

April 2014
Volume 3, Issue 6

Upcoming Events:

Kente Celebration

April 5, 6 pm
Corey Union Function Room

Student Diversity Conference

April 12, 8 a.m. – 4:15 p.m.
Corey Union

Screening of Schindler's List

April 12, 4:30 p.m.
Exhibition Lounge

Fall 2014

Welcome Back Picnic

September 1, 12- 4 p.m.
Interfaith Center

Student Diversity Retreat

September 12-14

Dean's Unity Celebration

October 14, 5- 6:30 p.m.
Corey Union Function Room

...and more

For more information
visit our website
or contact MLDO at
607-753-2336 or
multicultural.life@cortland.edu

5th Annual Student Conference on Diversity, Equity, and Social Justice: Speak up Speak out



Conference Planning Committee

What has been the best part about working on this conference for you? When asked that question, the conference committee co-chairs were eager to answer. Sally Velasco, quickly responded: "I am so blessed that I have had the opportunity to be a part of the 5th Annual Student Conference on Diversity, Equity, and Social Justice: Speak up, Speak out. The best part of it would be working with the conference committee and my co-chair Miguel Montaz.

"We have set high standards for this conference and have come up with great ideas that will be showcased in the conference".

- Sally Velasco

Miguel Montaz offered a similar sentiment: "The best part of working in this diversity conference is the growth of participants and how passionate they are about the issues of diversity in the world and those within the school as well as the impact that it can hold on those who feel underrepresented."

The fifth annual student conference on diversity, equity, and social justice at SUNY Cortland will be held on April 12, 2014.



Miguel Montaz

Sally Velasco



Register now!

Join us!

Reminder:
Kente Ceremony



The Kente Celebration will take place April 5, 2014. It symbolizes and commemorates the rite of passage for learners and scholars who are transitioning from institutions of higher learning to the next chapter of their lives. The Kente Celebration has deep institutional history and is an important experience for our students.

Hillel Celebrations

Hillel will be celebrating and invites the campus to join them for two events: Passover Seder. The event is April, 15, 2014 7:00 – 9:00 p.m. at the Interfaith Center.

They will host events for Holocaust Remembrance. There will be a film screening and other events.

Please contact Hillel's president, Talia Peck, for more information about these events. talia.peck@cortland.edu

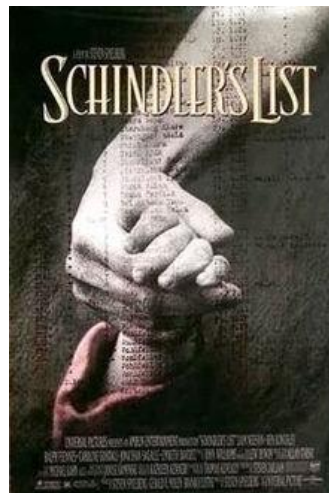
Conference Speakers Confirmed

Melanie Littlejohn, Director of Community and Customer Management for the Central New York Division of National Grid, will be delivering the opening address at the 5th Annual Student Diversity Conference. Ms. Littlejohn has received numerous awards such as the 2012 House of Providence Humanitarian Award, the Network Journal's 25 Influential Black Women in Business award in 2011, the 2011 Leadership Greater Syracuse Distinguished Community Leader Award, 2011 Community Wide Dialogue Racial Justice Award, 2010 NAACP, Freedom Award, 40 Below, YWCA Diversity Achievers, Marjorie Dowdell Fortitude, Omega Psi Phi, Citizen of the Year Award and she has served as a judge for New York's Creative Core Competition for Emerging Businesses and as a facilitator for the Community Wide Dialogue to End Racism.



Don't miss this year's keynote speaker, Dr. Sean G. Massey. He is currently an associate professor of Women, Gender & Sexuality Studies at Binghamton University. His research focuses on sexuality and gender, anti-homosexual prejudice, same-sex parenting, queer theory, and the relationship between social science and social change.

Don't Miss the Conference Special Event



As a new addition to the conference we decided to offer a film screening.

Schindler's List (1993), the film to be shown as a special event, is an American epic historical drama film directed and co-produced by Steven Spielberg and scripted by Steven Zaillian. It is based on the novel *Schindler's Ark* by Thomas Keneally, an Australian novelist. The film is based on the life of Oskar Schindler, a German businessman who saved the lives of more than a thousand mostly Polish-Jewish refugees during the Holocaust by employing them in his factories.

Source Credit: Wikipedia

Creating Best Practices: Diversity Training for Student Affairs

Director's Update



Noelle Chaddock Paley, Director of MLDO, has written an article featured in the SUNY System Office of Diversity Equity and Inclusion Newsletter. The article discusses SUNY Cortland's institution-wide commitment to diversity.

The article can be found on pages 4-5 and you can read it now by following this link:

<http://www.issuu.com/generationnsuny/docs/diversitycounts-newsletter-winter13?e=1711668/7099561>

"Diversity is the one true thing we have in common!"



How can one be taught to be multiculturally competent? One can start by having a personal sense of what multicultural competence looks like to them as a professional. The division-wide diversity training offered on March 7, 2014 offered student affairs staff members an opportunity to explore the "I" in diversity and gain a sense of what multicultural competence means. Over 80 staff members attended the training.

The co-facilitators, Noelle Chaddock Paley and Chris Kuretich, engaged the audience with an on-screen survey in which attendees could use a clicker to respond to the questions. The audience seemed to enjoy having their voices counted as question after question was asked. Mr. Kuretich explained that the data from the survey would help us begin to consider questions such as "what does our demographic makeup mean for us as a division?" and "what does it mean for students' perceptions of us as student affairs professionals?"



Dr. Paula Ioanide, assistant professor at Ithaca College, facilitated the second half of the diversity training. Her presentation sparked further engaging and thought-provoking discussion.



Asian-Pacific Heritage: Japanese Baseball

April is the month that many campuses commemorate and celebrate Asian-Pacific Heritage. The national observance of Asian-Pacific Heritage takes place annually during the month of May. Many colleges and universities celebrate during April because many students leave campus for summer break shortly after the month of April.

“A sport can be a means to understanding subtle aspects of culture and national identity.”

- Robert Whiting, Author



Library Display



What is better than celebrating culture? Celebrating culture and sports together of course. Multicultural Life and Diversity will be hosting a display in the Memorial Library, beginning April 1, 2014 and ending May 30, 2014, to celebrate and educate the community about Japanese baseball. The display features menko cards (traditional Japanese Baseball cards), library owned books, and pictures of games held in Japan. Baseball is one of the most popular sports in Japan. It was introduced to Japan in 1872 by Horace Wilson, who taught at the Kaisei School in Tokyo. The professional baseball association is called Nippon Professional Baseball (NPB). Japan has two leagues, as in the United States. The Central and Pacific Leagues each consist of six teams and the pro baseball season is eight months long with games beginning in April, and a Championship held in October. Teams play 144 games, as compared to the 162 games of the American major league teams. Construction of the game ball, fans involvement, and training are all areas of difference when compared to American Baseball.

MLDO Seeks Interns

Know someone interested in diversity work? Our office is seeking undergraduate interns for the Fall 2014 semester. Interns are given the opportunity to learn the ins and outs of the MLDO as well as development, programming, and assessment of diversity initiatives. Internships are built around students major and career goals with the intention of creating globally competitive graduates!



If you are or know someone who is interested in this position please contact our office via email to schedule an interview. You may submit your resume and letter of interest to multicultural.life@cortland.edu with a subject line: **MLDO Student Internship**

Solitary Confinement Comes to Cortland



Left : Dr. Ute Ritz-Deutch and
Right: Dr. Mecke Nagel



Students experience the cell firsthand

The number of inmates held in solitary confinement in the United States has been extremely problematic to determine. It is commonly said that solitary confinement inmates are more likely to commit suicide than traditional inmates. If the question is why you should care, then one answer would be that it simply violates human rights, which is a matter of social justice. In some instances, the prisoners have mental health issues that they are dealing with that only worsen during segregation. One of the most surprising points is that some inmates have been in solitary confinement for many years.

The Memorial Library is hosting a solitary confinement cell exhibit. Dr. Ute Ritz-Deutch is responsible for the coordination of the exhibit and during an interview she explained the amount of work that went into getting the exhibit established. Her passion and drive for human rights is evident as she speaks about the cruelties of inmate conditions, especially solitary confinement. The cell on display is a very close replica of an actual solitary confinement cell. The only differences is that actual solitary confinement cells are fully enclosed with no natural light and most of them include everything an inmate would need to survive 23 hours a day within the space.

Dr. Ute Ritz-Deutch along with Dr. Mecke Nagel facilitated a panel discussion on the topic of solitary confinement on March 18, 2014. During the panel discussion the audience heard information regarding current legislation, historical facts, and the connection of human rights to social justice.

Dowd Event



Artist: Lynne Allen
Moccasins from Nature Morte series, 2010, photogravure, 21 x 17 in.
You are not worth a penny from Nature Morte series, 2010, photogravure, 21 x 17 in.

Lynne Allen, Director of the School of Visual Arts at Boston University, will give an artist talk on April 22 at 5 pm at the Dowd Gallery (9 Main Street, 3rd Floor).

Allen is one of four artists whose works will be on view in the Refocus: Contemporary Photogravure exhibition at the gallery from March 18-April 24.

In her Nature Morte series, Allen explores issues of conflict relating to Native Americans and the history of all conflicts. She is the descendant of six generations of matriarchs at the Standing Rock Indian Reservation, all of whom were sent away to government boarding schools to realign their cultural heritage.

Students Win Prestigious Award

Each year, SUNY campus presidents establish a selection committee to review outstanding graduating seniors. The nominees are forwarded to the Chancellor's Office for a second round of review and a group of finalists are selected.

The recipients were honored for integrating academic excellence with accomplishments in leadership, athletics, community service, creative and performing arts or career achievement. This year's honorees are: Khalia Brown, Kyle Shea, Michael Rosenthal and LeighMarie Weber.

LeighMarie, the student body president and intern for MLDO, stated: "It was an honor to even be nominated for this award; it is even more of an honor to have received it. I never thought four years ago my undergraduate career would have unfolded the way it has. I am truly blessed for all of the opportunities Cortland has offered me and so grateful that my commitment this institution has been acknowledged by such wonderful people. I couldn't be happier!"

Congratulations to all of the honorees!



The Trans Umbrella: Rebecca Kling Visits

Over twenty campus sponsors pulled together to bring Rebecca Kling to campus as part of the college's Louis Larson Lecture and Performance Series.

Her visit offered the SUNY Cortland community an opportunity to learn about the "trans" umbrella and issues that transpeople face that we may need to consider as our campus becomes more and more diverse.

Rebecca's engaging and easy-to-follow presentation focused on defining terms, addressing inclusive language, and discussing issues relative to the transperson's narrative.

Rebecca's style engaged participants in the contact zone. Courtney Piniero, a SUNY Cortland student, sat in the front row of the afternoon presentation and asked a few questions while also sharing that he was also a transperson. (You can read more about Courtney on page 7.)



The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer (LGBTQ) Faculty and Staff Committee created the Louis Larson Lecture and Performance Series to educate and support the campus and local community. The series includes guest speakers, panel talks and performances from professionals in the LGBTQ community to help foster and promote diversity and mutual respect.

Community Conversations

As a part of the ongoing Community Conversations initiative, we spoke with Courtney Piniero (Court), about his experiences as a transsexual student at SUNY Cortland.

Can you share a little about yourself with the campus community?

When I asked this question Court (as everyone calls him) very enthusiastically begin to share details about himself. He explained that his preferred pronouns are: he, his, him. He is currently transitioning from female to male. Court talked about feeling, at a very early age, as if he was supposed to be male. He smiles fondly as he remembers having “the talk” with his mom for the first time and innocently asking “Mom, so when will my penis grow”. I couldn’t help but laugh at the thought of how awkward Court’s mom must have felt but very excited that Court’s mom was very supportive in his journey to discover his comfortable identity. I am sure Court’s awesome personality made the talk easier for his mom. Court is in his junior here at Cortland and hopes to engage in speaking tours (like our recent visitor, Rebecca Kling) to educate others about the Trans Umbrella.

What are your thoughts about the campus climate related to being a transsexual student?

Court smiled and spoke positively as he reminisced about his experiences at SUNY Cortland. This surprised me because many transpeople recount endless negative interpersonal and institutional experiences as a part of their personal narrative. Court, explained that his time on campus has been great. He shared how accommodating Res Life staff has been in terms of pairing him with roommates, making sure he had a safe bathroom, and providing opportunities to educate and learn more about different identities. Court is involved with Spectrum and is an avid athlete. As if that was not enough, this exceptional student, speaks to students in human sexuality courses on campus.

What advice would you give to the campus to help improve the campus climate around transsexual students?

I learned a lot and enjoyed my conversation with Court. We talked like old friends covering topics such as the “don’t ask, don’t tell” policy and the issues transpeople experience when trying to be a part of sport teams. When asked what advice he would give he smiled again while thinking. Then he replied simply “Just be outspoken and confident” (in reference to other students). He stated that when you are confident and outspoken you are able to share your positive experience and encourage others. While this does not offer direct advice to administrators I think the message to other students indirectly helps to improve campus climate as hearing other students stories would allow us all to become more aware and more educated.



Court today

“If you inform others it is a better situation for everyone.”

- Courtney Piniero



Court before starting testosterone

Court is proud of his progress through transitioning and so is eager to share both photos with the SUNY Cortland community.