

DIALOGUES ON DIVERSITY

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 1 SPRING 2009

A NEW YEAR, A YEAR IN REVIEW

In the past year, the office has undergone some major changes. The physical location of the DAO has moved, we've added new resources and programming, revived student and campus community outreach efforts and partnerships so that we can better serve students and the campus community.

When I came to this position last February, I didn't think that there would be so much happening in the first year, nor did I expect the twelve months that have passed since I started to go by so quickly.

Over the course of the time that I have been here, I've been delighted with the student interest and the support that various departments and programs have shown in the office.

In case you missed some of the event that we've been involved in, here's a quick run-down of some of our major events and additions to the offerings and resources of the office:

- *Dr. Tim Meade, of Tiny Tim and Friends, lectured about AIDS and vulnerable children in Zambia Africa (September 2008)*
- *Diwali Night 2008 - In conjunction with the Indian Student Association, the celebration of lights was hosted in the SOB Barn and open to the public - Indian Food, song and dance were shared and enjoyed (November 2008).*
- *Diversity Dialogue Seminars in conjunction with counseling and Psychological Services are offered each semester. These guided discussions on topics such as race, gender, class, sexual identity are offered each semester over the lunch hour.*
www.montana.edu/diversity/dds/html

Support through co-sponsorship:

- *The Martin Luther King Jr. Day Lecture - Ronald Omyonga "Our Chance at History"*
- *Black History Month Celebration - The Four Elements of Hip Hop*

It has been a wonderful beginning, I hope that the next year in this position will bring even more energy, events and opportunities to increase the awareness of diversity on campus. Please feel free to pass along feedback and suggestion or stop in and say hello.

Cheers!

-Phenocia Bauerle
Program Coordinator

FUN FACT TO PONDER :

- *March is Women's History Month! (See page 2 for some events related to Women's History.)*

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ESSAY CONTEST WINNERS ANNOUNCED!

The Diversity Awareness Office recently gave students the opportunity to write essays in the second contest called Conversations of Difference. Participants were challenged to write about how diversity affected them in their lives, whether they observed it or experienced it directly.

We had some great entries this year and some great prizes as well! Thanks to The Community Food Co-Op, Colombo's Pizza, and Montana Ale Works for providing the Diversity Awareness Office with

some wonderful prizes to hand out to the winning students and runners-up.

We had many entries, all excellent depictions of diversity in the world we live in today. It was hard to pick a winner with so many fantastic essays to pick from.

The essay that the DAO felt expressed the topic best was an essay by Adam Benson entitled *A Barbershop in Wyoming*. The essay embodied a strong account of a man who witnessed a act of dis-

crimination in small town America.

Following closely in second place was an essay entitled *What if nobody touches me?* By Nirleska Vanegas. She wrote an essay that embodied culture and heart.

We had a lot of wonderful essays and hope the next contest we have just as many. See back page for winning essay (page 4)!

To read all essays, please visit our website at
<http://www.montana.edu/diversity/essay.html>

CALL FOR ART

The Diversity Awareness Office is looking for artists and photographers who are interested in submitting their work that explores issues relating to diversity on any number of levels of diversity are invited (including but not limited to race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, class, ability, difference, privilege and prejudice).

Submissions are now being

accepted for the Spring 2009 semester! **A collection will be chosen and will be displayed in the Strand Union Building from May 2009 to October 2009.** Exhibits will be chosen by a jury based on the quality of work as well as the level of appropriateness for the space.

Deadline for submissions is April 3rd, 2009!

Submission Guidelines:

- + Digital CD or Slides of original work
- + 200 word Artist Statement - Must be typed
- + Artist info must include: name, e-mail, phone, resume, and address
- + Self addressed stamped envelope

Drop off/Send Submissions to:

Diversity Awareness Office
Strand Union Rm. 284
Bozeman, Montana 59717

For more information, please visit <http://www.montana.edu/diversity/>



Currently Featured:
Portraits of Immigration: Montana in Focus
by Ian McEwan can be viewed in the northeast and northwest lounges of the Strand Union.

NEW WEBSITE LAUNCHED



Last month the Diversity Awareness Office website had a major makeover!

With a new theme and much more information, the site features a Resources page which

offers students information about scholarships and student groups. The Programming and Events page pro-

vides Diversity Art Spaces for aspiring and talented photographers; Diversity Dialogue Seminars which is a discussion based panel that hits the hard issues; and Conversations on Difference, the semester-annual essay contest.

The site also features a calendar and list of diversity-related events that will be a part of the Montana State University campus.

And coming soon, a Resource Database and Teaching Tools portion of the site designed to

help educators in and out of the classroom in teaching diversity, as well as resources for the average Joe looking to educate themselves or their children. And soon a new library feature with books the DAO possess that student can check out to read up on diversity.

To check out the new website, visit:

www.montana.edu/diversity/

AN EVENING WITH KAL PENN



Called "The Next Tom Hanks" by The Boston Globe, Kal Penn is the star of The Namesake, the Harold and Kumar franchise, and a co-star on Fox's House. Penn is a rising star in Hollywood -- but what sets him apart is his off-screen eloquence, his depth of intention, and his passion for the intersection of popular culture, politics and race. Penn is leading a new wave of performers who are subverting stereotypes and changing the racial and ethnic landscape of Hollywood.

Penn will speak about how the intrinsically political nature of pop culture affects our political landscape, and he will also provide a glimpse into the darker side of the entertainment industry, full of prejudices and comically misguided casting agents ("Where's your turban?"). One of the few Indian-

American actors -- so far -- to break into Hollywood, he looks at how pop culture can reinforce, but also challenge and overturn, racial stereotypes. With an actor's grace and an activist's unbridled passion, Penn shows the audience the visionaries working to broaden the racial and cultural experience in movies and on television.

In May 2007, Penn, whose real name is Kalpen Modi, received the Asian Excellence Award for Outstanding Actor for his performance in The Namesake. He also appeared in a 2007 episode of Law and Order: Special Victims Unit and currently plays Dr. Lawrence Kutner on the television series House.

The 31-year-old actor also has a B.A. in sociology with a specialization in theater, film and television from the

University of California, Los Angeles, and is currently working on a graduate certificate in international security at Stanford University. Named one of People's Top 50 Bachelors, Penn also taught two courses at the University of Pennsylvania.

As a co-sponsor of this event, the DAO will be sending a very small group of students to a Master's class with Kal Penn prior to the lecture.

Tickets are \$5 for students and \$8 for adults and go on sale Tuesday, February 24th at all Tickets West locations including the Bobcat ticket office and TicketsWest.com.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH EVENTS

THE WOMEN'S CENTER IS OFFERING SOME GREAT EVENTS IN HONOR OF WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH!

When: Wednesday, March 4th

Time: 12:00—1:00 pm

Where: SUB room 168

What: *Teach a Women to Fish: Women as Agents for Progress*

About: A panel of international women discuss their lives

When: Thursday, March 5th

Time: 5:30 pm

Where: Gallatin Valley Cinema

What: *A POWERFUL NOISE*

About: A documentary event that showcases the lives of three women around the world. One night only!!

When: Tuesday, March 24th

Time: 4:00 pm

Where: SUB room 168

What: *The Uniqueness of Eleanor Roosevelt as a First Lady*

About: Dr. Joan Hoff will be talking about her book and the life of Eleanor Roosevelt.

When: Wednesday, March 25th

Time: 12:00—1:00 pm

Where: SUB room 168

What: *Making Herstory: Promoting Diversity in Sciences*

About: Panel discussing women in male dominated fields of study.

When: Thursday, March 26th

Time: 5:30 pm

Where: Alumni Building

What: *Women's History Month Reception and Student of Achievement Awards*

About: The 17th Annual event!

Please join us for these wonderful events! For more information, please visit the Women's Center website at:

<http://www.montana.edu/wwwomen/>

SYMPOSIUM ON ISLAM

The Diversity Awareness Office was thrilled with the success of the February 18th symposium on Islam, a day filled with information and dialogue about the Muslim religion.

The all-day event, which included free screenings of the documentary *Mohammed: Legacy of a Prophet* in the Procrastinator Theater, information tables staffed by members of the Muslim Student Association, a panel presentation and roundtable, and two



evening lectures, was very well attended.

The interactive panel presentation in the afternoon included faculty members David Large (History and Philosophy), Michelle Maskiell (History and Philosophy), Thomas Goltz (Visiting Scholar/Adjunct Professor, Political Science), and Dale Martin (History and Philosophy) as well as key note speaker Hussam Alyoush. Attendees listened to panel members discuss a variety of issues, afterward, the floor was opened for a lively question and answer session.

In the evening, key note speakers Hussam Alyoush, Director of CAIR—Southern California, and Amina Assilmi, Director of the International Union of Muslim Women spoke. Alyoush's speech "What does it mean to be Muslim?" outlined basics of Muslims in the U.S. Assilmi's talk, "The Status of Women in Islam", focused on the role of women in Islam. After the lectures, a lengthy and informative

question and answer session took place.

The symposium grew out of a willingness of members of the Muslim Student Association to address a perceived lack of understanding of Islam and Muslims in this country and around the world.

In today's political climate, it is imperative the public have an understanding of different world views. The DAO was proud to help make this event possible, in the hopes of increasing understanding and exposure to different perspectives. With more than 200 people attending the evening lectures, it was obvious that there is at least curiosity, and at best a desire to understand the beliefs and practices of others.

One attendee of the symposium sent feedback saying, "The symposium answered several questions about Islam that I have had for a while...Events such as the symposium are great in this regard, in that they get to the root of the religion and bypass any preconceived prejudices of other sources."

Timothy Spring, from the Christus Collegium wrote, "I was able to participate in some of the panel discussion time and hear both keynote speakers. Each presenter (Muslim or not) offered their perspective in a balanced and informative manner. I can't imagine anyone attending not coming away with a deeper understanding of Islam and Muslims."

We hope to sponsor other events of a similar nature, and welcome comments and suggestions.

NORMAN FINKELSTEIN TO SPEAK AT MSU

Normal Finkelstein will be speaking March 25, 2009 at 7pm in Strand Union.

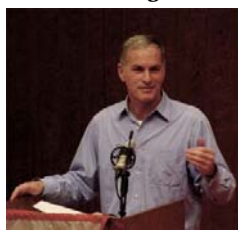
The son of holocaust survivors, Norman G. Finkelstein is a political scientist and author, specializing in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the politics of the Holocaust. He received his doctorate in 1988 from the Department of Politics at Princeton University. For many years he taught political theory and the Israel-Palestine conflict as a faculty member of Rutgers University, New York University, Brooklyn College, and Hunter College and DePaul University in Chicago. He is currently an independent scholar.

Finkelstein is the author of five

books which have been translated into more than 40 foreign editions:

His new book, **A Farewell to Israel: The coming break-up of American Zionism**, is due out this year.

Sponsored by ASMSU Lively Arts and Lectures and Office of International Programs.



LEADERSHIP IMPROV WORKSHOP

The Diversity Awareness Office is proudly sponsoring the attendance of five students to Leadership Improv Workshop on March 3, 2009.

Sponsored by the Leadership Institute, the workshop provides students with the opportunity to train with Kent Davis and three other professional actors in an evening revolving around games and techniques focused on jump-starting imagination and bringing out the best of the important soft skills needed to be a strong leader.

Kent Davis brings over 16 years of professional experience performing in film, television and theater, as well as an approach that balances technical excellence and a nose for fun. Kent has taught performance, improvisation and acting around the country, at workshops and seminars in Los Angeles, Philadelphia, and San Diego and in the media and theatre departments at MSU, Bozeman and the University of California, San Diego.

Last fall, we were able to sponsor several leaders from MSU student



groups at the Leadership Summit, which was also put on by the Leadership Institute. Attendees gave rave reviews. The DAO is proud to provide sponsorship to students for these excellent leadership development opportunities, and the opportunity to support the efforts of other university entities.

"I CAN'T IMAGINE ANYONE ATTENDING NOT COMING AWAY WITH A DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF ISLAM AND MUSLIMS."

UPHEAVAL
 Mark your calendars! **Upheaval** is coming **March 31st to April 2nd**. It is a Student Art Show and it will be located in the SUB Ballrooms!
 For more information contact Stacy Ray exhibits@montana.edu



THE DAO PRESENTS
DIALOGUES ON DIVERSITY

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WE'RE ON THE WEB!
CHECK US OUT AT:

[WWW.MONTANA.EDU/
DIVERSITY](http://WWW.MONTANA.EDU/DIVERSITY)

BUILDING BRIDGES;
CREATING COMMUNITIES.

TO:

WHAT WE ARE ABOUT...

The Diversity Awareness Office (DAO) provides information and support to the entire university community in the areas of multicultural awareness and community building, prejudice reduction and practical resources relating to diversity issues. In its outreach programs the DAO sponsors, produces and promotes events that encourage and foster diversity awareness around issues of gender, class, religion, sexual orientation, and ethnicity. Awareness of Diversity is examined through lectures, movies, discussion groups and social events. The DAO provides a safe supportive environment where students can begin to understand the diversity they face on campus as well as the larger global community.

Part of the vision of the DAO is to also foster and support the growth of understanding and tolerance of difference throughout the university and in the surrounding community. We see the existing diversity as a valuable resource towards this goal, and seek to involve students in all steps of the process. From this, we hope to add to the leadership skills of those students interested in the processes of educating and raising visibility and understanding of difference and multiple perspectives.

Want to contribute?

Sends us an e-mail, fax, or drop us a letter in the mail!

UPCOMING EVENTS TO WATCH FOR:

- **American Indian Council's Pow-Wow**
When: April 10th—April 11th
Where: Brick Breeden Fieldhouse
+ Free admission, drum contest, cash prizes! Please visit: http://www.montana.edu/wwwnas/club/powwow_09.htm for a complete schedule.
- **Free Film *Inheritance***
When: April 15th
Where: Procrastinator
+ Free admission: This Holocaust film is an extraordinary, gut-wrenching account of the continuing effects of Nazi horrors on human souls. *Inheritance* tells the stories of two women with very different scars from the World War II genocide of Europe's Jews – whose sorrows and angers intersect in the haunting memory of one man.
- **Native American Law Symposium**
When: April 10th
Where: TBA
+ Speakers include Edward Valandara, Dion Killsback, Tim Coulter, a panel discussion, and more! Please contact Montana INBRE for more information @ 994-5214.

ESSAY CONTEST WINNER

A Barbershop in Wyoming
by Adam Benson

It had been a couple months since my last hair cut and upon recurrent mentions from my parents that I looked 'shaggy', I decided to go in and submit myself for a trim. I had been in this barbershop ever since I was young and now felt at home in the familiar scene of the older white men with close cut hair and protruding bellies covered by western-style shirts. Before the haircuts they would always relate stories of their childhood and how the times were so much better back then. They talked of sandlot baseball, high-school sweethearts, and how peaceful and docile the times were. These times sounded so wonderful that I always longed to share the same sentiments that they grew up with.

This day when I was to get my haircut was no different. The old white men were all talk-

ing about how much better high-school football was when they played. Each man had his own story that lead all the others to laugh and tell stories of their own which would spur on more laughing and more stories. In the middle of one man's story the thick wooden door opened and the joyful mood of the parlor deflated. The men all glanced to the door and hurriedly picked up the hunting and sports magazines and buried their gazes in them. Through the door walked a young Native American woman, probably in her early twenties, with a young child of about four or five in tow. The woman and her son had magnificent dark skin and long black hair that flowed down around their waists. They sat down in the seats that lined the parlor, apparently in want of a 'trim' for the young boy. The barber cringed at the task of having to cut hair that wouldn't be buzzed down into a short cut and averted his gaze from the two customers. For the remain-

der of the time I was there, no one shared stories or told tales about the peaceful time they always talked about so much. There was only the whispering of the mother to the son and the professional talk of the barber.

After my haircut I paid the ten dollars and gathered my coat to leave. When I pushed on the thick door it seemed so much harder to open than before. Its oppressive weight made it feel like a vault door, intended to keep people out rather than allow them to move about freely. The blustery wind outside made me feel cold inside my coat. When I had gone a block away, I looked back and watched the spinning of the barbershop pole and noted how despite the movements of the red, white, and blue, the patriotic-colored lines, they were not going anywhere at all. The image in the glass case was simply spinning—stuck in its own path.

Congratulations to Adam Benson!

Thank you to all of you who participated this Fall semester!
Also thank you to Colombo's, the Community Food Co-op, and Montana Ale Works!