

Mourning the Loss of David Kearns



This past February, we lost a great man, the name sake for our center, Mr. David T. Kearns. As a center we were fortunate enough to be invited to his memorial service to hear from friends and family members about what David Kearns meant to their lives; which gave us time to reflect on what he has meant to our center and the University community at large.

We had the privilege to learn about him as a father, a husband, and a friend. Over the past year, I personally had the privilege of meeting David to talk with him about the current state of the Center and he was receptive and engaged and concerned about the future of all students in the Kearns Center and in the University community at large. It was clear that education and equity in education specifically were a top priority for David Kearns. This experience has further validated and solidified our Center's connection to David Kearns as the Kearns Center is the embodiment of his deepest passion towards education.

David T. Kearns was a national icon, recovering Xerox from sudden doom in the 80's to working with George W. Bush on national educational policy in the early 90's. Many media outlets around the world had quite a lot to say about Mr. Kearns at his passing about his dedication to Xerox, education, and the University of Rochester as a whole. In the New York Times he's quoted as an, "advocate for improved public schools" (2011). Aside from his work with the Kearns Center, David Kearns spent time building alternatives to the current educational structures as exemplified in the creation of a non-for profit called, New American Schools. These works exemplify the passion that David Kearns had for education in the US and the continual quest to make it better.

Kearns Center Commemorates 25th Anniversary of the Space Shuttle Challenger Disaster

In January, the Kearns Center commemorated the 25th anniversary of the Challenger space shuttle disaster, which killed all seven of the shuttle's crew members, including Ronald McNair, the astronaut and physicist for whom the Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Program is named. The event, titled "Renewing the Promise: The Life and Legacy of Dr. Ronald E. McNair," featured alumni of Rochester's McNair program, a showing of a video honoring the life of Dr. McNair, and a keynote address by Dr. Napoleon Wells, a clinical psychologist and graduate of the McNair program at Binghamton University.

The Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program is a federally funded, national program designed to increase the number of low-income, first-generation, and underrepresented minority students who attain the Ph.D. and go on to careers in academia. The McNair program at UR was first funded in 1992 and has served almost 400 students. More than 80% of our graduates have gone on to pursue graduate degrees.

Four of these scholars—Carlo A.K. Williams (1994), LaFleur Stephens (2002), Monique Peters (2002), and Christina Wong (2009)—returned to Rochester to share their experiences and advice with current McNair and Kearns Center Scholars, as well as some high students from the Center's Upward Bound program. When asked about the characteristics of a successful graduate student, all the panelists articulated the importance of perseverance and passion.

Dr. Napoleon Wells, in a stirring keynote address, reiterated the importance of hard work, determination, and commitment. Articulating the need to channel our time and energy into the things that are most important to us, he challenged each student to do something daily that would advance his or her goals. In response to questions about how to deal with the challenges and competitiveness of the graduate school admissions process, Dr. Wells emphasized personal behavior and responsibility, declaring that students will have no control over other applicants to a program, but only over the actions that they take to make themselves good candidates. Dr. Wells also affirmed that all the students in the audience, by dint of their perseverance and courage, had already demonstrated their ability to succeed in graduate school.

The response to Dr. Wells, the panelists, and the McNair video was enthusiastic. Genesis Alberto, a McNair senior, captured the tone of the evening, saying that it "caused me to reflect on my ability to recover from adversity. As Dr. Wells stated, 'you've lived through poverty and through people telling you what you can't do, yet you still get up.' There's one thing I'll remember when I get to grad school: that it's a selective process, and that I've already shown myself I can get through it."



Would you like the Kearns Center to have an information table at one of your events? Contact our office at 585-275-7512 to make arrangements.

Graduate Visitation Program

In an effort to increase the diversity of our graduate student population, the College of Arts, Sciences and Engineering, the School of Nursing, and the Medical School hosted their second annual Graduate Visitation Program for historically underrepresented students interested in earning a Ph.D. at the University of Rochester.



From September 23-25, 2010, 21 students, all from different universities, met with current faculty and graduate students in their areas of interest. Their visit included a faculty luncheon, graduate student panel, tour of the River Campus, and a reception with the Deans of Arts, Sciences, and Engineering.

The students also had the benefit of having an interactive discussion with Donald Asher, an internationally acclaimed author, renowned speaker, and career advisor. Mr. Asher explained the graduate school application process and highlighted the importance of the personal statement.

Over 50 faculty and staff participated in the facilitation of this program. We at the Kearns Center are very proud of the success of the Graduate Visitation Program and believe that it is a great benefit to the University of Rochester.

The next Graduate Visitation Program will occur September 22-24, 2011. For additional information regarding this program, please contact Donald Mitchell by email (donald-mitchelljr@rochester.edu) or by phone at (585) 275-7512.



That the Kearns Center is a Safe Zone for LGBTQ students? All of our staff have received training in this area.

Junot Diaz Visits the University of Rochester



On October 15th, Pulitzer Prize winning novelist Junot Diaz visited the University of Rochester in celebration of Meliora Weekend and Hispanic Heritage Month.

Junot Diaz was born in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic and is the author of *Drown* and *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*, which won the John Sargent Sr. First Novel Prize, the National Book Critics Circle Award, the Anisfield-Wolf Book Award, the Dayton Literary Peace Prize, and the 2008 Pulitzer Prize. He is the fiction editor at the *Boston Review* and the Rudge (1948) and Nancy Allen Professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Mr. Diaz was able to spend most of the day on the River Campus. He met with a Creative Writing class and allowed students to receive direct feedback on their work. He then spoke at a small reception attended by Kearns students, addressing the potential and abilities that he admires in U of R students. Over 300 people registered for the book reading/question and answer session in the Interfaith Chapel.

This event was cosponsored by the Office of the President, the Kearns Center, S.A.L.S.A, Modern Languages and Cultures, English Department, the Frederick Douglas Institute, the Friends of the University of Rochester Libraries and River Campus Libraries. In the future, we hope to invite speakers of the caliber of Junot Diaz to celebrate Hispanic Heritage month. Please contact the Kearns Center if you have a suggestion for future speakers.

Megan Roberts Studies in Malawi

This past summer I was afforded the great opportunity to partake in the Malawi Immersion Seminar. The time I spent in Malawi, a country in the southern region of Africa was not only life changing but one of the most memorable experiences of my life. In Malawi, I along with the other participants, spent most of our stay in Malawi living in a rural village with host families for about twelve days. In these twelve days we learned what the average day for a Malawian living in a rural village consisted of; this includes chopping firewood, pounding maize, sweeping and preparing meals amongst other things. It was expected by the end of our stay, for us to participate in some of the household chores.

What I appreciate the most about my host family is the strong bond that we had with each other. I cannot remember a moment during my stay where I felt like a stranger and because my host family was so welcoming I feel that I really received what Joe Lanning (program instructor) wanted all of the participants to get out this trip and that is true cultural exchange. I am extremely thankful that I was able to attend this trip with the help of family, friends, and the Kearns Center and most of all I am thankful for the program's existence. I urge anyone that has ever contemplated study abroad to consider this program as one of their options.

~Megan Roberts, Class of 2012

Important Information

This summer, all Students will be housed in Susan B. Anthony Hall.

McNair Scholars and Xerox Fellows

Program Dates: May 31-July 30

All Students

We need to receive a biography from you by April 25. Check your email for details.

Kearns Scholars

Summer Session A
May 16-June 24

Summer Session B
June 27-August 5

Upward Bound Regents

Academy

On January 15th and January 22nd, Upward Bound hosted its Regents Preparation Academy at the University of Rochester. The program provided opportunities for Upward Bound students to work with pre-service teachers from the Warner School of Education, undergraduate tutors from the University of Rochester, and instructors from the Rochester City School District to help prepare for the New York State Regents Exams.

With the Regents exams as one of the most significant challenges on the path towards high school completion for many students, it was clear to see that Upward Bound students were taking advantage of the Regents Prep Academy very seriously.

Students in attendance had the opportunity to take part in this focused preparation. Ranging from fields within mathematics, science, social studies, and english, Upward Bound students spent their time reviewing material in small groups with classroom instructors, tutors, and their fellow students. While some students chose to spend their days at the Regents Prep Academy focused entirely on one subject, most students divided up their time in order to prepare for multiple different Regents Exams.

While these January Regents Prep Academy days are sure to have added to Upward Bound students' preparation for the upcoming exams, they are not the end of that effort. With more Regents Exams on the horizon for the end of the academic year, Upward Bound students can look forward to more Regents Prep Academy days in early June.

Upcoming Events

Financial Literacy Workshop

Wednesday, April 20th @ 4:00 pm
Location: Hylan 1106A

End of Semester Party

Wednesday, April 27th @ 5:30 pm
Location: Meliora Salon D

Study Break—Pizza and Wings

Wednesday, May 4th @ 12:00 pm
Hylan 716

Exam Breakfast

Friday, May 6th @ 8:00 pm
Hylan 716

Upward Bound Programs Class of 2011

The Upward Bound Programs prepare seniors for the college admissions process. During "Senior Week," the class of 2011 was the first cohort to experience residential life. The week consists of college search, recommendations, college applications, personal statements, and resume. Throughout the academic year, the program hosts Senior Days every other Wednesday for students to work on their applications and scholarships with the Academic Advisors.

This year, we have incorporated Senior Meetings that involve the student and the parent or guardian to review application status, financial aid and the college list. In the Senior Meetings, the parents and or guardians get a sense of what to expect from the admissions office, financial aid office, and opportunity programs.

So far, we are proud to share that our Class of 2011 have been accepted to the following colleges and universities; Alfred University, Alfred State College, Roberts Wesleyan College, St. John's University, Barry University, University of Rochester, Hartwick College, and Clarkson University.

Rochester AmeriCorps at the Kearns Center

This past academic year, The Kearns Center was pleased to have two AmeriCorps members, Jenna Drake and Michele Viterise assisting our academic advisors with the Upward Bound program. Rochester AmeriCorps is a part of this national service initiative and is an organization dedicated to mobilizing AmeriCorps members and community volunteers to address pressing issues in the Rochester area, with an emphasis on initiatives involving children and youth.

Jenna and Michele have been able to utilize their AmeriCorps network to bring in a speaker from RochesterWorks! For Youth. Dana Lundquist, a fellow member, gave a presentation to our 9th, 10th and 11th grade students on the importance of picking a career that is right for you and how to reach your career goals in college.

New Kearns Center Scholars

McNair Academic Year Scholars

- Cannon, Grace
- Chowdhury, Ripa
- Collins-Anderson, Akilah
- Dupree, Haley
- Grigsby, Sierrah
- Kothor, Marius
- Markham, Gerard
- Marozas, Ian
- Nicholas, Tyler
- Oladeru, Oladysin

NSF Scholars

- Antoniou, Pantelis
- Becerra, Omar
- Burton, Frederick
- Cardona, Michela
- Cason, Sierra
- Flores, Bianca
- Gill, Anisha
- Hannah, Jarrett
- Robinson, Justine
- Viers, Cassandra
- Wong, Beverly

Social Science/ Humanities Scholars

- Brefo, Manda
- Martin, Leslie
- Nzikou-Pembe, Isia
- Perez, Yaritza
- Radcliffe, Shamen

Kearns Center Engineering Fellows

- Brown, Kevin
- Byrdwell, Milan
- Ingram, Asia
- Jimoh, Omotayo
- Lafrance, Isaac
- Lee, Andrea
- Macias, Henry
- Vanderburgh, Jacob
- Vasquez, Edy

2011 McNair Summer Scholars

- Jessica Colorado
- Fatima Tanni
- Amirah Beeks (Hampton University)
- Jabari Henriques (North Carolina A&T)
- Arshaqui Johnson (Norfolk State University)
- Kelli Barnes (Hampton University)

2011 Xerox Engineering Fellows

- Andrea Morrell
- Ruth Davis
- Christopher Schmitt
- Daniel Reynolds
- Douglas Clift
- Jeffrey Shapanka
- David Alvarado
- Shyue-Li Horng (Mike)
- Carrie Trant
- Peter Vercillo
- Kyle Arean-Raines
- Dmitry Boyuk
- Michael Beckley
- Chad Hunter
- Donato Borrello
- Kyle Murray
- Jinan Hussain
- David Heid
- Colin Funai
- Susana Acosta
- Miguel Garcia
- Elizabeth Martens
- Jesse Cramer
- Frank Wolfs
- Christopher Legocki
- Syed Habib
- Michael Her
- Stephanie Cai

THE DAVID T. KEARNS CENTER

FOR LEADERSHIP AND DIVERSITY IN ARTS, SCIENCES AND ENGINEERING

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Graduate Programs Expanding

We are joined by two new professionals who will be leading our efforts in the recruitment and retention of graduate students in Arts, Sciences and Engineering. Professor Valeria Sinclair-Chapman joins us as Director of Graduate Programs, with primary responsibility for expansion of the support services we are able to provide for minority graduate students, and planning for the retention of graduate students more broadly. Donald Mitchell, Jr. joins us as Graduate Recruitment and Retention Specialist, with responsibility for sustainably increasing the pool of minority students applying to doctoral programs in Arts, Sciences and Engineering.

Our current initiatives include: our Graduate Visitation Program (GVP), which brings underrepresented minority, low-income, and first-generation college students to campus who have started their graduate school search and considering UR; managing UR's membership with the National GEM Consortium, which provides graduate fellowships for MS and PhD students in science, technology, engineering and math; and, managing the Visiting Dissertation Fellowship as part of the Northeast Consortium for Faculty Diversity, offered as a means of diversifying our academic departments while providing mentoring and financial support to scholars in their final stages of completing the doctoral degree. This Fall, 21 students participated in the GVP program and 6 applied for Fall 2011 admittance; 9 students who applied for the GEM Fellowship applied to one of our graduate programs; and, we received 32 applications for the 2011-2012 Visiting Dissertation Fellowship.

New Staff

The Kearns Center would like to welcome our new staff members:

Valeria Sinclair-Chapman, Ph.D., Director of Graduate Programs

Donald Mitchell, Graduate Recruitment and Retention Specialist

Danielle Daniels, Science Specialist

Jon Gorman, Academic Advisor, Pre-College Programs



That the Kearns Center collaborates with SALSA to develop programs and events for Latino Heritage Month (September 15 - October 15)?