



Office of Multicultural Programs (OMP) — Established 1989 — Frisch 008 — (716) 888-2787

## Future Events—Next Fall

**Auditions:** The Canisius Performance Troupe will hold auditions on Sept. 10 at 1:00 p.m. in Student Ctr. Conf. Rm.

**IU Soul Revue:** The College is hoping to schedule a fifth performance by this talented group from Indiana University.

## Asian-American Quiz April 2011

The winner was Amina Benman '12. Congratulations and enjoy your \$50 gift card! Thanks to all who enjoyed learning interesting facts about our Canisius family!

## Donning of the Stoles

Tishana Daniel MS '12



The *Afro American Society* and Dr. Florence Rozier '85 honored graduating seniors of primarily African ancestry with the Donning of the Kente Stole, on Thursday, May 5. This ceremonial garment is worn as an acknowledgement of African ancestry, and it symbolizes accomplishment, community, unity and pride. (Row 1: Ayana Harris, Kaimessa Stevenson, Karen Williams, Ebony Douglas, Lauren Rainey, Kerron Johnson, Sarah Homere, Amber Villacrusis Row 2: Damion Morris, Michael Coad, Bennie Williams, Terrell Robinson.)

## Graduation 2011!

On May 18th, Canisius held its graduate level ceremony and 352 students, 23 of whom were ALANA students, graduated! The



college's undergraduate ceremony was on May 21, with 634 undergraduate students, of whom 51 were ALANA students! We are proud of all our students and all they have achieved. (Pictured above: Melanie Parker, Karen Williams, Ayana Harris, Victoria Lawrence, and Amber Villacrusis.)

## Afro American Society Movie Night

Donovan Griffin '12

The movie, *Hollow Image*, left me filled with a lot of emotions and questions. The discussion that followed included these issues: Are you considered "phony" for wanting to make your life better? Will your friends accept you? Should you help others even if they do not appreciate your efforts? Those are just a few of the hundreds of questions I constantly ask myself every time I think about *Hollow Image*. I definitely recommend this thought provoking movie to the ALANA community.

## Afro American Society Fashion Show

Simone Jarmon '11

The *Afro American Society* hosted its annual fashion show on April 8. The theme, "Seven Deadly Sins" was represented in the music, fashions, and attitudes of the models. This year was especially exciting because an alum, Thamara Myrie '10, of rELLIEmY, was featured as one of the designers in the show. The show was hosted by Gylan Saunders '12 and Phylicia Brown '11. Thank you for a great event!

## Indiana University/Canisius College Pilot Project

Canisius College and Indiana University (IU) sponsored a pilot recruitment project for several of our students to investigate graduate school opportunities at IU. Both institutions are exploring ways to encourage more ALANA students to attend graduate school and provide guidance during this process. During Easter break, Canisius sent students to IU, where they were able to speak with representatives of different graduate programs. Dr. Charles Sykes of IU was a first-rate host, representing the African American Arts Institute where he serves as the executive director. Canisius students were given tours of the campus



and were able to attend a performance by the IU Soul Revue. Everyone agreed they were fortunate to see such great performers! Member of OMP's Performance Troupe were also able to perform and received great reviews. OMP graduate assistant, Tishana Daniel MS '12, was an excellent assistant and chaperone. The student coordinator, Michael Coad '11, also provided great assistance. Other students in attendance were Amber Villacrusis '11, Terrell Robinson '11, Elliott Raimondo '11, Mahamud Muya '12, Leman Harris '11, and Michael McClurkin '13. The director of OMP, Sababu Norris, served as a chaperone and advisor. Canisius and IU hope to continue this successful project.

## ALANA Retreat

The Canisius College ALANA Retreat was held on Saturday, April 16 in Grupp from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Alejandro Nunez '11 and Julian Radney '11 were co-chairs of the student committee



that organized this event along with co-advisors, Sababu Norris of OMP and Mark Piatkowski '01 of Residence Life. Mark received an award for his contribution to this event from the committee and OMP. This retreat was held for ALANA students to provide skills helpful to them in college and afterwards as well. The workshop topics included: What Does It Mean to Attend a Jesuit Institution?, Relationships/Health/Wellness, Financial Budgeting, and How to Navigate a Predominately White Institution. This fun retreat was not only informative but free as well. Approximately 50 students attended, and everyone enjoyed cultural foods from Gi-Gi's and Niagara Café. Our thanks to the sponsors of this event: Afro American Society, COPE, Counseling Center, CPLD, LASAF, OMP, Public Safety, and Student Success and Retention.

## Nexus Banquet

Michael Coad '11



The *Afro American Society* was invited to the Beta Sigma Kappa Afro-Latino Fraternity Nexus Banquet, so I was one of the honored guests. It was amazing to be part of an event with so many different clubs and organizations from the Buffalo area coming together for one cause. The *Afro American Society* of Canisius College was honored for our work in the area of ALANA students. This shows how the Society's influence is growing not only as a club at Canisius, but throughout Buffalo. Also, two of the three speakers were from Canisius! One is an alum who I greatly admire, and the other is a current student. It gave me a great sense of pride to be able to see the Canisius family represented so well.

## Taste of Africa

Sandra Nwosu '12



I loved the welcoming atmosphere the *Afro American Society* provided for this event. The president, Bennie Williams '11, did a good job making sure everyone was comfortable. I really enjoyed the 'Did You Know' activity that described a lot of important people and events in the Black History of America. It was very informative and exciting at the same time. The performances by *G-Squad* and the *Gospel Ensemble* were very creative and well presented. The food, which everyone looks forward to, was well catered and included traditional delicacies from various parts of Africa. It was simply delicious. It is surely an event that fosters union among all students on Campus.

## Poetry Slam

Amber Villacrusis '11



The Canisius College Poetry Slam took place on Thursday, March 17 in Palisano Pavilion. I was honored to plan the event and co-host the evening, along with Royshawn Sessum '12, the Sergeant-at-Arms of the *Afro American Society*. The event included performances by the Canisius College Performance Troupe, local college students, alumni, and Ra Perre Shelton of HBO's *Def Jam Poetry Series*. There were about 50 guests at the event, including students and community members. The performers, the hosts and the audience members all formed an inspiring gathering of poetry lovers for this special event.

## A Jesuit's Perspective

Fr. Martin Moleski



The Society of Jesus was founded by St. Ignatius Loyola and his companions in 1540. "Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam"—"For the greater glory of God." In Latin, the word "Jesuit" literally means "Jesus-like." Armed with this information, you may now, if you wish, ask whether Canisius is, in fact, a truly "Jesus-like" institution.

In the African American Christian tradition, the choir and congregation sing God's praises full-throated and unsparingly. "Jesus is the answer for the world today. Above him there's no other. Jesus is the way!" (André Crouch).

## Alums in Focus: Canisius Joined Our Lives

Ben Upshaw '92 & Lillie Wiley-Upshaw '90



Lillie Wiley-Upshaw  
(Ben Upshaw's picture unavailable)

We met at an *Afro American Society* meeting at Canisius College in 1988. In 2002, we married and now have three children: Benjamin, Joshua, and Hannah. Our years at Canisius were instrumental in forming both our personal lives and our professional ones as well.

We were both afforded the opportunity to attend Canisius College as Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Scholarship winners in the late 80s. Lillie served as a treasurer of the *Afro American Society* and one of the first co-chairs of the college's Dr. Martin Luther King celebration under the direction of the then newly appointed coordinator of Multicultural Programs, Sababu Norris. Upon graduation, Lillie was featured as one of the students of "Among Our Best," in *The Griffin Newsletter*. (This was an honor that I later shared in '92.) Lillie then went on to work with residence life at Penn State while pursuing graduate studies. She now serves as Vice Dean of Admissions for University at Buffalo Law School and has served in this capacity for the past 10 years. I worked as a member of Circle K International on various fundraisers for the less fortunate during my college years at Canisius. Upon graduation, I worked in real estate and served several years as the assistant director of COPE at Canisius. In 1997, I left my position with Canisius to pursue a master of science degree at NYU in real estate development and asset management. Today, I am a real estate developer in the NYC area and have developed over 1,000 apartments with business affiliates.

Our years at Canisius College have taught us the Jesuit tradition of aiding the less fortunate of our community. Lillie has been honored by the Western New York Minority Bar Association and Medgar Evers College for her efforts in recruiting and retaining minority populations for UB Law School. She has also served on the board of the Niagara Falls YWCA. I am on the board of trustees of Nativity Miguel School of Buffalo, which offers a valuable Catholic elementary school education to the less fortunate of Buffalo. I work with current students as well as alumni to keep them focused on attending college in the future as well as addressing their current academic needs.

Lillie and I believe we have a responsibility to ensure that others receive the same opportunities that we received. In helping others, our lives have been enriched. It is these experiences at Canisius, and in the years that have followed, that have helped us to become the people we are today.

### The Cultural Times Bulletin

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Editor/OMP Interim Admin. Associate.....Lesley Drury  
Bulletin Assistant .....Rev. Martin Moleski, S.J.  
Bulletin Assistant .....Dr. Sandra Estanek  
Graduate Assistant.....Tishana Daniel MS '12  
Student Assistant.....Michael Slis '11  
Director..... Sababu Norris

Canisius College is one of 28 Jesuit colleges in the nation and the premier private college in Western New York. Canisius prepares leaders—intelligent, caring, faithful individuals—able to promote excellence in their professions, their communities and their service to humanity.