

# OLIVET COLLEGE MULTICULTURAL OUTLOOK

A Newsletter from the Office of Multicultural Education and Initiatives

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## Olivet College Gospel Choir hosts its first pre-concert revival

The Olivet College Gospel Choir hosted its first annual pre-concert revival titled, "Jesus, Everything You Need," on Friday, Oct. 27. The evening began with the Gospel Choir Praise and Worship Ministry Prayz, which includes Denise Jackson, a junior from Detroit; Johanna Hughes, a sophomore from Detroit; Eunice Oladele, a senior from Nigeria; Kyndall Minley-Marshall, a freshman from Detroit; Katherine Roesch, a senior from Oakland Township; and Lynn Ward Gray, gospel choir advisor and associate vice president for diversity and community affairs. Prayz was accompanied by Maria Beam from the Olivet Congregational Church.

The master of ceremonies for the evening was Demetris Mayberry, a freshman from Roseville and gospel choir member. Minister Malcolm Satterfield from the Maranatha Original Church of God (MOCOG) in Battle Creek also spoke, while L.I.F.E. Mentoring from Albion offered three powerful selections of sign/mime interpretive dance.

"The gospel choir believes that if we keep doing what we are doing, we will see students coming to Christ, fully and with no regrets," said Jackson, who is also the gospel choir president. "If Jesus can remove the desire for the world from me, he can do it for others too. I pray the seed that was planted on the night of the revival will grow and take root throughout the college."

## Free Yo' Mind "Rhymes" in a new location

Ashurina Chamoun, a senior from Warren, had some new ideas for Free Yo' Mind, the spoken word student organization on campus. As president, she wanted poets and artists to be heard, but wanted to make a difference at the same time. So, the Free Yo' Mind Lunch Slam was born.

Once a month, artists render poems in the middle of the Kirk Center Dining Room.

"We started in the Kirk Center Lobby for our September Lunch Slam but felt a bigger audience awaited us inside the dining room, so after clearing it with Chartwell's, we moved inside," said Chamoun.

The September and October slams included original pieces from Chamoun as well as students Katherine Roesch, Danielle Jones, DeShaun Warren, Derrick Dawkins, Andrew Wasson, Amanda Bates and Demetris Mayberry.



Ashurina Chamoun, second from left, created the Free Yo' Mind Lunch Slam so fellow artists would be heard on campus.

In addition to slams on campus, Chamoun and members of the group wanted to bring back the community service and mentorship history of Free Yo' Mind's past. Chamoun has been in contact with various teachers at Fern Persons Elementary in Olivet and librarians in the teen section of Willard Library in Battle Creek to take Free Yo' Mind's expressive and contagious energy beyond Olivet College with a goal to inspire younger students and to make a difference.

## Marching with the NAACP

On Saturday, Sept. 16, students DeShaun Warren, a senior from Detroit, and Denise Jackson, a junior from Detroit, along with Lynn Ward Gray, associate vice president for diversity and community affairs and Olivet's NAACP advisor, represented the Olivet College NAACP Chapter at a march and rally to defend affirmative action in Lansing.

The march began at Sexton High School and continued through the streets of Lansing for almost two miles. Many community and state officials spoke in support of affirmative action including Gov. Jennifer Granholm, Sen. Debbie Stabenow and Bruce Gordon, president and CEO of the NAACP.

## Open house celebrates diversity

The Office of Multicultural Education and Initiatives held an open house for students, faculty and staff on Monday, Sept. 18 from 12-1:30 p.m. in Mott 203.

Informational tables were sponsored by several student organizations, including: the Olivet College Gospel Choir; Black Student Union; the Olivet College NAACP Chapter; Free Yo' Mind; and the Office of Multicultural Education and Initiatives. Representatives from each group were available to answer questions and promote upcoming events.

Visitors spent time viewing the first issue of the "Multicultural Outlook" newsletter, looking over the calendar of events, touring the office, getting to know one another and celebrating diversity.

## Affirmative action panel discussion held on campus



Pictured above include from left: Lynn Ward Gray, associate vice president of diversity and community affairs; Brandon Jessup, president of the NAACP Youth and College Division; Lynne Haley, former candidate for the 62<sup>nd</sup> District of the State House of Representatives; Bryan Beverly, moderator and Olivet senior; Max McPhail, media relations director for the Michigan Civil Rights Initiative (MCRI); Jennifer Gratz, executive director of the MCRI; and President Don Tuski '85, Ph.D.

On Wednesday, Sept. 13, the campus community gathered for the Michigan Civil Rights Initiative (MCRI) panel discussion.

Event moderator Bryan Beverly, a senior sociology major, said the purpose of the panel was to “present both sides of the affirmative action debate fairly and to provide students with the information they need before voting.”

The con side, which consisted of Brandon Jessup, president of the NAACP Youth and College Division, and Lynne Haley, former Democratic candidate for the 62<sup>nd</sup> District of the State House of Representatives, based its argument on personal experience and knowledge.

The pro side consisted of Jennifer Gratz, executive director of the MCRI, and Max McPhail, media relations director for the MCRI. Gratz initially spearheaded the

campaign after she was not accepted by the University of Michigan-Dearborn because of slanted admissions. During the panel discussion, she and McPhail often referred to her personal experience, as well as how California and Washington have adopted similar initiatives.

“The proposition is one to amend state law to ban programs that give preferential treatment, especially in public education and public jobs,” Gratz said.

With an issue as complex as affirmative action, Jessup said, “This is an issue that transcends race and gender.”

In November, the proposal was voted on, and Michigan became the third state to ban affirmative action.

## College receives grant to provide diversity training workshop

Olivet College has received a \$150,000 grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation in Battle Creek, which will enable the college to partner with the National Resource Center for the Healing of Racism (NRCHR) to provide diversity training workshops for Olivet’s first-year students. All incoming students will be required to attend a two-day NRCHR workshop and participate in the follow-up discussions. Each workshop will include 25 students and two facilitators.

As part of the grant, some students and college employees will be trained to become facilitators for Olivet as well as other colleges. The facilitators will also provide information about the oneness of humankind and truths about our culture.

## Book club tackles a tough subject

This fall, the Office of Multicultural Education and Initiatives introduced a book club to students. The book, “Single, Saved and Having Sex,” discussed an issue often talked about after a student’s college education is sidelined because of a sexually transmitted disease or pregnancy.

The club met three times and discussed the importance of recognizing what it means to be single and striving to live a holy lifestyle while grappling with the temptations of having sex. In the book, author Ty Adams explains the steps many people deal with when walking the life of Christ, yet still having desires.

In small groups, participants shared the struggles of being saved, living on a college campus, and the peer pressures to party, drink and have casual interactions with others. The book offered a realistic view that many students could relate to no matter their background.

## Student Life Corner

### Create a study space

Finding and creating a comfy and healthy place to study on a college campus takes some creativity. It’s important to remember that not everyone finds studying at a desk comfortable or productive. No matter where you decide to hit the books, your study space should be:

- Free of clutter.
- Stocked with pens, pencils, a calculator and anything else needed to complete assignments without interruption.
- Adequately lit with no shadows or glare.

- Comfortable, but not too comfortable that you fall asleep.
- Free of distractions that are annoying to you, such as aromas or sounds.

Remember 24 hour “quiet hours” are in effect until Dec. 8. Quiet hours allow students the opportunity to study and sleep without distractions. During this period noise shouldn’t be heard outside of a student’s room.

*Taken from PaperClip Communications and Federal News Services.*

## Happy Holidays from the Associate Vice President for Diversity and Community Affairs

As the 2006 fall semester draws to a close, we anticipate the excitement of the holiday season. But first, I know you have gone to class everyday, turned in all required homework and given your share of presentations, answering the call by President Tuski for a new level of responsibility for each of us. You probably can say you eat, drink and sleep *Education for Individual and Social Responsibility*.

But before you begin to complain about what you've gone through, think again—it could be worse. This holiday season and always, be socially responsible and take the time to do something for someone else anonymously. Do it because you saw a need and wanted to help.



Lynn Ward Gray

Next semester, our guest speakers for the Martin Luther King Jr. Day Celebration and the Black Student Think Tank will open dialogues about migrant workers in the Midwest, immigration in America and the images of racism that are a part of our everyday life.

In addition, we will gain a global perspective of the genocide occurring in Sudan when we hear from escaped slave, Frances Bok on Wednesday, Jan. 31. According to the "Genocide Intervention Network," genocide in Darfur has claimed 450,000 lives and displaced more than 2,500,000 people. More than 100 people continue to die each day—5,000 die every month. When will it end? And, what role will you play?

As always, if you have any questions, comments or suggestions, please do not hesitate to stop by Mott 203 or call the Office of Multicultural Education and Initiatives at 749-7631. Have a safe and enjoyable holiday and we'll see you in 2007!

## Olivet College Gospel Choir hosts annual concert

On Saturday, Nov. 4, the Olivet College Gospel Choir celebrated their annual fall concert titled, "Jesus, Everything You Need." The master of ceremonies for the evening was Samuel Gray, husband of Lynn Ward Gray, gospel choir advisor and associate vice president for diversity and community affairs.

The concert began with Spirit of Praise from the Maranatha Original Church of God (MOCOG) in Battle Creek. The Gospel Choir marched in singing, "I will bless the Lord." Guests for the evening included Minister Anne McGilbray from MOCOG, who ministered through an original drama piece and signing in a one woman act. Special guest, Vera Riley, an up-and-coming gospel artist from Lansing, also performed.



Prayz N' Motion, the mime, sign and praise dance ministry team within the Olivet College Gospel Choir, render a selection during the fall concert.

The concert also included Prayz N' Motion, the mime, sign and praise dance ministry within the Olivet College Gospel Choir and senior Ashurina Chamoun, a senior from Warren, who recited an original poem. The gospel choir concluded with a new version of an old song, "The Lord is Blessing Me." Rev. Jack Brown from the Olivet Congregational Church gave closing remarks.

## Hispanic Heritage Month celebrated

Hispanic Heritage Month, celebrated throughout the country from Sept. 15-Oct. 15, marks the anniversary of independence for five Latin American countries – Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua.

On Wednesday, Sept. 20, the Office of Multicultural Education and Initiatives kicked this month off with a Hispanic Heritage Month informational table in the lobby of the Kirk Center. Pictorial and informational books, artifacts and flags were on display to help others learn about the people, culture and language of these five countries.

The table displayed pictures and biographies of several Hispanic personalities. Denise Jackson, a junior from Detroit, recently took a trip to Mexico for an Intensive Learning Term session and displayed some of the items she purchased including dolls made out of corn husks and a handmade poncho. Judy Fales, international club co-advisor, also displayed flags that represented various Hispanic countries of both current and past international students.

On Wednesday, Oct. 11, the Office of Multicultural Education and Initiatives teamed up with the Shiphord Hall resident advisors and held a fiesta in the recreational room at the hall. The fiesta included food, dancing and a piñata. There was also a table set up where students could view authentic Hispanic artifacts owned by Cecilia McCaleb, an adjunct instructor of Spanish at Olivet. A dance instructor also taught salsa and other dances to students and faculty in attendance.



## Multicultural Welcome Back Picnic provides “responsible” fun for all

The Multicultural Welcome Back Picnic returned to Olivet College Tuesday, Aug. 29. The picnic aimed to promote unity and the sense of responsibility that President Tuski outlined during his opening convocation. While rainy weather halted the 3-on-3 basketball tournament, it didn't stop students and supporters from coming out and having a great time.

The picnic was held at the Olivet Memorial Park on Main Street, allowing room for games such as spades, a relay race and water balloon toss. To conclude the event, more than 20 door prizes were given away, from gift cards to free pizza.

John Homer, professor of economics, also contributed to the evening, as head chef of the barbeque. In all, those in attendance



Students, faculty and staff enjoyed the end of summer at the Multicultural Welcome Back Picnic in August.

enjoyed the afternoon, and found that they could be responsible and still have fun.

## Prayz N' Motion group part of back-to-school rally

On Saturday, Aug. 26, Larry '97 and Antoinette (Dawkins) '99 Gray requested that the Olivet College Gospel Choir's Prayz N' Motion group perform as a part of the back-to-school rally and carnival held at Citadel of Faith Covenant Church in Detroit.

Prayz N' Motion members in attendance included Denise Jackson, a junior from Detroit; Ashley Oliver, a freshman

from Ironwood; Eunice Oladele, a senior from Nigeria; and employees Arlene Randall, administrative assistant to the vice president and dean of student life; and Lynn Ward Gray, Gospel Choir advisor and associate vice president for diversity and community affairs. With the help of the Grays, the Prayz N' Motion group was able to take its ministry beyond Olivet College.

## January Events

- 9 Movie Night, Kirk Center Movie Theatre, time TBA
- 15 Martin Luther King Jr. Day Celebration, various locations on campus, 12:15-5 p.m.
- 15 “What's up with that?” book club, Klock Commons, 3-5 p.m.
- 16 Free Yo' Mind Lunch Slam, Kirk Center, 12:15-12:45p.m.
- 22 Sister to Sister, Part II, Olivet College Art Gallery, 6-8 p.m.
- 31 Lecture and Symposium Series, Frances Bok, 1:30 p.m., Mott Auditorium

### Ongoing Events

- There will be a Bible study every Sunday night, Jan. 21 – April 15 from 7-8 p.m. in the Library Lecture Room (except Feb. 4 and March 4)
- The Gospel Choir will rehearse every Thursday, Jan. 18 – March 22 from 6-7:30 p.m. at the Olivet Congregational Church (except Feb. 15)

## Office of Multicultural Education and Initiatives

The Office of Multicultural Education and Initiatives at Olivet College coordinates or assists with the coordination of activities related to recruitment, retention, enrollment and graduation of minority students. These activities include intervention programs, mentoring and career advising. In addition, the office is responsible for advising the faculty and staff regarding the impact of policies and procedures on minority students.



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