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THE GRIOT

**GRAPHIC DESIGN: KERRIANA TATUM
EDITOR: KERRIANA TATUM**

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

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

HELLO READERS,

I am absolutely pleased to be the editor of our Griot magazine this year. Building a cohesive display of our #BlackExcellence with many of your faces sprinkled throughout each page has been a joy to create.

Words from staff and students bring every page to life and just reminds me every day that our emphasis on work and community building is important.

I wouldn't be my genuine self if I didn't speak on what I care about in this letter. I don't want to approach current events from a place of pessimism, but from a self-reflective standpoint: what can we learn? Personally, I have learned the importance of identifying my values and applying them to my life, striving to be a caring person, even if that includes some tough love. I have grown through community at CSU, a sentiment that I wish could be shared by the rest of the country I would like to claim.

That being said, I hope you all remain undiscouraged by the

shortcomings of our current political administration. I hope that you all realize that within Blackness is strength and perseverance. Even with socioeconomic, legislative, and systematic marginalization forcing us to bear the weight of the criminalization of our own skin color, millions of Black people wake up every day and resist the bigotry ingrained into our society. With centuries of calculated oppression in America's history, being Black and waking up in the morning to interact with institutions---institutions that only began to welcome us in recent history---is worth celebrating, Every Day. This is why we have things like the Griot; to show that we choose to live in community despite odds against us.

Thank you all for believing in yourselves and being the vision of light and achievement.

with love, Kerriana



ROLLING WITH THE B/AACC OFFICE

WRITTEN BY:
JAYLEN SPIRES



The B/AACC Rites of Passage program hosted another fun event for students, inviting them to strap on roller skates and have some fun! Students were encouraged to come roller skating at the Rollerland Skating Facility off of Mulberry in Fort Collins. The night was full of laughter, food, and falling. Everyone skated, danced, and had a great time. Students took in the musical vibes and skated away. The people participating were amazing and the employees gave all students a great experience. It was a "rollernight" to remember!

United Women of Color

written by: Ronke Adebayo



UWC

For the fall semester of 2019, United Women of Color (UWC) has had the opportunity to bring a group of phenomenal women together to be in fellowship with one another. Through the hard work of the members and the executive board, UWC has met with two wonderful people this semester. In one of our UWC meetings, CSUs president Tony Frank stopped by and briefly sat in on our weekly gathering. During UWC week, we also had Leslie Herod come to speak. This semester, we also had the chance to discuss black love hosted by the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity here at CSU. This event was filled with emotions and great discussion of what black love looks like and why it's depicted the way it is in the media.

For UWC week, there were some great events held throughout the week. The start of our week on Monday was game night. Tuesday night we had our fundraiser at chipotle. Wednesday we had our hair care night. Thursday we had movie night in the BAACC office. Friday, Leslie Herod, a wonderful speaker and legislator, talked with us about being the first openly gay African American woman to be elected to Colorado's state legislature. Saturday we had our CSU serves at the Fort Collins Community Garden, followed by our UWC/ UMC all Black and white party. It has been a wonderful semester of gathering and building relationships within UWC and beyond.



SKEE- WEEK

written by Janse Brown



Xi Eta's Fall 2018 Skee-Week took place on the week of October 15th-19th. The week was full of fun events that were catered to educating and engaging with members of the CSU community. The week kicked off with a financial literacy event, followed by a campus clean-up, a kickboxing class, an evening of arts and crafts and viewing of The Great Debaters. Backed with the legacy and essence of their illustrious organization, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., Xi Eta continues to be exemplary in their service to all mankind.

Beauty in Blackness: Homecoming Pageant 2018



This year's Homecoming Royalty Pageant was one for the ages! Ten contestants competed for the title, and every one of them showcased just how great it is to be proud of your Blackness.

Attendance was high, and support ran deep; many contestants repped their Greek Organizations or student orgs, and the support from their sisters and brothers or org members were in full force. Thanks to dance major Mohammad York, this year's opening dance was a great precursor to just how well these contestants could dance. Contestants competed all judge's categories: formalwear, interviews, talents, and beachwear- a revolutionary new category as it deviates from the traditional bikini expectations, and encourages comfortability.

Throughout every category, the contestants' Blackness was shining through. Among the most amazing aspects of this year's pageant was everyone's talent. Every contestant had something different to offer, and performed to an incredibly high caliber. There were comedy routines, dance numbers, drum solos, spoken word pieces and more. Overall, audiences were blown away with just how powerful our black community is, and how many versions of Blackness were displayed that night. Congratulations to Kerriana Tatum for winning 2018-19 Overall Homecoming Royalty, and Micaela Parker for her dual recognitions of Ram's Choice and Ms. Congeniality! (above)

written by: Rachel Surratt

PARADE

This Homecoming, the Black/African American Cultural Center showed up and showed out for the Annual Homecoming Parade. By bringing enthusiasm and culture (and being the very first float in the parade), participants showed energy and passion as they celebrated history, specifically history of the B/AACC office itself. Many black and white photos of past activism were held up by students and staff for parade viewers to see. Many people dressed in 70s style outfits,

given that B/AACC was formed in 1976. The crowd got a taste of the passion of the cultural center as they danced and sang along to 70's music. Featured on the float were Homecoming Pageant winners, Royalty Kerriana Tatum and Micaela Parker, in sashes and crown. The parade was another display of beauty in Blackness and in Black history. The images and celebration had a lasting impact as B/AACC celebrated CSU's homecoming and added an element of pride to the event.



written by:
Kerriana Tatum



1976





TASTE OF AFRICA

written by: Zion Jones

Africans United kicked off a week dedicated to celebrating the African culture on CSU's campus with their annual Taste of Africa on November 11, 2018, which featured over 30 dishes from 14 countries. The event featured performances from the organization's dance crew and from the graduate student organization, Amani. The week continued with events such as a movie night, featuring the film "Beasts of No Nation", and AfroBeat Zumba which were great opportunities for members

and others to bond and make new connections. This semester, members of Africans United were largely involved in activities going on in the larger community. Members and friends also attended an Inclusion Symposium hosted by ASCSU and the annual MLK Spoken Word Contest hosted by the Black/African American Cultural Center. After a long week indulging in some of the best aspects of African/Black culture, we were ready to rest and recuperate on Fall Break.

BAACC SERVES

written by: Rachel Surratt



This semester's B/AACC Serves event had great numbers from our Black/African American community. Halloween was a great success for the city of Fort Collins as students and staff volunteered at

Treatsylvania, a family event where parents can take their children to choose safe trick-or-treating options, ride hayrides, a pumpkin patch, and go through corn mazes and (not so scary) 'haunted' barns.

The Fort Collins fundraising event always has great turn out, inviting kids from the Northern Colorado and Wyoming area, and our volunteers helped keep this event running for another year.

Volunteers helped run the mazes, pass out candy, and set up the entire event. Thanks to Zion Jones for setting this awesome volunteer opportunity up, and thanks to every person that helped us help out!



WRITTEN BY: TRANAE JEFFERSON

BSA Week

During the 2018 Fall semester, Black Student Alliance held our first BSA Week of the year. Our week took place from September 24th through September 29th where we hosted different events each day of the week with respective themes. On Monday, we stayed in and relaxed during our Movie Night, where we watched Black Panther. On Tuesday night, we hosted a Karaoke Night where our members sung their hearts out! We took our members outdoors on Wednesday evening to bond at Horsetooth, where we wore our gear and hung out by the reservoir. The next day, we had an educational workshop about alcohol and campus policies. An officer from CSU PD made an appearance, as well as a representative

from the Health Network. To get the weekend started, we got active and held a Night at the Rec bonding. A plaza party was planned for earlier in the day Friday, but the weather got a bit too cold, but it was definitely made up the next day. As a conclusion to BSA Week, our Battle of the Universities: NOCO Invasion party shut down Greeley as people from all over Colorado, and even Wyoming, came out and helped us create a successful night.

BSA Week was an overall good time as we kicked back and had some laughs. One of the favorites of the week was the Karaoke night, so that will definitely be an event that we host again! Our first BSA Week of the year was quite successful and we are coming back even harder in the Spring semester!



United Men of Color



United Men of Color put together a week of events for students and staff to enjoy during the fall semester. The week is put together to build brotherhood throughout the organization and help educate those around us. This fall UMC week consisted of a night at the rec, a masculinity workshop, a campus takeover, and a 2k/Madden tournament. The night at the rec was a kickstart to the week.

The organization invited everyone to come play some basketball and lift weights. It was a way to promote self-care through exercising and build a stronger community in the rec center. The next event that took place was the masculinity event. This event was ran by a staff member, Carl Olsen. It took place in the LSC where thoughts were shared about how masculinity is viewed in the world today. Mr. Olsen gave students a chance to brainstorm

some traits that were most commonly portrayed to different men in the world. The lists were created for Black/African American males, White males, Latino males and Asian males. The purpose was to see the difference of characteristics placed on each male listed and find ways to help each other without using their masculine traits as a stereotype. The last event that took place during UMC week was the 2k/Madden tournament. The event was sponsored by GameStop and their local store provided PlayStation 4's, controllers, and games. The event was created as a fundraiser to help the organization raise money toward putting on more events in the future. UMC week was a great success and the organization cannot wait to show what else it has to offer.

written by: Dezmond Jeans

NPHC WEEK

written by:
Kerriana Tatum



CSU's National Pan-Hellenic Council held NPHC Week from October 1st-5th, filled with fun activities and workshops throughout the week. We were grateful for all organizations who helped plan the week: Alpha Phi Alpha, Alpha Kappa Alpha, Kappa Alpha Psi, Omega Psi Phi, Delta Sigma Theta, Phi Beta Sigma, and Zeta Phi Beta. On Monday, there was a Meet The Greeks session where members of NPHC organizations introduced themselves and engaged with non-members and interests, giving them a chance to learn some org history, ask questions, and watch some strolling. Tuesday's Game Night was filled with fun and laughter, as NPHC members and non-members got

together to play board, card, and video games to destress from schoolwork. A

Masculinity/Femininity Workshop brought some reflection and discussion on Wednesday, as participants were encouraged to self-reflect and share personal insights around expressions of masculinity and femininity.

Friday's Midnight Scavenger Hunt brought NPHC week to a close, as Greek Life members handed out clues and snacks for some run-around fun. Overall, the week was a success with many students engaging in fun activities and discussions while gaining knowledge about NPHC and it's importance at CSU. We hope to see you all at the next NPHC week!

FINER WOMEN



FALL 2018

written by: Kerriana Tatum



The ladies of the Omicron Omicron chapter of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc. presented three of our new members on November 10th, 2018. The Zetas have worked hard to be present and active on CSU's campus, and after weeks of hard work, we welcomed Akosua Antobre, Taylor Latimer, and Lila Jones into Zetaland.

CongratZ to this wonderful group of women who have committed themselves to the principles of Zeta. These three ladies have exemplified Finer Womanhood in amazing ways, and we couldn't be prouder to call them our sisters. Much love to the Fall '18 ladies from Fall '17, Spring '18, and Zetas worldwide. Stay Sweet!



C.A.R.E.

**Community
built in the
office**

**Aspirations to
be great or do
better**

**Responsibility
to self and
others**

**Engagement in
the larger
Colorado State
University
Community**

OCTOBER:

Julius Philpot

Year: Senior

Area of Study: Psychology

From: Tampa, Florida

**The Black/African
American Cultural Center
now recognizes and wants
to honor non-staff students
for exemplifying C.A.R.E. to
fellow students and being
active in their engagement.**





Year: Senior

Area of Study: Animal Sciences with Business Administration minor:

Pre Vet-Track

From: Brooklyn, New York

Year: Senior

NOVEMBER:

Michelle Mendoza



B/AACC wants to thank these students for their involvement beyond academics, and for being a positive and inspiring presence in the B/AACC office.

STUDENTS OF THE MONTH

REALTALK

recorded by: Ally Johnson

What does Black Pride look like?

"It wasn't until I visited the continent of Africa that I was proud to be black."

"There is pressure to assimilate into black culture. There is fear of not being black enough."

"That's the power of being black, it's recognizing the oppression we go through."

Colorism

"As a medium brown skinned person, I have the privilege of not worrying about having to educate myself on colorism."

"Women are seen as beauty standard and object rather than human, whereas black men's colorism is in terms of being seen as a threat and physical policing."

"[Black] bodies that were put on display in the past and now its being bought and that can be embodied as well."

Perpetuating colorism on the children

In Your Feelings: Open Forum

"Failure is important on the pathway to success."

"It's hard to say we're not okay but it's even harder recognizing that we aren't okay."

"Systemically what do they expect us to be? We get stuck on being the strong black woman or emotionless man before we're able to vocalize that we're struggling."

"'I'm not okay' is too often seen as equal to 'I'm weak'."

"I am still here and I am breathing and that in itself is my strength."

The Black Vote

"Your vote isn't always just for you."

"Conservatives were founded on wanting to keep slaves. I may be wrong but from what I've learned, I'm not wrong."

"We can't deny that there's an emotional aspect with politics."

Cultural Appropriation

"Using aspects of culture without the appropriate knowledge behind it."

"If you appreciate my culture so much, you would know that it's wrong to wear it as a costume."

#BlackExcellence

"Finishing college and succeeding in college may not be the same. They may. But maybe not. But they should both be celebrated."

"Social media is toxic because you're constantly comparing somebody's ideal life to your real life without even seeing the struggles they took to get to where they are now."

"There's a fascination of the struggle. We want this story of we came from nothing but we made it but in reality, we won't all get the opportunity to say that."

"Praise is not who someone is. It is to bring out what they could be which is a little less trash than they were yesterday."

**Real Talk is every Tuesday
in the Black/
African American Cultural
Center (LSC 335) at 4:00!**

Bill Cosby

"If we're against something and someone we know is for it, do we write them off as well?"

"I firmly believe that with what Bill Cosby did, regardless of what he did for the Black community, he needs to be held accountable."

"From a survivor: Rape is not just an event, it's not a crime committed once. It sticks with you. You think about it, you dream about it."

"I feel like I disrespected myself by even second guessing Bill Cosby."

"How can you be an advocate for women and then hang out with the people committing the crimes?!"

Academic Success in the Black Community

"We still value education, but the reason we value education is different."

"It drives me. It drives my existence. As people of color are on the come up. Why do you think white people are increasing tuition? It's because they're scared. I hope y'all value your education as black people."

KAPPA WEEK

written by: Chjina Hopkins



As a way of bringing more attention to their organization and giving back to the community, the Omicron Zeta chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc. organized a week full of events across four campuses this past October. Kappa Week featured events that included educating students about voter registration, a space to study, de-stressing through movies and pumpkin carving, and of course celebrating tradition and giving back.

Chiekezie Chukwuka, a current brother of Kappa Alpha Psi says, "It was a successful week, especially considering we are a city-wide chapter. We were able to host events at University of Denver, Colorado State University, University of Northern Colorado, and University of Colorado." The organization raised about \$60 during their Phi Nu Pi(e) event and overall believes the community has a better understanding of who they are and what they represent.