

# THE I.C. TIMES



INTERCULTURAL  
a f f a i r s

## PROVIDING SPIRITUAL SOLACE AND PROMOTING DIVERSITY AND ENGAGEMENT @ HWS

BY NITA BYRD, DEAN OF SPIRITUAL ENGAGEMENT AND CHAPLAIN

The Office of Spiritual Engagement provides a place for spiritual exploration, support, and diverse spiritual resources for the campus community. We strive to support spiritual development, as a way to enhance the overall learning environment and social enrichment of the HWS student body. In a commitment to diversity, we have sustained a vibrant Hillel group, weekly gatherings for food and relaxation during non-sectarian pasta dinners. This has been augmented by developing a Muslim Life Prayer Space located centrally on campus, providing increased access for gatherings, prayer and Friday Prayers weekly. Subsequently, a newly formed Muslim Student Organization began in the Spring of 2020 with student leadership and faculty advising.

Following the implementation of remote learning due to the COVID19 pandemic, the Office of Spiritual Engagement used technology to engage students including virtual worship services, messages of encouragement sent via Instagram and Facebook, and a list of resources on our worship page for students of various faith backgrounds. A time of weekly support and Student Bible Study is also offered and students can request to be part of a GroupMe chat group related to this study group.

As we look toward the upcoming semester, Chaplain Byrd is excited to work with the new Meditation Theme House as an advisor. This theme house will focus on meditation practices, particularly those emerging from non-Abrahamic faiths. Until we are able to come together again however, resources for a virtual labyrinth will be offered as a means to slow the pace of life, be in touch with one's inner resources, and practice self-reflection. Although many people thought that studying and working at home would provide an abundance of time to achieve more, the reality is one where many people have been stretched mentally, and spiritually as we find new ways to engage with our communities, our families, and our study/work spaces. We encourage you to spend time with the resources provided and let us know if you have additional resources to share with the campus. In addition to the spiritual needs of the campus, the Office of Spiritual Engagement also operates the Pass the Plate Food Pantry. Any questions related to the Food Pantry may be sent to TUFANO@hws.edu. Hillel Director Julianne Miller and Chaplain Byrd may be reached at JHMiller@hws.edu and byrd@hws.edu.



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### IC HOURS

Monday - Friday  
8:30 AM - 12 AM

Saturday - Sunday  
9 AM - 12 AM

### CONTACT INFORMATION

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## THERE'S THIS MOMENT...

BY VISITING ASSISTANT PROFESSOR SURIATI ABAS  
EDUCATION DEPARTMENT



There's this moment between sleep and awake when the world is deliciously vague. In those few floaty seconds before my brain and body reconnect to reality, I could be anywhere in time. And here I am, in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic which upended our lives in many ways. Daily routines halted; face-to-face meetings, events and community gatherings were cancelled. Schools across the world pivoted to remote learning

to slow down the spread. This hasty transition inherently invites a "new" normalcy. It reconfigures our understanding of literacy and traditional notions of schooling.

My students joined a class through a link on Zoom at the comfort of their home. They clicked on the "hands raised" button to participate. They selected the "thumbs up" icon to signal the completion of an assigned task. They go to "breakout rooms" to engage in group discussions.

Literacy, in this sense, involves the social practice of knowing particular ways of behaving and doing things in a situated environment. As educators teaching in a pandemic crisis, how do we reimagine the world? What do our students truly need in these unprecedented times? Should we continue to offer a modicum of the learning experiences as promised by the university?

Teaching amid a pandemic calls for humane pedagogies that considers our students' and our own anxieties over the crisis. I like to think that the battle against coronavirus shall pass, soon. That day will come; I could again be at a faculty fireside chat at IC. I could witness students coming together to understand one another through intercultural activities and other events. But, we will never be the same again. Our literacy, in a post-COVID universe, would have been shaped by shared histories. by then. There's this moment where...we would have a different worldview than what we are currently holding on to.



## GENEVA: OUR COMMUNITY

### RAFAEL DÍAZ, GENEVA LATINO FESTIVAL & EL MORRO RESTAURANT

Rafael Díaz, a native of Puerto Rico, is a long-time friend of the Colleges. Through his catering services, Rafael has shared with colleagues and students his love of cooking authentic Puerto Rican cuisine. His food truck (a converted school bus), which made its NY State Fair debut in 2017, can be seen regularly on campus, as well as at farmer's markets and festivals in the Finger Lakes area. Rafael is also the founder of Geneva's Annual Latino Festival which has, in the words of Rafael, "brought thousands of spectators to Geneva to not only create a festive environment in the city, but to bring people of all ethnicities together."

After the devastating hurricanes hit Puerto Rico, Rafael organized donation drop-offs at his restaurant—volunteers assembled hygiene kits and they helped prepare meals that were to raise funds for the people of Puerto Rico. We commend Rafael Díaz's leadership and civic engagement—a true life of consequence!

## ALUM CONNECTION

### SHAVONNE WARD WS '08 POST-PLACEMENT COUNSELOR WITH PREP FOR PREP <https://www.prepforprep.org/>

In high school, the most asked question is, "What college will you attend?". In college it becomes, "What are you doing after college?". After college it evolves into, "Where do you work?" Even though you all have yet to enter the status of being alums, you have the capability to answer this question. How can you? You have had experiences that have compelled you to speak against injustice, you have had moments of challenge, you have cried, you have been stirred to change, you have been tired, you have failed, you have laughed, you have succeeded, and you have memories that you desire to relive again. Life after college is a beautiful montage of all these experiences.



Here are three lessons I have learned since HWS:

**#1 Grace:** There is no need for comparing yourself to others. Extend to yourself grace that your accomplishments will occur at a different timeline than others. There is not a correlation between age and success; growth and challenges determine success.

**#2: Explore:** Take a job in a field that does not align with your major. Beyond the knowledge, you will have greater insight of your own intrapersonal and interpersonal skills.

**#3 Face It:** In the words of James Baldwin, "Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced." There will be times you will be inclined to minimize the impact of you. To approach situations directly, is not always about your inclination to speak, but the courage to make your presence known. People can disagree and debate opinions you have voiced, but they cannot deny your presence. Time only flows in the direction of moving forward. Take a deep breath, exhale, and onward you go.

## OUR CAMPUS COMMUNITY

### BY JAMES BURRUTO, DIRECTOR, OPPORTUNITY PROGRAMS

For many on campus, and especially HEOP students, this will come as news but I will be leaving HWS on December 23rd 2020 to retire from higher education and begin a new chapter in my life. I have served the Arthur O. Eve Higher Education Opportunity Program for almost 20 years and access programs for more than that. I have had the privilege of being part of hundreds of HEOP and EOP students' lives and feel bittersweet about leaving the institution. The things I will miss are the personal interactions with students... watching them grow from the time they arrive for SI to when they graduate. The transformation is remarkable. I feel blessed to have had many graduates move on to work in HEOP and education across NY State and beyond. I also have been blessed to work with some wonderfully dedicated individuals such as Alejandra Molina, Edith Wormley, Darline Polanco Wattles, Renee Grant and Bonne DiLeo in the Office of Intercultural Affairs. To be associated with our SI faculty, Professor/Dean Hussain, Professors Ristow, Curtin and Finkelstein for these many years has been a privilege. To our students, I wish you the very best in your future. My best advice to you is make each moment count. As my grandmother would say, "Affronta ciò che è davanti a te adesso, perché non sarai in grado di cambiare le cose fuori dal tuo controllo. È una perdita di tempo ed energia." In essence she was saying, keep your energy focused upon the important work ahead of you and not be dragged down by things that are not important for the long term." I still have a few months until I leave HWS—until then, viaggi sicuri e buona fortuna! Ciao.

# STUDENT SPOTLIGHTS



**Yan Ma '20**

Intercultural Affairs Center offers international students of HWS a precious place to rest, to think, to inspire. As an international student from Chengdu, China, I have never expected to have so many fantastic experiences in the United States, and in Hobart and William Smith Colleges four years ago. Moreover, I have to admit that IC layered my study abroad life with colors and reflections. I was in Perfect Third Acapella group for three years, while having three committed jobs on campus: IT student technician, Admission senior student intern, and student librarian. Before I became the president of ASU (Asian Student Union) this year, I was able to study abroad in the United Kingdom. Look back at my time in the USA, I have to indicate that IC encouraged and supported me remarkably along with my growth and changes. Right now, it is a tough time for everywhere in the world. If you are concerned and lost, please don't forget that if this Chinese girl came all away from home and is going to graduate in this toughest year and she is doing just fine, trust me, my friend, you shall be well.



**Stephen "Josh" Walker '20**

My name is Josh Walker and I am a senior and a member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Inc. At HWS, it has been easy to get involved in student organizations, take advantage of volunteer opportunities, and secure paid jobs. As a football recruit, I played for the Hobart Statesman during all my four years at the Colleges and I have also been involved on campus and in the community. I volunteered at Happiness House, a Geneva school which integrates students with special needs into the classroom with students without. I have worked for the Office of Admissions, the Office of Advancement, the Office of Diversity and Inclusion, and the Intercultural Affairs Center (IC). Going to a smaller school gave me the opportunity to be a big fish in a small pond. HWS has provided resources such as campus employment, study abroad opportunities, community service projects, etc. – all of which are at the level of schools double its size. The IC is one of the most comforting and warm places on campus. It is a place at a PWI where there are predominantly students of color which is a unique comparison to the rest of campus. The IC is a place bustling with positive energy and usually a person or people that are excited about what you are and will accomplish at this school and even after.



**Divya Tewari '20**

Growing up as the only brown person in my everyday life, apart from my nuclear family, coming to a PWI like HWS was not something new for me. What was new was the IC and the IC community, a network of individuals with experiences and backgrounds rich and full of culture that they were forced to hide or monetize in white spaces. What was new, was the conversations of solidarity and affirmations and visibility among black, brown, and queer students. A place like the IC can be transformative for (queer) students of color, especially those who grew up in white spaces- students who were robbed of their mother tongue, students who carry enormous internalized hate, students who seek chosen family members. The work that is done within this (IC) community and physical space, as it continues to be (literally) pushed to the margins of this institution, are unmatched across campus.

For me, I never came to the IC with my homework. The IC for me was where I came to feel seen. The IC was the place for me where every time I came I felt like I was visiting a favorite cousin's house, where it's technically not home, but there's always room for me. The IC redefines what home is, a feeling rather than a place. To have the IC open during quarantine has been crucial to continue the community mobilizing that the IC has always symbolized for me. Thank you Comadre Molina, Renee, and everyone who I have been able to learn and love and grow with within this space & community.



**Rizky Kafrawi '20**

During my time at HWS, I was able to broaden my horizons and become an individual with diverse interests and skills. As a Biochemistry major with a minor in Philosophy, I was able to participate, with the support of my professors, in undergraduate research projects, one of which (Plant Genomics with Prof. Straub), led to my honors thesis, where I explored the interplay of mitochondrial and chloroplast genomes for members of the Asclepiadoideae subfamily (milkweeds). I attribute my interest in participating in science research to my experiences in my philosophy courses, as well as my semester abroad in Korea, an experience which revitalized my passion for the natural sciences and gave me the drive needed to complete my honors project. Throughout the years, the IC has served not only as a quiet place where I can compose my thoughts and focus on my studies, but as a place where I can comfortably express myself with other like-minded POC. I am grateful to the IC for the role it played in my college career as a source of personal respite from my stressful academic life. I am certain that in the future, the IC will continue to provide the same sense of comfort and welcoming to all those who seek it.



## STUDENT CLUB CAUCUS

This year the student club caucus started as an opportunity for cultural, global awareness, and social justice student clubs & organizations to come together and talk about the successes and challenges that they have as individual organizations. It is a venue for members of clubs' executive boards throughout the campus to share their plans, issues, and concerns in their roles as student leaders at HWS. The goal of caucus was also to foster and develop collaborative programs among clubs. Through club caucus, Family Food Night, IC Haunted House, and were able to support student clubs that were starting this year. The pilot year for club caucus has definitely been a success and we definitely look forward to all that is to come next year from this group.

# A WORD FROM THE DIRECTOR

By: *Alejandra Molina*

As we approach the end of this academic year, I would like to thank the HWS and Geneva communities for supporting our work at Intercultural Affairs (IC). Special kudos to our Associate Director, Renee Grant, and to our Secretary, Bonne DiLeo, for their hard work on behalf of our students. It is the work of colleagues of this caliber that make it possible for IC to promote an environment where students find support, challenges, and grounding for their personal growth, academic success and leadership skills. My final note of gratitude goes to our students: their resolve and resiliency during these very troubling times have helped me find renewed strength ... and hope.

¡Muchas gracias!



**Community Conversation with Camilo Romero, Fall 2019**

## Programs and Resources

### Chat and Chew

Members of the HWS community share information on their programs and initiatives. Free food is provided.

### Fireside Chat with Faculty

Faculty discuss with students their current interests and research in an informal setting.

### The Alum Connection

HWS alums share their post-graduation interests and experiences with current HWS students.

### The Transnational Student Talk

A campus-wide forum that provides a venue for students to share their perspectives on critical global issues.

### Community Conversation

Members of the local and global communities discuss their leadership in community service and civic engagement.

### The Social Justice Dialogue

Students, faculty, staff and community leaders share their perspectives on a social justice issue.

### Career Chat

Students join the director of the Salisbury Center for Career, Professional and Experiential Education, for monthly conversations to discuss career opportunities.

### The Green Tea Connection

The program brings together members of the HWS and Geneva communities to discuss and act on social and environmental justice issues.

**BE SURE TO CHECK OUT OUR BLOG:**

[hwsinterculturalaffairscenter.wordpress.com/](https://hwsinterculturalaffairscenter.wordpress.com/)

## FALL 2019 PROGRAMS

IC Open House and Welcoming Reception  
Career Matters with Kevin Cervantes:  
*Interning at the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden*  
Career Chats with Brandi Ferrara, Director of Career Services  
Alum Connection with Dr. Kay Payne WS'73  
Family Food Nights  
Rochester International Food Markets Trip  
Hispanic Heritage Day Trip @MAG  
Community Conversation with Edisa Weeks:  
*Social Justice: Performance as Reflection and Empowerment*  
Fireside Chat with Suriati Abas, Education Department:  
*School, Social Justice, Spaces*  
CGASJ Club Caucus Sessions  
The Green Tea Connection: *The Garden* Film Screening  
Community Conversation with Camilo Romero:  
*Social Justice and Student Well-Being*  
Chat and Chew with the William Smith Deans  
Lunch and Conversation with the Hobart Deans

## SPRING 2020 PROGRAMS

Career Chat with Brandi Ferrara, Director of Career Services  
Black History Month Family Day Celebration Trip @MAG  
Campus Conversation with Title IX Office:  
*Examining Sexual Violence Through the Lens of Identity and Cultural Norms*  
Campus Conversation with Dean Khuram Hussain:  
*Diversity, Equity and Inclusion at HWS*  
Family Food Nights  
Washington DC Cultural Trip  
The IC Virtual Connection  
CGASJ Club Caucus Sessions  
The Green Tea Connection:  
*Rachel Carson's Silent Spring* Film Screening  
Virtual Senior Speak Out