05.04.13
SAVE THE DATE
The University of Texas at Dallas
Office of Diversity and Community Engagement
Cordially Invites You to Our
DIVERSITY RECOGNITION AWARDS GALA
Location
The University of Texas at Dallas
800 West Campbell Road
Richardson, Texas 75080
Tickets: $75
RSVP to (972) 883-4560
Reserve your seat today!

Additional information and formal invitation to be sent at a future date
Contact Rosie Peterson for more information at rosie.peterson@utdallas.edu

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Hispanic Heritage Month: Hispanics Across Continents
BY MULTICULTURAL CENTER PEER ADVOCATE, SARINA SEMINTAL

The terms Latino and Hispanic, which are often interchangeably used, actually have a difference that goes back to the colonization period. Hispanic refers to all people from countries in Latin America whose language is Spanish, since their country was first colonized by Spain. Latino, on the other hand, refers to all people from countries in Latin America independent of their language, which includes countries such as Brazil which was first colonized by Portugal.

The Spanish trio performed a few classic pieces and gave a brief explanation about each of them. The lively performance was a great closing act for the event and for the celebrations of National Hispanic Heritage Month.

Once again, the Multicultural Center enlightened us with a diversified and culture-rich event! I am sure many people left taking a valuable lesson from Dr. Piquero’s speech to “work hard, work harder, and even harder to achieve great things!”

Community Engagement Mentors Help Students Make Their College Dreams A Reality
BY THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The college enrollment process can seem daunting for high school students, especially those who are the first in their family to go to college. The Department of Community Engagement’s G-Force Mentoring Program has been helping students from schools in Richardson and Dallas through a grant from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board since 2009. The G-Force mentors work at College Go Centers in five area schools.

“A large portion of the students we mentor find it hard to believe they can either afford college,” said Albert Palmer, G-Force mentor and graduate student.

UT Dallas students serve as near-peer mentors to high school students on various things, from scholarship searches to registering for the SAT or ACT exam. Last year, the 12 student mentors employed by the program served more than 1,100 students at Emmett J. Conrad High School, Hillcrest High School, J. J. Pearce High School, L.V. Berkner High School, and Lake Highlands High School.

“It’s important to guide the future college students of tomorrow,” said Joel Romero, G-Force mentor and sophomore. “They need every available resource to get them to a better future and we are here to guide them to it.”

The G-Force mentors work closely with the staff at the high schools to insure that they are meeting the needs of students effectively and helping to nurture a college-going culture. In most cases, the mentors are housed in the counselor’s office of each high school. For more information about the G-Force Mentoring Program, contact the Department of Community Engagement at community@utdallas.edu or visit the program’s website at utdallas.edu/community.
Nomination Process for the ODCE’s Diversity Recognition Awards is Now Open

The Office of Diversity and Community Engagement (ODCE) annually recognizes the significant contributions made by the faculty, staff, students and community toward the promotion of diversity and inclusion activities on the campus at The University of Texas at Dallas. This year, two new categories will be added to the recognition list: student organizations and academic units. The recognition by the ODCE is for individuals or groups who have provided support or activities over and beyond their assigned duties to promote diversity and inclusion. Deadline for nominations is February 1, 2013. The nomination process can be found on the ODCE’s website at http://www.utdallas.edu/diversity.

Last year’s awards and winners were as follows:

Corporate Diversity Award: Texas Instruments for providing $15,000 in matching funds for a program that will support women in science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

Community Champion Award: Irvin Ashford, senior vice president public affairs and director of community development and external affairs for Comerica Bank, for work including partnership for a Naveen Jindal School of Management program to empower minority individuals to improve their economic wealth and ultimately their place in society.

Student Diversity Award: Runchun Chen, graduate student in the Jindal School, for cosponsoring a program that welcomes international students by having domestic students provide tours to Dallas sightseeing spots.

Staff Diversity Award: Sharon Edwards, administrative assistant in the Center for Lithospheric Studies at UT Dallas, for encouraging underrepresented students to pursue degree programs in geosciences and providing mentorship and assistance to international students.

Faculty Diversity Award: Dr. Alex Piquero, Ashbel Smith Professor of Criminology, one of the most prolific, scholarly and well-known criminologists in the world, and member of UT Dallas committee that supports diversity and equity and sits on the Faculty Diversity council.

Faculty Diversity Award: Dr. Orlando Richard, Associate Professor of Organizations, Strategy and International Management, for his research and publications on workplace diversity and organizational justice; he also serves on the UT Dallas Diversity and Equity Committee and sits on the Faculty Diversity Council.

Teaching Award for Inclusive Excellence: Dr. Mihaela Stefan, Assistant Professor of Chemistry, for creating a classroom environment of inclusiveness, and for her investment in students.

Ambassador of Diversity Award: Duncan MacFarlane, Professor of Electrical Engineering, for his work as a friend, mentor, counselor and tutor to underprivileged, inner-city kids, and recruitment of other volunteers to serve this community.

Recognition for Diversity Service: Dr. Peter Park, Assistant Professor of History, for leadership of the diversity and equity committee and service throughout the year.

This year, the recognition for special individuals or groups will be held on May 4, 2013 during the fourth annual ODCE’s Diversity Recognition Gala and Silent Auction. The event will be held at UT Dallas in the Student Union Galaxy Room starting at 5pm. For more information about the diversity recognitions, the diversity recognition gala and silent auction, please call Rosie Peterson at 972-883-4560.

The Multicultural Center presented the culmination event for the National Hispanic Heritage Month, which is celebrated around the U.S. from September 15th to October 15th, at UT Dallas on October 10. The event included a variety of representations of Hispanic culture in the forms of food, music, and dance. A pleasant surprise in this year’s celebration was the fact that the music and dance performance originated from Spain and not a specific Latin American country as had been done in the past. Instead of the usual Mexican mariachi, Cuban salsa, Dominican merengue, Columbia cumbia, Argentine tango, or Brazilian samba, two women danced flamenco while a man played the traditional Spanish guitar.

The highlight of this celebration event was definitely Dr. Alex Piquero’s speech about Latino culture in America and his personal life story. He started his speech with, “I shouldn’t be here, you shouldn’t be here,” alluding to the low percentage of Hispanics who attend college and the even lower percentage of Hispanics who actually graduate from college. He pointed out that he grew up “the poorest of the poor,” and that his parents, who worked extremely hard, instilled in him the work ethic to put all his efforts in in order to achieve great things. He said that the most valuable lesson his father taught him was, “work hard, then work harder, and when you think you’ve worked hard enough, work even harder, because someone else is working harder than you for the same thing.” Dr. Piquero’s speech was my favorite speech out of all the Multicultural Center events I have attended, not only is he a great public speaker, his inspiring input was extremely relevant to the program as he had great examples and personal experiences to share with the audience.

After the speech, the celebration began. The trio from Spain explained that flamenco originated in Southern Spain, the area where one of the members was from. Interestingly enough, the other dancer was from Cuba, which made me think of the fact that Latinos have a strong Spanish heritage. During the fifteenth century Latin America was colonized by Spain and Portugal, but with the passing of time and as each country acquired its independence each developed its own ethnic music and dance.

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Student Diversity Council Bridges Differences in Campus Community

BY STUDENT DIVERSITY COUNCIL CHAIR, BRITTANY ELLENBERG

The Student Diversity Council’s purpose is to provide the students’ perspective, input and advice to the Office of Diversity and Community Engagement. The Council addresses the elements of student diversity, concerns, activities and programs to increase awareness and understanding among one another and move beyond simple tolerance to embrace and celebrate the rich dimensions of diversity contained within each individual. The group consists of forty-one student organizations, each of which represents one of the diverse facets of the University of Texas at Dallas. The clubs encompass differences in religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender and race. The Council meets monthly to hold a forum between club presidents to discuss upcoming events activities, challenges faced, and ideas on how to create a more diverse campus community.

The Council does not only seek to represent the wide array of diverse students at UTD, but also to create an environment conducive to bridging students across barriers created by their differences. The group held an toy drive in the month of November to donate Christmas presents to refugee children in the Dallas/Fort Worth metropolex. A potluck and gift wrapping social mixer will be held in December as an opportunity for members of the various student organizations to interact for a common cause. If your student organization is interested in being a member of the Office of Diversity and Community Engagement’s Student Diversity Council, please contact brittany.ellenberg@utdallas.edu.

Some of our standing members include:
- Atheists, Skeptics, and Humanists
- Delta Epsilon Psi
- Indian Student Association
- International Political Economy Student Association
- Iranian Student Community
- League of United Latin American Citizens
- National Association of Black Accountants
- National Society of Black Engineers
- PRIDE
- Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers
- Turkish Student Association

LGBTQ Education, Engagement & Programming Initiative

BY THE GALERSTEIN WOMEN’S CENTER

The Galerstein Women’s Center (GWC) leads the LGBTQ Education, Engagement & Programming (LEEP) Initiative at UT Dallas. LEEP supports an inclusive environment that values and celebrates the sexual orientation and gender identity/expression of students, staff and faculty. Once a semester, three times annually, we deliver SAFE ZONE Ally Trainings for students, staff, faculty and the community, as part of a nation-wide campus movement to help raise awareness of LGBTQ communities/cultures, as well as develop safe areas and allies for LGBTQ students, staff and faculty.

In addition to SAFE ZONE Ally Training, the LEEP initiative also engages in advanced dialogues. The topics of these dialogues focus on a specific subject that pertains to LGBTQ issues. An emphasis is placed on mutual understanding toward, and education of all viewpoints presented. On November 1st, a Dialogue was held on the intersection of politics and the LGBTQ community. Students, staff, and faculty came together to discuss the variances in ideas and positions that the political parties have concerning LGBTQ issues. Eighty-six percent of the attendees agreed that the Dialogue left them feeling empowered to continue their education of the political process and to integrate opposing points of view into their political ideologies.

The LEEP Initiative also engages in events across the UTD campus to help promote our community, find friends and allies, and exchange ideas. Our annual events include National Day of Silence, National Coming Out Day, World AIDS Day, National Ally Week, and LGBTQ Month.

Please contact us at the GWC! Call 972-883-6557 or e-mail womenscenter@utdallas.edu.