

Ethnic Diversity *Newsletter*

DEPARTMENT OF ETHNIC STUDIES

Minnesota State
University, Mankato

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The College life Experience

By Alex Amundson

Transition from High School to Minnesota State University,
Mankato

I've always thought of my life as a journey. It's as if I'm climbing a mountain and I'm getting closer to the "top", to my ideal place to rest. Before you start your climb you should always remember that you need to do two things. You have to remember to first observe and then decide which path to take and start your climb.

The path I choose was to go from Albert Lea High School with my Diploma and further my education at the college of my choice, Minnesota State University, Mankato. Although you may feel prepared, you will never know until you have actually experienced the "college life".

Back home when going to high school everything seemed more structured. Structured in a way that you have class after class; one after another. Then there seemed to be a few options for after school, like hanging out with friends, going home and doing something, or the occasional work day. The "college life" seems to be way more open and free to choose what you want to do. This also means you have to be responsible enough to get to your class at whatever time they may be. Another thing you have to work out is when you're going to eat. If you want to eat with your friend you have to make sure the time fits both of your schedules.

Something else that can be labeled under the "college life" category is the dorm room experience. Now as for me, I have a friend as a roommate so I have no surprises and didn't have to worry about not liking him. The main thing that is different in this setting is that I have to be the one to get myself out of bed, because at home I had a caring mom that made sure I got up in time to be ready for whatever I needed to do.

Though the college life may be different than what I was used to, I think that I can adapt to the college setting and get through it in one piece, even if there are a few bumps along the way. You may never know what you can do unless you try.

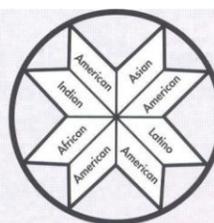
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Mission Statement

"The Department of Ethnic Studies, an interdisciplinary program, is academically committed to promoting multicultural and ethnic knowledge, skills and values both within and outside the United States and to preparing our students for effective participation in the culturally diverse global community."

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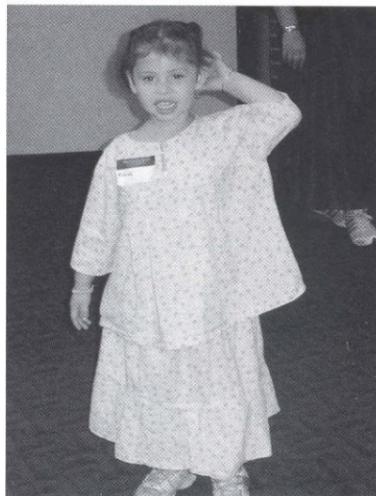
AMERICAN INDIAN PERSPECTIVE

LeVi K. Boucher [LeVi.Boucher@etravelexperts.com]

The Director of American Indian Affairs Dave Larsen, with the wonderful assistance of Kelly Meier, Director of Development for the Office of Institutional Diversity, invited American Indian speakers from all over to Minnesota State Mankato campus. This one day event took place at the Centennial Student Union on September 18, 2009. The Keynote Speaker was Elaine Salinas, President of MIGIZI Communications Inc., a well known speaker with presentations focusing on the education of American Indian Children and other underrepresented groups.

Other presentations were made by American Indian Affairs Director Dave Larsen who gave the opening presentation remarks; Valerie Larsen a Non-profit Organization Management Professional, and Shirley Cain spoke about "From the Rez to Success." Another speaker was Shawnee Hunt from the Ojibwe and Ho Chunk-Onigum communities, Joe Circlebear sang who spoke about the importance of drum. Among many other recognized speakers, was Dr. Rhonda Doss who presented "Grandmother Told Me-Native Women and Tradition," and Sebastian (Bronco) LeBeau who spoke on the topic of "Walking the Red Road".

The month of November is American Indian Awareness month. This is a time for everyone to become more aware of and to honor the land that we walk on. Director Dave Larsen and the American Indian Student Association (AI SA) can be reached at CSU 248 for anyone who is interested in the future events held by the American Indian Affairs Director and the American Indian Student Association.



CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS III II

The Department of Ethnic Studies provides special opportunities and recognition for the students in Ethnic Studies. Listed below are students who have received the most recent scholarships. Congratulations to the following Ethnic Studies scholarship student recipients for 2009-2010 academic years.

Lero Odola is the winner of the Timothy Price Scholarship. Lero has shown great leadership and community skills, along with maintaining a great academic standing.

Miho Chisaki is the winner of the Ethnic Studies Global Ethnic Diversity Award. Miho has brought her home country culture from Japan with her to Minnesota State Mankato, while keeping a high GPA.

Malinda Dean is the winner of the Ethnic Studies Achievement Award. Malinda has overcome great challenges while keeping her GPA high.

Jody Burnett and **Tom Heffernan** are the winners of the Ethnic Studies Academic Excellence Award. Jody and Tom are the two students with the highest GPA's.

In order to actively support and distribute to our students scholarships and interactive multi-cultural experiences, we must have the continued provisions from our colleagues and friends. Please consider a tax deductible contribution to the Department of Ethnic Studies' foundation account for scholarships (Account #: 335814). For more information, please contact Dr. Kebba Darboe by telephone at 507-389-5014 or by-mail at kebba.darboe@mnsu.edu. Thank you again for providing us with your continued support for the department, students and program.

HMONG NEW YEARI

November 14th The Hmong Student Association presented the Hmong New Year Celebration. The food was outstanding along with the festivities. Performers kept the audience captivated and involved with the event throughout the evening. Bright and detailed traditional dress attire was worn and modeled elegantly. Music was beautifully played and the dance performers were outstanding. The Hmong Student Association did a wonderful job again this year 2009, and we are looking forward to next year.

BEAUTY OF CULTURES

Vang Xiong co-founder of Beauty of Cultures, along with sponsors of the Department of Ethnic Studies and Office of Institutional Diversity, hosted the 3rd annual event this fall, 2009. Students from Various student organizations participated and performed during the event. The masters of ceremony include ethnic studies graduate students Tom Heffernan and Malinda Dean. Tom also performed with his band "Shot Gun Fiction". Chicana latina Student Association (C.I.A.S.A) did a great Ritmo Latino dance that had everyone in the mood to boogie. Minnesota State Mankato's Swing Dance Team swung their members around not missing a beat. Also, other students beautifully performed rich cultural dances, for example, a Sudanese student lero Odula and his beautiful wife along with a family friend preformed an Anuak Dance. There was a graceful Asian Indian dance done by Nicki lee, and the TCC Church Dance Group did two outstanding dances; one was a traditional Laotian Dance, while the other was hip-hop. Two south Pacific Polynesian performances were done; one by Evelyn Steffen preformed a beautiful solo Polynesian dance; and the other Polynesian performance was a song by Solo Taumalolo accompanied by Ericka Masias from the Philippines who gave Hula instructions to elementary students Emporess-Esther Dean and Fatima Bana. The performers get better and better every year and we are eager for next year's event. If you are interested in performing in next year's event please contact Vang Xoing via e-mail at: vang.xiong@mnsu.edu.

ETHNIC STUDIES ADJUNCT PROFESSORS

Vang Xiong and Angela Ward

Department of Ethnic Studies is proud to have two adjuncts faculty joining the team this fall semester 2009: Angela Ward and Vang Xiong. Vang Xiong has graduated with a Master's Degree in Ethnic Studies and is presently in the counseling and student personnel graduate program. Angela Ward has also earned a Master's Degree in Ethnic Studies and studying the alcohol and other drug abuse programs. We are pleased to have these two on the team.

FACULTY AND GRADUATE ASSISTANTS FOR ETHNIC STUDIES

Department of Ethnic Studies Graduate Assistants for 2009-2010 year are Barbara Doust, Thomas Heffernan, Mohamed Ibrahim and Malinda Dean. Our most appreciated Ethnic Studies office supervisor is Cynthia Veldhuisen. Faculty includes Professor Hahn-Huy Phan, Sebastian Iebeau, and Dr. Kebba Darboe who is the Interim Chair. Two adjunct faculty additions to the department this fall are Vang Tou Xiong and Angela Ward.

ETHNIC STUDIES STUDENT ORGANIZATION (ESSO), 2009

Malinda Dean, President
Levi Boucher, Vice President
Tamiya Lewis, Secretary
Mijo (hisaki), Treasurer
Van Xiong, Co-advisor
Dr. Han-huy Phan, Faculty advisor

ESSO has been meeting every other Tuesday at 5:00 P.M. in 101 Morris Hall. Please come and share your fresh innovative ideas with us. We are in progress of making plans to do outreach into the community. Two strategies currently being looked into are the local food banks and shelters. The goal is to donate to the local food shelves with nonperishable food item along with toiletries. With the current state of the economy it is vital to keep these food shelves stocked and contribute to the women and shelters. For inquires for joining ESSO or making donations please e-mail Malinda Dean at: malinda.dean@mnsu.edu.



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**PLEASE KEEP US POSTED. WE'D
LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU!**

Name (Mr./Ms./Mrs./Dr.):

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E-mail:

I AM: Alumni- Year Graduated: _____ Degree:

- Friend of the Department of Ethnic Studies
- Other

I WOULD LIKE TO RECEIVE MORE INFORMATION ON:

- Serving as a Professional Mentor
- Providing an internship
- Contributing to the Ethnic Studies Development Fund at the Minnesota State Foundation (tax deductible)

THANK YOU!

Please tear off, fold, and place in an envelope addressed to:
Department of Ethnic Studies, Minnesota State University, Mankato,
109 Morris Hall, Mankato, MN 56001
Or E-mail this information to kebba.darboe@mnsu.edu

