

GRIOT

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VOLUME XXIX, ISSUE XV

In the records of West African history, "GRIOT" (PRONOUNCED GREE-oh) was the honored name bestowed on wise and knowledgeable storytellers entrusted with the task of documenting tribal histories and genealogies.

Barack the Oval

Reprinted with permission from The Rocky Mountain Collegian. First published October 27, 2008

Obama lauds CSU as green university

Jim Sojourner

Sen. Barack Obama spoke to the Fort Collins community, discussing the importance of a renewable energy future and commending CSU for its plans to go green, underneath vibrantly golden leaves on the Oval Sunday.

Roaring with approval and breaking into raucous chants of "O-ba-ma" and "Yes We Can," the crowd stood on tiptoes and gaped upwards, enraptured, as Obama discussed his plans for renewable energy as well as the economy, education and healthcare.

Obama said he plans to spend \$15 billion on renewable energy sources if elected president, which he said would create more than five million green jobs that "pay well and can't be outsourced."

The jobs would range from construction on new wind and solar fields to biofuel farming and the improvement of America's energy grid to include new power sources.

"Governor Ritter is doing it. Colorado is doing it," Obama said.

He said that, while the energy issue is critical to the future of the U.S., educating the young people is also of primary importance.

He said students deserve a world-class education and need to be given the skills and knowledge to compete with workers in any country, and said early childhood education, new teachers and higher salaries are part of the solution.

Speaking to the crowd, which was largely comprised of students, Obama said he wants to make sure that anyone who serves their country in the military or volunteer service is



Photo courtesy of www.illinoischannel.org

able to afford college with "no ifs, ands or buts."

"I don't think the young people of America are a special interest group; I think they're our future," Obama said drawing thunderous shouts of approval.

Obama also urged the crowd to vote early if they hope to "change" these issues.

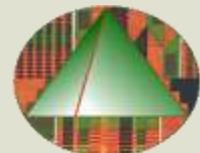
"You'll feel morally superior having already cast your ballot, while those lazy procrastinators are waiting until Nov. 4," Obama said, drawing laughter from the crowd.

"I especially want you to vote early if you're voting for me," he said and encouraged McCain supporters to wait until Nov. 5 to vote.



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**Black Student
Services**

Highlights of Ram Welcome

Danielle McConnell



Ram Welcome has been around the CSU campus for many years. It serves as a way to get the campus to come together, allow people to meet one another, and to welcome incoming students to their new campus. Also, students get the chance to become acquainted with their major, college and professors.

It all started Thursday August 16th as all the students were officially moving in to their new residence halls. That day the halls were crowded with people and their possessions. With all the students unpacking their things and getting accustomed to brand new settings without their parents, it was a bit overwhelming.

Some of the staff member and Key communities members strolled around the residence halls to assist in any way they could. The day ended with a huge carnival in celebration of the incoming freshmen and transfer students. There was free food, rides, and just sheer fun for the remainder of the evening.

On Friday there were more introductions and information about the students' new environment. Students were able to learn about their majors, meet professors, learn the different departments, and get a simple overview of what to expect when classes began.

The next event, the Street Fair, was where all the different organizations, clubs, and the different colleges on campus assembled in one area for students to get their hands on information. Ramapalooza was also that night. There, students could mini golf, play laser tag, video games, and participate in many other fun activities.

Our third day would come to be known, to me at least, as the day of tradition. It began with the CSU photo which all new students took part in. We formed up as the letters "C-S-U" and got a chance to really connect with each other.

This was followed by the hike up to the "A" painted on the foothills. This is a historic spot that has been a part of CSU's campus for a long time. The day ended with a late night extravaganza to target, where students were given

the opportunity to pick up any last minute supplies they needed for classes.

Sunday was a day simply to relax. Students had the day to absorb their surroundings and mentally prepare for the classes the following day. This would prove to be one of the most exhilarating days, simply because of the excitement and nervous tension the idea of college brought about.



CSU photo on field next to Student Recreation Center

Dominique Dawes Inspires Others

Reprinted with permission from CTV News

Angelica Riley

Many people remember growing up watching the Olympics, and fans all over the world remember watching gymnast Dominique Dawes take the gold. We sat down with Dawes to see what she's been up to.

Dominique Dawes spent her young years flipping and tumbling.

"Gymnastics really helped shape me to realize that it's important to follow your talents and passions in this world," Dawes said.

And fans who came to hear her speak in October said they loved her athletic talent. President of Black Definition, Marlon Blake, remembered cheering her on in 1996.

"Every young male had a crush on Dominique Dawes at some point in their life," he said.

At the age of ten she never realized that she'd be the first African American gymnast to both compete in three Olympic Games and win the gold.

"This is what people were talking about," Dawes thought back on her experience. "When I was competing people would come up to me all the time and say 'I was crying watching you at the '96 Olympics or the 2000 Olympics.' I finally understood it when Halle Berry won her award. I understood the impact that she was making."

She says it made her stronger. But it was not easy for Dawes growing up in the spotlight.

"I didn't anticipate the popularity that would come with it," she said. "I was very comfortable being the shy student, sitting in the corner or in the front of the class only conversing

with the teacher. That was me. But I think it's given me tougher skin today."

Now years later, she hopes to use her experiences to inspire others.

"To leave something positive in someone else's brain, or plant a seed for success... that's my goal and that's my desire."

Dawes said she enjoyed speaking with CSU in the Lory Student Center Theatre.



Photo courtesy of voanews.com

CSU and Black Student Services send Dr. Molock off on a high note

Erika Green



Dr. Jennifer Williams-Molock

On the afternoon of September 10th, students, staff, family and friends came together to celebrate the service of Dr. Jennifer Williams Molock as the Director of Black Student Services and to congratulate her on her new position as Assistant Vice President for Student Equity and Diversity at the University of Utah.

Dr. Molock's interest in Student Affairs began when she was an undergraduate student at Colorado State University and was strengthened by the encouragement of many Colorado State University faculty and staff members.

"I was a little shy and it was Dr. Dawn Person who was the Director of the Office of Black Student Services who really encouraged me and pushed me to my fullest potential," said Dr. Molock. "It was also my passion for working with and for students that brought me to where I am today."

Keys To Success

Danielle McConnell

On September 23rd, Ronald C. Glover came to the office of Black Student Services to speak. He is the Vice President of Global Workforce Diversity for IBM in Boston. Mr. Glover gave students a little bit of insight as to what it's like to be on a campus that is predominantly white.

Coming from Brandeis University in Waltham, Mass., Mr. Glover had a first-hand experience about what it was like to be part of a handful of African-American students on a predominantly white campus.

Mr. Glover gave the students advice and three major things stood out. The first was that a person has to choose for themselves how to manage the college experience.

Simply taking it as it comes is only going to add to the stress and difficulties that come with college territory. Mr. Glover also said

Dr. Molock began her tenure as Director of Black Student Services in 1998. During her time as Director, Dr. Molock implemented programs such as "CSU's B.E.S.T." (Black Educational Support Team), the Albert C. Yates Leadership Development Institute (sophomore program) and the Rites of Passage Leadership Program for first-year students.

For the annual Black Student Services awards ceremony, Dr. Molock added new academic awards such as the highest GPA award for each class and the 4.0 GPA award. She also added new leadership awards such as Pillar of Excellence and the Director's award.

"The Awards and Recognition program is by far my favorite annual memory," said Dr. Molock. "My heart would just be full and most times my eyes would be weepy when I would see what students had accomplished over a year or over 4 years. I was always so proud and it was an honor to have been a part of the collegiate experience of the students."

As the Assistant Vice President for Student Equity and Diversity, a newly created position at the University of Utah, Dr. Molock will oversee many offices and programs. Those programs are the Center for Ethnic Student Affairs, the American Indian Resource Center, the Utah Opportunity Scholarships and Grants Program, and the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Resource Center. She will also be responsible for directing University cultural awareness events and programs.

"I am thrilled by this opportunity to work at the University of Utah, or 'the U'. This position had my name written all on it!" said Dr. Molock. "My role as Executive Director of Advocacy and my many years as Director of Black Student Services greatly contributed to this opportunity. I am looking forward to working with the students, faculty and staff at the University of Utah as we continue to build on what the University already has in place."

Although Dr. Molock has moved to a new position, she wants the students, faculty and staff at CSU to know that she is still here to provide support.

"Just because I'm miles away doesn't mean I can't still be a supporter or contributor," said Dr. Molock. "I hope that I have successfully served as a good role model, mentor, and supporter for students as well as being a good colleague, employee, confidant, friend and professional. I truly treasure my years at Colorado State and will cherish them always."

Dr. Molock wants students to remember to hold on tightly to their goals and their dreams.

"Keep your eyes on the prize, and remember as you move toward graduate school, law, school or medical school to consider the University of Utah!" said Dr. Molock. "Continue to stay, 'Dedicated to Excellence.' GO RAMS!"

We are so thankful for all of the hard work Dr. Molock has put into the office of Black Student Services and wish her the best in her new position!



Ronald Glover with students in Black Student Services

college is simply practice for the real world.

When you get of college you go to work with people from different backgrounds and cultures so you must be prepared.

"No matter what you do in life you will always face challenges," Glover said. With every success comes a mountain you had to get over to get there, and that was the point that he wanted to get across to the students.

"Being here in college [as practice for the real world] really hit home for me because now I understand what I need to do to succeed in the future," said Gabrielle Ohaya, a student listening to Glover.

The speaker gave these students a lot of positive insight that will not only help them with the struggles they are facing now but the ones to come in the future as well.

First Year Student Retreat

Experience of a lifetime

Danielle McConnell

An experience unlike any other with a thought provoking and emotional outcome is how the First Year Student Retreat can be remembered. Our trip began when we attended the football game against the Sacramento State Hornets and yes, we won! When the game ended, the group slowly walked back to the bus to continue our journey to Estes Park. After reaching our destination, we headed for the dining hall. Though there was a bit of miscommunication we were able to eat a good meal that night.

The night continued with our group of fifty being split into eight groups and designated a skit topic revolving around college life and some of the stresses we may experience in our college years. From partying, to alcohol, to relationships, to time management, we covered it all in imaginative and entertaining ways. It was an extremely fun conclusion to a night full of laughter, which carried on into the early hours of the morning.

A 6:45 wake-up call for breakfast made it difficult for us to get up after a late night. We all shuffled towards the cafeteria for breakfast and right back to our rooms for a quick nap. That nap came to an abrupt end when we were brought together for more activities.

We started with a couple icebreakers which were followed up by an informative talk and the introduction of the many different organizations of campus. We met representatives of the Greek organizations, community service organizations, and groups to help us develop as people, such as United Men/Women of Color (UMC/UWC respectively). They showed us there were more resources on campus to help African Americans get involved and succeed in college.

After lunch is when the retreat began to tackle more serious topics. It started out with “real talk” sessions. During this, the females and the males were separated and asked the same four questions to allow for different perspectives. Then we all came back together to answer the questions as a group.

Next was our trust walk, which was one of the most difficult activities we did. It required us to be blindfolded while holding on to the shoulders of the person in front of us. We were forced to rely solely on communication to get us through the tedious journey that represented college.



First year students on bus to Estes Park

As we struggled through the trees, up and down stairs, and over hills, we had familiar voices on both sides of us. To our left were the positive voices, telling us we were going to make it, and make us push forward. To our right were

the negative voices, telling us to just give up, that we weren't good enough, and that a degree meant nothing when a man or woman of color was holding it.

That balance represented what everyone will go through because you will always have doubters but will always have supporters too. At the end, we were all given a pledge to recite, devoting ourselves to being better people and striving toward excellence.

The retreat's final activity left a lasting impact on everyone. This event is a tradition that occurs every year. It is our Rite of Passage.

To get a deeper feeling from the activity, participants were blindfolded again and placed in the center of the room. Somewhere in the room there was the sound of beating of drums and a story of our ancestry being told.

We began to picture what our ancestors experienced: pain, fear, shock, frustration, and an explosion of many other emotions was just a little bit of what took place during the activity. The lesson learned is that if our ancestors can endure what they did, then we can overcome anything.

The retreat came to a close with each of us giving a penny for our thoughts, expressing what we were taking or learned from the retreat. The jar we placed the pennies in contained the pennies of those before us. The greatest response came from Cenae Kemp.

“I thought I would have to do this all on my own, but now I know I don't have to.”

That is just how impactful this retreat was. We knew that when we left, we had a whole new family to help us get through anything we may encounter.

Second year experience

Austin Lowe

This year's experience on the Black Student Services Retreat to Estes Park, Colorado was empowering. I was in a position to lead and assist the freshman and transfer student's transition into CSU. I approached the challenge/experience with an open mind. There were times when we did have some minor attitude clashes and communication issues with one another, but all that was quickly overcome once we got settled in and discussed our differences, which is a part of the learning experiences.

We kicked off the weekend with skits and other opportunities to bond that laid a good foundation for a successful trip. As a result of my experiences, I feel I have a responsibility to be an advocate for getting people involved around campus and to inform people about the office, its affiliates, and all they have to offer. I also feel a greater responsibility to act as a mentor for the freshman and anyone who might need a bit of assistance.



BSS staff on bus at LSC Transit Center

Essence of a woman

Erika Green

Strength. Motherly instinct. Attitude. Low self-esteem. Those are only a few of the positive and negative character traits that created discussion at “The Essence of a Woman,” a program brought to the student body by Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc.

As a member of the Zeta Phi Beta Sorority Inc., we believe in an incessant commitment to the principle of “Finer Womanhood.” By keeping this principle in mind, the program “The Essence of a Woman” was designed to create a dialogue where attendees could speak about how women have defined themselves in the past as well as in the present society. With many



Activity about positive and negative stereotypes of women

differing perspectives, the 30 attendees were able to break down both positive and negative stereotypes that have been used to define women for centuries.

“It was very helpful in the fact that it allowed me to incorporate others’ views into my own perceptions of women,” said Sara Anderson, a junior majoring in speech communication.

It is our hope that attendees were able to walk away from “The Essence of a Woman” more aware of their own perceptions of women as well as the views of others, in order to create a more well-rounded perspective for themselves.

Office transitions

Joe Goings

Nothing ever stays the same. Things change. People come and people go. The Office of Black Student Services is no exception. Last year the office’s Administrative Assistant Theresa Grangruth left for a new beginning in Minnesota. This year the student staff has decreased in size and is nearly a complete overhaul from last year as only a few returned to work in the office this year.

In addition to those changes, Dr. Jennifer Molock has also departed, taking a new position as the Assistant Vice President for Student Equity and Diversity at the University of Utah. Dr. Molock had been the director of the

office for 10 years.

Marcus Elliott, formerly the Assistant Director, has temporarily taken over duties as director in an interim role, while still retaining some of his old duties and keeping the office running smoothly.

“Nothing has changed. I have new duties, a larger role, and much more is required of me,” Elliott said.

CSU’s Vice President’s office is going to do a nationwide search for a new director in the spring of 2009.

To help out with the Assistant Director duties, the office hired Bridgette Johnson in an

interim role. Last year Johnson worked in the office as Retention Coordinator in a consulting role. “The office needed someone to help keep it afloat until a new director is hired,” Johnson said.

There comes a time when things change. This office has altered its make up but is definitely moving towards a bigger and better tomorrow.

“There’s no loss of momentum,” Johnson said. “We’re just trying to enhance what’s already established.”

Looking toward the future

Angelica Riley

Sometimes I think it would be fun to start a rumor about myself. I could tell people that I’m moving to Singapore next semester and changing my major to marine biology. But that would only be a good laugh for a day or so.

In reality, I still spend much of my time in the Lory Student Center, just in a different office. Now I am anchoring for CTV News Channel 11 on Wednesday nights. Television media is a lot different from print media, but equally as fun. I am also finishing up my major in Technical Journalism this year and I plan to graduate in May.

My exciting news doesn’t end there. On May 17, 2008, I became engaged. I’ll be getting married in June on Look Out Mountain. Doesn’t that sound so romantic? After that I’ll be moving to California where I plan to begin a lucrative career in Television News.

When I think about the future, it looks like a gigantic yellow blob: yellow, because it’s shiny and exciting, but a blob because nothing is certain. Just the thought of graduating and being out there in the cold harsh world can be a little daunting. However, I’m sure everything will turn out great.

When I look back on these past few years at CSU, I realize that the Office of Black Student Services has been a big piece of my life. I’ll always cherish the friendships I’ve made, and I’ll really miss laughing at Freda’s pet turtle stories. Things in the office will surely be different as Dr. Molock (former director of the office) has moved on to bigger and better things, but I will always appreciate her mentorship.

I’ve got high hopes for the new Editor-in-Chief, Joe Goings. He’s a bright person and it was so much fun working with him last year. Currently he is a sophomore and he has nowhere to go but up and up and up!

It sounds like these are my last words but don’t worry. I’ve until May before graduation. So if you see me around, don’t be shy and say hi!

*You can catch her on Channel 11 on Wednesdays at 9pm and 10 pm or Thursdays at 9am and noon and CTV11.com.

If you have any good news stories, she’d love to hear about them!



Black Educational Support Team



Shenavia Balcom

My name is Shenavia Balcom and I'm from Colorado Springs, Colorado. I'm a sophomore majoring in Biomedical Science. Something I really like doing is go running. In BSS I am a Peer Mentor. I chose to be a peer mentor because I wanted to be more involved with the office and it is a really good leadership opportunity. An interesting fact about me is that I'm a member of the marching band. My goal this year is to raise my GPA above a 3.2.

Jasmyne Garrett

My name is Jasmyne Garrett and I'm from Denver, Colorado. I'm a sophomore majoring in Psychology. Some of my hobbies include dancing, working out, watching movies, crocheting, hanging with family and friends. In the Office of Black Student Services (BSS) I am a Peer Mentor. I chose this position because I want to help the incoming freshman with their transition so they are willing to stay. I want them to have close relationships with our black community, so we can keep it growing and keep it strong. I love to help others. My goals for the year are to keep in close contact with all my mentees and stay on top of my grades and extra-curricular activities. I really want to get involved this year. Something interesting about me is that I have small ears.



Joe Goings

My name is Joe Goings and I'm from Chicago, IL. I'm a sophomore double majoring in both Social Work and Journalism. Some of my hobbies include playing football, hanging with friends, playing video games every now and then, and recently I've been trying to find the time to read more often. Something interesting about myself is that I wear Mardi Gras beads while on duty walks around the premises of my residence hall (in addition to being editor, I'm also a Resident Assistant). I just like to be goofy and have some fun while I'm doing my job.

In the office, I am the Editor-in-chief of the GRIOT. Being the editor affords me the opportunity to hone my skills as a reporter, interviewer, and as an editor. This position was the natural progression for me. Last year I was a reporter and towards the end of the year I began to get more responsibilities as the editor at the time (Angelica Riley) was preparing to move on with her career and try new things. Now I have the responsibility to make sure the GRIOT is a successful publication, a task that I embrace and enjoy. A goal of mine this year is to raise my GPA to beyond 3.5 (currently it's 3.46). Classes are a bit more challenging this year but I'm confident that I can pull it off.

Erika Green

My name is Erika Green and I am a junior majoring in Technical Journalism and minoring in Ethnic Studies. I was born and raised in Colorado Springs. In the office I write for the GRIOT, the office newsletter. In addition to that I work at the front desk answering the phone and greeting passers-by. I chose this position in Black Student Services because it is my ultimate goal to create a magazine for young women of color and I think that writing for the GRIOT will be a great start toward reaching that goal. This year, I hope to continue to maintain a balance between my school work and organizational activities. I'm looking forward to this year!



Ashley Griffin

My name is Ashley Griffin and I'm a sophomore, majoring in Human Development Family Studies, and I'm from Aurora, Colorado. I enjoy watching TV, reading good books, and relaxing. I decided to be a Peer Mentor because I have a passion to help young black students be successful in college. Being a mentor would allow me to do so. I love softball and I am a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Incorporated. My goals this year are to be the best mentor that I can and to make this year as successful as the first.

Austin Lowe

My name is Austin Lowe. I was born in Denver, CO (raised in Park Hill) before relocating to Aurora. I am a business major with a double concentration in Marketing and Accounting. I also intend to pick up a minor in Spanish. My goals for the year are to improve my study skills and keep up with my work. Outside of school I like to draw, play sports, lift weights, and hang out with family and friends.

As for my office work, I work at the front desk and help out with things around the office. I'm also the student coordinator for the Albert C. Yates Leadership Development Institute, which is a program designed to enhance leadership experiences through programs. I decided to work in the office because of the relationship between Dr. Molock (former director of the office) and my mom. The office is giving me the opportunity to work with the black community and to meet new people. Something interesting about me is that I've traveled to Spain for an 8th grade class field trip.



Danielle McConnell

My name is Danielle McConnell and I am a freshman at CSU this year. My major is English with a concentration in creative writing. I was born in Chicago, Illinois but have lived in Denver, Colorado for about fourteen years. My hobbies mainly include writing and just spending time with my friends, when I'm not studying for class of course. I am trying to get more involved in the office of Black Student Services. Currently I assist at the front desk as well as work on the GRIOT, the office's newsletter. I am also trying to be an active member with the campus organization Black Student Alliance.

I chose the position in the GRIOT because it focuses on what I want to accomplish later in my life, as far as my career is concerned. I wanted to work for an organization where my writing can be viewed by many, which is why I'm so excited about working for the newsletter. Something interesting about me is that I am a very outgoing and outspoken person who loves to make everyone smile. This year I hope to be more open and willing to do things outside of my comfort zone.

Rhesa Melvin

My name is Rhesa Melvin and I am from Denver, Colorado. I am a sophomore communication studies major with a business minor. I like to sing, act, write music and poetry, and I enjoy playing tennis. As for my work in the office, I'm a peer mentor. I want to be a positive force in someone's life, to be there for them if they need me, provide support, and to be a positive role model. This year's freshman class is our future, so we must invest in them. A couple of my goals are to be active in the community and school and continue to do well academically. An interesting fact about me is that I was born in and lived in Germany for 4 years.



Samara Payton

My name is Samara Payton and I am a sophomore speech communication major with a minor in business. I was born in Chicago but grew up in Aurora, Colorado for the past 8 or 9 years. I don't find myself getting into too many hobbies lately because I am too busy with school. I do however enjoy going to parties. I also love music so I have my headphones on 24/7. I am affiliated with the Black Student Services Office because I am a Peer Mentor, which I enjoy because of my excellent mentees. I wanted to work as a Peer Mentor because I wanted to give the incoming students someone to turn to as a guide and a friend. My goals for this year are to get good grades, to network more and to just have fun!

Kiarah Perkins

My name is Kiarah Perkins and I'm a sophomore from Aurora, Colorado. Some of my hobbies include sports, poetry, having fun, theater and plays, sleeping, dance, outdoor activities. In BSS I am a peer mentor. I chose to be a mentor because I want to help the incoming first-year students in succeeding. An interesting fact about me is that I love ketchup and would love to go sky diving! A goal of mine is to obtain a 3.8 GPA.





Twyla Rouse

My name is Twyla Rouse and I was born and raised in Denver, Colorado. This is my senior year and my major is nutritional sciences. My concentration is Nutrition and Health and my goal and overall mission is to become a D.O.C.T.O.R (an ob/gyn to be exact)! This is my second year working in the office and my duties are assisting the office faculty and coordinating the Real Talk series, which is where we discuss issues in the black community. I like working in the office because it keeps me informed and involved on campus. My hobbies include music, shopping, and “choppin’ it up” (talking and having fun) with family and friends. My goals for the year are to help the freshmen and transfer students have a smooth and great transition into CSU, and to gain that Ram pride! Personally, my goals are to really understand science, learn as much as possible (because that’s what I’m in college for!) and knock out some good grades to improvement my GPA in preparation for medical school.

Mercedes Scott



My name is Mercedes Scott and I’m a sophomore. I am a business major with a concentration in accounting. Some of my hobbies include being around my friends and family. I also love writing poetry and generally just having fun.

In the office I work as a peer mentor. I chose to be a mentor because it was very hard for me to adapt to being a black person on a predominantly white campus. I also didn’t receive the help that I felt I needed when I was a freshman and decided to help those who were having problems so that they wouldn’t have to struggle like I did. I wanted to have an impact on someone’s life.

One of my goals for the year is to keep people excited about Black Student Services and involved with the office. Every year we start off strong but by the end of the year we’re not as close as we can, and maybe should be. I hope to lend a helping hand in keeping that fire and excitement going throughout this year and those to come.



Jahala Walker

My name is Jahala Rose Walker. I’m a sophomore from Denver and I am a Life Science open option looking to major in Human Development and Family Studies. My hobbies include singing and dancing. In the office I am a peer mentor in the Rites of Passage Leadership program. I am also a member of Black Student Alliance (BSA). I wanted to work for the office so that I could help ease the freshmen class’s transition into college and to be a support system for them. I also wanted to get more involved in things this year and build my resume. Something interesting about me is that I am on the Urban Jewelz (UJK) dance team! U-U-J-K!!! My goals for this year are to bring up all my grades and to stay involved on campus!

Ashley Waller



Hello! My name is Ashley Waller! I am a sophomore and I double major in Psychology and Sociology with a concentration in Criminal Justice. I am from Aurora, Colorado, where I attended Overland High School. I am Vice President of Urban Jewelz and Kingz Multicultural Hip Hop Dance Group. This is my first year as a peer mentor for the Office of Black Student Services. The reason I decided to become a peer mentor was because I wanted to be a vital resource to all of the incoming freshmen students. I have made it my mission to help these students transition smoothly into college life. My goal is to have a positive impact on as many people as I possibly can this year by offering my advice, support, experiences, and friendship to anyone who needs it.



EDITOR'S NOTES

Beauty

Erika Green

What is beauty? Does a particular standard define what American society accepts as perfect, and therefore more endearing?

When I was younger, I failed to embrace the wonderful African American heritage that I am a part of. In elementary school, I was so fascinated with the Caucasian standard of beauty that I wore my hair "down" thinking my hair would flow freely in the wind.

However, instead of fine free flowing locks, I was stuck with coarse nappy hair that had a mind of its own. As I entered the school building I was met with jeers and laughter from the other students. As a five year old, I was devastated that it was impossible for me to meet this false standard of beauty.

This misconception of beauty is one reason why one of my dreams is to work toward becoming a writer for a magazine that appeals to a diverse group of young women. This unique magazine would help lessen tension and create bonds between people of different backgrounds and of different races.

Hopefully, this magazine will ultimately help our society break down barriers of ignorance and bring us a step closer towards building relationships between those of other ethnicities and cultures. As a first time GRIOT writer, I am thrilled to be able to use this opportunity as a stepping stone to ultimately achieving my ultimate goal.

Year 2

Joe Goings

As an incoming freshman I was not familiar with anything. I did not know anyone and I did not know anything about the campus. I was not comfortable with my surroundings and I was never interested in taking on any new tasks. I tended to shy away from things. I did all of my work however and reported for the GRIOT last year.

This year is completely different though. Towards the end of my first year I decided that I would have to change that. I decided to become an RA so that I could become more connected with the things the campus has to offer and meet new people at the same time. It also looks good on a resume. I'm also now the Editor-in-Chief of the GRIOT so I have many more responsibilities.

Both jobs have made me more involved and knowledgeable about campus events that I would not have known about otherwise, and maybe not have even attended last year. I am also a more responsible person because of all the things that I have to keep up with in order to do my jobs well such as keeping up with events around campus so that I can inform readers of the newsletter and the residents living in my hall.

This year has been far better than last year. Though it is much more of a challenge now that I have to balance RA duties and a new position as editor, as well as class, I'm still having a great time this year.

Director's Note

Marcus Elliott

Greetings!

Welcome to the 2008-2009 academic year! The clean, crisp autumn scent is in the air and yet another exciting year has begun at CSU. We here in the Office of Black Student Services are thrilled with the opportunity to not only reach out to new students, but to also to reconnect with returning students as well.

Only a few weeks into the fall semester, there were plenty of events hosted by our office, ranging from our annual Open House/Ice Cream Social to

the well-attended Welcome Back BBQ in the courtyard of the Student Recreation Center. Also, our annual Fall Retreat for First Year Students was held at the YMCA of the Rockies in Estes Park, CO for the first time since 2001.

There were plenty of memorable experiences and positive feedback shared by the fifty or so students in attendance. We are extremely proud to have played a significant role in their early journey through college. I hope that you find the Fall 2008 issue of the GRIOT to be informative, interesting, and enjoyable. A special thank you goes out to our Editor-in-Chief, Joseph Goings, our Assistant Editor, Erika Green, and our Staff

Reporter, Danielle McConnell for all of their hard work in making this issue possible.

Have a great semester!

Marcus D. Elliott, M. Ed.
Interim Director



Break the Stage

Step Hard or Go Home

Erika Green

This show was different from shows in the past because it was held on the CSU campus and the stage was placed in the center of the ballroom, thus challenging the steppers to be creative in how they catered to the audience around them.

On the CSU website, BSA advisor Javon Baker commented on this new set up.

“It’s an opportunity to do something different and make it the best show we’ve ever done. It’s back on campus and in the ballrooms where the stage will be in the middle with people all around it. It makes it a lot more intimate.

Students also expressed their opinion of the new stage, as well as the event itself.

“The atmosphere and the way it was set up with the stage around the performers made it a really competitive event,” said Marques Bellaire, a senior sociology major. “The performers had their game faces on. That was the most energetic step show I’ve been to since I’ve been here.”



Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. during their performance

Sounds of stomping feet and chanting filled the ballroom in the Lory Student Center on November 22nd as a group of eight sororities and fraternities participated in the *Break the Stage: Step Hard or Go Home* step show.

The six competing Black Greek lettered organizations were Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc., Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., and Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc.

The two competing Latina Greek lettered organizations (Lambda Theta Nu Sorority, Inc., Pi Lambda Chi Latina Sorority, Inc.) competed for two \$2,200 prizes (one for the fraternities and one for the sororities.)

The winning fraternity was Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., and the winning sorority was Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.

“As the stepmaster of The Rocky Mountain District Step Team of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.,

it was a humbling experience to win, it takes hard work and dedication and it all paid off in the end,” said Aaron Green, a member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.

“We put so much work and energy into the show,” said Mikyla Nelson, a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. “That whole week before the show I didn’t get any sleep.”

Break the Stage, formerly known as Hip Hop Explosion, is a step show that is put together annually by Black Student Alliance (BSA). This show marked the 14th step show put on by BSA.

Stepping is the art of rhythmic stomping, clapping with body movements that are special and historic to each organization. Step teams come together to create a synchronized show that showcase the members’ pride for their respective organizations as well as serve as an entertaining show for those watching.



**The winning fraternity and sorority:
Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. (left)
Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. (right)**

Classes resume
January 20, 2009.

The GRIOT will resume printing
spring semester 2009.

Until then have a great
Winter Break

If you would like to contribute
to the GRIOT send articles to
bss@lamar.colostate.edu



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December 2008/January 2009

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15 <i>Finals Week</i>	16 <i>Finals Week</i>	17 <i>Finals Week</i>	18 <i>Finals Week</i>	19 <i>Finals Week</i>	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31 New Years Eve			

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1 New Years	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19 MLK Day	20 Class resumes	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28 DWW Prof. Mentoring	29	30	31