



# James Farmer Multicultural Center

## Alumni Newsletter | May 2020

### MULTICULTURAL FAIR: THROUGH THE YEARS

The Multicultural Fair is a longstanding and hugely popular tradition that celebrates culture and diversity as its foundation. This wonderful event, first implemented in 1991, strives to bring the campus and local community together to embrace the many ethnicities, heritages and customs that make our society so rich and vibrant. The inaugural event was named “Multicultural International Festival” and coordinated by Forrest Parker, director of the Multicultural Center, Cedric Rucker, chair of the Global Observation Committee, and Brenda King, director of the International Studies Program.

Each year, the Fair has grown in scale. This event provides an entire day packed with cultural performances, children’s activities, international cuisine, and an array of ethnic arts and crafts. The impact for the campus and local community continues to be lauded and reflective of the mission of the JFMC and the University, to enhance cultural understanding, and create opportunities for global engagement. The JFMC is proud of this lively celebration and excited each year to host it for the enjoyment of everyone. Differences truly do enrich us all!

Here is a selection of images from the Fair through the years:



*Vendors on campus walk, 1999*



*Native American performers, 2012*



*Rappahannock Area Kids on the Block, 1997*



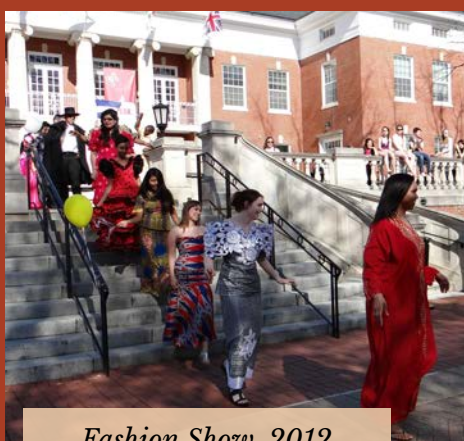
*African Performers, 2004*



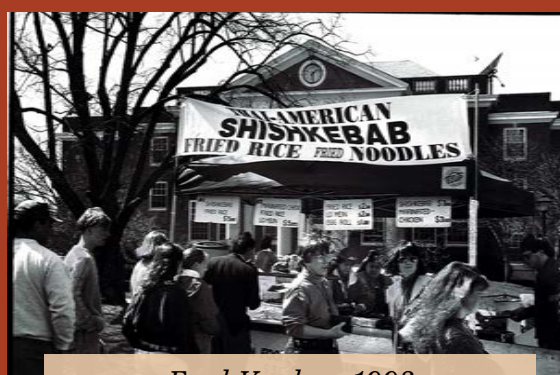
*Gaye Adegbolola & The Wild Rutz, 2017*



*Children's Area Inflatables, 2015*



*Fashion Show, 2012*



*Food Vendors, 1993*



*Fair 25th Anniversary, 2015*

# CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2020 SENIOR RECOGNITION PROGRAM HONOREES



For the graduating seniors, the end of this year marks their next step into their journey beyond UMW. While we were not able to host our annual Senior Recognition Program and Dinner in April, we still honor those graduating students who have made significant contributions in the areas of multiculturalism, diversity, inclusion, and social justice during their tenure. The work of the James Farmer Multicultural Center has been greatly enhanced by the contributions of these students. We thank them and wish them the best in their future endeavors.



## NEHEMIA ABEL

This year, Nehemia was the Citizenship Award for Diversity Leadership recipient. He served as a Student Board Advisor for the African Student Union, a Resources Inspiring Student Excellence (RISE) Peer Mentor for three years, and as a member of the James Farmer Multicultural Center Faculty Advisory Committee. After graduation, Nehemia would like to join the Peace Corps, because he is passionate about helping those in developing communities.

## KELSIE BURT

Kelsie has been a member for two years and served as vice president for two years with the Voices of Praise club. She also served as a student aide in the James Farmer Multicultural Center for four years. After graduation, Kelsie plans to work in the music and media industries.

## KELSEY CHAVERS

Kelsey was a founding member and served as the first president of the UMW NAACP College Chapter. She also served as vice president of the Colorguard, a student leader with the NEST program, an Orientation Leader, and was a FSEM peer mentor. Kelsey finished her degree requirements in December and is currently employed as a Solar GIS Specialist in Charlottesville, VA.

## HERSHELLE CLARK

Hershelle was a member for two years and served as vice president of the Black Student Association, co-vice president of Students Educating and Empowering for Diversity (SEED), and as the social media chair for the People for the Rights of Individuals and Sexual Minorities (PRISM). After graduation, she plans to work with Autism Learners ABA Therapy and to apply to graduate school for teaching.

## LESLIE ESCOBAR

Leslie has been a member for three years and served as president for two years of the Women of Color club. She also served as a resident assistant for two years and an office assistant with the Office of Disability Resources. She finished her degree requirements in December and has been accepted into George Mason University's Higher Education and Student Development Master's Program.

## JASON FORD

Jason served as president and director of communications for the Student Government Association, and as president, vice president and treasurer for Brothers of a New Direction. In addition, Jason was a member of the UMW NAACP College Chapter, a member of UMW Club Basketball, and as a supervisor and referee for UMW Intramural Sports. After graduation, Jason hopes to begin a career in the public or private sector of Government Relations.

## ANUSHAH HASSAN

Anushah served as a member for three years and this past year as the president of Arab Culture Club and as the co-president of Eagle Bhangra dance club. In addition, Anushah was a JFMC Faculty Advisory Committee student representative, a peer tutor with Academic Services, and a member of the Women in Business group. Anushah has accepted a job offer from KPMG, one of the big four accounting firms, where she will be starting as a Federal Audit Associate in Washington, D.C. this August.

## YOEL KIDANE

During his time at UMW, Yoel was a member of the African Student Union, Arab Culture Club, and Men's Club Soccer. He also served as a Resident Assistant and an Orientation Leader. After graduation, Yoel hopes to apply for teaching assistant positions abroad, before applying to the education sector in the Peace Corps.



### **SARAH MAHMUD**

Sarah has served as secretary, treasurer, and president of the Bellydance team. She was also freshman liaison, publicity chair, historian, vice president and president of the UMW Young Democrats. In addition, Sarah served as publicity chair and vice treasurer of the UMW radio station. After graduation, Sarah plans to remain in Fredericksburg to work.

### **EBONI MAYO**

Eboni has been a member for three years and served on the executive board this past year with the Black Student Association. She also was a member of the Women of Color and UMW UNICEF clubs. After graduation, Eboni plans to complete a service year as a tutor with the Literacy Lab before going on to earn her master's degree in Social Work. She also intends to open a mental hospital and start a non-profit for youth and families.

### **RAHIMA MORSHED**

Rahima has served as chair of the Diversity and Unity Coordinating Committee of the SGA for three semesters, was a member and captain of Eagle Bhangra, a member of the Muslim Student Association, BellACapella, and UMW Symfonics. In addition, Rahima worked as a student aide in the JFMC, the Sociology department, and interned at the JFMC and the Rappahannock Council Against Sexual Assault (RCASA) agency. Her career goal is to work in direct care services and healthcare senior consulting, and hopes to start her own preventative healthcare nonprofit for vulnerable populations.

### **JAZEB RAJA**

Jazeb has been a member for two years and served as co-president and president of the Muslim Student Association. He also served as the treasurer and fundraiser of the ACM club and a member of the League club. In addition, he worked for four years as a student aide at the IT Help Desk. After graduation, Jazeb plans to become a software engineer and then later move on to become a project manager for software development.

### **SALMA SANDOVAL**

Salma has been a member for three years and served as treasurer of the Latino Student Association. She also served as a member of the student planning committee for the Social Justice and Leadership Summit, as well as a Spanish interpreter for the Vice President of Student Affairs office. After graduation, Salma plans to work internationally.

### **MATTHEW SKLAW**

Matthew is a psychology major and has been a member for three years and served as co-president of Framar/Intercultural Living Community.

### **SHANE THIN**

Shane is a Communications and Digital Studies major. He has been a member for three years and served as the treasurer of the Asian Student Association.

### **CHIANN TODD-MGBAKOR**

Chiann has been a member and president of the Black Student Association. She also served as Director of Administration with the SGA this past year. In addition, she was a RA/Senior RA, a student aide with the STP program, and a RISE peer mentor. Her future plans after graduation include working at least a year being directly involved and assisting programs that help at-risk youth who may be subject to incarceration. Then she plans to attend graduate school and earn a Master's in Social Work degree to further help individuals from becoming victims of the criminal justice system.

### **JEREMIAH WARD**

Jeremiah has been a member and served as president/director for two years of the Voices of Praise club. Jeremiah also is a member of the UMW NAACP College Chapter, and served as the director of training for the Washington Guides with the Admissions Office. He also served as chair of the James Farmer Tribute student-led planning committee. After graduation, Jeremiah will begin a full-time position with Oxley Enterprises in Fredericksburg, VA. He later plans to attend graduate school and earn a Master's in Business Administration degree with a specialization in Human Resources.

**CONGRATULATIONS TO THESE GRADUATING SENIORS!**



## STAY UPDATED - STAY IN TOUCH FOLLOW THE JAMES FARMER MULTICULTURAL CENTER



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## UMW ANNOUNCES 2020 GRACE MANN LAUNCH AWARD

### CONGRATULATIONS TO NEHEMIA ABEL!

Established in 2015 in honor of the legacy of Grace Mann, a junior at UMW who was very involved in social justice issues, the Grace Mann Launch Award is given to a graduating senior who has demonstrated consistent engagement and leadership as a social justice activist and looks to continue that work upon graduation.

The recipient this year was [Nehemia Abel](#), a graduating senior in Marketing and an active student leader. Throughout his tenure at UMW, Nehemia has demonstrated a commitment to make a positive impact in people's lives, not only on the campus community, but in the broader community, as well. He has sought leadership opportunities that allowed him to realize his passions for serving as an advocate and voice for underrepresented populations. In just his second year, Nehemia became a peer mentor for the Resources Inspiring Student Excellence (RISE) Peer Mentoring Program, was a Resident

Assistant, and co-founded Ubumwe, his own non-profit organization that strives to "unify and empower Burundian refugees as they pursue higher education and careers." He also interned with Micah Ecumenical Ministries and volunteered at Habitat for Humanity in Fredericksburg. His other leadership roles included serving as a student representative on the James Farmer Multicultural Center Faculty Advisory Committee and the College of Business Advisory Board, student board advisor of African Student Union, and president of the Men's Club Soccer team for three years. Additional campus involvements included memberships in the UMW NAACP College Chapter, the UMW UNICEF and the Women of Color clubs. In addition to these involvements, Nehemia served as the 2019 – 2020 Citizenship Award for Diversity Leadership recipient, where he served as an ambassador for diversity and facilitated multicultural and inclusion workshops.

Abel stated, "Since my first year at UMW, I approached each semester with the mentality of helping others to enjoy their experience at this prestigious institution." After graduation, Abel stated, "I would like to join the Peace Corps...because of my passion for helping others in developing communities." "The lack of equality and equity in the world concerns me deeply and has given me a mission to foster an environment where victims are heard and cared for. I am thankful for individuals like Grace Mann for being an inspiration to the UMW community in advocating for a better world tomorrow."

