

# BLACKRAP

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 2, APRIL 2020



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LAKE FOREST  
COLLEGE

**Black Rap, Volume 1, Issue 2**

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## This one's for you, the visionaries who shatter glass ceilings.

Feeling bullish? This April issue is for you—the visionaries that step up to the challenge and grab the bull by the horns, the visionaries that challenge the norm and make changes. For those of us that fall, rise up, sweat it out and choose to take the road that is less travelled.

Hopefully the content in the second issue of our volume will inspire you to turn your visions into reality, to see a closed door as a stepping stone towards greater victory, to build your own bridge to the other side and to take action when you see injustice. After all, what is the worst that can happen when you grind and seize the opportunity to dance among the stars?

In the last known **Black Rap** publication, prior to the last 2020 issue—33 years ago in 1987, African American Student Leaders highlighted the importance of *unhu ubuntu*, unity otherwise known as regrouping. With 2020 vision, we not only bring back the importance of unity, but also highlight stories of successful Lake Forest College Alumni, trail blazers, gamechangers, allyship, diversity and inclusion, and amplify global voices that are unified by a common struggle; COVID-19.

I've fulfilled my promise—to make the final issue bigger and better. After all, visionaries drown the noise, change the narrative and they don't look back. Future Foresters, welcome to the beautiful yet challenging journey. Current Foresters, I will be cheering you on from a social distance on Zoom. Class of 2020 you will forever have a special place in my heart. Alumni, I'm choosing to climb the ladder to join you soon. Worldwide readers, enjoy.

*Au revoir*, it has been grand,  
Rudo Ellen Kazembe  
Editor-in-Chief  
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As diversity leaders within the community, we dedicate our efforts to embrace and celebrate the diversity of students, faculty, and alumni of African descent. We stand together in *unity, power, and love* with a dedication to uphold Lake Forest College's Forester Five Foundation. *Black Rap* is a student publication. The submissions in *Black Rap* do not necessarily represent the views of the Editorial Team members. Letters to the Editor are encouraged. Letters to the Editor should be signed. *Black Rap* reserves the right to edit all submissions for the publications. Submissions from everyone are always welcome. As always, *UNITÉ, AMANDLA & UPENDO*.



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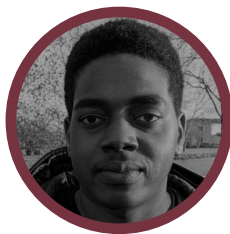
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# “Beam me up, Hanelle!”

By ELLEN KAZEMBE '20

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

**Hanelle M. Culpepper '92** shattered the glass ceiling by being the first woman to launch the sci-fi *Star Trek: Picard* series in its long 53-year franchise history. Eighteen years later, the spin-off series features Patrick Stewart as Captain Jean-Luc Picard, a role which he last starred in *Star Trek: Next Generation* in 2002. *Star Trek* has been well-renowned for its depiction of diversity and inclusivity in: *Star Trek: The Original Series* (1966-1969) which featured Lieutenant Uhura portrayed by Nichelle Nichols Uhura, who was one of the first African American women to star in a lead role. The aforementioned series also featured an Asian man, Lieutenant Hikaru Sulu portrayed by George Takei. In 1968, *Star Trek: The Original Series* featured the first interracial kiss, a year after the Supreme Court legalized interracial marriage.



Lake Forest College Alumnae, Culpepper '92 who signed on to direct the *Kung-Fu* reboot, has also directed various television shows and films, inclusive of but not limited to: *Gotham*, *Counterpart*, *The Originals*, *Parenthood*, *Empire*, *UNREAL*, *Sleepy Hollow*, *How to Get Away with Murder*, *S.W.A.T*, *Flash*, *Sleepy Hollow*, *American Gothic*, *90210*, *Supergirl* and *Criminal Minds*.

From 1997 to 2019, she has been awarded numerous awards including: NBC/Universal's Directing Initiative Fellow, Honorable Mention Writer's Digest Screenplay Competition (Block Party), HBO-DGA Directing Fellowship Finalist, HBO-DGA Directing Fellowship Finalist, Variety Inclusion Impact Honoree and ReFrame Rise Director. She graduated

from Lake Forest College with a B.A in Economics and French in 1992. And she got her M.A from USC Annenberg School for Communication. Here I spoke to Culpepper'92 about her inspirations, career pathway and her passions.



**Kazembe: Is there any particular moment or memory that still stands out to you from the time you were at Lake Forest College?**

*Culpepper:* That's a hard one because there are so many memories that stand out to me. I would say Playfair because that is something we did on our very first day of freshman year. I don't know if they still do it. How it worked is that you would do various activities in order to meet other people in your class. I met one of my very best friends through a Playfair activity where you separated into groups with people who are born the same month as you. Then you had to find the person whose birthday was closest to yours. I met Lisa Azu who was born one day before me and we are still great friends to this day.

**Kazembe: Which organizations or sports were you involved in when you are still a student at Lake Forest College?**

*Culpepper:* I was very involved in Garrick Players. I was also on the pom squad. I didn't really do any sports. I was involved in planning Student Activities and that was my job for quite a while. So, working in the theater and picking out films which relates directly to what I'm doing now.

**Kazembe: How would you describe your transition from your undergraduate years to working within the film industry?**

*Culpepper:* I knew that I wanted to work in the film industry when I was at Lake Forest College. I got a fellowship to get a PHD in Economics at the University of California, Riverside. While I was in that program, I decided that my heart was still in film and T.V., so I dropped out and switched to the University of Southern California. From there, it was a matter of working on various film projects. I worked in every position from P.A to producer to A.D to Grip so that I could learn, work my butt off and be ready for opportunities. Ultimately, it was while working at the Sundance Institute that I was really inspired by the filmmakers who were not waiting on Hollywood to give them a break. They were going out and making their movies and making it happen. I knew if I wanted to be a director, I had to start making movies. So, I stopped working full time and made my first short film. And things started opening up to me once I committed 100% to my true passion.



**Kazembe: What inspired you to become a film and T.V director?**

*Culpepper:* What inspired me was Mr. Ellis' directing class in my 12th grade of high school. I always wanted to act and constantly auditioned for my school's plays. But I was never cast so I took this elective class because it ensured myself an acting role. And that's when I discovered how much I enjoyed directing and working with actors instead of being on stage myself.



***Kazembe: Is there a particular genre that interests you the most when it comes to film directing?***

*Culpepper:* No. I don't really do broad comedy, but I love other genres including dramas, thrillers, action and sci-fi. For me it is more about the character driving the story rather than the genre.

***Kazembe: What has been the best aspect so far about directing Star Trek?***

*Culpepper:* Getting to work on a show that I absolutely love and getting to work with an actor, Patrick Stewart, that I completely admire. Also being able to create stuff that will go on to be canon and that will inspire people's Halloween costumes and cosplay costumes is pretty cool.

***Kazembe: What do you work towards in your free time?***

*Culpepper:* My answer to that is what free time? I am always working or if I'm not working, I try to put on the mom hat and be a good mom. I have not had time to read a book for fun in a long time and I really miss it.

***Kazembe: Who would you say has been the biggest influence in your life?***

*Culpepper:* I would say my parents. I saw how my Dad worked super hard to break barriers and to do

things that had not been done within the African American community and I saw how my mother always encouraged us to always follow our dreams no matter what they were.

***Kazembe: What have you learned over the years that you would like to share with students at Lake Forest College?***

*Culpepper:* If there is something that you really want to do, you can't give up. Sometimes you need to find your cheerleading section that can keep you motivated. These include people that really believe in you and encourage you. I also want to let the students know that nothing comes easy and you should not feel entitled to anything. You have to be willing to work hard, and when the rewards come, you will appreciate them more. Way back when I was in 10th or 11th grade, I was in a summer program where they shared with us a quote by Zig Ziglar, "it's your attitude, as opposed to your aptitude, that determines your altitude" and I have always lived by that. I approach everything with a good attitude and that is how I treat people and that is how I think we should all be in this world.

For more information visit [hillview798.com/](http://hillview798.com/)



# Standing out to make it

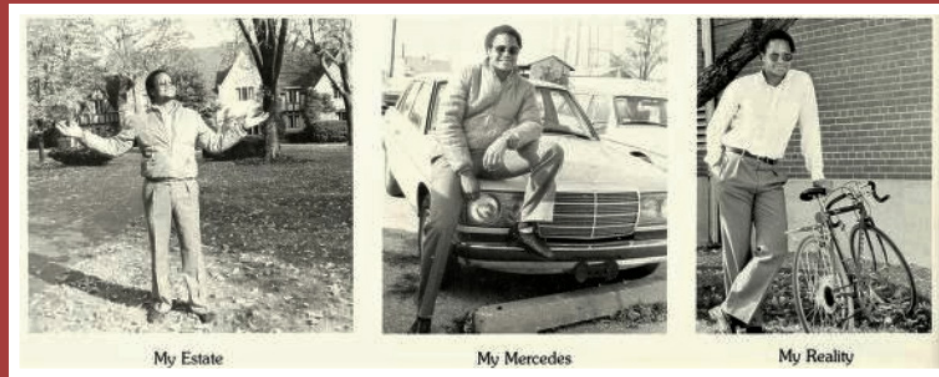
By **YANIRA GONZALEZ '20**  
MANAGING EDITOR

From having White House meetings under the Clinton administration to talking about small business lending that limited minorities, to overseeing functions at the 12 Federal Reserve Banks during the 2007-08 financial crisis, **Craig Marchbanks '84** has certainly created a name for himself in the professional world. The Lake Forest College alum has had many unique opportunities presented to him during his 30+ years working in finance, including the chance to meet with government officials and finance experts in both the U.S. and abroad. He has worked with the Federal Reserve Banks for 16 years now, and his current role as Knowledge Leader involves bank supervision and regulation as well as liquidity and risk management.

But a lot of Marchbanks '84 work with the Federal Reserve Bank has been more than just analyzing financial risks. "I've always had a desire to help the community", he states in reference to his work in community building. Much of his community and social justice work revolves around preparing students for college and the professional world, along with teaching them about financial literacy. While working as the Vice President of Corporate Social Responsibility and Diversity and Inclusion for the Federal Reserve, he worked closely with Chicago Scholars, a development program for under-resourced students in the city. He hosted numerous events for Chicago Scholars and also conducted a mentoring program with them. Marchbanks '84 has additionally managed a number of partnerships with local high schools to facilitate mentor-mentee relationships. Outside of his work with students, he led a volunteer counsel at the Federal Reserve consisting of representatives from all departments working on statewide volunteer efforts.



Much of Marchbanks' desire to serve the community, and more specifically help students succeed, stems from his experience as a student at Lake Forest College. He describes not having a mentor while in school, explaining "I was not the best student at Lake Forest, but I figured it out". Some valuable lessons that he learned in the process of "figuring it out" were the importance of networking and relationship building, and of putting oneself out there in order to gain knowledge and experience. During his internship with the City of Lake Forest, he was asked to conduct a time management study on the garbage disposal workers. His work was not well received considering he had to time the workers on the job, so he had to put in extra effort to win them over and gain their respect. Even-



tually, he had their trust and his work for the City of Lake Forest was deemed a success, as they ended up acting on some of his time management suggestions. He was asked by Lake Forest College administrators to speak to Alumni about his work for the city, a task which seemed very daunting at the time but ended up opening doors for him. “Once I had visibility on campus, things started happening for me”, he states. “Once you put yourself out there and do good work, people are going to recognize you”. He claims that part of building a repertoire is doing things that others ask of you even if it is out of your comfort zone, as those people probably see something in you that you don’t see in yourself. He goes on to describe having been in several situations which were outside of his comfort zone, including interviewing for jobs in which “the only Black people in the room would be me and the receptionist, and there would be hundreds of other brokers, all white males”. According to Marchbanks ‘84, situ-

ations like these should never deter you from knowing your worth, striving for greatness, and accomplishing your goals despite the obstacles.

In addition to networking and putting oneself out there, Marchbanks ‘84 advises students to “stay in contact with the people that think highly of you” and “take advantage of the opportunities you have at this school”. He recommends utilizing resources like the Lake Forest College Center for Academic Success in order to learn how to study better and time management habits, something he states he should have done earlier as a student. He cites going through the Lake Forest College In The Loop program and connecting with people in the Alumni network, or even connecting with him, as other ways to branch out and interact with people who can help you advance your career. You’ll never know the opportunities that may come your way if you never try. In his words, “a closed mouth doesn’t get fed”.



**Far Back Row:** Ippolito, Whalen, Larson, Pasilo, Dank, Walker, Olsen, Marra; **Back Row:** Augsberger, Marchbanks, Vruno, Barnes, Hamblett, Sullivan, Taylor, Wagner, Shaw, Horne, Kavanagh, Hehr, Teet; **Middle Row:** Loll, Wells, Wilson, VanHaften, Beck, Cortez, Kaiser, Lundgren, Giles, Bonner, Malls, Jatis; **Front Row:** Rhee, Fox, Ciszek, Lasher, Knous, Drombroski, Webb, Centrella, Ciemniowski, Tatera, McPartland.

# Constructions of racial identity: Coconut

By **TEBATSO DUBA '22**

CONTRIBUTOR

A coconut is socially defined as a black or brown (non-Caucasian) person who, in many ways, is perceived to embrace and embody white culture. They're defined by the way they speak, their friend group, their music playlist, the way they dress, their goals and aspirations, and the kind of education they receive. I've learned that in the U.S., these individuals are usually labelled as Oreos. In some Asian countries, they're labeled as bananas and almonds.

I had been called a coconut throughout my whole childhood and I did not mind because I was blissfully unaware of the implications of these labels. Over time, however, as I grew older, I began to realize some things. Slowly I became aware that I live in a world where, more often than

*“much time had passed before I could notice the wounds from thousands of tiny microaggressive bullets”*

not, my race walks into the room before I do, and these kinds of labels (coconut, oreo, banana, and almond) reaf-

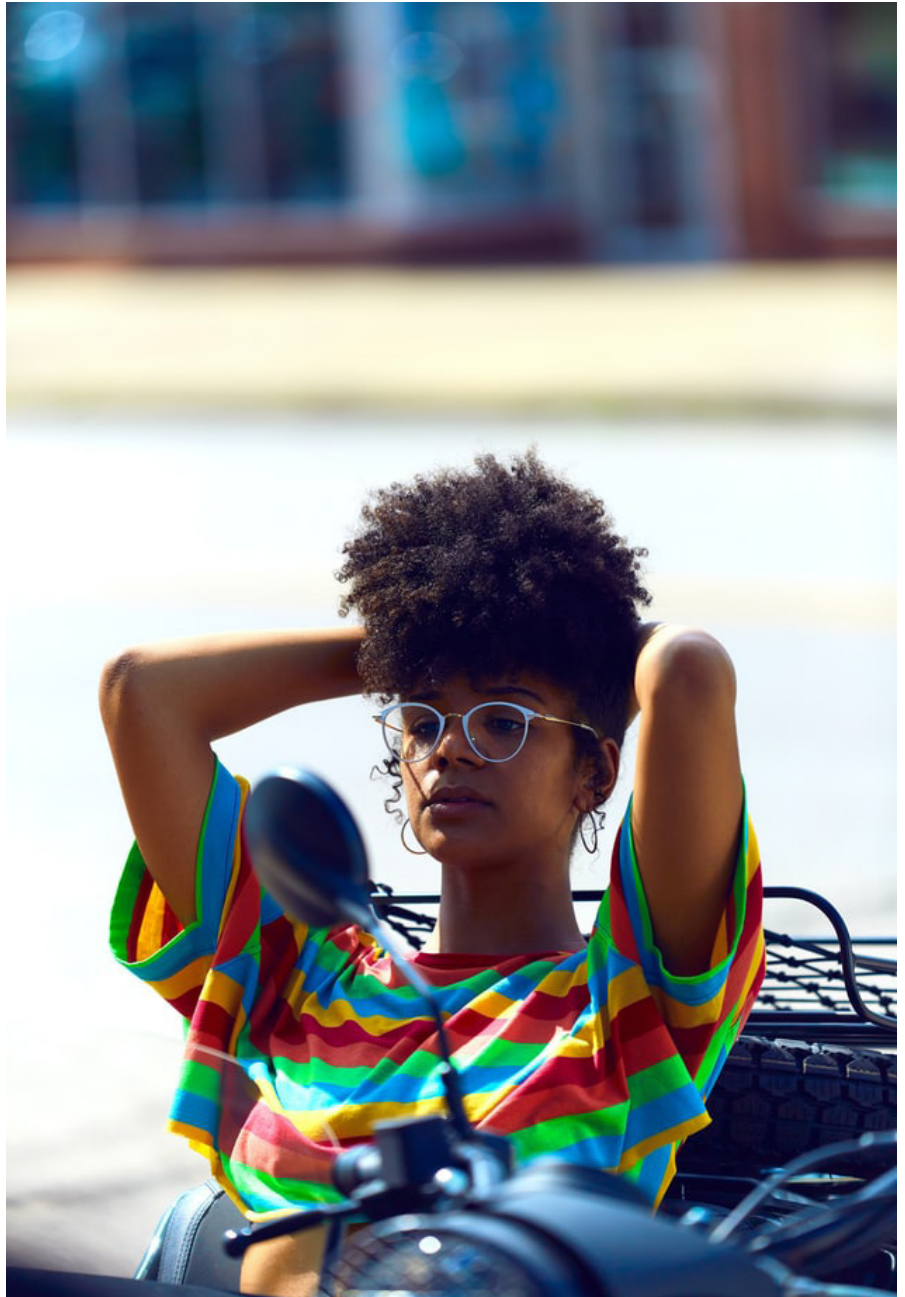
firmed what I was starting to notice. These labels suggest that there is a preconceived idea of how one should present themselves from the way they speak to what they should aspire to, depending on the color of their skin. The worst part is that when I do not meet these expectations, I am labeled as an outsider. I am not black; instead, I am a coconut, and I am set apart. Note that we live in the 21st century, thus, these discriminatory and prejudiced notions were never overt expressions. They were hidden behind kind smiles and good intentions. Consequently, much time had passed before I could notice the wounds from thousands of tiny microaggressive bullets.

So what do we do with these labels and how do we tackle implicit prejudice? Well, if we think about it, these labels spell out: YOU CANNOT BE

IDENTITY

TOO (insert race) IF YOU WANT TO ENTER THIS SPACE OR SUCCEED OR FIT IN etc.. So here's an idea. Use all the advantages that come with these labels. In other words, use the privilege it brings. As a result, you enter these spaces and make the most of the opportunities, but, while you are there, work to make sure that the road you're paving is one that encourages and allows more diversity and inclusion. You kind of become like a spy... working on the inside to motivate and lend a hand to the people that the system has historically barricaded from the spaces you now operate in.

Finally, this message is not only for people of color. White people who operate to create more diversity and inclusion and understand the necessity of it are just as powerful and absolutely necessary. This is a group effort because we are all responsible for our future. Look, there are many ways to tackle prejudice so you do not have to take my word for it. I just think that this is a good step in turning something as sour as discrimination into something sweet.



# The complexity of identity

By **ODETTE FREDERIK TATANGMO MENO '21**

CONTRIBUTOR

A simple way to define my identity is that it makes me who I am. For most of my life, my identity has often been a part of three specific categories; Cameroonian, female, and a scholar. I am a born-raised Cameroonian, from a Franco-phone background. Both of my parents are from the Bamileke tribe; one of the most dominant tribes in Cameroon.

My first language is French but as soon as I turned two years old, I attended a bilingual system of education where I studied in both French and English. Between the ages of 10-18, I was in an Anglo-Saxon system of education. I am the second born in a family of four and the second girl child. Compared to many ideologies that some families adhere to in some African countries, and for me, Cameroon specifically, when it comes to a girl child, my parents have never made us feel less important than my brother.



I am now 22 years old and I am now in the United States of America. For the past three years in the USA, my identity has constantly been redefined and reaffirmed. In Cameroon, my racial identity was never questioned. As a result of the unpleasant realities in the U.S pertaining to race, it has become part of my identity to reaffirm and redefine my Blackness. Another part of my identity I hold at heart is my femininity. I am very passionate about women and everything that has to do with the wellbeing and prosperity of women at a global scale. My gender is female, and my sexuality is heterosexual. These are personal attributes I am gladly rediscovering and embracing these parts of my identity since I have been in the USA.

*“Having all these angles about identity just accentuates the fact that almost everything is socially constructed, and we often act as a result of our socializations.”*

As much as the term “identity” is commonly used, the content of this word is actually very complex. So many people struggle to find what really suits their personalities without getting backlash for it. I have a few friends who are still not comfortable with their identities because it feels like they are placed in a box. Having all these angles about identity just accentuates the fact that almost everything is socially constructed, and we often act as a result of our socializations. I personally think regardless of what one may identify with, we ought to be responsible and respectful of one another.

# 9 students share the importance of allyship

By **ELLEN KAZEMBE '20** and **ESTHER KIM '22**

*EDITOR-IN-CHIEF AND CONTRIBUTOR*

What is an ally? According to Merriam Webster dictionary, being an ally is defined as, “supportive association with another person or group. Such association with the members of a marginalized or mistreated group to which one does not belong”. We all hold different identities and privileges in different aspects of our life and they intersect in multiple ways that are important to our sense of self. To be an ally is to offer acknowledgement of others’ identities, and to recognize the power in our lives to support each other. To be an ally is to be willing to learn, and offer sympathy, and to strive for empathy. To be an ally is a unique process for each person. Here are nine short reflections about allyship written by students across the globe.

## **1** **Ashleigh Nyambirai, Masters in International Trade and Commercial Law, Durham University, United Kingdom**

“The importance of allyship is self-evident: the greatest advances in redressing inequality were made possible through it. It shifts the conversation from that of blame and guilt to that of accountability through self reflection. Allyship creates a cocoon of support for the disenfranchised, thus allowing a metamorphic shift in social norms and dynamics that sees a more diverse society unified by the need to do and be better.”

## **2** **Krista Grund-Wickramasekera, Economics and Political Science, Lake Forest College, United States**

“Allyship reinforces the idea that we do not face our challenges alone, but we are always within arms length of support. Even if one group is exclusively facing a struggle, this will impact everyone in the long-run, so it is of utmost importance to fight alongside one another in the pursuit of equity and inclusion. As written in *To Kill A Mockingbird*, one of my favorite books, “you never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view...until you climb into his skin and walk around in it.”. Allyship means you are purposely putting yourself in a vulnerable position for the benefit of someone else and their movement towards a path of justice and righteousness.”

### **3** Detmer Kremer, Masters in Human Rights, University College London, United Kingdom

“Solidarity is essential for any activism, because all of our oppressions are interlinked, and without each other any perceived liberation is not just incomplete, it is false. Solidarity allows us to learn and grow, and to resist the systems profiting from dividing us. It shows us new ways of being, and new names for ourselves and our experiences.”

### **5** Andisiwe Tena, Psychology and English, Varsity College Port Elizabeth, South Africa

“Allyship is important because it promotes working together and forming meaningful relationships that actually make a difference. Like men supporting women in feminist causes or white people supporting black people in racial causes.”



### **4** Munotidaishe Timba, Sport and Exercise Science, the University of North Hampton, United Kingdom

“Allyship for me is the discovery of new cultures and beliefs. Through this process you discover that although people are from different cultures we have many aspects that are similar. And by finding these similarities you further strengthen your connections and realise that being an ally is not designated to one skin colour, but can encompass all people regardless of their nationality, race or religion.”

### **6** Prince Cooper, Exercise in Sports Science, Murdoch University, Australia

“Well the importance of allyship to me represents the definition of unity. Unity means to be together and that’s what allyship aims for, making sure the underrepresented are appreciated and never alone. Allyship also becomes a voice for the voiceless, being a vessel for those that don’t have the strength to fight alone, but with allyship you never have to fight alone, you become united amongst others with the same vision to support the underrepresented”

## **7** Munotidaishe Timba, Sport and Exercise Science, the University of North Hampton, United Kingdom

“Allyship for me is the discovery of new cultures and beliefs. Through this process you discover that although people are from different cultures, we have many aspects that are similar. And by finding these similarities you further strengthen your connections and realise that being an ally is not designated to one skin colour, but can encompass all people regardless of their nationality, race or religion.”

## **8** Devota Niyikiza, Psychology criminology and Justice, Edith Cowan University, Australia

“Allyship strives to promote inclusivity, it reinforces the importance of listening and uplifting those around us, as this helps even the marginalised and underrepresented voices be heard.”

## **9** Michelle Nyambirai, Finance and Accounting, Carleton University, Canada

“Allyship means understanding that you always have someone who has your back no matter what. It is knowing that you never have to navigate through the struggles of this world alone. It feels like practising social distancing without ever feeling distant from your social circle.”

We often feel alone, defeated, and powerless when we are faced with discrimination or ignorance. Blatant hatred and microaggressions are hurtful, and our multiple identities and struggles exacerbate feelings of hopelessness. Allyship is a way to bond through the pain in our lives, standing up to bigotry, and provide a community for activists to have a support network. This is hard work. This is what it means to be an ally. You, too, can be an ally. You choose.

*“It shifts the conversation from that of blame and guilt to that of accountability through self reflection”*



# What is science without diversity and inclusion?

By **ELLEN KAZEMBE '20**

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

**Matt Wallaert** is a Scientist who has applied Behavioral Science to start-up companies, including some that are listed among the Fortune 500 companies, as well as tackled multifaceted social issues to make an impact. He is the first Chief Behavioral Officer at Clover Health where he leads one of the world's largest behavioral science teams which includes: qualitative researchers, project managers and quantitative researchers. Prior to his role at Clover Health, he worked as Microsoft's behavioral scientist and he was also a director at Microsoft Ventures.

In his book, "Start at the End: How to Build Products That Create Change", Wallaert integrates humor, anecdotes, personal experiences, research and issues related to diversity and inclusion to capture how to drive behavioral changes within organizations. He has conducted multiple diversity and inclusion projects that include: I Asked Her, Why Men Attend, Get Raised, Thrive, Salary or Equity and many others.

Walleart collaborated with Data Scientist Tyler Burleigh to research the *Peculiar Psychology of Mediocre White Men* and found out that, "White men feel more competent and more psychologically safe at work than people of color and women" and that "if we want to make work better for women or people of color, increasing psychological safe spaces holds more promise." His brainchild, GetRaised.com, which was driven by the frustration of the wage disparities in relation to gender has



brought about an average salary raise of \$6,500 totaling over \$3.1B. Here, I spoke to Wallaert about his background, interests and the intersection between Behavioral Science research and diversity and inclusion.

**Kazembe: How does Behavioral Science intersect with diversity and inclusion?**

**Wallaert:** So there are two ways to talk about Behavioral Science and diversity and inclusion: The first one is in terms of how diversity and inclusion empowers Behavioral Science. So, Behavioral Science is about how we change behavior. Think about bigger structural changes that you can't do without diversity. Science requires diversity for a couple of different reasons. One, if you get a bunch of White people in a room they will likely generate behavioral change strategy that generates behavior for White people, so if your goal as a Behav-

ioral Scientist is to change the behavior of a large population of people, which it usually is then you need to have representation of a large population of people in order to produce the behavioral science that would likely work. That's one piece. Second, it requires the diversity of thought, disciplines and backgrounds because the wider we cast the net the better. So if you think about behavioral changes like a tabletop you want as many as possible and as far apart as possible and you want optimal distribution. If you had a table with one leg that would be a failing table but similarly if you had one leg and all the legs were in the center that would also be a failing table. You need a diversity of perspectives in order for the table to be stable. So message one is that Behavioral Science requires diversity and the second one is more about how Behavioral Science can actually work to increase diversity and inclusion by increasing those behaviors. We need diversity to do our work but we can also produce diversity through doing our work.

***Kazembe: What leveraged your interest in studying the intersection between Behavioral Sciences and diversity and inclusion?***

*Wallaert:* I am interested in diversity and inclusion because it is one of the places in which we have the most ability to actually change behavior. Issues in relation to diversity and inclusion and equality are things that we can and should change. We do have an ability to change behaviors. I am not saying it's easy. I am not saying getting people to be inclusive is easy by any sort of imagination, but it is possible.

***Kazembe : What inspired you to come up with the Get Raised project?***

*Wallaert:* I got access to peoples' financial data

through my previous startup, Thrive. Through that startup, I got a first-hand look at the fact that women were actually better at managing their money but are dramatically underpaid. The wage gap is not only isolated to gender but it also intersects with race. For example, White women are underpaid by 30 cents whereas Hispanic women are underpaid by 50 cents so there is a huge difference. So, I got interested in finding ways to actually increase women's pay.

***Kazembe: Why do you think there is a disparity when it comes to salary?***

*Wallaert:* Well there are a lot of different factors. Some of it has to do with training and educational attainment. Some underrepresented groups are less likely to get high quality education. We need to recognize

that underrepresented groups such as African Americans face more barriers in comparison to white Americans. Fewer African Americans are

able to go to college, fewer African Americans have access to healthcare. Another major factor that causes these disparities is systematic racism that underrepresented groups face at young ages. Systematic racism limits potential. Another factor is how as a working adult there are some limitations for underrepresented groups within the job market that don't adequately compensate for the potential that does exist. In order to address this, the first step is to find ways in how to make sure that underrepresented groups are set up to succeed. Step two is finding ways to ensure that people succeed. Another issue is that African Americans and other underrepresented groups are not getting hired at the same rate as White Americans. They are also not promoted at the same rate. Actions by underrepresented groups are also not interpreted in the same way. For example, with gender, when men take cer-

***“That is something that has been corrosive within American society. It has gotten better but we are not anywhere near good.”***

tain actions it's interpreted as leadership whereas with women those actions are interpreted as being bossy. There are other examples of structural inequities where people interpret the same information differently depending on the source and that contributes to inequities. That is something that has been corrosive within American society. It has gotten better but we are not anywhere near good.

***Kazembe: Why do you think diversity and inclusion is important within the workplace or institutions?***

*Wallaert:* Well, I think that there are lots of reasons. One, I think it's a moral imperative. It is about treating people with dignity and respect and about giving people opportunities to help them flourish. It is something that humans are born wanting to do. We want to help other people as humans. It is our nature to try to create diversity and inclusion when we can. Even beyond that we know that diverse businesses are a lot more profitable. It's a rule of numbers. The larger the perspective of the pool of talent the greater the collective talent. Right? If you only hire White guys, then you will lose out on a lot of people who are really talented. So I have a ten person team here at Clover Health and there is only one other White person on my team and everyone else is a woman of color. And that gives my team tremendous resilience

and it brings unique things to my team that other teams don't have. My team is a very high performing group. Again, with diversity there is a moral imperative but there is also a profitable imperative.

***Kazembe: How has your background and experience prepared you to be effective in social projects that are committed to diversity and inclusion?***

*Wallaert:* Arguably my background and experiences haven't prepared me because I am a White man. As a White man I am the most distant from the experience of being an underrepresented person. On the flip side, as a White man, I have gotten a tremendous number of opportunities that most people from underrepresented groups would not have gotten and that has allowed me to make changes. So, I have the power but not as much of the knowledge. So it's a hard plane. I went to a UWC in high school, so I got to go to school with students from all over the world. I am a first-generation kid. When I went to school I also felt out of place. I am lucky that as a White male I still got a lot of resources and messages from society that even though I felt out of place I could still be successful but it was hard for me as a first generation college student.

*For more information visit [mattwallaert.com/](http://mattwallaert.com/)*

# Segregated thoughts: A black perception of whiteness

By **KOBENA AMOAH '23**  
CONTRIBUTOR

The popularization of Black History Month among colleges adds to a heightened black consciousness within modern America. Of course this can be attributed to the growing black presence and group solidarity on college campuses. The acknowledgement of a black presence on campus with the celebration of Black History Month not only shows the ethnic pluralism of American diversity but also brings into light the dark and somber chapters of American history.

*“Whiteness invokes a sense of racial superiority as well as a superiority that society grants white people in the form of normative privileges.”*

It is, without a doubt, this celebration which has brought into mainstream conversation the role of racism in defining the black identity. Discussions of whiteness are embedded into this conversation, and in this piece, I hope to shed more light on what 'whiteness' looks like from a black perspective - or at least mine.

The creation of the United States by the founding fathers provides an insight into the philosophy of individual freedom. Freedom at the time was synonymous to ownership; however, this sovereign freedom was grounded in color-coded law that only recognized the liberties of specific groups. White people under law were allowed to express this freedom while Black people were denied this right. Thus, it seems logical to connect the idea of whiteness to a sense of ownership. An ownership that presumed a racial superiority towards Black folks, legitimizing exploitation.

My association of whiteness with a sense of ownership brings into question the role of morality in history. The idea of whiteness carries this sense

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of neglect and oppression in black thought. It is, however, no longer the case that Blacks are being outwardly ignored in the conception of American history. The black role in American history still is somewhat unspecified; however, the celebration of Black History Month at least acknowledges the presence of the black identity in our history.

Whiteness invokes a sense of racial superiority as well as a superiority that society grants White people in the form of normative privileges. American history has long been characterized by a power versus powerless dynamic. This power imbalance is, however, changing for the better. Perhaps this can be attributed to the removal of a muted silence of the black voice. If we are to maintain on this path of progress, we need to be willing to take fresh looks at history.

History is meant to be interrogated. Interrogation breeds understanding. Ultimately, it is understanding that will lead us to making a positive action in redefining problematic societal constructs about race and identity.

# The role of Jewish Rabbis during Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s movement

By DENZEL MARUFU '23

EDITOR

Much has been said about Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s industriousness and charismatic pursuit of racial equality in the mid 20th century. The focus has often been on his stance against the discriminatory policies that were in place so as to inhibit the African American community, at the time, from obtaining adequate opportunities to advance in the society. However, the matter was not just black and



white (no pun intended) and King's actions represented a much greater notion. The devil, or angel in this case, is in the details, and the details show that the solidarity shared by influential figures in the Jewish community and the African American community came from a place of resistance to oppressive, inhumane treatment, and a desire to be able to act without being the subject of unjustified ostracization.

To understand the shared sentiments of the Jewish and African American communities, one needs to understand the ideologies that oppressed both groups. The Holocaust had occurred less than two decades before Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s March on

Washington and was still fresh in the minds of the world. The Nazi "Übermensch"<sup>1</sup> ideology was, to a great extent, a misinterpretation of German Philosopher Friederich Nietzsche's notion that Aryan individuals had excellence in their blood. Adolf Hitler went on to use this notion to justify his belief that all non-Aryans do not possess this excellence and, therefore, would contaminate the superior Aryan citizens. This

idea of "contamination" is a common theme in ideological battles as it justifies the extermination of the contaminant, similarly to how we try to eliminate bacteria that contaminates our bloodstream.

While, unfortunately, slavery has been common throughout humanity, the ideology behind slavery and colonization in the 20th century was more prominent as it was not directly justified by class, as it

had been in ancient Greece, northern Africa etc. but it was justified through those who helped push forward the period of Enlightenment. The technological advancements that came as a result of this "intellectual awakening" justified the protuberant ethnocentrism of Western Europeans (who had integrated into the United States by the 20th century) amongst others. Inevitably, they saw those who had not yet advanced by this standard to be primitive, which brought about subhuman attitudes towards other groups. Despite the abolition of slavery in December of 1865, these ethnocentric ideas still remained

1 Nietzsche, 1883

and were exacerbated by oppressive laws such as the Jim Crow Laws in the south of the United States.

Now that the ideologies that justified the oppression of both groups have been stated, the question is: What were the similarities that allowed them to find solidarity with each other during this period? For one, they had been oppressed by misconstrued ethnocentric views that led to their dehumanisation. More importantly, through their oppression, they gained a strong sense of camaraderie and even greater cultural solidarity. Like a spring, the more these respective groups were pushed down, the more tight-knit they became and the greater their desire to rise.

Given these similarities, it is clear why Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was an ally in the fight against anti-semitism. In March of 1967, two weeks before his assassination, King wrote a letter to Adolf Held, the president of the Jewish Labour Committee<sup>2</sup>, about his support for the preservation of Israeli democracy and peace. In response, despite warnings from fellow Jews about the violence that could ensue, 500 Jews made up half of the 1000<sup>3</sup> White activists that took part in the March on Washington and the Selma to Montgomery March. Notable individuals included Rabbi Saul Berman who gathered 150<sup>4</sup> Jewish activists (who were subsequently arrested) and Rabbi David Teitelbaum, who took four other Rabbis to the Voter Registration Drive for black-Americans in March of 1965. The black-American community reciprocated this support by wearing yarmulkes and walked hand-in-hand with their Jewish brothers. The aforementioned Rabbi David Tietelbaum summarized the motivation to aid the black community by stating that “This was living out what Judaism itself has been teaching all along, that you have to help the oppressed, the underprivileged; not stand idly by the blood of your neighbour.”<sup>5</sup>

2 Judaism Reform, 2020

3 Judaism Reform, 2020

4 Fishker, 2016

5 Fishker, 2016

***“This idea of ‘contamination’ is a common theme in ideological battles as it justifies the extermination of the contaminant, similarly to how we try to eliminate bacteria that contaminates our bloodstream.”***

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# Dear Feyi

By **OLUWAFEYISAYO ADEYINKA '22**  
CONTRIBUTOR

*Editor's note: These are some of the questions that were submitted to the Black Rap Editorial Team by Lake Forest College students that want to learn more about African and African American cultures. The students' identities have been withheld.*

***Dear Feyi. How do you feel about politically conservative black people?***

*-Anonymous*

*Dear Anonymous... Everyone is entitled to their thoughts, opinions, and beliefs. The truth is the root of conservative black people originally was to better belong in a community that has marginalized and oppressed*

*them for so long. "If you can't beat them, join them" mentality. But over the years they have not only adopted it but embraced it.*



***Dear Feyi. To what extent are African languages different? Are the languages more similar or dissimilar? This is something that I have always been curious about.***

*-Global Trotter*

*Dear Global Trotter... Due to colonization you might find that many African countries speak English, French, Dutch, and Portuguese. Aside from this we have local languages. Let me put this in perspective. I am Nigerian, in Nigeria we have over 300 languages spoken and 3 major languages. I speak English, my local language*



Yoruba, and that's it. I can't understand any language from any other west African country. Now imagine the whole of Africa, Northern Africa colonized by the Arabs, Southern Africa colonized by the Dutch, Eastern Africa colonized by the British, and Western Africa colonized by the French and British.

**Dear Feyi. What effect has the majority women representation in the Rwandan government had on other African countries' view on pushing for gender equality? Do you think that this will cause a significant shift of the patriarchal system?**  
-Feminist Ally

Dear Feminist Ally ... The patriarchal system still exists in many African countries. This is such an ingrained part of African society that stems from the mentality that men are the ones who work on the farm to take care of their families. In many African countries, polygamy is still practiced and girls are married or sold off in their pre-teens. Africa is a continent that allows forward thinking because of the lack of policing, but is so backwards because we hold our traditions so high, even when it makes no sense.

**Dear Feyi. Have you ever viewed American History and culture as your own? Have you embraced it as your own?**  
-New Yorker

Dear New Yorker ... Hmm... maybe the culture at times but not the history. I started traveling to America before I knew what traveling was. I grew up annoyed that Nigeria wasn't as fun as America. But as I grew Nigeria closed the gap with its western influence.

**Dear Feyi. I've always admired the flamboyant Nigerian Gele hats. Are those symbolic of any part of your culture in Nigeria?**  
-Fashionista

Dear Fashionista ... Babes, you're a real one! But it is just called Gele, no need to add hats. It functions as a hat you wear on special occasions, but it is tied, it's not actually a hat. They have many pleats in different colors, finishes, and textures, but you better believe beauty is pain because they hurt!

**Dear Feyi. Have you ever felt discouraged about making non-black friends?**  
-Kentuckian

Dear Kentuckian ... I do have non-black friends but I would say the LFC environment makes it hard to sustain. But if you want to be friends you can just say hi!

**Dear Feyi. What do you love the most about America?**  
-Curious

Dear Curious ... I love the fact that every state is a new experience.

# I choose the ladder

By ELLEN KAZEMBE '20

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

**Watchen Nyanue** is a business strategy leader from Liberia. Not only is she the founder of *I Choose the Ladder*, but she is also the Vice President of Marketing Partnership for the WNBA Chicago Sky. Additionally, she is the co-founder of Little Doebahyou, a monthly subscription box, which teaches children between the ages of 6-11 to embrace and understand the history and culture of the African Diaspora. Nyanue has been endowed with many accolades. She is a 2018 Chicago Business Journal Woman of Influence Honoree, a Chicago Scholars 35 Under 35 Honoree, and a Biz Women 2018 Headliner. She has also been featured on Windy City Live, WGN-TV and Chi at a Glance.

*I Choose the Ladder* is an empowering bi-weekly podcast that features uncensored stories of black women who have stepped up to the challenge and shattered the glass ceiling of corporate America. In these podcasts, black women not only share their experiences, but they also share advice on how to break barriers in various sectors. Prior to launching *I Choose the Ladder*, Nyanue Watchen worked for Comedy Central, Hearst Digital, Yahoo! and the Johnson Publishing Company.

The *I Choose the Ladder* podcast has featured a wide range of guests from various spheres. From Nicole A. Elam, who is the Vice President of Government Relations at JPMORGAN CHASE & CO, to Shae-lynn Otikor, who is the Senior Vice President of Global Business Strategy at Northern Trust Corporation. Here, I spoke to Nyanue about her interests, experiences, and the *I Choose the Ladder* podcast.

**Kazembe:** *How did you come up with the brand name "I Choose The Ladder?" Is there a story behind that?*

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*Nyanue:* For me, the podcast and the program that we do is to make people feel empowered in their career choices. I want people who are in the corporate world to realize that they are choosing to climb the ladder and to feel like they are in total control.

***Kazembe: What excites you the most about the I Choose the Ladder podcasts?***

*Nyanue:* Part of it is getting to hear the stories of these phenomenal women whom most people have probably never heard of, but who are actually making a difference and changing the narrative for black women in corporate America. I think that there are some really fascinating stories about how they got to where they are. We had our first career summit last year and at the summit people got jobs, mentors, and internships, so to see the actual results of the work is also really exciting.

***Kazembe: Is there a particular story that has stood out to you the most?***

*Nyanue:* So, there are quite a few. One of them features Nzinga Shaw, who is the Chief Diversity Officer of Starbucks, but when I interviewed her she was the Chief Diversity Officer of the Atlanta Hawks. She was the first person to have the Chief Diversity Officer title in all of the professional sports. She actually got that because, at that time, she was working for another organization and she recognized the need for a position that focuses on diversity and inclusion. So she spent a couple of weeks doing research, putting together a proposal and she presented it to her boss. A lot of times your boss should be the person who is trying to help you within your career pathway, but when she presented the idea, her boss said, "I am not a Chief anything so what makes you think you are going to get it? You are never going to be a chief of anything". Two years later to the date, she became the first person to have a Chief Diversity title in all of professional sports. Another story is Episode 19

which features Sherina May Edward. She is one of my favorites. She is a partner at a law firm. Most people work forever to try to lobby for the position. In her case, she was nominated by someone to get this position and she doesn't even know who nominated her. Her message was that people are always watching so make sure that you are always doing your best. Another one is Episode 20 whereby Karen Brown talks about being raised in the equivalent of a small shack in Jamaica and then came to be the Chief Diversity Officer of a major corporation and now runs her own consulting firm.

***Kazembe: Which listeners are you mainly targeting for your Podcast?***

*Nyanue:* For us the intention is for people in their early career stages, not people in senior management. A lot of people who listen are mostly black women between the ages of 23 to 36, but we also have non-black women who also listen to the podcast. It also helps younger college women on campus with knowing what they need to do to start preparing for transitioning from full time students to

working in the corporate world whereby the learning curve is not so steep.

***Kazembe: Can you tell me about a project or accomplishment that you consider to have been the most significant in your career?***

*Nyanue:* Outside of running I Choose the Ladder, I am the Senior Vice President of Marketing partnerships for the WNBA here in Chicago. Two years ago we partnered with our New Jersey partner and we found out that when Kevin Durant was playing for the Warriors he had the Guinness World Record for the world's largest basketball lesson so we set out to beat his world record and that's how we announced the partnership. We actually beat Kevin Durant's record and we had about 25,000 people of all ages playing basketball at the same time and it was a lot of fun!

***“For sports it’s a big deal. The NBA paused their season and it’s the same for the WNBA right? And for us, we are trying to figure out a new normal.”***

***Kazembe: Can you tell me about a time you overcame a challenge?***

*Nyanue:* If we are talking about now: A recent challenge for me is the coronavirus pandemic. For sports it's a big deal. The NBA paused their season and it's the same for the WNBA right? And for us, we are trying to figure out a new normal. Our season normally starts on May 15th. So, for now, we have been trying to figure out how to keep things going and how to keep partners interested in us during this time when we are not playing... when we normally would be playing. We also wanted to figure out how we can come back to play this season and ways to keep people engaged with the brand and the game.

Thinking back to the time when I was in college, I had done eight internships by the time I graduated. Post-graduation, I decided that I wanted to live in Los Angeles and New York. I had seen people on TV loading up their cars and moving to Los Angeles and that's what I did. I literally moved to Los Angeles with my friend and I didn't have a job. I also didn't have a place to stay. And I said that I would figure it out; they do it on TV all the time, I got this. It was not as easy as I thought, but I was able to find a job on Craigslist. I thought that I was interviewing for a job to work for the gym, but it was actually for an acting school, and tons of friends that I know had really good business networks. It was tough figuring out how to support myself after college and figuring out how to have a clear sense of what I wanted to do professionally and figuring out how to network beyond my family in Chicago, halfway across the country from my parents. It really taught me that I am resilient and that my problem-solving skills are really up to par. That was a pretty tough time.

***Kazembe: Who is the first corporate connection you made and what impact did they have on your life?***

*Nyanue:* I went to undergrad on a scholarship from an organization called the Posse Foundation. The Posse Foundation is based in NY, so I remember reaching out to them, to their career center and telling them that I want to move to NY and I asked them if they have a connection to anyone who works in TV or entertainment and it just so happened that the president of Comedy Central was on the board at that time, so they set up a meeting with me and her. When I was meeting her she introduced me to this guy who was the head of marketing named Peter Risafi. Peter Risafi and I interviewed and I literally got the job the next day after meeting him. Peter was my first corporate mentor. He was the person through whom I learned to navigate my way in corporate America. I was his assistant and he was the person right at the top. He is the head of marketing in the entire network. He did such a good job of letting me know what I was expected to do, what the corporate Amer-

ica landscape was, and he helped me with professionalism. That was in 2007 and I still talk to him once a week and despite not having worked for him since 2012.

***Kazembe: What resources have you used to leverage your corporate ladder climb?***

*Nyanue:* I am huge on professional development. I take tons of coursework online and I also do workshops. I am currently getting my MBA at the University of Chicago. I leverage some of their resources. I read a lot of books. A book that I am reading about right now is Mindset. I am also into podcasts. I also rent books and audiobooks for free. I have also been able to grow a healthy network of people, and I reach out to those people when I have questions or need guidance.

***Kazembe: What would you say are some of the main challenges that black women face in corporate America and what advice would you give them to overcome those challenges?***

*Nyanue:* So, I feel like if you are first generation in corporate America, it is really hard to understand corporate culture and expectations unless you have someone to guide you. If you are first generation your parents often tell you to go to school, get good grades and get a job, but that's not how it works. That's a part of it, but there is a big portion that is left out of this statement. I don't think black women are really told how important it is to have a network and how to leverage a network, so we go into the corporate world with a little less confidence because we don't have the resources.

***Kazembe: What general advice would you give to young women in college who are planning on launching their career pathway within the corporate world?***

*Nyanue:* Most of the decisions in relation to your career will be made in the room when you are not there, so you have to make sure that you do things that will represent you when you are not in the room. And also, really spend time on cultivating a high-quality network. You can do that at school or with your teachers. Find people who you are interested in and nurture those relationships. My best friends are from undergrad and they are still a part of my life. I do business with them.

The *I Choose the Ladder* Podcast can be found on Apple, Spotify, and SoundCloud. For more information visit [ichoosetheladder.com](http://ichoosetheladder.com)

# United Black Association's Black History Month 2020

By **DEJA MCCLELLAN '20**  
EDITOR

## The N Word Panel

2/3/20

Dr. RL Watson presented information about the history of the N-word, complete with modern day examples. The panel of five students of different backgrounds answered several questions about their personal use of the word, how the word has affected them in personal and educational settings, and how they feel about non-black people's use of the word.

## Movie Showing: Dear White People

2/7/20

The United Black Association (UBA) hosted a movie showing of *Dear White People* (2014). *Dear White People* is a film that covers a campus unraveling at the seams due to underlying racial tensions that come to a head at an offensive Halloween party.

## Cultural Appropriation Panel

2/10/20

Panelists discussed the implications of cultural appropriation and how to combat it.

## Soulful Soup: E'mon Lauren

2/13/20

E'mon Lauren was a guest speaker to talk about her queerness, black womanhood identity, and her career as a poet. E'mon Lauren was named Chicago's first Youth Poet Laureate and uses poetry and playwriting to explore a philosophy of hood womanism. Her first chapbook, *Commando* was released in 2017.

## Black Love

2/14/20

Black Love was an event held on Valentine's Day by UBA. The event featured a night of creatives expressing themselves through poetry, with the special guest Harold Green. Harold performs original poetry, including an entire improvised piece made from words chosen by the audience.

## History and Soul

2/16/20

UBA hosted an outing to visit the DuSable Museum of African American History. The outing completed as the participants enjoyed soul food from Pearl's Place.

## Black Identity Panel

2/18/20

The Black Identity Panel was a panel discussing the question "What does it mean to be black?" Being black is not comprised of one singular identity, and several panelists discussed their experience navigating the world as a person of color with all of their accompanying identities.

## Winter Gala

2/22/20

In collaboration with the Student Government and Student Programming Board, UBA co-hosted this year's Winter Gala at Joe's Live in Rosemont, IL.



## Conversation on Leadership with Claire Babineaux-Fontenot

2/24/20

In collaboration with the Lake Forest College Departments of English and Theater, the Entrepreneurship and Innovation Program, Women in Biz, and the Career Advancement Center, UBA co-hosted a talk by Claire Babineaux-Fontenot about leadership. Claire Babineaux-Fontenot oversees Feeding America, the nation's largest domestic hunger-relief organization and second-largest U.S. charity according to Forbes.

## Juke Jam

2/29/20

UBA ended Black History Month on a high note by hosting an All Campus Party based off of the classic Chicago parties. This event was a collaboration with the Lake Forest College, Student Programming Board.

*In addition to the 10 events, UBA collaborated with Parkhurst to provide a selection of foods from the African diaspora each Thursday in February to bring cultural awareness to the campus. The schedule of foods provided are below:*

**2/6/20** – Soul Food Inspired

**2/13/20** – Caribbean inspired

**2/20/20** – Latinx Inspired

**2/27/20** – African Inspired

# Fall 2019 activism & event timeline

By **ALICIA MAYNARD '20**  
EDITOR

*Editor's note: This is a snapshot of the student activism that took place on campus during the Fall 2019 semester.*

**8/23/19:** Krebs Provost and Dean of Faculty, Davis Schneiderman, and Vice President of Student Affairs and Dean of Students, Andrea Conner, sent out an email detailing the new actions being taken to combat incidents of racial bias and improve the campus atmosphere. The email can be found under this [link](#).

**9/28/19:** There was a racial bias incident. A volleyball player assaulted several students and then proceeded to yell the racial slur n\*\*\*\*r [Editor's note: word altered]. This *Stentor* article describes the incident. "[Lake Forest College Stentor, November 8, 2019](#)"

**10/24/19:** There was a Community Caucus held to discuss the racial bias incident which occurred on September 28, 2019, during which students critiqued the College's handling of it.

**11/7/19:** Student leaders met with Dean Conner and President Schutt to discuss Title IX and racial bias incidents on campus at a [Campus Climate Meeting](#).

**11/11/19:** A silent student protest took place at the Senior 25 Lounge at 12:30 P.M. Approximately 40 students were protesting the handling of certain incidents of bias and of Title IX cases. At this protest students wore clothes that represent their club or organization. The students walked from the Senior 25 lounge to President Schutt's office to deliver a letter encapsulating their 16 demands. Here is the [letter](#).

**11/11/19-cir. 11/26/19:** Students continued to protest outside of President Schutt's office during the work day.

**11/14/19:** Over 200 students met with President Schutt, Dean Schnei-

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derman, and Dean Conner, to discuss the list of demands with relation to bias incidents and Title IX and Lake Forest College's response. The minutes can be found under this [link](#).

**11/19/19:** There was a second meeting to discuss the material that was not covered in the meeting which occurred on 11/14/19. During this meeting President Schutt acquiesced to many of the demands and formed a working group for the purpose of fulfilling these demands.

**12/2/19:** President Schutt sent out an all-campus email detailing the college's response to the 16 demands sent by students on November 11th, 2019. The email can be found under this [link](#).

**12/9/19:** A bias incident was reported; a group of students recorded themselves singing a song and using the slur n\*\*\*\*\*[*Editor's note: word altered*]. The campus was informed of this episode through an email sent out by Dean Conner on December 10, 2019.

# Empowerment one word at a time

By **DENZEL MARUFU '23**

EDITOR

In an age where “making a change” seems to be an obligation rather than a dream, many wonder how they can make that change in their immediate communities and, possibly, in the wider world. It can be discouraging to think about how much effort is needed to achieve this change but one will never know what it takes until they try to do so first hand. Zimbabwean writer and activist; **Isabella Matambanadzo** embodies this through her work advoca-

ting for gender and women's rights in her native country, Zimbabwe, and by promoting economic investment in the country. She has worked in over 36 African countries in various capacities for agencies such as The Southern African Economist, Radio One and the Inter Press Service, just to name a few.

On April 7th, I interviewed Matambanadzo about her work and how she continues to make an impact by



using her platform to encourage others to find their voice and become the best version of themselves. The interview went as follows:

**Marufu: Is there a particular experience or a moment that directed you to advocate for equal gender rights in Zimbabwe as adamantly as you have done?**

*Matambanadzo:* I was born during and raised at the time of our liberation struggle. My politics is based on the multiple strands of our interconnected anti-colonial, black liberation, anti-patriarchal politics that imagined and still imagines the black human being, the black woman as a free and total person. Not a sub-human entity devoid of rights and dignity. My politics also comes very deeply from my family and

have ID cards. You were identified by your father or husband. You couldn't own a cow, a house or enjoy economic autonomy. This meant women suffered financial exclusion. This photograph, the earliest visual record of her existence, was taken when she wrote to the District Commissioner petitioning him for an account. She wanted to manage her own money. She wanted her salary to be paid into an account that she controlled. Her first bank account was opened at Standard Chartered Bank in Newlands. Women's Economic Freedoms have been a key site of agitation by feminist movements.

**Marufu: What was the biggest challenge for you on the road to where you are now (in terms of your work) and how did you overcome the obstacle(s)?**

***“My politics is based on the multiple strands of our interconnected anti-colonial, black liberation, anti-patriarchal politics that imagined and still imagines the black human being, the black woman as a free and total person. Not a sub-human entity devoid of rights and dignity”***

how they raised me. My grandmother, for instance, was from Chidodo village in Uzumba, a place that is often the butt of uncouth caricatures in Zimbabwean election politics. She later moved to Tamutsa village, across the way from Nyadire Mission, where her brother Ebson, my Sekuru, was a Priest in the United Methodist Church. She went to primary school at Nyaitenga, the primary school there. She did her primary teacher training diploma at Hartzel in Mutare, then known by its colonial name Umtali. This is important because education was a very segregated sector and remains segregated, perhaps more along class lines in the 21st century than along the race lines that my grandmother surmounted. At that time, Zimbabwe was under colonial oppression. Working women could not receive their wages into their own bank accounts because segregation and sexist discrimination did not permit women to hold bank accounts in their own names. Women didn't

*Matambanadzo:* I do not find much about my feminist work and activism difficult. I find tremendous joy and happiness in my work, labour, and resistance of all forms of oppression in my feminist life and amongst the collectives and communities of feminists that I am very fortunate to be part of and work alongside. We know that we will be victorious.

**Marufu: What is the one thing you are most proud of with regards to your work and why?**

*Matambanadzo:* I am proud that together, as feminists from Africa - and indeed as feminists from the global south, we have shown tremendous diligence with our duties to fight injustice and subjugation in all its forms. Nothing makes me happier than seeing feminists win the battles we win. And indeed, seeing those who may not identify with our struggles and sites of resistance benefit from our collective efforts and labour. It gives me tremendous glee actually,

when feminism shows up faithfully, generously, without selection for those who condemn it. And who are contemptuous of those of us who name ourselves feminist.

**Marufu: What motivates you to keep doing what you do i.e. which aspect of your work makes you the most excited to get up in the morning?**

*Matambanadzo:* The joy. My struggles give me pleasure. Because I know that we can vanquish all forms of marginalisation, segregation, and injustice.

**Marufu: If you could give the 19 year old Isabella Matambanadzo any advice, what would it be? Is there any general advice you'd give to youth who are trying to make positive impacts on their respective communities?**

*Matambanadzo:* That it is okay to stay on the dance floor until the sun rises. Enjoy this life. It's meant to be lived fully, fearlessly and conscientiously.

As the old saying goes: "If you love what you do, you'll never work a day in your life" and through her sheer desire and commitment, Isabella Matambanadzo has taken pleasure in all aspects of her work. Given how successful she has been in empowering the next generation of African youth socially and economically, it is no wonder why. It seems that the only way is up for her and who knows how much she can continue to leave her mark on the African continent.

# Coping with the COVID-19 pandemic together

By **ELLEN KAZEMBE '20** and **ESTHER KIM '22**

*EDITOR-IN-CHIEF and CONTRIBUTOR*

COVID-19 has affected us all. With schools and businesses shutting down, the virus has significantly changed our lives. The narratives we had planned for our lives were cancelled. Not only have people lost their jobs, many have lost their loved ones. All of a sudden, our daily routines shifted. Graduation ceremonies were cancelled. Health care and grocery store workers were recognized as being essential. Yet, in a new era of social distancing, people are connecting over social media, singing on balconies, and figuring out innovative ways to make masks. Here are 17 different experiences that were shared by global citizens from across the world:

## **1** **Sonia Rawat, India**

“Day 16 of being in lockdown in my apartment in the city of Mostar in the small nation of Bosnia and Herzegovina - the French windows and the balcony giving me access to the outside world which is completely inaccessible in these extraordinary times; especially since I belong to the high risk category as a lupus patient. Having my husband and kids in two different countries and continents and extended family in India and Singapore, I seem to be online all the time, staying in touch and ensuring others are convinced that I am fine alone in this far away land. And most of the day, teaching and meeting on Zoom, getting concerning messages from my former students from years ago, I seem to be busier than before this chaos crept upon us. Airports have been shut and my homeland has closed its borders for more than a month. I don't know when I will step out of this apartment, or when I will be able to take a plane to meet my husband and kid in Germany or visit my mother and extended family in India. But I keep my sanity, cook, read, embroider and meditate with a group of strangers every evening on Zoom, led by a friend.”

## **2** **Michelle Dsouza, Portugal**

“The corona virus situation has completely displaced me; I've been studying in the US for the past three years and made the decision to travel home as schools shut down. Home for me is both

Goa, India, where my mum and sister live, and Dubai, UAE where my Dad lives. However, I am not a citizen of either country, leaving me “homeless” when both countries decided to shut down borders to non-citizens. Luckily, I managed to arrive in Dubai a few hours before borders closed. But visa regulations dictate that I can only stay here for 3 months on a visitors visa, which would once again leave me homeless in a short period of time. I would love for regulations to be lowered, but at the same time, these regulations are the best way to protect society, and indeed the world, from the virus.”

### **3** **Tatenda Shuro, Zimbabwe**

“I’m in Cyprus and as of March 10th we were officially on lockdown. We’re not allowed to move around as all shops and businesses are closed, except for amenities- which we have to get permission from the local government to go to. Public transport also stopped moving. You can only move around by taxi. And we subsequently stopped attending lectures. We’ve been doing everything online.”

### **4** **Andrés Montiel, Venezuela**

“The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted pretty much everyone globally, but to different degrees. In many ways, I am fortunate since I am able to work from home, and stay home without financial stressors. However, living in Canada without my family has intensified feelings of isolation and powerlessness, given that my parents are older and live in a country with a heavily-deteriorated healthcare system. I am able to care for myself, but there is always a lingering feeling of uncertainty about what might happen to my loved ones, who are all far away.”

### **5** **Danai Myezwa, South Africa**

“COVID-19 is an interesting phenomenon to experience in one’s lifetime. The national lockdown has kept us in our homes to flatten the curve. Luckily, having parents with deemed essential jobs, it feels like business as usual. It has given us a chance to re-ground ourselves, get to know and appreciate each other and the health we have in turn. On the other hand, it has forced the community to confront the reality that some families in not-so-fortu-

nate positions are going through, like those in SA who have an RDP (Reconstruction and Development Programme) home where 9 adults sleep in daily. The lack of movement has them all in close proximity, people are at risk of domestic violence incidents where distancing previously helped them.”

### **6** **Lilian Marquez, Guatemala**

“Guatemala is on lockdown, we have had only one death from COVID-19 and 21 confirmed cases but we are already in strict isolation. Thankfully, the government acted swiftly and aggressively because our health-care system is significantly weak. Of course the economic pow-

ers are pushing against these measures and given the poverty and terrible inequality, shutting down the country means that 70% of the population that survives on the informal economy are all of a sudden out of jobs. It is a critical situation and I doubt politically and socially it will be viable for as long as it should be. I am an environmentalist, so I am distraught not only for the human toll of the crisis, but also I do not lose sight of the underlying causes that brought us here. The human race is a virus after all, one that encroaches on every territory possible, one whose ambition and hunger for more has taken over

*“The coronavirus situation has completely displaced me...Home for me is both Goa, India, where my mum and sister live, and Dubai, UAE where my Dad lives. However, I am not a citizen of either country, leaving me “homeless” when both countries decided to shut down borders to non-citizens.”*

the Earth. This crisis is our own doing. I hope that once we have weathered the massive ongoing storm we are facing that we will rebuild, not with more of the same frameworks, but those that promote equality, sustainability, and balance with nature.”

## **7** **Ula Adamska, Poland**

“This is not a senior semester any of us imagined but I decided that I want to take advantage of my (possibly) last months in Colorado and enjoy all the things I love about this place. Fortunately, the outdoors are still accessible and I’m lucky enough to be able to go to places, smell the ponderosa pine, hike, and have fun in the snow. I’m also using this time to reflect on my college experience and what I want to remember from it. Something that I’m most proud of is developing a sense of home in Colorado while at college and I’m using this mandatory quarantine to foster it and enjoy the beauty of the region.”

## **8** **Francesca Liviero, United Kingdom**

“It’s been an anxious and uncertain time, yet filled with personal growth, a sense of community, a new appreciation for the little things in life and an all round unique adventure. I’ve learnt to be okay with the silence and the cluster of thoughts in my head. Beijing will always be my second home and life is slowly getting back to normal here. Perhaps the world needed something like this to happen, for us all to wake up and see how valuable our planet is and the human connections we make each and every day .”



## **9** **Rune Øster Mortensen, Denmark**

“The coronavirus has affected most people and in many different ways in Denmark. In the last two weeks, I’ve met just five people, attended an online beer tasting and a couple of online live concerts (with voluntary contributions to the musicians) and spent more time outdoors than I usually do. I was working in Sierra Leone and had planned to stay there for 2 months, so my Copenhagen room is currently being sublet. I’m therefore staying at my mother’s farm and I think it’s safe to say that the countryside corona situation is very different from the current situation that is shown on the media and that friends report from cities. Here, things look normal. There are no empty streets. We just shop for groceries more seldomly and don’t stop

by at the neighbours property. The crisis will inevitably have a negative impact on the economy on both a global and local scale, but I hope that many people can also have a positive experience, maybe spending more time alone - at least I'm enjoying/exploring that. Lastly, I am quite involved in the Danish folk music environment, and one of my main concerns is in fact the survival of the freelancing musicians and artists who so far have received very little economic relief from the government compared to more commercial and established fields of work."

ing appreciation for the mild spring weather. Some say they're sleeping more. Others report that they are cleaning, especially closets, drawers, places to which there is little time to give attention normally. Many are having Zoom cocktail parties."

## 11 Adolfo Castro, Colombia

'At Yale-NUS College, a small liberal arts school in Singapore, Covid-19 has gradually restricted student club gatherings, sports practices, and most recently classes. Singapore's first confirmed case was reported in mid-Jan-



## 10 Libre Lelliot, United States of America

"Here on the east coast, many are seen gardening and doing outside home improvements during the Covid-19 lockdown. A home improvement contractor says he is doing outside projects in an abundance of caution, express-

uary, but the country has responded with fantastic contact tracing technologies that have allowed for a much slower spread and a relatively normal life for most. Up until today I was able to go to the cinema, visit malls and even go clubbing. More recently, gatherings of more than ten people have been forbidden and distancing is encouraged, but we are



not under lockdown. Singapore's effective policies have made this island a safe haven for its citizens and international residents, but despite this relative security there is increased worry about our family and friends who have undergone much stricter regulations and are still under a much higher threat."

## 12 **Luciana Fernandez, Argentina**

"I currently live in Sao Paulo, Brazil. As the news of coronavirus spread in Brazil started, I began paying attention to the measures the government was going to take. There was little initiative from the federal government and the pandemic was treated as something insignificant. I realized that my home country, Argentina, was going to close its borders and cancel all flights. I then decided to go back before it was too late. I have been completely isolated for the past week since the government declared it was mandatory for everyone. I am worried about Brazil due to some of the newest declarations the president has made, but also because its infrastructure, as with most countries in Latin America, is very obsolete, and it is not ready to handle a crisis like this one. At the same time, Sao Paulo currently has more than 24 thousand homeless people who are constantly exposed,

and the government is not taking any responsibility for these people's health. There are countless examples of how the most vulnerable populations are being ignored. For instance, favelas in Brazil are very crowded spaces, and once the virus starts spreading it is not going to stop. I am hoping the local government will step in and take measures to ameliorate the consequences of the pandemic."

## 13 **Lihn Do, Vietnam**

"I'm currently in my hometown Hanoi, Vietnam. My country was quite quiet until the outbreak in Europe when people flooded home and the number of cases has risen drastically. I was in a mass quarantine camp myself (flying home amidst the cancellation of my studying abroad program in South Korea due to the country's outbreak earlier this month) and I am so grateful for my government's effort. I trust whatever they are doing in terms of policy and execution. For example, in Vietnam everyone is wearing mask, tries not to go out, works from home, practices hygiene and social distancing even before the government announces any lock down solution. Of course, the economy has been a sad scenario but in Vietnam we never have to struggle for food or necessities due to strategic

regulations and guidance from the government. Also, the government has implemented tons of solutions to help everyone (we don't have to pay for testing and treatment for COVID, there has been systematic online education scheme, there are insurance plans to help make sure people get pay if their works are delayed or cancelled).

## 14 **Jocelyn Montejo, Japan**

"While working abroad and looking at the way this pandemic is being dealt with in my home country makes me feel that enough is not being done where



I'm currently living. Speaking to my family back home and listening to how people are reacting and comparing it to my situation I'm definitely surrounded by a lot of people who don't seem to see the virus as something to worry about. That reaction is frustrating since I feel I am putting myself in danger by having to still go to work and take public transportation still everyday. I'm hoping that people will take more care of themselves and think about the risk they are putting themselves, but most important, others in by not taking proper precautions."

## 15 **Laura Haeck, Luxembourg**

"My life got turned upside down in January when I got an email from my school (UWC Changshu China) that I have to leave China immediately because of the impacts of COVID-19. I was in Nanjing, a city in Jiangsu province at that time because we had Chinese New Year holidays. I stayed in an Airbnb with two of my friends. I could not go and collect any of my stuff, which means all of my belongings are still in China, neither could I say goodbye to my friends or my boyfriend (because everybody had to leave immediately from wherever they were staying).

This had a huge impact on my emotional state, because I don't have closure from UWC and I still don't know if I will be able to return to get a graduation and to see all of my friends and the people in general. I believe the hardest thing is to just leave and not be able to say goodbye. To not have a proper closure is something that will follow me my whole life and will definitely affect some of my relationships that I have with people from UWC."

## 16 **Roie-Shaul Hillel, Israel**

"Working as a social worker at a psychiatric hospital, I am mostly worried about my older clients. They are coping with some severe and persistent mental health issues, and are in a high risk of being infected. I think the things that it makes me appreciate the most are being able to take care of myself in this crazy time and the privilege of having friends and family who help me in rough times."

It's hard to cope with change in our lives, especially when we didn't choose to have this change. Online Zoom classes don't offer the closure or solace we need to see our friends, and staying cooped up with the same people can create tension. Every single person has a different living situation that is highlighted when there is a global pandemic. It is important not to panic, and to practice self-care during this historical event. Mental health matters, and most importantly, you matter. Even though we have to be six feet apart, we will be closer than ever after this is over. Wash your hands, don't touch your face, drink water, wear masks, social distance, and before we know it, we will see each other again. In person this time, not over Zoom.

# Tackling infectious diseases with Dr. Makadzange

By ELLEN KAZEMBE '20 and RENEE GORDON '22

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF and EDITOR

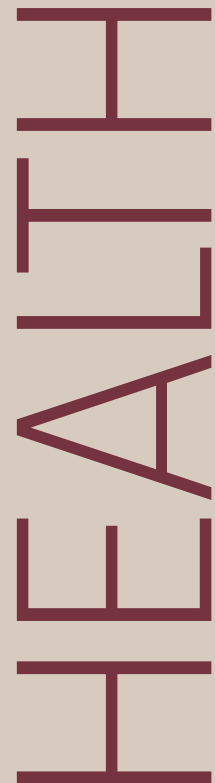
**Dr. Tariro Makadzange** is a Physician from Zimbabwe. She is also the Director of Biology and Clinical Research at Gilead's Discovery Virology department. She got her PhD in Immunology from the University of Oxford. Afterwards, she earned her M.D. at Harvard Medical School. She is also an Associate Member of the Ragon Institute of MGH, MIT and Harvard. According to Gilead Sciences, "Tariro and her colleagues are focused on understanding T-cell biology and researching potential ways to harness a patient's immune system to cure or control HIV." She and colleagues from Ragon Institute established a basic immunology research laboratory at the University of Zimbabwe College of Health Sciences. The research laboratory was set up in accordance with her commitment to capacity-building for science research in the continent of Africa and to be an inspiration for young Africans to be interested in finding solutions to medical problems that prevail in Africa. Here, *Kazembe* spoke to Dr. Makadzange about aspects of her undergraduate years and career advice for young students in College.

***Kazembe: Why did you choose to study biochemistry and physics during your undergraduate years in College?***

*Makadzange:* I wanted to be a doctor, and also wanted to be an engineer. Most importantly I had outstanding mentors in both. Physics was taught by an incredible husband and wife pair, and they made quantum mechanics exciting and interesting.

***Kazembe: What sparked your interest in conducting HIV related research within the medical field?***

*Makadzange:* I had an incredible thesis mentor as an undergraduate student. Sam Black at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst. He had spent a large part of his career working at KEMRI in Kenya, doing outstanding parasite research. I worked on African trypanosomiasis in his lab, but his energy, love of science, his inquiry and thoughtful mind were just infectious. I knew in addition to doing medicine, I wanted to be engaged in research and have the same level of excitement at inquiry, data, and science.





***Kazembe: Is there any particular achievement that you are most proud of?***

*Makadzange:* I think working with Dr Ndhlovu on setting up with Parirenyatwa Hospital OI clinic. The clinic itself is not fancy and it is imperfect, but it was incredibly rewarding in the early days to see the difference that provision of ARVs made.

***Kazembe: What do you enjoy doing during your free time?***

*Makadzange:* I enjoy running and being outside in nature. Being thankful for the incredible planet that we live on. I also enjoy cooking, and spending time with friends and family.

***Kazembe: What advice would you give to college students who are interested in advancing into the medical field post-graduation?***

*Makadzange:* Do it for the right reasons and explore the options. There are so many different ways to make a meaningful contribution to society. You could do clinical medicine and take care of patients. As we look at this pandemic we are all in awe of the incredible people who are taking care of patients. It is a privilege to be able to care of patients. However

there are others who play key roles from the medicinal chemists who design drugs, the molecular biologists, virologists, immunologists who are designing vaccines and other therapeutics, the public health specialists who are planning and working to protect the community, the data scientists who are tracking data and guiding policy, to the policy makers. So there are multiple careers that can have an impact on medicine and human well being.

# NEED HELP? WORRIED ABOUT YOUR MENTAL HEALTH?

Use these resources!

## NEED TO TALK?

- Call or email health and wellness to set up a same-day phone appointment
- Drop in on the virtual *Wellness Wherever* coping group, Tues 3-4pm (email us for meeting info)
- Ask a trusted staff or faculty for support

## NEED HELP COPING?

- Follow Health and Wellness on Instagram @lfchealthandwellness
- Try out Silvercloud, our online mental health program:  
[gsh.silvercloudhealth.com/signup](http://gsh.silvercloudhealth.com/signup)

## LOOKING FOR A THERAPIST?

- Search using Psychology Today's Therapist Finder:  
[psychologytoday.com/us/therapists](http://psychologytoday.com/us/therapists)
- Call or email Health and Wellness for extra help and guidance

## IMPORTANT CONTACT INFO

### HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Main phone: 847-735-5240  
[healthandwellness@lakeforest.edu](mailto:healthandwellness@lakeforest.edu)

### CRISIS RESOURCES

Lake Forest College HWC crisis phone  
224-501-1621

National Suicide Hotline  
800-273-8255

A Safe Place Helpline  
847-249-4450

LGBT National Helpline  
888-843-4564

Trans Lifeline (peer support)  
877-565-8860

Substance Abuse Helpline (SAMSHA)  
800-662-4357

National Domestic Violence Helpline  
800-799-7233



LAKE FOREST  
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*Editor's Note: In this issue of Black Rap, the Editorial Team has reprinted selected photographs of different Black student organizations at Lake Forest College from the 60s to the 90s. The featured student organizations include: Sisterhood, Afrikan Students for Afrikan Liberation (ASAL), House of Soul, Black Ensemble, Black United and Concerned Students (BUCS) and United Black Association (UBA).*

## House of Soul



ABOVE: TOP ROW: Phil Bates, Deleriza Rice, Sandra Upchurch, Walter Lumpkin, Wesley Winfrey, Deborah Towns, Debbie Morgan, Viola Maxwell, Deidre Vincent, Lynn Jackson, Jocelyn Burton, Tony Green, Paula Stepter, Gary Chapman, Trudy Hardin, Pam Williams. ROW TWO: Tony Ferguson, Katrina Young, Duplain Gant, Joyce Johnson, Rodney Stewart. ROW THREE: Fred Carter, Jocelyn Willis, Johnathan Colbert.

## Black Ensemble



ABOVE: TOP ROW: Tony Green, Daryl Gray, Emmet Kelly, Joel Mikell, Harriet Crosky. ROW TWO: Donna Smith, Jane Dow, Debra Towns, Donna Smith, Paula Stepter, Jane Jones, Terry Lewis, Ken Wilks, Kim Mitchell, Deidre Vincent, Debbie Morgan, and Jocelyn Willis.

## Afrikan Students for Afrikan Liberation



The United Black Association (UBA) of Lake Forest College is an organization whose primary focus is the African American student, and its goals are largely aimed at bringing about an atmosphere on campus in which such students can be academically motivated, culturally stimulated, and morally supported by their peers. UBA strives to build bridges between African Americans and the larger community, while it also acts as a forum for discussion and expression open to students, staff, and faculty of the LFC community.



## United Black Association

## Black United and Concerned Students



The purpose of BUCS is to make Black students and other LFC students more aware of Black culture. BUCS works to enrich the student body as a whole by presenting campus-wide activities such as Black Cultural Weekend, Black Orientation, Academic Council, and publication of Black Rap, a news and literary publication with the dual purpose of increasing community awareness of the Black population and providing exposure and experience for contributors.

Created in 1980, the Sisterhood is an organization dedicated to serving the needs of Black females in the LFC community. The responsibilities of Sisterhood and its members are to provide services to other members in need, to sponsor social activities and women's discussion groups, to increase the awareness of the LFC community to the concerns of Black women, and to present to the members the growing demands of society on Black women.



## Sisterhood

# SPECIAL THANKS

## FACULTY ADVISOR

The *Black Rap* Editorial Team would like to give a special thanks to our Faculty Advisor, Lake Forest College staff members and our sponsors for supporting us and for making our publication possible.



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- P.47, Black United and Concerned Students - **Forester, 1984, p.41***
- P.47, Sisterhood - **Forester, 1985***







**Lake Forest College's Black Rap magazine is a student run publication. The main aims of the publication are to embrace diversity, celebrate differences and to raise awareness. This student-run publication also seeks to create a venue for collaboration and constructive dialogue between undergraduate students, faculty members and staff members.**

[publications.lakeforest.edu/black\\_rap](http://publications.lakeforest.edu/black_rap)