



Welcome to our Fall 2011 edition of the OMSA Chronicle. It is our expectation that the featured articles and information enclosed will reinforce the fact that the University of Rochester is indeed a vibrant and intellectually stimulating place-an environment where students truly make a difference and contribute in significant ways to both our living and learning community.



This issue includes a wide range of interesting articles, campus events and co-curricular activities that showcase the diverse interests and opportunities open to students at the University. Moreover, we hope that the newsletter will continue to serve as an important vehicle for students to share ideas and bring focus to the ways in which our students proactively engage with both the University and greater Rochester community. As always, we look forward to your feedback regarding this issue and hope that the content will prove to be insightful.

Meliora!

Norman Burnett Assistant Dean and Director Office of Minority Student Affairs & Higher Education Opportunity Program

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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.

Paneeni Lohana Class of 2013 Major: Neuroscience

During the summer of 2011, Paneeni Lohana conducted research through the UAMS Cancer Community Network Program as well as the Center for Diversity Affairs' Summer Research Internship Program at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences in Little Rock, Arkansas. She received an NIH grant which allowed her to work in Dr. Gunnar Boysen's laboratory to conduct research. Her summer research focused on the formation and isolation of N-7 Guanine adducts, which form through the binding of genotoxic carcinogens to DNA. Overall, she gained many new experiences and met many inspiring people.



Stephanie Lorenzo Class of 2012 Major: Psychology

Over the summer, Stephanie was an intern for a non-profit organization called The Fresh My duties over the summer were to go over medical packets of the children who have

Air Fund. The Fresh Air Fund is an organization that provides children between the ages of 5 and 14 with a free vacation for a maximum of 2 weeks if it is their first time with the organization, if the child is a returning child they can go away for the entire summer for free! The children can go to summer camp or be hosted by a family in one of 13 States throughout the East Coast. The Fresh Air Fund also provides tutoring services throughout the year. been matched with host families in the areas I was assigned to and make sure their packets were complete. I also had to send promotional items to the areas I was assigned to, helped the chair people of the towns interview potential host families, and had the opportunity to travel as well! This past summer was one of the best summers I had, I grew personally, professionally, and pinpointed the direction I want to take in my career after graduation.





Rochester Center for Community Leadership, RCCL Quinlan Mitchell

"Don't cross the bridge!"

One of the first things a freshman may hear after arriving at the University of Rochester. The bridge, adjacent to the residential quad, it connects UR students directly into the 19th ward. For many students the 19th ward truly is an off-limits place.

Fact vs. Fiction and in-between

Whether or not an awfully dangerous place for UR undergrads, some rochester students find that the 19th Ward is something much more familiar than the neighborhood they've University staff member on the day of heard about. It's a place to get in touch with the community that lives right next door to them in a meaningful and positive way. The 19th Ward is a neighborhood that shapes their college experience for the better. It's a home.

Rochester Center for Community Leadership (RCCL)

Located on the fifth floor of Wilson Commons, the Rochester Center for Community Leadership offers a wide variety of programs and services that fall under the realms of "leadership, civic engagement, and community service", according to their website. It offers multiple programs that send students out into the greater Rochester area, the RCCL oftentimes acts as a bridge between the community and the school.

The breadth of programs channeled through the RCCL, however, is impressive, ranging from the Compass to Personal Success program, a comprehensive curriculum of workshops, personal projects, and written reflections conducted over a three-year period, to the Monroe County Election Fellows program, which recruits undergraduates to volunteer as election inspectors at the polls in Monroe County on Election Day.

The center is focused on more than just sending students out to volunteer and better the city. It offers programs to help make students

into better citizens, as well. But having more than 14 programs/initiatives to its name, the purpose of RCCL can become somewhat complicated. Understanding the underlying mission of RCCL as an organization and as a component of the Rochester campus can be difficult. An interview with center director, Glenn Cerosaletti, sheds light on the goals of the RCCL and how it relates to the city of Rochester.

The Interview

Cerosaletti looks the part of a the interview. Pamphlets and handouts are arranged on his desk, detailing various RCCL initiatives and programs, awaiting anyone curious enough to stop by. At first, there is a sense of something prepackaged in Cerosaletti's demeanor, as if he is giving the same speech about the center as he has many times before. Much of the interaction seems like that of an owner selling his business. As the interview carries on, however, Cerosaletti's mood begins to relax and some things become readily apparent.

The first is that Cerosaletti is earnest. Listening to him talk about the programs offered by RCCL gives the impression of a member of an organization who strongly believes in what he is doing. Cerosaletti promotes some of the centers more interesting and less well known programs.

Through many of the programs offered through RCCL the end goal is to strongly root students as citizens of a larger community, which at the current moment is Rochester. Cerosaletti describes RCCL as "much more than just volunteering...It's not just as simple as giving back to the community...[students] can also learn a lot from this community". He continually hits on the idea of students learning from the community through engagement. The "reciprocal nature" of involvement was a frequent tag-line of Cerosaletti's. He encourages students

to be open to "the possibility that the people in the community may help to guide you". The sincerity with which he describes Rochester as a place deserving of recognition and exploration is refreshing.

The second aspect of Cerosaletti that became obvious over the course of the interview was that he was realistic. As excited as he seemed by the quality of certain programs offered by RCCL, there was a strong awareness that one of his main challenges in engaging students with the city of Rochester is to change negative campus opinions of the Rochester area, and particularly the 19th Ward. Specifically, changing the campus slogan of "Don't go over the bridge!".

The image of the 19th Ward as an undifferentiated neighborhood fraught with danger, in fact belies many of the obvious realities of the area. Namely, the neighborhoods right across the bridge are well-populated by students' peers. Undergraduates electing to live off campus often secure houses in the conveniently located 19th ward, along the UR shuttle routes. Businesses and other establishments also have begun to spring up or were already established in the area, such as Staybrige Suites, Boulder Cafe, and the older D&M Market, which offers a wide variety of groceries and Caribbean imports.

Schools of the 19th ward are often ignored, and therefore receive less college student volunteers. A majority of the residents of the 19th Ward are children and families.

Project Care

For example, down the road from the Riverview Apartments is School 19, an elementary school where volunteers from sub-group Project CARE of RCCL's Partners in Reading program go twice a week to volunteer. The program is built around the slogan, "Coaches are role models for empowerment".

By spending at minimum one hour with a single student twice a week, UR undergrads are meant to serve as academic and character role models for young children.

Ranging from elementary to middle schools, many Project CARE coaches, as they are called, elect to follow students from grade level to grade level. The purpose of the program is to create a strong bond between student and coach.

Melissa Gaitan (2013) is chair of the Project CARE program and a team leader for grades 5-7. She also tutors a student in the 5th grade. She has been a part of the program since her freshman year and has greatly enjoyed the experience. Besides the inevitable challenges that come with working with children, Gaitan believes mentoring a student has been personally enriching for her. "Through mentoring I had the opportunity to learn about myself and about the students at School 19. The students have not only taught me how to solve problems in ways I've never imagined, but about courage and perseverance," says Gaitan. She intends to continue working with the group for the duration of her undergraduate years.

Gaitan also mentioned cultural sensitivity as one of the skills she has had to develop through the program. In getting at the root of misconceptions of the 19th Ward, a cultural divide seems to be part of the problem at the U of R. Cerosaletti addressed this issue of culture. "The 19th Ward is just sort of like the other" says Cerosaletti, "...[a] symbol of the fear of the unknown". He was also quick to point out early on that these cultural differences likely are "socioeconomic, but also racial", reflecting larger patterns of misunderstanding in society based on skin color. It was refreshing to hear one of the most basic issues between Rochester and the UR expressed, one that is often unmentioned in generic discussions on overcoming "differ-

ences".

Exploring the unknown can sometimes be extremely beneficial, as it was for Gaitan. However, safety and preparation are still issues that RCCL must deal with before sending students out into the community. Cerosaletti says that the center does its best to prepare students beforehand with "background information" about the community and challenges they might face, as well as incorporating discussions and reflection as a part of most programs. According to Cerosaletti these "structured reflections" provide a "useful outlet for fostering dialogue", as well as allowing students and directors to collaborate together to solve problems and ensure positive experiences for students.

In spite of the challenges met by students when confronting a new community with its own set of values and practices, Cerosaletti assures that most students who participate in RCCL initiatives enjoy the experience. Student response is "by and large very positive," he says. The center's growth seems to be reflecting that. Although continually seeking more participation in RCCL programs, "We're not lacking for student interest" says Cerosaletti.

The Bridge

The bridge between the University of Rochester and the 19th Ward for the RCCL is not an invitation to bar one's doors, but to cultivate what Cerosaletti calls a "spirit of exploration in the local community".

The RCCL, in all its initiatives to create leaders, service workers, strong citizens, and community members is not about dividing the community and those who help it. The RCCL attempts to put people in context with the world around them, and to make them aware and effective in their positions as social creatures. Working with RCCL, as well as crossing the bridge to the 19th Ward, is "about gaining a sense of place", says Cerosaletti.

Programs offered through RCCL include:

UR/Paychex Leadership Institute Leadership Development Program The First Year Leadership Engagement Program: Thinking Beyond the Classroom Skills for UR Leaders UReading UR Potential: College Immersion and Tutoring Program Rochester Youth Year Fellowship R' World R' Vote Rochester Every Day (RED) Alternative Spring Break Rochester Urban Fellowship Project CARE

Visit: http://rochester.edu/college/rccl/ index.html for more information on getting involved.

THE MINORITY STUDENT ADVISORY BOARD (MSAB)

History:

During the late 1990s on this campus there were many race related incidents, causing a lot of tension and distance for the minority students on this campus. The University's Renaissance Plan, which made the University itself smaller, had an adverse affect on the minority student population. Also the Fred erick Douglass Institute was facing being shut down, with no one to run it.

All this and more were a part of the grievances that the students had and thus MSAB was formed. The Minority Student Advisory Board was founded in 1999 with the purpose of holding the University of Rochester accountable to its underrepresented minority students. The group was meant to be the political arm of the campus' cultural groups.

The University's President at the time of MSAB's inception was Thomas H. Jackson and in the aftermath of the sit-in of 1999, he and the Provost, amongst others and the students who participated in the sit-in, signed an agreement which said there would be: more targeted minority recruitment, a faculty group was formed to provide leadership for the Frederick Douglass Institute, more faculty diversity and an improved climate for diversity on campus.

Who is MSAB?

"MSAB is the liaison group between the student groups, faculty and staff "says Lecora Massamba '12. Lecora is currently the President of MSAB and this is the fourth executive board position she has held in MSAB since her Freshman year. "As a liaison group we should be supporting and bringing everyone together" says Lecora. Their number one goal is to unite everyone.

The umbrella groups of MSAB include: BSU (Black Students' Union), SALSA (Spanish and Latino Students' Association), MGC (Multicultural Greek Council), NSBE (National Society of Black Engineers), SHPE (Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers), SHADES (Shadowing the History and Diverse Environments of Students), and MAPS (Minority Association of Pre-Medical Students).

Dean Burnett of the Office of Minority Student Affairs, one of two co-advisers for MSAB, says the

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group started off as a political umbrella and a social advocacy platform for minority groups. Upon its foundation MSAB's central focus was to gain more access to the administration for students. Every year MSAB meets with the administration to make sure that all issues, new and old, are addressed. Dean Burnett has felt that the group has slightly strayed from it's political roots, but now under its new leadership, the group is returning to its original mission.

Dean of the college, Richard Feldman, who has worked with MSAB for the past five years, says "many [but not all] of the issues that were prevalent during MSAB's inception have been resolved and the group's focus needs to change and evolve in the current social climate of the campus." Feldman serves on the College Diversity Roundtable (CDR), where he can share ideas and information that reach the student groups and the students. Working with MSAB has been an "eye opening experience" for Dean Feldman.

Dean Beth Olivares, Director of the Kearns Center, is the other co-advisor for MSAB and has been for the past two years. She says the group's focus has changed over the years, dependent on the issues at hand. "A lot of good has come of MSAB's pushing for change on this campus."

The Future

As a current student, I am grateful that MSAB exists, because sometimes you need those few people to voice your concerns.

Events from MSAB this semester were, "MVP Multicultural Showcase" on November 11th and "What's the 411"

Bridging the Gap

Before you become a sophomore at the Univer-There is the Boulder Café which can serve a sity of Rochester, it is only inevitable that you will hear double purpose as a coffee house and, for students, it telltale horror stories about the big scary footbridge makes for a great getaway study spot during the week, that connects the outside world to the collegiate bubble where they can be accompanied by more than just we reside in. Often times, we forget about the bridge stacks of books. On the weekends it serves as a great and the fact that real people live in real communities place to grab lunch with friends during the day and directly across from us. This reality can never be forgotcatch open mic or live music at night. ten for too long before another story by an upperclass Also across the Bridge is D & L Tropical Grocerfriend is told or a security notice is emailed out to the ies where many ethnic foods are sold both prepared and student body that once again stigmatizes the 19th ward packaged. Miss your mom's Jamaican beef patties? They community. Before you let the whispering voices make. <u>can help you with this problem.</u> or break your decision to take a walk across The 19th ward community also has endless opportunities for volunteer work. the bridge, you must take some things The St. Monica's Church across into account.

First, take caution. This is my first form of advice that I would give if you were crossing the bridge or if you were crossing the street. Just as you would cross the street, be attentive. Attend to your surroundings. You wouldn't jump into this hypothetical road if you are having doubts about whether the car coming towards you is going to slow down or keep speeding up, so do the same as you cross the bridge.

Secondly, use the buddy system. I wouldn't go down a street that I've honey almonds fill the air every other heard bad things about if I wasn't confident that I weekend, with festivals of all kinds. However, to could safely do so alone, so take the same consideration enjoy these happenings, it does require that you leave when crossing the bridge. Common sense is key here. campus.

Now let me just say that both of these things are Silently watching over the Genesee River is the rules I'd apply anywhere at any time, thus making the Staybridge Suites, a place where many of your parents bridge and what lies across it, nothing more than an will be occupying upon your graduation. When that time does come around and your family wants you to everyday and normal experience. Third and most importantly be an optimist. show them around the city, it would be great to show Contrary to what you've probably heard or are bound to them that you've discovered many of the exciting things hear about the "big, scary, bridge", what lies across it is that lie across the bridge. So why not start early. Put diversification at its best. your worries aside and explore with your compass of Families of all races and socioeconomic backcaution and common sense.

grounds occupy the 19th ward. Students and professors alike call the 19th ward their home. The 19th Ward Neighborhood Association classifies the area as "Urban by Choice".

Charlene Cooper

the bridge is always looking for iniversity students to volunteer with them, particularly during their annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Luminary event; where they create luminaries and place them all around the Cornhill and 19th ward area as a commemoration to MLK's vision.

During the summer, if you're lucky enough to stay behind for it, the smell of fried dough, Italian ice, and roasted

BSUTHEN & NOW

At the University of Rochester's tenth annual Meliora Weekend, I attended one of the events hosted by the Black Students' Union (BSU). The event BSU: Then & Now, took place on Saturday, October 22nd at 8AM. The event was a panel discussion with questions prompted by BSU President Melika Butcher ('12) and Vice President Sharese King ('12). There were four panelists: Dr. Pamela Straker ('73), Wade Norwood ('83), Jacob Scott ('99) and Melany Cilas ('99).



The insight on what this school was to them in their time as students and what they think of it now, was inspirational. The prompted questions touched on subjects such as their journeys academically, the campus' social climate, as well as how they stay connected to the University.

In response to the prompt on their academic journey at the University, it was Mr. Norwood's that stuck with me the most. "...because the University requires you to take a broad range of courses, it allows you to really explore." In my experiences, I have found this to be true, it is one of the main reasons I chose the University of Rochester. Mr. Norwood also advised us that in picking a major to "let your passions lead you."

The panelists all had similar experiences in regards to the campus and social climate but they approached it differently. Dr. Pamela Straker said her time at the UofR was "probably one of the best experiences of my life and one of the most difficult." Rochester native Melany Cilas said that her experience participating in ECO helped her transition into college. Since she was so close to home, being on campus was about "creating [my] atmosphere." Another native of Rochester Jacob Scott says during his time here he asked a lot of questions, some I think most of us ask such as "why

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aren't there more students who look like me?" and "why aren't there more professors who look like me?" Scott was a part of the sit-in in 1999, he himself says he came here "a rebel." Scott believes that i "if your agenda isn't right, you won't survive."

Finally when asked how they as alumni stayed connected to the University all the answers were different and prompted me to question how, why and will I stay connected the University once I graduate. Mr. Scott says "I love the UofR, I love talking about my experiences here both positive and negative." He says he really wants to reach out to the students. Dr. Straker admits it took seventeen years for her to be convinced to come back. She says her friend convinced her by telling her about the current students. She admits her plan was to get in, get her education, and get out. Ms. Cilas expressed similar feelings saying "My connection was with my peers not really with the school itself. I am here, because of you, the students."

BSU Then & Now, made me feel so much more connected to my peers, to see others who look like me, that made it through their experience at the University, and who can give me insight into the fact that their experience wasn't much different from mine. Their stories make me more grateful for my time here and I hope that someday I can come back and be a panelist at such an event to share my experiences.

Mr. Norwood said "the more things change, the more things stay the same", and the stories that were shared with us made that statement seem all the more true.

Meliora Weekend Review LGBTQ in the Classroom: Representing a UR Demographic in the Academic Sphere **Ouinlan Mitchell**

If asked, many students at the University of Rochester would probably say that, overall, the University campus has a large gay population.

In support of that feeling, the Pride Network (an LGBTQ social and activist group) recently celebrated its 40th anniversary. The group biannually hosts drag shows in the May Room and the ImageOut Film Festival recently screened the film "You Should Meet my Son" (a gay romanticcomedy) in Hoyt Theatre. It seems that most students' assumptions about the campus demographics are true, and the number of LGBT students at Rochester seem to be having an impact on campus culture.

During Meliora weekend the Pride Network hosted the Pride Lambda Reception, featuring a panel discussion comprised of educators and students from all over the university. The discussion covered a wide range of topics from collaboration among minority groups to hunger in the gay population of Rochester. One of the recurring themes in their discussion U of R campus.

One of the major areas in which LGBTQ visibility was discussed concerned academics at the U of R. Despite film showings after hours in Hoyt, options for delving into LGBTQ studies during the sanctioned school day are limited on this campus. Professor Jeffrey Runner of the Linguistics department was present on the panel. Runner is a member of the LGBTQ Studies Steering Committee, which strives to provide LGBTQ studies courses at the U of R. Currently, no independent department of LGBTQ studies exists and one of the few undergraduate courses dealing explicitly with LGBTQ culture is Linguistics 103: Language and Sexuality, taught by Runner himself.

Runner acknowledges a need for more courses on issues of sexual

LGBT issues."

However, he cautions against blanket criticisms of professors and departments for not offering LGBTQ studies in their classes and curriculum.

"A full-fledged program of LGBTQ studies...would require more hires" says Runner. More hires means more money. Empty classrooms don't bring more funding for new programs, though. Ed Brockenbrough, director of the Urban Teaching and Leadership Program at the Warner School, feels that "we need to look deeper at the culture across the university", taking care to not assume that professors could teach courses, if only they wanted to. Involving students in LGBTQ studies courses is central to establishing a was the lack of LGBTQ visibility on the program that would merit the funding necessary to sustain its growth. Doctoral student at the Warner School and Adjunct Administrator at both Warner and the Susan B. Anthony Institute, BJ Douglass, says that in order to expand LGBTQ course offerings proponents must first prove that "we can show the university, yes they will come".

Douglass has been essential to the Warner School's recent efforts at expanding their LGBTQ studies program, spearheading two recently approved courses: LGBTQ Issues in Education and Human Development and LGBTQ Experiences in American History. Also in the works are courses: Introduction to LGBTQ Studies and LGBTQ Issues in Counseling. Douglass says she hopes to establish a "presence" for LGBTQ culture at the U of R. But such a goal presupposes the lack of

orientation and sexuality at the U of R. During the panel he urged for more internal initiatives on the part of educators. According to Runner, if LGBTQ culture is going to be represented with academics at the university, instructors on the U of R campus need to say, "I want to decide to teach a course on

an existing gay culture at the university. Despite this, audience member Angela (last name withheld) claimed during the panel discussion that "visibility [for the LGBTQ community] is a problem".

Douglass agrees, also, citing "a visibility issue". She clarifies her meaning by explaining that the U of R "is still sort of a conservative campus in some ways". The LGBTQ community then may not be fully able to express itself publicly/assertively on campus, notwithstanding the size of the population on campus.

In fact, the large number of gays and lesbians which students cite on campus may serve to prove Douglass' point. With such a sizeable LGBTQ population on campus the number of single-sex events, social venues, and even PDA on campus may be disproportionately low.

Kathy Sweetland, longstanding Intercessor at the U of R, describes the "active community" of students at the Medical School and Eastman, but says that they are not as well organized as other groups. This may explain why the number of LGBTQ groups and students on campus do not have the presence other groups may have.

In some sense, the lack of LG-BTQ studies courses may be symptomatic of the lack of the LGBTQ presence on campus which Douglas cites. Doing more to improve the cultural climate at the U of R may be what is most effective in stimulating academic interest. Either way, as advocates such as Douglas and Runner push forward to create more courses in LGBTQ studies on campus the burden rests more heavily on LGBTQ and other students to encourage the growth by just showing up.

Meliora Weekend Review

College Diversity Roundtable Brings Hope for the Future

Charlene Cooper

The College Diversity Roundtable (CDR)panel gave alumni a good reason to return to their alma mater this past Fall for Meliora Weekend. Even alumna Pamela Straker, who admitted to never wanting to return to the University, changed her mind about returning to the campus and was impressed by what she believes it has transformed into since her time.

The diverse panel, which featured students from various backgrounds and campus involvements, along with two alumni, truly demonstrated the well roundedness students display within the University. Students shared their experiences at the university and allowed listeners to hear of their concerns. One of these concerns included the lack of African American male alumni to look up to and serve as mentors to current students of similar background. This is a resurfacing issue that students and alumni agreed needed combating and provided suggestions that they hoped would be taken into consideration by the university. Alumnus, Marquis Harrison, expressed his concern saying, "We keep hearing the same issues repeated. I'm not sure that this time around the university will put out the commitment to including African American alumni in diversity showcasing".

Alumna, Pamela Straker, expressed how her experience at the University seemed to be far less rewarding than that of the students of color today. She mentioned how estranged she felt from the underrepresented student population; that which she thought would have been a support system at the University. She did not attend the Early Connections Opportunity (ECO) program provided by the Office of Minority Student Affairs prior to her freshmen year and thus felt deprived of the initial experience many of these students were given an opportunity to have. This opportunity seemed golden to her at the time, as the minority population was incredibly small and thus close, leaving her feeling closed out of this circle. She added that the amount of underrepresented students on campus now, compared to that of when she attended the University, has greatly increased. She further complimented the campus for having what she thought was a much better merging of the student body and administration now compared to in the past, saying it was now more like a "family".

A general concern that visiting alumni shared was that of the acceptance and retention rate of underrepresented students within the university. Dean of Undergraduate Admissions and Financial Aid, Jonathan Burdick, who sat attentively in the audience, explained how although the retention rate of underrepresented students is not as high as it is for the majority, the University does have in place programs that provide assistance to underrepresented students.

Dean Burnett, Chair of the College Diversity Roundtable and Assistant Dean and Director of the Office of Minority Student Affairs, added "I arrived at the University in 1994 and the African American retention rate was abysmal. There is still a gap that needs to be filled, but it is no longer the revolving door that it used to be".

These before and after perspectives that panelists and audience members provided could mean that the University is in fact making substantial efforts in better integrating and reaching out to underrepresented students. However, the student body, as well as alumni, wants the University to take bigger strides in integration of African American and Latino alumni in campus activities.





Keynote Address from Former Presidemt Bill Clinton

On Saturday, October 22nd, at the Kodak Theate in Rochester, NY, hundreds of people gathered for what has been described as the best keynote address in Meliora Then former President Clinton gave some good Weekend history. Tickets sold out less than an hour after news about the student loan payments, that I think they went on sale. There were four locations where simulbrought a feeling of relief to students and parents alike. casts were being streamed. The address was delivered by "Loan obligations will now be determined by their [stu-42nd President of the United States of America William J. dents] jobs, not the other way around. It will save \$60 Clinton.

As former President Clinton came on the stage his entrance was warmed by: claps, cheers and a standing ovation. As he stood at the podium, in a gray suit and blue tie, with his snow white hair, the crowd was so focused on him, you could feel the excitement as everyone waited for him to speak.

Clinton jokingly asked the crowed not to tell his wife if he gets more people at his keynote address than she did at hers. He started off with how happy he was to be speaking to all of us and how much he appreciated the University. "Thank you for asking me to be a part of this 10th annual Meliora Weekend. I really admire this University. I admire the education. I admire the students and alumni." Clinton shared with the crowd that some members of his staff, past and present, are Rochester alumni.

"The world we live in and the world you are [the college students] going to live in has three big problems, it is: too unequal, too unstable, and unsustainable." In terms of the world being too unequal he says "Yemen college graduates take to the streets due to unequal life opportunities that should be available to people with degrees." "... Climate change and lack of resources makes the world unsustainable." Things are too unstable "we don't like being around people who disagree with you," this he says is a huge issue amongst politicians. It is true that we do not like being around those who disagree with us, but maybe we should all take a page out of Clinton's book and watch

1. "One Hundred Years of Solitude" by Gabriel García Márquez 2. "The Sound and the Fury" by William Faulkner 3. "You Can't Go Home Again" by Thomas Wolfe 4. "The Meditations of Markus Aurelius" by Markus Aurelius 5. "Imitation of Christ" by Thomas Kempis 6. "Nonzero"

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er	Fox News, we might learn something."The decisions of the
	leaders affect tomorrow's possibilities."

- billion over 10 years." He says this should result in less defaults on student loans. Clinton's biggest piece of advice on college was to "just stay and finish, it's the patriotic thing to do."
- When his speech was done, he sat in one of two comfortable leather chairs on stage, in the other sat University of Rochester President Joel Seligman. President Seligman asked Clinton a few questions and at some point in the early afternoon our time with the 42nd President drew to a close, but he left with a list of his 10 favorite books.



by Robert Wright 7. "The Origin of Virtue: Human Instincts and the Evolution of Cooperation" by Matt Ridley 8. "The Way of the World" by William Congreve 9. "Politics as a Vocation" by Max Weber 10. "Lords of Finance: The Bankers who Broke the World" by Liaquat Ahamed

Platanos y Collard Greens

Quinlan Mitchell

Laughter filled Strong Auditorium on September 30th as community members and university of Rochester students watched the off-broadway production of "Platanos y Collard Greens". Sponsored by the Spanish and Latino Students Association (SALSA), David T. Kearns Center, the Latino Professional Alliance of the University of Rochester, Office of Minority Student Affairs (OMSA), College Diversity Roundtable (CDR) and the Office of Alumni Relations, the production culminated Hispanic Heritage Month.

Set in New York City, "Platanos y Collard Greens" revolves around the New York African-American and Latino communities, underlining the tensions that arise when two different cultures interact. At the center of the play is a love story between Freeman (Leon Joseph), a young black student running for class president, and Angelina (Karina Ortiz), a Latina student whose problems at home threaten to tear the two lovers apart.

The two protagonists are accompanied onstage by a colorful and unforgettable cast of characters, including Angelina's fiery friend Nilsa (Jocelyn Marie), Freeman's bumbling but wise father Pops (Doni Comas), the dignified Malady (Shakirah DeMesier), and the uproariously funny O.K. (Preston Taylor).

At the outset of the play, both Freeman and Angelina are unsure of their feelings toward one another. They turn to friends and family, looking for advice, but find only the stereotypes and misconceptions black and latinos in New York hold towards one another.

Once love wins out and the two become a couple, Angelina's mother suffers a heart attack at the idea of her daughter dating an African-American man. Feeling guilty, Angelina ends her relationship with Freeman. Whether the heart attack is real or feigned, as Freeman and O.K. imply, Angelina and Freeman find that their bond goes deeper than culture, reconciling at the end of the play.

As the lovers' relationship progresses throughout the story together the cast navigates the waters of interracial relationships, generational divides, and racial politics in America, all with an eye toward humor and an uplifting tone of hope.

The thematic elements of "Platanos y Collard Greens" are indeed the production's defining features. Between more comic scenes and stretches of dialogue,



the play often features monologues from single characters involving singing, rapping, or poetry. Ortiz delivers a beautiful monologue reshaping public praise of Latina curves into a harmful practice rooted in the commonplace raping of women during the colonial period in Latin America.

The most striking of these monologues, however, must be that of Demesier's character Malady. Her powerful voice, both speaking and singing, lend resonance to a monologue touching on color politics within the African-American community. Distinguished from the rest of the play for its lack of resolution, Malady's monologue puts pressure on the validity of the love affair between Freeman and Angelina, questioning Freeman's motives in choosing a latina over an African-American girlfriend. Her question of "Why does Freeman prefer her?" lingers in the mind.

Unfortunately, moments such as that are somewhat rare throughout the play. Touching on many important issues, "Platanos y Collard Greens" does not seem to revolutionize the dialogue about race relations, turning over many of the same questions and answers asked decades ago. In some ways, it leaves the audience member feeling as if they've seen the play before. It's a somewhat disappointing end for a play whose topic is still as important today as it was years ago.

What "Platanos y Collard Greens" does do, however, is add a strong element of comedy to a slew of serious topics. In the face of the unsinkable humor

of the cast, seemingly impossible situations are reinception in 2003, says the information in the play is solved and major differences shown to be not so differ-"not common knowledge to students." He further says ent. The cultural divide apparently can be crossed, and that the show aims at "tackling the racism in our own with a good sense of humor, as well. community." Starting with the younger generation Moreover, through its powerful message, seems to be an effective way to weed this problem out in the future.

"Platanos y Collard Greens" reaches audiences. Cathy Thomas, chairperson of the African American Net-Judging from the audience reception the night work in Rochester, calls the play "phenomenal". Stating of the show, "Platanos y Collard Greens" had a decided that for her "the message was real". Marcy Lorcoa, a effect on playgoers. The contrast of audience laughter so loud and long the actors had to pause before begin-Rochester community member, also found the play affecting. "Being Latina... I thought it was really inforning their lines as well as absolute hush falling on the mational for the young people out here," she says. crowd during the monologues of Malady and Ange-Information and education seems to be at the heart lina, highlights an intense emotional participation. At of "Platanos y Collard Greens". The show has toured the end of the night it seems the production's themes around the country visiting over 20 middle, juniortransgressed the boundaries of the footlights and high, and high schools, as well as over 200 colleges and impacted the audience members who became particiuniversities. Efforts to dramatize cultural differences pants in the drama on stage. to youth is a central goal of the "Platanos y Collard As an end to Hispanic Heritage Month, all of the sponsoring organizations who brought "Platanos y Greens" tour. Director Doni Comas, who plays the role of Collard Greens" to the U of R should be proud. Indeed, as Loncoa describes the production, "It was really in-

Pops and has been with the show almost since its



OMSA CHRONICLE UNIVERSITY OF ROCHESTER FALL 2011

Work Hard NETwork Harder

Networking sometimes is the key to unlocking the door of success. Yes, school is important, but it is more like the ring that holds these keys together. The good thing about networking is that it can occur in any setting and at any time.

You don't have to and shouldn't wait until your senior year to take advantage of the resources you have around you. During freshman and sophomore years, it is easy to get caught up in classes and forget about building personal contacts for the future. We oftentimes hear, "Oh, you're a freshman (or sophomore)! You have time". This is only true to a certain extent. Yes, you do have more time compared to those in their last year of college, but realistically it would be better to build relationships with those you network with over the course of four years, compared to a relationship you might have with someone you met only a few months before your senior year ends. Besides, the person you knew and built a relationship with over a long course of time is probably more likely to recommend you for jobs or give you the heads up on job openings when they see something that might be of interest to you. After all, they would have known you for a while, thus giving them a better grasp on your interests, abilities, and goals.

Many times we make it a habit to wait around for networking events to take place on campus in order to make these connections. Even this is unnecessary. Although this setting can be very helpful, oftentimes it is a competitive environment where the most extroverted thrive. Not everyone is as successful in this atmosphere, and many people are actually intimidated by it. Therefore, other routes can be taken to be successful in a manner that is most comfortable to the non-mingling type.

Rochester tends to be a place that, once it's got you, it sucks you in. It is so easy to assume that alumni graduate and return to their hometowns or relocate outside of Rochester. Believe it or not, many of them tend to stay within the area and take up jobs here. There are alumni who still reside in the Rochester community who would make great contacts and resources. One alumni who still resides here is Dr. Walter Cooper, the first African American to earn a doctorate in physical chemistry from the University.

Charlene Cooper

He once explained to me how he decided to become a scientist because he wanted to challenge himself and change up the scheme of things. He mentioned that there were not many African Americans who did pursue science at the time he was at the University so he wanted to change that. As a very outgoing member of the Rochester community, he is always so willing to speak with students about bettering themselves and creating a campus environment they are proud to be a part of.

Even our peers can be a source of connections that can help us get where we want to be. You never know who might know whom or who might be willing to put in a good word for you.

Maybe it's even time to use all of the available social networking sites for their actual purpose - networking. These are more indirect, but just as effective, ways of networking via the wonderful World Wide Web. Things like Facebook, LinkedIn, or simply sending out an email, can work wonders in networking and reaching out to people who could be of some help to vou.

At the end of the day, most people want to help you and help guide you in the right direction. Finding a mentor or a contact in your area of interest and sticking with that person, using your resources on and off campus, and not disregarding friends as a possible source of networking, can really crack open that heavily bolted door of success. So why not take the leap of faith and start networking early. It is sure to be worth the effort.

Stephanie Fitzpatrick, PhD •Class of 2004 Major: Psychology• Minor: Health & Society

I took a year off to obtain additional research experience before applying to graduate school. During this time I worked as a research assistant at the University of Alabama at Birmingham School of Public Health and School of Nutrition Sciences and was involved in research examining childhood obesity, barriers to fruit and vegetable consumption in families, and weight management in adults. In addition, I helped to design a health intervention focused on improving diet and exercise in overweight African American girls between the ages of 8-10 and their mothers.

In 2005 I started my doctoral program in Clinical Health Psychology at the University of Miami. During graduate school, I expanded my research interest in obesity to also look at the chronic disease outcomes such as cardiovascular disease and worked with my advisor, Dr. Patrice Saab, on a randomized clinical trial examining the effect of a lifestyle intervention on lowering blood pressure in a multiethnic sample of adolescents with elevated blood pressure. From this project I completed my Master's thesis that examined the relationship between ethnic identity and dietary intake in Black and Hispanic adolescents as well as my dissertation that examined the relationship between health knowledge and health behavior change in adolescents.

In addition to my research, I also received clinical training in psychotherapy and psycho-educational assessments as part of my clinical degree. My clinical experiences were primarily in healthcare settings where I worked with medical providers to help patients make health behavior changes (i.e., improve diet, increase exercise, and adhere to medication) to better manage their disease (hypertension or diabetes).

As part of my doctoral program I also had to do a one-year clinical psychology internship. From 2010-2011 I was a clinical health psychology intern at Rush University Medical Center in Chicago, IL where I completed rotations in Outpatient Psychotherapy, Behavioral Sleep Medicine, Geropsychology and Rehabilitation, and Psychosocial Oncology. I finally graduated with my Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology in June 2011.

Currently, I am in my first year of a 2-year behavioral medicine postdoctoral fellowship at the Johns Hopkins Welch Center for Prevention, Epidemiology, & Clinical Research in the Division of General Internal Medicine. I am funded by a diversity supplement from the National Institute of Diabetes, Digestive, and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK). My postdoc will primarily involve working on several different clinical trials examining interventions for weight management, diabetes control, and prevention of cardiovascular disease while applying advanced statistical modeling.

On a typical day, after checking my email of course, I am busy running analyses, writing manuscripts for publications, and attending team meetings to discuss the trials. I also may attend seminars that showcase the latest research in the area of prevention and health outcomes or attend journal club where we discuss the literature on diabetes and obesity. In terms of my clinical responsibilities, a few times per week I work with African American type 2 diabetics on managing their disease using Problem Solving Therapy and I conduct bariatric surgery evaluations for those who are seeking weight loss surgery. Despite a busy day I still make it home in time to spend time with my two dogs, Sophie and Mufasa.

Alumni in the Workplace



Admissions and Recruitment in Rochester

The student body of the University of Rochester is well known for its diversity and multiplicity of backgrounds; however recruitment from within the city itself often seems to go unnoticed by many. After a visit to the Office of Admissions and a talk with Joe Latimer, the Assistant Dean for Enrollment Diversity and Outreach since 2006, local efforts were explained. "The transformative education experience is helped by bringing in the most unique, diverse, and interesting students we possibly can," Latimer said of the Admissions goals.

When eager high school juniors across the country and across the world take the PSAT or PACT for the first time the names and contact information of 100,000 students are then purchased by the university and the race begins. High school visits, College fairs, open-houses, and walk-ins are scheduled around the world to reach every possible student and encourage interest in the UR. After all the literature, pamphlets, and emails are sent out 13,000 will apply; competition is fierce as only 40% will be admitted with even fewer actually matriculated. The ideal freshman class, of roughly 1,180 [in 2011], is composed of 60% out-of-state, 40% in-state, and 13-15% international students with an even split of men and women.

City schools in Buffalo and Syracuse and the Rochester City School District (RCSD) in particular are target areas for the University, with several programs to make as many opportunities available to the largely underrepresented population. Beginning with the Eight Grade Blitz, where advisors from the UR will visit every 8th grader in RCSD, thousands of dollars are diverted to generating college interest in the local area. Once students are ready to apply to college, there are several options available to them.

The Rochester Promise is a program that accepts students that fit all the criteria for regular admission, however gives out a \$25,000 scholarship and other financial aid to potential matriculates. This year there were 14 students who were awarded the Rochester Promise and entered the college directly after graduation from RCSD. There is also a Guarantee Transfer, which allows potential students to work closely with a UR advisor to attend an accredited college two years prior to attendance to increase their academic skills before attendance; 24 students were given this option. There were three students who qualified for the Higher Education Opportunity Program (HEOP).

Antoinette Johnson

the RCSD and other city school districts are inhibited by a number of factors. According to Latimer, "Too little meet the qualifications to be here. We do not let anyone into this University if they are going to pack up their bags and leave a semester later a failure." Of the 85 who applied from RCSD, 43 students failed to complete their application.

For those in the Rochester area suburbs the expectations are much higher. A majority of the suburban schools offer Advanced Placement classes, which place students in the same bracket as students from around the world. Not only do these students have to meet academic standards, they must also show 'demonstrated interest' in the University, meaning students are given more consideration if they have gone on a college tour, went through an interview, or kept in contact with an admissions advisor. Latimer noted "It is harder to get in here" if you're from the suburbs because other students within the state must also be considered as part of the 40%.

For suburban applicants, there is good news: there are many UR high school programs offered during the summer for locals that give them an upper hand. Marius "Meme" Kother, a junior at UR double majoring in African Studies and Public Health, and from the suburb of Greece, used the Science Research program as a gateway into UR. Paired with a faculty member in the Biology department she worked on her own independent project researching Vitamin D using bacterial experiments. "Just being around this campus, it was such a prestigious place. I got exposed to the campus. I worked really hard to come here," said Meme. Several campus visits, interviews, and calls to her advisor later, Marius received her acceptance letter; however she distinctly remembered not being consistently contacted by the university.

"The University has enough kids apply to be selective," said Latimer, but the seeming exclusivity of the University does not overlook local disadvantaged students. Not only does Admissions work to maintain the diversity of the student body, they also work tirelessly to ensure local students have the same opportunity to a higher education and better future.

CONGRATULATIONS!

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT RECIPIENTS SPRING 2011

Travis Amengual Kyle Arean-Raines Rafael Baez Brian Barker **Rachalie Barthelemy** Alani Bass Shay Behrens Edmond Boullianne Genevieve Bradford Tume Kaitlyn Brady Manda Brefo Zachary Bunin Melika Butcher Ingrid Carvo Lai Chan Hannah Chhibber Matthew Chin Catherine Christian Akilah Collins-Anderson Teija Corse Meghann Cunningham Chanise Cvrus Braden Czapla Ruth Jennifer Davis Meghan Demirer Michelle Dick Shukri Dualeh Kathy Edouard Erin Fairbank Jessica Finkielsztein Janine Fleury

Angelica Frausto Ernesto Frausto Daniel Gaillard Melissa Gaitan Ana Garcia Priscilla Garcia **Rodrigo Gobitz** Jonathan Gonzalez Benjamin Goulet Iulieta Gruszko Syed Habib Jarrett Hannah Rainya Heath Evan Hernandez Shaelom James Li Yi Jiang Vijay Kasschau Saad Khan Nazmin Kharodia Sharese King Isaac LaFrance Amanda Lardizabal Daniel Latourette Nelson Lee **Brittany Lewis** Sara Lickers Chen Ling Brandon Manrique Gerard Markham Leslie Martin Yasmin Mattar

STUDY ABROAD SPRING 2012

Kiera Anderson '13 - Italy Janise Carmichael '13 - Argentina Hannah Chhibber '13 - United Kingdom Shukri Dualeh '13 - South Africa Ana Garcia '13 - Belgium Maxine Humphrey '13 - South Africa

Efforts to increase the number of students from

Quinlan Mitchell Benjamin Monge Mark Okimoto Janna Orons Zachary Palomo Jonathan Papa Louis Papa Abigail Perales Yaritza Perez Valerie Pietroluongo Armando Rivera Juan Robaina Willie Roberson Andrew Roberts Megan Roberts Natajah Roberts Sandra Rodgin Sean Rodrigues Aaron Rusheen Sandeep Sandhu Cristina Silva H<u>oyos</u> **Dustin Singer** Kelsey St. Clair **Catherine** Tarantine **Carrie** Trant Nyi Tun Paul Vergara Morgan Ward Simon Weber Kirsten Williamson Yazzmynn Wilson

Marius Kothor '13 - Morocco Quinlan Mitchell '13 - China Yaritza Perez '14 - Italy Catherine Tarantine '13 - Ghana Chizoba Umesi '13 - United Kingdom Paul Vergara '13 - Semester at Sea

Michael Eric Dyson

Free & Open to the Public

• One of the nation's most influential and renowned public intellectuals

• Professor, author, radio host and television personality

• MSNBC commentator and host of NPR's The Micheal Eric Dyson Show

• NAACP Image Award for Outstanding Literary Work -- Nonfiction winner (2004, 2006, 2007)

 Dr. Dyson "is reshaping what it means to be a public intellectual by becoming the most visible black academic of his time" (The Philadelphia Weekly)

• His best-selling book, Martin Luther King Jr.'s Death and How It Changed America, is "an excellent sociological primer on institutionalized racism in America" (The Washington Post)

•With his rhetorical gifts, he "can rock classroom and chapel alike" (The Chronicle of Higher Education)

• "One of the most graceful and lucid intellectuals writing on race and politics today (Vanity Fait Magazine)



FRIDAY JANUARY 27th, 2012 @ 6PM STRONG AUDITORIUM ON THE RIVER CAMPUS UNIVERSITY OF ROCHESTER MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. COMMEMORATIVE ADDRESS