



Volume 6:2 | May 2012

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It is the mission of the Diversity Center and Office of Multicultural Programs to provide leadership for positive and equitable change that creates a welcoming, supportive environment for staff, faculty, and all students and to design and support activities that infuse an acceptance and appreciation for difference that is morally and socially just into college life.

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At the Center



Nengher Vang, Laura Schilling, and Virgil Jones.

The symbols on the stole represent Justice on one side and Democracy/Unity in Diversity on the other. This year's recipients are those who have performed in social justice theatre, organized our annual Building Bridges conference, participated in the execution of "Diversity Week," championed multicultural sororities, produced films and documentaries, initiated new programs, and awakened in other ways the sleeping social activist in all of us. Because of their contributions in the form of self-sacrifice, program development, workshop facilitation, peer mentoring, community service, and policy advocacy, we are a better community.

Every year, the Diversity Leadership Council and the Diversity Center honor graduating seniors who have been leaders and advocates for diversity, inclusion, and social justice at Gustavus Adolphus College by giving them a "Diversity Stole" to wear during commencement.

On behalf of the Diversity Leadership Council and the Diversity Center, we would like to express our sincere gratitude and appreciation to this year's Diversity Stole recipients for all their contributions to the Diversity Center and the greater campus community at Gustavus Adolphus College (see page 2). We would also like to thank all the department chairs, faculty, and staffs who donated to make it possible for us to recognize all deserving students for their distinguished contributions. Thank you all for your contribution to multicultural and engaged citizenship education at Gustavus.

**“DIVERSITY STOLE”
RECIPIENTS 2011-2012
SCHOOL YEAR**

Chad Allen *Psychology*
 Leah E. Atz *Health Fitness*
 Benjamin Batz *Individualized*
 Ethan Bjeland *Theatre*
 Karen Boidoku *Nursing*
 Demetria Brown *Psychology*
 Breanne Cernske *English*
 Passang Chozom *Art Studio*
 Elizabeth Coco *Religion*
 Raci Crowley *Management*
 Veronica DuBose *Dance*
 Jennifer Fox *Political Science*
 Yukako Funaki *Communication
Studies*
 Karen Getfield *History*
 Ryan Hallsten *Russian Studies*
 Julie Hayes *Classics*
 Zicheng He *Public Accounting*
 Griffin Hinwood *Computer Science*
 Brandon Hirdler *Gender, Women,
and Sexuality Studies*
 Catherine Keith *Individualized*
 Annabel Landaverde *Political
Science*
 Meghan Lee *Sociology &
Anthropology*
 Blong Lor *Art Studio*
 Yer Lor *Health Fitness*
 Amanda McCourt *English*
 Ellen Miller *Religion*
 Carrie Moua *Health Fitness*
 Mai Yia Moua *Art Studio*
 Michelle N. Palm *Environmental
Studies*
 Kelly Patterson *Religion*
 Michelle Peterson *Management*
 Nick Prince *Classics, Political Science*
 Kyle Schapolowsky *Mathematics*
 Andrew Schmitt *Physics*
 Elizabeth Shay *Communication
Studies*
 Matthew Swenson *Mathematics*
 Evan Taylor *Art Studio*
 Chue Mai Thao *Management*
 Tong Thao *Geography*
 Irma Márquez Trapero
Political Science
 Hua Vang *Environmental Studies*
 Xiu Xiao *Biology*
 Khoua Xiong *Sociology &
Anthropology*
 Syjong Xiong *Psychology*
 Nick Yang *Psychology*
 Yer Yang *Health Fitness*
 Julio Zelaya *Political Science*

Diversity Center Award Recipients

Each spring, allies and advocates of diversity come together to celebrate the work of specific individuals and events that have made substantial contribution to multicultural education and social justice on campus during the year. On April 27, the Diversity Leadership Council and the Diversity Center recognized Andrew Grace; Elizabeth Coco; Irma Marquez Trapero; and OLAS’s Brazilian Carnival for their outstanding contribution to student life at Gustavus.



Andrew Grace is currently the ELL tutoring specialist. Since 2010, Andrew has devoted his time, energy, and enthusiasm to the multicultural students at Gustavus. Despite his part-time contract, he met students whenever they needed him, including evenings and weekends. This year alone, Andrew held more than 400 tutorials with students. Andrew is also a discussion facilitator for *Breaking Barriers*. In addition, as a member of the ELL Action Committee, he helps facilitate faculty development events such as “Teachers Talking” and works with Vang Yang, a math/education student, to develop a public discourse project focusing on the needs of ELL students. Most of all, Andrew is the man behind the Summer Multilingual Writing Institute, the pilot program first offered in August of 2011 to reach out to a cohort of first-year multilingual students and get them ready for college writing at Gustavus.



Elizabeth Coco is a true fighter and a champion for diversity and social justice on campus and in society. Reflecting on her post-graduation plan, Coco says, “I’m going to keep fighting the fight in any way I can as long as there is a fight out there.” In the four years that she has been at Gustavus, she was involved in numerous student organizations, including IAWA, Building Bridges, Womyn’s Awareness Center, and the Diversity Leadership Council. She served as co-chair for both the DLC and Building Bridges and is a student representative on the Cultural Diversity Committee in Student Senate. Most recently, Coco is the visionary leader behind *Breaking Barriers*, a new program that brings students together with a faculty/staff facilitator to talk about issues of systemic oppression, inequity, and social justice.



Irmá Marquez Trapero is a true exemplar of the servant leadership that Gustavus cultivates in its students. Reflecting on her post-Gustavus plan recently, Irma says, “I am still not sure about my future, but I hope to be serving in all the ways I can.” Irma is currently a co-chair of Building Bridges and the main architect behind this year’s hugely successful conference on Native Americans. Irma has also been involved in numerous other student organizations on campus, including IAWA, Greeters, Crossroads, Zeta Chi Phi Multicultural Sorority, the Guild of St. Lucia, and Pan Afrikan Student Organization (PASO). In 2010, Irma was president of the Diversity Leadership Council (DLC) and a recipient of the Jay and Rose Phillips Scholarship.



Brazilian Carnival is a new, exciting, and interactive event that the Organization for Latin American and Spanish Cultures (OLAS) put together this year. Designed to educate the Gustavus community about Brazilian culture, the carnival brought more than 300 faculty, staff, students, and members of the St. Peter community together on Sunday, February 26. The evening was filled with delicious food, live music, and dances by an impressive group of professional Brazilian dancers and singers. Attendees were up on their feet all evening, learning the steps and movements, and dancing to the rhythm of the music.



Alex Christensen '13

Hello good people! I'm a junior from Minneapolis majoring in environmental studies and minoring in peace studies. I want to let you know about the evolution of my understanding of diversity at Gustavus, which has not stopped unfolding since I saw *E Pluribus Gustavus* during orientation. After being floored by *E Pluribus*, I joined I Am We Are the first chance I got. That decision was one of the best and most important I've made in college. Since I joined IAWA, I've performed in three Building Bridges conferences, this fall's *E Pluribus Gustavus*, and a handful of event-specific shows, such as those for *To Write Love on Her Arms* and PASO's "Our Stories" conference. The process of creating each of these shows has been unique and intense, and the bonds that I've formed with my peers are strong and deep.

My involvement in I Am We Are has sparked other interests and opportunities that have continued to define who I am. During my first year, I had the opportunity to attend the White Privilege Conference, an annual forum on issues of race, gender, sexuality, faith, class, and the intersections between all of these complex identities, as part of Gustavus's first-ever student delegation. Those three days changed the way I viewed myself in relation to others. The WPC gave my time here deeper and more urgent meaning and compelled me to take responsibility for my racial, gender, sexual, and class privilege.

Studying abroad for a semester was another good decision. I spent four months in India on the Social Justice, Peace, and Development program with eight other Gusties and a comparable group from Concordia-Moorhead. I still cannot articulate the effect that the people, places, sights and sounds there have on me. I miss India every day, and I am constantly motivated by my study abroad experience.

Diversity is a challenging subject at Gustavus. It is important to think about the diversity contained within ourselves, but we cannot let that distract us from larger societal issues of diversity that disenfranchise people from educational, legal, career, housing, and other opportunities. We've got a lot of work to do. I hope you'll join me.



Jen Fox '12

At the end of the month, I will be graduating with a degree in political science with minors in gender, women, and sexuality studies, peace studies, and Scandinavian studies. These areas of study have given me critical views, compassion, empathy, and a growing heart of advocacy.

The last four years at Gustavus have been a whirlwind of experiences. It is never dull around here. Numerous events are occurring every week, not to mention the incredible people who are always around in places like the Courtyard Café who cannot wait to have that life-changing conversation with you. Former Gustavus president Axel Steuer called the Courtyard Café "the living room of the college," and that is how I have treated both the Courtyard Café and the Diversity Center. The Courtyard Café and the Diversity Center are two places I've made my home at Gustavus. Both rooms are constantly open and ready to greet the people entering.

So many opportunities are given to all of us Gusties, and I have sought out every opportunity I got to make them a part of my life at Gustavus. I was a CAB executive who helped bring the first delegation of students to the White Privilege Conference in 2010 and a leader in Student Senate who helped and supported *Breaking Barriers*. I also helped organize a one-time event on campus to prevent a small community in India from being removed from their home because a huge dam construction project. Through these experiences, I've learned that forming solid relationships with students, faculty, staff, administration, friends, and alumni is absolutely crucial to being a mover and shaker on campus. These relationships and the knowledge that comes with them are what create such a strong bond for me to Gustavus. All of us Gusties are extraordinary people, and Gustavus is an extraordinary place.



SANDY XIONG '14 is Phillips Scholarship Recipient

Every year, the Diversity Center works with the Minnesota Private College Council to promote and facilitate the Jay & Rose Phillips Scholarship, an award given to private college students who strive to make life better for people with unmet needs in Minnesota communities. Sandy is the 11th Gustie to win this highly competitive scholarship in the past 13 years. Sandy's project involves the creation of an online *HmoobTeen* magazine to enable Hmong teens all over the country to submit their arts and writing for publication as a way to empower them to pursue education and prevent them from gang involvement and violence.

World Watch and **Cultural Connections** are brought to you by the Crossroads Program. Through their shared interest in world cultures, languages, and contemporary global issues, members work to develop a broader understanding of the world in which they live and contribute to the education of the College community as a whole.

Think Globally, Act Locally.

WORLD WATCH

Africa and Latin America

May 14, 1811 – Independence of Paraguay. Patriots surrounded the house of the Spanish governor. They demanded that he relinquish control over the nation. The surrender was carried out without any bloodshed.

May 1, 1865 – Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay signed an alliance treaty to fight against Paraguay. The war of the Triple Alliance was the war that caused the most deaths in the history of South America. Paraguay was ultimately defeated, leading to decades of chaos.

May 13, 1888 – Slavery banned in Brazil by Princess Isabel. Brazil was the last western nation to abolish slavery.

May 3, 1910 – The Union of South Africa was founded uniting the British colonies of Cape, Natal, Transvaal, and Orange Free State. The Union broke formally with British rule and became the Republic of South Africa on the 31st of May 1961.

May 1, 1961 – Fidel Castro proclaimed Cuba as a socialist nation and abolished elections. "If Mr. Kennedy does not like Socialism, we do not like imperialism. We do not like capitalism." ~Fidel Castro

May 9, 1979 – El Salvador cathedral bloodbath. At least 18 demonstrators were killed and many wounded after police opened fire on anti-government protesters outside the Metropolitan Cathedral in San Salvador. Five months later, on October 15th, the government was overthrown in a coup.

May 10, 1994 – Nelson Mandela, former leader of the African National Congress (ANC), became South Africa's first black president after spending nearly 20 years in prison for protesting apartheid.

May 26, 2004 – A historic peace agreement was signed ending the 21-year civil war in Sudan, but the killing in Darfur continues.

CULTURAL CONNECTIONS

Baron Bliss Day (Belize) – Baron Bliss (1869–1926) was a British traveler who willed the equivalent of 2 million US dollars to a trust fund for the citizens of modern-day Belize. Every March 9, on the anniversary of his death, the citizens of Honduras celebrate his memory. The money allowed for the building of the Bliss Institute Library, Museum in Belize City, health clinics, and markets around the country. It also has helped with the Belize City water supply system.

La Ceiba (Honduras) – With preparations starting a week in advance, the Festival La Ceiba in Honduras is the 2nd largest Latin American festivity behind the Brazilian Carnival. Meant to honor the patron saint San Isidro, this week-long festival, which starts the third week of May, brings in hundreds of thousands of tourists each year. Music, food, dancing, and entertainment happens the entire week, culminating in the "Gran Carnaval de la Amistad" or "Great Carnival of Friendship." In this day, the streets are filled with floats, carnival games, live music, great food, and an amazing atmosphere that can only be felt in person.

Mwaka Kogwa (Zanzibar, Tanzania) – The celebration of Mwaka Kogwa festival takes place in Zanzibar. It is the New Year, which is celebrated in either June or July. It is the end of the old growing season and the start of the new as a way to purify and start from a blank slate. The men fight with banana stalks, and a straw house is burnt. These rituals mark the end of feuds and end the worries of the previous year.