

INTERCULTURAL LEADERSHIP AWARD RECIPIENTS

Thanks to funding from the Irvine Foundation and the Goble Foundation, Westmont selected its inaugural recipients of the Intercultural Leadership Award. These six students are actively involved in broadening students' understanding of diversity, the realities of our racialized society and its impacts on our campus and the church.

The 2004-2005 Intercultural Leadership Award recipients and the organizations with which they are working are:

Sarah Akinwale (Junior)
Black Student Union

Stephanie Crockett (Junior)
Racial Equality & Justice Group

Daniel Galicia (Sophomore)
Latino Cultural Organization

Laurraine Gereige (Senior)
Nomads, International Students

Candice Mingleton (Sophomore)
Black Student Union

Shannon Reid (Junior)
Racial Equality & Justice Group

Here are reflections from two of these students on their experiences and leadership at Westmont.



DIVERSITY COMMITTEE 2004-2005

Jane Higa, Chair

Melissa Burns	Thomas Jayawardene
Krista Caballero	Alyssa Shangraw
Chris Call	Sarah Shoemaker
Toya Cooper	Heather Speirs
Julissa Delgado	Reggie Williams
Bob Duchin	Paul Willis
Jaclyn Grant	Elena Yee

Sarah Akinwale

As an intercultural leader, I have thus far enjoyed my time and involvement in the BSU (Black Student Union), Events Assistant for Diversity in Admissions, as well as my involvement with the Orientation Team at the beginning of this year. Each area has allowed me to face and tackle new challenges in the areas of leadership, service, integrity, faith, and learning.

I have grown in a lot of ways, spiritually, emotionally, and mentally. I have matured from when I first started my journey here at Westmont College my Freshman year. I have participated in multicultural leadership conferences, Intercultural Leadership retreats and meetings, Supper Clubs and in the student leadership retreat at the beginning of the school year with leaders of WSM and WACC. These activities have taken me out of my comfort zone, and forced me to cultivate my mind and every part of my being as I've entered into meaningful dialogue and interaction.

I wouldn't trade my experience and all its hardships and successes for anything in the world. I truly feel that God has been showing me personally how, when one makes themselves available and broken, they can learn and truly appreciate that broken mirror we are all a part of and that God binds together through this grace and love to reflect His redemptive reflection.

It has been a pleasure and honor to serve. I will take my experiences lived and lessons learned with me to share and enlighten others as well as use throughout the course of my life.

Laurraine Marcelle Gereige

As an intercultural leader, my vision was to facilitate discussion between people as a means to ameliorate prejudice and disintegrate the edge and uncertainty which appear at the doorstep of differences. I saw that such communication could be facilitated by creating a safe arena in which our differences could be discussed and laid on the table.

I believe that such an arena can only be created if we prepare our hearts and minds to welcome new and probably controversial ideas and assess them through the lens of true community which encompasses love and perseverance. Yet, it was important for me to keep in mind that such communication should not seek homogeneity as an ends, but tend to explain differences and render them rich and unique.

I am extremely grateful for the opportunity of being one of the intercultural leadership awardees, for it gave me the opportunity to voice my concerns for this campus on a larger scale. I trust that Westmont will achieve its goals for diversity one day, and I pray that God will grant our institution the perseverance and passion for the hard work ahead.

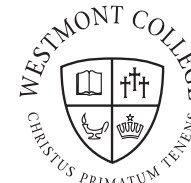
The challenges I have come across as a leader this year have certainly made me grow in various ways. I struggled with the lack of knowledge or interest on world issues that students have, and thus invited students on various occasions to look at the world under a different lens. The progress has been slow but holds a lot of promise. May Westmont continue to warmly welcome students from diverse backgrounds as it has welcomed me. *Liyoubarikakom el lah.*

ON THE WEB!

Check out what you can access via Westmont's Web page on diversity:
http://www.westmont.edu/_academics/pages/diversity/

- Current and past issues of *Across Cultures*
- Diversity-related excerpts from the Long Range Plan
- The 2003-2004 Report on Diversity
- Information about Intercultural Programs
- Members of the campus Diversity Committee
- Diversity in Evangelical Higher Education
- Links to diversity in higher education Web sites.

Bookmark the site and return to it periodically to see what's new!



Across Cultures

NOTES FROM WESTMONT'S DIVERSITY COMMITTEE

ISSUE 12

MARCH 2005

THE SUPPER CLUB—AND OTHER HOPEFUL SIGNS IN OUR COMMUNITY

by Provost Shirley Mullen

The past several weeks have again brought diversity issues to the forefront of our community life. In some ways, it could seem like another round of the same old thing.

First, feelings were hurt—in this case as a result of something said in a chapel message, (one that was meant, ironically, to celebrate the richness of diversity within the Kingdom of God) but perhaps even more so by the apparent response of the audience to what was said.

Second, the initial response to the hurt was that it was not intended.

Third, as evidenced in the pages of the Horizon over the course of several weeks, the community took sides behind either those whose feelings were hurt, or behind those who are protesting that they did not intend anything hurtful. Lots of people ended up very discouraged, wondering if Westmont had made any progress at all in becoming a truly welcoming community where all of us are “we” and no one is a “they.”

That is the bad news.

The good news is that this season did not, in fact, end up being another round of the same old thing. Several things were different this time.

First of all, lots of people, especially many students of color, were willing to take the time to engage in many conversations—some one-on-one, some in groups—to help our community become more aware of why what happened could, quite understandably, be hurtful to our community to the point of provoking a public response. These people risked being misunderstood, in order to help us become the community that we believe we are called to be in Christ. These conversations were among students, between students and administrators, between students and the

campus pastor, between faculty and students, among the faculty, etc.

Second, lots of people were willing to listen and learn. Ben Patterson set a great example when he shared in a subsequent chapel message what he had learned about our community as a result of the conversations following the first chapel message. He modeled what it means to bring together an appreciation for the role of intent in our actions, but also the humbling realization that, no matter what our intent, we can sometimes be an agent of hurt in others. In short, in this situation, there was a critical mass of people in our community who were determined to “stay at the table”—people who believe that we can, by the grace of God, become a community where everyone truly feels “at home.”

A “Town Meeting” was held Wednesday evening, February 23, in Page Hall to hear

continued under Supper Club, page 2

Westmont strives to be a community informed and enriched by thoughtful and intentional study of and interaction with multiple cultures. As a liberal arts college rooted in Christ, we celebrate diversity as an aspect of God's creation; we strive to create community out of rich diversity as an aspect of building God's Kingdom in the world; we value the range of perspectives on the world that stimulates intellectual and personal growth; and we seek for faculty and staff to apprentice students in the art of dealing with diversity in constructive ways. It is an aim of Westmont to prepare graduates who will function intelligently, effectively and for the good of our increasingly intercultural world.

From Long Range Plan Excerpts

Some Reflections on the Recent Campus Conversation

by President Stan Gaede

What began as a misunderstanding, and then quickly escalated to hurt and sharp words, eventually produced an extraordinary amount of understanding. Call it education. It is a part of helping students (and staff) come to terms with real diversity in our community. Nothing easy about the process, but all told, an important step on the way to being the kind of community we want to be.

Ben Patterson modeled, in an incredibly vivid way, what it means to be a learner and, in chapel, talked to the entire community about this being “our” issue, not “their” issue. Through it all, Shirley Mullen and Jane Higa gave wonderful leadership, pulling people

together and encouraging frank but gracious conversation. This task was made more doable, however, because those who were initially hurt neither harbored resentment nor escaped to isolation. Rather, they sought out others, graciously bearing their souls but also intent upon listening and learning.

In the end, I think this was one of the best “across the campus” conversations about diversity that I've ever seen. Not easy. But few good things are. I'm extremely proud of these good folks who dearly love our students, and model what it means to be a follower of Christ in the midst of our misunderstandings. I'm grateful.

FALL 2003 FULL-TIME UNDERGRADUATE ENROLLMENT CALIFORNIA PRIVATE BACCALAUREATE LIBERAL ARTS COLLEGES

Institution Name	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian or	American	Race/	Nonresident
	Non-Hispanic	Non-Hispanic		Pacific	Indian/	Ethnicity	
				Islander	Alaska Native	Unknown	Alien
University of Judaism	88.4%	0.7%	3.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	7.2%
Westmont College	82.0%	1.1%	6.7%	5.6%	1.2%	2.6%	0.8%
Thomas Aquinas College	81.9%	0.3%	5.1%	3.9%	0.9%	0.0%	7.8%
Christian Heritage College	77.4%	4.7%	11.0%	3.7%	0.2%	0.9%	2.2%
Claremont McKenna College	61.8%	4.0%	9.5%	14.4%	0.7%	6.9%	2.7%
Scripps College	61.1%	3.2%	5.3%	13.1%	0.4%	14.7%	2.2%
Harvey Mudd College	57.1%	0.4%	4.9%	18.6%	0.4%	15.6%	3.0%
Pomona College	56.9%	5.8%	8.2%	12.9%	0.9%	13.4%	2.0%
Occidental College	54.8%	6.9%	15.1%	12.1%	1.1%	6.0%	4.0%
Mills College	48.1%	9.9%	9.9%	8.4%	0.7%	19.4%	3.6%
Whittier College	46.0%	3.3%	25.5%	9.0%	1.9%	9.2%	5.1%
Pitzer College	45.1%	5.5%	12.3%	9.8%	1.1%	23.3%	2.9%
The National Hispanic University	3.2%	2.6%	82.7%	6.4%	0.6%	2.6%	1.9%
AVERAGE	58.7%	3.7%	15.4%	9.1%	0.8%	8.8%	3.5%

Supper Club, *cont'd from page 1*

from members of the Supper Club—group of seven students who have been working this year to be agents of redemptive community at Westmont—particularly around the issues of diversity. That is, they have worked to create enough trust among themselves that they have the courage to talk about the hard issues associated with diversity.

The Supper Club began when one group of students wondered why Westmont as a college puts so much emphasis on diversity. These students agreed to meet with another group of students who would have said that Westmont needs to put more emphasis on diversity. The students agreed to meet for four times, along with two administrators, to talk about the issues.

We met around meals—including several ethnic meals. That is significant. There is something about “breaking bread together” that is deeply Christian and that makes it hard to be either unkind—or superficial—while sitting together at the table.

There were some ground rules set—everyone had to be present each time; no one could make fun of anyone else either during or after the meeting; no one could talk disparagingly about anyone in the group to someone else after the meeting—and anything was fair game to ask... And so, we started, slowly.

First, we asked people to speak about

what they thought were the hardest issues about diversity, or the issues that seemed controversial—either to them or to others in the community. We talked about such issues as cultural diversity scholarships, and what counts as being “diverse”—why some ethnicities seem to count more than others.

Second, we talked about why it might be important for Westmont to care about diversity, and the challenges of doing that in helpful ways.

Third, we talked about what it would look like if Westmont were the kind of community that it ought to be in relation to diversity. And finally, we are still talking about how we take what we have learned into the larger community. The students certainly began that process in the Town Meeting last week.

It is certainly not that the seven students who started in the group now all agree with each other on these matters. But they have come to care about each other enough to try to see things from each other’s perspective and they have come to trust each other enough to be able to learn from each other.

We can only hope that the kind of trust and community that the Supper Club members are building among themselves will be contagious within our community. And we trust that this is only one of the ways that the Holy Spirit is changing us at Westmont into people of the Kingdom.

DIVERSITY IN EVANGELICAL HIGHER EDUCATION

William Kratt, a Ph.D. candidate at Claremont Graduate University, completed a dissertation in 2004 on Diversity in Evangelical Higher Education. Westmont is one of the two major objects of study in the dissertation.

Kratt’s conclusions are not surprising. Perhaps there is some consolation in the fact that a person seeking to be objective about our campus drew very much the same conclusions about diversity as those within the institution. For a summary of his observations and conclusions, visit the home page for diversity at Westmont (see page 4) and click on the link for “Diversity in Higher Education.”

*Lord God, we thank You
For calling us into the company
Of those who trust in Christ
And seek to obey His will.
May Your Spirit guide and strengthen us
In mission and service to Your world
For we are strangers no longer
But pilgrims together
on the way to Your Kingdom.
Amen.*

The Pilgrim Prayer
The Council of Churches for Britain and Ireland

EN COLOR

by Westmont in Mexico participant
Stephanie Smith '06

La Fiesta de la Cruz

My familiar plazas and roads become foreign all over again. Floods of Aztec dancers fill the streets, their tall feathered head-dresses tickling the sky and their shell-laden ankles pounding the earth. Street vendors have their very best to offer tonight with towers of buñuelos, stained-glass gelatins and gorditas singing together in sizzling pans. The night air is permeated with copal that rises from swaying hands and the haunting echo of conch shells ring as clearly as the church bells from *el Convento de la Cruz*. Everything is alive and moving to a new rhythm.

Going into the church sanctuary I find myself asking, “God, do you take pleasure in all of this?” In the aisle another flood of dancers fall to their knees and a shot from a nearby firework sets me on edge. I do not know. All I know is that there is still so much to this culture that I do not understand. I am not used to everyone moving together to the same rhythm. Back at home, our feet are not united. Everyone dances different dances in the United States of America, each with different costumes and different customs and different creeds. The land is the only thing that holds us together there. Here the people hold together the land—with their bare hands.

And yet this seems like a land of contradictions. My black and white mind sees Aztec gods loudly intruding into the holy house of Jesus Christ. But then I think that there must be a method to this madness. There is a story to be told here, and I do not yet have all the pages. The black and white pictures need some color, and the words need some translation. I ask my Lord for a new set of eyes, and I am witnessing their past hues uniquely blending into their present picture. And then the conch cry does not sound so different from the church bell’s ballad, and the length of the feathers grows into divinely glowing rays.

Here in Mexico, History still has a part to play in the Present. It is not shut outside the doors, or left out in the cold to die and be forgotten. It does not beg for others to see it or to give it some pocket change. It is still very alive and well. It has feet that dance to a beat that the heart decides, and it

AND THE SURVEY SAYS ...

by Associate Provost Bill Wright

The National Survey of Student Engagement was administered to first-year and senior Westmont students in 2001 and 2004. Disaggregated data from items involving students’ relationships with the faculty, administration and other students, as well as general perceptions of the college were examined. Broad generalizations are difficult, given the small number of respondents in the non-White categories. Nevertheless, the following observations seem warranted:

1. On the general question regarding “quality of relationship with faculty members,” students of all ethnic groups report that faculty are quite helpful and available. However, there appear to be some differences as to which students seek out specific contact with faculty. Non-white students are less likely to discuss the grade received on an assignment with the instructor. In the classroom, Asian/Pacific Islander students report asking fewer questions and participate less in class discussions than most other students.
2. Although student relationships with administration and staff were not described quite as positively as relationships with the faculty, these relationships were generally rated as helpful and considerate by students of all ethnic backgrounds.
3. Students’ relationships with other students were described as friendly and supportive. In the 2001 survey results, few differences

has a voice that cries out to the stars. Here in Mexico, History marches right through the most holy of doors in the land, and pays homage at the feet of the Present. I would like to say that we treat History in the same way in the United States, but the Future has taken its place—only, we are still waiting for it to show up.

So now I am standing here appreciating this place—with a new set of eyes. Thank you Lord, for them. Help me to use them to see things as you do; to love what you love and hate what you hate. I want to find you in a new way here. Take my old eyes away. Those eyes saw things only in black and white, but colors bring life.

between ethnic groups were noted. In 2004, the non-white population described their student relationships in more negative terms than the majority population. We would attribute this primarily to the fact that the campus was much more self-aware of diversity concerns in 2004 than 2001 and students of color would feel freer to talk about these issues—rather than that there is a marked decline in ethnic relations. However, there is some anecdotal evidence to suggest that with the larger number of students of color on campus and the greater emphasis in the community on the subject of diversity, there may have been some attitude “backlash” toward students of color during this time.

4. Responses from all ethnic groups were positive that the college provided the necessary support for students to succeed academically. Responses were not as positive, particularly from the ethnic minority groups, as to whether the college provided the necessary support for students to thrive socially.
5. The two items dealing with the extent to which the college contributed to students’ understanding of other racial and ethnic groups, and the degree to which the college encourages interaction with students different from themselves generated quite varied responses from the majority and minority populations.

Bless our beautiful land,
O Lord,
with its wonderful variety
of people, of races,
cultures and languages.

May we be a nation
of laughter and joy,
of justice and reconciliation,
of peace and unity,
of compassion, caring
and sharing.

We pray this prayer for
a true patriotism,
in the powerful name of
Jesus our Lord.

- Desmond Mpilo Tutu