

PROVIDENCE COLLEGE

IDEI in Our Community

FEBRUARY 2021 - ISSUE NO. 5

Reflecting on Black History Month

DR. SAAID MENDOZA, IDEI FACULTY IN RESIDENCE

When I reflect on Black History Month, I think about the importance of recognizing that Black History is American history. The success of this nation has heavily depended on exploited Black labor, cultural influences, and intellectual contributions that simply cannot be overlooked. As an educator, I strive to decolonize course content to help students remember that history is written by those in power. When we give others voice, we are able to gain better insight into our biased interpretation of the past. For example, my Stereotypes & Prejudice seminar is currently reading Ibram X. Kendi's "How to Be an Antiracist" and recently watched the 13th documentary by Ava Duvernay. These have led to critical conversations about the social psychology of racism, which lead to a more nuanced and contextualized understanding of the Black lived experience today.

IDEI Updates

2020-2021 MINI GRANT UPDATES

CONGRATULATIONS TO KEVEN MCMAHON OF THE BUSINESS SCHOOL! TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THEIR FULLY FUNDED MINI GRANT VISIT OUR WEBSITE.



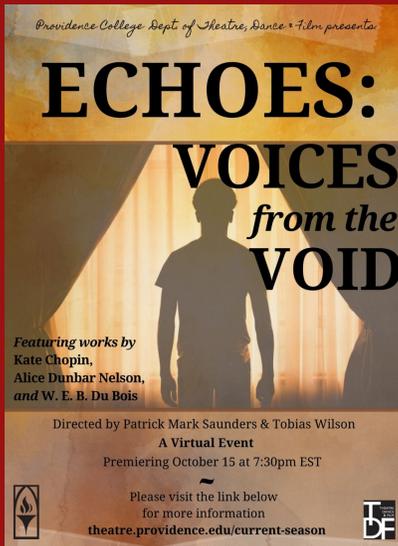
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INCLUSION

Be sure to click the play icon throughout the newsletter to access video interviews and related content! Or check out this newsletter's podcast at the play icon below.



Centering Black & Brown Voices

PC DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE, DANCE & FILM



Erin J. Schmidt '00, assistant professor of theatre, and her colleagues made a concentrated choice to make BIPOC stories and voices the center of their season. The social unrest of this summer in the wake of the murders of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor spurred the department into action and deeper discussions of race. "When it came to our productions and our production season, it became very apparent to us that we needed to make a big shift," said Schmidt. That shift centered around choosing material to "share Black voices, celebrate Black voices, and to focus on Black voices".

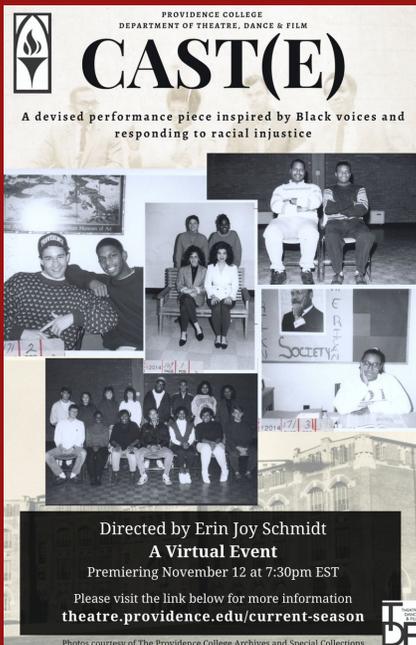
"This was about a very purposeful and very conscious effort to say that we know we have been lacking and we know how important it is to diversify our exploration of the human condition," said Schmidt. With the indispensable help and input of IDEI's visiting professor Theresa Moore, the department was able to produce two shows last semester. "Echoes," directed by Patrick Mark Saunders '13 and Tobias Wilson, is a series of radio-style plays taken from literature and original content from the students. Schmidt directed "Caste," a devised play "based on students' own lives, what was happening at PC, and what is happening in our country." Both are available for viewing online.

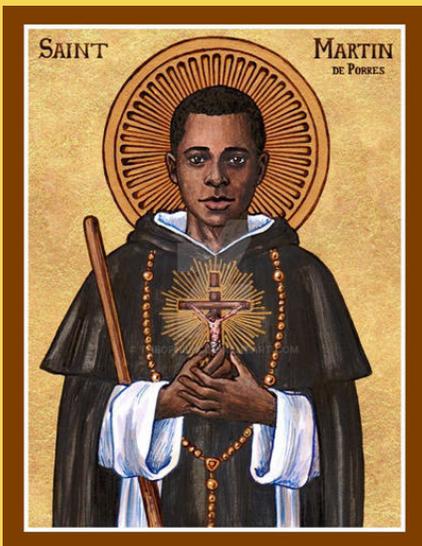
This spring semester there will be two further productions: "Writers' Summit: A Series of One Act Plays Centered on Social Justice Themes" and the musical "Violet". Both productions will be available for viewing online in the coming months.

This isn't a single season effort for Schmidt and her colleagues. They hope to convey that while this is performance work, it is not performative work. As Schmidt often says to her students, "We are going to make mistakes and things will not be perfect, but that is not a reason not to do something." The Department of Theatre, Dance, & Film is committed to continuing to uplift BIPOC voices and voices from marginalized communities. The hope for the coming season is to continue to the expand their look into the human condition by exploring more stories from Black voices, Latinx voices, and indigenous voices.

View performance of "Caste" and "Echoes" and check out the current season at:

<https://theatre.providence.edu/current-season/>





The Importance of Saint Martin de Porres

A CONVERSATION WITH PAM TREMBLAY & CAM MCCAULEY

Both Pam Tremblay, Director of Service Immersion and Social Justice, and Cam McCauley '21 share a love for Saint Martin de Porres, O.P. Born in 1579 in Lima Peru to a Spanish father and mother of African and Native descent, Saint Martin de Porres overcame racial hardships, cared for the poor, and sought to serve God in all he did. Due to this, St. Martin has been given the title of patron saint of social justice, public health workers, and racial harmony--the "perfect patron saint for the year 2020," according to Pam. Living during a time where discrimination towards native and mixed-race peoples was prevalent, St. Martin de Porres joined the local Dominican priory first as a "donado" (term used to describe those who served the community) but was then invited, due to his love of God and others, to sidestep local law and become a fully professed lay brother of the Dominican order. St. Martin spent his time caring for and serving all of God's people and was known for his humble heart and joyful spirit. Pam and Cam invite the community to learn more about St. Martin and to gain from him his witness of humility and hope, recognizing that racial harmony is a long process that asks each of us to participate in.

To learn about Campus Ministry and their DEI efforts download the TORCH App or visit the [Campus Ministry website](#)



Kareem Abdul-Jabbar @ PC

REV. DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR CONVOCATION

To say that Kareem Abdul-Jabbar is a legend is an understatement. The much-lauded athlete and activist was welcomed as the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Convocation keynote speaker on February 11. Abdul-Jabbar did not present a prepared speech, but instead participated in a question-and-answer session moderated by student-athletes David Duke Jr. '22 and Julia Murphy '21. The athlete spoke with grace and conscience about his time playing ball, his charitable foundation, and his work as an activist.

In regards to the work of Dr. King back in the day and the new wave of activists, like Colin Kaepernick and so many others, Abdul-Jabbar states: "The objectives are exactly the same — freedom, justice, and equality for all American citizens regardless of race, ethnicity, national origin, religion. All of those things, none of that means anything. It's the content of our character. That's what we have to focus on and that's the direction that we have to go in."



@ MOORE HALL

- Chalk your answer on the D.I.D. wall



- Check out the BHM Black Figures Gallery
- Follow @thecenteratmoore on Instagram!

The Center at Moore Hall
A cultural space promoting diverse interactions and sustainable social change at Providence College.
institutional-diversity.providence.edu/center-at-moore-h...
Followed by linda.ineus, ann.t.joseph and 58 others

28 Posts 221 Followers 289 Following

Following Message



Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Vision Awards

In 2018, Providence College established the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Vision Award in remembrance of the 50th anniversary of the unjust assassination of the civil rights leader. This honor is awarded annually to individuals or groups who exemplify his teachings and spirit.

This year, Dr. Saaid Mendoza, assistant professor of psychology and IDEI faculty in residence, and Christina Roca '21, global studies and sociology major, were chosen by the selection committee for their work advancing the principles which Dr. King embodied: social justice, advocacy, equality, human rights, the promotion of faith, and the freedom of all people.

For more information about Dr. Saaid Mendoza, Christina Roca and previous award recipients, click the play button below!



DIVERSITY COMMITTEES ON CAMPUS

- Presidential Committee to Address Systemic Racism
- Strategic Directions Committee
- Board of Trustees DEI Committee
- Community Advisory Committee
- Inclusion Committee in Athletics

Visit our website to learn more about our DEI committees on campus.

FEEDBACK / SUGGESTIONS FOR OUR OFFICE

If you would like to provide feedback or suggestions for the IDEI team, please visit the IDEI homepage and click "feedback".

#FriarsInBlack

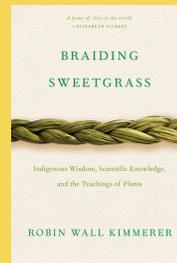
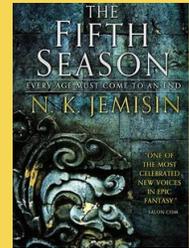
An Athletics Celebration of Black Athletes

Nick Sailor '17, director of training and education for diversity, equity, & inclusion, was interviewed about the #FriarsInBlack campaign - created to highlight and honor Black student-athletes and the tradition of Black excellence at PC that extends to the coaches and greater athletic community. Check out Sailor's interview [here](#).



Come visit the new and improved IDEI site at:

institutional-diversity.providence.edu



RECOMMENDED READS

- The Water Dancer - Ta-Nehisi Coates
- The Fifth Season - N.K. Jemisin
- Braiding Sweetgrass - Robin Wall Kimmerer
- Black Sun - Rebecca Roanhorse
- Legendborn - Tracy Deonn



A Reflection on Black History Month

DR. CHRISTOPHER S. CHAMBERS, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF SOCIOLOGY

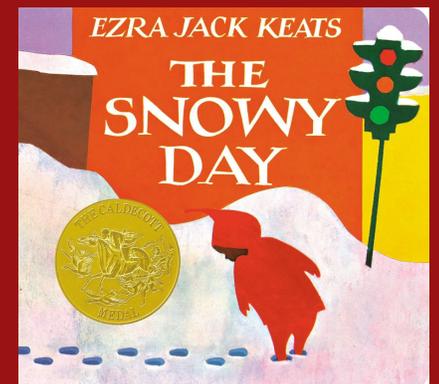
For me, Black History Month is when everyone gets to have a glimpse into the historical account of our lives in America that transcends stereotypes and celebrates our overcoming of limitations and hardship. It is a version of Black life that resonates with me because the people I was most influenced by while growing up reinforced this message daily. My dad saw the world in terms of racial and political consciousness, and he would encourage me to believe that smart and courageous Black people had an obligation to make the world better for people who looked like us. My mother exposed me to a world of fearless and creative Black expression. She introduced me to books and dance where “The Snowy Day” by Ezra Jack Keats and the Alvin Ailey Dance Company were among her (and now my) personal favorites.

I attended primary school with teachers who had been active in the Black arts movement and so they taught us pride and consciousness through the work of Harlem Renaissance poets. Many years later when I discovered I wanted to become a sociologist I knew I wanted to tell stories about Black life in America that emphasized our agency, joy, and creativity. I am drawn to stories because they can be a captivating, sophisticated, and yet accessible way to explain complex social phenomena. So, I examine the stories that Black people relate about being Black. I invite them to recount experiences and events that explore their relationship to our social institutions, norms, and values. I ask them to consider their own lives at the intersection of multiple identities — race, gender, class, sexuality, etc. — to understand the complexity, contradictions, and nuance of our experiences.

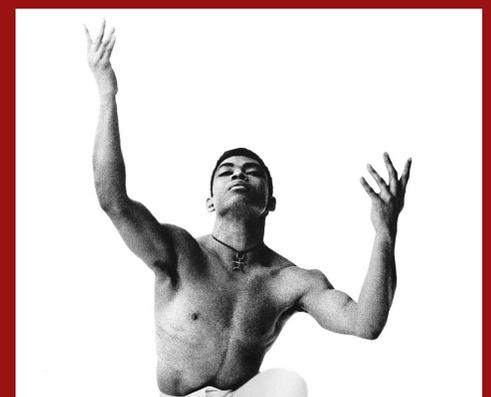
Where the month and my work converge, I believe, is that both provide opportunities to pose sometimes uncomfortable, but always important, questions about how people become marginalized in our society — but also understand how despite that marginalization, people find meaning and promote justice in the world.



Dr. Christopher S. Chambers



Click [here](#) to learn more about the poetry of the Harlem Renaissance.





Celebrating Black History Beyond February

A WORD FROM THE IDEI TEAM

Black History Month dates back to 1925 when historian Carter G. Woodson announced Negro History Week to amplify Black historical presence and contributions. Fifty years later, President Gerald R. Ford officially decreed a national observance and expanded the celebration to a month. Black history mattered before Woodson came along, it mattered 50 years ago, and it matters today. Black history also matters outside the confines of the month of February. It has been wonderful to see the Providence College community mobilize so thoroughly in the celebration of Black History Month. The IDEI team hopes to see and help facilitate more programs and initiatives that center Black and Brown voices at Providence College and in the greater national pantheon.

Black History Month is merely a starting point for the larger conversation about how we incorporate Black history into United States history and global history as a whole. In the words of Shirley Chisholm, the first Black woman in Congress, "I don't measure America by its achievement but by its potential."

Created by:
Perla Castillo Calderon & Kylie Ashton Maurer