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Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. once said, "Life's most persistent and urgent question is: 'What are you doing for others?'"

Each year, Americans across the country answer that question by coming together on the King Holiday to serve their neighbors and communities. The “MLK Day of Service” is a part of a campaign entitled “United We Serve” initiated by the President. This service initiative calls for Americans from all walks of life to work together to provide solutions to our most pressing national problems.

Monday, January 17, 2011 will mark the 25th anniversary of the Martin Luther King, Jr. federal holiday. This milestone is a perfect opportunity for Americans to honor Dr. King’s legacy through service. The “MLK Day of Service” empowers individuals, strengthens communities, bridges barriers, creates solutions to social problems, and moves us closer to Dr. King’s vision of a beloved community.

The UNI Student Leadership Center is sponsoring a “MLK Day of Service” event on January 17, 2011 for all faculty, staff and students to participate in during their day off. They have several volunteering opportunities planned including work at the Northeast Iowa Food Bank, Catholic Worker House, Grout Museum, and Country View Nursing Home.

Participants of the “Day of Service” will check in at the Maucker Union at 9:00 a.m. on Monday, January 17, 2011 and transportation will be provided to the various locations, leaving at 9:30 a.m. Participants will receive a free t-shirt and lunch, which will conclude with a montage of the images from throughout the day! The entire event will be done by approximately 1:00 p.m.

If you are interested in participating, make sure to register online at www.uni.edu/maucker/online-forms/slcmlkdayofservice/. You will receive a confirmation via e-mail; registration will end on Wednesday, January 12, 2011.

Help celebrate the life and legacy of Dr. King. by volunteering your time and efforts on your day off; help those in need in the Cedar Valley on MLK Day of Service!
Looking for some free entertainment opportunities? Check out the CME sponsored Poetry Slam on January 28, 2011! Free for all faculty, staff, students and community members, this show will for sure be energetic! Never been to a poetry slam before? No worries! The following answers a few basic questions about a poetry slam:

**What is a poetry slam?**
Poetry Slams are a competition of performance poetry pieces. As Poetryslam.com describes, “It puts a dual emphasis on writing and performance, encouraging poets to focus on what they’re saying and how they’re saying it”.

**So….how does it work?**
Interested persons who want to compete perform various pieces of poetry, and are judged by members in the audience which provide numerical scores. Judges should focus their awarding based on content and performance. Many times there will be exhibition performances as well which help.

**Are there any rules?**
While every slam is different, there are some general guidelines which should be followed:
- Each poem must be of the poet's own construction
- Each poet gets three minutes (plus a ten-second grace period) to read/perform one poem.
- If the poet goes over time, points will be deducted from the total score
- The poet may not use props, costumes or musical instruments

**I’ve never heard of this before; where did it start?**
According to Poetryslam.com, 1985 a construction worker and poet named Marc Smith started a poetry reading series at a Chicago jazz club looking for a way to breathe life into the open mike poetry format. The series’ emphasis on performance laid the groundwork for a style poetry and performance which became a phenomenon across the world!

In 1986 Smith moved his poetry performances to the Green Mill (a Chicago Jazz Club) with a plan to host a weekly poetry exhibition on Sunday nights. So, on July 25, 1986, Uptown Poetry Slam was born.

**INTERESTED? COME AND CHECK IT OUT!**
The Center for Multicultural Education will host a poetry slam on Friday, January 28, 2011, beginning at 8:00 p.m. at the CME (upper level of Maucker Union). Those who are interested in participating should be prepared to perform during three rounds of competition. A prize will be awarded to the winner of the night!
What an opportunity to embark upon the second decade of the 21st century! There are so many things for which to be thankful: advancements in electronic gadgetry are skyrocketing; the U.S. economy is slowly rebounding; Oprah Winfrey is finally leaving network television; LeBron James, Dwyane Wade, and Chris Bosh are at last gelling; and the CME is celebrating its fortieth year! The times, they are a-changing!

But as time marches on, we soon discover that adage is still true: the more things change, the more things stay the same. The unemployment rate is unacceptable; we still have cyclical deployments to Afghanistan; the criminal justice system still unfairly targets African American males; the current administration is still disposed towards ICE raids to catch and deport so-called illegal aliens; the military-industrial complex is still proliferating; there is no cure for cancer on the horizon; the gap between the rich and the poor is steadily widening; and public discourse is as vitriolic as ever.

Each individual has the ability to bring about positive social change. Often, people are discouraged by what seems to be overwhelming odds in the struggle simply to begin to address the root causes of the major issues. Because they feel too small to tackle ostensibly intractable problems, they hardly make any effort to try. Those who favor the status quo are heartened by this pathetic apathy, for it maintains a system of oppression from which many of them (believe they) benefit. The fragility of the flesh is their boon and the repression of the will is their elixir. What a sorry state in which we live!

We who inhabit an institution of higher learning must sometimes be reminded of what the purpose of education is all about. Two individuals who only met briefly once before they were brutally murdered seemed to share some hope in the power of education to promote change. Malcolm X once stated: “Education is our passport to the future, for tomorrow belongs to the people who prepare for it today.” My personal hero, whose life and legacy we commemorate this month as a nation, namely Martin Luther King, Jr., clarified its objective: “The function of education is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically: intelligence plus character—that is the goal of true education.” How soon we forget!

So many educated persons have wreaked havoc upon our society, from the peculiar institution to “don’t ask, don’t tell”; from free enterprise capitalism to supply-side economics; from Jim Crow segregation to fencing our southern borders; and from tax cuts for the rich to the proliferation of penal institutions—just to name a few! What has been lacking, sad to say, is the inculcation of a social-ethics framework that is inclusive of all and seeks to improve the lot of the marginalized and disenherited in our country.

Once our ideal values are able to control what goes on in the public arena, we will be better equipped not only to address, but also to redress the heretofore inveterate conundrums that plague our social environment. We can triumph over the maladies of the human spirit when we fight against the social sins that Mahatma Gandhi warned us about: wealth without work; pleasure without conscience; science without humanity; knowledge without character; commerce without morality; politics without principle; and worship without sacrifice. Individually to some degree, and collectively to a much larger degree, we can transform the jangling discords of our nation into a beautiful symphony for all. We can ensure that everyone has life’s fundamental and existential needs and the opportunity to participate fully in the structures, processes, and policymaking of our still young democratic republic. Ah, when that day comes, what a great, getting-up morning it will be!
Our Mission

We foster success in racial and ethnic minority students, contribute to the cultural competence of all students, and promote an appreciation of diversity in the University community.

Become a Jumpstart Pathfinder!

Applications are now available for individuals who are interested in being a Pathfinder during the 2012 Jumpstart Week.

Pathfinders serve as mentors and guides to new UNI students as they transition into college life. Pathfinders will train in early August and will work August 14 through August 19, 2011.

Calling all Actors and Actresses...

The Center for Multicultural Education is looking to sponsor a play production on Monday, April 5, 2011 entitled:

“Come over here!”: An inside look at male/female relationships.

Individuals who are interested in participating in the short play will need to audition between the week of Feb. 7-11 and/or 14-18, with three group rehearsals to take place at the last two weeks of March.

Application deadline is
February 9, 2011 at 3:00 p.m.

More details will be available in the February Newsletter!