

December 2012
 Volume 1, Issue 12

SafeZone training #2 for Faculty/Staff

January 9, 2013

The New Jim Crow Community Conversation

January 21, 2013

12-1:30pm

YWCA of Cortland

Human Trafficking Community Conversation

March 6, 2013

12-1:30pm

YWCA of Cortland

Kente

April 6, 2013

Function Room

Corey Union

Student Conference on Diversity, Equity, and Social Justice

April 14, 2013

Corey Union

Fall 2013

Multicultural Student Leadership Retreat

September 6-8, 2013

Multicultural Alumni Reunion

October 19-20, 2013

Contact MLDO at 607-753-2336 or
multicultural.life@cortland.edu

Happy Holidays from MLDO

Happy holidays to the SUNY Cortland community! Around this time of year, it is important to be reminded of the diversity of customs and cultural expressions celebrated by the students, staff, faculty, and community members. Multicultural Life and Diversity encourages you to make an effort to learn more about those whose faith/non faith, customs, and traditions differ from your own. By educating ourselves about the differences and similarities in our community, we support inclusiveness and civility in each other and in those around us.

We would like to say thank you to those who have helped make this a highly successful semester for Multicultural Life and Diversity, and hope that we can continue to work towards creating an inclusive and equitable community in 2013.

Congratulations

On November 17, 2012, State University of New York Chancellor Nancy L. Zimpher announced that the university system, as well as the College at Brockport, received the first ever Higher Education Excellence in Diversity (HEED) award from INSIGHT Into Diversity Magazine, the oldest and largest diversity-focused publication in higher education.

As a winner of the award, SUNY and the College at Brockport are featured along with 46 other recipients in the December 2012 issue of INSIGHT Into Diversity Magazine. INSIGHT Into Diversity magazine selected award winners based on their diversity and inclusion initiatives, including all aspects of diversity such as gender, race, ethnicity, veterans, people with disabilities, and members of the LGBT community

Carlos N. Medina, SUNY Associate Provost & Associate Vice Chancellor and a SUNY Cortland graduate '78, had this to say about the award: *"Aligning SUNY's strategic planning goals with the diverse communities the system serves has helped us recognize new opportunities to build strong pathways between diversity and academic excellence. It is deeply rewarding to see SUNY be nationally recognized for its diversity efforts, something we're very passionate about."*

Through its various programs, the SUNY Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion celebrates diversity as a reflection of SUNY's strategic mission, and leverages the diversity of all its communities to expand the horizons of academic excellence, research and scholarship, affirmative action and inclusion throughout the university system.

Call for Presentations

Black History Month February 2013

The Africana Studies Department is accepting proposals for Sandwich Seminars and evening presentations for Black History Month in February 2013.

Faculty, staff, administrators and students who have scholarly and/or artistic interests in the Africana World (Africa and the African Diaspora) and would like to share them with the college community should forward their title, proposal, and preferred date for presentation to:

Dr. Seth N. Asumah, Chair
Africana Studies Department
Old Main 208B
seth.asumah@cortland.edu

The deadline for submitting proposals for Black History Month is Monday, December 10, 2012. Presenters will be notified of the status of their application for participation on December 18, 2012.



Community Conversation

As part of the ongoing Community Conversations initiative, we spoke with **Jeremy Zhe-Heimerman, Coordinator, Assistive Technology and Test Administration Services** about his experiences with accessibility at SUNY Cortland. You can find the complete interview here:

<http://www2.cortland.edu/offices/multicultural/newsletter.dot>

Talk about the importance of promoting inclusive accessibility on campus

I'll take the liberty of separating that phrase into two words—inclusion and accessibility—as both are important in their own terms. There is inevitably some overlap between the two, though.

First, the college is legally responsible to ensure all students have equal access to its programs. This is a simple issue of equality. As a nation, we have decided that colleges must find ways to level the playing field so anyone with a disability, who is otherwise willing and able to do the work, can get a degree. This dramatically improves the lives of people with disabilities, but it also strengthens our society. I often look at how our students are succeeding and consider all they will contribute to the world in the future. Yet, in my parents' generation, many such people would have been lucky to graduate from high school, let alone get into college. They may have still lived good lives, but they may never have been transformed by that college philosophy class. They may never have been able to fulfill that dream of becoming a teacher, a scientist, or a medical professional. It makes one wonder what our society has missed out on by failing to provide equal access in the past. The same, of course, can be said about women, people of color, and others who were unfairly excluded from most institutions of higher learning until well into the 20th century. I feel fortunate to be working in a field and at an institution that is committed to ensuring everyone today has equal access to an education that can truly change the world.

Second, when I think of inclusion I am reminded of the college's efforts to create a diverse student body by including individuals from all walks of life. Inclusion allows us to learn from peers who have had very different life experiences. Students with disabilities experience the world in a different way and have a lot to teach the rest of us. Many of us will likely face some kind of disability ourselves at some point in our lives, whether it's the loss of vision, hearing, mental capacity, or mobility. When students with disabilities are included on a college campus, we are reminded of our common humanity, our common vulnerabilities, and our common strengths. That helps all of us grow as human beings and be better prepared for life outside of college. But it's also crucial for our students who are working to become teachers and need to know how to teach diverse students themselves.

EOP Student Involvement

Serving as student teachers and doing field work and internships this fall are:

Adriana LoCascio
Lima Stafford
Tameka Wilkes
Rigoberto Becerra
Violetta Rivera -Washington DC internship

Football

Jonathan Prior
William Hilliard
Derreck Dalton
Andre Hernandez-Green

Wrestling

Troy Sterling

Basketball

Maurice Kearney
Lamard Herron

Track

Mattque Jones
Kenneth Sinclair
Stephan Linton
Joshua Daves
Kenya Outram

Cross Country

Africa Harper

Tennis

Shequla Mason

Softball

Nancy Newell

Holding positions on the Residence Life staff are:

Shaniqua Kissi
Miriamu Sillah
Mariel Concepcion
Sidnei Afari
Boyan Cox
William Gyasi
Sabrina Vidal

Educational Opportunity Program Report

Now in his second year as Director, Dr. Lewis Rosengarten and the staff consisting of Janet Hegedus, Amy Dahlman and Marc Dearstyne are pleased to be included in the Multicultural Life and Diversity Newsletter. Our offices are committed to a dynamic and productive working relationship.

Below are some of our accomplishments and initiatives:

The EOP Fall Gathering was held Friday September 28th with four students winning raffle prizes. The E-Board organized EOP Dinner will be held Saturday December 8th.

Taking advantage of the wonderful Study Abroad opportunities, the following students were and are involved this summer, fall, and spring: Emeli Sena Lopez – Ghana, Violetta Rivera – Ghana, Whitney Newby – Ghana, Khalia Brown – Ghana—Scholarship Recipient, Tawana McNair – Costa Rica, Abdul Diallo – Belize—Scholarship Recipient, Zhuo Fu Chen – London—Scholarship Recipient, Cordell Grant – London, Emeli Sena-Lopez – Costa Rica, Paloma Bido – London—Scholarship Recipient Jonathan Rodriguez – Spain

We would also like to solicit support for the following event
EOP Legislative Lobby Day, February 5, 2013

EOP is currently recruiting students who would like to become part of its legislative lobby initiative on February 5th, 2013. This is a day-long program designed to educate NYS lawmakers on the benefits of continuing EOP funding, and the successes EOP has realized through continued legislative support.

This program is part of a larger effort that occurs in NYS each year. EOP Lobby Day has been recognized as an outstanding program by state legislators and by SUNY that helps to continue the very important work with students that EOP does in both the comprehensive colleges and university centers.

This initiative will begin with an orientation to grassroots lobby, conversation around the historical development of EOP, and the sharing of success stories from participants.

The lobby day will consist of a luxury coach bus trip from SUNY Cortland to Albany, between 5-6 meetings with the NYS Assembly and Senate representatives, lunch, and a boxed meal for the ride home.

For additional information and to sign up, please contact Marc Dearstyne in the EOP Office, Cornish Hall, D-132, or at marc.dearstyne@cortland.edu, 607-753-2997.

Examining White Privilege

On November 16, Multicultural Life and Diversity Office student intern **Jessica Borio**, in collaboration with MLDO Director Noelle Chaddock Paley and Assistant Director Lyndon Huling, facilitated a presentation entitled “Examining White Privilege.” This presentation was a culmination of several months of hard work. 75 students, staff, and faculty attended this presentation, and it was a huge success. Jessica shares her reflections in the article to the right.

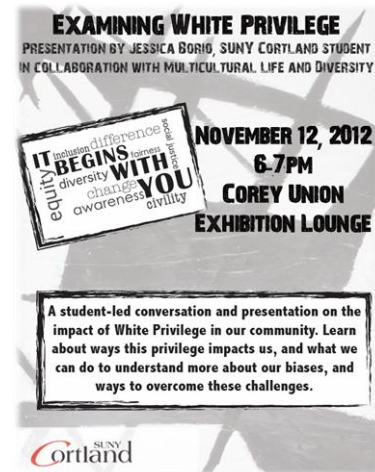


Examining White Privilege

“After viewing “Mirrors of Privilege: Making Whiteness Visible,” and presenting “Examining White Privilege,” I feel more empowered about how I can use the privilege I have as a white female to support others and become an ally for oppressed populations. Through my months of research on the topic of white privilege, I have gained more knowledge on how to recognize it in my own life. White privilege is the concept that white people are privileged in many ways in our society, and often do not recognize this about themselves. After watching this film, I realized that it was true that I did not wake up every morning thinking about how my skin color will impact my day, nor am I treated poorly because of the color of my skin. Here on campus, I feel very comfortable because most of the people look like me. I do not have to worry about people viewing me differently because I often blend in. As an education major, I started my practicum observation hours this semester with younger students. The students are not shy towards me and feel very comfortable approaching me. I believe this is in part because many of their previous teachers have been white women as well. Because of this familiarity, I was not worried about how they would react to me.

After completing my research on white privilege, I thought about ways I could become an ally for oppressed populations that do not experience the same privilege as I have. I believe that those with white privilege can become allies by educating themselves and others, speaking up when they hear hurtful language, and most importantly, recognizing and acknowledging that they have privilege and thinking about ways that it can be deconstructed. I have thought about ways I could use my position as an educator to my advantage in the future when trying to combat white privilege. When I am a teacher, I am going to be intentional about recognizing the history of all races when teaching. Most of the focus in K-12 education is on white historical figures. I plan to teach the history of people of color and their contributions to society.

Researching white privilege has had a great impact on me. It has made me more aware of the privileges I have and how I can use these to help others instead of just feeling guilty that I have these privileges. I encourage everyone to visit YouTube and watch the videos ‘Mirrors of Privilege’ for a deeper understanding of the ways in which white privilege impacts our society.”



Bridging the Gap

The Greek Multicultural Council and Spectrum (SUNY Cortland's Gay/Straight Alliance) collaborated in hosting an impactful conversation about the misconceptions and stereotypes within the Greek community and the LGBT community. The program served as an opportunity to promote inclusion and education at SUNY Cortland and provide a space for transformational change.

Transgender Day of Remembrance

Transgender Day of Remembrance was on November 20th. This day was designated to remember and honor those who have died due to transphobia and anti-transgender victimization.

For all of the focus put on the rights of the gay, lesbian, and bisexual communities, the hate the transgender community faces is often understated.

On November 19, 2012, the Common Council of Syracuse, New York passed legislation creating nondiscrimination protections for gender identity in employment, housing, and public accommodations. Syracuse was the last major city in the state to add the transgender protections, joining Buffalo, Rochester, Albany, Binghamton, Ithaca, and New York City, as well as Westchester, Suffolk, and Tompkins counties. New York State currently only provides nondiscrimination protections based on sexual orientation.

Spectrums 2nd Annual Drag performance: A Drag Extravaganza

On November 18, 2012, Spectrum (SUNY Cortland's Gay/Straight Alliance,) in collaboration with Multicultural Life and Diversity, Student Government Association, and Ms. Sherry Pie, hosted the 2nd annual Drag performance: A Drag Extravaganza. The event provided the SUNY Cortland campus with an opportunity to learn more about the drag lifestyle through an educational Q/A, as well as the unique experience of seeing some of the top performers in New York. The educational panel that followed the performance provided a deeper level of understanding about the experiences of drag performers, the "coming out" process, and how performing



has been an empowering experience for the individuals involved. Panelists spoke about when they first dressed in "drag," their experiences with their family, friends, and employers when they "came out;" their charity and philanthropy work; and the empowering nature of performing in drag.

Additionally, \$250 was raised by Spectrum to support [Broadway/Equity Fights AIDs](#). With over 400 students, staff, faculty, and community members in attendance, the event was a major success. Thank you to all who supported, donated, and made this the largest drag performance ever at SUNY Cortland.



Get Involved

The Multicultural Life and Diversity office is available for diversity trainings/talks/workshops with classes, departments, and organizations on campus and in the community. We tailor our trainings and presentations to meet the needs of your group, and offer a variety of topics related to access, diversity, and social justice. To have Multicultural Life and Diversity present on a topic, contact us at (607) 753-2336.