

"OMSA Update" is a biyearly publication that highlights programming and other events at OMSA.



Office of Multicultural Student Affairs

# OMSA UPDATE

{ FALL 2005

## what's New

OMSA is pleased to introduce additional programs that are energizing in the office this year! Several new programs have been created to add to the current services already established.

In addition to the above mentioned, OMSA welcomes two new staff members to assist with implementing the goals of the office, Ms. Beverly A. Walker, Assistant Director and Mr. Ijuanzee I. Isom, Multicultural Program Specialist.

Ms. Walker comes to us with a wealth of experience in education. She has taught, facilitated groups, trained and worked with diverse populations from community colleges, public schools and job training environments. She holds Bachelor of Science and Master of Education degrees. She has an open door policy and hopes to give to the students as much as she expects to receive from them. Please feel do not hesitate to contact her!

Mr. Isom joins the office with excellent communication, organizational and leadership skills. He holds a Bachelor of Science degree.

OMSA has instituted several programs, such as our new **Mentoring Program** is designed to match first year freshman and transfer student of color of VCU with staff, faculty and alumni of the University. The goal is to better serve the academic, professional, and cultural needs of the student, by creating positive relationships with VCU professionals. *Please visit the Web site for details to participate!* Also through a collaborative project with the School of Business entitled **Life Skills 101: Understanding Basic Personal Finance** we will offer seminar-type programs designed to allow students an opportunity to dialogue with professionals about entering the job market, credit card debt, mortgages, financing automobiles, purchasing health, disability and life insurance, investing, and other basic personal finance topics. The new **Multicultural Leader Speaker Series** will focus on learning how to become successful in a multicultural world. Successful multicultural community leaders will discuss their rise to responsible leadership positions, the issues they faced, the lessons learned, and the skills they developed to become a success. The first speaker will feature Tanya Gonzalez, City of Richmond's Manager of the Hispanic Liaison Office, presenting on Monday, September 12, 2005. OMSA will also offer an annual **Multicultural Conference** that will focus on multicultural issues in contemporary society. In a collaborative project with the University Career Center, the first annual conference will be held on Tuesday, November 1, 2005 and the theme will be "Diversity in the Workplace: A Challenge for the Students of Color". (Please visit the Web site for upcoming details to register!)



Coming in September with assistance of the Office of International Education and the VCU Libraries, we will introduce the International News Center! Students will have the opportunity to view news from around the world! Be sure to come by and take advantage of this technological opportunity!

We are also excited about introducing a new Web site. Please check out our schedule of events and services at [www.students.vcu.edu/omsa](http://www.students.vcu.edu/omsa).

## director's Message

Dear Students,

For some of you we say "Welcome", for others we say, "Welcome Back"! We hope your summer was a restful and rewarding one. Now it is time to begin another academic year and we hope you are as excited as we are about the challenges. As President John Fitzgerald Kennedy once said, "Our progress as a nation can be no swifter than our progress in education." Therefore, I challenge you to do your best.



The Office of Multicultural Student Affairs has been busy designing interesting programs that we hope will stimulate your thinking and create a climate for greater ethnic and racial understanding. It is through these programs that we reach out to the University by offering an opportunity for all students to learn about diversity. The world is shrinking to the extent that we need to have a better understanding of each other.

Please read the newsletter to see what we will be offering this semester. After you have read it, attend some of the programs. However, if you desire a greater challenge, where you can be more involved, please become a volunteer. We look forward to meeting you.

Sincerely,

Napoleon L. Peoples, PhD  
Director, OMSA

# openHouse

Be sure to stop by the office during the **OMSA Open House** on **Wednesday, September 7** to learn more about OMSA services and the following ethnic and racially diverse student organizations that we are responsible for advising:

- African Student Union
- Black Caucus
- Chinese Student Association
- Ethiopian Student Union
- Filipino Americans Coming Together
- Intercultural Festival Planning Board
- Kuwaiti Student Organization
- NAACP at VCU
- Latino Student Association
- South Asian Student Association
- Vietnamese Student Association
- West Indian Student Union



## 04/05 Events

Last year we developed an **OMSA Volunteer Team**. We invite students to join us who are interested in assisting with various activities by to gain experience in program development/ implementation, networking, and marketing. Also, volunteers learn how to work with people who are culturally different. Please stop by the office or visit our Web site to join!!

During Black History Month we sponsored or co-sponsored several prominent events and speakers, such as **Bakari Kitwana**, Hip Hop Writer, co-founder of the first National Hip-Hop Political Convention and the author of several books on hip hop culture. Widely acknowledged as an expert on hip-hop politics by The Washington Post, The Los Angeles, CNN, The O'Reilly Factor, and other leading news outlets. His writings have appeared in The New York Times, The Boston Globe, Savoy, The Village Voice, Black Book, and other publications.



**Marita Golden**, a literary phenom, an award-winning writer and author of twelve works of fiction and nonfiction. She conducts workshops on a variety of topics including African-American literature, Black women's writing, literary institution building, and cultural activism. She is also a veteran teacher, who has

been a member of the faculty at Virginia Commonwealth University and George Mason University and has lead writing workshops in many venues in the United States and abroad.

**Sister Souljah**, Hip Hop Activist, possesses the most passionate and articulate voice to emerge from the projects. Now she uses that voice to deliver what is at once a fiercely candid autobiography and a survival manual for any African American woman determined to keep her heart open and her integrity intact.

In addition to other thought provoking discussion groups and seminars, the first annual Soul Food Café was a huge success featuring the significance of soul food with good food, music and poetry. Great kudos to the student organizations that was instrumental in creating such a successful event!

In April, several events significant to OMSA were held. For example, the **Multicultural Academic Achievement Awards Reception** was a success with award receipts of over 400 students. Also, the **Intercultural Festival (ICF)** was successful with attendance of over 2500 participants, more than 30 vendors and performers. An official VCU tradition, the VCU Intercultural Festival celebrates cultural diversity. It is an all day outdoor festival which involves over 30 different VCU cultural student organizations and attracts not only the VCU and Richmond community but also people from all over the country. The festival offers an array of activities, such as unique performances, cultural displays and exhibits, VCU art student showcases, various cuisines from local restaurants, a fashion show and a parade. Several other exciting opportunities include dance lessons, arts and crafts from around the world, games, face painting and chances to win grand prizes. We also had the opportunity to partner with VCU Business Services and Aramark to award a student the first **VCU Dining Service Multicultural Scholarship**.

*We're looking forward to the 2005 - 2006 events!*

## upcoming Events

September is the 'kick off' of activities for OMSA! Please mark your calendar and join us!

There will be activities sponsored by various departments at the University during Welcome Week introducing students to VCU life Here are the OMSA sponsored events!

Date	Event Title & Topic	Location	Time
8/22	Life Skills <b>Topic:</b> Liquidity I – Credit Cards and Other Devilish Devices!"	University Student Commons Forum Room	12 p.m. – 1 :30 p.m.
8/22 & 8/24	Cultural Café <b>Topic:</b> West Indian Heritage Celebration	University Student Commons OMSA (Rm. 215)	4 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.
8/25	Salsa on the Plaza & Taste of Culture	Commons Plaza	5 p.m. – 8 p.m.

### mosaic week

*September 6 – 9*

A series of events held annually during the first week of September, offering incoming multicultural students an opportunity to meet faculty, staff, and others in the university. Students also learn about multicultural organizations, OMSA, and other University services that may be helpful to them. We welcome you to attend the various events held that week, especially the Open House event, stop by the office learn to more about our services and meet organization reps!

Date	Event Title & Topic	Location	Time
9/6	Asian Student Organizations Meet & Greet	University Student Commons Richmond Salons	4 p.m. – 6 p.m.
9/7	OMSA Open House	University Student Commons OMSA (Rm. 215)	10 a.m. – 4 p.m.
9/8	Latin Extravaganza	Gladding Residence Center	4 p.m. – 6 p.m.
9/9	Spirit Fest	Commons Plaza	5 p.m. – 8 p.m.



### multicultural leader speaker series

Date	Speaker & Topic	Location	Time
9/12	<b>Speaker:</b> Ms. Tanya Gonzalez, City of Richmond's Manager of the Hispanic Liaison Office <b>Topic:</b> "Spanglish: The Growing Latino Community in Richmond and Its Impact"	University Student Commons Richmond Salon III-IV	4 p.m. – 6 p.m.

### discussion groups

All meetings will be held in the University Student Commons, Room 215. Discussion Groups for women and men of color will be offered beginning in September. The groups are designed to discuss current issues related to them. The focus will be places on exploring racial, social, cultural issues and educational and career goals.

**The Women of Color Discussion Group** will be held every other Wednesday at 5 p.m., beginning September 21.

**The Men of Color Discussion Group** will be held every other Thursday at 5 p.m., beginning September 22.

### multicultural book club

All meetings will be held in the University Student Commons, Room 215. Students will have the opportunity to increase their knowledge of cultural and social issues through reading and discussing books in a relaxed interactive forum. The club will meet every Tuesday at 12 p.m., beginning September 13. Space is limited, please sign up at omsa@vcu.edu or call 828-6672.

## fall2005

Calendar of events for the rest of the semester

Date	Event Title	Location	Time
November 1	Multicultural Conference <i>(Please visit the Web site for upcoming details to register!)</i>	University Student Commons	4 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.
December 1	Taste of Holidays	University Student Commons OMSA (Rm. 215)	4 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.
December 8	Kwanzaa Festival	University Student Commons Commonwealth Ballrooms	6 p.m. – 8 p.m.

## ongoing *Events*

### brown bag discussions

(Meets in the OMSA office, 12 p.m. – 1 p.m.)

- » September 9
- » September 29
- » October 13
- » October 27
- » December 1

### life skills

(Time – 4 p.m. – 6 p.m.)

- » August 22 – Richmond Salon IV
- » September 15 – Forum Room
- » October 13 – Richmond Salon IV
- » November 17 – Forum Room
- » February 16 – Richmond Salon IV
- » March 23 – Forum Room
- » April 20 – Forum Room

### men of color discussion group

(Meets in the OMSA office, 5 p.m. – 6 p.m.)

- » September 22
- » October 6
- » October 20
- » November 3
- » November 17
- » December 1

### multicultural book club

(Meets in the OMSA office, 12 p.m. – 1 p.m.)

- » September 13
- » September 20
- » September 27
- » October 4
- » October 11
- » October 18
- » October 25
- » November 8
- » November 15
- » November 29



### multicultural leaders speaker series

(Meets in Richmond Salons III & IV, 4 p.m. – 6 p.m.)

- » September 12
- » October 24
- » November 14
- » February 13
- » March 27
- » April 10

### women of color discussion group

(Meets in the OMSA office, 5 p.m. – 6 p.m.)

- » September 21
- » October 5
- » October 19
- » November 2
- » November 16
- » November 30

## staff *Information*

**Napoleon L. Peoples, PhD**  
Director

**Beverly A. Walker, MEd**  
Assistant Director

**Ijuanzee I. Isom, BS**  
Multicultural Program Specialist

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