Deep Dives

During the month of April, Social Justice Initiatives hosted the Deep Dives Dialogue Series, described as "an opportunity for authentic connections to occur while having certain topics addressed related to issues impacting our campus community." On Friday April 27th, community organizer and consultant Becky Martinez visited UC Merced to partake in these deep dives. Hosting her own workshops, Becky provided an overview of student activism. ways to build coalitions, and strategies for self-care and healing to stay in equity work for the long-haul. Students, staff, and faculty also had the opportunity for an open discussion about concerns with and suggestions for creating greater inclusion at UC Merced. To learn more about the deep dives, please email Onar at oprimitivo@ucmerced.edu.

Cultural Spaces Update

Thank you to the members of the UC Merced campus community who provided feedback and participated in the process of establishing the first-ever fully resourced cultural center on our campus. Through the online survey, individual meetings, and focus groups, the community has informed the administration of the short-term vision for cultural spaces at UC Merced. The macro vision consists of a social justice quad. This quad will be composed of multiple affinity spaces, a fully-resourced center, and cultural art throughout all spaces. The full vision can be found on the DOS Website by viewing the April 17th town hall slides. Other findings from the process include the sentiments of students, staff, and faculty in terms of why these spaces are crucial for community success. Several overarching themes emerged. including safety, resources, education, and sense of belonging. One survey respondent highlighted the role of resources, sharing that "cultural spaces provide a foundation of support and a stable location for accessing resources that are intentionally created for you [...] and helps students in their personal and academic endeavors."

In terms of logistics, the goal is to open the cultural center and hire one student staff member per each existing affinity space (BCRC and GCRC) during the 2018-2019 academic year. Some of the programming and services the cultural center will provide include the following: leadership and skill building workshops, monthly social forums, lecture series, dialogue series, programming around specific cultures, teach-ins, and programming around identity and intersectionality. Please visit the aforesaid town hall slides to view the complete strategic vision surrounding the upcoming cultural center.

Chief Diversity Officer Search

Committing to University values of diversity, equity, and inclusion, Chancellor Leland has initiated the search for a Chief Diversity Officer. Any recommendations for the qualifications, potential organizational structure, or ideal accomplishments can be sent to cdosearch@ucmerced.edu.