



Multi-Ethnic Education and Engagement Center Community Digest

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

Spring Semester 2020
Volume 12, Issue 3

OHANA



End of the year Wrap-Up!

As we come to the end of the semester, the staff and students of MEC would like to celebrate our GRADUATING Seniors and provide updates and resources for the COVID-19. This edition of the newsletter will also highlight our MECnificent March and April events, including our celebration of Asian and Pacific Islander Heritage Month. Thank you for reading this edition of the OHANA!

Inside the Issue:

Letter from the Executive Director.....	2
Transformational Leadership.....	3
Student Engagement Assistants (SEAs).....	4
Asian Pacific Islander Heritage Month	6
Emerged Transformed.....	7
Diversity Peer Educators (DPE).....	8
Graduate Assistant Corner.....	9
MEC Student Reflection.....	11
COVID-19 & MEC Resources	12
Contact Us.....	13

Follow MEC on Social Media!

Snapchat - @ud.mec | Instagram - @mec_ud | Twitter- @mec_ud

Letter from the Executive Director

Daria-Yvonne J. Graham, Ph.D.

Associate Dean of Students and Executive Director

The Spring 2020 semester has certainly been unlike one we could have anticipated. We are filled with so many emotions as we prepare to conclude this semester away from students due to the mandates related to COVID 19. The quiet in the Multi-Ethnic Education and Engagement Center's hallways seems like a violation to the mission and vision of our work, yet it is a stark reminder that our connection is greater than our location. Many students and alumni refer to their connection to our Center with an affinity that was allowed by our vicinity to each other but solidified by relationship. Relationships have been our hallmark and will continue to be as we navigate these unprecedented times.

One statement that many of us have heard and said has been "Let someone know if you need anything." Similar to the term "community", we can become desensitized to the meanings of words we hear often at

UD and what is genuinely being extended to us. This is a time to embrace what our bodies and spirits are telling us that we need. **If you need academic assistance in ways you haven't before, pursue it.** If you need fresh air, take a break and go outside for a few minutes. If you need to see the face of someone who cares, let's meet in MEC's virtual lounge via Zoom. Stoicism is often considered a virtue. This may not be the time to be stoic. I would submit that we must have space for how we show up in the world differently based on an environment that rapidly changed and continues to do so. That space means we revel in the thing that we, as a MEC family, do so well: relationships. Reach out and connect with someone.

I agree with those who remind us that this year should be marked by more than our current crisis. Even while facing significant adjustments, students have achieved amazing and remarkable accomplishments during this academic year. Several students strengthened the structure and membership of their student organizations. Some confirmed future participation in research and academically-focused programs. There are also several students and student organizations who were recognized for their excellent leadership and innovation. We celebrate you! We also recognize the everyday successes of all students who continue to manage their academics while being an active community partner and family member. We see you and celebrate your hard work as well.

Special thanks to our campus partners who continue to be invested in MEC's programs and educational initiatives. Lastly, I also want to thank the MEC professional, graduate, and undergraduate student staff for their dedication and commitment to providing tireless partnership and engagement no matter what is going on in our personal and institutional lives. The MEC staff has professionally and personally exemplified the department's values of academic excellence, family spirit, social justice, inclusion, and equity, faith/Marianist Charism, learning and development, and leadership. It would not be possible to structure a student experience with these values if we did not reflect them in our work, our engagement with each other and with our extended UD community. It continues to be an honor to be a part of this dream team.

Together we continue to fly no matter our locations or destinations. Take care of yourself while taking care of each other.

Dr. Daria

Follow MEC on Social Media!

Snapchat - @ud.mec | Instagram - @mec_ud | Twitter- @mec_ud



Transformational Leadership

Mérida Allen, Director, Multicultural/Multi-Ethnic Education & Student Leadership

Change. It is the inevitable aspect of life that requires creativity, flexibility, intelligence, and resources. It is an honor to work directly with student leaders who are adaptive to change amid the uncertainties of life. The family spirit of the students at UD and within the MEC community is inspiring. Each student is a leader, each with immeasurable potential and a unique purpose. Our identity and social awareness is a large part of how we experience change. This is an excellent time to focus on perspective-taking and look at situations from different vantage points. Acquiring skills to problem-solve and embrace resilience through change, are valuable to your future. With prayers and hopes that all members of the UD family are taking good care of themselves, it is with faith and gratefulness for every journey of life that I remind you all- *we are stronger and in this journey together!* Remember to contact MEC staff at mec@udayton.edu for any and all support you may need, during these changing times. We are here exclusively, to assist You with the many transitions of life, as a UD student and beyond.

Thank you! Grazie! Gracias! Je Vous Remercie! I'd be remiss if I did not take the time to formally recognize and thank all of our student leaders for your dedication, care, and hard work to serve our UD community and MEC family. Your ability to serve the common good, through scholastic achievements, community service, leadership, and mentorship has improved the experience for all students but is especially impactful for multi-ethnic students on campus. Stay connected with MEC staff and services, one another and yourself.

The **LEAD Team (Leadership Engagement and Development Team)** is continuing to work together to provide students within the diverse community with programs and that keep students connected and motivated. Check out the MEC Instagram page and MEC Virtual Lounge on ZOOM for takeovers and to stay involved with your favorite student organizations at UD!

Your opportunity awaits! MEC will host the **Virtual Colors of Leadership Connections (vCOLC)** event for all new, emerging and advancing leaders, beginning April 20- May 1. This interactive opportunity will be available for students to walk-through a one-of-a-kind experience to give you tools and affirmation that will boost your leadership development. It is designed to empower you with academic, social and professional resources and support as you continue to grow into the powerful leader that you are. vCOLC also fulfills the *Leadership in Service scholarship* requirement for any student needing to complete a leadership experience. A link to participate in this cool Kahoot experience will be posted on the MEC 1850 page on April 20.

I leave you with some food for thought. Several years ago, one of my mentors once said the following, a quote I carry with me. This statement is more relevant now that it was 7 years ago when she said it. **"Pay it forward. Unite and support each other. Share it, don't bury it. We are stronger together. We are not born leaders but are responsible for the leadership we are given"** *Linda Brown-Ewing, a retired VP of 5/3 Bank.*



Multi-Ethnic Education and Engagement Center presents...

Virtual COLORS OF LEADERSHIP CONNECTIONS

"reMEMBERing how you FLY!"

vCOLC offers the opportunity to share resources with unique, special and brilliant individuals who currently are UD staff and peer leaders. vCOLC offers education, empowerment and support in leadership development, through an identity lens.

APRIL 20, 2020 | A KAHOOT EXPERIENCE!

vCOLC is sponsored by Multi-Ethnic Education and Engagement, in partnership with University Advancement, Regal Cole Co., Student Leadership Programs, Diversity Peer Educators, Multicultural Programming Council, and other sponsoring student organizations.

CONTACT MEC@UDAYTON.EDU FOR QUESTIONS OR MORE INFORMATION

SAVE THE DATE: Multicultural Leadership Institute

Weds. August 19 for all LEAD Team members, representing 19 student organizations supported by MEC.

MECPrO

a transitional family orientation program for incoming multi-ethnic students and families, is slated for **Thursday and Friday, Aug. 20-21.**

Follow MEC on Social Media!

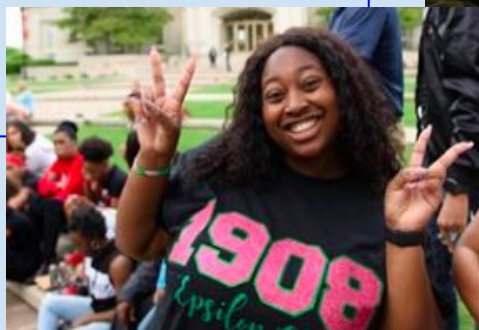
Snapchat - [@ud.mec](#) | Instagram - [@mec_ud](#) | Twitter- [@mec_ud](#)

Student Engagement Assistants

Our Graduating Seniors

Jordyn Mitchell, Senior, Sport Management

To my OMA/MEC family, thank you. These last 4 years have been the best experience of my life and you all are the reason. I can't imagine college without a lounge full of beautiful people, who are full of culture, personality, love, intelligence, and ambition. During my time as a SEA, I have had the pleasure of being impacted by so many students. Some of my favorite times and best memories come from being a part of the PEERs Program, hosting Sister to Sister, and my last face-to-face event, 'Your Mind Matters'. You all mean the world to me and I can't wait to see all of your achievements and success when I come back as an Alum! I love you all and GO FLYERS!



December Lee, Senior, Medicinal-Pharmaceutical Chemistry

I have enjoyed my time as a Student Engagement Assistant at MEC. It has allowed me to connect with the MEC community on a deeper level. I have enjoyed participating and leading the PEERS mentoring program First Fridays. I love seeing the program grow and have enjoyed the great mentor-mentee relationships over time. In addition to PEERS, my favorite event has been this year's Bilingual Mingle. This event was a part of UD's Latinx heritage month celebration. We were able to celebrate Latinx culture with different groups of students and staff due to the large amount of participation. I was happy to be a part of this event and hope that it continues in years to come.



Our graduating class has experienced many changes over these four years. Through the name change and changes in staff, MEC has continued to be a place of support. Graduation is a bittersweet experience. I am sad to leave all the great people that I have met during my time here, but I am very excited to start my new journey. Thank you to the MEC staff and students for your continued support. You have helped me grow as a person and encouraged me to be great. I am extremely sad that our time in MEC has been cut short due to the pandemic, but I am excited to come back and visit as an alumni.

Follow MEC on Social Media!

Snapchat - @ud.mec | Instagram - @mec_ud | Twitter - @mec_ud

Student Engagement Assistants

Our Returning SEAs - Notes to Outgoing SEAs

Lena Clerici, Junior, Chemical Engineering

Dear December,

Thank you for all of the work that you've done for the community. It's been an honor to work with you this semester. I remember meeting you one of my first times in MEC. I remember you reaching out to me because you didn't see me around before. Thank you for that and for being an awesome friend. I wish you the best of luck at OSU!

This semester, though it was cut short, was a wonderful experience. In February, a group of us went to see the *Photograph* for Valentine's Day. Throughout the whole academic year, we had a great turn out for Sister 2 Sister. So thank you to everyone who came out and supported!! can't wait to see what the Fall has in store! See you guys then!



Luis Rogel, Junior, Civil Engineering

Dear Jordyn,

Thank you for your consistent hard work and dedication to our second home, MEC. You are a go getter and such a great advocate for the MEC community. Your work with *Real Topics* was amazing and emphasized reality with a focus on supporting one another. I loved the way you went about the *MEC Spotlight* and gave recognition to students who deserved it. This allowed people to feel appreciated and showed the rest of the community the work people are doing. Your positivity goes noticed and is something I appreciate so much, and I know others appreciate it as well. The ability to talk to you about anything and share a relationship with you outside of work is such a blessing. I am grateful to have met you and I hope we can stay in touch. To one of my dearest mentors, I wish you the best of luck.

(P.S. I am going to miss you!)

Follow MEC on Social Media!

Snapchat - @ud.mec | Instagram - @mec_ud | Twitter- @mec_ud

Asian Pacific Islander Heritage Month Programming

Sam Ortiz, Associate Director of Campus & Community Engagement

Hello Family,

As I write this message many of us are self-isolating to protect our community against the spread of COVID-19. This last month has given me a new and deeper appreciation for community. While community may mean many things and can look different for different people I have truly miss the daily interactions I had with my MEC family. Yet how I have seen folks show up and show care for one another and me has been incredible. This time calls for us to make intentional efforts to support one another and to be in solidarity with one another. One way in which we must stand in solidarity is with our Asian



American friends, family and neighbors. We have watched as some individuals and groups have used the current pandemic as an opportunity to verbally and physically assault our Asian American brothers, sisters, and family. This is of course unacceptable and we call for our MEC and UD community to stand in solidarity against such hurtful and hateful acts. Bigotry aimed at any of our community is an attack on all of us. As the fearless Fannie Lou Hamer said, “nobody’s free until everybody’s free”. MEC will continue finding unique and innovative ways to honor and celebrate Asian and Pacific American Heritage Month virtually and hope you will join us.

In addition to our cultural heritage engagement we look forward to celebrating and sharing love with our wonderful graduating seniors. This graduation season will be difficult for many of them who have waited many years to walk at graduation and will have to wait until the pandemic is over to have an opportunity to do so at a later date. Our hearts go out to all of our graduating seniors. We know how much you have sacrificed and how hard you have worked. I am particularly mindful of our first-generation college students who are the first in their family to earn a bachelor’s degree. We have multiple plans in the works to ensure that we honor and celebrate all of you in the ways you deserve. Now more than ever it is so important that we love one another and love ourselves. I hope for the best for all of you and sincerely believe we have a bright future waiting.

With care,
Sam

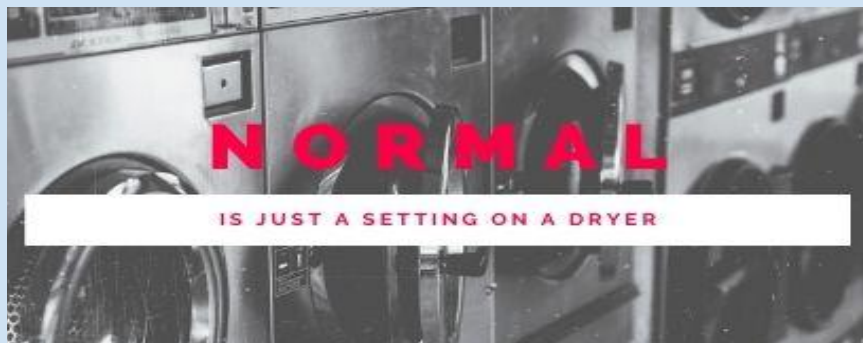


Follow MEC on Social Media!

Snapchat - @ud.mec | Instagram - @mec_ud | Twitter- @mec_ud

Emerge Transformed

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



“Normal” - a word so based on expectations created by society and by those with power - is a term I dislike using (especially when describing people). Now, in this time of our lives, it is another, often uncomfortable, reminder that “normal” does not exist. That discomfort can challenge us to grow. We learn how we respond to stress. We learn better study habits. We learn how important our friends, our family, and our MEC Community is to our mental health. We learn that it’s ok to not be ok. It’s ok to rest. It’s ok to ask for help. This time is trying, but also a moment to re-evaluate and re-examine how we interact with the systems in our world and the expectations we, and others, have set for ourselves. All students, all graduating seniors, all employers, and all faculty & staff are re-imagining how to be. The transformation that can emerge from this moment in time has unlimited potential to create positive change in our world.

Some of you are emerging as Flyer Alumni! Transitions are always so bittersweet, but this one especially. While I was only part of your final year, I truly appreciate my first experience as a part of the MEC family. The lively debates shared in the lounge; the “hellos” as you passed by my office; the conversations about all the possibilities the future holds (be it our next meal, or which graduate school to attend) are fond memories that have shaped what has been, for me, an amazing year. I truly thank each one of you for opening your arms and welcoming me to be a part of your MEC family. **Go out there and in each of your ways, create an equitable, awesome world, Class of 2020!**

Drop in to **Zoom Study Tables on Wednesdays at 6pm!** The ASAs & I will be there to greet you before you connect with professors or have your papers edited. If you need help creating an outline for an essay or perfecting citations, use the Write Place resources. Feel free to reach out to the ASAs if you’re looking for help with classes outside of that provided by Study Tables - a **Study Buddy program** has been started. Follow their account **@mec_studybuddy**

Follow MEC on Social Media!

Snapchat - @ud.mec | Instagram - @mec_ud | Twitter- @mec_ud

MEC Diversity Peer Educators (DPE)



The Diversity Peer Educators' semester began with many new ideas, as well as some amazing new members! While we were on campus, we began to brainstorm and make plans to put on many social justice education opportunities across campus. Our brainstorming and planning period has now extended to the entire semester with the COVID-19 pandemic sending us to our homes in New York, Illinois, Michigan, Ohio, Puerto Rico, and Pennsylvania. We continue to meet weekly through Zoom, so **keep an eye out for some great things from us in the Fall including:**

Residence Hall Floor Programs (PATH Eligible)

DPE Chats (PATH Eligible)

UDiversity Chats (PATH Eligible)

Latinx/Hispanic & Native American Heritage Month Events

My Culture Is Not Your Costume Workshops

Presentations in Classrooms

And more!

DPE Chats will be coming next Fall - Diversity Peer Educators will be reaching out to practice these one on one conversations on topics such as social identities, privilege and microaggressions. **Help us form these experiences to cultivate conversations of change across campus!**

This month, follow our instagram to take part in the **Asian Pacific Islander Knowledge Contest**.

Each day we post an image of Asian Pacific Islander people, or places we admire. It is up to YOU to name the subject of the image and give 2 facts in the comments about that person, or place.

If you participate every day in April, you have the chance to win your choice of the following: a Doordash gift card to support your local Asian restaurants, or a copy of Little Fires Everywhere by Celeste Ng.
Best of luck and happy learning!

Follow Us On
Instagram, Twitter & Snapchat!
@ud_dpe



Follow MEC on Social Media!

Snapchat - @ud.mec | Instagram - @mec_ud | Twitter- @mec_ud

The Graduate Assistant Corner

Joia Mitchell-Hollman, '15, '21

MEC Graduate Assistant for Creating Inclusive Community

Hi Family! I hope that wherever you may be, that you are well, healthy and wholesome. Can I just express how much I truly miss you all! You all have been heavy on my mind and heart. These unprecedented tims have been extremely challenging for us all but it has also reminded me of the resilience of our community. I feel like I've connected on a deeper level because of our current situation. This situation is temporary and we will prevail through this.

To the graduating seniors, Congratulations! You did it! I am so very proud of you. I admire your strength, commitment, vulnerability, and tenacity. I'm sure it has been a journey, but you you made it and I celebrate all of your accomplishments, past, present and future. Please stay connected with us as you enter into your field to do the work!

For our returning students, we will reconnect very soon but until then, please do not hesitate to reach out and connect virtually. We are still here to support you! Please continue to utilize the MEC virtual lounge, study tables, and your PEERS partnerships. It is critical now that we really lean in on one another.

Virtual Colors of Leadership Connections (vCOLC) is an event for all new, emerging and advancing leaders!, Beginning April 20-May 1, this engaging opportunity will be available to students through 1850. This is an amazing opportunity to acquire skills for leadership development!

Be well, Joia




It's TIME to make a DIFFERENCE



Follow MEC on Social Media!

Snapchat - @ud.mec | Instagram - @mec_ud | Twitter- @mec_ud

The Graduate Assistant Corner



Kirsten Simpson, '19 '21

MEC Graduate Assistant for Student Engagement and Mentorship Initiatives

Hey MEC fam!

Although, this is a difficult time for the world right now. It is simply not the same being away from campus and I wish that we could all be together again. I am praying for everyone's health and well-being! Remain positive and keep the faith because it will get better.

Now in this virtual realm, our center has developed fantastic programming and engagement opportunities for our MEC students such as the MEC virtual lounge, General Body Organization Meetings, Social Media Takeovers, COVID-19 Mental Health Checklists, Netflix Watch Parties. However, we are most excited to announce that we will have compiling a MEC Graduating Senior Reflection and Thank you Video. We have encouraged our MEC students, staff and campus partners to participate in this celebration.

To our returning students, I am glad that we have more time together and can't wait to see you in person next semester! Good luck this semester with your online classes and be sure to stay engaged with MEC through our lounge, social media and student organizations. Reach out if you need anything from us, because that is what we are here for.

Lastly, to our MECnificent graduating seniors, I am so beyond proud of all that you have accomplished! The world is going to be so much better because of your light. You are a brilliant, bold, beautiful group of people. It is an honor to see you graduate. I wish you nothing but the best. Stay encouraged and resilient you are almost there. Finish strong and stay in-touch. Congratulations! It is not goodbye just see you later! 😊

Much Love,

Kirsten

CONGRATULATIONS TO MEC'S NEW STUDENT ENGAGEMENT ASSISTANTS



Caleb Cecil
First-Year student
Computer Engineering
Chicago, IL

"I love MEC because it is a family that's always there for me."

Adriana Paonessa
Second-Year (2022)
Industrial Engineering Technology
Ponce, Puerto Rico

"I love MEC because of its community and staff, everyone has your best interests at heart!"



Follow MEC on Social Media!

Snapchat - @ud.mec | Instagram - @mec_ud | Twitter- @mec_ud

Graduating Senior Reflection

Destiny Watson '20

Where do I even begin? First, I have to thank God for allowing me to make it this far and always being by my side. These last 4 years at UD have been a rollercoaster with many ups and downs, but I've always had a place to call home, MEC. It seems like just yesterday I was a senior in high school attending then what was known as the OMA Overnight. I spent much of my first year trying to find my place, my people, and my major. By the end of the spring semester of my freshman year, I knew this is where I belonged. I didn't imagine becoming the leader I did, but being a part of and witnessing the growth that has transpired throughout the university has been amazing. I've been able to use my voice in spaces that really matter. Not only has UD has challenged and inspired but it also has all helped me grow and make an impact. These four years have flown by and man what I would give to be on campus just one more time prior to COVID-19.

All good things have to come to an end, in order to grow. I am closing this chapter of my life with no regrets and can't wait for what's next! These 4 years has brought me my supportive MEC family, leadership opportunities, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., I couldn't have imagined this journey without my line sisters and neos, and most of all my closest friends, Jordyn, Courtney, Quez, Shadayah, December & Kenosha. We started this journey together and are about to cross the finish line together. This has been the best 4 years of my life! They say the friends you make in college will last a lifetime, so this isn't a goodbye, but a see you later! Cherish your time, friendships, and never forget to take care of yourself. Love you all and I'll be back soon!

Love,
Destiny Watson



Follow MEC on Social Media!

Snapchat - @ud.mec | Instagram - @mec_ud | Twitter- @mec_ud

COVID-19 & MEC Resources

COVID-19 Information and Resources

World Health Organization (WHO)

Click [here](#) for more information

Center of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

Click [here](#) for more Information

MEC Virtual Student Resources

Virtual MEC lounge via Zoom Chat

Click [here](#) to access this link

Password: MEC Lounge

Virtual Study Tables

Every Wednesday Night at 6 pm in the Virtual MEC lounge

Study Buddy program

Click [here](#) to sign up for the Study Buddy Program

Click [here](#) to follow MEC Study Buddy IG Account

Voting Information

Voter Registration Form, click [here](#) to complete

Absentee Ballot Form, click [here](#) to complete

Multi-Ethnic Education and Engagement Center
| **University of Dayton** |
| **Alumni Hall First Floor South** |
mec@udayton.edu | 937-229-3634

Follow MEC on Social Media!

Snapchat - @ud.mec | Instagram - @mec_ud | Twitter- @mec_ud

MEC STAFF

Daria Graham, Ph.D.

Associate Dean of Students and Executive Director

Mérida Allen

Director, Multicultural/Multi-Ethnic Education and
Student Leadership

Sam Ortiz

Associate Director of Community Engagement Services

Vacant

Associate Director of Academic Success and Outreach

Megan Woolf

Assistant Director of Multicultural/Multi-Ethnic
Education

Sherry Williams

Administrative Assistant

Graduate Assistants

Joia Mitchell-Holman
Kirsten Simpson

Student Engagement Assistants

Lena Clerici
December Lee
Jordyn Mitchell
Luis Rogel

Student Office Assistants

Alyssa Mims
Kenosha Robinson-Washington

Multi-Ethnic Education and Engagement Center

| University of Dayton |

| Alumni Hall First Floor South |

mec@udayton.edu | 937-229-3634

Follow MEC on Social Media!

Snapchat - @ud.mec | Instagram - @mec_ud | Twitter- @mec_ud