

D.I.C.E. NEWS

Diversity | Inclusion | Community | Engagement

D.I.C.E. News is a graduate student-run newsletter by the Graduate Dean's Advisory Council on Diversity (GDACD) for issues related to diversity, inclusion, community, and engagement on the UC Merced campus.

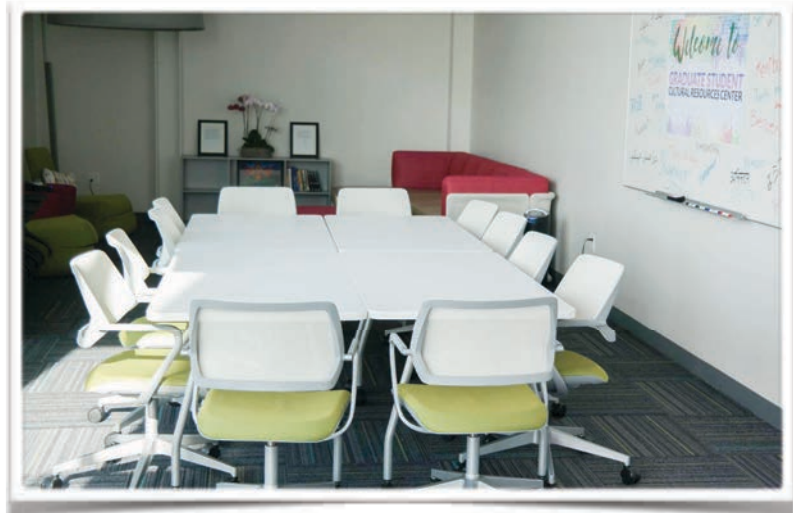
Please email suggestions, ideas, and submissions for future editions to gdacd.ucmerced@gmail.com.

D.I.C.E. Editorial Committee

- Ashley Baker
- Patricia Cabral
- Gerald Eisman
- Rachel Hatano

Special thanks to the remaining members of the GDACD, whose support was instrumental to the creation and realization of this inaugural edition D.I.C.E.!

- Jasmine Armstrong
- Danielle Bermudez
- Johannes Brust
- James Kupihea
- Jamin Shih
- Tashelle Wright
- Dean Marjorie Zatz



Graduate Cultural Resource Center Opens on Campus

by the GCRC Planning Committee

Photo credit: Danielle Bermudez

On March 2 2017, the Graduate Cultural Resource Center (GCRC) opened its doors in COB2-190 with its first event: “We Wear Our Crowns: An Evening of Female Empowerment” hosted by fifth year Interdisciplinary Humanities graduate student Kim McMillon, which included poetry, music, art, and spoken word with Black Panthers Charlotte Hill O’Neal “Mama C” and Tarika Lewis.

“This was a liberating, historical moment for students of color at UC Merced, where we were in solidarity with one another to heal and build community,” said third year sociology graduate student and social justice advocate, Maria Mora.

The GCRC comes from the organizing efforts of graduate students of color across multiple identities, who advocated and mobilized for a safe space and asserted the right to belong. In the spring of 2016, Daniel Rios, the graduate student advisor to GSA on Climate, Diversity and Equity, second-year Interdisciplinary Humanities graduate student and social justice advocate,



Spotlight:

Maryam Trebeau-Crogman

Grad Group:

Psychological Sciences

Prior Institution:

M.A. Counseling, La Sierra University

Highlighted Achievements:

Program Coordinator for the Partnerships for Improving Community Health (PICH) Grant provided by the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and the Merced Public Health Department
 Named "Outstanding Graduate Student" by the 2017 UC Merced leadership awards

Maryam attained her B.A. in Developmental Psychology at Montpellier 3, Paul Valery University in France. She then married and moved to the US where she attained her M.A. in Counseling. She is the first woman of color to act as president of the UC Merced Graduate Student Association, a position she will hold through June 30.

As a Ph.D. candidate, Maryam's research focuses on spatial training in Dyslexic learners. She is the co-founder of the Institute for Effective Thinking, which focuses on helping minority students attend college. She is also a volunteer at the Boys and Girls Club of Merced where she is an event organizer and teacher of art and literacy. Besides being a youth leader and tutor, her passions include oil pastel painting, guitar and vegan cooking.

presented a co-written resolution to the Graduate Student Association to establish a graduate cultural resource center at UC Merced, which was voted on and passed by the Executive Council on March 14, 2016.

In this process, students of color envisioned a space where they could come together and acknowledge their daily lived experiences regarding institutional racism, neoliberal capitalism, cisgender heteropatriarchy, and oppressive micro-aggressions they face in academia.

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 "We enter this space with a shared commitment and understanding to mutual dignity and respect, non-violence, social justice-centered intentionality, and transformative justice." – excerpt from the GCRC mission statement

The GCRC embraces an intersectional, social justice, and emancipatory education praxis that affirms students of color intersectional identities, and validates the marginalizations they encounter daily. The GCRC creates a place and a space where marginalized communities can cultivate healing and resistance through cultural events, political organizing, and community solidarity with each other.

"In the future, we hope that GCRC will provide opportunities for marginalized students in recognition of the emotional, political and intellectual labor that we give to the university, and the importance of building equity in higher education" said Danielle Bermudez, a fourth year Interdisciplinary Humanities graduate student and social justice advocate.

GCRC events to date have highlighted historical and ongoing oppressions as well as collective agency and resistances of people of color and their intersectional identities, such as womxn, income-insecure, first-generation, LGBTQ+, non-binary, gender non-conforming, gender fluid, disabled, international, immigrant, undocumented, and non-traditional graduate students. These events seek to foster a climate where marginalized students feel safe expressing themselves and their lived experiences without fear of being targeted, and to affirm our identities and resiliency.

GCRC events reflect established Community Agreements, which exalt the rights to be respected, to be treated with dignity, to be affirmed, to highlight the community's duty to challenge oppression, and to recognize that [our] silence will not protect us.

April events—open to all students—included a workshop on White Supremacy and Anti-Blackness, a Know Your IX training, and a presentation on Cultural Centers and HSI Status by UC Student Regent Marcela Ramirez. Future events are in the planning stages, and include a panel with local community activists, the visioning of a mural, and more. The Graduate Cultural Resource Center has air quality issues, which has prevented its use for large groups. However, the planning committee—which includes Christina Acosta, Violet Barton, Danielle Bermudez, Denise Castro, Maria Mora, Daniel Rios, Rodolfo Rodriguez, Jamin Shih,

Maryam Trebeau Crogman, Tashelle Wright, and Michelle Yeung—has continued their hard work for the center and Facilities Management expects to resolve the issues this summer.

“It is our hope that the GCRC will grow and serve to dismantle the oppressions that students of color and marginalized communities face in academia, to bridge graduate and undergraduate students, and to increase the number of faculty of color, in our collective pursuit of transforming the institution” asserts Christina Acosta, first year Sociology graduate student and social justice advocate.

For more information about GCRC, please contact Director of Campus Climate, De Acker, the committee’s advisor, at dacker@ucmerced.edu. You can also find more information at the [GCRC’s Facebook page](#) (search @UCMGSCRC or Graduate Cultural Resource Center at UC Merced).



Diversity Hiring Process and the Strategic Academic Focusing Initiative (SAFI)

This semester commenced UC Merced’s Strategic Academic Focusing Initiative (SAFI) hiring expansion plan to hire over 100 faculty members over the next four years.

This year alone, UC Merced aims to hire 50 new faculty members, with several of these occurring in three of the six pillars: Inequality, Power, and Social Justice (IPSJ), Human Health Sciences (HHS), and Adaptive Functional Matter (AFM).

Dr. Tanya Golash-Boza is spearheading these efforts by serving as the Chair



Spotlight: Vipawee (Yen) Limasakoune

Grad Group:

Biological Engineering and Small Scale Technologies (BEST)

Prior Institution:

M.S. Petrochemical, Chulalongkorn University, Thailand

Highlighted Achievements:

BEST Summer Fellowship 2017

Yen completed a chemical engineering undergraduate degree at Kingmonkut Institute of Technology Ladkrabang, before moving on to her M.S. degree at Chulalongkorn University, Thailand.

As a UC Merced Ph.D. student, Yen researches nanomaterial synthesis and energy storage. In addition to her teaching and research duties, she supports her younger sister, who moved to the U.S. three years ago to practice English through her high school education.

Yen is a role model for the Central Valley’s high school students by leading the Society of Women Engineer and MACES Outreach laboratory demonstrations. She is also an exemplary teaching assistant who emphasizes the importance of personal integrity along with material science engineering concepts.

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of the Diversity and Equity Committee and also as one of the four campus Faculty Equity Advisors (FEA).

In the capacity as one of the FEAs, Dr. Golash-Boza meets with the search committees to discuss implicit bias in evaluating and hiring potential faculty candidates, and reviews the applicant pool to ensure that it reflects the availability pool in terms of diversity, among other responsibilities.

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Consistent with UC Merced’s values on diversity, equity, and inclusion—and to meet the needs of our expanding diverse student body—increasing the diversity of our faculty is at the apex of these cluster hires.

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The search committees then evaluate potential candidate’s contributions to diversity, and every candidate is required to submit a written diversity statement.

While it is still too early to know the results of this year’s searches, Dr. Golash-Boza is optimistic that between the efforts of the FEA program and the SAFI cluster that the hires will result in a more diverse 2017 cohort of new professors working at our campus.

“The candidate pools in most of the SAFIs are far more diverse than other searches. In one SAFI, we received 1200 applications for four positions. Half of the applications were from minorities, and half of the 16 candidates brought to campus were minorities,” Dr. Golash-Boza said. “Also, at least half of the candidates brought to campus were women, which is promising for creating gender equity in those fields where women are underrepresented.”

In our Fall 2017 newsletter, we will follow up with these efforts and report on the results of these cluster hires in increasing faculty diversity.

The Graduate Dean’s Advisory Council on Diversity welcomes feedback on D.I.C.E. News. Please email your comments, suggestions, ideas and submissions to gdacd.ucmerced@gmail.com.



Spotlight: Nicole Madfis

Grad Group:

Quantitative and Systems Biology (QSB)

Prior Institution:

B.S. Biology Randolph Macon College

Highlighted Achievements:

Graduate Dean’s Dissertation Fellow, GradSlam! 2017 finalist

Nicole is a non-traditional student whose love of science brought her to UC Merced after a varied career that included teaching high school math and chemistry in the U.S. and Japan, as well as work in business and banking sales. She will be the first African-American woman to receive a doctoral degree in the natural sciences from UC Merced.

In her research, Nicole directs mouse and human stem cells into vascular endothelial cell populations with specialized properties, which could potentially help to make strides in inducing the growth of blood vessels in fabricated tissues, creating vascular models for disease modeling and generating cellular sources for regenerative medicine therapies.

After wrapping up her doctoral work this summer, Nicole plans to pursue a career in industry, where she hopes to use her cardiovascular expertise to bridge the worlds of business, science, and medicine.

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