

James Farmer Multicultural Center

Cultural Programming and Collaborations Report

Native American Cultural Celebration – November 17 – November 21

- The theme was “Native American Traditions: Preserving Cultural Identity.” This week-long celebration included a Native American exhibit, authentic Native American cuisine featured in Seacobeck Dining Hall, a film and discussion, poetry readings, and concluded with an outstanding keynote lecture featuring Dr. Scott Stevens. Dr. Stevens is a citizen of the Akwesasne Mohawk nation and associate professor of Native American studies and director of the Native American Studies Program at Syracuse University. With a master’s degree and Ph.D. from Harvard University, Dr. Stevens has held several fellowships at major archives, including a Ford Foundation Postdoctoral Fellowship at Brown University. The audience was treated to a stimulating and informative keynote presentation that evening. This keynote presentation was co-sponsored by the Department of English, Linguistics, and Communication and the Department of History and American Studies.

Kwanzaa Celebration – December 4

- Kwanzaa is a weeklong celebration that takes place in the United States. It is observed from December 26 thru January 1. This year, the James Farmer Multicultural Center along with the Black Student Association, held Kwanzaa on December 4, 2014. The purpose of Kwanzaa is to educate and entertain the members of the University of Mary Washington community about the culture of Kwanzaa. During the Kwanzaa event, attendees are informed about Kwanzaa’s seven principles, libations, and Zawadi (gift giving). Kwanzaa allows for an opportunity to focus on the importance of family and community.

Like previous years, Kwanzaa is geared to all members of the UMW community. This year we had a good attendance by students, faculty, and administration as well as community members within Fredericksburg. Each year the faculty, staff, and administration are invited to serve as an Elder in the program in order to foster a more diverse community and emphasize the importance of Kwanzaa’s culture. Their presence is an essential part of the program because it symbolizes the significance of Kwanzaa. The Voices of Praise singing group performed during the program.

Martin Luther King, Jr. Week Celebration – January 18 – 24

- In collaboration with the Office of the President, Office of the Special Assistant to the President for Diversity and Inclusion, Office of Community Service, and the MLK Planning Committee, the JFMC assisted in coordinating a series of programs to celebrate Dr. King. The campus and local community were invited to journey and reflect during this celebration on how Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. has affected your life, your community, and your future. This is the third year we implemented the MLK, Jr. Kids' Day activities. It was held off campus at the James Monroe High School in collaboration with the community-based Partnership for Excellence organization and their city-wide MLK program. The MLK keynote presentation featuring Mr. Ernest Green on Wednesday, January 21st was very successful. Mr. Green delivered an inspiring and enlightening speech as he shared his journey and involvement with many civil rights movements and causes, beginning with his experience as a member of the Little Rock Nine. The celebration concluded with the Day of Service activities on campus where over 70 students participated in various projects to honor Dr. King's legacy and commitment to strengthening communities.

Academic Collaborations

- Co-sponsored program with Dr. Antonio Barrenechea, associate professor of English in the English, Linguistics, and Communication department for the Native American celebration keynote lecture entitled, "Our Histories Beyond the Archive: Indigenous Material Culture and Memory, " on Thursday, November 20, 2014 at 7:30 p.m. in Lee Hall, Room 411.