

February 2014
Volume 3, Issue 5

Upcoming Events:

Pride Ceremony

March 28, TBD
Exhibition Lounge

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

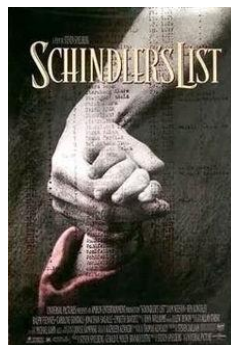
multicultural.life@cortland.edu

Student Diversity Conference Update



The fifth annual student conference on diversity, equity, and social justice at SUNY Cortland will be held on April 12, 2014. Our keynote speaker has been chosen and we are preparing to include a film showing as a special event of the conference this year.

Dr. Sean G. Massey will be the keynote speaker this year. 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.



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

This conference serves as an opportunity for participants to develop and nurture skills that will help move them through the next stages of their academic and professional lives while sharing their current research and experiences with their peers, mentors, and supporters.



Register now!

There is still time to submit a proposal. The call for proposal deadline has been extended through March 17, 2014. If you would like to present, please visit our website for more information regarding possible topics, guidelines, and submission instructions.

“Women can change the world!”



Library Display

Reporting Bias

The SUNY Cortland community is committed to nurturing an inclusive community. Bias disrupts that effort. Silence about bias paralyzes that effort. When you see or hear things that work against inclusivity, things that are hateful, harmful, or make people feel unsafe and unwanted – say something. The reporting of Bias Incidents is everyone’s job. You can report incidents of bias to the University Police Department (UPD), the office of Multicultural Life and Diversity (MLDO), Human Resources, Affirmative Action officer, Deans’ offices, Residence Life and Housing staff, Student Conduct, the Vice President for Student Affairs, your academic department, or your coach. Speak up! Speak out! With your help, bias incidents can be stopped!

Celebrating Women’s History Month



March is Women’s History Month. In 1987, the United States Congress declared March National Women’s History Month. There will be several opportunities to participate in events for Women’s History Month on our campus. Many events will be announced via email and you can contact Caroline Kaltefleiter: Caroline.Kaltefleiter@cortland.edu, for more information about possible events.

Call for Submissions

Have something to add to our next newsletter? We love to have contributions such as diversity related events, articles, announcements, news, personal narratives, and more.

Please make all submissions no later than the **third Friday of the month** and your contribution will be included in the following month’s newsletter. Send contributions to: multicultural.life@cortland.edu with a subject line: **Newsletter Submission**

“I am prepared to sacrifice every so-called privilege I possess in order to have a few rights.”

- Inez Milholland, Suffragist 1909

The Multicultural Life and Diversity Office have created a library display to highlight Eva Peron. Eva Peron was a well-known and controversial Latin American female leader that made great efforts in addressing social issues that concerned women and children. She is celebrated and remembered often for those efforts but we know that commonly we forget leaders that have made a mark on our history but are no longer around. We also thought that often Latin America is neglected when speaking of progress of social issues so we hope that by bringing one of their most influential leaders to the forefront we are offering you an opportunity to understand their contribution to women’s history and continued progress.

Kente Ceremony



Kente will take place April 5, 2014. The Kente Celebration 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.

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**

CUNY/SUNY Model Senate and Somos El Futuro

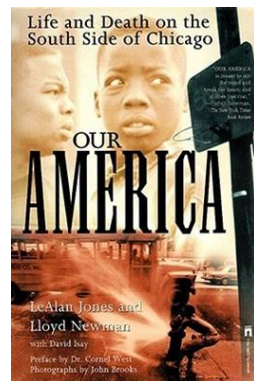
Five SUNY Cortland students will play the role of New York state senators for a day when they take part in the CUNY/SUNY New York State Model Senate Session Project. The event will take place at the annual Somos El Futuro (We are in Future) Conference March 21-23.

Will Hernandez, RHD, will prepare the students: Jessica Perez, Ashley Perez, David Paulino, Lisbeth Ortiz, and Sally Velasco, for the Senate experience.

Developed in 1997 by CUNY, the Model Senate Session Project was launched at the request of Puerto Rican/Hispanic Task Force of the New York State Legislature with the aim of providing students with an opportunity to explore the workings of the U.S. Government from a unique perspective.

Black History Month Recap

Black History Month is coordinated annually by the Africana Studies Department and SUNY Distinguished Teaching Professor Dr. Seth Asumah. The month long celebration consisted of various sandwich seminars and events that covered a variety of interests. LeAlan Jones, Co-author of *Our America*, visited campus to discuss the question: "What will a collective voice of a generation have to say?" His talk was part of SUNY Cortland's Cultural and Intellectual Climate Committee (CICC) series, which this year focuses on "Inter/Action" and the inequalities some Americans routinely face.



Additionally, the Black Student Union, led by Jahtayshia Davis hosted events such as the Solidarity Dinner, and the annual Kings and Queens Conference. Individuals interested in participating in Black History Month in the future should contact Dr. Seth Asumah, the Multicultural Life and Diversity Office, or the Black Student Union.

Community Conversations

As a part of the ongoing Community Conversations initiative, we spoke with Rashad Williams, about his experiences as an African-American student at SUNY Cortland.

What are your thoughts about the campus climate related to being African-American?



“What frightens me, however, is knowing that there are plenty of other students who finish their four years at the university without interacting with people from different ethnic backgrounds.”

- Rashad Williams

Coming to Cortland, I didn't know what to expect because I didn't know anyone from the school. I remember my freshman year vividly and being taken aback by just how many students were unaware of the cultural differences between them and students of other ethnic backgrounds. Most surprising to me was that many white students said that I was the first black American that that had ever met or had an interaction with. They often thanked me for helping them shift from seeing through the lens of mass media stereotypical generalizations of people to actually appreciating spaces of diversity for shared ideas, growth, and understanding. That of course thrills me. If I'm changing one persons' perception of other people at a time, that is an accomplishment. What frightens me, however, is knowing that there are plenty of other students who finish their four years at the university without interacting with people from different ethnic backgrounds. It seems ludicrous but in almost all of my classes, I am the only black American or minority in general. There are countless others where there are absolutely none. Depriving students of the majority interaction of diversity perpetuates the system of social and economic inequality because those very same deprived students will go on to serve as our nation's new managers, doctors, and leaders of the corporate world. It comes at no surprise to me when I hear white students say that we should get rid of federal and state programs that help certain groups (i.e Affirmative Action) because they believe those programs are "racist". My reaction to that has been, and continues to be that we don't need a colorblind society, but one that acknowledges the power of color and one that is willing to level the playing field.

What advice would you give to the campus to help improve the campus climate around African-Americans?

I believe it is paramount for professors to do whatever they can to encourage students to get out of their comfort zone and attend events that are known to incorporate education on diversity and inclusion. They can do this by simply mentioning the events in class or perhaps going the extra mile and assigning extra credit for attending them. Some professors are already doing this by making their classes attend our things like the diversity conference or promoting student clubs like "The Black Student Union." For that I commend them. This will hopefully create a more culture friendly atmosphere and subsequently a higher retention rate for minority students, assuming that they're accepted in greater numbers.