

S N A P S H O T



OFFICE OF MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS 2008- 2009

A Look at the Multicultural Orientation 2008

The mission of the Office of Multicultural Affairs at Florida State University is to create a welcoming environment that is inclusive of all students.

To that end, the Office of Multicultural Affairs provides advocacy, support services, and culturally based programs that educate students on diversity and multiculturalism and empowers them to be agents of social change in an increasingly diverse and global community.

Office of Multicultural Affairs

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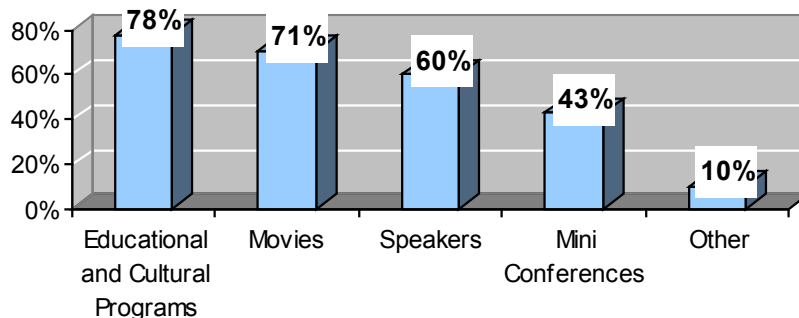
As part of Seminole Sensation Week, the Office of Multicultural Affairs (OMA) kicked off the fall term with the annual Multicultural. The Multicultural Orientation is designed to allow first year students to interact with faculty, staff, and student leaders, as well as learn about the numerous opportunities available for campus involvement.

Joining OMA for the Multicultural Orientation this year was a panel comprised of psychologist Dr. Byron Pack from the University Counseling Center, and faculty members Dr. Mike Mesterton-Gibbons, Dept. of Mathematics and Dr. Michael Neal, Dept. of English. First year students received an overview of the importance of communicating with their professors, information about campus resources, academic requirements and expectations, study tips, and suggestions on how to deal with the stigma and stereotypes often associated with seeking help for issues related to mental health and well-being. Student organization and agency leaders also participated by extending invitations to their meetings to learn more about their organization's mission and activities.

An evaluation of the Multicultural Orientation showed that African American students were the largest (31%) group of participants, followed by Hispanic/Latino students (25%). Asian/Pacific Islanders occupied 14% of the participants.

Eighty-eight percent of the respondents agreed the Orientation met their expectations while, 97% of the students indicated that they would like more opportunities to participate in multicultural activities on campus. Educational and cultural programs were rated as the top multicultural and diversity activities that would attract students' participation (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Multicultural and Diversity Activities Preference



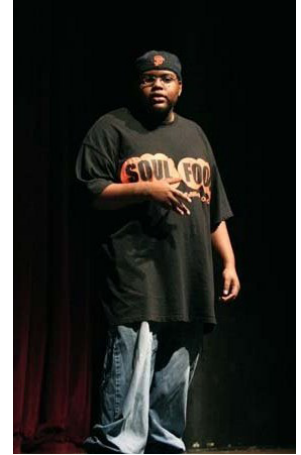
OMA continued the welcome festivities for first year and returning students by hosting the annual Barbeque Gathering and Multicultural Showcase, respectively. The Barbeque Gathering, co-sponsored by the Dean of Students Department, provided a fun opportunity for Division of Student Affairs staff members and administrators to roll up their sleeves and work side by side to serve over 350 meals. The Multicultural Showcase, co-sponsored by National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC) featured a variety of performances by many registered student organizations. The Showcase is designed as an opportunity for student organizations to generate interest in their activities and to promote their campus and community events.

Student Leader Spotlight

Johnny C. Darrisaw, II is a senior creative writing major/film minor. He is Editor-in-Chief of the Nubian Waves newsletter, a publication of the Black Student Union. Johnny is also co-editor of NAACP newsletter (FSU Crisis), a member of Garnet & Gold Key Honorary Leadership Society. Johnny is also a mentor with the Students Supporting Students Mentoring Organization (SSSMO). In SSSMO freshmen are assigned mentors who provide support and guidance as they matriculate through FSU. He also serves as Immediate Past President and current Communications Chair for S.O.U.L.F.O.O.D. (Speaking Our Urban Language, Fulfilling Our Own Destiny). He writes and performs his original poetry, making commentary on contemporary issues of race and class. S.O.U.L.F.O.O.D. debuted at the 19th Annual Martin Luther King Jr. celebration, and since then they have been invited by faculty and staff to perform for various university programs.

Under Johnny's quiet and effective leadership, the Student Appreciation Farewell Roast for Dr. William Hudson, a longtime Student Affairs professional, was extremely successful. The event was attended by over 250 students and Student Affairs professionals. Karla M. Johnson, OMA Assistant Director says, "I believe Johnny has the respect of his peers due to his honesty and candor, and his effort and leadership in forming partnerships with others. He is very observant and creative, and we greatly appreciate his artistic contributions to our programs on behalf of students."

If you would like to see more multicultural and diversity programs on campus, please visit the website of the Office of Multicultural Affairs (OMA) at <http://oma.fsu.edu/mission.html>



Available in Alternative Format. If there are any questions or concerns, please contact the Division of Student Affairs at (850) 644-5590.

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