

## International Student Services Multicultural Student Services

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Malyse Uwase

*This newsletter is published by the Cultural Center. Its overall purpose is to promote and reflect the ethnic richness and diversity of Bucknell's student body.*

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## A Tribute to Fran McDaniel

BY KAREL PARVE '12

I first met Fran McDaniel, as a scared closeted gay man from Eastern Europe in the summer of 2009. A couple friends and I went uphill to Roberts hall because we had heard that there was this office dedicated to all things LGBT. We knocked on the door, coy and afraid and the next thing we know there is this woman on the other side of the door, yelling at us in a high pitch voice to come in—it was Fran. She introduced herself as the paid professional lesbian on campus (naturally), and started showering us with all sorts of LGBT goodies. Once our hands were full of all-things-rainbow, she continued to tell us all about the office and her work. When we walked out of that office, I felt like a rainbow truck had run over me. I was absolutely in awe of her, and I'm not going to lie, a little (read: very) intimidated by her. So naturally, as far as coming to Bucknell went, I was sold!

I transferred officially into Bucknell in the fall of 2010. One of the first things I did was to go and find that fabulous Rainbow woman up on the hill in Roberts. She welcomed me with open arms as she had done almost a year ago and I walked out of that first meeting with her with a hug, a smile... and job. I had found my place—my safe space. Over the course of the semester that I had the privilege of knowing her, I learned that she was so much more than simply the Director of the office. Once Fran hired you, you didn't really work for her. She made you family and she treated you with so much love, that just like a real mother's love, you would get too much at times. She would blow up my email inbox on a daily basis with all sorts of forwards and projects and things she thought I should do. And no matter what, if I did not get to go into the office that day, the last email would say, "Karel, where are you? How are you? Come see me!" ...in that specific blue font she loved to abuse that drove most of us crazy.

I can't speak on behalf of all the people she took in as her family because she had such different relationships with all of us, mostly because she genuinely took the time to get to know us and cultivate a strong relationship with each and every one of us. She understood every LGBT person on a level that no one else would and she was always our "go to" person. When writing this, I was asked to talk about what Fran did for the LGBT community on campus. I struggle in doing that because everyone who knew Fran, knows that she did tons: Safe Space presentations, bringing speakers to campus, and educating the campus in general. While all of these things are important, and will continue to be part of her immense legacy at Bucknell, what strikes out the most, is the amazing person she was. She was one of the greatest mentors an LGBT person could ask for. She was the best kind of friend to have. She was the woman who taught me how to take pride in being who I am and loving every fiber of my being. She was and is Bucknell for me.

International Bridges to Justice Summer Internship:  
Documenting Legal Rights Issues In Jakarta, Indonesia

Last summer I had the amazing opportunity to work for International Bridges to Justice, a legal rights organization based out of Geneva, Switzerland. Unlike many other internships, however, I never met my bosses face to face, nor did I even step foot in Switzerland! IBJ implements a variety of programs that seek to increase global access to legal rights, one of these programs, JusticeMakers, is a competition for hardworking lawyers and activists from underdeveloped countries who have an idea for legal rights reformation, but lack proper financing or training. The winners of the competition are awarded with a training seminar in Singapore, counsel from prestigious lawyers in Europe and Asia, money, and a team of documentary journalists to record their progress. That's where I come in.

As a documentary journalist intern, it was my responsibility to assist the JusticeMaker in any way possible, and to share the stories of legal reformation with the local community and world. I was thrilled to be putting my love of the written word, legal/human rights issues and travel together to live in a strange new land and help people, but realized that even though I had the internship, financial needs still had to be addressed. That is where the Bucknell Public Interest Program (BPIP) an incredible Bucknell program that funds non-paid public interest internships became helpful. I found out about it through the career center website, went through the application process, and was grateful to be selected. Through their financial and logistical assistance, my dream internship was possible. I encourage everyone to learn more about BPIP through the career center.

Only 3 weeks after finding out my location (first Sri Lanka, then Georgia, ultimately Indonesia), I found myself in Jakarta, Indonesia, 10,000 miles away from home, not knowing a soul in the entire time zone. I soon met the Spanish professional photographer and Floridian writer who would be my roommates and colleagues, and more importantly, I encountered the outstanding hospitality of the Indonesian people. Without bias or hesitation, I believe that of the nearly 30 countries I have had the privilege to visit, Indonesia boasts some of the most warm and welcoming citizens. The same sentiment was found in our employers. Ajeng, the activist who won the JusticeMakers competition, worked at an office (LBH Masyarakat) of intrepid, inspired, and brilliant young lawyers/activists working to provide legal rights for many of the marginalized citizens in Indonesian society. Their kindness and passion for their work made it a fantastic environment to work in.

My fellow journalists and I accompanied Ajeng and the others to the most notorious prison in the country to provide legal counsel for the uneducated detainees awaiting trial. Many of the detainees are arrested without knowing why, and their lack of knowledge about the legal system often leaves them in horrid, abusive conditions when they should be free. We also worked in fishing villages, community centers for HIV+ individuals, drug users, sex workers, anti-corruption commissions, and schools for homeless children. Through our documentary projects following the lawyers, we witnessed the struggle for legal rights in Indonesia, and were able to voice these issues on an international stage. My total immersion into Indonesian life made the experience enriching, and difficult to leave in August. I still assist the legal office from here in Lewisburg, and follow the progress of IBJ closely! The fight for legal equality is a difficult one, but beautiful in the sense that it recognizes the need for people of all cultures to come together and share in their common humanity.



### Save the dates:

**Feb 12th : Celebration of the Life of Fran McDaniel at Rooke Chapel**

**Feb 15th: Evening with Robyn Ochs "Beyond Binaries: Identity and Sexuality" 7pm Rooke Chemistry**

**Feb 24th: Film showing "A Jihad For Love" 7pm LC Forum followed by a talk by the film maker Parvez Sharma**

**Mar 7th: Speaker, Matt Golawski "Diversity Family Guy and South Park " 7pm LC Forum**

**Mar 8th: International Women's Day Lunch, Center Room (must sign up for this event through the ISS office x73794)**

## The Beloved MLK Annual Dinner

By Oscar Beteta '11

This year the annual Beloved Martin Luther King Dinner, co-sponsored by the Multicultural Student Services and the Office of the Provost was a complete success! The event took place Tuesday, January 18<sup>th</sup> in the Terrace room with the attendance of many special guests including President John C. Bravman and Provost Mick Smyer. The program was emceed by Posse Scholar Bryan Coleman (English and Sociology '11) and was kicked off with a warm welcome by Lakeisha Meyer, assistant Professor of Education, and an invocation by our University Chaplain Thomasina Yuille. What followed were powerful speech excerpts from various works by Martin Luther King Jr. read passionately by three students from very diverse backgrounds; Megan Reid (Chemical Engineering '14) read a piece from the "Nobel Prize Acceptance Speech," Cleveland Cunningham (Undeclared '13) read a piece on "Loving Your Enemies," and Oscar Beteta (Chemical Engineering '11) read a piece on "The Purpose of Education.". After a delicious dinner, the keynote speaker of the night, Ms. Sylvia Mendez, was introduced to the podium by the one and only very special Bucknell alumnus Ms. Jessica Quintana Hess. Ms. Mendez is an education activist—though she does not like to call herself one—of Mexican-Puerto Rican heritage that travels and gives lectures at many University campuses. She shares her legacy through the story of her family's involvement in desegregation efforts in the United States. In her very moving and inspirational keynote speech, Ms. Mendez shared her experiences as a child with segregation in the California school system. Her parents, along with other politically active acquaintances, fought against segregation in schools and won the *Mendez v. Westminster* case in 1946, which allowed Ms. Mendez to attend a predominantly white institution. The progress obtained through this case played a pivotal role in the outcome of the better known *Brown v. Board of Education* case that took place 7 years later. Acknowledging Ms. Mendez's sincere and strong efforts towards American Civil Rights, President Barack Obama announced on November 17, 2010 that he will bestow the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the United States' highest civilian honor, to her in early 2011. The beloved dinner ended with a deeply emotional closing provided by Paula Myers, Director of International Student Services, which put all the stories heard that night into perspective; there is no doubt that everyone left the



### From Cultural Center Staff....

**Please keep the Vedder Cultural Lounge in mind for a unique place to hold your weekly office staff meetings, club meetings, or just a quiet place to study. In order to reserve the space, you may contact the Event Management Office to schedule your meeting or luncheon. You can also reserve it by logging in to mybucknell, click on Schedule an Event and fill out the form. If the space is available, we'd love to have you join the many organizations that have already made use of our wonderful lounge.**



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