

OCTOBER - NOVEMBER - DECEMBER 2020



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the

GRIOT



**BLACK/AFRICAN AMERICAN
CULTURAL CENTER
COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY**

#BLM MURAL

On October 10th, 2020, Colorado State University's Department of Art & Art History installed a Black Lives Matter Mural at the Visual Arts Building. Art students and faculty alike were an integral part of the mural's planning and installation. This mural has been in the works since Spring of 2020, when several other BLM Murals were being installed around the country, but several concerns from CSU Administration blocked the project from happening.

To address the negative feedback, the mural has an informational QR code for people to scan and interact with. It gives a history of BLM Murals in general and how the CSU Mural came to fruition. It also has space for people to leave all their comments- good or bad. To address the possibility of it being defaced, there are cameras being installed around the mural's vicinity and it is now protected as CSU property. If someone chooses to deface the mural, they'll face actual criminal charges from the city of Fort Collins. Being a part of the installation was, at face value, fun. It was pleasing to see some of CSU's community come together in solidarity to show support for the Black lives on campus. A lot of work went into the planning of the mural and even more work went into its installation. Being a part of something this historic was a heavy feeling; but also a tense feeling. For many students, this mural is a promise that work will be done to effect change on campus. However, only time will tell if CSU is ready to be an active ally in protecting and supporting its Black students.



Finally, during Summer 2020, the Department of Art & Art History gathered art and Black students to discuss whether or not it should actually be installed on campus. Again, several concerns came up in this discussion; but rather than shutting down the project, CSU Faculty advocated for it and did everything in their power to address these concerns. One of the concerns was, "What about all the negative feedback this mural will get?" Several other murals, if not all of them, have been criticized by White Supremacists and all lives matter supporters. These groups have even gone so far as to deface the murals installed in their hometowns and threaten the lives of those who help install them.



BY: Jocelyn Lapham

Homecoming Spirit Week!



USUALLY, B/AACC HOSTS AN ANNUAL HOMECOMING PAGEANT EVERY YEAR LEADING UP TO THE HOMECOMING GAME. THIS YEAR, WE DECIDED TO TAKE A DIFFERENT ROUTE BECAUSE OF THE CURRENT PANDEMIC AND SOCIAL DISTANCING REGULATIONS. INSTEAD OF A PAGEANT, WE THOUGHT IT WOULD BE FUN TO ENGAGE IN A VIRTUAL SPIRIT WEEK! FOR THE LAST WEEK OF SEPTEMBER, WE ASKED STUDENT'S TO DRESS ACCORDING TO THE SPIRIT DAY THEME. EACH DAY OF THE WEEK INTRODUCED A NEW THEME FOR STUDENTS TO PARTICIPATE IN FOR THE CHANCE TO WIN A PRIZE FOR THE MOST SPIRITED AND BEST FITTED. TO KICK OFF ON MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 28TH, WE BEGAN THE WEEK WITH BLACK POWER DAY. STUDENTS WERE ASKED TO DRESS IN ATTIRE THAT MAKES THEM FEEL MOST PROUD AND POWERFUL. PAJAMA DAY SEEMED APPROPRIATE FOR TUESDAY'S SPIRIT ATTIRE, STUDENTS WERE ASKED TO SPORT THEIR COMFIEST P.J.'S. FOR WEDNESDAY'S THEME, WE DECIDED TO THROW IT BACK WITH A 90'S THEME. LOTS OF STUDENTS WERE EAGER TO SHOW OFF THEIR FLYEST 90'S FIT; WE HAD THE MOST ENGAGEMENT ON THIS DAY. THURSDAY, STUDENTS HAD FUN DRESSING UP AS THEIR FAVORITE AND GOOFIEST MEMES- PICTURE INCLUDED- FOR MEME DAY! FINALLY, IT WOULDN'T BE SPIRIT WEEK WITHOUT SOME SCHOOL PRIDE. NATURALLY, FRIDAY WAS SAVED FOR RAM PRIDE DAY. STUDENT'S CELEBRATED THEIR CSU PRIDE WITH THEIR BEST RAM GEAR. ALL WEEK, STUDENTS CAME INTO THE OFFICE TO SHOW OFF THEIR SPIRIT WEAR TO BE FEATURED ON THE B/AACC INSTAGRAM PAGE AND POTENTIALLY WIN A PRIZE.

By: Alizayna Walton

MLK SPOKEN WORD



CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2020
MLK SPOKEN WORD WINNER
JASMINE RETLAND



The Annual Dr. Martin Luther King Spoken Word Competition took place on Thursday, November 19th, 2020 from 5 pm to 7 pm. The MLK Spoken Word competition is an event hosted by the Black/African American Cultural Center, in which students have an opportunity to perform spoken word poetry for a chance at winning a cash prize, as well as the opportunity to perform at the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. celebration on January 18, 2021, at Colorado State University. Participants had to ensure that their work included no profanity, must be no longer than 3 minutes and work must be in correlation with this year's theme: "Where do we go from here?"

Participants included Devon Washington and Jasmine Retland. These participants were judged based on their ability to meet the criterion: Physical Appearance, Voice & Articulation, Dramatic Appropriateness, Evidence of Understanding, and Overall Performance. Based on these 5 criterias, the 5 judges announced that Jasmine Retland was the official winner of The Annual Dr. Martin Luther King Spoken Word Competition, and she will have the opportunity to perform at the 2021 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. celebration.

BY: JAY SPIRES

REAL TALK

October Topics:

6th- *Black Lives Matter on Campus*

13th- *Mental Health in the Black Community*

20th- *The Power of the Black Vote*

27th - *Real Talk: Politics in the Halls*

"GO VOTE!! YOUR VOTE IS YOUR VOICE!!"

"MENTAL HEALTH IS SO IMPORTANT AND WE AS A PEOPLE HAVE TO MAKE MORE EFFORTS TO PUT OUR MENTAL HEALTH AT THE FOREFRONT."

"I VOTE BECAUSE OF THE HARD WORK THAT WENT INTO ME BEING ABLE TO MAKE THE CHOICE ON IF I WILL VOTE OR NOT."

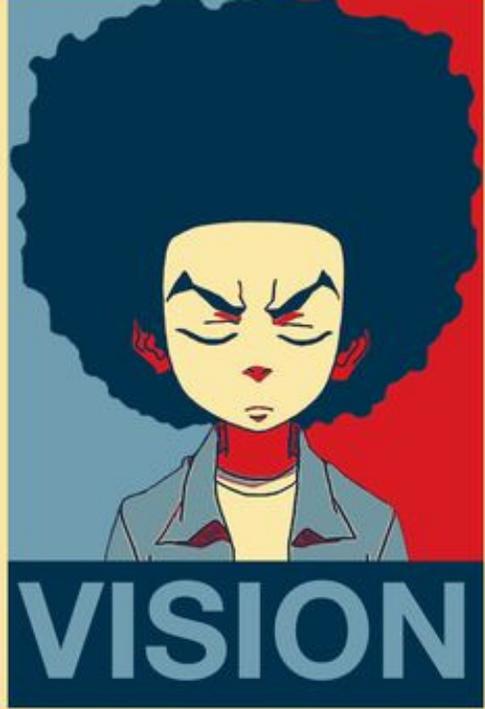
"IN ORDER FOR US TO CARE ABOUT BLACK LIVES, WE HAVE TO CARE ABOUT ALL BLACK LIVES"

November Topics:

3rd - *Open Forum: Go Vote*

10th - *Black Lives Matter in Africa*

17th - *Pre-Break Check-in*



BLACK MALE THINK TANK



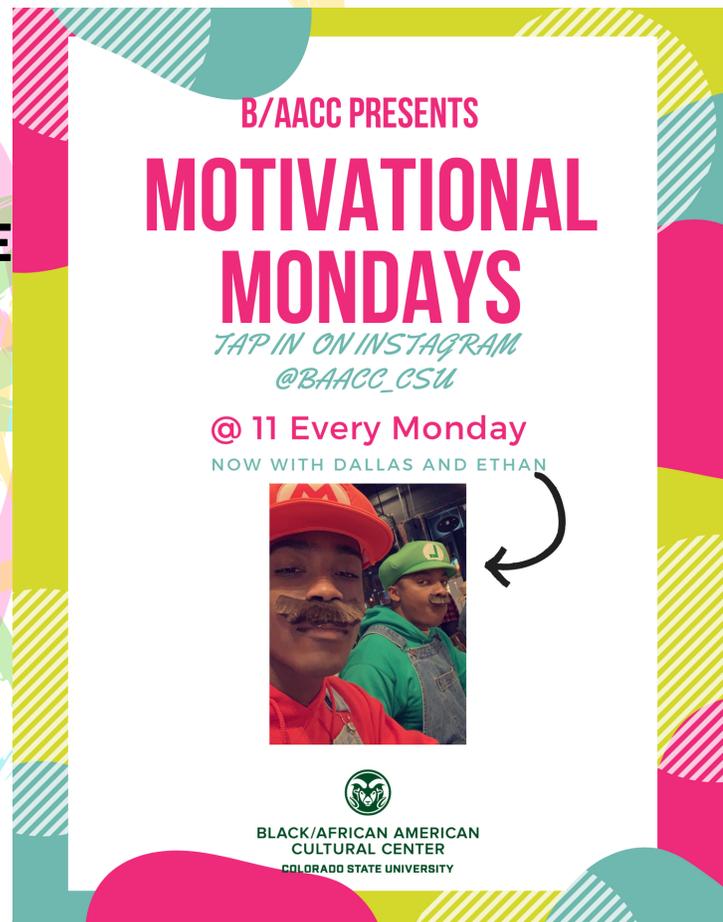
THE BLACK MALE THINK TANK IS A PROGRAM THAT OFFERS A SPACE FOR BLACK MEN OF ALL DIFFERENT ACADEMIC LEVELS AND BACKGROUNDS TO COME TOGETHER AND DISCUSS VARIOUS TOPICS WITHIN THEIR LOCAL COMMUNITY AND THOSE COMMUNITIES AROUND THE WORLD. MOST IMPORTANTLY, IT GIVES A PLATFORM FOR THESE MEN TO GET CONNECTED WITH EACH OTHER AND ESTABLISH A STRONG RELATIONSHIP. SOME OF THE VARIOUS TOPICS OF THIS YEARS BLACK MALE THINK TANK WERE “WHAT IS OUR RESPONSIBILITY AS BLACK MEN IN OUR COMMUNITIES?” AND “WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A MAN?” THESE TOPICS OF DISCUSSION HELPED THOSE THAT ATTENDED LEARN THE MINDSETS OF THEIR PEERS ON CAMPUS, AS WELL AS AIDED IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THEIR OWN PERSONAL IDEAS. IN ADDITION TO QUESTIONS ABOUT TOPICS AROUND THE MALE IDENTITY, THERE WERE ALSO MEETINGS CREATED AS A CHECK IN TO MAKE SURE THAT INDIVIDUALS WERE DOING WELL IN THEIR DAY TO DAY LIVES. THESE CHECK INS WERE VALUABLE AS THEY PROVIDED SPACE FOR EVERYONE TO REFLECT ON HOW THEY WERE DOING, FURTHER ESTABLISHING THE VALUE OF PERSONAL CARE. THE BLACK MALE THINK TANK WAS VERY EFFECTIVE IN PROVIDING A SPACE FOR MY PEERS IN THE COMMUNITY AND FOR MYSELF TO DEVELOP AS ONE.

BY: MALIEK SWAIN

Motivational Monday.

THIS SEMESTER, THE BLACK/AFRICAN AMERICAN CULTURAL CENTER HAS INTRODUCED “MOTIVATIONAL MONDAYS!” TO THEIR LINE OF NEW IG PROGRAMMING. DUE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC, THE B/AACC OFFICE HAS HAD TO GET CREATIVE WITH HOW THEY KEEP STUDENTS ENGAGED AND BOOST MORALE IN THESE SOCIALLY DISTANT TIMES.

THE PROGRAM IS HOSTED BY BEST STAFF MEMBERS, ETHAN AND DALLAS! EVERY MONDAY AT 11AM, THE TWO APPEAR ON IG LIVE TO SUPPLY SOME LIGHT HEARTED MOTIVATIONAL COMMENTARY TO GET THE WEEK STARTED! GUESTS RANGE FROM B/AACC PRO-STAFF, TO STUDENT STAFF, DR. CHLOE WRIGHT, ALUMNI, AND WHOEVER ELSE MAY TAP IN! GET YOUR WEEK STARTED RIGHT WITH SOME MONDAY MOTIVATION!!



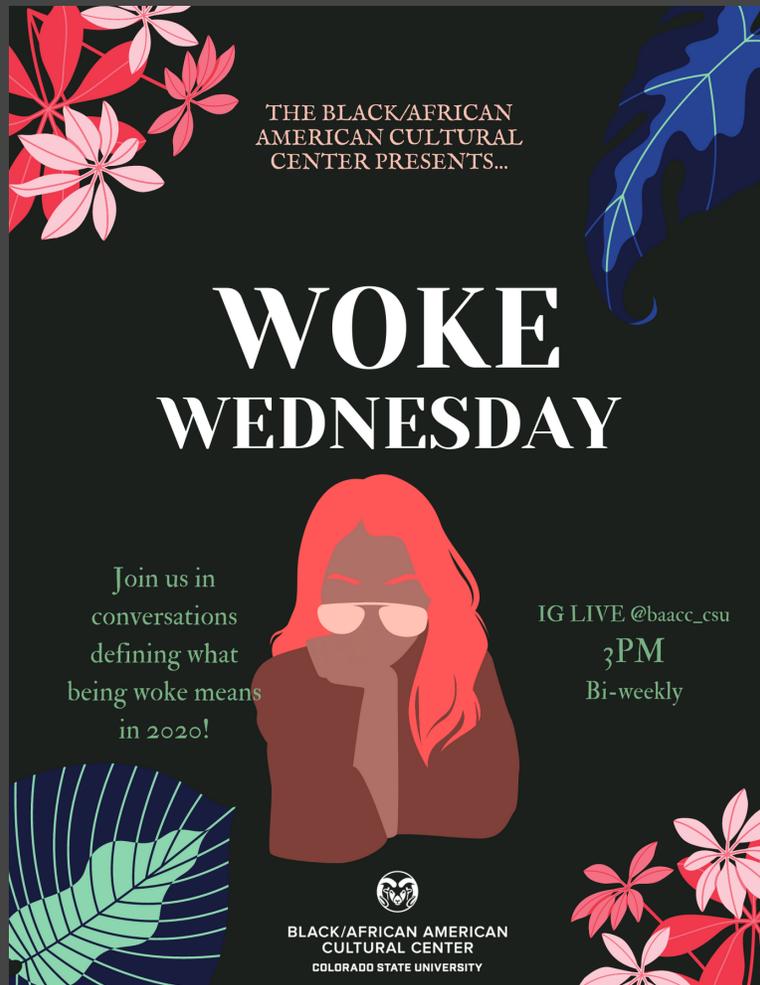
B/AACC PRESENTS
MOTIVATIONAL MONDAYS
TAP IN ON INSTAGRAM
@BAACC_CSU
@ 11 Every Monday
NOW WITH DALLAS AND ETHAN




BLACK/AFRICAN AMERICAN
CULTURAL CENTER
COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY

BY: Dallas Botchway

WOKE WEDNESDAY



THIS SEMESTER, B/AACC CONDUCTED MORE THAN HALF OF THEIR TRADITIONAL PROGRAMS AND SERVICES IN A VIRTUAL FORMAT, INCLUDING ONE OF SEVERAL NEW PROGRAMS MADE BY STUDENTS, FOR STUDENTS. WOKE WEDNESDAY IS A NEW SOCIAL MEDIA SERIES CONDUCTED BY JOSLYN ORJI, EVERY OTHER WEDNESDAY FROM 3-4 PM ON INSTAGRAM LIVE ON B/AACC'S INSTAGRAM PAGE. WOKE WEDNESDAY IS A CONVERSATION FACILITATED WITH THE INTENT TO INFORM AND DISCUSS VARIOUS TOPICS AND IDEAS THAT ARE CONSIDERED "WOKE."

THIS SERIES TACKLED SEVERAL HOT ISSUES THAT HAVE BEEN THE MAIN POINT OF CONVERSATION WITHIN THE COMMUNITY SUCH AS THE DEFINITION OF WOKE, THE 2020 ELECTION, AND CULTURAL APPROPRIATION VS. APPRECIATION. DESPITE THE FACT THAT THIS SERIES WAS HELD ONLINE, THE ATMOSPHERE WAS STILL LIVELY, INTERACTIVE, AND ENGAGING AS GUESTS WOULD BE INVITED TO SHARE THEIR EXPERIENCES AS BLACK STUDENTS ON A PREDOMINANTLY WHITE CAMPUS

By: Joslyn Orjii

FIRST YEAR FRIDAY



This year, B/AACC added a new livestream series on Instagram TV call First-Year Friday hosted by first-year student and Peer Coordinator, Jasmine Retland. First-Year Friday is a livestream series dedicated to making a space where Black first-year students can share their experiences on CSU's campus. They talk on topics ranging from the transition from high school to college all the way to what their plans and goals are as they continue their college career into their sophomore year. This semester, due to COVID 19 things looked a lot different for everyone, especially the incoming Freshman. There were a lot of things that freshman students missed out on like a true Ram Welcome and the carnival.

A lot of the challenge for first-year students was trying to make connections with people whether it was making friends, establishing strong relationships with professors, or even getting to know the clubs and organizations that run on campus in hopes to join one of these communities. First-Year Fridays gave students like Adrian Perez a moment to vent and students like Mykala Wimberly a place to promote herself. It also gave students like Ian Yassa an opportunity to reflect and Jakobe Jones a chance for good conversation with a fellow first year student. First-Year Fridays opened a door for students who were special guest and students watching the stream to build community through sharing our stories and our experiences for others to connect, relate, and empathize with. First-Year Fridays has only just begun, and we can't wait to see what the future holds for our first-year Black students.



BY: JASMINE RETLAND

AFRICANS UNITED & BLACK STUDENT ALLIANCE



The collaboration between Black Student Alliance (BSA) and Africans United (AU) was created in order to bring together different communities of students across the CSU campus. Through the meetings of these two organizations, education about many cultures all around the world was shared, such as those folk tales that exist in countries all around Africa as well as the United States. Bringing together these two organizations was very impactful, creating more ideas and concepts to be shared and discussed upon. Most importantly, meetings that were held every Thursday of the week allowed for students to connect with each other and learn more about everyone's culture.

BY: MALIEK SWAIN, FINANCIAL OFFICER

UNITED MEN OF COLOR



UNITED MEN OF COLOR IS AN ORGANIZATION MEANT TO UNIFY AND STRENGTHEN THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN MEN OF COLOR ON THE COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY CAMPUS. IN A PREDOMINANTLY WHITE UNIVERSITY, IT IS HARD TO NAVIGATE YOURSELF AS BOTH A PERSON OF COLOR AND AS A MAN. IN FACT, IN OUR WORLD IN GENERAL, SOCIETY HAS BOXED OUR MEN OF COLOR TO STEREOTYPES AND TOXIC TRAITS WHICH ONLY LEAD MEN DOWN A ROAD OF THEIR DEMISE. IN UNITED MEN OF COLOR, WE PRIDE OURSELVES IN BREAKING DOWN THE STEREOTYPES OF MASCULINITY AND REDEFINING WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A MAN. WE ARE BUILDING THE FOUNDATION FOR MEN, FUTURE LEADERS, GIVING THEM PRIDE AND CONFIDENCE IN THEIR OWN IDENTITY, ENCOURAGING THEIR JOURNEYS, EXPLORATION, AND SELF REALIZATIONS. WITH VOLUNTEERING FOR A PLETHORA OF PROGRAMS, PARTICIPATION IN SOCIAL ACTIVISM, AND THE ORGANIZING OF COMMUNITIES FUNCTIONS, UNITED MEN OF COLOR MAKES IT A PRIORITY TO STAY ACTIVE IN THE COMMUNITY AS IT NOT ONLY BENEFITS THEIR DEVELOPMENT, BUT LETS THE COMMUNITY KNOW THAT WE NOT ONLY LEAD, BUT SUPPORT AS WELL.

FOR WE ARE UMC(UNITED MEN OR COLOR) AND WE'RE ALL WE GOT."

BY: Joseph Adenowo, UMC Member

National Pan-Hellenic Council



The National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC) is an organization composed of the nine historically Black/African American Greek-lettered fraternities and sororities. The NPHC was created on May 10, 1930 on the campus of Howard University, in Washington, D.C. and was chartered under the laws of the State of Illinois in 1937. At the time of the NPHC's inception, African Americans were being denied various rights supposedly granted to all citizens under the law of the U.S. Constitution. Due to racial tensions on predominantly white campuses, Black students felt the need to seek community with other individuals who shared common goals, ideals, culture, and struggles.

The individual Black Greek-lettered organizations and the NPHC have been used throughout the years to facilitate brotherhood and sisterhood among college educated Black/African Americans. The organizations and the council aim to bring about social change through the development of programs and initiatives that cultivate equity among social groups. The NPHC at CSU was established in 2017 and consists of the active historically Black/African American Greek-lettered organizations on CSU's campus including the local chapters of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Incorporated, Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Incorporated, Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Incorporated, and Delta Sigma Theta Sorority. The CSU NPHC's operations include forums, social media exchanges, informational programs, volunteering in the community, and weekly meetings for members.



BY: Simone Butler, President of NPHC

Presidents Multicultural Student Advisory Council

This semester, students, Joslyn Orji and Janaye Matthews served as the student liaisons for the President's Multicultural Student Advisory Committee (PMSAC). PMSAC is an advisory group to the President and University administrators, professionals, and academic faculty. This committee is created with the intent to gauge student perspectives and facilitate a space dedicated to addressing broad issues of multiculturalism and social identities. As a multicultural-focused committee, representatives from other Student Diversity Programs and Services (SDPS) offices such as El Centro, the Asian/Pacific American Cultural Center (APACC), and the Pride Center, among many others, have also been in attendance, offering their perspectives concerning the various campus-oriented issues that would be discussed.



Janaye Matthews
5th Year Student

Favorite Quote:

"The most common people give up their power by thinking they don't have any"
- Alice Walker

Favorite Hobby:
Reading

Every other Thursday evening, from 5-6 pm, PMSAC representatives met virtually to engage in meaningful conversations facilitated by notable university faculty members and administrators such as President Joyce McConnell, Dr. Blanche Hughes, the current Vice President for Student Affairs at CSU, and Kathy Sisneros, the current Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs. In the past, PMSAC meetings have been in-person, however, this semester the meetings were fully virtual. Conducted in a timely and efficient manner, the meetings have been fulfilling and progress-driven, with several significant concerns communicated effectively to the Presidential Administration. Some topics that have been discussed include the 20th Annual Diversity Symposium, Halloween awareness campaigns that focused on educating students about offensive costumes, and various campus and personal security concerns. For those on PMSAC, this semester was not only challenging but it was successful in giving students the opportunity to voice their concerns, comments, and opinions on the events of this virtual semester.



Joslyn Orji
3rd Year Student

Favorite Quote:

"The most common people give up their power by thinking they don't have any"
The world is like a mask Dancing. If you want to see it well, you do not stand in one place.
- Chinua Achebe

Favorite Hobby:

Painting and Reading outdoors, hanging out with friends and hanging out in the B/AACC Office

By: Joslyn Orji, PMSAC Representative

Associated Students of Colorado State University



Merry Gebretsadick
3rd Year Student
Director of Diversity and Inclusion

"And yes you are all that yo have, so you must be enough. There is no other way."

Marya Hornbacher

Favorite Hobby:

Watching Documentaries, Going to the Museum reading/listening to podcasts, and going out for a movie or walk

Abi Tekeste
2nd Year Student
Associate Senator

"Mas vale un minuto en la vida, qe la vida en un munuto." - Bolivian Proverb

Favorite Hobby:
Making/Collecting Jewelry



Bemnet Tefera
2nd Year Student
Associate Senator

"If you don't like something change it. If you cant change it, change your attitude."

Maya Angelou

Favorite Hobby:

Huge bookworm into fiction and mystery novels

Congratulations to our new Associate Senators and a special congratulations to Merry Gebretsadik, as the new Director for Diversity and Inclusion

FAREWELL BRIDGETTE (Ms. B) JOHNSON, DIRECTOR



A WORD FROM Ms. B

LAST BUT NOT LEAST, SOME OF YOU HAVE HEARD THROUGH THE GRAPEVINE THAT I WILL NO LONGER BE THE DIRECTOR OF B/AACC! IT IS TRUE, AFTER 10 YEARS OF WORKING IN THIS POSITION AND A SIMILAR ONE FOR 7 YEARS PRIOR TO MOVING HERE – IT IS TIME I MOVE ON. MY MOVE WILL NOT BE FAR FOR I WILL CONTINUE MY CAREER AT CSU AS THE MANAGING DIRECTOR OF DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION FOR STUDENT SUCCESS (YEP - IT IS AN INAUGURAL POSITION THAT I CREATED – YAY!). AT ANY RATE, SOME OF THE THINGS I HAVE BEEN WORKING ON (I.E. MURALS, UNITED IN STEMM AND FEW OTHER THINGS), I WILL CONTINUE WHILE EXPANDING ON MORE ACADEMIC RELATED OPPORTUNITIES WITH YOU STILL AT THE FOREFRONT!!! I BEGIN MY NEW ROLE JANUARY 1ST BUT MY LAST DAY WORKING FOR THE SEMESTER AS THE DIRECTOR OF B/AACC WILL BE DECEMBER 14TH (I AM TAKING SOME TIME FOR PERSONAL REASONS).

WHO WILL BE THE NEXT DIRECTOR MANY HAVE ASKED – WE SHALL SEE. THERE WILL BE A NATIONAL SEARCH CONDUCTED BEGINNING EARLY SPRING SEMESTER AND I ENCOURAGE YOU TO GET INVOLVED SO YOU CAN SHARE WHAT IS IMPORTANT TO YOU!!! JANAY MATTHEWS WHO HAS WORKED IN OUR OFFICE AND WHO HAVE SERVED AS OUR PMSAC REPRESENTATIVE FOR SEVERAL YEARS WILL BE YOUR STUDENT REP ON THE SEARCH COMMITTEE. JANAYE WILL BE SOLICITING YOUR INPUT SO BE SURE TO STAY TUNED - THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SERVICE TO THE OFFICE JANAYE. OF COURSE, OUR STUDENT STAFF WILL CONTINUE TO BE A HUGE RESOURCE AND WILL SHARE INFORMATION AS IT BECOMES AVAILABLE – MAN OH MAN, I WILL MISS THEM DEARLY. I HAVE HAD THE PLEASURE OF WORKING WITH BOTH EMERALD AND ADRIAN (ADRIAN SINCE HE WAS A 1ST YEAR STUDENT) FOR YEARS AND THEY HAVE FILLED MY SOUL AND SPIRIT IN MANY WAYS – I, AGAIN, THANK THEM FROM THE BOTTOM OF MY HEART FOR WHO THEY ARE AND WHAT WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO ACCOMPLISH AS A TEAM AND THEY WILL CONTINUE TO KEEP THE TORCH LIT!!!

MY EMAIL ADDRESS AND CELL # WILL STAY THE SAME SO YOU KNOW HOW TO CONTACT ME AND DO NOT HESITATE TO DO SO!!! YOU ALREADY KNOW, I AM SENDING LOVE - I DO NOT JUST TYPE THIS TO TYPE IT – I LITERALLY TAKE A BREATH AND SEND LOVE!!!

~Ms. B

The Black/African American Cultural Center Presents

BLACK HEALING WEEK

DECEMBER 7 - DECEMBER 11

WE ASK THAT YOU DEMONSTRATE
YOUR ALLYSHIP BY PRESERVING THIS
AS A SPACE FOR US CREATED BY US

MONDAY 12.7

Motivational Monday
on **IG Live** with
Dr. Chloe Wright
11:00am

WEDNESDAY 12.9

Netflix and Chill'd
(Movie Night)

Tap in via zoom to receive
the link. Don't forget to grab
your favorite Ice Cream
7pm - 9pm

FRIDAY 12.11

Let's Getaway
(Evening Chill Session)
via Zoom & IG Live
6pm-7pm

TUESDAY 12.8

Hello Namaste
(Yoga Session) with
Duan & Reneca Ruff
via Zoom
6pm - 7pm

THURSDAY 12.10

Good Vibes and
Vibrations
(Study Session)
via zoom
6pm - 7pm



HOSTED BY
DALLAS BOTCHWAY

TAP IN VIA:
IG LIVE - BAACC CSU
ZOOM - [HTTPS://ZOOM.US/J/7752871829](https://zoom.us/j/7752871829)



BLACK/AFRICAN AMERICAN
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**"WE ARE THE ONES
WE HAVE BEEN
WAITING FOR"
- ALICE WALKER**

Black History Month 2021

For more information about Black History Month 2021 events, please visit our website at baacc.colostate.edu



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