.edu) for more information on subcommittee participation.

I am working closely with the senior administrators to identify the areas we need to work on to create a truly diverse, inclusive, welcoming, safe and equitable campus community. The President is committed to producing graduates who are culturally competent and globally competitive citizens. We are also working to make sure that we have a diverse community that is representative of the diversity in our region, state, and global community. I look forward to sharing more information with the campus community in the coming months.

It becomes very easy to focus on the places we need to improve, but we need to also celebrate the places we are not only doing well but are leading our colleagues in best practices. SUNY Cortland has a solid relationship with the SUNY System Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion which is led by Dr. Carlos Medina '78. This relationship has allowed our institution, especially the MLDO, to be at the forefront of diversity in the system. Examples of that relationship are evident in the way that SUNY Cortland was an instrumental piece of the first ever co-sponsored conference by the SUNY Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and the University Faculty Senate "Making Diversity Count: Ensuring Equity Inclusion Access and Impact" where Dr. Seth Asumah and Dr. Noelle Chaddock sat on the planning committee, Drs. Seth Asumah, Lewis Rosengarten, Mecke Nagle and Noelle Chaddock presented, and the SUNY Cortland Gospel Choir opened the event. SUNY Cortland is also represented on the newly formed SUNY Diversity Task Force where I sit as the chair of the climate committee. I also sit as the chair of the University Faculty Senate Committee on Diversity and Cultural Competence. The institution is currently searching two diversity positions; one for the Assistant Director of Multicultural Life and Diversity and another for a Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprise Coordinator. These positions are a reflection of our commitment as an institution to diversifying SUNY Cortland at every level.

## Announcing the 2015 Student Diversity Conference Keynote...Mr. Lyndon Huling



Mr. Lyndon Huling, SUNY Cortland's former Assistant Director for Multicultural Life and Diversity, is the 2015 Student Diversity Conference Keynote.



To register for the conference, please visit our website.

[Register for the 6th Annual Conference](#)

Mr. Lyndon Huling is a Student Activities Coordinator at the Center for Student Involvement at the University of California, Davis. Lyndon's higher education journey brought him from California to New York and back including a two-year stay with the Multicultural Life and Diversity office at SUNY Cortland as the Assistant Director. Along the way, Lyndon has had the opportunity to engage with student leaders who have shaped his understanding of how diversity, equity, inclusion and social justice intersect with student development in higher education. As an inner-city youth growing up in Vallejo, California, Lyndon overcame many challenges with the support of teachers and mentors in order to pursue his dream of attending college. Lyndon's experiences during that period of his life have led him to pursue positions where he has the opportunity to be an advocate for underrepresented students, and act as ally for those whose voices are silenced by the hierarchy of education in the United States. By investing his time and energy in promoting the success of students, Lyndon believes he is honoring those who supported him through his own educational journey.

For the last year and a half, Lyndon has served as a key member of the Student Affairs team at UC Davis. In this capacity, Lyndon has provided leadership and education while helping the campus community navigate complex and challenging situations such as tuition hikes, police injustice, and cultural appropriation. By working with students, administration, and community members, Lyndon strives to create brave spaces where every voice can be heard, and students are empowered to ignite movements. Lyndon believes that the free exchange of ideas is at the foundation of higher education, and dialogue is critical in developing student leaders to be engaged citizens and critical thinkers.

**Please join us on March 28, 2015 for a day of research, lecture, and critical thinking!**

**Registration for the conference is now open on our website!**

## NCBI Law Enforcement Diversity Training

### Meet the Trainers!



Fabienne Brooks, co-director of NCBI's Law Enforcement Program, Retired Chief of Detectives for the King County Police Department in Seattle, WA.



Guillermo Lopez, co-director of NCBI's Law Enforcement Program

On January 13, 2015, the Multicultural Life and Diversity office coordinated a diversity training for local law enforcement agencies, which was held at SUNY Cortland. At the request of the City of Cortland's Mayor's office and the Cortland Chief of Police, Ret. Chief Fabienne Brooks and Guillermo Lopez, co-directors of the NCBI Law Enforcement Program, were invited back to deliver the training. Ret. Chief Brooks brings an intersectional lived experience as a police officer and a woman of color. With her guidance, and that of her training partner Guillermo Lopez, our local law enforcement officers were able to develop a safe space and willingness to examine the impacts of diversity, race, gender, orientation, and religious affiliations in our local community. A small group of faculty, staff and students also attended so that officers were able to better understand how they were being perceived and experienced by campus community members. Officers shared their experiences and struggles with the group and it became apparent that understanding and respect were a universal desire for all participants. There was difficult dialogue around national and local race issues and everyone walked away having learned something. Ashley Ingrassia '15, a Cortland graduate student, said "this is the most worthwhile thing I have participated in at Cortland." Ingrassia went on to say that she really appreciated the opportunity to be heard and to learn from the attending officers. MLDO looks forward to coordinating future trainings that incorporate more community members. The Multicultural Life and Diversity office would like to thank Vice President Greg Sharer, Mayor Tobin, Chief Catalano, Chief Dangler, and Sheriff Price for supporting this important work.



### Veteran Support Resolution

On August 10, 2013, President Obama presented the following 8 Keys to Veteran's Success and encouraged SUNY campuses to participate.

1. Create a culture of trust and connectedness across the campus community to promote well-being and success for veterans.
2. Ensure consistent and sustained support from campus leadership.
3. Implement an early alert system to ensure all veterans receive academic, career, and financial advice before challenges become overwhelming.
4. Coordinate and centralize campus efforts for all veterans, together with the creation of a designated space for them (even if limited in size).
5. Collaborate with local communities and organizations, including government agencies, to align and coordinate various services for veterans.
6. Utilize a uniform set of data tools to collect and track information on veterans, including demographics, retention, and degree completion.
7. Provide comprehensive professional development for faculty and staff on issues and challenges unique to veterans.
8. Develop systems that ensure sustainability of effective practices for veterans.

As of January 6, 2015, 1,375 colleges committed to this nationwide initiative, including 16 SUNY institutions. Therefore, the SUNY Faculty Senate encouraged campus Presidents to review the keys at their institution. SUNY Cortland has taken on this initiative by bringing it up for review. An update will be provided once SUNY Cortland comes to a final decision.

## From Convict to Conviction: A Grassroots Vision for Criminal Justice Reform in America

We have an exciting speaker coming to campus this semester as our 2015 Charles N. Poskanzer Lecturer.

**Glenn E. Martin**

**From Convict to Conviction: A Grassroots Vision for Criminal Justice Reform in America**

**March 5 at 7:00 p.m.**

**Sperry 105**

**Student reception to follow**

**Glenn E. Martin** is a national leader and advocate for reform of the criminal justice system. His presentation is titled, *From Convict to Conviction: A Grassroots Vision for Criminal Justice Reform in America*. The lecture will focus on the growth of mass incarceration in America and how his personal journey has helped shape his unique and groundbreaking approach to criminal justice reform.

Mr. Martin's presentation will be in Sperry 105 on Thursday, March 5<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. Students will have the opportunity to continue the conversation with Mr. Martin at a student reception immediately following the presentation.

Mr. Martin is the founder of JustLeadershipUSA, a non-profit organization dedicated to cutting the prison population in half by 2030 while reducing crime. Prior to founding JustLeadershipUSA, Mr. Martin served for several years as Vice President of The Fortune Society and Co-Director of the National HIRE Network at the Legal Action Center. He is Co-Founder of the Education from the Inside Out Coalition, an America's Leaders of Change National Urban Fellow, and a member of the governing boards of the College and Community Fellowship, Prisoners' Legal Services, New York Foundation, the Petey Green Program, California Partnership for Safe Communities and the Reset Foundation. He also serves on the advisory board of the National Network for Safe Communities.

Sponsored by the College's Health Department, the lecture is free and open to faculty, staff, students and the public. The event is sponsored by the Charles N. Poskanzer Fund, an endowment named in honor of the late SUNY Distinguished Professor emeritus who taught in the college's Health Department for 40 years. For more information, contact Barbara Barton, assistant professor of Health, at [\(607\) 753-2976](tel:6077532976), or Al Sofalvi, assistant professor of Health, at [\(607\) 753-2980](tel:6077532980).

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