



Multi-Ethnic Education and Engagement Center Community Digest

Multi-Ethnic Education and Engagement Center
 A Diverse Community of Scholars Achieving Excellence

Fall Semester 2019
 Volume 12, Issue 1

OHANA



**MECPro First Year Students
 Class of 2023**

The Multi-Ethnic Education and Engagement Center welcomes the Class of 2023! This year we had nearly **100 students and families join us from August 14th-15th**. These students were able to move-in early, learn about opportunities on campus, and engage with student panels. In addition, parents and students had the opportunity to meet faculty, staff, and students. We deeply appreciate Dr. Spina, our faculty and staff partners, student volunteers, student staff, and many others who were involved with making this year’s MECPro program an excellent first step at UD for all incoming students and families!

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Letter from the Executive Director

Daria Graham, Ph.D.

Assistant Dean of Students and Executive Director of MEC

Greetings and welcome home to our first-year and transfer students! And to our returning students, you were greatly missed. Welcome back!

It was a full summer as we worked to create and prepare opportunities to support and educate students from a cultural perspective. One of the major outcomes from that work was a name change. We understand the power in a name, and the connections that individuals have to them. While we are still about the “affairs” of multicultural students, we recognize that the need and scope of our work was no longer accurately reflected in our name. Effective July 1, 2019, the name of the Office of Multicultural Affairs was changed to the Multi-Ethnic Education and Engagement Center.



After much dialogue with students and campus partners, there were several observations. First, while the staff recognizes the diversity represented in the term “multicultural”, our work is more reflected in the term “multi-ethnic”. The term “multi-ethnic” refers to ethnic identities based on social location and the experiences and implications of those identities in the context of the history of the United States. Along with adopting the term “multi-ethnic”, we recognized that our area has been uniquely positioned not only to support the experiences of underrepresented students but also to provide ongoing social justice and diversity education to all students. We provide co-curricular offerings and we create opportunities and fulfill requests to directly partner with academic affairs in the classroom. We have been charged with the affairs or engagement of multi-ethnic students and as educators in partnership with academic affairs to prepare students to live, learn, work, and love in a global society.

Finally, we recognized that areas that are referred to as “offices” are often narrow in their scope and purview. As we have grown, our scope has grown and the term “center” better encapsulates the depth and breadth of our work. The Multi-Ethnic Education and Engagement Center (MEC) will continue to support the experiences of students and to highlight the richness and beauty of all cultures. The Center will also pursue and support endeavors to increase the social justice competencies of all students in a way that continues to reflect our Catholic, Marianist values. We recognize the affinity that many members of our community, especially our students, have for the OMA name. We do not take the change lightly, but are excited to better align with our role in the development of all students.

We are #MECnificent and remain #OMAZing!

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Upcoming MEC Events

Upcoming Events- December 2019

- Graduating Senior Banquet- December 2nd
- Final Week Study Tables- December 9th - December 13th
- NCORE Student Scholars Conference Deadline - December 16th

MEC and Campus Resources Contact Information

- **MEC** | Alumni Hall 1st Floor South | Phone Number: (937) 229-3634
- **Academic Dean's Offices:**
 - College of Arts and Sciences | O'Reilly Hall | (937) 229-2611
 - School of Business | Miram Hall 230 | (937) 229-2226
 - School of Engineering | Kettering Labs 565 | (937) 229-2736
 - School of Education and Health Sciences | Fitz Hall 618 | (937) 229-2969
- **Campus Ministry** | Liberty Hall 101 | (937) 229-3339
- **Career Services** | 208 L Street | (937) 229-2045
- **Center of International Programs** | Alumni Hall 211 | (937) 229-3728
- **Counseling Center** | Gosiger Hall 100 | (937) 229-3141 | *Walk-ins accepted*
- **Dean of Students** | Gosiger Hall 202 | (937) 229-1212
- **Facilities Management Work Orders** | Fitz Hall | (937) 229-3753
- **Health Center** | Gosiger Hall | (937) 229-3131
- **Housing and Residence Life** | Gosiger Hall 210 | (937) 229-3317
- **Library** | Roesch Library | (937) 229-4221 | *Open 7:00 AM - 5:00 AM*
- **Public Safety** | Fitz Hall | (937) 229-2121 | *Open 24 hours*

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Leading the Way

Merida Allen, Director, Multicultural/Multi-Ethnic Education and Student Leadership

It is a great time to be a UD student. I am proUD to be able to formally introduce some of our new work in MEC! This summer we gained a great addition to the MEC family in Megan Woolf, the inaugural Assistant Director for Multicultural/Multi-Ethnic Education. She brings great experience and energy to the department and university. Megan is providing support to some of the initiatives and leadership for our dynamic Diversity Peer Educators (DPE)! She was an original member of DPE when she was an undergraduate at UD, so it is exciting to see the full-circle moment.

Another new and exciting aspect of our work in the department is ME in MEC, an engaged partner in the wholistic development of all students at UD. ME in MEC is situated to create, introduce, support and advance opportunities for awareness of multiculturalism and multi-ethnicity through educational engagement, programs that provide critical reflection, and dialogue as an effective form of intergroup communication.



Check out the great work from the Leadership Engagement and Diversity Team (LEAD)! This community of student leaders have been meeting since before the Fall semester began to support, collaborate and access resources that directly benefit and impact over 20 student organizations. Add the LEAD calendar to your Gcal to follow the events and programs offered by the LEAD student orgs.

I am also looking forward to the Annual MEC Retreat on November 15 and 16. We already have filled the bus with students who are signed up to enjoy some time away from campus, building community, reflecting on the semester and energize to finish strong.

"We will be known forever by the tracks we leave." – **Popular saying among the Indigenous Dakota Nation**

(First Nations)



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Student Engagement Assistants

Lena Clerici, Junior, Chemical Engineering

Hi guys! I'm Lena. I'm a Junior Chemical Engineering major and my role here in MEC is a Student Engagement Assistant. I've been involved in MEC for the past two years. I'm a member of PEERS, BATU, NSBE, SASE and an inaugural member of AAA. Outside of MEC, I'm involved in Campus Ministry, the Marianist Leadership Scholars, Minorities in Engineering Program, Big Brothers Big Sisters, and the American Institute for Chemical Engineers. My day-to-day involvement here in MEC is engaging with students and making sure that they have access to everything they might need. I'm leading and organizing Sister 2 Sister, as well as, MECnificent Days this year!

I'm proud to say that this is MEC's first semester composting and I hope we can get a larger involvement. This Fall Retreat was a great success due to the great memories shared and the friendships made and strengthened.



December Lee, Senior, Pharmaceutical Chemistry

My name is December Lee. I am a senior majoring in medicinal pharmaceutical chemistry. I love being a Student Engagement Assistant and doing programs in MEC. I am highly involved with the Multicultural Programming Council and organize many cultural heritage events. I also organize monthly PEERS mentoring meetings. I have been a member of the PEERS mentoring program for all of my four years at UD. I like to bring in great speakers to talk to students and share different experiences with mentees in the program.

My daily activities in MEC involve interacting with my peers and sometimes helping with chemistry homework. As a senior, I like to give students advice about the school and life balance. I struggle with this and often rely on other students to give me advice as well. I like to encourage everyone to do their best and remember that college is just the beginning.



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MEC Student Engagement Assistants

Jordyn Mitchell, Senior, Sport Management

Hello there!

My name is Jordyn Mitchell and I am a Student Engagement Assistant (SEA) in MEC! I am from Cincinnati, Ohio and I am a senior Sports Management Major and Business Administration Minor. My responsibilities in MEC include REAL topics and being the Public Safety Partner to advocate for a safe and inclusive environment for multicultural students on campus. My main goal is to work to eliminate the stigma between minority groups and the police through dialogue, initiatives and programming.

As a student leader, I have completed multiple internship rotations related to my major. This past summer, I interned at Foot Locker Inc. as a Brand Partnerships and Activations Intern. On campus, I serve as the President of the Epsilon Chi Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Incorporated, peer advisor to first year Sport Management students, a PEERS Mentor, and am an active member in multiple organizations on campus. I hope you all are having a phenomenal semester so far, and I hope to see you in the office some time!



Luis Rogel, Junior, Civil Engineering

Hello everyone!

My name is Luis Rogel and I am one of the four Student Engagement Assistants. I am a Civil Engineering student. I am the social chair for the Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers, the treasurer for EOL (El Orgullo Latino), and a general member of Alpha Psi Lambda National Inc. I am specifically in charge of the Brother 2 Brother talks which take place once a month. The first Brother 2 Brother was centered around leadership in your respective community, and the second talk was about toxic masculinity and I was even able to bring in a representative from PAVE, Caleb Negron. Brother 2 Brother is where young men in the MEC community come together and talk about certain topics which need to be addressed for the betterment of the community. I am also in charge of PEERS first Fridays along with my fellow SEA, December Lee. Together, we invite guest speakers to address important resources which benefit the MEC community. We also plan activities to promote peer collaboration.

During my time as a Student Engagement Assistant, I have done my best to lend a helping hand to anyone who needs it. On certain days, I tutor students on math and physics which helps them do better in their academics. I also mentor a lot of the first-year students by telling them my experiences going through college in hopes they can use it to make the best decisions for their future.



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Academic Success Corner

Cynthia Payne, Assistant Director for Academic Success

Greetings Everyone!! It is truly an honor to be at UD and to be a part of this #MECnificent family. I am here to support you in your academic journey! I am a person who can help with any academic questions or concerns you have. I will cheer you on in your accomplishments! I can make connections with resources that can aid in your success. It is my hope that you know you are not in this journey alone! Please be in touch if there is any way I can assist you.

In light of this season that we are in, I have a few questions for you to consider. What do you think of when you hear "retreat?" Some of the first words that come to mind for me are "to get away, move back, step away, take a break..."

I'm going to ask you to *retreat from your mind space* for a minute. So much of what you choose to do - or not do - is a result of how you approach a situation.... when you come across a challenge in your academic journey at UD, I invite you to ask yourself these questions:

1. *"Have I already decided the outcome?"* So many students tell me they are going to fail, tell me they aren't good at it, tell me it won't work... it always sounds to me like they already decided how it's going to be. If you are thinking something negative before the outcome happens, what are the chances it will turn out positively? Stop deciding that a negative outcome will be the result before you even give yourself a chance!
2. *"What exactly am I in control of?"* Your professor, your loved ones, other people in general - you can't control them. When a test is, when the paper's due, the curriculum you learn in the class, how the professor is teaching - for the most part you can't control that either. There is no reason to focus on the things you can't control. Are you in control of how you approach a situation? Are you in control of how much you study? Are you in control of the effort you put in? Are you in control of your mindset? For the most part you are! I challenge you to focus on what you can control.
3. *"Do I believe in myself?"* Believing that you are capable of handling a situation or a challenge is more than half the battle. And honestly, all the people in the world can believe in you, but if you don't believe in yourself none of that matters. You are at UD for a reason. You are capable. You are able. But YOU have to believe in you.

It would be silly to say it's easy to change your mindset. In fact, sometimes we aren't in control of how our minds process and think through things. But other times, it is a matter of thinking about things differently. As this semester comes to an end, I encourage you to *retreat* from any mentality that is holding you back and consider how adjusting your mindset can make a big difference.



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MEC Academic Success Ambassadors

Academic Success Ambassadors are student leaders in MEC who are positioned to help with bringing academic resources to their peers and also help to recruit prospective students to UD. This fall there are 9 ASAs who work directly with Cynthia to bring you:

Study Tables - nearly every Wednesday from 6-10pm we invite you to study with us in the MEC lounge. At the beginning of study tables help is typically available in Chemistry, Math, Physics and with writing papers!

Success Steps - held once a month, these sessions help you to learn about resources that can support you in your success in and out of the classroom.

Study Breaks - it is important to have a balance between studying and self care. Once a month there will be a session doing something fun and giving you a break from studying!

Success Messages - watch your email! Received once a month, these important messages give you important academic tips and updates.



These are your ASAs:

- **Maritza Betancourt** - 3rd Year - Sociology major, Social Work minor from Chicago, Illinois
- **Joshua Biris** - Senior - Mechanical Engineering major from Cleveland, Ohio
- **Niani Brown** - 3rd Year - Environmental Biology major from Dayton, Ohio
- **Sergio Ginés** - 3rd Year - Industrial Engineering Technology major from San Juan, Puerto Rico
- **Elijah Johnson** - Sophomore - Mechanical Engineering major from Columbus, Ohio
- **Han Le** - Junior - Marketing and Entrepreneurship double major from Bien Hoa, Vietnam
- **Noelia Perez** - Sophomore - Psychology major, Biology minor from Chicago, Illinois
- **Sandy Smith** - Junior - Marketing major from Columbus, Ohio
- **Sebastian Rawl** - Sophomore - Sociology major, Marketing minor from Pittsburgh, PA



ASA Spotlight

Noelia Perez

Hello! My name is Noelia Perez, and I am a sophomore majoring in psychology with a biology minor here at UD. On campus, I am a PEERS mentor, a member of Alpha Psi Lambda National Inc., and an Academic Success Ambassador in MEC. As an Academic Success Ambassador, I help create events, such as study breaks, for students to come out, meet others and take a break from studying. Besides creating study breaks, I am also available to let students know of resources available on campus.

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P.E.E.R.S. Mentoring Program

Sam Ortiz, Associate Director of Campus and Community Engagement

Hi MEC Family!

This Fall Semester has already been an incredible experience. We've gotten to welcome a new cohort of wonderful first-year students from deeply diverse backgrounds. I have been specifically excited to see the engagement of our students in our many programs. This academic year marks the largest group of participants ever in our PEERS Mentorship Program with approximately 270 students engaging as either mentors or mentees. By joining the PEERS program our first year students are paired with a returning student who shares their academic interests or degree and who can personally connect and relate with the experience of being a historically underrepresented student navigating the University of Dayton. Research shows that young students from marginalized communities who have a mentor are more likely to succeed academically, are more likely to stay active on campus, and have better physical and mental health outcomes.



In addition to the great engagement in our PEERS program we have continued the great tradition of honoring our various communities through our cultural heritage month programming. Between September 15 through October 15 we celebrated LatinX/Hispanic Heritage Month with critical programming such as the Bilingual Mingle, Film and Discussions on Immigration Issues, salsa dancing lessons, and many others. We have begun the transition to using the term LatinX as a more inclusive term that signals our values of ensuring all feel represented.

In November we honor and celebrate the heritage and cultures of Native Americans. This month includes the Native People of the Americas Colloquium where indigenous scholars and community members discuss important issues impacting native people across the continent. Some of the subjects that will be touched upon this year include how current border issues intersect with indigenous people, music and storytelling, and imagining indigenous futures. We are looking ahead to next semester where we will celebrate and honor Black History Month and Asian and Pacific American Heritage Month. Each of these months we celebrate is an opportunity to build connections across difference, reduce bias and misconceptions, and create an atmosphere where everyone feels a sense of home. These programs reflect the core values of MEC and we are excited to continue to elevate them each year.

With care,
Sam



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Diversity Peer Educators

Megan Woolf, Assistant Director of Multicultural/Multi-Ethnic Education

Happy Fall y'all!

Hope if it's your first year or your final year, that you've been taking time to enjoy every moment. This year has been both a welcome back, as I attended UD for my undergraduate and graduate degrees, AND a new home for me as the newest member of the MEC Family!

I'm Megan Woolf, the new Assistant Director for Multicultural/Multi-Ethnic Education. This is a new position, so the exact details of everything I do will be growing throughout the year, but mainly I work with Merida on dialogue and identity education efforts all across campus. I might show up in your classroom to give a Partners in the Classroom presentation, or sometimes you'll see me in the Dialogue Zone in Roesch Library. Otherwise, I'll be in Alumni 105 prepping for the Diversity Peer Educators meetings and programs, fielding questions about the new U Diversity Module (required for the first years - a PATH credit for all!), OR listening to Lizzo, Taylor Swift, Bad Bunny or the Hamilton soundtrack while drinking too much coffee. New music artist suggestions happily accepted.



I hail from Xenia, Ohio but feel most at home here in the city of Dayton. I enjoy biking, browsing shops, markets and coffee shops, and serving people pizzas at Old Scratch. If you want or have any suggestions for great spots in Dayton, I'm happy to both share and learn! If you stop in my office you might notice my love of decorating spaces - feel welcome to stop in and hang out any time! If you need a brain break I have some coloring books and kinetic sand, and let me know if you like puzzles... considering getting a few to work on throughout the semester.

I'm especially excited for the Diversity Peer Educator group, as we're expanding our training and involvement this year. So far this semester, the DPE's have earned nationally recognized Certification for Peer Education, hosted two PATH events and presented at the Fall Leadership Conference, creating conversations about identity and power with over 200 students



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The Graduate Assistant Corner

Joia Mitchell-Holman '15, '21

MEC Graduate Assistant for Creating Inclusive Community

Hello friends !

Welcome! I am glad you all are here and I am looking forward to meeting with you all. To our new students, welcome to the community! To our returning students, welcome back! My name is Joia Mitchell-Holman and I am the Graduate Assistant for Creating Inclusive Communities (CIC) in The Multi-Ethnic Education and Engagement Center. While Columbus, OH is home, I have spent the last five years in Oxford, OH attending Miami University. I am a proud member of the RedHawk graduating class of 2015, earning a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology. During the end of my undergraduate career, I knew I wanted to continue with my education, but I was unsure of where I would call my second home. After thorough research, applying, and interviewing with Dr. Hall and Dr. Polanski from the Counseling Department, I knew UD would be my new home!

I am in the Clinical Mental Health Counseling student studying to be a Clinical Mental Health Therapist.



community to be a part of. My time thus far as a graduate student and graduate assistant has been nothing short of amazing. As a first year graduate student at The University of Dayton in the Clinical Mental Health Counseling program, I so much opportunities and growth has happened, both professionally and personally. I could not have chosen a better

As the graduate Assistant for CIC, I serve as support for students for the mini-course and to assist students and faculty in the planning of a Fall conference and attending a conference in the Spring. As a part of the mini-course, students use knowledge from the course to create change. How awesome is that! I also assist with the Diversity Peer Educators to facilitate student to student dialogue around topics such as race and oppression.

I am so glad you are here and please come by MEC to say hi!



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The Graduate Assistant Corner

Kirsten Simpson '19, '21,

MEC Graduate Assistant for Mentorship Initiatives & Student Engagement

Hello Amazing People!

To our MEC students, staff and extended family, it has been a blessing to be have joined the MEC staff in August. After graduating in May, I just did not want to leave UD! Now, thanks to the Multi-Ethnic Education and Engagement Center, I have a few more years at this wonderful place!

My name is Kirsten Simpson. I serve the MEC community as the Graduate Assistant for Mentor Initiatives and Student Engagement. I received my Bachelors in Engineering Technology in the Spring. Now, I am currently pursuing my Masters in Engineering Management.

As as an African-American undergraduate student at UD, I could ALWAYS count on the MEC staff for personal and academic support. MEC is critical to multi-ethnic student experience and I am truly grateful to serve as the GA in the office. In my undergraduate career, I served as President of Residential Housing Association, Co-Facilitator for President's Emissaries, Engineering Ambassador for the School of Engineering, Multicultural Peer Leader for the College of Arts and Sciences and humbly served as a P.E.E.R.S. mentor to four AMAZING first year students. Now, as the GA for Mentorship Initiatives, I am responsible for facilitating the P.E.E.R.S. program. Just call me the Mentor of the Mentors!

Although, I was born and raised an hour south of the University of Dayton in Cincinnati, MEC has become my second home. I am proud and grateful to be afforded the opportunity to foster that environment for our multi-ethnic students.

My responsibilities include facilitating the Program to Exchange and Exchange Resources Program (P.E.E.R.S.) and Navigation Faculty Partner programs, which provide mentorship and resources to our multicultural students in the MEC community.



In addition, I support each of the multicultural student organizations through the LEAD team, which is a group of student delegates that serve on a MEC student organization executive board. Moreover, I serve as the adviser for the Multicultural Programming Council (MPC), which celebrates and educates our campus community on the world's cultures. I also serve as the coordinator for the OHANA newsletter, so I hope that you are enjoying the newsletter.

If you are on campus, please feel free to stop by MEC and stay hello! I would love to welcome you to the MEC family.

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Front Desk Assistants

Alyssa Mims, Junior, AYA Education

Hi everyone! My name is Alyssa Mims. I am from Dayton Ohio. I'm studying to become a high school English teacher. In MEC, I serve as the front office assistant where I am a welcoming face to all students and visitors. On campus I am involved in Women of Remarkable Distinction (W.O.R.D), where I am the Vice President and Social media chair. I am also an active member of Black Action Through Unity (BATU) and a mentor in PEERS.



Kenosha Robinson- Washington, Senior, Sociology

Hello, My name is Kenosha Robinson, I am from the south side of Chicago, Illinois. I am a senior, studying Sociology with a minor in both Anthropology and Family Development. My role in MEC is to make sure students are feeling welcomed while they are using the tools in the center. I do this by making sure the printers have paper, as well as ink in them so students can utilize the opportunity to print for free. I make sure that the lounge and surrounding area has updated flyers of current events that are happening on campus. I also coordinate events as necessary.

On campus I would say that I am pretty involved. I am a senior, studying Sociology with a minor in both Anthropology and Family Development. I am the immediate past President of Women of Remarkable Distinction (W.O.R.D). I am the current President of the Intriguing Iota Epsilon chapter of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Incorporated. I am the current Vice-President of University of Dayton's National Pan-Hellenic Council. I also serve as a Resident Assistant in the Housing and Residence Life Department at UD. I also have been a PEERS mentor since 2017.

Since graduating high school, I have continued to be a mentor, this is why I engage in PEERS. I have impacted students in ways that I could not think of. I am glad to say that I have been mentoring for almost 8 years now. Being a person that people can look up to make me feel amazing and this is why I want to go into the field of Social Work.



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Student Organization Spotlight

Multicultural Programming Council

The University of Dayton's Multicultural Programming Council (MPC) was founded to give University of Dayton students, faculty and staff an opportunity to be involved in cultural engagement on campus. MPC is a student run organization, supported by the Student Government and the Multi-Ethnic Education and Engagement Center, which hosts cultural education dialogues and engagement events to celebrate the ethnic backgrounds of others. MPC's goal is to breakdown social walls through programming and initiatives to enlighten the campus community on people with diverse cultures, ethnicities and sexualities. The objective of the organization is to ensure that our university as a whole has an understanding of all people. While striving to develop a stronger, diverse community.

MPC hosts and facilitates programs and events for the Multi-Ethnic Education and Engagement Center's Heritage Month celebrations and Culture Fest. In September, MPC partnered with El Orgullo and MEC to host, the Bilingual Mingle, a path credit event for MEC's LatinX/Hispanic Heritage Month. The event had approximately 250 participants, who traveled to four different cultural stations to learn about LatinX culture and speak Spanish. As a result, this event helped other university students from different backgrounds engage and learn about Latinx/Hispanic culture.

MPC Personal Reflections:

"MPC is an organization that is dedicated in making sure everyone's culture is celebrated during their appointed heritage month. Personally, I have learned many new things about each of the members culture and their identity. This organization has helped me grow in cultural awareness, appreciation, and sensitivity. I love that every meeting we have a goal and how with that goal we are able to see the events outcome. I appreciate knowing how the people who come to our events leave learning something new about a different culture they've never really learned before. I'm always excited during each meeting because of all the amazing ideas we want to put into action." - Kaitlin Hall, Vice President of Community Outreach

"Being a First-year student, I didn't really know what to expect of Multicultural Programming Council (MPC). Nonetheless, this position has really broadened my understanding on the amount of different cultures the University of Dayton represents. To me it is so exciting to learn from my peers' cultures and their interest in incorporating their traditions for the UD community. This association has taught me a lot and I love how we each get to learn new things about each other every day. The thing that I love most about MPC is how my peers and I have become so united despite all our physical, and cultural differences; because at the end of the day we are all one big community, no divisions, just one." - Camila Sánchez, MPC President



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Student Organization Spotlight - Student Reflection

Black Action Through Unity (BATU)

As I searched for the perfect college to start adulthood and become the successful person I have always dreamed of becoming, The University of Dayton was certainly not the first college I had in mind. I knew right after I graduated that I wanted to go to a diverse college, after going to a PWI from elementary school through high school. I was tired of being one of the few black students in my class. I wanted to be around people who share or have a similar history and experience as me. I wanted to be fully myself and share my black pride with others like me. After my first visit to UD, it wasn't a college that I felt would be best for me. It personally looked and felt like the elementary and high school I went to. Although I wanted to go to college out of Ohio, I still applied to some colleges in Ohio as a safety net if things don't work out, and UD was one the colleges that I applied to. It was my third choice out of the 6 colleges around Ohio.

Once I got accepted to UD, I was super excited. along with my mom. The fact that I got accepted to one of the best private colleges in the nation brought confidence to my abilities and intellect. Even if the University of Dayton was my third college of choice, I was thankful for my acceptance. It wasn't until I saw the scholarship money that I received from the college. That was it. UD gave me the most money out of all the colleges that I applied to. It would be stupid if I didn't take the financial awards that the college gave to me. I accepted the money and accepted the offer to the college and here I am today, writing for the Ohana. Being a writer for this Ohana is my way of paying homage and thanks to MEC. MEC gave me the chance to meet people who look like me; something I never truly got a chance to do throughout my childhood. MEC gave me to the opportunity meet my current group of friends that I become grateful for having every day.

There were days when I walk around UD and observe the students at UD who I don't look like and don't relate to, and I ask myself, "why did I choose UD? Why did I apply to an HBCU?" There were just days that I didn't feel like I belonged. Students and Faculty always preached about the community, but I certainly never felt like I was a part of the community. Feeling a part of community just felt non-existent to me. That was until my friends and I went to BATU's first bi-weekly meeting and there were 6 of about 50, 60 or more of other black students. It was like I was apart of an important black council. Being able to speak freely about how I truly feel as a black woman in white man's country felt nothing but liberating.

Recently, BATU has created a timeline that focuses on black history in UD. The timeline starts in 1924 when John Alexsander graduated from U.D. with a bachelor's for chemical engineering. John Alexsander was UD's first black male graduate during the time racial tension was growing strong in America. Six years later, UD's first black female graduate, Jessie Scott Hitchcock graduated and later taught at a Dayton Public School.

The timeline is rich with black UD history. It holds information from UD's first black organization to the year Martin Luther King spoke at the college. The timeline is so important and powerful for everyone to read. But, it also holds great value to the black students in UD. It shows and shares with other students and faculties of UD the great impact past and current black students have made to the college. On April 13, 2017, BATU was awarded UD's Inclusivity Award and this year they have celebrated their 50th anniversary. It has been 50 years since BATU's foundings, but they are just beginning to grow more influential to UD's community and the black community as a whole.



- Emma Mason '23

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