



# James Farmer Multicultural Center

## Alumni Newsletter | August 2017

# CULTURAL AWARENESS SERIES

# 2017-2018

**Oct. 6 | 7 p.m.**

Digital Auditorium, HCC

Latino Identities Month Keynote: Ernie G.

**Oct. 25 | 7 p.m.**

Chandler Ballroom, UC

Gender & Sexual Minorities and Allies (GSMA)

Keynote: Faisal Alam

**Oct. 29 | 4 p.m.**

Chandler Ballroom, UC

Taste of Asia

**Nov. 2 | 7 p.m.**

Chandler Ballroom, UC

Asian Cultural Celebration Keynote

Performance: Mana Polynesia

**Nov. 9 | 7 p.m.**

Chandler Ballroom, UC

Jewish Cultural Celebration Keynote

Performance: Machaya Klezmer Band

**Nov. 16 | 7 p.m.**

Chandler Ballroom, UC

Native American Cultural Celebration

Keynote: Rose Powhatan, Native American Storyteller

**Nov. 30 | 7 p.m.**

Chandler Ballroom, UC

Kwanzaa Celebration



**Jan. 24 | 7 p.m.**

Chandler Ballroom, University Center

Martin Luther King, Jr. Keynote

Speaker: April Ryan

**Feb. 7 | 7 p.m.**

Digital Auditorium, HCC

Black History Month Keynote: Cherrell Brown

**Feb. 24 | 7 p.m.**

Dodd Auditorium, George Washington Hall

Step Show Competition

**Mar. 19 | 7 p.m.**

Lee Hall, Room 411

Women's History Month Keynote Speaker:

The Honorable Megan L. Clark

**April 3 | 6 p.m.**

Chandler Ballroom, UC

Passover Seder

**April 12 | 6 p.m.**

Chandler Ballroom, UC

Islamic Cultural Celebration Banquet

**April 14 | 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.**

UMW Fredericksburg Campus

28th Annual Multicultural Fair





# ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT: Rucker Receives Award



Dean Cedric Rucker, UMW Administrator, Faculty Member and Alumnus, Receives Distinguished NASPA Award

Cedric Rucker, Associate Vice President and Dean of Student Life, first made his mark at UMW in 1977 when he was the first African-American male student who lived on campus. He has been achieving impressive and notable marks ever since. When Dean Rucker reflected back on his years as an undergraduate at UMW and then later as a graduate student at the University of Virginia (where he received a master's degree in Sociology and advanced on to doctoral study), he never imagined he would find himself back in Fredericksburg working at his alma mater for almost 30 years. He returned to UMW in 1989 in the position of Associate Dean of Student Activities and became Dean of Student Life in 1999. In 2011, he was promoted to Associate Vice

President of Student Affairs. When asked what motivates him on a daily basis, Dean Rucker stated, "I think of where I came from, and I think of my grandparents, and of my mother and father, and talents that they had and the things they were not allowed to achieve[...]they pushed their children forward, insisting on being prepared to take on opportunities not yet known." During his years at UMW, as a student, he served as president of the Afro-American Student Association, president of the Inter-Club Association, president of Hamlet House (the men's honors house), member of the Student Government Association, the Association of Residence Halls, Judicial Council, and was a disc jockey for WMWC. As an administrator, he was one of the creators of the Multicultural Fair, served on the board for Equality Virginia, a founding member and president of Fredericksburg HIV AIDS Support Services, Race and Gender Project faculty participant, Mary Washington Affirmative Action Committee, Admissions Diversity and Advisory Council, designed and taught the initial courses in both Ethnic Studies and Queer Studies at Mary Washington, helped to establish the Women's and Gender Studies major, as well as serving on several boards in the local community.

In acknowledgement of his genuine, long-term commitment to education, the welfare and success of the generations of students he worked with and nurtured, and his contributions in the areas of diversity and inclusion, Dean Rucker received the NASPA Region III Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Award on June 16, 2017 at their Summer Symposium. He was very surprised and honored to receive this distinguished award. This was not the first time he has been recognized for his significant contributions, professionally and personally. In April 2016, Dean Rucker was also the recipient of the Richmond Public Schools Legacy Award. He stated that receiving both of these awards was meaningful in that "I always take great stock in having had the opportunity to work with such a wide array of students. I wanted to do for students what others have done for me, i.e., helping me to recognize my talents and advance as a student, a scholar, and as a professional. You have the obligation and responsibility over time to make sure the next generation will have opportunities to advance, as well. So, being acknowledged for those contributions in that way was just amazing."

As Dean Rucker continues to make marks at UMW and beyond, it is his desire to continue to utilize his life, his skills and talents to equip individuals to have the life they dream of. People see him as someone who has fostered an environment that has allowed students to reach their potential. His greatest reward is having the opportunity to work with so many generations of students and to witness their lives fully realized. It is important to him for students to know they are always at the heart of what he does.

## 2017-2018 Citizenship Award for Diversity Leadership

# ZOYA AHMED

Each year the President's Community Advisory Committee on Diversity presents a Mary Washington student with the Citizenship Award for Diversity Leadership. This award is given to a rising senior enrolled in the University, who possesses strong characteristics of leadership and demonstrates a personal commitment – advocating for diversity and inclusion across campus. This year's recipient is **Zoya Ahmed**.



Zoya Ahmed is President of Islamic Student Association and President of UNICEF. Zoya has been very active in the James Farmer Multicultural Center and with her involvement in the Islamic Student Association. She helped to plan numerous programs and campus-wide events including the 2017 Islamic Cultural Celebration. She has volunteered during Taste of Asia, Arab Culture Night, and other activities. Zoya will graduate with a major in Psychology and hopes to attend Virginia Tech's clinical psychology program after completing her degree at UMW.

See more on our website at <http://students.umw.edu/multicultural/citizenship-award-for-diversity/>