February 14, 2022

**James Farmer Multicultural Center**

**Cultural Programming and Collaborations Report**

Gender and Sexual Minorities and Allies (GSMA) Celebration – October 18 – 23

* This celebration paid tribute to the contributions of LGBTQ+ people in music and the performing arts. The theme was “Our Stories, Our Voices.” Programs for the week included a movie and discussion, a poetry slam competition judged by faculty and staff members, and a dance. The keynote speaker was Kenny Fries, an accomplished author and educator in disability culture and creative writing. He is a recipient of a Rockefeller Foundation Bellagio Center Arts and Literary Arts Fellowship and has twice been a Fulbright Scholar (Japan and Germany).

Asian Cultural Celebration – October 24 – 30

* The theme was “Behind the Folds: A Paper Crane of Hope.” Events for the week included a panel discussion on the Asian American experience and discrimination, a karaoke/game night event, as well as a movie night. The keynote event featured Silk Road Dance Company, a contemporary and traditional women’s dance troupe from Central Asia, the Middle East, South Asia, and the Caucasus. The celebration ended with the popular annual celebration, Taste of Asia, which highlighted different aspects of Asian culture presented through a fashion show, dance performances, and an array of ethnic foods representing at least five Asian cuisines.

Native American Cultural Celebration – November 8– 12

* This celebration strove to uplift the proud legacy of the Americas’ first people. The theme was “We are Still Living Our Truth.” Scheduled programs included a Native American dinner in the University Center, 4th floor, a film and discussion, a presentation on perspectives of women in tribal leadership positions, and an outstanding keynote presentation featuring Diana Gates, a member of the Nottaway Indian tribe.

Jewish Cultural Celebration – November 15 - 19

* This was the 11th annual Jewish Cultural Celebration co-sponsored by the Jewish Student Association and the JFMC. There were several programs throughout this celebration including a Jewish cultural dinner in the Top of the UC, an educational presentation on “The Disproportionate Impacts of COVID,” the keynote event featuring Bagels & Fraylox Klezmer band, and a Shabbat dinner.

Kwanzaa Celebration – December 1

* 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 Wednesday, December 1, 2021. 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 great attendance by students, faculty, and administration as well as community members from the surrounding areas. 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 UMW Praise Dance team performed, along with Alter Egos Step Team and other performers.

Martin Luther King, Jr. Week Celebration – January 17 – 22

* In collaboration with the Office of the President, Office of the Associate Provost for Equity and Inclusion/CDO, Center for Community Engagement, and the MLK Planning Committee, the JFMC assisted in coordinating a series of programs to celebrate Dr. King’s life and legacy.  The campus and local community were invited to reflect on “the fierce urgency of now” and one may engage in positive social change.

The MLK keynote presentation featuring Rev. Dr. LaKeisha Cook on Wednesday, January 19th was successful.  Dr. Cook delivered an inspiring and enlightening speech on the legacy of Dr. King as a man of great purpose and vision. She shared that Dr. King envisioned the “Beloved Community” and wanted everyone to work collectively to transform our current reality. Dr. Cook encouraged individuals to activate their vision, acknowledge what is, and be persistent in our goal for equality and social justice.  In addition, there was a spoken word event on Thursday, January 20th where students shared their written and digital works of poetry and art. The Day of Service activities scheduled for Saturday, January 22nd were successful. Over 80 students engaged in community service projects during the afternoon and participated in an interactive workshop where they learned more about civil rights and social justice.

Black History Month Celebration – February 2022

* The successful implementation of the 2022 Black History Month Celebration involved the collaboration of the Planning Committee, the JFMC, BSA, Voices of Praise, WOC and several other departments and student organizations on campus.

The theme for the month was “Healing Through History: Recognizing Our Struggles While Celebrating Our Triumphs.” Each program was designed to reflect the theme in one aspect or another. The goal of the Black History Month Celebration was to honor, celebrate, and educate everyone about the contributions of African Americans to American history and culture. The month-long celebration included a social justice discussion, lectures, film and discussion programs, cultural and musical events representative of the Black cultures, as well as four meals in the University Center Dining Hall highlighting cuisines of various Black cultures. The keynote program featured Dr. Marceline Catlett, the first African American superintendent with the Fredericksburg Public Schools system. She is a trailblazer in her own right with her achievements in education, as well as her work as a long-time, dedicated community leader. She delivered a powerful and inspiring presentation that chronicled her life’s journey in sharing “her story” of healing and triumphs.

Academic collaborations

* Program support with Dr. Maria Laura Bocaz, associate professor in Modern Languages and Literatures, on a program entitled, “A Panel Discussion and Tribute to ESL Teachers,” on Wednesday, October 13, 2021 at 4:00 pm in room 139, Combs Hall.
* Co-sponsored program with Dr. Brooks Kuykendall, chair and professor in the department of Music on a musical performance entitled, “East Meets West with Ustad Shafaat Khan,” on October 18, 2021 at 8 pm in the Digital Auditorium, HCC.
* Co-sponsored program with the UMW Kappa of Virginia Chapter, the UMW College of Education, and the departments of History and American Studies, Political Science and International Affairs, and Sociology and Anthropology on a lecture entitled, “Restoring the ‘P’ in the U.S. Public Education: From Equity to Adequacy,” by Dr. Marta Tienda, Maurice P. During ’22 professor of Demographic Studies and professor of Sociology and Public Affairs at Princeton University, on Monday October 25, 2021 at 5:00 pm.
* Program support with Dr. Nora Kim and Dr. Suzie Kim entitled: “United: A discussion on the Asian American Experience and Discrimination,” on Tuesday, October 26, 2021 at 6:30 pm in the Colonnade Room, University Center.
* Program support with Dr. Scott Harris, executive director of the UMW James Monroe Museum, on a lecture entitled, “Creating Change: Perspectives of Women in Tribal Leadership,” on Wednesday, November 10, 2021 at 6 pm via Zoom.
* Program support with the Ridderhof Martin and duPont galleries on the exhibit, “Healing Through the Preservations of Our Histories and Our Selves,” from Thursday, January 27, 2022 through Thursday, March 24, 2022.
* Program support with Dr. Scott Harris, executive director of the UMW James Monroe Museum, on a lecture entitled, “6 degrees of Phillis Wheatley,” on Thursday February 3, 2022 at 6 pm via Zoom/Facebook/YouTube.