From the Editor:

Greetings!

My name is Tia Carter, and I am the current graduate assistant for the Office of Multicultural Affairs. This newsletter encompasses details about the exciting events and activities that took place during Fall 2011–Spring 2012 semesters. We hope you enjoy and will become interested in participating in future events!

About the Editor:

Originally from the Bronx, New York, Tia relocated to Buffalo to attend Daemen College. After successful completion of her Bachelor’s degree in Business Administration, Tia decided to prolong her stay in Buffalo. While obtaining her undergraduate degree, Tia had several leadership roles on campus and became a prominent figure to many students. Her experience influenced her decision to pursue her Master’s in Higher Education Administration. Tia is in her second semester at the University at Buffalo, State University of New York and plans to continue her career in student affairs.

What better way to start the Spring Semester than giving back to the community? On January 16, 2012, the Office of Multicultural Affairs collaborated with Campus Ministry for the MLK Franciscan Day of Caring. Over 30 faculty, staff, and students served as volunteers at a few places in the Buffalo region, including, St. Vincent De Paul, St. Lawrence’s Parish, and Vive La Casa. The celebration of Civil Rights and the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. continued with a weeklong quiz competition. There were two winners, Kayla Silver and Ronella Joyner who both received a $25 dollar Visa gift card. Wrapping the celebratory activities up for the month, Mr. Kevin Powell, an activist, author, and entrepreneur discussed Dr. King’s legacy and dream of social justice and activism.

Even more exciting, in February Black History month included workshops, fun history facts posted on Facebook, poetry night, and a civility and diversity dialogue. In addition, students had an opportunity to get off campus for dinner and attend the play “For Colored Girls Who Considered Suicide When the Rainbow Was Enuf” at the Ujima Theatre on Elmwood. As you glide through these pages, I hope you enjoy the articles from our students at Hilbert!
What an energizing way to kick off the inaugural "Cultural Awareness Week," by having a theme that asks everyone to CELEBRATE each other! Through the collaborative efforts of several offices and departments at Hilbert College, this event gave faculty, staff, and students an opportunity to explore cultures from around the world.

The week kicked off with the Unveiling of the Quilt, “Wall of Peace & Inclusivity,” which was created with squares by students that illustrated how they viewed diversity. Dr. Christopher Holoman, Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs offered some introductory words on the importance of diversity. Special guest, Dr. Darren O’Hern shared his experiences in the education systems of Kenya, China, and Iraq.

Lead by Barbara Bonanno, the Director of Campus Ministry and Mission Integration, Friday, October 7, 2011, faculty, staff, and students traveled to Vive-La-Casa in Buffalo to volunteer in the largest refugee center.

Later in the evening, Common Ground Club president, Laura Wilson tested student’s knowledge through a game of “Cultural Jeopardy.” There were two winners, Gianni and Vincent Zambito who one gift cards to T.G.I.F.

Over the weekend, Tarra Oginnisanti and the residential advisors hosted a Cultural Potluck: “Diverse Desserts” in St. Joseph’s Hall. Over 25 participants indulged in desserts around the world.

On Monday, October 10, 2011, Dr. Amy Smith lead a roundtable discussion entitled, “The Meaning of Words” with panelists, Dr. Donald Vincent, Dr. Jim Golden, and Dr. Tara Jabbaar-Gyambrah. In addition to the honors students, more than 40 faculty, staff, and students joined in on the discussion on the power language.

On Tuesday, October 11, 2011 Hilbert College the Cultural Bazaar attracted over 100 people from on and off campus. There were several vendors, performances, and presentations that celebrated the importance of diversity. Some of them included: the School of Irish Culture, Pride Center of WNY, Gay and Lesbian Youth Services, Woodland Visions Native Arts, Red Dragon School of Martial Arts, Salsa for the Soul, and the Caribbean Extravaganza Steel Drum Band. Although many of the events were received highly, one of the most popular was the Woodland Visions Native Arts. Students peaceful music and the sweet aroma of the wood burning exercise.

The week wrapped up with a viewing of Avatar, Zumba, and keynote speaker, Firoozeh Dumas. Author of several books, born in Iran and raised in California, Dumas presentation “Laughing Without an Accent... From Abadan to Hamburg” captured the audiences attention. In her presentation, she recalled her diverse and colorful past, discovering her love of writing, and her travels around the world as an author.

The Office of Multicultural Affairs thanks everyone for their support and hopes you will come out for next year’s event.
The 6th Annual Flip The Runway fashion show, was held on November 3, 2011. With over 100 guests, Common Ground Club hosted its annual show with the help of DJ Gus, the models, performers, students, and faculty/staff. There were 4 modeling categories, however, students voted the “Hilbert All-Stars,” their favorite. This was a moment that faculty/staff had an opportunity to strut their stuff. To the students surprise, Dr. Tara Jabbaar-Gyambrah took to the stage and almost brought down the house.

Other performances and appearances included but was not limited to: Reign, a hip-hop group, a dance ensemble by Chanel De Los Santos and Keidon Richens, the Lion Dance performed by the Red Dragon, and much more! The show was co-hosted by Nate Felipe, Chanel De Los Santos, and JQ Hamilton.

Next year’s show will be held on November 8, 2012 at 8:00 p.m. in the Upper Level of the Campus Center. If you are interested in assisting with the show, please contact the office of multicultural affairs. We hope to see you there!
Reflection: Poetry Night

On the night of February 16th, in the dining hall, the Office of Multicultural Affairs sponsored Poetry Night. Poetry Night gave poets and spoken word geniuses an opportunity to explore and illustrate their talent. The humor of the host, Brandon Williamson, captivated and maintained the attention of the spectators. The student performers from Hilbert were; Jerell Mason, Kristine Surman, and myself. I was also grateful for the participation of the professors that performed from Hilbert College, Mr. Kauderer and Mrs. Erika Haygood Gault. The poetry night was fun for me, not only because I performed, but everybody that wanted to speak, had their voices heard. I can’t wait for the event to come back around because it was a lot of fun.

Kekeli Olympio

Thursday February 23, 2012 at seven-thirty I went to a theater called Ujima. The Ujima Theater is located near downtown Buffalo. We went to view the play “For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide When the Rainbow is Enuf.” The play which inspired the movie entitled For Colored Girls, by Tyler Perry is very popular, but was told from different angles. At the play, there were seven girls that performed on stage. Each girl told a different story wrapped up into a poem. The poems carried out several messages to the audience. My favorite two messages were, don’t let nobody take your “stuff” and don’t be “afraid” to express yourself.

While, enjoying the play I bonded more with my peers. We socialized more during and after the show. The play made me think more out the box instead of having a closed mind. The outing gave me a chance to get off campus and explore the community. I look forward to future events that allow me to bond with my peers.

Alexis Overton
Kevin Powell positively inspired me. Mr. Powell reminded me that everybody and everything in this world is God’s creation. With that being said, I am more acceptable of differences because I realized I am not better than anyone else, instead, equal. Kevin Powell views everyone as his brother and sister no matter their race. I incorporated Kevin Powell’s brother and sister concept into my own life, and every morning I’m so happy to wake up and embrace diversity.

~Lawrence Oaks

Not only was I fortunate to be a spectator at the MLK Commemoration Lecture event, but I had the opportunity to volunteer as well. I had the chance to actually walk Kevin Powell to his dressing room, and talk to him. He told me I would be surprised and appreciative of the knowledge I was about to receive. The lecture by Mr. Kevin Powell opened my eyes and was very informative. It made me want to know more about my culture, as well, as others. It was also interesting how he touched on generational issues such as the youth priorities compared to the priorities of elders. The event allowed the students to engage in a conversation with adults and inform them of what and how we feel. There wasn’t a second that went by that I was not interested. I really enjoyed the MLK event, it started a positive movement on Hilbert campus.

~Keyon McCarley

Mr. Powell brightened MLK week for me at Hilbert College. During the hour long service, I learned a lot about Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. It was amazing to learn Dr. King, was opened to all other people of the world. Dr. King believed before he could be classified in the black race, he was classified in the human race. Everyone has potential on this earth as long as they count as part of the human race. Prior to the lecture by Kevin Powell, I thought Rosa Park was the first person who refused to give up her seat on the bus, it was interesting to learn otherwise. I really enjoyed myself at this event, the audience was very engaged, asking questions and getting informed. I am impressed with the growth in diversity at Hilbert College, as well as in the community.

~Kekeli Olympio
Kelly Penepent

**Major:** Business Administration  
**Concentration in Marketing**  

**Campus Involvement:**  
- Phi Beta Lambda (PBL) Student Business  
- Accounting Association: Secretary  
- Student Government Association: Senior Representative

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Diandra Cano

**Major:** Human Services

**Campus Involvement:**  
- Student Government Association: Senior Representative  
- Student Ambassadors Program: Student Ambassador  
- Campus Advisory Activity Board: Member  
- Emerging Leader Program

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Zeaunia Green

**Major:** Rehabilitation Services

**Campus Involvement:**  
- Common Ground Club: Member  
- Human Service Club: Member

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JQ Hamilton

**Major:** Criminal Justice  
**Minor:** Communications and Psychology

**Campus Involvement:**  
- First Year Experience (FYE): Peer Leader  
- Residence Life: Resident Assistant  
- Common Ground Club: Vice President  
- Student Government Association: Vice President of CAAB

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Laura Wilson

**Major:** Criminal Justice

**Campus Involvement:**  
- Common Ground Club: President  
- Residence Life: Resident Assistant  
- Emerging Leader Program
Q: How do you feel now that you almost at the “Finish Line”?  

A: “I’m elated. It was the rockiest journey I’ve been on. It went by pretty fast now that I look back, but during, it felt like forever, like I would never get to graduate.”  

~JQ Hamilton  

A: “I feel sad, nostalgic. I remember getting here just yesterday and now I’m about to graduate. It seems as if the 4 years flew by. It’s also exciting because I know I will be doing bigger and better things. It’s satisfying, because I know I’ve impacted the campus in some way.”  

~Diandra Cano  

A: “I feel stressed about the big decisions I have to make, graduate school, club responsibilities, school assignments, and balancing a full time job.” ~Laura Wilson  

Q: Which resource (office, academic department, person) you found to be the most helpful at Hilbert College?  

A: “Admissions Office, Career Center and Student Life.”  

~Diandra Cano  

A: “Many professors and staff members helped me over the years through school as well as helping me plan what I want to do with my life after graduation.” ~Kelly Penepent  

A: “The Office of Multicultural Affairs helped me throughout my college career in all aspects.” ~Laura Wilson  

Q: If you could use a few words to summarize your Hilbert experience, what would they be?  

A: “Life changing, different” ~Diandra Cano  

A: “Fun, Pushed outside of your limits, Spontaneous” ~Laura Wilson  

A: “Trial and Error, Character building, growing experience” ~JQ Hamilton  

Q: What advice would you give incoming freshmen?  

A: “Go to class and care about school. I didn’t care about school as a freshman and it was reflected in my grades. College fly by so fast, you can not wait until your senior year to care”. ~Kelly Penepent  

A: “Stick to your planner. Do not let others/peers affect your actions. Manage your time wisely because no one will be there to tell you what you need to do. You need to WANT this!” ~Zeunia Green  

A: “Take each and every learning experience for what it is and apply it to everyday life. Not just text book learning, what you learn inside the classroom is just as important as what you learn outside of the classroom.” ~JQ Hamilton  

Q: What will you miss the most about Hilbert College?  

A: “The Professors and my advisor Kate Eskew, she helped guide me a lot.. I’ll also miss the roommate/homey experience.” ~Zeunia Green  

A: “I will miss the friendships I created here.” ~Laura Wilson  

A: “I will miss the support by faculty and staff, my apartment, and how easy it is to get involved, there’s always opportunities”. ~Diandra Cano  

Q: What are your plans once you graduate?  

A: “My plans once I graduate is to continue the job search, it’s a hard process but I’m hoping for the best. I also will be returning next year to enroll in the MBA program at Saint Bonaventure.” ~Kelly Penepent  

A: “Once I graduate, I am attending Boston College Graduate School of Social Work.” ~Diandra Cano  

A: “I plan on participating in Ameri corp and giving back to the community.” ~Laura Wilson  

Congratulations to the of Class 2012 and the best of luck with all endeavors!!!
Mission Statement
The mission of the Office of Multicultural Affairs at Hilbert College is to build an inclusive campus environment that promotes diversity awareness, academic excellence, multicultural education, student learning and development.

Preview: Fall 2012 Events

Cultural Awareness Week
Theme: “Building Bridges, Creating Community”
October 8, 2012 – October 11, 2012

7th Annual Flip the Runway
November 8, 2012
8:30 pm—10:30 pm
Upper Level Campus Center

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