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GSU View

University Newsletters

10-27-2014

GSU View, 2014-10-27

Office of Marketing and Communications

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Recommended Citation

Governors State University Office of Marketing and Communications, GSU View (2014, October 27). <http://opus.govst.edu/gsvview/730>

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It's Awards Season at GSU

Recognition for the university's programs and people has been arriving at a steady pace. Last week three organizations honored GSU for excellence.

Dual Degree Program Honored

The American Association of State Colleges and Universities announced the inaugural winners in a new awards program honoring member institutions for excellence and innovation in several major areas of campus life and leadership.

The Student Success and College Completion Awards went to GSU for the Dual Degree Program.



On behalf of GSU, President Maimon receives the Student Success and College Completion Award from the American Association of State Colleges and Universities for the GSU Dual Degree Program.

In announcing the award AASCU said, "With degree completion a national priority, Governors State University has developed a comprehensive approach for transfer students, the Dual Degree Program, that increases the number of students earning both an associate and a bachelor's degree. The campus' partnership with 17 area community colleges provides extensive support to facilitate transfer and completion."

"I was thrilled to represent GSU at the presentation of AASCU's Inaugural Excellence and Innovation

Award. This national recognition for the Dual Degree Program is the result of many people working together at the university and at our 17 partner community colleges. After the ceremony, many university presidents spoke to me about their wish to replicate the DDP pathway at their institutions. At the same time that I was accepting an award in Washington, DC, Roshaunda Ross, Director of the DDP, was in Denver to accept a separate award on our behalf. GSU has pioneered a program that is truly a national model for guiding students from community college matriculation to university graduation," said President Maimon.

In looking at what's facing public higher education, AASCU President Muriel A. Howard said, "State colleges and universities have dealt with enormous challenges during the past decade, yet they have remained committed to their missions of student access and success, and regional and economic progress, as well as a dedication to advancing the quality and distinction of their institutions. The innovative and collaborative approaches our members have engaged to successfully address their missions inspired us to create this awards program to foster recognition of their work."

Another Honor for DDP

The National Resource Center for the First Year Experience and Students in Transition recognized the Dual Degree Program at GSU with an award during its conference in Denver last week. The NRC launched this new award for "...institutions that have designed and implemented outstanding collaborative initiatives enhancing significant transitions during the undergraduate experience. Award recipients ... have demonstrated the effectiveness of the initiative in supporting student success, learning and development at a variety of transition points beyond the first college year and in responding to unique institutional needs."

"The National Resource Center is the epicenter of research and best practices on supporting students in transition. We are honored that they recognize our efforts and contributions to the field. And we look forward to exploring new and innovative ways to continue to support our transfer students," said Roshaunda Ross, Director of the Dual Degree Program.



L-R Aida Martinez and Roshaunda Ross receive the Institutional Excellence for Students in Transition Award from Jennifer Keup, the Director of the National Resource Center for the First-Year Experience and Students in Transition during the FYE/Students in Transition Conference ceremony in Denver.

Priscilla Cordero named for Entrepreneurial Excellence

The Daily Herald Business Ledger announced its annual awards recognizing 23 suburban professionals for their "entrepreneurial spirit." Priscilla Cordero, director of GSU's Small Business Development Center, received the award for Outstanding Service to Entrepreneurs.

In recognizing Cordero, the awards committee said that, in a little more than a year as director, she has helped 33 businesses get started, creating more than 120 jobs in the region. And, with her help, nearly 30 client companies have expanded their export values to more than \$2 billion. She was also recognized for helping to create an entrepreneurial conference for women called "The Heels of Business."

Dyson Appointed Chief Marketing and Communications Officer

GSU Executive Vice President Gebeyehu Ejigu announced today that Keisha Dyson has been appointed Director of Marketing and Communications in the new Department of Digital Media, Marketing and Communications.

The past few years have seen great strides in Marketing and Communications including a complete rebranding of the university, launching of a new website, the development of multichannel advertising and marketing campaigns, plus a general growth in scope and sophistication required for the transition to a four-year full-service university. At the same time, the department of Digital Learning and Media Design has established an international reputation for excellence in television and multi-media production as well as for the design and development of state of the art online interactive training programs. DLMD has also evolved as a strongly student-centered service department, providing many opportunities for students to gain considerable professional level experience in media production alongside their curricular studies. According to Ejigu, "This is an opportune time to bring these two strong units together under unified leadership. There are multiple areas in which synergies can be achieved and strategies implemented more effectively by fusing these two departments together."



Keisha Dyson

"This is a very good first step in unifying the departments of Marketing and Communications and DLMD," said Charles Nolley, Interim Assistant Vice-President for the newly combined department, adding "Keisha's strong professional background in national media, her track record during the past three years as Program Developer at GSU, her first-hand knowledge of the GSU student experience and her life-long knowledge of the surrounding community position her well for success in this vitally important work."

According to Ejigu, "This reorganization does not signal a major change in direction in either area. Rather, it seeks to consolidate and extend the progress that has been made in both units while improving operational efficiency and integration of resources."

As Director of Marketing and Communications, Dyson expects to build on an established foundation. "I am grateful for the opportunity that has been presented to me," said Dyson. "My top priority will be to maintain and extend the recognition of GSU's clear brand identity. At the same time, we will be making ever greater use of powerful net-centric tools including the website, social media and streaming video, all of which are creating a whole new universe for marketing and communications."

The Civil Rights Act: GSU Reflects on the 50th Anniversary

As the university prepares for the Civil Rights Student Research Conference on November 6, students and faculty have written reflections on the theme, *How Far We Have Come, How Far We Have Yet to Go?* In this edition read what Lynn Johnson, a GSU student and staff member in the College of Education remembers. To read the thoughts of other students, faculty and staff, [click here to visit our page on the GSU website](#).

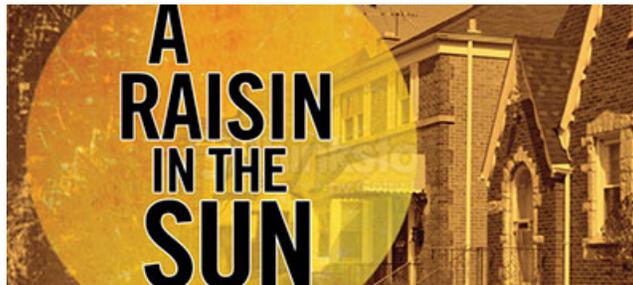
A Civil Rights Reflection

By Lynn Johnson

There was anger, crying, running, disappointment and a sense of loss to many. The year was 1968 and the date was April 4. I remember being young and thinking playing a game of double-dutch jump rope was my most important thing to do, until the unsettled rage from his assassination began to take place, in my neighborhood. It was the south side of Chicago, my neighborhood, just a few blocks west of Halsted. I remember there were candy stores, barber and beauty shops, meat markets and clothing stores owned by everybody, but it all changed that day. The days shortly after, as I walked those same blocks to shop, I can still remember my little eyes reading the signs, in store windows which became mandatory: **"soul sister" or "soul brother"** to signify it was owned by an African American. Why was this important? Without it your business would cease to exist. Yes, I remember it was all the same year the unannounced anthem was recorded by James Brown: **"Say It Loud, I'm Black and I'm Proud"**, restored a sense of pride, purpose and confidence to African American communities. Oh, whose assassination did I hear you ask? History has recorded as the day Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was killed. Both of these historic moments have impacted civil rights.

Center for Performing Arts Production Shines a Light on Discrimination

The classic Lorraine Hansberry play, ["A Raisin in the Sun," comes to life on stage at the Center for Performing Arts](#) on November 6 & 8 at 7:30 p.m. and November 9 at 2 p.m.



This is the fourth production by the new Theatre & Performance Studies program. Why another production of "A Raisin in the Sun"? Because the story still matters. Since the play's 1959 Broadway debut, racial discrimination has shifted, but in this historic year marking the 50th anniversary of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, the story could not be more relevant.

Director Patrick Santoro, who heads the program, said of the production: "*Raisin* is one of the most groundbreaking plays of the 20th century; it is a literary masterpiece, a significant work of activism. *Raisin* is a production that everyone should see at least once in their lifetime."

Civic Engagement – Coming to Life at GSU

The evidence is everywhere: GSU is living into one of the themes that guide both curriculum and culture

across the campus and across the region.

On campus:

Every month, Dual Degree Program Peer Mentors organize a community service opportunity. All DDP students, from GSU and partner community colleges, are invited to participate. DDP student volunteers have served more than 2,500 people from various Chicagoland communities since 2012.

October's activity was coordinated by Sharita Walker, a DDP Student Transition Assistant and Peer Mentor, who is pursuing her master's degree in social work. DDP students, both current and GSU alumni, volunteered at the Children's Hunger Fund in Homewood, IL on October 18. They made "food paks" to send to needy families across the globe.

In the region:

In Momence, a small town in east-central Kankakee County, several of its residents with strong ties to GSU donate their time and talents to their community.

Momence Mayor Mick Porter received his bachelor's degree in elementary education from GSU in 1996. After teaching for many years, he is now the Dean of Students and Athletic Director at Momence Junior High School. He can also be seen around town volunteering for everything from watering the downtown flower baskets to painting City Hall.

The Chief of Police, Jeffery Cavender, holds a master's degree in public administration from GSU. He is also a volunteer paramedic/firefighter for the Momence Fire Protection District, has served on the City Council and was one of the first D.A.R.E. officers in the state of Illinois. He also taught D.A.R.E. at two Momence schools.

GSU ITS employee Bruce Crooks and his wife Eileen were recently honored by Main Street Momence as "Community Partners of the Year" for 2014 for their volunteer work designing and maintaining the websites for the City of Momence, the Momence Police Dept., Main Street Momence, the Graham Historical House Museum, River Valley Animal Rescue and the Momence Park District. Bruce also lends his photographic and technical expertise to these organizations.

Matt Rivard, also a current ITS employee, has lent his technical expertise to the City of Momence, and is also a volunteer paramedic/firefighter for the Momence Fire Protection District. He works part-time for the Bourbonnais Fire Protection District.

The Chicago Community Trust Renews Grant for Chicago-based Artist Series at Center for Performing Arts



For the fourth straight year, The Chicago Community Trust is supporting the work of [GSU's Center for Performing Arts](#). The grant awarded this season for \$25,000 will be used toward the Center's "Made in Chicago" series, which brings the best in Chicago-area live performance to local audiences in the

Southland region.

Under the terms of the grant, the Center for Performing Arts will introduce its audiences to Chicago-based theatre, dance and musical ensemble companies and develop new audiences through collaboration with diverse arts organizations. The series is designed to increase attendance from underserved communities, increase theater participation by minority populations and increase the number of first-time attendees.

"We are pleased that The Chicago Community Trust has once again recognized the work that GSU is doing to bring productions from the lively Chicago arts scene to the south suburbs," said President Maimon. "Our goal is to develop new audiences for Chicago performing arts organizations. The Trust is supporting a true win/win arrangement."

"Made in Chicago" fulfills the GSU Center mission, which is to present the finest in world-class performing arts entertainment and education to area citizens at affordable prices. All performances are \$25, with discounts available for seniors, students and groups of ten or more.



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