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Diversity Center

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at the center

with Virgil Jones



Virgil Jones

"MIX IT UP" By Virgil Jones

Welcome back! The Diversity Center is excited to welcome students, staff, and faculty back to campus. We are excited about all of our returning student staff and the veteran presence that they bring to our office. Laura and I are anxious for the new challenges that each school year brings with it.

As you pass by the office, we hope that you will notice that we have added a sign that should help people who are new to Gustavus find us in the Campus Center. Just in case you didn't know, we are located on the lower level of the Jackson Campus Center, next to the Residential Life Office. I am personally inviting you to drop in, kick your feet up, check your e-mail, or just spend some time talking and laughing with friends.

If you are looking for one good reason to visit, you should know that we will continue to partner with the Writing Center. The Writing Center will offer writing tutor assistance Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays! We also have faculty and staff who are nice enough to hold some office hours at the Diversity Center, too. Please keep a look-out for other upcoming events and stop in sometime to meet the staff.

Something new this year is that every month we will offer an opportunity for students, staff, and faculty to come together. There will be icebreakers, UNO, Scattergories, chess, euchre and snacks.

Diversity Mixers | 7 p.m. – 8 p.m.

- October 15 – the Dive
- November 19 – Linner Lounge
- December 16 – Linner Lounge
- February 16 – Linner Lounge
- March 18 – Linner Lounge

We hope the first semester is starting off with a bang and that we will see you soon.



Virgil Jones | Director of Multicultural Programs

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diversity center newsletter

Higher Ground

department focus



ELIZABETH COCO

Hello there. My friends call me Coco (and if you are reading this you are one, too). I'm the co-president of the Womyn's Awareness Center (WAC) and a Gustie Greeter. These are important activities for me, but working in the

D Center has certainly been one of the most rewarding experiences I have had on campus so far. This is a welcoming and safe place to be where I can truly be myself.



LAURA JENSEN

I'm Laura Jensen and I'm a junior nursing and Spanish major. I'm involved in the Crossroads Program, the Philips Scholarship award, and the Diversity Center. The Diversity

Center has really helped me to experience and apply to my life a variety of diverse situations. It has awakened the social activist in me.



LAUREN MATYKOWSKI

My name is Lauren Matykowski, and I am a senior from Minneapolis. I am a Russian studies major with minors in history and peace studies. I am a co-president of the Russian Club, and

I play the oboe in the Gustavus Wind Orchestra. Last spring I spent the semester in St. Petersburg, Russia. While I enjoyed my time in Russia, I am really excited to be back at Gustavus for my senior year. I love working in the Diversity Center because I have met so many awesome people and it is a great outlet for our campus. Come meet new people, work with our tutors and learn about Gustavus organizations and events. You will not be sorry you stopped in!



REBEKAH MENDOZA

Hey! My name is Rebekah Mendoza, and I am a sophomore student from Los Angeles, Calif. I am a Japanese studies major with a minor in history. Currently I am treasurer of OLAS

and a member of PASO, ACC, and JCC. Working in the Diversity Center helps me to stay involved and meet new people. So come by to say hi or just chat.



OBUKOWHO "OBUS" OKOH

Hi, I'm Obukowho, but people call me Obus. I am a junior accounting major from Nigeria. All the people who stop by the Diversity Center are great! I've made lots of friends here. And I can't wait to meet you.



HAMADA OMAR

Hi, this is Hamada Omar. I am a student from Minneapolis Washburn and a senior majoring in business management with a minor in geography. Right now, I'm involved in PASO, football, and Tau Psi Omega "Reds" fraternity. In my free time, I am quite involved in the St. Peter community, where I help coach 8-10 year old boys' flag football. I love the Diversity

Center because it is a place for me to come and relax and meet all sorts of people from different backgrounds.



JEANIFER POON

My name is Jeanifer Poon. I'm a senior nursing major. I'm really into volleyball and I'm learning how to play tennis. I enjoy mentoring others, helping out people, and being involved in their lives. The D Center is a niche on campus for me. It's where I can express myself and learn about other people's cultures and life experiences.



LAURA SHILLING

I'm Laura Shilling, the administrative assistant in the Diversity Center. This is my second year here and it has been a blast. You will usually find me behind the desk, on the phone, or on the computer. But, don't let that fool you—I'm always ready to help out, answer questions, or play a game of UNO. I see the Diversity Center as a place where we can find a common ground

to celebrate our individualities and differences.



JULIO ZELAYA

My name is Julio Zelaya from St. James, Minn. I am political science major with a peace studies minor, and I have worked at the Diversity Center since last year. I enjoy spending time meeting up with friends and chatting about everything at the D-Center. I also enjoy spinning on our cool new chairs! So

come by, get dizzy and visit me at the D-Center.

student profile



Lauren Matykowski

My time at Gustavus has not been at all what I expected, and at the risk of sounding extremely cheesy, my time here has been better than I could have imagined. Like all students, I have had many ups and downs at Gustavus, but these experiences have shaped me into someone I am proud to be. During my time at Gustavus, I discovered my passion for Russian language and culture, declared Russian studies as my major, and had the strength and humor to live in St. Petersburg, Russia, for a semester. I am grateful for my time in the Gustavus Wind Orchestra, which has allowed me to grow as a musician, has given me many opportunities, and as an added bonus has allowed me to tour the world with some of my best friends.

Of course, the Diversity Center has also impacted my time at Gustavus. I am thankful for Virgil, who recruited me years ago and then gave me an opportunity that allowed a great amount of welcomed change into my life. When I started working in the Diversity Center, it gave me a new sense of purpose in our community. I've met so many wonderful people, discovered new organizations, and learned to be a leader and how to use my voice on campus positively. I will take what I've learned here and carry these experiences and values into the next stage of my life after Gustavus. Thank you to all of my professors, advisers, and friends who have helped me during my time at Gustavus. You have contributed to the person I am today and the person I will be after I graduate. Don't Forget to Grow.

student organization

Queers and Allies—Q&A By Andrew Nelson

Queers and Allies is a student organization focused on raising campus awareness of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender rights and concerns. We strive to promote tolerance, acceptance, and education for all students, staff, and faculty. As a result of the efforts of past years, the Queers and Allies group has made significant progress on campus. One rather recent and promising change has been the addition of a Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Ally-centered house (dubbed the Q&A house) to the Intentional Learning and Service program of the Residential Life Office. This program, which is in its third year now, allows both male and female students to live together in a school-owned, off-campus house. In conjunction with Queers and Allies, the house offers programming focused on raising understanding and visibility of the GLBT community to the entire campus.

These programs have included events such as an annual Drag Show, BBQ(&A), Safe Zone training, and Queer We Are, among many other things. The drag show, for example, attracts upwards of 600 students each October, during our yearly celebration of National Coming Out Week.

For the past three years, we have also sent students to the Midwest Bisexual, Lesbian, Gay, Transgender, and Ally College Conference. At the conference, attendees participate in various workshops, network with other GLBTA students from the Midwest, and attend lectures by speakers such as Angela Davis and LZ Granderson.

With so much activity, it is no wonder that we have furthered our goal of making Gustavus an environment for queer or questioning students to safely come out or explore their sexuality. But there is still a lot of work to be done.

“The experience of change and transformation is never complete. Something bigger and brighter always calls to shine through us. We are continually challenged to change and grow, to break down and break through.” ”

— Elizabeth Lesser

Diversity Events

Did you know that the Diversity Center offers tutoring and Writing Center opportunities? It is a great way to get your questions answered, get a little boost, and get a fresh perspective on your papers.

Writing Center Hours:

Monday | 7–9 p.m.

Tuesday | 7–9 p.m.

Thursday | 5–7 p.m.

Tutoring Times:

Monday | 7–9 p.m. | Physics

Tuesday | 7–9 p.m. | Chemistry

Wednesday | 7–9 p.m. | Biology

We are also hosting Office Hours in the Diversity Center for Assistant Dean of Students Deirdre Rosenfeld and Professors Lisa Heldke, Martin Lang, Brandy Russell, Henry MacCarthy, Peg O'Connor, and Thia Cooper.

Monday | 12:30–1:30 p.m.

Lisa Heldke, Philosophy

Monday | 2–3 p.m.

Martin Lang, Communications

Tuesday | 12:30–1:30 p.m.

Brandy Russell, Chemistry

Wednesday | 10–11 a.m.

Deirdre Rosenfeld, Dean of Students' Office

Wednesday | 11 a.m.–Noon

Henry MacCarthy, Theatre and Dance

Thursday | 3:30–4:30 p.m.

Peg O'Connor, GWS

Friday | Noon–1 p.m.

Thia Cooper, Religion

College Calendar

October 6–7 | Nobel Conference® 45

October 9 | 9-10 a.m. | Fun Run

meet at 3 Flags

October 10 | 11:30 a.m.–1:30 p.m. | Market Place

Carnival Luncheon

October 10 | 11 a.m.–1 p.m. | Near Reunion Tents

Michael & the Sundogs, *free concert*

October 10 | 7:30 a.m.–9 p.m. | Alumni Hall

Mind Games, *street magic show*

October 15 | 7-8 p.m. | The Dive

Diversity Center "Mix It Up"

October 22 | 10 a.m.–3 p.m.

20th Annual International Photo Contest Voting

October 30 & 31

November 5 & 5 | 8-10:30 p.m.

Three One-Act Plays

November 1 & 7 | 2-4:30 p.m.

Three One-Act Plays

November 4–5 | 1130 a.m.–5 p.m.

American Red Cross blood drive

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—The Crossroads Program.

World Watch

Thailand, Asia: King Hospitalized — The 81-year-old king of Thailand has been admitted to hospital suffering from fever. People are gathering at the hospital to convey prayers and good wishes to King Bhumibol Adulyadej, the world's longest-serving monarch.

Italy, Europe: Italians Mourn — Italy will today pay tribute to the six Italian soldiers who were killed in a suicide car bomb attack in Kabul last Thursday.

Jerusalem, Middle East: Pressing for Peace — Barack Obama will try to get Mideast peacemaking back on track this week in a meeting with the Israeli and Palestinian leaders, hoping the weight of the U.S. presidency can resolve a showdown over Israeli settlement construction and get the sides talking again after months of deadlock.

Havana, Cuba: Peace Concert — Half a million people jammed into Havana's Revolution Square on Sunday for a concert by Colombian singer Juanes and other mostly Spanish-language pop stars who hope music can do what politics has not—bring together Cubans here and in the United States.

Cultural Connection

October 2– Gandhi's Birthday (Indian)

October 3 – Harvest Moon Festival (China, Taiwan, Korea, Vietnam):

A harvest festival celebrated with family reunions, moon gazing, and eating of moon cakes to pay homage to ancestors and express gratitude for rich crops

October 17– Diwali (Sikh, Hindu): Week-long festival for the Hindu New Year.

October 31 – Samhain (Wicca): The most important Buddhist festival celebrates the birth, enlightenment, and death of Gautama Buddha.

May 10 – Mother's Day (Australia, Canada, Italy, Mexico, New Zealand, USA, Denmark)

May 29 – Shavuot (Jewish): Traditionally animals were slaughtered for winter provisions and the spirits of those who have died in the last year are invited to a final celebration.