

OFFICE OF MINORITY STUDENT AFFAIRS Chronicle



Director's Corner

On behalf of the Office of Minority Student Affairs, welcome to the Spring 2011 edition of the OMSA Chronicle. As in past publications, it is gratifying to note that this issue focuses primarily on our students and some of their amazing achievements and experiences. For example, students have worked hard on a diverse range of programs and have brought influential and inspirational speakers like the late Dr. Manning Marable, Professor Junot Diaz, and Dr. Alvin Poussaint to campus.

In this issue, we are also fortunate to hear from President Joel Seligman, outstanding alumni, and new staff in the College. As usual, it is our expectation that the articles and information represented will reinforce the fact that the University is a vibrant and intellectually engaging place – an environment where students truly make a difference and contribute in significant ways to the living and learning environment.

In this vein, I strongly encourage students to use the Chronicle as a proactive voice to frame and articulate both the outstanding achievements as well as the complex issues affecting campus climate for culturally and ethnically diverse students. As we see it, the newsletter with your input, of course, can foster meaningful and much needed discourse around important issues that promote an open and inclusive community.

As always, we look forward to your feedback regarding this issue and hope that the content will motivate students to become even more engaged in all aspects of campus life. Please enjoy the Chronicle!

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OMSA CHRONICLE MISSION

To provide students with timely information about opportunities and events that support the mission of OMSA; to serve as a forum for students to present ideas, issues and solutions to problems and or issues that exist in our community; to act as an on-going communication resource for students, faculty and staff alike.

Diversity in the President's Eyes

Written by: O.J. Watson



At the annual Sophomore Dinner with President Seligman, I asked the President a burning question: What does diversity mean to the University? President Seligman's immediate response was "diversity is a core value." President Seligman says that he and the administration are continuing to work on diversifying the University

in the realms of students, faculty, and advisors.

In terms of diversity, President Seligman says this is not only important on campus, but also off campus. The President has personally reached out to the Rochester community specifically through hosting several talks in the 19th Ward and Sector 4. His association with the Rochester community is part of what made the Riverview Housing development a success.

President Seligman is very proud of the steps that he and his administration have made so far in diversifying the University of Rochester community.

He is hopeful that in the years to come the University will continue on the path to diversifying successfully.

I later decided that finding out from President Seligman what diversity meant to the University was not enough, so I emailed him two additional questions.

The first question was: "What is your personal definition of diversity?" In terms of diversity he stated that "the ultimate aspiration of diversity is to allow every person the ability to achieve the dream of a fully actualized life, including financial security, health, happiness, family, and community."

The second question was: "What is the importance of Black History Month to you and the University's administration?" The President responded that "Black History Month matters because it is the story of a people who are achieving one of the most fundamental transitions in world history. Too many African Americans were brought here as slaves. Their history of overcoming the brutality and inhumanity of slavery, of building a culture against too long a period of indefensible laws such as those that required segregation, in some instances of continuing to struggle against social prejudice, and in many instances of achieving deeply deserved recognition and achievement is Biblical in its moral force."

It was refreshing to get the President's perspective and I look forward to future discussions.

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Poussaint Provides a Hopeful Perspective

Written by: Charlene Cooper

Keynote speaker Dr. Alvin Poussaint provided a sense of hope and a message of perseverance at the University of Rochester's Strong Auditorium, for the University's annual Martin Luther King Jr. Commemorative Address. As a professor of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School, former script consultant for the "The Cosby Show", and an active figure in the Civil Rights Movement, Dr. Poussaint's presence was most vital in a time where the presence of a positive African American male figure was much needed on the University's campus. After tragic events took place only a few weeks prior, his speech, which focused on his personal experience in the Civil Rights Movement, served as a much needed ray of hope and an inspiration for all those in attendance.



Sharing personal pictures and laughs with the collegiate community as well as the greater Rochester community who gathered that night, Dr. Poussaint wasn't afraid to provide his realistic lens of the challenges presented before African Americans during that time.

As the Southern Field Director of the Medical Committee of Human Rights from 1965 to 1967, Dr. Poussaint spoke of how he made a difference in Jackson Mississippi with his efforts to abolish segregation of public hospitals, as well as providing medical assistance to civil rights workers. Furthermore, he shared with the audience an inside look at the protest march from Selma to the Capital State Building in Montgomery, Alabama, with the help of Martin Luther King Jr. and Ralph David Abernathy.

The still photos and Dr. Poussaint's narrative account of these events allowed all to visually share each moment in time with him. Amongst the many serious visuals presented, was one photo of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. indulging in an orange. These candid photos brought to life Dr. Poussaint's vivid explanation of both the political and realistic aspects of this civil rights struggle.



It was clear through Dr. Poussaint's keynote address, that in such a powerful time of progression and change, there was no question as to where all the active African American men were to be found; a question Dr. Walter Cooper, U of R alumnus, couldn't help but ask during the reception prior to the main event.

After scoping out the venue, Dr. Cooper expressed his worry about the lack of black male presence in the room. He shared with those interested, how during his collegiate days black men on this campus made their mark.

One of the active black men brought up in conversation was Ian Feurtado, a junior at the University of Rochester and the Vice President of the Black Students' Union. That night, Feurtado was given the opportunity to introduce Dr. Poussaint and share the stage with someone who he personally admires. Feurtado explained after the address how Dr. Poussaint inspired him to carry on the torch of black male leadership. An enthused Feurtado stated, "I believe that the opportunity put me in the position to be incredibly inspired. Not only did I witness the accomplishments of an important historical figure, but I was able to identify with him and thus realized my obligation to carry the torch for years to come."

Feurtado was not the only one who left encouraged by Dr. Poussaint's address that evening. Much of the administration and student body dismissed on a very uplifted note as well; with many gathering in small groups to discuss how moved they were after the address.

This past February came and went, marking another National Black History Month. But honestly, sometimes you think: who really cares? What with writing essays, studying for exams, figuring out endless housing drama, and trying to get internships for the summer, students have more important things to do in the spring semester than relearn that black people made peanut butter. Right? However, if students were to learn that the university they attend did not always have a track record of embracing a diverse community and that students engaged in civil protest to fight for the Rochester that exists today, maybe it would warrant taking a break from the textbooks. If they were also to learn that twelve years ago the Office of Minority Student Affairs (OMSA) was located in the basement of Morey in an office smaller than its current one, which prospective students would almost never see on tours, maybe they might take some time to remember Black History Month.

Black history exists wherever African-Americans come together and leave a mark on the community. At Rochester, in 1969 and 1999, students of color decided that there was an impact they wanted to have on the university that would remain. In both 1969 and 1999 sit-ins were arranged on the Rochester campus to protest issues of diversity on campus. This is the story of the most recent struggle, the 1999 sit-in, and its impact on the Rochester we know today.

“[A sit-in] wasn’t the beginning idea, by any means. That was a last resort,” said Damion Polite, class of 2001. Polite was a leading coordinator of the 1999 sit-in who agreed to get in touch with the staff of the OMSA Chronicle in order to tell his story. On February 22nd, a group of students gathered on the second floor of the admissions building outside of the office of then president Thomas H. Jackson to protest issues faced by minorities on campus that were not being addressed. According to Polite, “[The space] was packed, I mean, you could hardly get down the hall.” However, such a number of students did not suddenly arise out of the woodwork due to their instant dissatisfaction with university life. The gathering had its roots in long-standing problems on campus. These problems were the subject of meetings that took place a year before a sit-in had even been imagined between student leaders hopeful to resolve them.

The first of these issues that inspired the meetings and eventually led to a student civil protest was the vitalization of the Frederick Douglass Institute. Nowadays, this institute houses the African and African-American studies majors on campus. It offers undergraduate internships, brings in outside speakers, and hosts a bi-weekly video and film series. But in 1999 Polite described the Frederick Douglass Institute as a “shell”, which featured the name of Frederick Douglass in school brochures but did not offer majors. The hope was to turn the institute into an academic resource for students. Other goals of student leaders were the attraction of underrepresented minorities (which they considered to be blacks and Latinos) to campus. This included both students and faculty. Finally, the movement of OMSA from the basement of Morey to a more accessible location was another rallying point.

According to Polite, “OMSA wasn’t this nice, spread out thing they have now.” The location and size of the office suggested to students the regard that the University held towards minority student affairs. For about a year students were engaged in discussions with the administration, hoping to address these issues. To Polite’s recollection, the administration assigned Dean Green to attend student meetings and serve as a liaison between students and officials. For Polite, “the administration was very apathetic to the needs of minorities on campus” and he recognized that a lot was not being done to actually address their concerns.

The tipping point, however, dealt with an almost unrelated issue concerning the May Room. Many minority student groups such as SALSA, BSU, and MSAB used the May Room for certain campus events, but due to a change in policy related to security the price of holding those events went up to around \$800. Polite contrasted the May Room situation with events involving Greek Life where students did not have to pay the steep security charge, but where it could be argued there was a higher need for security. In the face of such costs, many groups would find it unprofitable to even hold events. Confronted with this setback, Polite went to Dean Burgett, who he describes as having had a “very good relationship” with. Alone in the dean’s office, Polite warned that the administration had better solve the security issue.

Soon thereafter, tired of dialogue and following deliberation and brainstorming, the students decided to organize a sit-in. In preparation, various people were assigned different tasks. The students rallied support for the sit-in, calling on the general student body and campus groups. “We met with all types of reactions,” said Polite, describing them as ranging from enthusiastic to outright hostile. The media was also contacted before the sit-in in order to make the event more public. The site of the protest, Wallis Hall, was chosen because of its visibility to visiting students. Minority students on campus were set on making their complaints unignorable.

On Monday, in business-casual attire, after meeting at the chapel the students made their way toward the admissions office. With them they carried a ten-page document outlining their grievances and goals. Security was first to meet them at the building. The sit-in was allowed to continue, but unlike the students’ original plan to take the entire building, they were confined

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to the second floor. Many students brought textbooks, binders, and notebooks to study while they waited. After a short time, President Jackson met with the students, who were accompanied by Dean Burgett, to look over their document. They were then asked to leave the room. After some time the administration responded with a single paragraph document. According to Polite, the response was far from satisfactory. He expressed that at the time his thoughts were, “they don’t get it.” The students settled in for a stalemate.

Two meetings and four hours later Polite emerged from the President’s office with a proposal hammered out between minority students and the administration meant to address the problems of diversity at Rochester. “I still have an original contract,” said Polite. Overall, the contract pledged university support towards the goals laid out in the document brought by student protestors including increased minority student and faculty recruitment, creation of majors within the Frederick Douglass Institute, as well as new offices for OMSA. The only dissatisfying element for Polite was the lack of a timeline.

At least on the surface the sit-in seemed to be a success. Even so, Polite expressed that a “level of distrust was there” between the administration and students. In the months that followed, the Minority Student Advisory Board (MSAB), which was a loose umbrella group, was transformed into a group fulfilling something of a “watchdog” role. “MSAB’s job is to hold [the administration] accountable” said Polite. In the wake of that agreement, over the years, the task of keeping the administration attentive to the needs of minority students has met with successes and pitfalls.

Marius Kothor (2013) expressed dissatisfaction with the transparency of the administration in its efforts to achieve the goals laid out in 1999, specifically with respect to attraction and retention of minority students and faculty. “The university has not given us any specific kinds of things that they’re doing,” said Kothor. She fears the lack of concrete steps reflects a lack of progress overall. “This university always talks about diversity in the public realm... but I feel like it’s just talk,” she said.

Although grounded concerns, the legacy of the sit-in has in other respects been a positive one. The movement of OMSA and the current robustness of the Frederick Douglass Institute are good examples. Referring to the continued existence of MSAB and expanded campus facilities, “that was our hope” Polite added. However, he cautioned against becoming complacent in the face of positive change and reminded that “it enhances the whole educational experience of everyone to have diversity at the forefront of your atmosphere.”

Polite stressed that this was beneficial to all students, and that other campus demographics should be involved in causes seemingly only pertaining to minority students. “Our intention is to have the community embrace everybody” he said.

Creating a campus that is a home for all students and not just the ones with the highest numbers is a responsibility of every member of the university community. Polite believes that issues that crop up for certain populations should concern the whole. “If gay students are being bullied it’s not just gay students” he used as an example. He urged that fighting for diversity “should be everybody’s charge” despite the fact that sometimes “it’s going to be uncomfortable for folks.” But, in the end, maybe that discomfort is what is necessary for change; the kind of discomfort that shakes students out of their routines and opens their eyes. Speaking of routines, in light of Damion Polite’s story, another routine it may be worthwhile to break out of is ignoring what else February is about other than the fact that it is still snowing.

Certain people, including students at Rochester, have gone out of their way to leave a historical impact. February may not be just another month to get through, albeit a hectic one, but a time to look back and think about the past and those people. More importantly, it also might be a time to feel inspired. Damion Polite and his colleagues took their vision as far as it could go in 1999 and were willing to put themselves and their academic standing at risk to take a stand for what they believed in. The participants of the sit-in came together to imagine a university better than what existed for them in that time and to make that a reality.

For every student, no matter what background, the OMSA Chronicle wishes to tell you to make February your month. It is, in the spirit of all black history, a time to take back pride in your personal identity. And for all students, it might be advisable to begin doing so with the advice Mr. Polite gave at the end of his interview, to “start with that ‘what if’ again.”

Meliora Weekend

Contribution from S.A.L.S.A

During the past few years at the College Diversity Roundtable, the Spanish and Latino Students' Association's (S.A.L.S.A.) leadership expressed our need to have more inclusive events during Meliora Weekend that our parents, alumni, and students could identify with. After two years, the University committed to bringing Pulitzer Prize winning author Junot Diaz to the University during Meliora Weekend. We co-sponsored this event with the President's Office, The David T. Kearns Center, Modern Languages and Cultures, the English Department, the Frederick Douglass Institute, and Friends of the University of Rochester Libraries and River Campus Libraries. As a result of this joint effort the event was a complete success.


Ultimately, S.A.L.S.A. wanted to give our peers, parents, and alumni reasons to return to Rochester for many years to come and fill a void in being able to relate to one of the University's premier weekends. It is even more important to us as a sign that the University is supportive of us during Hispanic Heritage Month, a month in which we recognize the achievements of Hispanic Americans.


Junot Diaz won the Pulitzer Prize for his book "The Brief and Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao". We worked with the Kearns Center to recruit volunteers for ushering and assisting with the execution of the program. The University, particularly the Office for Faculty Development and Diversity and Communications, helped promote the event on the school's website and provided a calendar which we helped distribute on campus. In addition, S.A.L.S.A. promoted the event through our Hispanic Heritage Month calendar, Facebook events, and at our general membership meetings. The event was well attended by students, faculty, staff, and community members. We estimate that about 200-300 people were in attendance at the Interfaith Chapel.

This event catered not only to Latino students but those interested in creative writing and expressive thought. We were able to provide insight for students in a creative writing course where Mr. Diaz was able to interact and share his personal experiences and advice. A small reception was

also provided for other University students, high school students, and staff, which served as an opportunity for individuals to speak with Mr. Diaz on a more personal level. The S.A.L.S.A. membership feels proud to have been able to start a new tradition at the University of Rochester and the success of this event has demonstrated the University's commitment to honor and celebrate future Hispanic Heritage Months.

The Spanish and Latino Students' Association
(S.A.L.S.A.)
cordially invites you to our following Meliora Weekend 2010 events:


Junot Diaz
Pulitzer-Prize winning author
Reading and book signing
Friday, October 15
6pm-8pm
Hoyt Hall


S.A.L.S.A.'s
40th Anniversary
Panel and Luncheon
Saturday, October 16
12:15pm-2pm
Meliora Restaurant,
Salon D

Alumni in the Workplace

Joshua Pollard • Class of 2005 • Economics and Statistics

Activities at the University: Minority Student Advisory Board, Sigma Beta Rho Fraternity, Inc., BSU member, SALSA member, Meridian Society, Study Abroad (Madrid, Spain)

Employer: Goldman Sachs

Department: Global Investment Research (Equity Research)

What I do: My team covers fifteen housing related stocks for Goldman Sachs. Coverage in equity research at Goldman Sachs entails produce ratings, creating earnings estimates and target prices for the US Homebuilders and US Building Products companies. Our coverage includes companies like Toll Brothers (TOL), Whirlpool (WHR), and Owens Corning (OC).

Day-to-day life: My daily activities vary widely. I spend most of my time on the phone and in meetings with portfolio managers and analysts at mutual funds, pension funds, and hedge funds. Travel can be expansive at times, but I spend an average of 3-5 days on the road per month. Significant amounts of time are spent in Microsoft Excel and Microsoft Word creating, updating and forecasting company and industry models, and writing investment notes. It is critical to have good contacts across the industry, so we spend a fair amount of time networking.

Favorite quote in the business: “The highs are really high and the lows are really low.” In November 2009, eight months after I was given lead coverage of the US homebuilders I was making a high conviction call to buy shares of DR Horton (DHI), the biggest homebuilder in the United States. That day in November the company reported earnings that were below my forecasts, even though all of the forward looking metrics were above expectations. The stock traded down 16% that day. I called my favorite client for advice, even though he was not particularly pleased with my advice. His comment to me was “Look Pollard, in this business the highs are really high and the lows are really low; if you hate the lows and love the highs then let those feelings drive your investment acumen.” The next day I told investors to keep buying DR Horton, because the negatives were transitory in my opinion. Indeed, the highs are high and by February 2010 the company reported earnings again; the stock was up 50% from the lows it reached the previous November.



Who Can Step Bet

Written by: Qu

Nine teams put their strongest foot forward Saturday, February 3rd at the Black Students' Union 8th Annual Step Show competition. Performing for a near packed Strong auditorium, teams from the city of Rochester and others as far as Buffalo delivered an exhilarating showcase of stepping.

According to BSU they provide a stage where "African American history of step is embraced and teams are able to demonstrate their modern day variations of this and put their overall stepping ability on display." An integral goal of the event is to integrate the Rochester youth with the collegiate population. BSU wants the high school students to understand that achieving a higher education is feasible. Prior to the show there was a College Forum which included high school and college students as well as representatives from Financial Aid and Admissions.

Out of the competitors two teams emerged as winners: the School Without Walls' Flawless Females in the high school division and the University of Buffalo's UB Step Troupe. The show featured a variety of styles, from teams as regimented and synchronized as the Wilson Pearls to others such as the Flawless Females who, literally, danced their hair off. Some groups incorporated theatrical elements such as a mock documentary from the G-Steppers and a skit involving ravenous zombies by the UB Step Troupe. The quality of each group was astounding; The Black Reign Steppers even performed part of their dance blind-folded. But what stood out the most for a non-initiate to stepping were, the dual elements of extreme control and synchronization combined with powerful intensity. The steps, which give the style its name, are meant to be strong and aggressive, but they are also contrasted with an almost military precision between individual dancers.

The team that definitively showcased that aspect of stepping in performance was the Wilson Pearls. The second team to take the stage, the Pearls is an all-female step group from Rochester. An extremely large group, they were an intimidating force moving onto the stage in streamlined rows wearing all black with jean jackets, baseball caps and, of course, pearls. The performance started to Janet Jackson's "Rhythm Nation" with a dance portion more similar to hip-hop than step. But when the music cut out and the stepping started, the team of dancers became as regimented as a military platoon. Their movements were fast and frenetic, and although broken strings of pearls were soon flying across the stage, the dancers themselves were perfectly in time, powerful steps breaking through the varying rhythms of clapping and body percussion. The Pearls were first to truly capture the audience's attention with intense stepping. So much so that one audience member remarked that "they should not have let them go second", in reference to the Archonettes who preceded them.

But in contrast to the powerful and military style of the Pearls, other teams highlighted more creative aspects of stepping. The co-ed UB Steppers turned their team into two groups of dancers made up of 'students' fleeing from 'zombies'. The interweaving of the plot into the dance was the best of the night. One of the high points of the choreography was when the students' dance moves included ducking and dodging the zombies who lunged at them.

The Black Reign Steppers from Syracuse incorporated multimedia into their performance, opening the dance with a video in which two evil scientists brought Barbie dolls (and one Ken) to life. The scientists became harder and harder to please as the dolls kept dancing, demanding more complicated choreography. This culminated in one of the best moments of the show when the Black Reign steppers put on blind-folds and continued dancing, switching positions within a framework where dancers were both standing and sitting and had to do motions that involved a partner. It was an impressive demonstration of skill.

The Black Reign Steppers' representation also emphasized one of the common features of the show; that every



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team choreographed pieces in a series of fragments strung together into one performance. There was often an introductory dance, various sections more oriented to traditional step, and an ending dance. In each small dance there were different rhythms, speeds, types of choreography, use of clapping versus stepping, and so on. For a lot of the performances this fragmented style was used to build suspense.

For example, watching the all-male Wilson Wolfpack from Rochester stand in absolute silence after dancing one of the fastest sections of choreography in the show only increased the energy of the performance and the crowd. Spoken elements were also often used in between dance portions to enliven the audience and the dancers. When one member of the Wolfpack informed the other teams that the Wilson Wolfpack would give them material that they could use next year, the audience erupted with cheers. Other teams threw out seeming catch-phrases from their groups, declaring themselves “dedicated”, “sophisticated”, and “motivated”.

The lasting element, however, that defined the Rochester show was the commitment of dancers to their steps. The Wilson Pearls, The Wilson Wolfpack, the Flawless Females, and the UB Steppers were all teams that deserve mentioning in this respect. But the Flawless Females were second to none in commitment. Stomping around the stage wearing pajamas and army boots, one member of the group projected her voice across the auditorium during her solo-speaking portion, and looking at the dancers’ faces, it was hard to find one that did not seem entirely focused on the performance. As the dance built up and the steps became more complicated two of the dancers actually lost parts of their costumes, but continued dancing without pause. The audiences’ reaction was deafeningly loud.

Overall the event was extremely successful. SUNY Brockport student Edith Koduah., said “The show was wonderful. All the teams came with their best game.” However, not everyone was satisfied with the results. Arlene Cudjoe, also a Brockport student, said that she had hoped The Black Reign Steppers from Syracuse would have won.

Despite some disappointment for the losing teams and their fans, the show itself was an entertaining experience that demonstrated what stepping is all about. Showcasing without a doubt their motivation, dedication, and sophistication in dancing, all the teams at the show put on performances to be proud of. The audience response echoed the quality of the performances, one woman calling the show “wonderful” and saying that every team “brought their all”. The Black Students’ Union can certainly pat themselves on the back this year for the success of the 8th Annual Unity Step Show Competition.



This past February was one of the few Black History Months placed in a time when change and progression are directly headed by an African American president; carrying the torch that illuminates the new presidential face. It is a face leaders like Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Malcolm X fought assure we'd all see one day. In a month and a time like this, it is so easy to celebrate for those minimal 28 days and sweep the rest of black history under the rug for the other months of the year. This is something many of us do even during Black History Month itself, when it is the ideal time to explore the roots of our past and seek for the missing pieces in this puzzle called history.

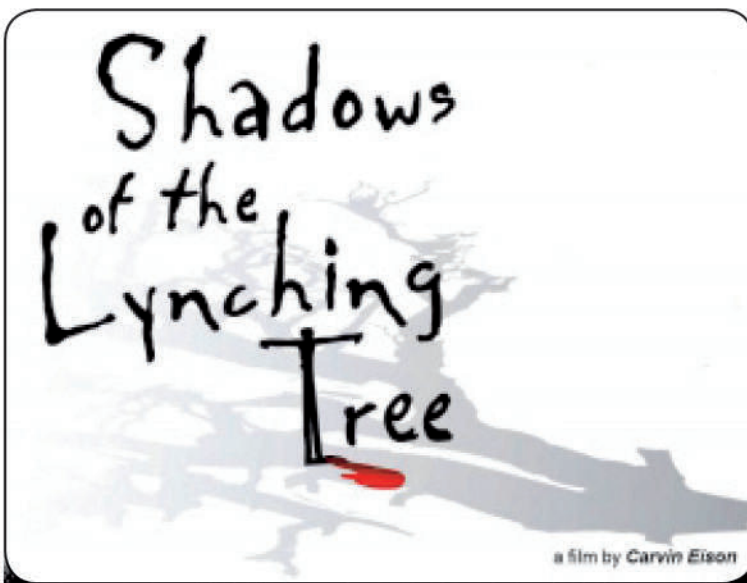
We have learned, long before our collegiate years, of slavery, the Civil Rights Movement, and the great leaders and individuals who paved the way for Black consciousness, liberation, and rights today. What about the rest of the African-American past that plays an integral role in American History? These are parts of history that many of our educators are too afraid to delve into, out of fear that they may offend someone. They cringe at the idea of creeping into a territory they have convinced themselves for so long that they have no business going into. It is not until the much bolder individuals of our time decide that enough is enough and

that there is no time better than now to explore the unfrequented grounds within black history, that we will learn about these pieces of the past.

A gallant Carvin Eison, associate professor at SUNY Brockport and producer-director of *Shadows of the Lynching Tree*, a raw and powerful documentary exploring the history of lynching within American history, examines the truths behind the hatred and brewed-up fury within the hearts of much of White America in the early 19th Century. *Shadows of the Lynching Tree* takes us to a place of deep, dark secrets once put on display for a bloodthirsty community to enjoy, but now tucked away into the darkest of closets hardly making it into history books; let alone our cerebral history. One of only a few like it, *Shadows of the Lynching Tree* puts the realities of this dehumanizing conduct on display with no reservations.

Brilliantly revealing the core dimensions and social structure of lynching in America's past, Eison recognizes that this means little to us now if we cannot relate it to our present and future. In an interview with Eison, he explained, "We know virtually nothing as a culture about the institution of lynching and how pervasive it was and how it resonates today."

These shadows discussed in the documentary initially came in the form of bloodthirsty, enraged, White Americans who were out to kill for the entertainment of the community. As they saw it, this was a way to instill fear within African Americans, with the goal of essentially creating a clear social hierarchy with Whites at the top of this social ladder. Eison explains lynching as "a blood thirst where there was an order established around this blood thirst, that had to be quenched from time to time. It was part of the social fabric; part of the social order."



Carvin Eison

Arlene Cooper



It is frightening to imagine living in times like these and the thought of it would naturally cause discomfort in many of us. This is particularly true in a time where many of us would rather just turn the other cheek and say ‘at least we’ve got a Black President’; unaware that a Black President means nothing when

one does not know where they’ve come from and where they are headed. Although we’d like to think lynching does not occur anymore, these same dreaded shadows Eison speaks of are still ubiquitous today.

Creeping into our contemporary government, our homes, and even within our seemingly safe campus, lynching has stepped beyond its overt past, and we’ve allowed it to enter under the radar into our present. We live in a time of new age lynching that appears in a covert manner and can often be unconscious. This act of lynching has become ingrained in our society and our historical blueprint that we naively sit back and hardly recognize that it still happens today.

These shadows rear their ugly heads, for example, in the form of what Eison describes as Presidential “character assassination”; particularly through attempts by high powered individuals, to delegitimize President Barack Obama by questioning his authority, his power, and his ability. Eison explored how these shadows are further prevalent on university campuses when, for example, African American professors whose work was once regarded as exceptional when they were sanctioned into their position, suddenly becomes not quite up to par when it’s time for the tenure committee to possibly grant them permanency.

All of a sudden the standards seem to change and the professor’s work is no longer good enough.

Likewise on a more basic level these shadows still lurk. Eison explained how in situations when we stand around, watch, and not say anything in the presence of off color racist jokes, we allow this shadow to once again take precedence. He adds that those of us guilty of even simple acts like these are just as guilty of social lynching, explaining that “those people give approval by not saying anything, not doing anything; they just go along with it.”

Only a very thin line separates those of us guilty of this silent act of social lynching from the individuals who took the day off of work, brought picnic baskets and their children along to enjoy what they saw as amusement provided by the lynching procedure. What makes us any less responsible than these people for allowing the act of lynching to continue to thrive? Surely not our black skin.

For so long we’ve been forced to divorce ourselves from our everyday acts of societal lynching, to the point where we’ve conditioned ourselves to unconsciously disguise it with our ‘but look how far we’ve come’ mind frame.

We ought to take an approach similar to that of Eison’s, and dive into the deep, dark, forbidden waters we’ve been warned to stay away from for far too long, and truly reacquaint ourselves with Black History; beyond the aspects we have been given permission to explore.



image found at: http://image.shutterstock.com/display_pic_with_logo/195/1215256765/20/stock-vector-weeping-willow-tree-silhouette-14535949.jpg

Student Poetry Submissions

Spinning Wheel

Derek Ward

The Spin of the Wheel must not stop
The wheel must keep going
For it did not stop with King or Malcolm
Its forward momentum only increased
It does not rest with Jesse Jackson
It continually moves on in path
Obama is not the final
To merely direct the wheel
It is to you
You who must continue to push
Spinning the wheel into the hands of the future
Do not allow the forward progress to stop
But deliver it faster, stronger, better
Allow it to continue without cease
To an infinite spin!

Black & Young

Derek Ward

Black & Young, look in your hand
There in it lies destiny
It is you who has the ability
The authority
The power
To shape & cultivate existence in your will
So much has been given from those previous
In effort
In sacrifice
In labor
In blood
With all of this given comes so much responsibility
The responsibility for a future
A future of Prosperity & Peace
A future of Growth & Greatness
A future Serious & Successful
This is for yourselves, the world, & the future
generations
Shape before you time & space
As if you are God
Dictate fate & not let fate dictate you
The only thing that can stop you is you
The world is yours & everything in presence
Black & Young, live it!

Rhythm & Moves

Carl Parker

Do you know what the gods do for fun?
For leisure.
A pastime to pass time from one hour into immortality.
I'll tell you.
They move.
Once, to the rhythm of a tribe of women.
Singing to the buckling knees of forty men.
With fire.
Burning passion and skin stretched across hollow tree trunks.
The notes, simply beaten out of them.
And the gasping for air after hours of tradition.
Dance, and music hand in hand like puzzle pieces.
Like lock and key.
Endorphin and synapses.
Appreciate your brains indulgence into this ancient art.
Here, lies your history.
Buried in the sands you have yet to kick up.
Heel and toe wop your way back to past lives.
Before spoken word and contemporary art.
We expressed through "foxtrots" and "square waltz".
We'd "swing" through dance floors and land on something
"groovy"
To move to.
Merengue, just to shake things up a bit.
After ballet and ballets.
From Bach to Tupac.
Dance, is too immortal of an artistry to have belonged to man.
Dance, is saved for the omnipotent.
To pass time.
Eventually taught to us.
So we can express the diety's in ourselves.
With victory swooshed across our feet.
And applause beating on our eardrums.
Like the rhythms of tribes.
It sounds like history.
And the dancers.
Look like gods.

image found at: <http://www.ninjavspenguin.com/blog/wp-content/uploads/2007/04/tree->

Words of Advice

written by: Iliana Garcia

Studying for finals and midterms tends to be automatically linked with stress. In fact, stress is already incorporated into a situation where a student needs to recall all of the important information that he or she has learned in each of their classes over the course of several months; the last thing students need to do is add the stress of midterms and finals. Unfortunately, many students inadvertently do just that. Certain common practices often make exams even more stressful than necessary, such as: pulling “all-nighters”, powering down caffeine, having study parties with fun friends, and waiting until the last minute therefore operating on pure adrenaline. One added stress that may not be so commonly thought of is constantly reminding oneself what’s at stake.

While remembering the importance of a test’s outcome may be a good motivator for studying, too much focus on this can backfire. If you’re the type of person who is already pretty conscientious, and the idea of doing poorly causes you significant test anxiety, it may be time to shift your focus. Being overly anxious about the outcome can actually cause you to do poorly, or score lower than normal. To avoid obsessing, try a technique that may not be as familiar, but can be surprisingly helpful: positive affirmations.

Positive affirmations are great tools to redirect your mind subconsciously from negative thinking to positive. The idea is to use positive

statements of what you would like to see manifested, and repeat them enough so that they are part of your way of thinking. But make sure they are positive! So don’t say things you don’t want manifested. For instance, instead of “I don’t want to be so stressed,” say, “I want to feel more relaxed.” To do this, first look at your intentions. What are you trying to create in your life? What are your goals? What kind of behaviors, attitudes and traits would you like to see yourself develop to reach them? Ask yourself these kinds of questions and

record them in a journal. Then create simple statements that reflect the reality of that which you want to create.

Phrase them as if they are fact, and not wishes. For example, the affirmation, “I am feeling more under control every day,” would be better than, “I want to feel more under control.” Be sure that you’re making your affirmations realistic, but hopeful as well. Repeat your affirmations to yourself on a regular basis whether it’s while cooking, cleaning, driving, exercising, getting ready in the morning, etc. Repeating them mentally can be effective,

but saying them aloud is even more effective because you hear them more clearly. Another great way to imprint your affirmations in your mind is to put them on post-its and put them in places that you go to regularly. This way, you give yourself a positive message throughout the day and you feel good!



OMSA Welcomes: Sasha Eloi

Sasha Eloi presents a unique perspective as she returns to OMSA after graduating from the University of Rochester in 2005. She earned a BA in Linguistics with a minor in Spanish from the U of R.

As an undergraduate, Sasha was involved in many organizations including BSU, MSAB, Gospel Choir, Indulgence, D'Lions, Meridians and Newman. She is a McNair Scholar, a Keidean, an Urban Fellow, and was extended the opportunity to spend one undergraduate semester in Madrid, Spain. Sasha held various positions on campus as a student.

Following graduation, Sasha pursued an MA in Linguistics at Syracuse University. She also taught in and organized an intensive culture and language summer program for international students at a local college. Her teaching appointments at Syracuse University and Genesee Community College have driven her interest in higher education and the factors that influence success. Sasha has also worked as a technical writer.

She is a lover of books, fashion, travel, word games and sports. She writes articles online based on fashion in Rochester. The islands of Dominica and St. Thomas are the places she calls home.



NEW STAFF

Kearns Welcomes: Donald Mitchell Jr.



Donald Mitchell, Jr., a native of Portsmouth, VA, is Graduate Recruitment and Retention Specialist for Arts, Sciences and Engineering. Donald joined the David T. Kearns Center for Leadership and Diversity in Arts, Sciences and Engineering in July 2010 and focuses on the recruitment and retention of graduate students who are under-represented minority, low-income, or first generation college students.

He is also a PhD candidate in higher education at the University of Minnesota – Twin Cities. His research and academic interests include Black Greek-lettered organizations, race and gender issues in higher education, Historically Black Colleges and Universities, college students navigating their college experiences, and ethics in leadership. Additionally, he is compelled by social capital theories, critical theories and qualitative inquiries. He is currently working on his dissertation titled *Are they truly divine? A grounded theory of the influenced of Black Greek-lettered organizations on the persistence of African Americans at predominately white institutions.*

Donald also started Harris, Mitchell & Co. Investment Group, LLP in June 2006, which is a group of social entrepreneurs who, while investing, look for ways to empower the African American community. Their most recent investment was the launch of TheHBCUjobsite.com in August 2010, a job board tailored for Historically Black Colleges and Universities. Donald's social and community affiliations include Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc., the NAACP, and serving as a committee member of the 21st Legislative District of the Monroe County Democratic Committee. Donald enjoys music (trumpet), investing, trivia and watching sports.

Remembering an Influential Historian: Dr. Manning Marable

Written by: Charlene Cooper

Dr. Manning Marable spent much of the latter part of his life on the long-awaited *Malcolm X: A Life of Reinvention*, a publication he had worked diligently on for years, providing a full scope of the life and death of Malcolm X. On February 15, 2011 the University of Rochester's Black Students' Union was privileged enough to host a keynote address at the Interfaith Chapel, in celebration of Black History Month which featured Dr. Marable.



Marable shared small excerpts from his text, while incorporating lighthearted humor into his speech, particularly when comparing Martin Luther King Jr., who he said belonged to everyone, with Malcolm X, who he jokingly said belonged to African Americans. Students were lucky enough to receive a free copy of his book, in which Dr. Marable personally signed individual book plaques to insert inside, as a memorandum of the event. With only one other text similar to Marable's being Alex Haley's *The Autobiography of Malcolm X: As Told to Alex Haley*, Dr. Marable provides us with a side of Malcolm X that Haley did not explore. Dr. Manning Marable's *Malcolm X: A Life of Reinvention* provides us with a more holistic view of Malcolm X's religious, personal, and political perspectives due to his hard work in compiling sources that Haley never had access to or even knew about.

What should have been the start of his tour to promote his new publication, sadly ended much sooner than we could have all expected. On April 1, 2011 at the age of 60, Dr. Marable passed away from complications from pneumonia. Aside from his publication, he was a well known Columbia University professor, historian, and author of many other texts which focused on race relations. Dr. Marable was a man who was unafraid to explore the life of Malcolm X beyond what any other author has done in the past. We would like to remember Dr. Marable for who he was and the memory he has left with us. The memory of a man with great determination and diligence, whose voice will forever be heard through the very text he worked so hard on, but never got the chance to enjoy the fruits of.



KUDOS

Student Life Awards

Delano Davis-Tavares '14- Delno Sisson Prize
Lorenzo Mendez '12- Michael Lvovowenstein Memorial Award
Jerome Nathaniel '11- Seth H. & Harriet S. Terry Prize
Deidre Reid '11- Presidential award for Community Service
Rainie Spiva '12- Award for Outstanding Fraternity and Sorority Leadership

Study Abroad

Rainie Spiva '12 - Arezzo, Italy Fall
Priscilla Alabi '12 - Denmark Fall
Kindred Harris '12 - London Fall

D'Lion

Danilo Sarmiento '14
Jonathan Gonzalez '14
Yaritza Perez '14

Other recognitions

Antonio Ortega '14 - Football team Rookie of the Year
Sierra Cason '14 - Meridian
Allison Reiman '11 - Barry Rapaport Prize in Economics, University of Rochester
(Outstanding Senior in Economics)and Simon School of Business Early Leader, MBA class of 2012
Estefany Angeles '11 - Awarded the James Chin Endowed Scholarship for 2010-2011

Urban Fellows

Priscilla Alabi '12 Kiera Anderson '13 Alisa Jimenez '14 Tolulope Ogunbor '13
Justine Robinson '14 Robert Snyder '12 Cainaan Webb '12

Where next?

Estefany Angeles '11 - Teach for America Miami, FL
Abblemnis Araujo '11 - Florida State University for Exercise Physiology

Internships

Keith Crumpler '11 - summer/winter intern in the United States
Department of Housing & Urban Development - Office of the Inspector General
Danilo Sarmiento '14 - summer intern at JP Morgan
Allison Reiman '11 - offered one of seven MBA internships for Boeing
Commercial, Interning in Marketing - Market Value
Rainie Spiva '12 - summer intern on Capitol Hill in the office of Senator
Charles Schumer
Kindred Harris '12 - Research Opportunity Program (SROP) biological
research at the University of Michigan

RA

Sierra Cason '14
Vanessa Simpson '14

Keidean

Vicki Baudin '11
Christopher Bickford '11

McNair Summer Scholar

Jessica Colorado '12

Xerox Undergraduate Research Fellows

Ruth Davis
David Alvarado
Jinan Hussain
Susana Acowsta
Miguel Garcvia
Syed Habib
Carrie Twvwrant

Hispanic Heritage Month
September 30, 2011

*A tale of secret lovers... from different cultures...
until Mom finds out and has a heart attack!*



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You can send any submissions, comments, or questions to
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