

# The GRIOT

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In the records of West African history, "Griot" (pronounced gree-oh) was the honored name bestowed on wise and knowledgeable story tellers entrusted with the task of documenting tribal histories and genealogies.

Colorado State University

## *New Year's or Bust*

Danielle McConnell

It's funny the lengths we go to establish the so-called goals and aspirations with the coming of a new year.

We want to create a new sense of self, a new way of life, and hopefully a new perspective on the things around us.

This year we will lose weight, cut off that relationship that is just stagnate, or even do something new and unexpected in the hopes of truly bringing in the new year with a bang.

But why is it that half way through the year, or even half way through the first month of the year, our goals and aspirations simply fall off?

We start so strong and determined to make a change, or at least make it appear that we are starting off strong.

However, somewhere along the way we lose that sense of needing to move forward.

That push and that strive for excellence becomes just another day, with the same moves and motives that we have always made in the years before.

There is no progress, no excitement; it just simply comes to a close. So it's almost as if there shouldn't be an existence of a resolution in the first place, especially one that must take place at the beginning of the year.

If we simply lose our motivation and our goals, why even start off wasting our time with a vivid imagination of what could, but most of the time doesn't come to be?

Is it that we make goals only to sound like we are embracing the new year? If that's the case who really cares that much about embracing another year. It can't really be all that different from the last, with the exception of graduation, or maybe a new job.

Is it that we say what we hope for simply to look as though we are aiming for change in the New Year?

I sure hope that's not the reason, because people's opinions about the moves one is trying to make should never be a reason to create a false reality.

Or is it an attempt at convincing

ourselves that we will make bigger and better moves because it's a whole new year and something has to change?

Whatever the case may be, I think the name "New Year's resolution" should be changed.

There should be no reason why it has to be the new year to make a change; I feel it can happen any day, anytime, whenever you are most motivated to make it happen.

Each year I have been cursed to figure out what my "resolution" for the New Year will be.

Two years ago, it was getting better grades. Last year, it was getting better grades and working off this terrible freshman twenty I gained.

But with the 2011 year fresh in my mind, and on everyone's calendar, I have yet to come up with a goal.

I have heard the famous; "I'm cutting the negative people out of my life." Or even the, "I plan on losing weight and getting healthy."

Now as great as all of those sound, I'm thinking it's about that time to make a goal that is more attainable, a goal that inspires you to really do greater things instead of dreaming about them.

My goal for the year is just to make extreme steps forward towards success.

Nothing really specific, but something that can be seen as a positive move regardless of whatever I make happen.

It's not amazingly fabulous, or super extravagant, just something to keep my mind focused on what is possible. Not only based on the idea that it's a new year, but more along the lines that it's always a good time to reach for success.

So this year, I hope that goals really mean something, and that they are made possible. What is a new year's resolution if nothing new gets resolved?

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Black/  
African  
American  
Cultural  
Center

## *New Semester, New Rules*

Danielle McConnell

With each new semester, new things need to be put in place to make things better than they were before. Every student looks at each semester in a different way, but they all have the same thing in mind, advance as best you can academically. Here are some of the ways students here at CSU plan to grow with this new semester.

Keenan Bender: "Have no social life so that I can become magna cum laude."

Shakari Grisby: "Study with friends, instead of by myself so that I can get feedback when something isn't working quite right."

Ed Harlan: "Get out of my house and into the library, really get on my business for school."

Letrisia Chambers: "Spend more time in the library, so I can really focus on my books."



## What Goes Up, Must Come Down!

Danielle McConnell

The famous phrase, what goes up must come down, doesn't just apply to what one may or may not remember from physics class, but also to a long tradition on New Year's Eve that must come to a stop.

Every year around midnight all across the world, the sound of a shot or three can be heard going off, based on the notion of bringing in the New Year with a "bang" I suppose.

But what these individuals fail to realize, or choose not to be concerned about, is the fact that those bullets shot up into the air don't just land in the moon and get stuck there.

Gravity pulls those dangerous bullets back down to the Earth, and definitely not instantaneously, which makes them even more dangerous. They say bullets don't have a name on them sometimes, and this would be the bullet that was out for the kill with no idea what it would land on.

After reading a couple different sources about this topic, I realized that these bullets not only come down, but also come down a whole lot faster than they went up. This notion is called terminal velocity.

A bullet fired on New Year's will go up into the air, lose its speed, stop, and begin to fall. The unfortunate part is that as the bullet

falls, it picks up speed until it lands on or in something where its weight is equal to the resistance of the air.

Now we would all keep our fingers crossed and hope that was just the sidewalk or the street, but those are not the only things that exist on the Earth and therefore, there needs to be a new idea to bringing in the new year, maybe a "bang" that isn't so literal?

According to the Journal of Trauma in December 1994, about 118 cases of falling bullets were reported at a hospital in the L.A area, and of those 118 cases, thirty-eight victims died.

It was also reported that the criteria for identifying a falling bullet was a little skeptical. Hospitals really only focused on whether a gunshot was seen or heard, and also evidence that the angle of the shot was consistent with that of it coming from above the individual. These criterions are not always the only elements necessary in labeling a falling bullet.

However, the point of all this information is that a bullet shot into the air can kill. Individuals should remember that next time they decide on how to bring in their New Year.

## Ophiuchus Who?!

Brittany Sango

For all you astrology freaks, let me be the first to inform you if you have not already heard the startling news: your personality may have been judged wrong.

According to astrologists, everyone's astrology sign has been bumped back a notch.

Introducing Ophiuchus, known as the 13th astrology sign. Represented by a man wrestling a serpent, it is the only sign to be linked to actual men Imohept and Joseph.

In an article written by Tom Lyden of Fox Channel 9 news dated Jan. 14, 2011, Professor Parke Kunkle of the Minnesota Planetarium Society stated, "Ophiuchus has been a constellation for years and it just gets left out."

Interesting point of view if you ask me, how do you magically decide that this new sign has to be added to a list of symbols that have been in existence for years?

Apparently, Ophiuchus begins November 29th and ends December 17th. But the Facebook chat and other commentary all seem to have to the conclusion that the new astrology shift is just plain ridiculous.

Alyssa Dawson's birthday is in early December, making her a Sagittarius. Although she has never been a strong believer in astrology, she says that she has not checked the new astrology dates because she does not want her sign to change.

"I read my horoscope in the newspaper, but the whole change thing is not affecting me. Unless your belief system is based off these signs, then your sign can be whatever you want it to change into..."

She continues on to say, "Like everything else in the world, it is real if you want it to be."

Brittany Nieves' birthday is in late December. She says she has never considered herself a firm believer in astrology signs and their characteristics.

"My reaction to this news about the changes in the zodiac showed me that I care a lot more about what the zodiac lends to people than what I thought," Nieves said.

"I really love thinking of myself as a Capricorn, and I couldn't imagine fitting the description of a sag. I take everything too serious and I love working hard to meet my goals. Sags are more whimsical, but they are more care free and less responsible than Caps," Nieves said.

So how do astronomers account for this change? Professor Kunkle gave a statement in Lyden's article, attempting to provide some explanation.

"In science we deal with a long tradition of fact based investigation. We are not in the business of interpreting the purported relation between the positions of planets and human affairs."

Kunkle went on to state that the Earth spins and points in different directions. Today, the Earth's axis points towards the polar star, Polaris, but before it pointed toward Thuban.

'About 130 BC, Hipparchus noticed that the Earth's spin axis had changed

directions, so astronomers and astrologers have known about the Earth's precession for over 2000 years."

"But this means that if the sun was "in" a certain constellation on a particular date, it is in a different constellation on that date today. For example, the sun was in Pisces on March 1, 2000 BC but it is in Aquarius on March 1, 2011 AD. Right now its pointing this way, the North Star, but 3000 BC it was pointing differently," Kunkle said.

Now astrology is about a whole constellation off because of the Earth's shift and sun's position.

"Ophiuchus has been a constellation for years and it just gets left out," Kunkle said.

Astrologists speculate that the new astrology chart only affects people born after 2006.

If you are interested in seeing just how much your astrology sign has changed, here is the new astrology chart.

Capricorn: Jan 20th- Feb 16th  
 Aquarius: Feb 16th- March 11th  
 Pisces: March 11th-April 18th  
 Aries: April 18th-May 13th  
 Taurus: May 13th-June 21  
 Gemini: June 21st-Jul 20th  
 Cancer: Jul 20th-Aug 10th  
 Leo: Aug 10th-Sept 16th  
 Virgo: Sept. 16th-Oct. 20th  
 Libra: Oct. 30th-Nov. 23rd  
 Scorpio: Nov. 23rd-Nov.29th  
 Ophiuchus Nov. 29th-Dec. 17th  
 Sagittarius: Dec. 17th-Jan. 20th

## MLK Day Reflections

### Joy Anderson

Decades after the beginning of the civil rights movement, issues of equality still exist. Every day in the world some act against equality takes place. Whether this takes place directly in front of us or somewhere else around the world, it is important to still recognize that it occurs.

On Monday January 16th, the CSU and Fort Collins community joined forces to not only acknowledge the struggle that still exists, but also recognize the progress that has been made.

So often we forget how far, we as a community have come, and how much we have to celebrate on Martin Luther King Day. This day was a time to do just that.

This was the first year that I had an opportunity to attend and I was surprised at the large amount of people that participated and

the excitement of the crowd. I would have never thought that so many people, in this small Fort Collins community, would be not only interested, but also excited to be apart of this event.

My fellow sisters of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Incorporated and I sang with the crowd, cheered, and enjoyed each others company.

With the daunting nature of todays news, the parade offered a time to simply celebrate progress, and become inspired to reach towards a better and even stronger way of life in the future.



Martin Luther King Jr.

Courtesy of:  
[www.google.com](http://www.google.com)

### Keenan Bender

The Martin Luther King Parade was a huge success. The turnout was exceptional and the people in attendance were brimming with enthusiasm.

There were children holding signs about increased school board funding, and many people advocating for political candidates in support of public schools.

To begin the event, the march leaders were introduced and given a chance to speak a little bit about themselves and what the event meant to them.

Next, we were off to the march. Voices of middle school children singing “We Shall Overcome” and other songs characteristic to the civil rights movement echoed throughout Old Town as the children marching sang into a megaphone.

I remember at one point, looking back to see how long the line of people marching was and the end stretched far beyond where I could see.

It truly was a beautiful sight. I think that it is truly a blessing to see so many people gathered to celebrate the hard work and success of all the brave participants of the civil rights movement.

People of all backgrounds were gathered together and all of our differences somehow disappeared behind how much we have in common; to think that such a diverse gathering wouldn't have been possible 60 years ago truly exemplifies how far we've come.

Upon arriving at the student center, which was the end of the march, we sat down and awards were presented to elementary, middle, and high school students who had written poetry to the theme of “educating the heart and the mind”.

To conclude, a poet recited a couple deeply inspiring poems and the event ended with the keynote speaker.

## *Donald Wilson Professional Mentoring Program*

Danielle McConnell

Are you prepared for life after college? Get all the advice and support you can muster up as you complete these last few semesters of your college career!!!

The purpose of this program is to provide an environment of mutual support and sharing amongst African American faculty/staff members and African American students through specifically designed, limited time and individually prescribed mentor/protégé relationships.

The specific objectives of the Wilson program are listed below:

- Assist with building a resume that talks to your skills and who you are
- To recognize and successfully address challenges of being a college student
- To equip students with the insight and tools to make informed ethical decisions
- To groom students into a confident graduate with exceptional leadership, teamwork, creative thinking, and interpersonal skills through coaching and feedback
- To provide a source of advice on personal growth and development. Encourage the student to know the world outside the classroom and CSU opportunities
- To show the student professional networking skills through example and by providing opportunities

One of the many great things about this program is lunch will be provided EVERY SESSION and we will have FUN!!! We will meet the 4th Wednesday of every month beginning in February (February 23, 1st meeting)!!!!

If you are interested in being part of this program email [Bridgette.johnson@colostate.edu](mailto:Bridgette.johnson@colostate.edu) by February 11th.

## *Leadership Development Institute Pro-*

Danielle McConnell

The mission of the Albert C. Yates Leadership Development Institute is to enhance and further develop leadership skills of our current African American/black students by giving them exposure to effective leadership styles, leadership tools and qualities through workshops and interaction with faculty and business professionals.

The office will provide programs and opportunities to enhance student leadership development, foster civic responsibility, and promote shared responsibility within our community.

This program focuses on enhancing the leadership skills of African American sophomore students through participation in various training and leadership activities throughout the academic year.

This distinguished group of students works in conjunction with other office programs, as well as the university and the Fort Collins community at large. If interested in joining the program contact [marcus.elliott@colostate.edu](mailto:marcus.elliott@colostate.edu).

The tentative date for the programs to start is February 11<sup>th</sup>, in room 204 of the Lory Student Center. Deadline for the application is February 4<sup>th</sup>. Students can also pick up applications in the Black/African American Cultural Center, room 204.

## EDITOR'S NOTES

### *Accomplishments*

Danielle McConnell

An individual's accomplishments are what define them to the people around them. If you stand for nothing you will fall for anything people say all the time. But what does that really mean?

To stand for something means that you have taken a strong step towards advancing your life in one way or another. That advancement stands as an accomplishment.

If one never takes the time to do something, or make an effort for something, who are they really? Just another individual, living the average Joe life, with no real expectation for excellence.

How can one live with no expectations? That pretty much sucks the enjoyment right out of life. There is no suspense, no surprise ending, and no fairytale. Life isn't life without the creation of something unknown and at the same time amazing.

All this leads into the idea of an accomplishment. Most people when they hear that word they assume that it means a success that only can exist in the professional or educational world. However, an accomplishment can be whatever you decide to make it.

Accomplishment is defined in the dictionary as the act or instance of carrying something into effect, or fulfillment. So the question really is, what fulfills you?

Once an individual has established what fulfills them, and the desires of their heart that they have reached for, then one can truly say they have accomplishments.

It's not always about that all A's semester, or that amazing job promotion, although for many people, including myself, those are definitely accomplishments to be considered, but about what truly makes an individual happy.

So with this semester I encourage you to take a moment and establish what accomplishment really means to you, because when you figure it out, life tends to run a whole lot more smoothly.

You won't be stressing your self with what the world says you need to aim for, but you will focus on your own accomplishments and excellence, and that in itself is an amazing feat.

### *Cherish your Loved Ones*

Brittany Sango

I recently found out that my dad has become a victim of prostate cancer. He had been showing symptoms for about a year including severe weight loss. Shortly before Christmas my dad was admitted to the hospital. Seeing what was once a healthy 210-220 frame diminish to a 130 pound frame was hard to see.

Now I do not label myself as a daddy's girl, but he is certainly the closest person to me. I always thought my dad would live forever as if he was some superhero that could never be defeated, but after visiting him in the hospital and seeing him cry for the first time in my life, I realized that my dad was just a human being. All human beings must go at some time or another, whether their loved ones are ready for that departure or not.

There are two messages I want to relate to everyone. My first message to everyone reading this regardless of how much someone makes you angry, regardless how busy you think you are, or even how much you cannot stand someone, please cherish the time you have with the people in your life. Often times we get so wrapped up and in work and school and become so self absorbed that we take our loved ones for granted and fail to realize how important they are in our lives.

If you are not someone who frequently says I love you, gives hugs and kisses, and calls or visits, start doing so because you never know when it is someone's time to go.

Over break I spent a lot of time being angry at my dad for

not having gone to the doctor much sooner, thinking he could cure his symptoms with over the counter medicine. I was angry because I thought my dad would leave me alone in this world, and angry because my dad let his house become a hot mess and did not call anyone to help him.

But then I realized that being angry and thinking about should haves, could haves and would haves was totally pointless because focusing on the here and now was the most important thing. Luckily, the doctors say they have caught the cancer in time, but had it not been for loved ones' concerns and forcing my dad to go to the hospital, he definitely would be in a worse position.

My second message is to get physical exams regularly people. There are all sorts of illnesses and diseases loose in the world, some that have yet to be named. And we all know that most diseases are incurable. I know it can be scary going to the doctor, but in my opinion, it is much better to know what is going on than to not know. At least when you know, you and your doctors can begin to take steps for you getting better.

Peace, love and happiness to everyone.

# Creative Corner

## *Life*

Epikk

I have a dream; That one day I will have the world in the palm  
of My Hands without it landing on the shoulders first...  
To avoid the shoulders; you have to maintain that stress that  
you build from the ankles up to your cranium invisible ...  
Because if your stress is introduced to the ones who two face  
you: they are going to increase your height of stress in your Life

...

I have a crush on success and it seems like it doesn't have a  
thing for me because of what I see, People who don't give a  
fuck about what they stand for are standing the tallest ...  
Some Days I wish I can walk into the store of life and make My  
purchases on Life Purposes...

But when I have my mind set to make that trip; there is that  
one thing that introduces My mind to second thoughts ...  
And those thoughts, Prevents my main task of becoming a  
main task so My main focus are nothing but Side tabs ...

So Much for invention of achievement ... If there is anytime in  
this world to make the shit that you always wanted to happen;  
Now is that time...

Everyone has a clear view of what is going on in this world  
today...  
Put yourself in the undershirts of reality; would that want to be  
you ...  
The ones that are standing tall have a short vision of what they  
want in life, but keep them selves maintain from having their  
back on the pavement ...  
I want to be like that but kno where I want to stand and Know  
what I'm standing for ...

This is more than just words of creativity to uplift the emotions  
of those who are reading this ...  
But placing these words that I am embracing you with will want  
you to get a grip on Life ...

Once it's shown that you don't have that Grip; That Minute  
you slip is the second someone else is ready to take your Spot

...

So we the people have to kill the side tabs that are not necessary  
and focus on the real Shit...  
I don't know about you Guys; but I'm on my way to the Store  
of Life and going on a shopping...  
I'm tired of having dreams and making future statements; I  
rather living out my Dream and telling you what I dreamed  
about ...

The next issue of the GRIOT will be published in February 2010.

If you would like to contribute to the GRIOT send articles, drawings, poems or short stories to [danikm@rams.colostate.edu](mailto:danikm@rams.colostate.edu)

Visit the Black/African American Cultural Center in 204 Lory Student Center.



# February 2011

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		<b>1</b> <b>Noon</b> ~ Opening Ceremony LSC Commons  <b>4pm</b> ~ Real Talk "Are We Living the Dream" LSC 204  <b>8pm</b> ~ Slam Poetry Night w/ Blues , Ramskeller	<b>2</b> <b>5pm</b> ~Multimedia Concert Performance "The Langston Hughes Project" featuring Dr. Ron McCurdy 5:00pm LSC Theatre	<b>3</b> <b>Noon</b> ~ Meet the Black Faculty & Staff luncheon featuring jazz musician Dr. Leonard Brown LSC 203-05  <b>6pm</b> ~ Success Talk w/ Aaron Madonna LSC 214 - 216	<b>4</b> <b>FUN FRIDAYS w/ B/AACC</b> LSC 204	<b>5</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>7</b> <b>Movie Mondays</b> "Do the Right Thing" Times: 9, 11, 1 & 3 LSC 204	<b>8</b> <b>4pm</b> ~ Real Talk "MLK vs Malcolm X" LSC 204  <b>6pm</b> ~ Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc: "Black Arts "Through their Eyes" LSC 213	<b>9</b> B/AACC & Women and Gender Advocacy Center presents: "Black Beauty" 12:00pm, LSC 228	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b> <b>FUN FRIDAYS w/ B/AACC</b> LSC 204	<b>12</b>
<b>13</b>	<b>14</b> <b>Movie Mondays</b> "Something the Lord Made" Times: 9, 11, 1 & 3 LSC 204	<b>15</b> <b>4pm</b> ~ Real Talk "The LeBron Complex" LSC 204  <b>7:00pm</b> Keynote Speaker Eric Thomas, the Hip-Hop Preacher LSC Grey Rock Room	<b>16</b> <b>7pm</b> <b>United Women Of Color presents... "Women in Music"</b> Location: LSC 205	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b> <b>7pm</b> One-Man Theatrical Presentation featuring Patrick Sims "10 Perfect: A Lynching Survivor's Story" LSC Theatre	<b>19</b>
<b>20</b>	<b>21</b> <b>Movie Mondays</b> "Secret Life of Bees" Times: 9, 11, 1 & 3 LSC 204  <b>7pm</b> ~ Free Wright (BET's 106th & Park) LSC Ballroom	<b>22</b> <b>4pm</b> ~ Real Talk "The Values of the Black Community" LSC 204  <b>7pm</b> ~ Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. "Take a Trip Through Time" LSC 208	<b>23</b> <b>7:30pm</b> ~ ASAP: OMENALA African Drumming LSC Theatre	<b>24</b> <b>6:45pm</b> ~ BSA: "Lynn Manning" (former Blind Judo Champion, actor, and poet) LSC North Ballroom  <b>9:30pm</b> ~ Pillow Talk Discussion on "Letters to My Daughter" LSC 204	<b>25</b> <b>FUN FRIDAYS w/ B/AACC</b> LSC 204	<b>26</b> <b>10am</b> ~ Little Shop of Physics LSC
<b>27</b> <b>7pm</b> ~ UMC: BHM Closing ceremony Part 1	<b>28</b> <b>Movie Mondays</b> "For Colored Girls" Times: 9, 11, 1 & 3 LSC 204  <b>7pm</b> ~ ASAP Closing Ceremony: Intikana, LSC North Ballroom				Colorado State University Black/African American Cultural Center 204 Lory Student Center Fort Collins, Colorado 80523-8016 <a href="http://www.baacc.colostate.edu">www.baacc.colostate.edu</a>  Phone: 970-491-5781 Fax: 970-491-0492 Email: <a href="mailto:bss@lamar.colostate.edu">bss@lamar.colostate.edu</a>	

