

DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION

Compassion, Integrity and Excellence



In this Issue:

SPECIAL EVENTS

Martin Luther King Jr. Week
Black History Month
9th Grade Cross Cultural
Competency workshop
Lunar New Year
Affinity group events!

PD FOCUS PREVIEW

Carney Sandoe & Associated
Workshop Review
DEI: Let's Share the Work

OBSERVANCES

Holocaust Remembrance Day
Ash Wednesday
Ramadan
Women's History Month
Holi
International Trans Visibility Day

DIVERSITY SPOTLIGHT



Vanessa Grandison is a true Ohioan. Born, raised and educated right here in Ohio, Vanessa received a bachelor's degree in Psychology and Music at Denison University. Following Denison, Vanessa went off to work in college admissions for Purdue University then later Miami University in Ohio. At both Purdue and Miami, Vanessa worked on diversity recruitment teams and managed recruitment for territories across the state. Since joining the WRA community, Vanessa has made a great impression on her colleagues and students. Whether it's through teaching Learn to College, doing dorm duty in Long House, or chaperoning a college trip, Vanessa has gained the favor of so many students in awe of her infectious energy and joyous spirit. We are so grateful to be in community with her!

The Student Diversity Leadership Conference & People of Color Conference

November 30 - December 2, 2022

For the first time in two years, the NAIS People of Color Conference (PoCC) and the Student Diversity Leadership Conference (SDLC) was back in person! We had the honor and privilege to send four students and five faculty chaperones to attend the conference in San Antonio Texas. While chaperones sought out to unpack the theme for PoCC "Reunited in Purpose: Elevating our worth, our agency and our excellence," students explored how to put their theme, "We The People: Leveraging our community to preserve our humanity" in action at their schools back home. By the end of the conference, our students were able to lead the chaperones through an activity that sparked courageous conversations about the work needed to be done in our schools. We could not be more proud of the students who attended for putting themselves out there and representing our school so well. Thank you to all of the chaperones who helped make this trip a success!



Martin Luther King Jr. Day

MORNING MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

WRA's 2023 MLK day morning meeting was hosted by the students who attended this year's Student Diversity Leadership Conference. The meeting consisted of a musical performance by Jazz band, a student reflection and MLK week event announcements. Special thanks to all who contributed to the success of the special all school meeting!



Jordanne Nichols '23, Rojauhn Pakdel '24, Celine Omega '24, Peter McGinnes '24

An Excerpt From Jordanne's MLK Day Reflection



"Each and every one of us has not only a voice, but the experiences that we bring to our communities and the WRA community as a whole. While our speeches may not be *I have a Dream* we all have dreams of a better tomorrow, and that starts with action today. As a young black girl growing up in America I was taught about the things that were normal to experience like insults about my appearance, normal to be hurt by, like digs at my intelligence, normal to normalize, but that is not something people of color, and other minorities should have to normalize. All it takes is for one person to realize that their voice is powerful. So as we progress through this day of remembrance of change, we should all acknowledge our own ability to produce change.

Regardless of how you identify or how open you are to vocalizing your opinions there are things in this world that upset us all, and need to be fixed. We all have a dream of a world that is accepting of not only us, but the people around us. As you look at everyone around you in this chapel, I want you to remember that you, I, and all of us can be those figures we look back at history and are amazed by."

Martin Luther King Jr. Day

Guest Speaker: Nyle Fort



On Friday, January 20th we had the honor of welcoming Dr. Nyle Fort to WRA as our MLK week speaker. Dr. Fort, is a minister, activist, and current professor of African American and African Diaspora studies at Columbia University.

Dr. Fort spoke in the Chapel during Friday's morning meeting, bringing a vibrant energy to the space while utilizing a genuine and familiar tone to captivate students and faculty alike. Dr. Fort's honesty and authenticity when discussing issues of systemic racism, classism, sexism and the shortcomings of our society pulled the audience in.

Many students were eager to ask Dr. Fort difficult and complex questions regarding solutions to many of our society's challenging and pressing issues. Many stayed after to thank Dr. Fort, ask follow up questions and take photos. In addition to his all-school talk at morning meeting, Dr. Fort also visited classes and met with reporters from the Reserve Record. Dr. Fort left many of us intellectually reinvigorated and inspired to make a difference in our world.



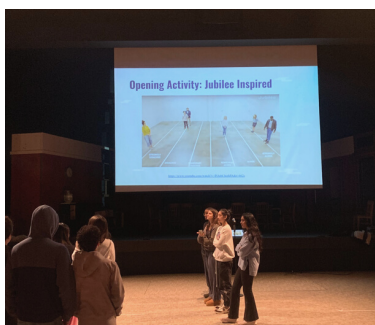
9th Grade Workshop on Cross-Cultural Competency



With her Compass Project, Elba Heddeshiemer '23 is working to construct a more culturally competent community at WRA. Elba asserts that "Despite nearly 30% of Reserve's school community consisting of international students, there tends to be a lack of cross-cultural understanding among students, teachers, and staff." To address this problem Elba worked in collaboration with the DEI office and the Student DEI Committee to lead a workshop on Cross-Cultural Competency for the 9th graders on January 22nd.

The workshop began with Elba explaining her story and experience facing and witnessing microaggressions against cultures that are different and unfamiliar. Afterwards, Elba and the Student DEI Committee led the 9th graders through an activity where they had to move based on whether they agreed or disagreed with statements such as "everyone has a culture" or "I don't need to learn any other language besides English." Once students picked a side they were prompted by their facilitator to engage in dialogue about their reasoning for their answers.

Elba plans to continue tackling this issue by hosting a number of story nights throughout the semester, the first of which took place on Friday, February 24th.



Lunar New Year



This year's Lunar New Year festivities kicked off with a heart thumping drum performance that woke up the vibrant, playful Lunar New Year dragon. The dragon captivated the excited audience as it came through the crowd spitting out candies and oranges to the children in the crowd. However, while the dragon opened the show, the acts that followed are what made the night truly memorable. The evening featured everything from edgy dance group performances to traditional solo dances as well as rap performances and heartfelt duo serenades. And as always, the night ended with yummy Asian snacks and special treats handed out by the Lux truck.



Thank you Judy Chen and all of those in the WRA community who put so much hard work into planning and organizing Lunar New Year! It is always such a privilege to be a part of such a special celebration and support our talented students.

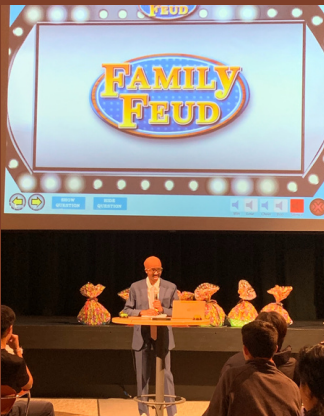
Black History Month Celebrations

BSU Mixer



On Friday, February 19th, the BSU hosted a mixer in the Green Key complete with soul food samplers and music by black artists. The Green Key was lively that evening and brought a lot of joy for all that were able to attend. The featured photo depicts some of the BSU members, including leaders Jordanne Nichols '23 and Ike Nabuife '23, as well as a few allies.

Family Feud



On the evening of Friday, February 24th, the BSU hosted their annual Family Feud event in the KFAC theater. In an attempt to bring an authentic feel to the event, Mia Maze-Ingram '25 played the role of Steve Harvey, complete with a bald cap, mustache and classic navy blue suit. Although there was strong representation from Hobart, and the freshman boys, Ells 2nd eventually took the victory. Special thank you to Brandon Davies who helped the BSU pull off this event!

Step Class



As a celebration of Black History and movement, the BSU, with the support of the Dance Department, welcomed Ron'Dale Simpson back to campus to teach a step dance class that included elements of Afro-fusion. The event was well attended and continued the tradition of combining fun, movement and appreciation for black culture.

Affinity Groups



Korean Club

The Korean Club kicked off the weekend with a special Korean Club Green Key. The evening was filled with Korean snacks, traditional Korean games and shows for students to watch and enjoy. The event was a success, allowing students to have some exposure to Korean culture.

The photo featured is from the Korean Club's outing earlier this year to Mango Mango Desserts in Cleveland, a Hong Kong inspired, modern dessert restaurant.



Asian American Club

In the loving spirit of Valentine's day the Asian American club chose to screen the romantic comedy, *Always Be My Maybe*, in the Green Key on Saturday, February 25th. The film is about childhood sweethearts that have a falling out and don't speak for 15 years only to rekindle their love when they are reunited as adults. *Always Be My Maybe* is one of a few mainstream American movies that was not only directed by a woman of color, but that featured two Asian American led characters that fall in love with each other rather than other non-Asian people. The club spoiled their attendees with yummy ramen and other delicious snacks.



Desi Club

On Sunday, February 26th the Desi club hosted their own movie night in the Green Key with lot's of delicious Indian snacks for the community to enjoy. They screened the movie *Chak De! India*, a film about people from different cultures who speak different languages who come together to represent India in a world competition.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Workshop Review:



At this year's Carney Sandoe & Associates DEI/Forum, Raheem Jackson and Iiyannaa Graham-Siphanoum debuted their presentation: A Seat at The Grown Up Table: Two young administrators of Color reflect on navigating infantilization, combatting tokenization and seeking empowerment. This workshop focused on arming individuals and institutions with the tools to avoid typecasting, marginalizing and tokenizing as they begin to create administrative teams and processes that reflect the racial diversity of their student body. Some of the sources used in the presentation are linked below.

- [Affirming the Well-Being of Black Teachers](#) | Article
- [Black Fatigue: When Black Teachers Leave Independent Schools](#) | Article

DEI: Let's Share the Work



Building a school culture that values DEI and centers belonging takes time and dedication from everyone, not just those in schools designated as 'experts'. While some in independent schools believe that having a DEI Office or DEI practitioner is all that is needed to demonstrate their DEI commitment, that alone is insufficient. Everyone in the school community must reflect on how they can further strengthen their DEI competencies in their areas of influence. Doing this work collectively not only benefits the students in your immediate circle, it enhances the quality of the community as a whole.

- [Slowing Momentum: What Does Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Really Include?](#) | Article
- [Strengthening the Role of the DEI Practitioner](#) | Article
- [Black Educators: Turnover, Selfcare and Sustainability](#) | Recorded Webinar

Spotlight Resource: Stories and Lessons for a Growing Mind



Film

While I Yet Live

Five African American women quilters and freedom-fighters from Gee's Bend, Alabama, share their cultural and family heritage of quilting.



Photo Essay

We Will Breathe

These photos by Sheila Pree Bright share intimate moments of mourning and inspiration within the Black Lives Matter movement.



Film

The Man is the Music

Atlanta-based artist and musician Lonnie Holley finds healing in the transformative power of art.

The [Global Oneness Project](#) is a free multimedia platform for educators aiming to instill empathy, interconnectedness and a sacred relationship with the Earth through immersive storytelling and curricula. The website has lesson plans for all grade levels and features a variety of media formats. Thank you to our Diversity Spotlight faculty, Vanessa Grandison for sharing this incredible resource!

OBSERVANCES



Holocaust Remembrance Day

January 27, 2023



January 27th, has been designated by the United Nations General Assembly as International Holocaust Remembrance Day. This special memorial day is meant to commemorate the six million Jewish victims of the Holocaust as well as millions of others tragically effected by Nazism. It is important that on this day we not only honor the lives of the Holocaust victims but to also help develop educational programs to prevent future genocides. Although the date has passed, here are a couple of resources to learn more about the significance of Holocaust Remembrance Day and plan ahead for next year:

- <https://www.ushmm.org/remember/international-holocaust-remembrance-day>
- Exploring "The U.S. and The Holocaust" (Webinar 3/21) - [Register here.](#)



Ash Wednesday

February 22, 2023



Ash Wednesday, an important event in the Christian church, marks the first day of Lent and occurs six and a half weeks before Easter. Lent is a period of reflection and preparation before Easter. During Lent, some Christians may surrender some sort of habit or vice such as a favorite food or activity. Those observing this religious event typically will attend Mass on Ash Wednesday, where a priest will place ashes on a worshiper's forehead in the shape of a cross to represent their devotion to Jesus Christ as well as grief and mourning for their sins. We wish well to community members practicing Lent!



Ramadan

March 22nd - April 21st



Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar and is observed by Muslims worldwide as a month of fasting, prayer, reflection and community. During this time, many Muslims fast from dawn until sunset and typically refrain from not only drink and food but also other behaviors. For many, the demands and structures of our school schedules and work practices can conflict with the sacred practices for many Muslim students and adults in the community. Accommodating these students can look like: rescheduling exams and other major assignments to the evening when mental clarity is not impeded by fasting, excusing students for commitments that conflict with fast-breaking or prayer, being understanding of decreased quantity of in-class participation and avoiding centering classes and meetings around food. Thank you for considering and supporting our Muslim practicing community members!

Here are some resources to help foster more awareness and guide your accommodation practices:

- [Ramadan | A Guide to Religious Observances](#)
- [How supporting students during Ramadan helps build feelings of belonging](#) (Article)

U P C O M I N G

Women's History Month



March is designated as a time to reflect and celebrate the incredible contributions that women historically have made and continue to make in our society. It is important that during this time we uplift and recognize all women, not simply those whose narratives are familiar. Here are some resources to begin thinking about how we can be more intersectional in our teaching and celebrations of women:

- [Centering Women's History Month in Intersectionality](#) (Article)
- ["History fails when it ignores the BIPOC women who made it"](#) (Podcast)



Holi

Wednesday, March 8th



Holi is a special Hindu festival celebrated in Northern India as well as some regions of Asia and parts of the Western world through the Indian diaspora. Holi is best known for the color fest where the community will gather to throw colors on one another, each color symbolizing something different (rebirth/new beginnings, marriage, fertility etc.) Holi is celebrated on the day after the full moon in early March and is meant to signify good harvests and the onset of Spring. We wish the best for all those who celebrate!

International Trans Day of Visibility

Friday, March 31st

Trans Day of Visibility is a day dedicated to celebrating the amazing contributions of trans people as well as raising awareness of the discrimination, violence, and inequality they face worldwide. Here are a few resources meant to help educate others on better supporting trans and nonbinary students:

- [Supporting Trans and GNC Students](#) (GLSEN)
- [Guide to Being an Ally to Transgender and Nonbinary Young People](#) (The Trevor Project)

