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What's Up!

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Cultural Connection

November 2011

AIDS Awareness Month

Written by Khaliph Green '12



World AIDS Day is held on December first each year and is an opportunity for people worldwide to unite in the fight against HIV and AIDS, show their support for people living with it and to commemorate people who have died.

World AIDS Day was the first ever global health day with the first one held in 1988. In addition, different governments and organizations have declared different months as AIDS Awareness Month, the most popular choices being October and December with December being chosen to coincide with World AIDS Day.

More than 1 million people are currently living with HIV in the U.S. and globally an estimated 33.3 million people have HIV. More than 25 million people between 1981 and 2007 have died from the virus, making it one of the most destructive pandemics in history. Today, many scientific advances have been made in HIV treatment, there are laws to protect people living with HIV and we understand so much more about the condition. But despite this, people do not know the facts about how to protect themselves and others from HIV, and stigma and discrimination remain a reality for many people living with HIV. World AIDS Day is important as it reminds the public and Government that HIV has not gone away – there is still a vital need to raise money, increase awareness, fight prejudice and improve education.

Ideally, if you understand how HIV is transmitted, how it can be prevented, and the reality of living with HIV today - you can use this knowledge to take care of your own health and the health of others, and ensure you treat everyone living with HIV fairly, and with respect and understanding. You can also show your support for people living with HIV on World AIDS Day by wearing a red ribbon, the international symbol of HIV awareness. World AIDS Day is also a great opportunity to raise money for NAT and show your support for people living with HIV.

Although World AIDS Day is a great opportunity to get the public talking about HIV and fundraiser, we need to remember the importance of raising awareness of HIV all year round. As such, the Black Awareness Cultural Organization of Cornell College (BACO) will be sponsoring various events in recognition of AIDS Awareness Month on campus. In the first full week of December, BACO will be selling AIDS Awareness ribbons in the Commons, and on December 12th, bringing the IDPH director of Minority and Multicultural health to the Cornell campus to speak. Some of their future plans in AIDS awareness include: bringing David Robertson, a motivational speaker who contracted AIDS at the age of 23, to come and speak to the Cornell community, as well as Mrs. Clayburn, who is in charge of the AIDS project here in Iowa. She will be speaking on the history of AIDS and its' impact on the African American community. For more info regarding those events, contact Ariel Harris 13', the president of BACO.

Immigration Laws

Written by Khaliph Green '12

America's exceptional status as a "nation of immigrants" is being challenged by globalization. The biggest challenge for policymakers is distinguishing illusory immigration problems from real problems. In 2005, immigration policy received far more genuine attention on Capitol Hill, and Members of Congress from both sides of the aisle are now considering what to do about immigration policy. Their various efforts have focused on a wide variety of changes in current policy, including improving border security, strengthening employer verification of employment, establishing a new temporary guest worker program, and offering some level of amnesty to undocumented citizens immigrants currently living in the United States. At present, these proposals are working their way through the legislative process. However, to achieve results, immigration reform must be comprehensive.



Arizona and Alabama have made headlines in their attempts to stop immigration with Alabama enacting the harshest legislation of the two. U.S. federal law requires all undocumented citizens over the age of 14 who remain in the United States for longer than 30 days to register with the U.S. government, and to have registration documents in their possession at all times. The Arizona Act, SB 1070, additionally makes it a state misdemeanor crime for an undocumented citizen to be in Arizona without carrying the required documents, requires that state law enforcement officers attempt to determine an individual's immigration status during a "lawful stop, detention or arrest" when there is reasonable suspicion that the individual is an undocumented citizens, bars state or local officials or agencies from restricting enforcement of federal immigration laws, and cracks down on those sheltering, hiring and transporting undocumented citizens. However, Alabama has enacted, what they call, HB 56. This prevents undocumented citizens from going to college, applying for jobs, or renting apartments, the [LA Times](#) reports. It requires anyone registering to vote to pass a citizenship check, and like Arizona's law, it requires police to check suspects' immigration status if there's a "reasonable suspicion" they're an immigrant. In addition, K-12 teachers are required to determine which students are undocumented, though only for statistical purposes. The bill also voids any contract signed by an undocumented citizen if the legal party has "direct or constructive knowledge" the other person is in the US without documentation.

As it is very difficult to remain unbiased in speaking on this particular topic, I've simply presented the facts that are available. As to what the real problem is and what measure should be taken, I leave that in the hands of the readers, as I wish only to enlighten the Cornell community to the immigration struggle in our society. Throughout history, great nations have declined because they built up walls of narrow-mindedness, but America has been the exception for over a century. Now it is up to us to decide the road ahead for the nation we live in.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA)

Written by: Diego Verdugo '12



The *Americans with Disabilities Act* (ADA) of 1990 is a wide-ranging civil rights law that prohibits, under certain circumstances, discrimination based on disability. Similar to the Civil Rights Act (1964) which made discrimination based on race, religion, sex, national origin and other characteristics illegal, the ADA grants protections against discrimination to Americans with disabilities. It was enacted by the United States Congress in 1990, being signed into law by President George H. W. Bush on July 26, 1990.

Disability is defined by the ADA as "a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity." The determination of whether any particular condition is considered a disability is made on a case-by-case basis. Certain specific conditions are excluded as disabilities, such as current substance abuse and visual impairment which is correctable by prescription lenses.

Originally, the intent of the law was to create law protections for people with disabilities that would be permanent, would not be able to be reversed or weakened, and would prohibit all discrimination. The law was also intended so that individuals with disabilities remained in the mainstream in terms of scientific and medical research and developments, opening future potential employment opportunities in various fields. It would also reflect changes in public policy, healthcare law and policy, and civil rights protections and public law changes for Americans with physical, mental and cognitive disabilities. Additionally, it was meant to be a flexible set of laws that could only be strengthened, and not weakened, by future case law.



The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) includes five different titles:

Title I – Employment

Title II – Public Entities

Title III – Public Accommodations

Title IV – Telecommunications

Title V – Miscellaneous Provisions: includes technical provisions.

To conclude, following is the ADA's legislative history:

May 9th, 1989 – The ADA was introduced in the Senate as S.933 by Senator Tom Harkin.

September 7th, 1989 – Passed the Senate.

May 22nd, 1990 – Passed the House of Representatives (unanimous voice vote).

July 12th, 1990 – Reported by the joint conference committee and agreed to by the House of Representatives.

July 13th, 1990 – Agreed to by the Senate.

July 26th, 1990 – Signed into law by President George H. W. Bush.

September 25th, 2008 – President George W. Bush signed into law the ADA Amendments Act* (ADAAA). This was intended to give broader protections for disabled workers and "turn back the clock" on court rulings which Congress deemed too restrictive.

January 1st, 2009 - The ADA amendments of 2008 became effective.

To find out more about the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) please visit: <http://www.ada.gov/>





Eyes of the World

Written by Khaliph Green '12

Eyes of the World is a group on Cornell's campus composed primarily of international students. The

group serves as a resource for the international students and focuses on international issues through the students and annual programs. There are three main goals of Eyes of the World: (1) To be a support group for international students by providing experiences on and outside of campus, (2) to be an organization acting as a nexus for students attending Cornell College who wish to share and/or trade cultural paradigms, and lastly, (3), to host cultural programs designed to raise awareness and to provide a light against ignorance of different cultures.

In order to live out these goals, Eyes of the World presents a plethora of different events to raise international awareness and increase a sense of togetherness among the students. Their first event, which is held in September, is *Mix & Mingle*: an event that helps new international students get to know previous international students better. The most widely known event is the *Cultural Show* during Family Weekend, which consists of presentations and/or performances of different cultures residing on campus, a fun way to discover information about other countries, their traditions and some of their secrets. Some of the future events to come include: (1) The *International Dinner*, an event open to the Cornell community. It is both a show of appreciation for students and host families as well as a chance for the greater Cornell community to sample traditional kitchens of countries represented on campus. (2) The *International Student Cultural Trip*, a chance for international students and members of Eyes of the World to discover more about American way of life and travel outside of Iowa. For greater Cornell community, the Cultural trip presents an opportunity to experience a different view of towns they might or might not have already visited. Lastly, (3), at the end of the academic year there is the *Farewell Reception*: a farewell outing for the international students and members of Eyes of the World, at which the international students and members receive the recognition they deserve and spend a wonderful time outdoors remembering great stories that happened during the academic year.

Eyes of the World usually meets on the first and third Wednesday of the block. Their exec board consists of Dzung Dang (President), Angella Gyamfi (Vice President), Hang Tran (PR), Nyugen Vo (Events Coordinator), Tiffany Monreal (Secretary), and Bernard deWet (Treasurer). For more information regarding Eyes of the World, feel free to contact any of these students as I'm sure they would love to share their culture and experiences.

E-Board Profile

Dzung Dang
Graduation Year:
Junior

Major/Minor:
Economics and
Business/Art

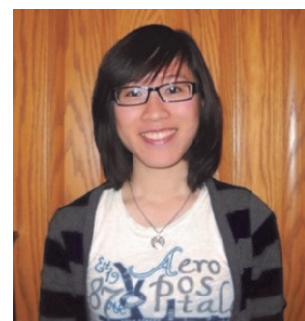
Hometown:
Ha Noi, Vietnam

**Favorite Course at
Cornell (so far):**

Financial Accounting, Intro to
Entrepreneurship

Activities at Cornell: Eyes of the World,
Sustained Dialogue, Marketing Coordinator
for CEC, NRHH, Omicron Delta Epsilon, RA
Hobbies & interests: Music, drawing,
cooking, biking, being random, dancing and
jumping around.

Favorite Thing about Cornell: Leadership
opportunities and the campus environment





Dear Cultural Connection,

I recently returned from a trip in South America, in which I took part in a seven-week long finance internship with an asset management and advisory firm—The Southern Cone Group. During my internship I was mostly in Montevideo, Uruguay's capital though I had a chance to visit Argentina and Brazil too! Traveling to Argentina was one of the highlights of my trip so I decided to share with you why that was the case.

The trip began with a bus from Montevideo to Colonia in Uruguay then leaving from Colonia's port to Buenos Aires on a ferryboat. Before leaving I contacted a friend, Kim Meyer, a junior from Cornell College who is studying Spanish at a university in Buenos Aires and told her I was planning to visit. She was very excited to hear I was heading her way and we arranged to meet up so she could show me around.

Upon my arrival to the beautiful and modern capital of Buenos Aires, I took a cab to Kim's university. After hearing my Spanish, the cab driver immediately noticed I was a foreigner and once I told him my story he proceeded to become my very own tourist guide! As we drove through some of the neighborhoods, including downtown, he pointed out some of the major monuments and tourist attractions, including random history facts and a few other important details.

When I finally arrived to Kim's university we were both really glad to see each other. We had been in South America for a few weeks at that time and it was nice seeing someone, not only from the United States, but from the same school! We then decided to get lunch so that we could catch up as well as learn about each other's experience in South America. I spent the rest of the afternoon visiting a few tourist attractions with Kim and greatly enjoyed her company. Later that night, she invited me to join her and her friends for a birthday celebration so the visit only got better.

Friday night when I was on my way out to meet my friend Kim and her friends to celebrate, I met a Swedish guest at the hotel who had just arrived from Brazil to visit Argentina for the first time. After getting to know him a bit more, I learned that he didn't speak any Spanish so it would be a little difficult for him to communicate and therefore maneuver his way through the city. So, since we were both new to the city and would be there for the same number of days, we decided to get to know the city together. In approximately four days, Daniel and I got to know each other well and had a great time going to the different tourist attractions together as well as enjoying Buenos Aires' night life. Some of the tourist

attractions that we visited included: Cementerio de Recoleta, Plaza de Mayo, Plaza Santelmo, Jardin Japones, Calle Florida and Estadio la Boca. All of these places were unique in their own special way and being able to visit them with someone else made things even better—not to mention having my own photographer!

Having a tourist buddy also made things safer for both of us, as according to the locals, Buenos Aires can be a dangerous city throughout the day and night. Daniel and I had a lot in common and it wasn't difficult for us to relate even though we belonged to two different sides of the world. Prior to our departure, we exchanged contact information and I'm certain that we will keep in touch.

Traveling to Argentina was a once-in-a-lifetime experience and I'm glad I made the decision to go there. I got to spend time with a fellow Cornellian and great individual, Kim Meyer, enjoyed Buenos Aires' contemporary beauty and vibrant night life, but most importantly, I made yet another friend who I'm certain I will see again in the future. I left Montevideo hoping I would have a good time in Argentina though it never crossed my mind that it would be one of the best trips of my life—interesting the way the world works.

Sincerely,
Diego Verdugo '12

Student Profile



Name: C'niphia Jones

Hometown: Denton, TX

Major: Biochemistry & Molecular Biology, Clinical Psychology

Year: Sophomore

Hobbies/Interests: Enjoying family and friends

Cornell Activities: Sister 4 Sister, Black Awareness Cultural Organization and PINQ

What do you like most about Cornell? What I like about Cornell is the amazing opportunities for exposure to resources that may help shape me into a better person.

Future Plans: I am aspiring to be a child psychiatrist

What does ICL mean to you? ICL is one of my most frequently resources at Cornell because Ken and Heather are both very supportive. I feel confident going to either one of them about any thought or concern because I know that my success is valuable to both Ken and Heather.

Faculty Profile



Name: Víctor Acevedo, Ph.D.

Department and Location: Education (College Hall) and Music (Armstrong Hall)

Major: Music Education & Clarinet Performance

Hobbies/Interest: Traveling, Fine Dining.

Future Aspirations: Write a book about clarinet performance.

What you like about Cornell? Because Cornell has smaller classes, I get to know better my students.

What is your Favorite Memory at Cornell so far? Walking on Campus during Fall; it looks beautiful.

What is rewarding about your position? Working one on one with my students and helping them to be more effective music teachers.

Advice to Cornell students: Work hard and be passionate about what you do. Do not procrastinate. Enjoy your college time; it will be one of the most rewarding experiences in your life.

Alumni Profile

Name: Amber Fricke

Hometown: Marshalltown, IA

Graduation Year: 2009

Majors: BSS in Women's Studies, Ethnic Studies & Politics

Career Updates: I am currently in my third year of law school at the University of Iowa.

Future plans: I would like to practice in the area of employment discrimination law representing victims of discrimination.

What did you like about Cornell? I loved the block plan, cherished the professors, who were invested in their students' education and accessible, and greatly appreciated the invaluable resources of Harlan House and the Office of Intercultural Life.

Favorite Memories: One of my favorite memories from Cornell was the White Privilege Conference that I, along with two other Cornellians, was able to attend with the assistance of funding from various sources across campus.

Advice to Cornell Students: Fully utilize all that Cornell has to offer, take the most challenging and interesting courses, seek out your professors outside of class for additional discussion and guidance, attend speakers, get involved in something you care about, and utilize the funding available on campus to pursue your academic and career goals.

Were there any services targeting your culture? If so, how did the support guide you through your college career? If not, what support did you wish was provided? As a heterosexual, able-bodied, white, American female, many of the resources provided on campus directly benefited me without intentionality. As a female, I did greatly appreciate having Harlan House as a resource, as well as the strong Women's Studies program; however, it could have benefited from having additional resources to attend conferences and from having an additional professor in the program in order to expand the curriculum. As an anti-racist, since leaving Cornell I have recognized how progressive and committed to diversity Cornell is, particularly with making funding available for conferences such as the White Privilege Conference, having an Ethnic Studies Program, making strides towards creating a diverse and welcoming environment and improving the climate overall. Nonetheless, Cornell still has room for progress and I hope that there is still a committed group of persons furthering the goals that the Cornell Coalition for Change began in the 2007-2008 school year, including but not limited to increasing funding for diversity initiatives and the Office of Intercultural Life, increasing racial diversity, and fostering a community that is more accepting and welcoming of people from a variety of backgrounds.

