

April 2013
Volume 2, Issue 3

**Student Diversity
Retreat Applications
due April 19, 2013**

**Model Senate
Recruitment
Applications
due May 1st, 2013**

Fall 2013

**Student Diversity
Retreat
September 6-8, 2013**

**Unity Celebration
October 15, 2013**

**Multicultural Alumni
Reunion
October 19, 2013**

**Kente Celebration
April 5, 2014**

Announcing the Multicultural Life and Diversity office 2013-2014 Theme

Multicultural Life and Diversity is proud to announce the 2013-2014 office theme: "Speak Up, Speak Out." Our office has chosen this theme as a way to encourage the SUNY Cortland community to speak up and speak out against injustice, inequity, bias, and discrimination. Remaining silent is just as damaging. Speaking up and speaking out means being an ally and advocate in everyday life.

The Multicultural Life and Diversity office at SUNY Cortland is committed to fostering a community of learners who are globally competitive students, staff, faculty, and community members who contribute to an environment of inclusive and academic excellence based on the values of human difference and individual contributions. By promotion activism, and removing the barriers of silence, we hope to create transformational change around ally development, inequities in higher education, and much more. We hope that you will join us in Speaking Up and Speaking Out in 2013-2014.

Wishing our Colleague Well

We would like to send well wishes to Lyndon Huling, the Assistant Director of the Multicultural Life and Diversity as he embarks on the next step in his professional journey. After 2 years at SUNY Cortland, Mr. Huling will be returning to California to pursue new opportunities, be closer to his family, and continue his education. As always, MLDO will keep you posted about the transition.

Student Diversity Retreat Applications

Applications for the Fall 2013 Multicultural Life and Diversity Student Diversity Retreat are available now on the Multicultural Life and Diversity office website at cortland.edu/diversity-retreat. Applications are due April 19, 2013 and may be submitted electronically or via hard-copy our office.



The MLDO Student Diversity Retreat aims to develop student-leaders that identify equity, inclusion and social justice as core values. We will select a representative group of engaged participants for this unique opportunity.

Lima Stafford



Lima Stafford, a current SUNY Cortland graduate student and leader within the Multicultural Life and Diversity community, was recently awarded the Chancellor’s Award for Student Excellence. Let us all join in congratulating Lima on this outstanding accomplishment.

CUNY/SUNY Model Senate

Seven SUNY Cortland students played the role of New York state senators for a day when they took part in the CUNY/SUNY New York State Model Senate Session Project on Saturday, March 23 during the annual conference in Albany, NY. Noelle Chaddock Paley, the director of the Multicultural Life and Diversity office, serves as the group’s faculty advisor. Developed in 1997 by CUNY, the Model Senate Session Project was launched at the request of the 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 NYS government from a unique perspective. SUNY Cortland student participants included Devante Saba, Esperanza Viera, Amanda Reyes, Lizbeth Ortiz, Jessica Perez, Kathy Quiroz, and David Paulino. Below, Kathy Quiroz shares her perspective:



Human Trafficking YWCA Event



Multicultural Life and Diversity collaborated with the YWCA of Cortland on March 6 to host a discussion about human trafficking and its impact nationally and in our community. The presentation included a showing of “Freedom: Slavery is Not an Option” and a roundtable discussion about the topic.



My name is Katherine Quiroz and I am a sophomore at SUNY Cortland. I participated in CUNY/SUNY New York State Model Senate Session Project this year and it was the best experience I have had during my time at college. I did not know many details when I decided to be a part of Model Senate, but I knew that it would require work, time, and dedication. I learned a lot about public relations and what it takes for a bill to pass. I was assigned as a Republican, and got to see how both parties view how bills can affect families, communities, and their constituencies. I think others should get involved with Model Senate in the future because it is a great way to face your fears. I spoke to a large audience for the first time while participating, and also developed great leadership experience. I enjoyed Model Senate because I got to meet different people from schools all over the state, and we got to share the experience of being involved with senators and bills. We felt like our voice was heard, which was incredibly empowering.



Spectrum Event



On March 5, Spectrum (SUNY Cortland's Gay/Straight Alliance) held a potluck event for faculty and staff to meet Spectrum students, and talk about various topics related to their experiences on campus and in the community. Over 50 participants gathered to share stories, do ice-breakers, and help support and enrich our community through collaborative partnerships.

MLK Pledges



During the month of February, the Multicultural Life and Diversity office held our annual MLK pledge drive. Staff tabled in Corey Union to gather signatures and pledges of non-violence in honor of Martin Luther King Jr. Over 60 pledges were signed. You can find the pledges in Corey Union in the lobby area.

Community Conversation

As part of the ongoing Community Conversations initiative, we spoke with **Shedia Christopher, Residence Hall Director in Hayes Hall**, about her experiences as a staff member from the Caribbean at SUNY Cortland. You can find the complete interview here:

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

Could you tell me about the significance of Caribbean and African American initiatives here on campus and its importance to you?

There are two main reasons why I believe that Caribbean and African American initiatives are crucial to the campus community. My first being retention. It is important that students are integrated into their college campus both academically and socially. All students should feel as though they belong, and that SUNY Cortland is their home away from home. Once students are invested and integrated into the community they are more likely to stay. Students will feel more at home on a campus that supports, plans, and hosts events that show appreciation for and acknowledges the value of their culture.

Secondly, learning, and the transference of knowledge, happens just as much outside of the classroom as it does inside of the classroom, if not more. African American and Caribbean initiatives provide the student body with an opportunity to diversify their experiences, and learn about things they may not have been exposed to otherwise. With faculty, staff and students making an intentional and collaborative effort to recognize, support and celebrate the cultural diversity of campus, we will continue to grow as a community that is inclusive and welcoming to everyone.

Do you have any recommendations about some strategies for how more awareness can be raised around the campus on this topic?

I encourage the campus community to consider the college experience through the lens of another; specifically, through the lens of African American and Caribbean community members. It is difficult to identify exclusion when you cannot recognize the inequity of resources. Something that worked well for me and my residential community was collaborating with the clubs of the VOICE office for programming. In the residence hall a great deal of educating is done through programming. Last year the Caribbean Student Association (CSA) collaborated with the Bishop Hall staff for a program and it was one of the most successful programs. CSA brought tri- fold boards with information about the countries in the Caribbean, flags, and fliers for their upcoming events and also held a salsa dance workshop. The program was well received by the residents. My residents later attended a CSA weekly meeting and then participated in their fashion show later that semester.

Passover Seder



On March 26, 2013 Hillel, the SUNY Cortland Jewish student organization, celebrated their annual Passover Seder event in the Interfaith Center. Seder is a Jewish ritual service and ceremonial dinner for the first night or first two nights of Passover. The Hillel executive board, in collaboration with Mike Weinstein, Henry Steck, and various staff and faculty, held a memorable celebration consisting of food, tradition, and education about the meaning of Passover to the participants, and the Cortland community.



Holocaust Remembrance Event

On Monday, April 8, 2013 the Jewish Studies Minor (JST) faculty/members, Hillel student leaders, and community members from SUNY Cortland hosted an evening in remembrance of the Holocaust. Dr.



Linda Lavine opened the ceremony by calling attendees to remember the Jewish Holocaust in which six million lives were unjustly taken. Lavine said “There are so many genocides in decades since. It is not really a contest is it? That is why it is so important that we never forget!” Lavine then lit eight candles on an altar, which also contained seven tulips. Six of the candles and six of the tulips represented the six million Jews lost in the Holocaust. The seventh tulip and candle represented the other genocides that continue in the world. The eighth candle represented “all of the others who were either killed because of differences, such as gay people and Romas and those who were brave enough to stand up against the atrocities of the Holocaust.”

Mr. Chris Sperry from the Alternative School in Ithaca, New York presented with some of his 10th grade students about the experience of teaching/learning about the Holocaust. Each student shared their humbling experiences and deep reflection about their sense that human beings are capable of great good but they also have the capacity for great evil. Sperry shared his pedagogy for teaching the Holocaust. The students shared their sense of why teaching the Holocaust was so important, and one stated that “we must understand that human beings are capable of this kind of evil to prevent it in the future”. We would like to thank JST and Hillel for bringing such a thoughtful program to our campus. It is truly important that we never forget!



Library Display

Visit the Memorial Library to see learn more about Asian literature and the literature of lesbian and gay authors as part of the Multicultural Life and Diversity library display series.



7th annual Celebration of Women: Jugglers of Professions, Managers of Lives

On March 23, 2013, Women of Color held their 7th annual Celebration of Women: Jugglers of Professions, Managers of Lives event. The ceremony was created to honor students, staff, and faculty from SUNY Cortland, as well as community members, for their outstanding academic achievement; campus and community involvement; and their dedication to those around them. 40 Awardees were selected for their contributions to SUNY Cortland, and special recognitions were given to graduating seniors and faculty/staff that have gone above and beyond in their support of Women of Color and the community. This event was part of the Women’s History Month event series at SUNY Cortland. Other highlights included the Women’s Path to Success Panel, and various other events on topics such as feminism, social justice, and more. Below is an excerpt from the keynote speech given by **Ngozichukwu (Ngozi) Mafiana**, a senior at SUNY Cortland:



As women, we face many difficulties, sometimes more than our male counterparts. However, the world is changing drastically, especially with the success of many feminist movements. We are all strong women; I encourage you to stay opinionated, but be open-minded.

Practice what you preach – be fair to everyone because you never know whom you may come across.

Accountability and responsibility – avoid the blame-game and take responsibility for your actions. Life may be difficult but strive to be positive always and surround yourself with people who lift you up.

Attitude is 100% you – if you add up the letters in the word attitude, you’ll find that it totals 100. If you have a bad attitude, chances are that you’ll have a negative view of life.

Gratitude – be grateful for every blessing that comes your way, no matter how small.

