

Intercultural Happenings

Office of Intercultural Affairs

Fall 2013

On a cold, rainy, November morning, I drove my kids to the bus stop at the end of our street. Standing on the corner were two young boys who had been waiting for the bus in the rain, drenched from head to toe. Though we see the boys each morning at the bus stop, we never really interact much with them. Instead, my kids wait in the car, and when the bus arrives, they jump out and board the bus.

That rainy morning, the two boys did not have any umbrellas, were shivering cold, and the bus was running late. I turned off my car, with my own children warm and dry in the back seat. I hesitated to invite the boys into my car, knowing that I tell my own kids never to get in a car with a stranger. I glanced over at my 10-year old daughter who, too, saw the boys.



Fall open house attendees: Amanda Nagim-Williams '16; Amanda Egesi '14; Erin Cook '16; Rhea Schneider '16; Love Boussiquot '16

But, unlike me, she made the choice to act. My 10-year old flung open her car door and stood about a foot away from the boys. Within a few seconds, in silence, the three inched closer to each other until they were standing shoulder to shoulder. Soon, they were huddled together trying to keep warm. The bus came within a minute of her leaving the car, and in that time, the three kids never spoke a word to each other; there was no need to say anything.

This event required me reflect on times when I do not “walk the walk”; when I, too, do not always act in solidarity. Though I *felt* badly and even *rationalized* the reason for not inviting the boys into my car, it took the action of a 10-year old to remind me that **solidarity involves action**. Solidarity involved standing in the rain.

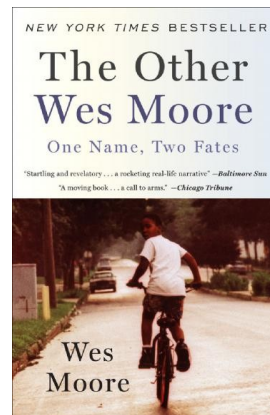
As we enter into the season of thanksgiving and of generosity, how are we called to action? What keeps us from standing in solidarity? And, how can we inch closer to understanding the humanity that unites us all?

Liza Salusan

Spring 2014 book discussion preview: *The Other Wes Moore*

At the Association for the Study of Higher Education conference this past November, I had the opportunity to meet Wes Moore — author, scholar, public speaker and educational equity advocate. I did not meet the other Wes Moore; **he** was serving time in prison for murder.

The story is described as “two kids with the same name living in the same decaying city. One grew up to be a Rhodes Scholar, decorated combat veteran, White House Fellow and business leader. The other is serving a life sentence in prison for felony murder. This is the story of two boys and the journey of a generation.” I was riveted by just how little separates us, and how our own structures of institutional racism, oppression, and marginalization keep that separation growing. Join us for our Spring 2014 book discussion *The Other Wes Moore*, as we further explore how to bridge this gap and how we can work towards creating equity.

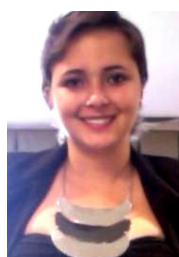


DISABILITIES AWARENESS MONTH CONVOCATION



The DisAbilities Convocation panel was held on October 1, 2013. In this program, we honored the multiple identities that people with disabilities hold. Panelists included Caitlin Gillet, (class of 2016), Joli Vega (daughter of Liza Talusan), Jan McGovern (Office Manager in Intercultural Affairs), Tara Daniels '14 and Nick Howard '13 (Development Associate).

Tara Daniels '14



I remember it like it was yesterday; I woke up incredibly early for the second day in a row one week in July, mentally prepared myself, and went to clinic. Clinic is always just “fine,” because who really wants to get up at 6 a.m., go into Boston, be poked and prodded for a few hours, then get a toxic chemical injected into their body? Not me, that’s for sure.

I sat down after my long day and took a half hour to write to my professors. I told them that I am a senior Communications major, Journalism minor and included all of the clubs I do on campus. I told them that, when I was 16, I was diagnosed with Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia, a cancer of the blood and bones. I finished treatment during my second semester of freshman year at Stonehill; however, unfortunately I had relapsed in the summer of 2012.

After I pressed the send button, I realized that reducing my illness and my needs to a single email and a few paragraphs was...hard. How do you explain five years of blood, chemo and tears to someone who has no clue who you are? How do you explain spending five months in the hospital and doing an entire semester while inpatient? How do you explain the temporary diabetes, the headaches, the blood clot, the spleen infection, the difficulty walking, the weakened bones, the heart arrhythmias, and the emotional issues that my situation has caused all in an email? How do you tell people about facing death twice before the age of 21? How do I tell people what to expect when I don’t know what to expect myself?

My “disability” of sorts has been both a blessing and a curse, but the students and faculty at Stonehill have been accepting and helpful; they have truly made my college experience so worthwhile. I firmly believe that if I were at any other institution, I wouldn’t be graduating in the spring, and I owe that to my wonderful support system here.

Nick Howard, '13



Personally, participating in the convocation was an opportunity to share the story of my disability in a safe space. I was met with an attentive, gracious, and receptive audience who heard my story as I told it; one of strength and growth. As a result, I was able to further engage with the narrative of my Cerebral Palsy and what disability means overall. I now think of a disability as a distinction that makes me unique and provides me with greater insight into what it means to be human.

SAFE SPACE @ STONEHILL



For the past six years, the Office of Intercultural Affairs has hosted Envision Social Justice Training to facilitate Safe Space Workshops. Todd Smith-Bergollo and Monroe France, joined this year by Liza Talusan, led the workshops on October 23rd and 24th that over 55 faculty, staff and students attended. The 3-hour workshops helped to identify common definitions, share experiences and first messages, and work to develop an action plan for ally development.

Geoffrey Smith, Web Content Manager



The Safe Space Workshop with Monroe France and Todd Smith-Bergollo from Envision Social Justice – and our very own Liza Talusan! – was inspiring. Their passion and commitment to LGBTQ communities and causes were on full display, and their program resonated with a diverse cross-section of people from all corners of the Stonehill community. The workshop was engaging and informative, and allowed every participant the chance to contribute and reflect.

I learned a lot about myself and what it means to be an effective ally, and I left with a renewed sense of purpose and conviction. If I could repeat or recommend only one training workshop offered by Stonehill, this would be it!

Lauren Admundson, Head Volleyball Coach



I wouldn't have described myself as someone who loved learning for the fun of it. I did enjoy school because I was competitive, and earning a better grade was "winning." For this same reason, however, I did not push myself into subjects I was not confident with, nor venture into unfamiliar territory often. So, this summer, I decided to challenge myself a little more to be a "lifelong learner."

With a little life experience under my belt, I've begun to understand that being uncomfortable is exactly the type of learning we should all strive for. The **Safe Space Workshop** is a great opportunity to do that. Liza's office puts on consistently amazing programs, so I knew I would enjoy it. I learned much more about myself in the process than I thought I would.

We discussed how our own viewpoint is often shaped by life experience, and just aiming to understand someone else's is a huge first step. A particularly valuable piece for me was the permission to ask questions. I'm often afraid I will say the wrong thing or offend someone unintentionally. But perhaps by not asking at all, I'm doing just that. Now, if I don't know and I want to know, I will ASK – humbly, compassionately, and from a place of wanting to understand.

I was impressed by the cross-section of campus employees who chose to be there. It was a cool experience to discuss some often personal topics with coworkers I had never met. Get to this workshop if you can; you won't regret it. Stop by my "Safe Space" anytime. Go Skyhawks!

LATINO HERITAGE MONTH by Cassandra Ponce '16

Cassandra Ponce is a sophomore, criminology major, work study student in the Office of Intercultural Affairs, and ALANA-A Leader

I was born and raised in New York City and never really thought about being different until elementary school and middle school. During those 8 years, I was bullied for being different because I was not dressed like everyone else and did not act like everyone else.

I never used the word Latina to describe myself because I always felt that people would assume negative stereotypes that came along with the word. It wasn't until I arrived at Stonehill, and joined everything possible that connected to the Office of Intercultural Affairs, that I learned to address and overcome stereotypes. I also further explored what it meant for me to be Latina, and I learned to not be ashamed of it.

For this very reason, I decided to speak on the panel at Latino Heritage Month Convocation on September 10, 2013. I wanted to let others know that I have goals and aspirations. I wanted them to understand that we are not that different. Latina is a label that I should be proud because I know my goals and dreams. I am here at Stonehill trying to accomplish them just like everyone else is.

Latino Heritage Month Panelists included Cassandra Ponce '16, Melinda Rios (Development), John Rodriguez (Residence Life), and Jatnna Amador (Student Activities)



IMMIGRATION AND POLITICS: Prof. Hiroshi Motomura, J.D.

Co-sponsored by the Martin Institute and Intercultural Affairs, we welcomed Prof. Hiroshi Motomura from UCLA. He was introduced by his brother and Associate Professor of Economics at Stonehill, Akira Motomura.

Hiroshi Motomura is an influential scholar and teacher of immigration and citizenship law. Professor Motomura has testified as an immigration expert in the U.S. Congress, has served as co-counsel or a volunteer consultant in several cases in the U.S. Supreme Court and the federal appeals courts, and has been a member of the American Bar Association's Commission on Immigration.

In 1997, Professor Motomura was named President's Teaching Scholar, which is the highest teaching distinction at the University of Colorado, and he has won several other teaching awards, including the Distinguished Teaching Award for Post-Baccalaureate Instruction at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, in 2008. Most recently, he received the 2013 Chris Kando Iijima Teacher and Mentor Award from the Conference of Asian Pacific American Law Faculty (CAPALF), and he was one of just 26 law professors nationwide profiled in *What the Best Law Teachers Do* (Harvard, 2013).



INCLUDING DIVERSITY THIS SEASON by Liza Talusan

As the mother of three young, multiracial, multiethnic, and multireligious children, it has been a priority for me to include a wide variety of diversity in our home. My kids have grown up with knowledge of diversity, and these themes have been integrated into their daily lives through books, games, activities, conversations, and toys.

The gift giving season is upon us, and here is a list of my favorite (diversity related) gifts to give.

Books for kids

Lola at the Library by Anna McQuinn

Something Beautiful by Sharon Dennis Wyeth

The Color of Us by Karen Katz

I Love My Hair by Natasha Anastasia Tarpley

The *Amazing Grace* series by Mary Hoffman

Dancing in the Wings by Debbie Allen

All Families are Special by Norma Simon and Teresa Flavin

Mommy, Mama and Me by Leslea Newman and Carol Thompson

Dim Sum for Everyone by Grace Lin

Hot, Hot Roti for Dada-ji by F. Zia

Abuela by Arthur Dorros

The *Amy Hodgepodge* series by Kim Wayans and Kevin Knotts

Keep Your Ear on the Ball by Genevive Petrillo and Lea Lyon

The *Jump at the Sun* (redesigned classic children's tales to be racially inclusive) by John Kurtz

My Princess Boy by Cheryl Kilodavis

Monsoon by Uma Krishnaswami

The Name Jar by Yangsook Choi



Games/Toys

- A Mighty Girl (www.amightygirl.com) which has a great selection of multicultural toys, books, and ideas. Some of our favorites include:
 - Eeboo Paper Dolls collection
 - A “ColorYour Own” Frida Kahlo book
 - Racially diverse dolls like Doc McStuffins (young, Black, doctor)
- Kwanzaa Kids (www.kwanzaakids.com) has a good selection of toys that my 4-year old son likes because they have racially diverse dolls (aka ‘action figures’) that he likes

Other Ideas

- gift certificate to the Boston Children’s Museum where they have the “Boston Black” exhibit — an interactive and engaging play space with the feel of some of Boston’s diverse neighborhoods
 - A Taiko Drumming Party or single class by Genki Spark <http://www.thegenkispark.org/taiko-workshop-for-beginners.html>
 - Instead of giving a gift, make the gift of *time* — use ideas from Pinterest or other shared sites that have great ideas for arts, crafts, and activities together. One I enjoy is <http://www.pinterest.com/thagar/multicultural-preschool-lessons/>
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WOMAN WARRIOR BOOK DISCUSSION

On December 3rd a group of 20 students, staff and faculty joined together for a luncheon discussion about the book *The Woman Warrior* by Maxine Hong Kingston. Facilitated by Elizabeth Chase (Library), *The Woman Warrior* explored Kingston's blend of Chinese folktale and memoir, taking the reader on a journey of tension, love, power, loss, and beauty. The book club participants spoke openly about themes such as identity, race, feminism, culture, language, and related many of these themes to their own personal lives and experiences.



The Lunch with 12 Strangers Program was launched in 2008 as a way to connect Stonehill community members to both diversity content and critical discussion. Participants sign up for the program and 12 people are selected at random to receive a free copy of the discussion book. Thank you to Sodexo for a great catered meal!

The fall 2013 participants included (back row) Susan Wall, Janet Carpenter, Diane Maki, Deb Walsh, Regina Egan, Lee Damore, Trisha Brown, Jan McGovern, Bettina Scholz, Liz Chase, Melinda Rios; (middle row) Brittany Frederick, Kaitlin Pineda, Donna Vrana, Dana Wilson; (front row) Amy Brunswick, Kim Cordeiro, Ariel Bowen, Tiffany Enos; (not pictured) Liza Talusan

iTUNES U: SOCIAL JUSTICE EDUCATION by Prithak Chowdhury '15

Prithak Chowdhury is a junior at Stonehill. He is from Agartala, India; a Peer Mentor; an IDEAS facilitator; a member of the Asian American Leadership Series; and much more!

The Stonehill community is expressing a growing interest and awareness on issues related to diversity and social justice, however there is still a considerable lack of training and dialogue for student leaders on campus. With our growing diversity at Stonehill, it is important that leaders feel equipped to professionally and effectively engage their peers in a safe yet fulfilling conversation about diversity and social justice.



Keeping our student centered approach in mind, this diversity podcast program offers student leaders on campus, in particular leaders who actively engage with issues of social justice as part of their work, with tools and skills necessary to efficiently and competently facilitate dialogues on social identities, oppression, inequality and activism.

Through a combination of online and in-class discussions, students will participate in reflection on the following topics: introduction to democratic education; understanding identity and social prejudice; advantaged and subordinated groups; understanding privilege; personal bias; forms of oppression; understanding social justice; facilitating diversity; and moving from leadership to action. These videos and podcasts were designed to make engaging in social justice education accessible for all people, especially busy student leaders.

We highly encourage faculty, administrators responsible for student leadership programs, community members, and students to engage in this type of work and to also expect others to work towards creating and shaping a more inclusive community — one that begins with our own personal education.

FIRST GENERATIONAL COLLEGE STUDENT PANEL



Approximately 25% of Stonehill students identify as first generation college students — student who are the first in their families to graduate from college. Despite this significant percentage, it is an identity that is rarely talked about on campus.

In order to help fill this need, Ben Carroll, class of 2015, started a group called GenOne. GenOne is a student-led discussion group that brings students together who want to talk about their experiences of being a the first in their families to attend college. The group explores different challenges and triumphs to the college experience, navigating family and home life during school breaks, future planning and goal setting, and many other aspects to people's personal experience.

The First Generation Panel featured Erin Cook, class of 2016; Jennifer Pham, class of 2016; Alice Cronin, Director of International Programs, Vanda Barros-Lopes, Residence Director of Corr Hall and Villa Teresa; and Prof. John McCoy, Professor of Psychology and Director of the Neuroscience program.



CONFERENCE ON DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

The Office of Intercultural Affairs is pleased to announce the 5th Annual Conference on Diversity and Inclusion, an afternoon of learning, sharing, and dialoguing about ways to shape a more inclusive community. This year, the conference is taking place just before interviews for many of the student leadership positions, so this is a fantastic way to begin learning about diversity related issues.

Open to the entire Stonehill community, this year's workshops include:

- Keynote address by Matt Brown '16
- LGBTQ Ally Development
- Identidad: A film by Erin Kearney '14
- Leveraging Diversity in your Career Search
- Diversity and the First Year Experience
- Exploring Whiteness through a Social Justice Lens
- Leading with True Colors
- Intersections of Race and Gender: A Dialogue with the women and men of RISE and MOSAIC
- DisAbility Enlightenment Project
- Non-Catholic at a Catholic School: The Student Experience

Registration for the conference is now available! All Stonehill faculty, staff, and students are invited to attend. Please register here: <http://bit.ly/18XNLCr>

**Friday, February 7, 2014
4pm - 8pm in Martin Institute**

SPOTLIGHT ON RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY

Fatuma Haji '17

Ethnically speaking, I am Somali. My nationality is Kenyan. I came to the United States in 2007 and lived in Atlanta for one year. My family and I moved to Lewiston, Maine where we currently reside.



The first two days at Stonehill College were the worst days of my life. When I got here, everyone was welcoming, but unfortunately my heart and mind was back at home. I missed my family so much that I couldn't even enjoy the college experience. I also felt very different because I hadn't met any other Muslim students on campus. I wanted to meet people like me, so I thought to go check out the Intercultural Affairs Office. I was openly welcomed by Jan McGovern (Office Manager), and I could tell that she would be the one to make my day when no else did. The next day I met Tiffany Enos and Liza Talusan, and they continue to support me here at Stonehill.

There are not many Muslims on campus; however, we have found a home in Intercultural Affairs. In fact, they have even converted an office to serve as a prayer room to use during the school day! Just recently, a number of Muslim students came together to celebrate a belated Eid dinner. Many Muslims in the United States observe **Eid-al-Adha**, also known as the Feast of Sacrifice, each year. This festival commemorates Ibrahim's (Abraham) willingness to sacrifice his son to God. This festival also marks the end of the Hajj pilgrimage to Mecca. It is usually a time spent with family, and so I was able to at least celebrate here at Stonehill with people who have become a part of family for me. While there are not many of us, it feels good to know that I am not alone.

The room for prayer in Duffy 149 is available between 8:30am-5:00pm. There is a sink located down the hall from the office, and the room has prayer rugs and is kept quiet during the day.

Praveen Jain '17

Hello I am Praveen Jain, a first year student from Agartala, India. I arrived in America in July 2013. It was freezing cold on that day. I was told that the weather was not usually like this in July! "Great start," I said to myself and hoped better was to come.



I think I am the only patron of Jainism at Stonehill College (if I am wrong, please come find me and introduce yourself!). **Jainism** is an Indian religion that emphasizes complete non-violence and asceticism.

People have always been inclusive of my beliefs and traditions. It helps that some people are aware of my traditions. For example, Liza (Talusan) was not surprised when I bent down to touch her feet as a sign of respect when she dropped me off at the train station for the first time. Others also knew that I fasted on a Jain religious day.

I have had to adjust to a new environment both culturally and spiritually, but people at Stonehill College have been very warm and welcoming to me. Coming from India, from the other part of the globe, I have been exposed to so many opportunities and resources. The professors here are very helpful, and I love going to their office hours for academic help or just to have a wonderful conversation. There is so much to do and not enough time to include everything in my schedule. I have enjoyed my semester here so far and I look forward to graduating as a Skyhawk!

ASIAN AMERICAN LEADERSHIP SERIES

As presented at the National Association of Student Affairs Personnel Administrators Multicultural Institute by Liza Talusan, director of intercultural affairs, on Saturday, December 7, 2013.

The Asian American Leadership Series was developed to improve involvement in leadership by looking critically at the ways in which leadership is defined, taught/experienced, and privileged at Stonehill. Re-framing leadership values and qualities to include Asian values as central – not as tangential – might encourage other Asian, Asian American, and Desi future leaders to see that they are able to engage in leadership without compromising their cultural influences.

The guiding questions for the leadership series included: In what ways do Asian American students define leadership? What cultural influences impact the leadership experiences of Asian American students?

The group has met twice this semester, and the following quotes were taken from the discussion:

- “I need to **know more** about where I came from. I need to read more, but I also think our college should be providing more.”
- “I need **more role models** in my life who are Asian American/Pacific Islander/Desi American. I need to know about leadership in my community and what my role is in it.”
- “I need to figure out how to bridge the very western styles of leadership with what I actually favor **and value as an Asian American.**”
- “I need for conversations about **diversity to include Asian American struggles and issues.** I find myself in limbo in spaces about diversity and leadership because, well, I’m not sure if they are talking about me.”
- “I need for Asian American to be **broken down further.** What I know as an Indian is different from what (she) knows as a Filipina. But, I don’t think everyone understands that being Asian doesn’t mean we are all the same.”



Participants: Praveen Jain '17, Oscar Tsao '17, Sabina Dhami '14, Parijat Bhattacharjee '16, Angelica Sincavage '16, Dana Dhami '17, Prithak Chowdhury '15, Brianna Dau '16, Jenn Pham '16, Audrey DelRosario '14 (dec '13), M. Abbi Cerezo '16, Evon Li '17

STOMP THE 'HILL by Mia Newton '16

Mia Newton is a sophomore majoring in Criminology. She is from Boston, MA; an ALANA-A Leader; a member of R.I.S.E.; and on the Planning Committee for DiverCity.

“Stepping” is a form of dance that uses one’s entire body as an instrument through percussive claps, stomps, slaps, and call-outs. It has its origins in the early African American slave community as a way of communicating. As early as the mid-1900s, African American sororities and fraternities have implemented stepping as part of initiation, unity, and culture.



The first time I stepped was in grade school. At first it was just a game to me, but it soon stepping became an integral part of my life. I was the only 11-year old on my local church step team (everyone else was 16+), and step became a way for me to express myself, to connect to my faith, and to honor my heritage. Step is more than just a “dance” to me; it has history, purpose, and mission.

For me, especially as a Black and Jamaican woman, I step to honor my past and empower my future. Stepping is the soul, the mind, the spirit, and the self and, when done with intention, all of those are brought together. Stepping is more than just dance moves — it is a reminder of the struggles of my ancestors, the Black community, and a way to honor this heritage. **Stepping means family.**

Stepping is not something I *do*; stepping is *who I am* and *what I stand for*. I step because it is a way of life.

To watch some great stepping (by the Alpha Kappa Alpha performance at the Sprite 2010 Step-Off), go to: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=clOejAIXL1U>

To learn more about some of the controversy in the step community related to race, history, inclusion and representation, visit <http://www.racialicious.com/2010/03/05/white-sorority-wins-major-step-competition-postracial-or-just-wrong/>

ASPIRE TO LEAD



On Saturday, November 9, 2013, seven Stonehill women leaders participated in the Asian Sisters Participating in Reaching Excellence (ASPIRE) conference at Simmons College. They engaged in workshops designed to explore leadership; intersections of race, gender and sexuality; and participated in networking roundtables to expand their professional resources and mentoring.

L-R: Sabina Dhami '14; M. Abby Cerezo '16; Nisha Khubchandani '16; Brianna Dau '16; Jenn Pham '16; Audrey Del Rosario '14 ('13 dec grad); Jasmine Vo '16

RACE DIALOGUE GROUP

Raising Awareness of Cultural Experiences (R.A.C.E.) is a 4-session dialogue group for members of the Stonehill community to explore issues of race, racism, power and privilege in our lives. As of the fall 2013, more than 115 community members have participated in the dialogues. Through engaging articles, YouTube clips, and personal experiences, members of R.A.C.E. Dialogue group are able to learn about who we are as individuals and how we relate to the world and others around us. For many, it has been a unique experience of unpacking learned messages and reinforcing new ways of thinking that make Stonehill a more inclusive place.

This semester we welcomed Gavin Damore '16, Greg Wolfe (director of purchasing), Jacqueline Oberg '17, and Sarah Fontaine-Lipke (campus ministry). We hope to invite more Stonehill community members with each new semester. Look for our advertisement for Spring 2014!

AFFINITY/DIALOGUE GROUPS @ STONEHILL

This semester brought about wonderful opportunities to support students who may, at times, experience marginalization and isolation here at Stonehill. The goal of these groups is to increase connectedness, support and improve campus climate both for participants and for the larger Stonehill community. To learn more about these student dialogue groups, please email diversity@stonehill.edu.

Exploring Whiteness: A social justice dialogue group

Facilitated by Kelli Brodbeck '14 and Erin Cook '16, this group meets 1-2x a month to discuss issues of race, privilege, and ally development. This group started as a result of socially just white students who wanted a safe space to challenge their own first messages about race and racism and to work towards a more inclusive and supportive Stonehill community.

LGBTQ Self-Identified Dialogue Group

Facilitated by Sean Borger '14, this group meets every 2 weeks and serves as a supportive environment for Stonehill students who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, or questioning. For more information about the group meeting times and location, please email diversity@stonehill.edu. This group is open to any student who self-identifies as LGBTQ.

Radiant, Inspiration, Sisters Empowered (RISE)

Facilitated by Amanda Egesi '14, Now in its fourth year, the RISE group has provided women of color a supportive and challenging environment in which issues of race, gender, and intersections of identity are discussed.

Men of Service, Academia, Integrity, and Character (MOSAIC)

Facilitated by James Lanier '14, Also in its fourth year, the men of MOSAIC have lived up to their name of engaging in service, achieving academic success, working with integrity, and developing character through bi-weekly discussions about their experiences as men of color at Stonehill.

GenOne: Navigation for the First Generation College Student

Facilitated by Ben Carroll '15, In its first year, the GenOne group has been a huge success. It meets 1-2x a month to discuss shared experiences of first generation college students at Stonehill. This group has served as a forum to ask questions, to talk through experiences of college, and to share advice about the college process.

KEEPIN' UP WITH (THE) DIVERSITY by Tiffany Enos

Imagine walking into a Starbucks, ordering your favorite latte, and sitting down in a cozy chair next to a frosted window. You open up your electronic device, ready to dig in to the work ahead only to find that your Wi-Fi connection is not working. Try as you might, there are no networks to be found. You politely wait in line again and ask the cashier for assistance. The cashier gently tells you, "I'm sorry, we don't have any wireless internet connection here. If you'd like to fill out this comment card, I'd be happy to pass it on to my supervisor."

Huh? This is Starbucks. Sure the overpriced drinks are delicious and the ambiance is meticulously crafted but let's be real, I came here to get work done. You reply with a soft smile, "Okay, thanks anyway," and you exit with latte and unfinished work.

We have become so accustomed to being able to access technology. We make assumptions that we can access the internet, make calls, check our email, and even keep up with people on social media at all times and in all places. Even airlines are changing their practices regarding the use of personal technology!

As schools and businesses around the nation remind themselves that technology is imperative to their future success, we know that technology is something both expected and to be learned. For example, at Stonehill, we complete trainings on the Banner system, myHill, eLearning system, etc. We are trained to better understand how to use changing technology with our website. Though these trainings are formal, we are also expected to learn how to use it by practicing and gaining familiarity with technology. And, we do this because technology allows us to build capacity as an institution.

Our expectations about technology should be our same expectations about diversity.

Diversity is imperative to our success; yet, are we prepared to serve a diverse society? How are we keeping up with the changing trends – demographics, expectations, communication – of a diverse community? If we believe it is essential to learn how to effectively navigate and build a website, shouldn't we also learn how to effectively navigate and build a diverse institution? If we believe it is important to learn about a newly implemented component of our technology before we can use the product, shouldn't we also be expected to learn about diversity and inclusion before we hire employees, admit students, make policy decisions, or select student leaders?

This type of change can, and must, start on the personal level. As departments, we should engage in how diversity is changing our specific work and seek to implement those changes.

It is our responsibility to impact change.

Inspired by Dr. Daryl G. Smith's keynote address at the Higher Education Recruitment Consortium, November 2013

Visit us in the Office of Intercultural Affairs

Duffy Academic Building 149

M-F 8:30am-4:30pm

diversity@stonehill.edu

twitter 

@SCDiversity

Thank you!

The Office of Intercultural Affairs would like to thank the many students, faculty, staff and community members who have participated in our programs, trainings, dialogue groups, office activities, committees, and outreach! Thank you for inviting us to your classes, meetings, events, and for giving us the opportunity to work with such a motivated and dedicated community.

Thank you for all that you do to create, shape and support a more inclusive Stonehill.

With peace,
Liza Talusan, Tiffany Enos, and Jan McGovern

