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Highlights of the 2013 Latino Identities Month Cultural Celebration



This year's annual Latino Identities Month (LIM), hosted by the Latino Student Association and the James Farmer Multicultural Center, kicked off the yearly cultural celebrations at the University of Mary Washington. The theme was, "Living on the Border: Finding Latino Identity in the USA." The concept behind the theme was to show the struggles that one may face when adapting to a different and unknown culture. In doing so, one obtains and adjusts to a new culture while sometimes having to neglect or reject one's own culture in order to assimilate into U.S. society.

The keynote speaker for this cultural awareness series was Christine Chavez, the granddaughter of Cesar Chavez, a well-known activist for farmers' and migrants' rights. Ms. Chavez's presentation was titled, "Cesar Chavez: The Past and Current Struggle for Hispanic Americans." She specifically spoke about the farmers in the United States and their plights and challenges, giving the audience a new perspective.

This celebration also marked the first time we had a collaborative program with the Ridderhof Martin Gallery. We were pleased to include and support their exhibit, "Converging Cultures: Works by Latino Artists," in the campus calendar of celebratory events. In addition, there were several programs and activities sponsored by different academic departments on campus. They included distinguished lecturers, film series, Latin jazz performance, Teach-In discussions, and poetry readings. The celebration hosted a Salsa Night event in the Underground, as well as a soccer tournament. One of our own sociology professors from the University, Debra Schlee, gave an eye opening talk called "Assimilation and Acculturation." One of the featured programs of this exciting line-up included a Columbian-American film showing of *Maria Full of Grace*, representing the struggles of a young teenager in a country leading to a decision of engaging in drug trafficking in order to obtain a better future.



The LIM cultural celebration concluded with the much anticipated Feria/Dinner Theater. This year's dinner theater included traditional food, the performance of a local salsa band called "Orquesta Curare," and dancing. The Latino Student Association's hard work and effort have made the campus community very proud.

New James Farmer Post Doctoral Fellow in Civil Rights and Social Justice Joins Staff



On August 1, 2013, Dr. Meghan Conley joined the James Farmer Multicultural Center (JFMC) as the second James Farmer Post-Doctoral Fellow in Civil Rights and Social Justice. This position was established two years ago in commemoration of the life and work of James Farmer, who taught History of the American Civil Rights Movement at Mary Washington from 1985 to 1998 (description taken from the James Farmer Visiting Professor Committee). The appointment is a one-year term, renewable for a second year. Dr. Conley has a joint assignment with the Department of Sociology and Anthropology and as a part-time member of the JFMC staff. In this capacity, she will be teaching two courses per semester and working in and with the JFMC, organizing workshops and other activities centered in the areas of civil rights and social justice. Dr. Conley completed her doctoral work at the University of Tennessee this summer.

She was drawn to this position because of its emphasis on civil rights and social justice, stating "those key words signaled to me that UMW was the kind of place where I could blend my research and teaching interests with my social justice work." When Dr. Conley was asked about how she views the position and her potential impact in enhancing awareness for students about the struggle for civil rights and social justice in the past and present, her response was, "I think it is difficult to talk about civil rights in the United States today without talking about immigration and how the marginalization of immigrant communities directly and indirectly reinforces systems of privilege and oppression. Our country currently hosts a population of more than 11 million people who, because of their lack of documentation, are in many ways systematically excluded from society, from access to health care and education, and from the legal system. This is a similar story for a different group of people. We can draw countless parallels between the Jim Crow South of the past and the 'Juan Crow' policies of today. Perhaps more importantly, though, there are countless parallels in the ways that people resist. It's not that immigrant rights movements are the 'new' civil rights movement, but that they are a re-articulation of an old and ongoing civil rights movement."

Dr. Conley has a guided vision for her work at UMW, with one of her primary goals being to "encourage the campus community to actively engage in social justice work. As I teach my classes and organize activities with the Multicultural Center, I want to push us beyond the comfort of keeping these issues in the realm of the 'academic' conversation. It's simply not enough to talk about social justice; an education for 'critical consciousness'—in the tradition of Paulo Freire—must include us taking action to bring about a more just world."

Former Little Rock Nine Student will be 2014 Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration Keynote Speaker

In 1954, the Supreme Court ruled that the segregation of black and white students in schools was unconstitutional. This ruling compelled the NAACP to pressure school districts throughout the south to follow the declaration of the Supreme Court and allow

black students into all white schools. The school district in Little Rock, Arkansas, agreed to allow black students to attend, and in September of 1957 a group of nine black students began classes at Little Rock Central High School. However, these

nine students were met with great adversity upon arriving at the school. Segregationist groups as well as members of the Arkansas National Guard were at the school on the first day of classes in an attempt to prevent the group from entering the school. The actions of the segregationist groups and the state National Guard, which were sanctioned by the Governor, Orval Faubus, were condemned by the Little Rock School District and even President Dwight

Eisenhower. In order to protect the students and to allow them to attend school, the 101st Airborne Division of the National Army was sent to Little Rock and the state's National Guard was put under federal authority.

Ernest Green was one of this group of students denied entry into Little Rock Central High School and later known as the Little Rock Nine. The first African American student to graduate from the school in 1958, Green became involved in employment law with a building-trade apprenticeship for the Adolph Institute, a project to help minority women in the South find opportunities for professional careers in 1965. He later directed the A. Phillip Randolph Education Fund from 1968 to 1976. Between 1977 and 1981, he served as assistant secretary in the Labor Department under President Carter and has worked in the private sector

for consulting firms in corporate America since 1981. In 1999, the Little Rock Nine were awarded the Congressional Gold Medal by President Bill Clinton, the highest honor given to a civilian, for outstanding bravery during the integration of Little Rock Central High School.



Ernest Green
MLK Keynote Speaker

Upcoming Events

Jewish Cultural Celebration keynote – Alexandria Klezmet - November 15, 2013 at 7 pm in The Underground, Lee Hall

Native American Cultural keynote – Dr. Mario Garza - November 20, 2013 at 7 pm in Room 411, Lee Hall

Kwanzaa Celebration - December 5, 2013 at 6 pm in Faculty-Staff Dining Hall

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration keynote – Ernest Green - January 21, 2014 at 7 pm in Dodd Auditorium



Taste of Asia

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