

Griot

OCTOBER /
NOVEMBER
2016
Editor: Yasmine Amon
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UNITED WE STAND, DIVIDED WE FALL

- Students and Alumni celebrate 40 years of B/AACC
- UMC collaborates with Boys & Girls club
- The identity of Black Girl Dangerous is revealed
- And the winner for the best Halloween costume is...
- Lamine Kane is this month's student spotlight



**Celebrating 40 years
of B/AACC**



**Black Girl
Dangerous speaks up**



**Exploring cultural
African dishes**



**Who's taking the
spotlight for this month**

UMC AND THE BOYS AND GIRLS CLUB

WRITTEN BY: JARRAE NEWELL

United Men of Color, a registered student organization at Colorado State University, collaborated with the Boys and Girls Clubs of Colorado on October 1st, for their State Keystone Conference. Keystone is a teen program for youth ages 14 to 18 which allows members to participate in activities that take place both inside and outside of the club. The activities focused on three main areas: academic success, career preparation, and community service. The purpose of UMC attending was not only for the community service opportunity, but also to teach youth how to get involved on a college campus. The event was held at the YMCA of the Rockies in Estes Park where more than 100 club members were in attendance.

Transportation to the event was provided by UMC President Kent Washington, and Community Service Coordinator, Jarrae Newell.

There was a total of ten UMC members in attendance who presented on "How to get involved on a College Campus." After the presentation, the club members participated in a social which included video games, dancing and sitting around a bonfire. It was also DJ'd by UMC President Kent Washington. The organization donated fourteen large cheese and pepperoni pizzas from Domino's to the Keystone Conference!

Overall, the event was very successful. Members of UMC enjoyed being able to spend a day away from campus and to positively interact with the youth. Our organization plans to continue building a relationship with the Boys and Girls Club of Colorado and hopefully partake in more events in the near future.



UMC WEEK

MONDAY

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

THIS WAS AN EVENT HELD IN THE BLACK/AFRICAN AMERICAN CULTURAL CENTER LED BY CAPTAIN FRANK JOHNSON OF THE COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY POLICE DEPARTMENT. THE PURPOSE WAS TO EDUCATE STUDENTS ON THE RIGHTS THEY HAVE WHEN INTERACTING WITH THE POLICE. THE EVENT HAD 16 MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE AND THE OUTCOME OF THE EVENT WAS SUCCESSFUL AND EDUCATIONAL.

TUESDAY

MASCULINITY WORKSHOP WITH INNATELY U

THE EVENT FOCUSED ON BREAKING DOWN WHAT IT MEANS TO BE MASCULINE AND BLACK. DUAN RUFF, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF B/AACC FACILITATED THE SESSION THROUGH MEDITATION AND CONVERSATIONS SURROUNDING MASCULINITY.

OCTOBER 24TH-28TH

WRITTEN BY: AJ PORTER

THURSDAY

"LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION" MOVIE NIGHT

UMC HOSTED A MOVIE NIGHT IN THE BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE BUILDING WHERE THEY WATCHED SCARY MOVIE 2 WHICH WAS A GREAT TEAM BONDING EVENT.

FRIDAY

UMC AND ALPHA PHI ALPHA VOTER REGISTRATION PARTY

UMC WAS OUTSIDE ON THE LSC PLAZA WITH THE ALPHA PHI ALPHA FRATERNITY INC. ENCOURAGING STUDENTS TO REGISTER ONLINE TO VOTE FOR THE UPCOMING ELECTION. LATER THAT EVENING THEY HOSTED A HALLOWEEN PARTY WHICH WAS A FUNDRAISER FOR THE ORGANIZATION.

THE BLACK/AFRICAN AMERICAN CULTURAL CENTER

40
years

Homecoming Anniversary

WRITTEN BY: DONOVAN TATE

The 40th anniversary of the Black/African American Cultural Center was a moment to remember. As a graduate student who is currently in his 5th year of education at Colorado State University, I never thought that the B/AACC office would have impacted me as profoundly as it has today. The office has had a great influence on the way I navigate through my everyday circumstances. It has allowed me to grasp tightly to my identity as an African American young man who is dedicated to both his personal and professional development. Additionally, it has given me the opportunity to foster meaningful relationships with various people,

staff, mentors, educators and coordinators who validate me and my experiences. At the 40th anniversary banquet, I was able to share my appreciation for what the office has done not only for me, but also for a community of other students who can testify to its widespread impact. During my speech, I touched on the commitment the office makes to culture, awareness, understanding and advocacy for the diverse population of students at CSU. I spoke on the trials and tribulations that people of color endure in this country due to the harsh realities of institutionalized oppression such as mass incarceration, police brutality and the media's dehumanization of black and brown people. Everyone in attendance spoke highly of my speech and appreciated what I had to say on the topic. It was a wonderful sight to see so many historical faces in the room.

Alumni from an array of





graduating classes attended the banquet to celebrate B/AACC's achievements and success over the years. I saw both new faces and old faces; recent graduates and older graduates. However, no matter the difference in graduating classes, one thing was constant; everyone was there to express gratitude to a special office that helped mold them into the very successful individuals that they are today. All the individuals in attendance had something special to offer the communities they impact, the people they serve and the world overall. The delightful music and delicious food set the tone for an exciting atmosphere. The vibes in the room were characteristics of joyfulness, unity and solidarity. It was a time where alumni could embrace the one thing that will forever connect them when all else changes, and that was the connection we had all made while utilizing the B/AACC

office's magical space. I hope to be invited to the next celebration and I cannot wait to see the journey that my peers undertake in the next several years. I have no doubt that they will go far and wide, impacting every life that they touch. I am sure of this because B/AACC teaches students how to give back and pull others up alongside them. Going forward, I am excited to see the impact that my peers make on the world and look forward to linking up with them again at the next B/AACC celebration years down the line. Until then, thank you B/AACC for the opportunity, for validating me and others, and reminding me that I am enough.



THOUGHTS OF BLACK GIRL DANGEROUS



*Written By:
Tucia Alexander*

“I was not put on this Earth to hold your hand through your social justice journey. That is what Google is for” were the words of Mia McKenzie, also known as Black Girl Dangerous. To some, this may come off as a little harsh, but McKenzie kept it real on how it feels to be a part of a marginalized group. Mia McKenzie, a queer, black feminist and writer from Philadelphia, was the LGBT History Month Keynote Speaker. Her work has been recognized with several awards and grants. Her debut novel *The Summer We Got Free* won the 2013 Lambda Literary Award and her second book, *Black Girl Dangerous*, is used to teach about queerness, class, and gender at universities across the country. McKenzie brought a refreshing view on the social justice fight when she gave her speech unapologetically and eloquently. As a black woman who has attended schools with white students most of my life, I needed to hear what she had to say. It was as if her words were the thoughts I kept in the back of my mind.



She deemed her ideas on how to handle social justice as radical and often the term radical has a negative connotation in our society; however, her perspective wasn't radical in a way that was damaging to others.

Her form of radical promoted the mental and emotional health of people with marginalized identities. McKenzie addressed how most of what we are taught when it comes to discussing social justice topics are methods that cater to those with dominant identities.



Another key point she stressed is our society's habit of equating the hurt feelings of those with dominant identities with the oppressions of those with marginalized identities. McKenzie explained that it is feeding into white supremacy to have this mentality and it's another form of silencing to those who are already marginalized. She closed by stating she will only be taking questions and having conversations with people with marginalized identities and she acknowledged how it often catches everyone off guard when she says this. She vocalized it best when she said, "You have to be silent for 20 minutes. Marginalized people have been silenced for centuries." Her unapologetic dedication may have been interpreted as rude by some but in today's overtly racist world, it's necessary. Overall, from her demeanor to her words, she assured the space would be dominated by those with less privilege. I hope to see more of us command spaces like this on campus.

Mia McKenzie



SPECIAL THANKS TO RAM EVENTS, PRIDE RESOURCE CENTER, AND THE BLACK/AFRICAN AMERICAN CULTURAL CENTER FOR YOUR SPONSORSHIP AND SUPPORT

TASTE OF AFRICA

Written by: Arisson Stanfield

Taste of Africa was an event created to engage in the diversity and unity of African culture through cuisine. Many of us find it difficult to reconcile our differences with others; be it our religious sensibilities, our preferred styles of dance, or our national affiliation, there always seems to be a reason at hand to distinguish between “us” and “them.” It isn’t often that we provide ourselves opportunities to break out of this divisive mode of thought, but at least once a year Africans United provides an opportunity to do so. Taste of Africa is an event





where people from many different cultures, ethnicities, races, religions, and nationalities could come together and recognize that despite our differences we still remain inextricably connected. Being centered around food, the event was a beautiful example of how we are all fundamentally and uniquely connect to one another. From rice and stews, to cakes most of us enjoy the same basic foods.

Taste of Africa offers an opportunity to recognize the creativity of different peoples and their ingenuity in the preparation and service of what unites each and every one of us. The joy of Taste of Africa was not simply limited to cuisine; the night also



included music and dancing. Though not everyone knew every song that played, many cultural songs were played and all felt welcome to participate in the experience of a community of distinct members unified by one greater purpose. This was an evening to remember, one of celebration birthed by the hard work of not just the members of Africans United, but also generations of ancestors who were willing to fight hard enough to pass on something worth celebrating to their descendants.

Cultural traditions like Henna were included which gave attendees an ancient connection to a vast variety of cultures that has not only survived, but thrived in the modern era. If you missed out on this year's event, you can look forward to next year!



HALLOWEEN KICK B/AACC

Written by: Ahonsi Ohimai

A TRICK-OR-TREAT EVENT WAS HELD WITHIN THE BLACK/AFRICAN AMERICAN CULTURAL CENTER AS WELL AS THE OTHER SDPS OFFICES. IT WAS A GREAT EXPERIENCE BECAUSE OF STUDENT INVOLVEMENT AND EACH OFFICE HAD SOMETHING DIFFERENT TO OFFER, SUCH AS SHOWING A MOVIE OR ORGANIZING A GAME. PARTICIPANTS WORE CREATIVE COSTUMES LIKE BATMAN, SUPERMAN, CHEERLEADERS, DARTH VADER AND EVEN DAFFY DUCK. OVERALL, THE EVENT WAS A SUCCESS AND I HOPE TO SEE ITS RETURN NEXT YEAR WITH CONSIDERABLY MORE PARTICIPATION.







G.P.S. Gives Back

Written by: Ally Johnson
Pictures taken by: Donovan Tate and Tina Nguyen

GPS is a pre-collegiate mentoring program for 3rd through 12th grade students that identify with the Black/African-American community. The acronym stands for Giving back, emPowering, and Strengthening our culture and was founded by the director of the Black/African American Cultural Center (B/AACC), Bridgette Johnson. GPS meets once a month to talk about various topics including loving your blackness, the importance of furthering your education, and so much more. On November 6th, the students gave back to their community by hosting a coat drive which took place from 2pm to 4pm at the Diversity House on Shields St. This event was coordinated by GPS, but also appealed to students from Colorado State University that are involved in B/AACC. Families of the students who are involved in GPS also participated and ultimately gave back to the homeless community here in Fort Collins.



While the event specifically asked for coats, gloves, pants and other winter clothing, we were also able to collect toiletries and make care packages that included toiletries and snacks. The GPS students were able to take the care packages and give to the homeless if they see them on the street. This event truly helped those in need and gave the 3rd through 12th graders the opportunity to see what community service is and how it can help others.

We had a phenomenal amount of college students volunteer to help with sorting clothing and bags, as well as a great turnout from our students who participate in GPS. This was our first year doing a big community service event, with the amount of support we received, we plan to do more community service and continue to grow as a program. We would like to send a special thank you to all of our Destination Leaders, the student organizations, and the B/AACC office staff that came out to make this happen.





STUDENT SPOTLIGHT: *Lamine Kane*

Written by: Yasmine Amon

Last month, Lamine Kane participated in the Mr. and Mrs. CSU Homecoming Pageant and won the Congeniality award. The award is given by allowing each contestant to vote for each other based on their personality and it comes to no surprise that he won. His involvement in various campus activities, organizations and jobs has made him a well-known student on campus and in the global community. Lamine is a senior at Colorado State University majoring in International Studies with a focus on the Middle East and North Africa. His background has helped shape his cultural interests and his love for languages.

How many languages do you speak?

"I speak five languages fluently and I'm currently working on my 6th. The first three languages I learned was from being raised in Senegal. I speak Fulani (Pulaar) which is predominately spoken by Senegalese, but is also a minor language in 28 other African countries. My second language is Wolof which is also from Senegal and is spoken in neighboring countries and I speak French which is Senegal's national language. The other three languages came from moving to the United States and learning about my passion for languages.



I speak English and Spanish and I'm currently working on Arabic. Arabic is my favorite language because it is so rich and beautiful. The next four languages I want to learn is Portuguese, Russian, German and Chinese. My goal is to learn ten languages."

Do you have any tips for learning different languages?

"My three tips would be first you have to like the language you want to learn; you must ask how and what (how do you say this and what does this mean?) and you can't be shy about interacting with others. You learn from reading, hearing and expressing. There are also programs online where you can interact with people from all over the world. I use an online program called Verbling."

Where have you travelled to and where would you like to go?

"I was born and raised in Senegal until the age of 12. This past summer I travelled to Jordan for a study abroad program where I learned Arabic and I visited Panama in the summer of 2015. I would like to visit France, and every country in Africa. As an African, I know we have been fooled about our history and we act separated but we are more united than we think and that is why I want to visit every African country. I would like to work or participate in the development of other people's diversity."



What are you involved in at CSU?

"I came to CSU as a transfer student and joined the Global Ambassadors Student Program which is under the umbrella of Fort Collins International Center. We work with the Fort Collins Public School District and CSU community to bridge the cultural and global gap. We invite students from another countries as speakers who present to grades K-12 in Fort Collins. The president of the organization recommended me to work for INTO which is for international students on campus. The company is based outside of CSU and they work with universities to bring foreign students here to learn the language and earn a degree. You have to be open to diversity and open to learn and teach because some of these students have never left their country before and may not know a lot about American culture. I also joined Africans United, United Men of Color and the Muslim Student Association. I try to bring the diversity I've experienced and focus more on what unites people than what differentiates them."



What do you hope to accomplish after graduation?

“My dream is to work for the African Union or the United Nations and look at how we can involve younger people in International Affairs. It’s important to me because development is based on awareness because if you know what’s going on in the world, you can take better care of your own nation. I would also like to teach different languages in other countries through teaching programs or travelling programs.”

“I BELIEVE MOST PEOPLE ARE WILLING TO INTERACT WITH YOU IF GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY. LIFE IS A WASTE IF YOU SPEND IT IN A GIVEN SPACE AND A GIVEN PLACE WITHOUT GETTING TO KNOW THE PEOPLE AROUND YOU.”

-LAMINE KANE

WHO ARE WE?

BLACK AND POPPING

Black and Mexican

Ghanaian and Nigerian

Black and British

BLACK AND SPIRITUAL

ASIAN AND EXTRA

Blessed and Highly Favored

Lower class and Educated

Black and Pansexual

Black and Determined

Black and Mad

Black and Nigerian

Black and German

Black and Muslim

Black and Beautiful

BLACK and NEON

Native and Female

Black and Caribbean

African and Royalty

Black and Ethiopian

Black and Caribbean

REAL TALK:

October - November

TOPIC: VIOLENCE IN THE MOVEMENT

DATE: OCT 4TH

Q: IS VIOLENCE NECESSARY TO MAKE PROGRESS?
A: "IT DOESN'T MATTER THE WAY IN WHICH WE DO THINGS TO CHANGE AMERICA'S MIND BECAUSE AMERICA HAS ALREADY MADE UP THEIR MIND ABOUT US". -T'HANI

A: "I DON'T THINK THE UNITY IS PREVALENT IN OUR COMMUNITY. WE HAVE TO LOOK AT HOW UNIFIED WE ARE FIRST". -MICHELLE

TOPIC: THE GREAT DEBATE

DATE: OCT 11TH

Q: WHAT POLICIES DO YOU WANT TO HEAR FROM BOTH CANDIDATES?

A: "CRIME IS AT AN ALL-TIME LOW BUT INCARCERATION RATES ARE AT AN ALL-TIME HIGH. I WANT TO HEAR THEM ADDRESS THE HIGH LEVEL OF MINORITIES BEING LOCKED AWAY FOR RIDICULOUS OFFENSES." - JAYLA HODGE

TOPIC: OPEN FORUM-WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND?

DATE: OCT 18

Q: WHAT IS YOUR VIEW ON OTHER RACES PARTICIPATING IN THE BLACK LIVES MATTER MOVEMENT?

A: "THERE IS MORE POWER IN WHITE PEOPLE STANDING WITH BLACK LIVES MATTER TODAY BECAUSE WHEN IT'S JUST US, PEOPLE CAN MAKE UP THE EXCUSE THAT WE'VE BEEN PROTESTING SINCE THE 60S." -LAMINE KANE

A: "IN MY HIGH SCHOOL IN MINNESOTA, WE TALKED ABOUT ALLIES AS A PLATFORM INSTEAD OF AN ALLY BECAUSE THEY ARE THERE TO UPLIFT THE PEOPLE WHO ARE PROTESTING INSTEAD OF SPEAKING FOR THEM."
-RACHEL SURRATT

TOPIC: BLACKNESS AND QUEERNESS

DATE: OCT 25TH

Q: WHAT DOES GATEKEEPING MEAN?

A: "GATEKEEPING IS WHEN CERTAIN GROUPS IN ANY COMMUNITY ARE OSTRACIZED FOR NOT BEING (BLANK) ENOUGH. EX: NOT BEING TRANS ENOUGH FOR THE QUEER COMMUNITY IF YOU DON'T WANT TO GET SURGERY" -V

TOPIC: WHAT IS LOVE? COLLEGE RELATIONSHIPS AND CUFFING SEASON

DATE: NOV 1ST

I'M GOING TO QUOTE THE ONE WHO SAID IT BEST "WE LIVE IN A GENERATION OF NOT BEING IN LOVE AND NOT BEING TOGETHER BUT WE SURE MAKE IT FEEL LIKE WERE TOGETHER BECAUSE WE'RE SCARED TO SEE EACH OTHER WITH SOMEBODY ELSE"-DRAKE
-JORDAN LOGAN

November / December

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				17	18	19
20	21 FALL BREAK STARTS	22	23	24	25	26
27	28 CLASSES RESUME	29	30 MLK SPOKEN WORD	DEC 1	2	3
4	5	6	7 OFFICE OPEN TILL 11 PM	8 OFFICE OPEN TILL 11 PM	9	10
11 OFFICE OPEN 3 PM - 7PM	12 OFFICE OPEN TILL 11 PM	13 OFFICE OPEN TILL 11 PM	14	15	16 LAST DAY OF FINALS	17 COMMENCEMENT



**BLACK/AFRICAN AMERICAN
CULTURAL CENTER**

COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY