

MARCH ~ APRIL ~ MAY ~ 2019

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*In the records of West African history, "Griot" (pronounced gree-oh) was the honored name bestowed upon wise and knowledgeable story tellers entrusted with the task of documenting tribal histories and genealogies.*

the  
**GRIOT**



**BLACK/AFRICAN AMERICAN  
CULTURAL CENTER**  
COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY



MULTICULTURAL UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH  
ART AND LEADERSHIP SYMPOSIUM

The Multicultural Undergraduate Research Art and Leadership Symposium (MURALS) took place on March 29th, 2019, where participation hit over one hundred as students of color presented their hard work in the Creative Arts, Visual Arts, Social Sciences, Humanities, Service Learning and Leadership, and STEM fields. MURALS strives to recognize typically underrepresented students and encourage social justice through presentations. Judges deliberated on new inventions, studies, paintings, poems, legislation, and more as students fully delivered on their dedication to their passions. Congratulations to all winners, listed below.



Written by: Kerriana Tatum

**SERVICE LEARNING AND LEADERSHIP**

Dominica Manlove, First Place  
Akosua Antobre, Second Place  
Varehya Pratt, Rising Star Award

**SOCIAL SCIENCES/HUMANITIES**

Augusta Irechukwu, First Place  
Jayla Hodge, Second Place  
Zelle Moore, Rising Star

**STEM**

Ryleigh Gellas, First Place  
Brandon Tighe, Second Place  
Danelle Lazcano Concelman,  
Rising Star

**CREATIVE ARTS**

Luis Angel Santacruz, First Place  
Christian Cumber, Second Place  
Jaquieyah Fields, Rising Star

**SOCIAL JUSTICE AND INCLUSION**

Juri Moore  
Jennifer Gomez and Lizeth  
Arellano

**MURALS OVERALL PRIZE**

Xandria Amash and Reed  
Featherstone



WRITTEN BY: ETHAN HARRIS

On April 24th, the B/AACC hosted their “Black Healing Space”. The event served to wrap up the office’s celebration of National Minority Health month. Throughout the entire month of April, the B/AACC office held programs each week promoting the four pillars of health: nutritional, physical fitness, mental, and spiritual. The event was led by Reneca Ruff and her husband, Duan. With the help of B/AACC staff, they transformed the space into one of meditation and intentional, introspective thought. To facilitate this, each student was given bluetooth headphones that played a medley of soothing sounds, interjected with sound bites of historical speeches and powerful messages from historically black figures. The office lights were dimmed, and the furniture rearranged to create an intimate environment that supported painting, journaling, or silent stretching. Although each student was in a world of their own creation, everyone was in close proximity to one another, giving the space a familial feel.

# black healing space

As the time in the space was coming to a close, Zion Jones led everyone through a short, 10 minute guided meditation. The meditation capped the evening beautifully and solidified all the spiritual healing that everyone had dealt with within themselves. Overall, the Black Healing Space was a huge success! It gave students and staff a much needed reprieve from the stressors of daily life as we head into finals. Within the space, students were able to find peace, express creativity, and most importantly, take time to heal.

# AFRICANS UNITED PRESENTS: AU NIGHT

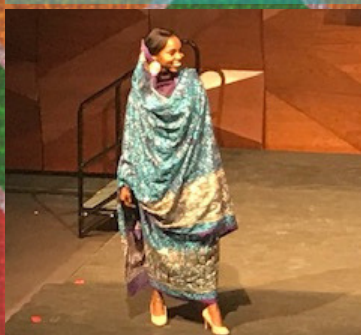
WRITTEN BY: ZION JONES

To celebrate African culture on CSU's campus, Africans United kicked off a week dedicated to just that, leading up to their annual AU Night on April 19, 2019.

This spectacular event featured over 15 cultural performances representing over 15 different African countries. It included dances, spoken word by Devin Jones, drumming by Wyoming African Student Association, and a fashion show. Africans United also took the opportunity to reveal the winners of their African United Achievement Fund; a scholarship that awards graduating high school seniors money to pursue their journey to higher education. The event ended with recognition of valuable members of AU this year, including AU's outstanding and dedicated advisor Derek Nettingham, new executive members for the next academic year, and graduating seniors. The week prior consisted of events such as community service events with the Mulberry Community Gardens, a guided meditation: Zen with Zion, and a promotional party on the LSC Plaza.



Members also took an opportunity to explore Old Town Fort Collins for an ice cream social. All events were a great time to bond, explore our cultural identities, and fulfill our philanthropy of engagement and empowerment within the larger community.



"The forces that unite us are intrinsic and greater than the superimposed influences that keep us apart." - Dr. Kwame Nkrumah

# AU NIGHT,

## CONT'D



## Rooted in Hxrstory: an Ode to Women's History Month

written by:  
Jaquieyah Fields

The Black/African American Cultural Center, in partnership with United Women of Color, hosted an event titled "Rooted in Hxrstory", in honor of Women's History Month. The theme of this event was centered around representing women as flowers, capturing the process of development and growth in becoming a womxn from different perspectives of individuals. The event included keynote speaker Simone Ross, a CSU alumni who shared her process and experiences

surrounding creating your own seat at the table and demanding space to be heard. She phenomenally presented how she continues to "learn to unlearn, to relearn" - changing her thought process and self-perceptions in order to get to where she wants to be and how she wants to succeed. Attendees left feeling empowered and with a gift of flower seeds and affirmations to tie in the theme of flowers blossoming, that they too may blossom into something great.

# UNITED IN MUSIC: UWC SPRING CONCERT



written by: Ronke Adebayo

The United Women of Color (UWC) Spring Concert happens every April and it is a time where we showcase phenomenal black female artists. The concert is always a big and exciting time for the CSU community and the UWC members. UWC's goal with our spring concert is to give women of color, especially artists, the platform to shine and be an inspiration. It centers the theme of empowerment for women of color. To kick start the concert, two amazing artists, **Rachel Bailey** and **Jay Triiple** opened, setting the pace with great performances. Rachel Bailey had the crowd dancing with her amazing voice

and killer dance moves, and **Jay Triiple** got the crowd excited with her amazing raps. This year for the concert, UWC brought the stunning and talented **Justine Skye** as the main artist. She performed some of her hit songs including "Build", "Heaven", and "You Don't Know Me". The crowd loved her presence and performance. Justine's energy was high and amazing and the crowd followed suit. The UWC spring concert gives everyone a space to be in community and have fun with one another. Be sure to tune in next year for another great UWC Week and concert.



# REAL TALK

## New Age Activism

"Social media makes it easy to claim but you're for but it's kind of inadequate because you're getting the word out but it's a shield of safety in comparison to what our ancestors have endured."

"The real activists are the people that go out of their way to work on an issue, but most of those people don't get the publicity they deserve for it."

"I'm having a hard time with the activists that are becoming celebrities. Are you a celebrity first of an activist first?"

## Home for the Holidays

"How do you be present and authentic at the same time around the holidays?"

## The Validity of Reclaiming the N Word

"Not saying one is worse than the other, but racism and anti-blackness are very different and we don't separate the difference which can be dangerous."

"Who are you choosing to check on the use of the word? What does that say to them and those around you?"

## Shut Up and Play

"People automatically think that black athletes come from nothing but we've all grown up different so representing authentically and accurately isn't the same for everyone."

"We shouldn't expect A, B and C from someone because what happens when they can't fulfill it?"

## Pride in the Black Community

"People shouldn't have to feel obligated to explain to other people who they are."

"I'm not gonna go drop it like it's hot at the family BBQ in comparison to my female counterparts because I'll be getting those weird looks. Sometimes I do drop it like it's hot at the family function because I want the smoke. I have time today." - Mohammed



WRITTEN BY: KERRIANA TATUM



The men of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc. welcomed six new members into their organization, and presented them to the CSU community, the UNC-Greeley community, and Black Greek life on April 20th, 2019. As NPHC continues to build up its individual organizations, there are many strong, smart, young men and women who have stepped up to contribute to the council, and the young men of Kappa

are no exception. We're ecstatic to see the presence of Eman McNeil, who will be representing the crimson and cream on CSU's campus next year. Congratulations to all Spring 19' initiates: Christian Williams, Paul Wilson, Jerone Jackson, Isaiah Swopes, Ofori Boateng, and Eman McNeil for taking on the responsibilities of Kappa Alpha Psi. Welcome to the Yard!

# KAPPA ALPHA PSI FRATERNITY, INC.

NEW MEMBER PRESENTATION



# DELTA SIGMA THETA SORORITY, INC.

NEW MEMBER PRESENTATION



WRITTEN BY: KERRIANA TATUM



The women of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. presented seven new members in Greeley, CO on April 20th, 2019. Tau Lambda has made strides since reviving their presence on CSU's campus and UNC Greeley's campus. The Devastating Divas welcomed Isabelle Rayburn,

Marcela Riddick, Mia Adkins, Kalie Black, Micaela Parker, Tabitha Jones, and Michaela Conway this semester, and we're excited to see what they have in store. Congratulations on repping the crimson and cream, ladies, and welcome to the Yard!

# ALPHA KAPPA ALPHA SORORITY, INC.

## NEW MEMBER PRESENTATION



written by:  
Kerriana Tatum



The women of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. presented their four newest members on Sunday, April 28th to the CSU and Black Greek community. With every new addition to the National PanHellenic Council, there is new energy and strength brought forth to contribute to the community

and Black visibility on campus. We're excited to see what Alyssa Caldwell-McGee, Analyssa Green, London Evans, and Simone Butler bring to Alpha Kappa Alpha's Xi Eta chapter. We're excited to see your presence and commitment, ladies. Congratulations, Pretty Girls! Welcome to the Yard!

# OMEGA PSI PHI FRATERNITY, INC. NEW MEMBER PRESENTATION

WRITTEN BY: HENRY COOPER



On April 14, 2019, the Lambda Beta Chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity Incorporated welcomed the new initiate, Elias (Eli) Sutton. His line name is OwtQast. Eli is a current sophomore studying Political Science at Colorado State University. He is also a part of the university's track and field team,

where he competes in the 60 and 200-meter sprints for the indoor season, and 100, 200, 4x1, and long jump for the outdoor season. Because the funky Lambda Beta is a joint chapter, Eli was presented on the University of Northern Colorado's campus at the Marcus Garvey center. Welcome to the Yard, Eli!

# MOVIE CORNER:

## BLACKKKLANSMAN

a **Spoiler-Free** article by Ahonsi Ohimai



BlackKKlansman, directed by Spike Lee, features the tale of an African-American man infiltrating the Ku Klux Klan to investigate the way they operate. Spike Lee won his first ever Oscar award for Best Adapted Screenplay, which I believe speaks to the greatness of this movie as it has taken over 30 years for this to occur in his triumphant career. The movie takes place in Colorado Springs with their local police department and provides insight into the operations of the KKK at this time. At this conclusion of the movie, Vance Payne led a student discussion touching on the different aspects of the movie and how the themes relate to current life on CSU's campus. One discussion was centered on

on the way race relations have changed or not since the original story took place. Another topic was how the cop had to deal with racism from other officers while working against the KKK. Finally, the conversation ended on how police were more scared of Kwame Tori than the actual KKK who was actually violent. The conversations surrounding these topics were enjoyable, as they really helped put into perspective the last implications the movie has on the general climate today. Overall, it is highly recommended that everyone watch the movie if they get the chance and find a takeaway that they can apply to everyday life, and continue having conversations around race relations.

# NATIONAL MINORITY HEALTH MONTH

WRITTEN BY:  
JOURNEY TAYLOR

The month of April is National Minority Health Month, and to celebrate the occasion, we hosted one event each week concerning a different aspect of health. The first week focused on nutritional health, which included a presentation by a dietitian on nutritional myths, healthy practices for college students and how to grocery shop on a budget. The following weeks were centered around mental health and spiritual health.

Activities to acknowledge these topics consisted of a Real Talk and a Black Healing Space. Students of all ages as well as faculty and staff attended these events in an effort to learn more about healthy practices to implement into their lives and have a little fun while doing it. Giving ourselves space not only to learn about our health, but also to address our health and ways to improve it is the key to a healthy future.

# Celebrating Our Excellence

The 35th Annual In Pursuit of Excellence Awards was a great way to close out yet another great year. The evening began with the whole room Swag Surfin like it was 2009, lead by the 2018-2019 B.E.S.T. staff. Brittany Soloman took the crowd through a wonderful rendition of “Lift Every Voice and Sing”, the powerful words of the Black National Anthem. Then Dr. Blanche Hughes captivated the audience with her inspiring words as she presented Morris Price, Jr., Colorado State Alum and brother of Phi Beta Sigma, with the “Pillar of Excellence” award, one that recognizes continued commitment and leadership throughout the CSU and Fort Collins community and beyond. This set the tone for the night as various students, faculty, and staff were recognized for contributing greatly to the community throughout the year. Entertainment was provided by Michelle Mendoza, who once again shared a beautiful spoken word to celebrate the 2019 graduates; Ezi Ohaya from Africans United blew everyone away with a



traditional Nigerian dance. We also had the opportunity to hear from outstanding students from each year. They showed their gratitude and shared with us what they intend on accomplishing in the near future. The ceremony closed with Michaelah Coleman singing “Hero”, as the 2019 graduates accepted their Kente stoles and stood on stage for all to admire. Congratulations to the Class of 2019! Go Rams!



# A W A R D S R E C I P I E N T S

Vivian L. Kerr Outstanding Student Award: Jayla Hodge  
 Dr. Dawn Person Outstanding Graduate Student Award: Selam Tewahade  
 Dr. Blanche M. Hughes Distinguished Faculty/ Staff Award: Melissa Edwards  
 Bruce E. Smail Diversity Award: Michelle Mendoza  
 Paul Chambers Outstanding Student Organization Award: Africans United  
 Outstanding Freshman Award: Merry Gebretsadik  
 Outstanding Sophomore Award: Ronke Adebayo  
 Outstanding Junior Award: Deborah Ilangikwa  
 Outstanding Senior Award: Akosua Antobre  
 Jennifer Williams Molock Outstanding Greek Chapter Award: Omicron Omicron Chapter of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc.  
 NPHC Highest GPA: Xi Eta Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Inc.  
 Bill Green Outstanding Student-Athlete Award: Barry Wesley

Outstanding Rites of Passage Mentee Award: Simone Butler  
 Outstanding Rites of Passage Mentor Award: Analyssa Green  
 Highest GPA Freshman: Chelsey Bankhead & Lisa Natasha Nyangao  
 Highest GPA Sophomore: Stephanie Cloughesy  
 Highest GPA Junior: Ashli Hellman  
 Highest GPA Senior: Sierra Thompkins  
 Outstanding Staff Member: Mohammed York  
 Director's Award "Fight the Power": Jayla Hodge  
 Special Friend Award: Tamara Wesley  
 Pillar of Excellence: Morris Price  
 Paul Chambers Scholarship Recipient: Shirley Randolph & Puleng Marutle  
 Claridy Hill Scholarship Recipient: Merry Gebretsadik  
 United Men of Color Scholarship: Ahmed Farah Hirsi

