WELCOME

As a UWEC alum, I had the opportunity many years ago as an undergrad to experience the Office of Multicultural Affairs (OMA) as a student. Now, as I have transitioned into the role as the Director of the OMA office, I am excited to continue to learn about the services we provide, the students we serve, and the opportunities across the campus through the lens of a colleague.

In my first three months as the Director, I have been very excited to learn about the OMA office through the experiences of our students. From our Multicultural Leadership Retreat, to our Heritage Month celebrations, and through our Blugold Dialogues, I have seen just how hungry our students are for these rich opportunities to connect with each other. I am impressed with their questions, their thoughtful insights, and their passionate engagement.

Moreover, I’m excited about the array of services and resources we provide through OMA, which includes our leadership development opportunities, as well as our financial resources, cultural spaces, and support for our student organizations.

Thank you for taking the opportunity to read through our inaugural OMA newsletter, and we welcome your comments, thoughts, and insights. Have a great year!

STAY CONNECTED

The Office of Multicultural Affairs invites you to stay connected with us! Get updates about upcoming events, hear from our students, and re-discover our ongoing initiatives.

Follow us on social media and get immediate updates about our events, activities, and our students!

OMA LISTSERV

Sign up for the OMA ListServ, a bi-weekly electronic publication that provides timely information about upcoming events that are sponsored by the Office of Multicultural Affairs. Although, many of our events and activities are open to all faculty/staff & students across the university, the primary purpose and audience for this electronic publication will be to disseminate information to the multicultural students we serve and their respective student organizations. Of course, any UWEC student, faculty, or staff may subscribe to this ListServ.

What would you like our ListServ subscribers to know about? We invite UWEC departments to submit events, activities, or notifications through our ListServ for our readers. Submit your items HERE.
The Office of Multicultural Affairs is excited to highlight Dr. Stacey Jackson, Assistant Professor of Psychology and Counselor, for her work in developing the women of color process group. This intentional program provides a dynamic space for women of diverse cultural backgrounds to discuss topics relevant to their experiences.

From race relations to gender equality, to romantic relationships and cultural adjustments, the women of color process group explore a range of issues related to being a woman of color and a college student at UW-Eau Claire.

Dr. Jackson had this to say, "I felt it was imperative to provide a safe, supportive space for women of color to process their unique experiences on campus. It is my desire that these discussions unite, inspire and empower these women and equip them with the skills to effectively cope with the unique challenges they face as students of color on this campus."

Youa Xiong and her family immigrated to the United States from Thailand as an infant with her family in 1993. As the oldest child in her family, Youa will be the second college graduate in her family in May 2019. She will be graduating with an English Linguistics major with a Chinese certificate.

Youa's parents did not have the same opportunities that she had to acquire a quality education. Nevertheless, she values education, because she knows it will allow her to be able to support herself and her family. Seeing her parents as factory workers has motivated Youa to continue to maintain a 3.5 GPA in college.

Youa, who is this year's recipient of the UWEC Tom and Susan Touchett Hmong Scholarship, finds UWEC to be a very healing and lively place to learn, meet new friends, and build relationships. While at UWEC, Youa has participated in study abroad programs in South Korea and China. She loves to travel and hopes to continue to travel more in the future with her family. Youa hopes to go abroad to teach English someday, as well.

While at UWEC, Youa's most memorable experiences included being a part of the Hmong Student Association (HSA) on campus. For the past four years, she has found HSA and the Office of Multicultural Affairs (OMA) to be her home away from home. They both helped Youa connect with other students and they both helped validate and strengthen her identity and culture as a Hmong person. She also values her experience with doing research with a faculty member on campus, which has helped Youa connect to the campus community.

In addition to being a stellar student, Youa is a Specialist in the Wisconsin National Guard with a position of MI systems maintainer/integrator. This experience has taught Youa valuable leadership, team work, and perseverance skills to help her succeed at UWEC.

Youa hopes that others who come to UWEC will get a chance to experience the same level of support and camaraderie that she has had. While Youa is undecided about what she wants to pursue after graduation, she will continue to enjoy each moment and looks forward to experiencing life to its fullest.
**WELCOME BACK PICNIC**

The Office of Multicultural Affairs (OMA) began the year with our annual Welcome Back Picnic. Despite the rain, about 300 students, faculty, and staff showed up at the Davies Center for the event, where incoming students of color had a chance to connect and network with returning students and other faculty and staff from across the University.

The small space in Davies provided our students and staff with a different environment to intimately interact. With our innovative “BINGO” game, students also had the opportunity to visit vendors, other EDI offices, and meet, greet, and learn about their respective resources and services.

At the event, participants were welcomed by Chancellor James Schmidt and Dr. Tamara Johnson, Vice Chancellor for Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Student Affairs. Dang Yang, the new OMA Director was also introduced to everyone, as well.

The atmosphere was one of collegiality and shared stories. Many students were thankful to have this annual event to officially open up their school year.

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**LATINX HERITAGE MONTH**

Throughout the month of September and October, students, faculty, and staff came together in celebration of Latinx Heritage Month (LHM) by participating in the Office of Multicultural Affair’s calendar of events. This year’s lineup specifically celebrated the heterogeneity in culture and identity of students on our campus.

Our LHM events aimed to highlight the contributions, academic successes, and talents of Latinx students at UWEC. The office also took the opportunity to highlight conversations that explored the intersections of race/ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and other often marginalized identities. Embedded in our mission to serve and advocate for students of color, we also took the time to recognize the issues facing Latinx people and the future of what it means to be Latinx.

It is imperative that the students we serve feel at home and feel welcomed. Through our efforts, we want our students to feel that the institution recognizes their cultural heritage and the contributions that they bring, and we hope to continue to meet those fundamental needs.

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**STUDENT INTERNS**

Our internship program offers a hands-on experience working in several areas of interests that promote and enhance the professional and personal development of the individual needs our OMA student interns.

**Left to Right**

**3rd Row:** Casey Moua and Justin Vue

**2nd Row:** Natalina Tekie, Pachia Xiong, Maria Villa-Rivera, Karen Her, Nkauj Naag Lis, Avery Benson, Dua Ci Khang, Elijah Vanderpoel and Mai Nou Lee

**Sitting:** Iman Dikko, Ariyana Dryden (EDI Intern), Anna Burleigh, Mirella Espino
BLUGOLD DIALOGUE SERIES

Under the Office of Multicultural Affairs (OMA), "Blugold Dialogues" is a series of conversations designed to give community members the opportunity to discuss and contribute to creating a more equitable, diverse, and inclusive campus community. These sessions are open to all students, faculty, staff, alumni, and local community members interested in joining the discussion. From different opportunities and challenges of today’s social justice movements to addressing the impact of local and state policy implementation, each program will have one or more presenters that will discuss the significance of these topics, relevant initiatives, and how these topics relate to UWEC. Our goal is to facilitate important dialogues regarding issues impacting our collective experience on campus and beyond.

MULTICULTURAL LEADERSHIP RETREAT

Miranda Murphy, a first-year Biology student, said it best. "The Multicultural Leadership Retreat has been really cool and helped me make a lot of connections to a lot of other people."

Over the weekend of September 21-23, Murphy was one of 50 UW-Eau Claire students who participated in the annual Multicultural Leadership Retreat, hosted by the Office of Multicultural Affairs. Just like Murphy, the first-year students who participated in this retreat found that it gave them a sense of belonging and set them on the right path toward success at UW-Eau Claire.

But this program wasn’t just for first-year students. Sofia Earle, a sophomore student studying Spanish and Human Resource Management, came back for a second year to the retreat to serve as a team leader. "I came back as a counselor, because I’ve had my first-hand experience with the retreat last year," said Earle. "Now, I can help mentor other students in their freshmen year and describe to them what I think leadership involves."

Each year, OMA hosts this event with the goals of: 1) building a community among multicultural students, 2) reinforcing and developing leadership skills, and 3) introducing how social identities impact leadership development. Through pre and post assessments, the program has continued to demonstrate success. However, above all else, creating a welcoming space through the Multicultural Leadership Retreat, where students can be their authentic selves, was the most significant outcome of the event.

MULTICULTURAL STUDENT ORGS.

Ernie Gilbert, a senior Business Management student and a member of the African Student Association (ASA), describes himself as a "brother" to all the members of the ASA. "The organization (ASA) is like a community," said Gilbert. "It’s the only time I get to connect with people of similar background to myself. It’s like a family."

Student organizations are often thought of as a space for students to practice their leadership skills. However, for many students of color, these organizations are so much more.

"In HSA (Hmong Student Association), I get to learn about my own Hmong culture," said Victoria Vu, a third year Psychology student and Secretary for HSA. This year is also Vu’s third year as a member in the HSA student org and what she has really appreciated was the opportunity to connect with other Hmong students and reflect on her cultural traditions and practices.

Participation in multicultural student orgs is also a way our students give back. For Tou Ger "Billy" Lor, a Communication & Journalism major and HLT Chair for HSA, "...being a leader [in HSA], is not easy...but I get to advocate for other students of color. I use my experience to give back."

What the UWEC campus community often sees from the student orgs may include cultural events, dances, food, and activities. But if you sit down long enough and dig a little deeper, what you realize is that these multicultural student orgs serve as a place for students to feel safe and accepted. It’s a place where they can explore their identities, connect with a community, develop life-long friendships, and as Gilbert suggests, "it’s a great place to have a lot of laughter."
INDIGENOUS PEOPLE'S DAY

Indigenous People's Day is celebrated on the second Monday in October and here at UW-Eau Claire, Indigenous People's Day has been recognized on campus since 2014. This is an important holiday to recognize as the university and the city of Eau Claire are located on the traditional lands of the Ojibwe and Dakota people. This year Indigenous People's Day took place on October 8th and we recognized the holiday with a student lead panel called “Ask an Indian”. Students from the Inter-Tribal Student Council participated in this panel to educate the public about their experiences as American Indian students. Questions were submitted anonymously before the event and the panel also welcomed questions directly from the audience. These questions ranged on a variety of topics including; student's experiences with racism on and off campus, life on and off reservations, traditional practices, and American Indian Education at the K-12 and college levels. Each student shared their personal experiences and prospective on these issues and topics. Their backgrounds and experiences are each unique and their tribal affiliations vary. The purpose of this event was to have an open and honest dialogue about being an American Indian which provided the audience with information and prospective they may not have been familiar with.

BLACK CULTURAL CENTER DOORS OPEN

UWEC's new Black Cultural Center opened in November 2018, and was the result of a series of open discussions between students in the Black Student Alliance organization and UWEC administration during the prior year. More specifically, students candidly shared their on-campus experiences with Chancellor James Schmidt and Vice Chancellor Tamara Johnson, regarding their classroom interactions to residential life and housing. Students also shared a range of challenges associated with being black at a predominately white university.

Through the power of collaboration and intentional planning, students are now able to use the Black Cultural Center. While there are misconceptions around affinity spaces in general, in that these spaces serve to segregate students from the rest of campus, many UWEC students using the Black Cultural Center in particular, feel a strong sense of community and support.

Avery Benson, a sophomore Creative Writing major and the Public Relations co-chair for the Black Student Alliance said, “the creation of this space means so much to the community of black students attending UWEC, and we are excited to spend time working with, learning from, and building community with each other.”

The space features a cork board, chalk wall, refrigerator, microwave, tables, chairs, storage space, a few blankets, screen projector, and a large image of Civil Rights Activist, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

BLACK CULTURAL CENTER DOORS OPEN [FROM LEFT TO RIGHT] GARY BUTCHER, II, DR. JOHNSON, COLLIS MCLOUD JR., JALEN THOMAS, MICHAEL THOMAS

NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

November is Native American Heritage Month and we invite you to join us in celebrating and recognizing Native American culture and history. The Office of Multicultural Affairs (OMA) officially kicked off the month with a showing of the film, “Neither Wolf Nor Dog.” This film tells the story of a Lakota elder who summons a white writer to visit him and help him write a book about his people. The film depicts contemporary Native American living. The portrayal of contemporary living and Native American traditions and culture are not portrayed often or accurately in many films, making “Neither Wolf Nor Dog” an excellent choice.

On November 8th, alum Adrienne Thunder was back at UW-Eau Claire to discuss her work with language revitalization in the Ho-Chunk Nation. Thunder has had a successful career within the field of education and found her way back home to use her skills and knowledge to help her own community. She currently serves as the Hoocak Waazija Haci Language Division Manager. Thunder, like those who have come before her, is working on maintaining the Ho-chunk language by learning from indigenous preservation programs from all over the world.

Other events during Native American Heritage Month include a Blugold Dialogue Series on November 14th facilitated by Dr. Heather Ann Moody about stereotypes and realities of American Indian people. On November 18th, a group of student panelists will discuss their participation in last year’s Water Protectors of Wisconsin domestic intercultural immersion experience.

Celebrating and recognizing Native American culture is encouraged throughout the year, so please join us on March 2nd for the Honoring Women Pow-Wow. The UW-Eau Claire Pow-Wow had traditionally taken place in November the past few years but has been scheduled for this spring.
FALL 2018

November 19, 2018
Native American Heritage Month
Water Protectors of WI DII
Centennial Hall 1614 | 4pm

November 28, 2018
Native American Heritage Month
Local Native American Buffet
**Advanced reservations recommended, pay at the door**
$11.25 + tax if paying with cash
Davies, The Dulaney Inn 122
11:30am-1:30pm

December 12, 2018
Blugold Dialogue Series:
Examining The Role of The Bias Incident Report Team [BIRT]
Centennial Hall 1204 | 4pm

December 21, 2018
Fall 2018 OMA
Graduation Reception
RSVP REQUIRED
Davies, Ojibwe Ballroom | 5pm

OMA Staff | Left to Right
Maggie Jensen, Michael Thomas
Melissa Moore, Charles Vue, Pa Kue Vue, Dang Yang

Submit a Faculty, Staff or Student Feature for our Quarterly Newsletter

Submit an event or program for the Bi-Weekly OMA ListServ

Subscribe to our Bi-Weekly ListServ

GET INVOLVED

GOT A QUESTION?
CONTACT US!

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SPRING 2019

February 2019
Black History Month
Click here for a full programmatic line up!

February 6, 2019
Black History Month
MLK Jr. Celebration
Schofield Auditorium | 5pm

February 28, 2019
Black History Month
Harambe Celebration
RSVP REQUIRED
Davies Ojibwe Ballroom | 5pm

March 2, 2019
Honoring Women Pow-Wow
McPhee Center | 10-8pm
Grand Entry | 1pm
Feast | 5pm

May 24, 2019
OMA Graduation Reception, Spring + RSVP REQUIRED
Davies, Ojibwe Ballroom | 5pm