The Davis Center advances broad campus engagement with complex issues of identity, history, and cultures as they affect intellectual, creative, and social life.

DIRECTOR’S NOTE:

Our new decade is off to a rough start. COVID changed how we live our lives and both exacerbated and provided a platform to highlight inequality in our systems. We are truly under multiple pandemics. But there were are also victories. Next week we will have the first Woman of Color VP and more than one vaccine was created (in record time!).

As we embark on a new year, let us all take the lessons of 2020 into 2021 and be even more compassionate towards one another. Continuing into this decade, I am comforted by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s words, "I refuse to accept that the view of humankind is so tragically bound to the starless midnight of racism and war that the bright daybreak of peace and brotherhood can never become a reality...I believe that unarmed truth and unconditional love will have the final word."

And it is this month that we celebrate Dr. King’s birthday! The DC has a number of great events lined up for everyone to engage in. Just check out our website for details!
I also want to remind everyone that the DC Team has office hours available for anyone looking to process the insurrection last week or anything else you would like to talk about. Just visit The DC and CEF appointment calendar for times!

In this newsletter, The DC team invites you to create a vision board, learn a little more sign language, and admire the birds as we inform you of events and programs for our community! Read on!

Enjoy,
Eden-Reneé

DC TEAM SHARES...

Nearly everyone I know is looking forward to 2021 being better than 2020. For many, 2020 was so difficult, that it set a low bar for 2021 to be better in comparison. But, what does better look like for you? What goals and aspirations do you want to achieve as we continue with the beginning of a new decade?

This month, I invite you to create a vision board. A vision board is a collection of images that represent the goals you would like to manifest. Having your goals on your wall in this way helps to keep them centered in your day-to-day life, which makes them more achievable.

Your goals may be personal, professional, spiritual, relational...anything. If you are like my son, then all you want is for the Coronavirus to go away. But what does that look like to you? What images would capture what you are looking for? Many vision boards are literal boards with images cut from magazines. Celebrity comedian Steve Harvey has his vision board as the screensaver on his computer. Every time his computer goes to sleep, the images representing his board scroll across the screen. All that to say, your vision board should be what works for you. Want words and not images? Totally up to you!

Not sure what your goals should be? Consider journaling prompts to self-reflect. And always remember: it’s ok for your vision to change. Edit as you see fit. Also remember that visualization is one step in a process, it’ll still take working smart to get there.

Want to go deeper? Create different vision boards for different areas of your life. I want to make one solely about post-COVID travel.

Want to learn more? Here’s an article on the benefits of a vision board and
My name is Aseel Abulhab, and I'm the Assistant Director of the DC. Welcome to Williams Signs! In each newsletter, I will share a new phrase or sign in ASL and a related fun fact. If you have any additional questions or want to engage on the subject, please reach out to me at aa9. Happy signing!

New Sign Phrase: Do you know Nyle DiMarco? He is the first Deaf person to win America's Next Top Model and Dancing with the Stars. He is currently producing a show on Broadway and a show on Netflix called 'Deaf U.' Here he teaches 10 basic ASL phrases.
Last week I stepped out of my mudroom to see this little chickadee sitting on a step. To be honest, I assumed it had run into a window and had died, but as I approached it, I realized it was moving its head around. I picked it up and for about five minutes this little bird hopped around on my hand. I then began to inspect it for a broken wing when it flew away. That brief moment left my spirit soaring for days afterward, which inspired this month's Get Out theme:

THE BENEFITS OF BIRDS, BIRDING & BIRD FEEDING
A study released by the journal, *Environmental Economics*, in December 2020, announced a fascinating finding: diversity of bird species in one's life equates to financial benefits of about $150 a month. The study is quick to note that the truly important aspect here is biodiversity in general -- the more varieties of species around you, the more likely you are to live in a place that's ecologically healthy. A healthy environment leads to a healthier mind and body: as has been discussed previously, it's already known that merely being in a forest for as little as a half-hour has medicinal value. While many people do not live in a magical mountainous wonderland like that found in northern Berkshire county, there are ways to encourage more ecological diversity among birds even in the most urban of environments: FEED THEM.

Cornell's Ornithology lab notes that while encouraging birds to congregate around feeders does increase the chance of spreading avian disease among each other, but the benefit of providing stable, nutritious vittle to them throughout winter and early spring does drastically improve their chances of survival and when one weighs the pros and cons, in terms of a bird's quality of life, feeding them is good. Beyond the benefits to the birds, the addition of a variety of fascinating little feathered friends visiting one each day is shown to improve mental health.

Three studies out of England recently showed quantifiable evidence that watching birds is literally good for one's mental health: people who see birds daily have lower rates of depression and anxiety. One study, "Urban Bird Feeding: Connecting People with Nature," notes that even in the most urban of environments, feeding birds and merely looking at them each day helps people be more connected to nature and the world around them.

Winter is a challenging season in the best of times: the cold weather for many, myself included, is hard to appreciate; add some ice and snow and it's easy to rationalize not going outside. Aside from the brief adventure into the cold to keep the feeder full, watching birds from your window can help you feel connected to the world around you while staying warm, safe, and dry.

If you end up like my family, with a half dozen bird feeders strewn all over the yard, you might find that taking care of the birds can cost upwards of $50 a month--you don't have to go to that extreme, I've been birding for years. But every time I see the cardinal couple taking care of each other I literally get happier: understanding that they're descended from a line of cardinals that RELY upon my house each year leaves me honored. Witnessing the congress of squawking Blue Jays has me fascinated; knowing that the murder of crows are defending my tiny dog from the hawk also fills me with appreciation (a tale for another day).

So maybe...don't GET OUT this month: though you definitely should. I understand why you might not choose to, but that doesn't mean you have to be starved of nature this winter: getting started can cost as little as a few dollars and can mean the world to our little feathered friends. While you get that set up, don't forget that the Cornell Ornithology lab provides live streaming of their bird feeders, which as I write this show that the black-capped chickadees and house finches are happily enjoying their seedy treats.
Community Engagement Fellows (CEFs)

The Community Engagement Fellows are a Davis Center-trained, peer-to-peer diversity education group. The DC Community Engagement Fellows work closely with the DC staff and are part of the Davis Center’s effort to provide education for the campus on issues of identity, power, and privilege in order to build a more inclusive community.

Click here to find virtual Drop-In CEF appointment times!

Office of Institutional Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (OIDEI)

The Office of Institutional Diversity, Equity and Inclusion at Williams College dedicates itself to a community where all members can thrive. We work to eliminate harmful bias and discrimination, close opportunity gaps, and advance critical conversations and initiatives that promote inclusion, equity, and social justice on campus and beyond.

Click here to learn more about the OIDEI team!

Born out of the students' advocacy and protests of students, the Davis Center continues to fulfill its mission by working closely with student organizations. Included in those groups is the Minority Coalition ("MinCo"), student affinity groups united under the umbrella of MinCo. The Davis Center provides
advising and logistical support for these groups.

MinCo provides a more unified voice against prejudice and discrimination against marginalized students by serving as a mechanism for affinity groups to come together in organizational, social, academic and political spheres. MinCo facilitates cooperation and communication among its member organizations, the campus and the Williamstown community and is an active voice in constructing a stronger community more aware of minority concerns.

Click here to read more about the MinCo Groups!

Upcoming Events: Community, Professional & Learning Opportunities

Join the DC Team to Watch the Inauguration on January 20, 2021 at 11 a.m.
Why watch the Inauguration alone when you can view it with the Davis Center Team? We will host the video as well as a multitude of opportunities to connect and comment with Williams College Community. This event is open to all current Williams College community members: staff, faculty and students alike!

Register and get the link here

Together, We Rise:
Summoning a Season of Renewal
Martin Luther King Jr. Day 2021
If you'd like to learn more about events and opportunities including movies, community service and other events for this year's celebration of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., check out our MLK Day website! Click here.
This is a free online internship preparation program for students who are traditionally underrepresented in the Berkshire County workforce. This includes students of
color, members of the LGBTQIA+ Community, and students who are differently-abled. The program will consist of workshops, networking opportunities, and local mentors to help you confidently step into the workforce this summer or after graduation. The program will run through the end of January to early March and each workshop and event will take place at night around 5:30 pm.

Apply through Handshake

The COVID-19 Health Advocacy Training
DC online workshop now available

This series of six short videos addresses COVID-19 and safer practices, as well as caring for oneself and for each other during this pandemic. The training examines racialized interpretations and impacts of COVID-19, and why social identities matter in dealing with the virus and with each other, as we engage in sometimes challenging discussions.

Created by Davis Center Community Engagement Fellows, this training is a peer to peer education and advocacy initiative, that others may find informative and helpful. The videos are available on-line, and follow-up discussion opportunities are available.

CLICK HERE to access this

CISA Curated Guide to Organizations Dedicated to Helping Immigrant Families Separated at the Border

The Coalition for Immigrant Student Advancement (CISA) has recently created a resource guide dedicated to organizations helping immigrant families being separated at the border. These organizations have all been fact-checked and have a history of providing financial assistance to immigrants for legal aid, housing, bail relief, etc. The goal in creating and sharing this research guide is to give individuals simple and organized information on how they can direct their funds to help individuals in need. For more information about this initiative, email MIR2@williams.edu.

CLICK HERE to access this
The CARE Syllabus

CARE SYLLABUS is a justice-oriented public education and community resource featuring original text, visual media, recordings, and virtual live events by activists, artists, and academics.

CARE SYLLABUS is a cross-institutional, multimodal public education resource of MCLA and MASS MoCA. This 2020-21 pilot program is made possible through THE MIND’S EYE, a research and praxis initiative at MCLA, which provides a venue for transdisciplinary collaboration and dialogue addressing contemporary social concerns. CARE SYLLABUS highlights artistic expression, activism, and thinking that fosters a radical communal imagination. The creative impulses rooted in these modes of collaboration and critique spur new ways of exploring the histories of care - and shifting praxes of care - currently at work in our homes, classrooms, and communities.

CARESYLLABUS.ORG offers:

- 6 guest-curated, themed modules, from autumn 2020 to autumn 2021, which illuminate specific strands and strategies of care in the arts.
- A public education program accompanying each module, organized by the Care Syllabus team, featuring a keynote event with guest-curators, a community study session aimed at educators, and a platform for the stories of community activists and advocacy organizations. Public programs offer invitations for action, and steps to activate what you learn.
- A blog that offers reflections on art and care submitted by partners and community members.
- A resource guide that features directions for further learning and community involvement.

Learn more about this resource

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**TalkSpace -**
Free Online Therapy for Students

TalkSpace is an innovative online therapy service that is now available, at no cost and effective immediately, to all enrolled students.

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**Crisis Interventions**

**Trevor Lifeline** — The only national 24/7 crisis intervention and suicide prevention lifeline for LGBTQ young people under 25, available at 1-866-488-7386.

**TrevorChat** — A free,
twelve months a year and even while traveling abroad.

TalkSpace connects users to a dedicated, licensed therapist from a secure, HIPAA-compliant mobile app and web platform. Their roster comprises more than 5,000 licensed clinicians from across the country, who collectively speak over forty languages. You can send your therapist a text, voice or video message anytime, from anywhere, throughout your time at Williams.

Williams College and the IWS is providing this service to students in addition to all of our existing on-campus offerings in psychotherapy, psychiatry and on-call crisis services, as well as the wellbeing promotion events, workshops and groups we organize throughout the year.

To register, visit www.talkspace.com/williamscollege. enter your Williams email address and follow the prompts.

Suicide Prevention Trainings and Resources

**LGBTQ on Campus** — These online, interactive training simulations for students and faculty in higher education are AFSP/SPRC Best Practices for Suicide Prevention and were created in partnership with Kognito Interactive and Campus Pride.

**Step-In, Speak-Up** — These online, interactive training simulations for faculty and staff working with youth in Grades 6–12 are AFSP/SPRC Best Practices for Suicide Prevention and were created in partnership with Kognito Interactive.

If you are thinking about suicide, you deserve immediate support. Please call The Trevor Lifeline at 1-866-488-7386.

**FREE RESOURCE:**

**Student's Guide to Radical Healing**

CLICK HERE TO DOWNLOAD AND ACCESS THE STUDENT’S GUIDE TO RADICAL HEALING