

September/
October 2014
Volume 4, Issue 1

2014- 2015 Upcoming Events:

Safe Zone Training for faculty/staff

1 – 5 p.m.
Wednesday, October 8
Exhibition Lounge

Safe Zone Training for students

1 – 5 p.m.
Saturday, October 11
Exhibition Lounge

Beyond the Blindsight Training

6 – 9 p.m.
Thursday, October 23
Sperry 106

Safe Zone Training for the community

10 a.m. – 2 p.m.
Saturday, November 1
Beard Building

Wellness Wednesday- “Let’s Talk About Race”

7 p.m.
Wednesday, November 5
Exhibition Lounge

Unity Celebration

4:30 – 6 p.m.
Wednesday, November 19
Function Room

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

Welcome Back From Multicultural Life and Diversity

The Multicultural Life and Diversity Office is excited to welcome our community back for the 2014-2015 academic year. As I walk across campus the shift in our student population in regards to visible diversity is noteworthy. What we know about visible diversity is that it is often a barometer for invisible diversity as well. Thus, the big institutional diversity focus moving forward is around readiness. Are we ready to attract, support, retain, and graduate a diverse population of students? Additionally, President Erik Bitterbaum wants to make sure we are producing graduates who are globally and culturally competent and competitive. As we move through the 2014-2015 academic year, we will be working to make sure that we have the infrastructure to support assessment, research, initiatives, and programming that will create a truly inclusive, equitable and accessible SUNY Cortland.

The MLDO continues to see significant changes. We are happy to welcome three new interim assistant directors; Melissa Wilson, Rachael Forester, and William Hernandez. All three interim assistant directors are full time residence hall directors who have developed competencies in diversity, inclusion, equity, accessibility, ethno-cultural and LGBTQAI programming and student engagement. The MLDO is a strong department because of the collegial support we receive from departments like Residence Life and Housing. This sharing of staff benefits the division of Student Affairs, staff, and most importantly, our students.

The MLDO is happy to announce the promotion of Dr. Noelle Chaddock Paley who now serves as the institution’s first Chief Diversity Officer. President Bitterbaum and the Vice Presidents reorganized the diversity position so that comprehensive diversity, inclusion, equity, and access work is possible as they understand diversity as an institutional imperative. Paley will serve the institution by working across and with the four divisions to serve faculty, staff, students, alumni, and the broader Cortland community. Paley will continue to work with the SUNY System Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion as well as fulfilling the role of chair of the University Faculty Senate Committee on Diversity and Cultural Competence.

Moving forward, the MLDO will be looking for ideas, comments, and concerns as we build our five year plan. We look forward to visiting with members of our campus and extended community so that we can begin to think about holistic approaches to meeting the diversity needs of our institution. Inclusion, equity, and access are matters of cultural wellness and we are committed to building and maintaining a well community in 2014-2015.

Welcome Home SUNY Cortland!

-The MLDO Staff

Community Conversation on Bias and Hurtful Language



Mayor Brian Tobin

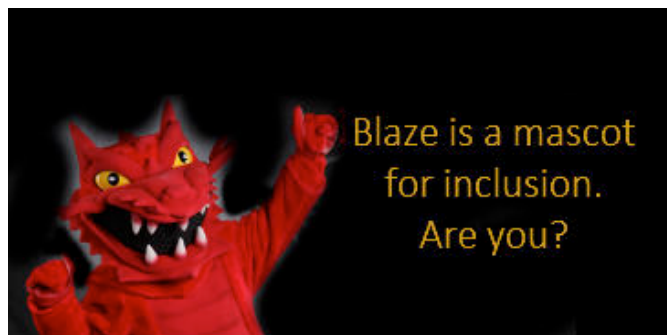


President Bitterbaum

President Bitterbaum hosted the second Community Conversation on Bias and Hurtful Language on September 3, 2014. Approximately 130 faculty, staff and students attended the two hour conversation where small work groups were formed to discuss concerns and possible solutions. Bias and hurtful language work against the building of a culturally well, inclusive, equitable and accessible community. The small work groups answered questions about what SUNY Cortland is doing well, where the gaps in our diversity work exist, and how we might do a better job supporting our community. Opening speakers Dr. Andrew Fitz-Gibbon, Chair of Social Philosophy, and Dr. Judith Ouellette, Chair of Psychology, started the conversation off with proscriptions of how we could be as a community along with stark examples of how many of our community members are not experiencing the safety and support they need to be successful. The small groups were facilitated by faculty and staff from across the institution modeling the way in which diversity, equity, inclusion and access work is everyone's job. SUNY Cortland is the benefactor of leadership that walk's the walk as senior administrators also participated in the conversation assuring top down commitment to making SUNY Cortland a place where all community members feel welcome, appreciated, safe and valued for their contributions. Mary Kate Boland, Assistant Director of Campus Activities, Christopher Kuretich, Assistant Vice President of Student Affairs, and Mayor Brian Tobin closed the conversation with a charge to our community to speak up, disrupt bias and hurtful language, and make this something that each of us is personally responsible for.

The MLDO staff is compiling the feedback received on September 3, 2014 and will be sharing that with senior leadership along with some recommendations as we move forward. A third Community Conversation on Bias and Hurtful Language will be scheduled for the end of the semester. If you were not able to attend the September 3, 2014 conversation, please email us your thoughts at multicultural.life@cortland.edu.

“Bias and hurtful language work against the building of a culturally well, inclusive, equitable and accessible community.”



Meet the Staff

An Overview

The Multicultural Life and Diversity Office offers resources, support services and educational/co-curricular programming that allows the SUNY Cortland community to build and maintain an informed commitment to inclusivity of under-represented individuals. We offer many programs and services such as our annual diversity retreat, student diversity conference, Kente ceremony, workshops and trainings. Additionally, we are always open to incorporating new and innovative ways to educate and engage our community around diversity issues. Stop by or call our office to meet our staff, learn more about what we offer, make suggestions, and/ or find out more about diversity.



Noelle Paley
Chief Diversity Officer



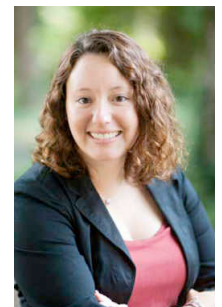
Ann Cutler
Secretary



Melissa Wilson
Interim Assistant Director



William Hernandez
Interim Assistant Director



Rachael Forester
Interim Assistant Director

Student Interns

Rachel Ernisse – Art Intern

Carl Copeland – Art Intern

Shannon Toomey – Work Study

Margarita Harper- Ottey – Work Study

Lisbeth Ortiz – Model Senate / SOMOS Intern

Valerie Alvarez – Social Media/Student Engagement

Elise Gallignano & Cody Stetzel – Conference Co-Chairs

Leah Gelblat – National Association of Student Affairs Professionals Undergraduate Fellow

2014 Diversity Retreat

Thank you to Leah Gelblat for planning this year's Diversity Retreat. It was a fantastic weekend filled with students stepping out of their comfort zone and showing what it means to be brave.

Despite the weather, a group of 30 students spent a weekend at Adams Eden knocking down boundaries and getting to know each other on a deeper level. Students came together to participate in diverse discussions, challenging activities, and a low ropes course. Students challenged the way things are, advocated for change, and learned about different people, experiences, biases, and opinions; conversations that are often hard to come by. Discussions included Jewish Heritage, the coming out process, surface level discrimination, the importance of diversity in the curriculum, and the campus climate around these issues. The group together shared stories, laughed, and cried as they uncovered problems and solutions to racism, homophobia, gender biases, and prejudice. It was a trying weekend with positive outcomes for all who participated.

Thank you to Ann Cutler for her continued support. Thank you to Melissa Wilson, Rachael Forester, William Hernandez, and Amber Ingalls for attending and facilitating. Thank you to Linda Adams of Adams Eden, Tom Gardner of Team Adventure, and Mr. Matthew Murphy of Murphy's catering. Thank you to the student organizations in the VOICE office, the Leadership House, and the Student Government Association E-board for attending faithfully every year.

The new bonds and the heartfelt stories that were created and shared will be a call for change and an inspiration to all.





"The Gospel Choir provides an opportunity for talented students to fulfill their artistic, academic, and spiritual potential."

Show Me Your Brave

SUNY Cortland's Multicultural Life & Diversity Office theme for the year of 2014-2015 is "Show Me Your Brave."

This year's orientation assistants share how they will be brave, both on campus and in the community. Will you be brave? After finding out what "Show Me Your Brave" is all about, share your brave moments via twitter by hashtagging #BeBrave in your tweets.

<http://www2.cortland.edu/offices/multicultural/show-me-your-brave/>



Designed by student intern, Rachel Ernisse

SUNY Cortland Gospel Choir

The SUNY Cortland Gospel Choir begins its twenty-ninth season this fall under the direction of Dr. Baruch Whitehead, who succeeds Robert Brown. Dr. Baruch Whitehead is Associate Professor of Music at the Ithaca College School of Music where he teaches music education and world music.

Founded in 1985 by a small group of students under the leadership of Dr. Samuel L. Kelley, the Gospel Choir made its New York City debut in April 1992 as part of the SUNY Performing Arts Series, performing in numerous NYC high schools. The choir later participated in national competition in New York City, winning acclaim for its performances and musicians.

The SUNY Cortland African American Gospel Music Festival, which the choir hosts each November, has become an established Cortland tradition. Colleges and universities throughout central and western New York participate in the annual festival. Invited choirs this year include the Dorothy Cotton Jubilee Singers, directed by Dr. Whitehead, the Binghamton University Gospel Choir, Syracuse University's Black Celestial Choral Ensemble, and The Promise Land Church of Syracuse. SUNY Cortland is the host choir.

The Gospel Choir provides an opportunity for talented students to fulfill their artistic, academic, and spiritual potential. It is a diverse group of students from throughout New York State. The northeast, Asia, Africa, Caribbean, Europe and local citizens are often represented. As part of the Africana Studies Department, students receive one credit hour for participating. The choir's energy and spirit are a moving experience to those who witness their performances. While sharing a great cultural tradition, choir members and audiences increase their appreciation of music as an artistic and cultural force in communicating across cultural boundaries. The choir has travelled internationally to Toronto and Niagara Falls, Canada, England, Germany, the Netherlands, and Belgium.

The SUNY Cortland Africana Studies Program offers Gospel Choir scholarships that range from five hundred to one thousand dollars. They are awarded to incoming and continuing students who demonstrate exceptional ability in performance, leadership, and service. Entering freshmen, transfer or continuing students qualify. Applicants must complete a scholarship application with a statement as to why they are applying. Students must be in good academic standing and must also be active in the Gospel Choir during the time of their scholarship.

For more information about the choir, contact either Dr. Samuel L Kelley at sam.kelley@cortland.edu, Dr. Seth Asumah at seth.asumah@cortland.edu, or Dr. Baruch Whitehead at Baruch.whitehead@cortland.edu.

Educational Opportunity Program Summer Institute

Fall 2014 Unity Celebration

The Unity Award was established in 2010 by then interim director of Multicultural Life, Noelle Chaddock Paley, and co-sponsor Affirmative Action officer, Wendy McAllister. The intention of the award was to recognize people in the SUNY Cortland community who were working toward equity and inclusion. The recipients are individuals that advocate for diversity and social change for all students, faculty, and staff regardless of their socio-racial locations and identities. These are selfless people who go above and beyond to make SUNY Cortland a welcoming, inclusive, and safe place for all community members. We thank them for their dedication and commitment to making SUNY Cortland a better place.

This year's celebration will take place on Wednesday, November 19 from 4:30-6 p.m.

To nominate someone for a Unity Award, please visit our webpage at

<http://www2.cortland.edu/offices/multicultural/programs/unity-celebration.dot>

The 2014 Educational Opportunity Program Summer Institute was another resounding success for the students. Forty-one incoming first year students benefitted from the rigors of a full course load, one on one academic support, and a model healthful schedule. Students took classes in writing, college mathematics, college preparation, offered by EOP's senior counselors Amy Dahlman and Marc Dearstyne, and our unique course designed for SUNY Cortland: The Value of Education. This is an interdisciplinary exploration of what it means to be liberally educated, and the value of it in creating informed citizens, an inclusive community and overcoming social injustice. The readings span works of Plato to Alice Walker. Serving as an introduction to the notion of the disciplines featured at Cortland, students emerge better prepared for what lies ahead. This course is team taught by Dr. Noelle Paley and Dr. Lewis Rosengarten with support from Shade Gomez. The Institute is proud to assemble a staff and faculty of 21 mostly SUNY Cortland professionals who establish trusting supportive relationships with the students that can then continue throughout the academic year. Our residential staff was expertly led by seniors Boyan Cox, and William Gyasi. They helped ensure a dedication to the schedule and a welcoming environment at the ready to respond to any concerns or doubts.

We had some fun too (aside from the joy of learning!). A picnic at Hope Lake Lodge kicked off our first Saturday's events where students honed their skills in volleyball, boating and devouring BBQ ribs. Other highlights included a day in nature at Adam's Eden, and a lovely dinner and pool party at the home of President Erik Bitterbaum and Ellen Burton.

With each step into the new semester, the students are seeing the value of the SI and are eager to apply their emerging skills. Their summer success maintains a string of three straight summers in which 97% retention was achieved. The students also look forward to meeting their fellow EOP classmates across the classes, at our Fall Gathering in mid-September. EOP continues to be thrilled by the support of the President and of our division leader, vice-president Greg Sharer. Please join all of us in welcoming our newest, ebullient group!



The 2014 EOP Summer Institute

**SUNY in Africa: Ghana
Faculty-Led Study
Abroad**

Program 2014

The 2014 "SUNY in Africa: Ghana Study Abroad Program" was a hit. **Dr. Seth N. Asumah** led 14 students from SUNY Cortland, University at Buffalo and SUNY Plattsburgh to the University of Ghana from May 28-June 20, 2014. This year's program highlights included interesting ethnographic research by the students and extended cultural events such as learning to play the African talking drums and a boat excursion on the Volta River in Ada. The SUNY in Africa Program includes a seminar that takes a broad transdisciplinary and multidisciplinary approach to the study of the culture, history, politics, economics, sociology and the natural environment of Ghana. The course also explores cogent issues in Africana Studies, African Politics and Society, and International Studies, which takes account of, but not limited to, the trans-atlantic slave trade, socio-historical issues, and political dynamics among the people of the African Diaspora. This study abroad course provides a number of vectors for study and learning in various areas of Ghana; the University of Ghana, Accra, University of Cape Coast, Kumasi, Bonweri, Cape Coast, Elmina, Kakum and Ada. The students visit museums, historical sites, African markets, churches, parliaments, cultural centers and engage in lectures by Ghanaian professors, professionals and parliamentarians.

Ghana: A Life-Changing Educational Experience

By Anderson Briggs, Political Science Major

Studying abroad for three weeks this summer in Ghana, Africa on a faculty led program was a life changing experience. All the research I had done and things I had learned leading up to the trip did not even begin to prepare me for what I was about to experience. The number of people who do not have jobs amazed me, but there are women working so hard to try and make what they can as they weave through dangerous traffic. This trip was an eye-opening experience showing the differences between a developed nation, which I am so accustomed to, and a third world country which is working toward development.

One of the things that amazed me the most during these experiences were the encounters our group had with children. We were able to see children who were enrolled in primary school and learning going to school six days a week, we were also exposed to the children who have to beg on the streets so that their family has money. Returning to the United States I had a much greater appreciation for the opportunities I have had growing up in a first world country. Ghana was beautiful and so much more than I had expected, I would recommend that if anyone gets the opportunity to go on a trip to an amazing developing country such as Ghana, to take full advantage, go, explore, and learn as much as you can. Without Dr. Seth Asumah this trip would not be possible, so I thank him for making this once in a lifetime experience available to not only myself but all of the students at SUNY Cortland and other SUNY schools.



SUNY students at the Ghanaian Parliament, June 2014



Boat ride on the Volta River, Ghana, June 2014

Affording Study Abroad

Gender Inclusive Housing

Did you know SUNY Cortland offers Gender Inclusive Housing?

Gender Inclusive Housing is a community that supports students by providing you with the opportunity to live with others regardless of where you may be on the gender spectrum. We recognize that it is up to you to choose your own gender identity, which is why we at SUNY Cortland are focused on creating a safe and welcoming living environment for students, without the limitations of gender. For more information, contact Residence Life and Housing at 607-753- 4724

"We need to give each other the space to grow, to be ourselves, to exercise our diversity. We need to give each other space so that we may both give and receive such beautiful things as ideas, openness, dignity, joy, healing, and inclusion."

- Max de Pree

Studying abroad can provide many benefits, from gaining an understanding of diverse cultures, to immersion in a foreign language, to the development of intercultural communication skills critical to thoughtful engagement in our communities and workplaces. Understandably, however, one of the first concerns students, parents, faculty, and staff raise when we talk with them about study abroad is the cost. Many assume the cost of studying abroad is prohibitive, and that only students with greater financial resources can afford to participate. Others are concerned that in order to study abroad, students will take more time to complete their degrees, further increasing their student loan debt. While some programs are indeed significantly more expensive than a typical semester on the Cortland campus, most are not, and today students can choose from a number of program and financing options that make participation in programs abroad both affordable and accessible, without delaying graduation. It is true that not every student can afford to participate on every type of program, but we have worked with students at all levels of financial need, from most majors, and from diverse backgrounds to find programs that have matched their academic programs, personal goals, and budget. Our mission is to help every student who wishes to study abroad access an international opportunity, a goal supported by the following factors:

1. **Students from all majors can participate in study abroad, and credits earned while abroad can count towards graduation requirements.** Twenty-five years ago, when I was in college, study abroad primarily came in one flavor: semester-long coursework at a campus or university study center overseas. Today, students can not only take courses at a partner campus for a semester or year, but they can also join a short-term faculty-led course, intern, conduct research, work on service projects, and even student teach in another country. Many of these options allow students to satisfy general education, liberal arts, language, major, or minor requirements. Working with students' academic advisors and associate deans, we can help them find [programs](#) that match their interests and academic needs, so that they can graduate on time.
2. **The budgets for study abroad vary significantly by program, and some cost less than the estimated cost of studying at the Cortland campus.** When calculating program budgets, the International Programs Office (IPO) tries to anticipate all costs, including airfare, accommodations, meals, overseas tuition, spending money, and even passport fees, so that students are not surprised by hidden costs. We also apply SUNY Cortland tuition to the cost of programs, further reducing overall budgets. While some of our programs are indeed substantially more expensive than studying at Cortland, we also have programs that cost the same or even less, *including* airfare, than the estimated \$9,880 cost of attendance, room, and board at the Cortland campus. Even some of the more expensive opportunities, such as our programs in Australia, can be affordable if students receive exchange awards.
3. **Students are often eligible for financial aid for fall, spring, or summer study abroad programs.** SUNY Cortland's Financial Aid Office has posted a helpful resource (<http://www2.cortland.edu/cost-aid/financial-aid/study-abroad.dot>) about financial aid eligibility for study abroad. Students should start by finding one or more programs (<https://sunycortland-horizons.symplcity.com/index.php?s=StudentHome&au=&ck=>) of interest, downloading the IPO program budget(s), and then making an appointment to talk with their financial aid advisor to discuss their eligibility.

SUNY Cortland offers study abroad programs in over thirty different countries

- Argentina
- Australia
- Belize
- Bolivia
- Brazil
- Cambodia
- China
- Costa Rica
- Ecuador
- Egypt
- Ethiopia
- Germany
- Ghana
- India
- Ireland
- Jamaica
- Kenya
- Mexico
- Moldova
- Mongolia
- Morocco
- Nepal
- Peru
- Romania
- Senegal
- South Africa
- Spain
- Sri Lanka
- Tanzania
- Thailand
- Togo
- Venezuela
- Vietnam

4. Study abroad scholarships are available. Nearly 50% of SUNY Cortland students who study abroad receive exchange awards or scholarships (<https://sunycortland-horizons.symplicity.com/index.php?s=StudentHome&au=&ck=>) ranging from \$200 to \$900 in Overseas Academic Program awards, or \$500-\$2,500 in scholarships generously sponsored by alumni, faculty, and friends of the College. Many outside agencies and organizations also provide substantial amounts of funding for study abroad, such as the federal Boren and Gilman awards, Diversity Abroad scholarships, and the Critical Languages program. These are highly competitive awards, so students should plan ahead and contact IPO for advice and resources. Visit the IPO resource on financing study abroad (<http://www2.cortland.edu/studyabroad/study-abroad/scholarships.dot>) for a list of study abroad scholarship programs.

5. Planning ahead and creative fundraising can expand options. If students start early enough, save, and do some creative fundraising, they can expand their study abroad options. One student, for example, raised funds from friends, family, and others using an online fundraising web site. Another worked with her hometown fire department to hold a fundraiser. Many others have opened savings accounts, depositing a few dollars a week from summer jobs over several years. You may be surprised how much you can save by putting that handful of pocket change in a jar every day over a few years!

We encourage students with a personal situation, financial constraint, disability, or other factor they think will prevent them from going abroad to come talk about options with an IPO study abroad advisor. We are committed to helping all students overcome barriers to participating in international programs, so they, too, can seize the opportunity to broaden their perspectives, enhance their skills, and enrich their college experience.

Mary Schlarb, Director, International Programs
 Old Main Room 219
studyabroad@cortland.edu

If you would like to contribute to the MLDO Newsletter, please email Rachael.Forester@cortland.edu with submissions.