

The Student Affairs Diversity Council (SADC) strives to cultivate an environment that embraces and promotes the broad scope of diversity within the division.

## A Reminder Of Our Connectedness



By Kyle Ethelbah  
Director, TRiO Programs

From March 16-31, 2016, I had the pleasure of participating in a Maori language immersion tour in New Zealand with the Indigenous language preservation project, "Niihiena, Niihezaad – Our Life, Our Language." Niihiena, Niihezaad – Our Life, Our Language consists of members from the Shoshone, Goshute, Ute, and Navajo tribes of Utah, as well as members from the Pacific Heritage Academy from Salt Lake City, and myself from the University of Utah (as well as representing my White Mountain Apache heritage). The primary goal of this trip was to explore the Maori immersion curriculum which was formally adopted in the 1980's and served as a nationwide effort to preserve the Maori language from, what was then inevitable, language death.

My involvement with this excursion focused on the current involvement of federal programs, like TRIO, in efforts to provide educational access opportunities to low income and first generation students in the US.

Though TRIO programs do not focus specifically on individual ethnic groups nor is there a specific focus (like language), TRIO programs consist primarily of underrepresented communities and the opportunities to incorporate language components within the TRIO system in the US do exist.

We spent fourteen days in Aotearoa (the Maori name for New Zealand), stayed with six communities, met with six schools, two universities, and covered approximately 1,126 miles to speak about language immersion processes and policies and conducted cultural exchanges with each community. The schools we visited included two pre-schools, two elementary schools, one high school and one university that were all part of the Maori Immersion program. Additionally, I presented on cultural capital and its impact on self-authorship and its overall place in student development to faculty at the University of Auckland, in Auckland and Waikato University, in Hamilton, New Zealand. All in all, it was an exhausting, yet invigorating experience.

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This was indeed a very intense and spiritual journey for me. Although I left with intentions of using this experience to enhance educational initiatives in Utah, primarily through TRIO, I was soon overtaken by the very palpable spiritual aspect of this endeavor, one that quickly surpassed curriculum and policy. We were welcome at every community with a powhiri, a ceremony used in years passed as a process to determine whether or not the visiting party was a friend or enemy, but now used as the formal welcome of individuals to the sacred spaces of their hosts. Each visit began with this as we were welcomed into their marae, or community houses where we were to stay. The process for entry into these sacred spaces represented the layers of awakening. The entry, once used to determine friend or foe, represented the base level of existence- survival. Once you encroached upon the Marae, you entered a space of awareness, not being burdened with the need for physical protection and now able to acknowledge the other as part of. This allowed for entry into the sacred space of the marae, and the layers of friendship building. As you approached the far end of the Marae, you came closer to your own awareness, having been able to connect with others as friend and no longer possessing the need to separate one another, but to join as community.

As we engaged with each community, all were very welcoming to our Indigenous group from Utah. They spoke, at every location, of their ancestral roots in the Americas, and how their legends indicated that they traveled south to the Andes, then made their way west, through Easter Island and ultimately into their current homelands. They called us “cousins” as we were their relatives. As we engaged more, we relayed stories of our own peoples. Though we were of different tribal groups, the Utes, Goshutes, and Shoshones all represented 1 language family, the Uto-Aztecan language family. Their roots can be traced from the upper US, south into

Mexico, and includes 30 tribal languages, including the Hopi and Aztec.

This language family alone showed the connection between the north and south and certainly gave credence to what we were hearing as these communities all have stories of the, “lost ones.” These, “lost ones” are also mentioned in the Athabaskan language family, (which include Navajo and Apache). The word, “Anasazi,”

which many learn about in history class, stems from the Athabaskan language (“Da’aná nasaa’ii”) and can be roughly translated into both Navajo and Apache as, “Those who left a long time ago.” This connection became very palpable the longer we stayed in the country. Now, instead of seeking ways to develop curriculum in Utah to combat language death, we were connecting with our ancestors who had left us centuries earlier, and through them learning that the preservation of language meant more than writing and coding and recording – it meant being open to recognize ourselves as others.

I’m not sure what to say of this experience in the traditional academic sense. Although we

did pick up much to be analyzed for the development of a curriculum and measures that could lead to policy, we brought home so much more. We came to New Zealand seeking assistance to preserve our language and left realizing, that it was not only our language that needed to be preserved, but our identity. However, this identity could not be seen as one in which we separated one from another, but one that encompassed all as one. In the course of these 14 days, I learned several Maori words and phrases, but the one that stays with me and regularly comes to mind is, “Kotahitanga.” This word was used to remind us of our connectedness, and its meaning, ‘unity amongst, iwi (family/tribe/clan), and other ethnicities standing as one,’ is something I hope I can maintain as I easily use my identity to separate myself from, rather than connect to.



(More: [Watch a photo slideshow from Kyle’s trip](#))

# The SADC Affirms Support For Those Persons Who Have Entered Brave Spaces

We as a counsel want to affirm our support for persons who have taken the risk to publish their reflections this year. We acknowledge the fear and vulnerability that can come from publishing ones reactions, growth, analysis, and personal story in a public forum. We welcome the critique of ourselves, our systems, and the overall climate that can ensue from the publishing of these stories and want to encourage the SA community to validate and find the truth in these experiences. Thank you to all those who have put themselves into brave spaces by allowing their stories to be published. We look forward to more next year.



## How Georgetown University Once Relied On The Slave Trade And New Efforts To Reconcile With Its Past

Listen now at [thedianerehmshow.org](http://thedianerehmshow.org)

## Harriet Tubman On The \$20 Bill

Listen now at [thedianerehmshow.org](http://thedianerehmshow.org)

# Notes From Korea: Culture Of Beauty



By Kari Ellingson  
Associate Vice President for Student Affairs

Last weekend, I needed a hair cut. I'd been cutting it myself, a little at a time and, on Saturday, I happened to glance in the mirror. My reaction was "It looks like I've been cutting my own hair." So, a trip to the hair salon. It was a wonderful experience, once my hair dresser understood that I only wanted a trim to repair the damage I'd caused. The hair washing was a blissful experience, with a head massage that was heavenly.

The woman who was working with me clearly knew what she was doing and, 20 minutes later, she turned me around to look in the mirror. My first thought was, "This is as close as I'll ever get to looking Korean." No, I

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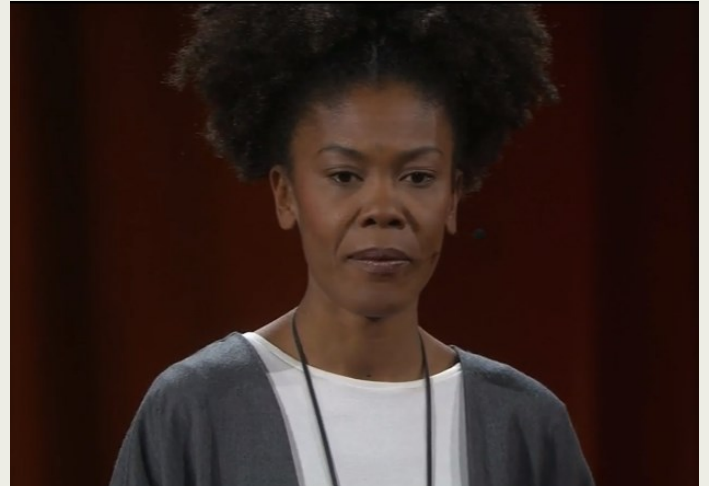
didn't really look Korean but my haircut was totally Korean. It was very smooth and straight, parted in the middle, curving slightly under just at the bottom. While Koreans have many different hair styles,

there is a similarity which my hair was now reflecting. This got me thinking about standards of beauty and how this plays out in a culture where the vast majority of the population is one phenotype.

Korea, as a country, has a very proscribed standard of beauty. In fact, South Korea has the highest rate of cosmetic surgery in the world, with an estimated 1 in 5 going under the knife. This ideal has led even some of our young students at UAC to already have had plastic surgery. Every model seems to have the same slenderness, small v-shaped face, smooth skin, straight black hair and a general similarity to their appearance. If these aren't given by nature, it can be accomplished through surgery. This obsession with appearance has led companies to require photographs as well as height and weight on resumes and job applications. I have been told by many who have worked for South Korean companies that, during the interview process, attractiveness is one of the evaluation criteria, seen as relevant to all jobs.

So, are we in the U.S. any different? While Korea comes in #1 for cosmetic surgery with the majority being for double eyelids, the U.S. is still ranked high as #4 with liposuction leading the way. We may not have as singular a standard of beauty as South Korea, with the Americans claiming ancestry from every corner of the world, but we still suffer from unrealistic ideals. And, even with our global heritage, I would imagine that, when asked for the ideal standard of beauty, many Americans would name very similar characteristics. These standards for both countries result in low confidence in our young (and not so young) women as well as men and the resulting depression. While my hair stopped looking "Korean" the minute I washed it, the thoughts that were generated from that trip to the salon have stayed with me.

# TED TALKS



**Angélica Dass:**

## **The beauty of human skin in every color**

Angélica Dass's photography challenges how we think about skin color and ethnic identity. In this personal talk, hear about the inspiration behind her portrait project, *Humanæ*, and her pursuit to document humanity's true colors rather than the untrue white, red, black and yellow associated with race.



## **Chieko Asakawa: How new technology helps blind people explore the world**

How can technology help improve our quality of life? How can we navigate the world without using the sense of vision? Inventor and IBM Fellow Chieko Asakawa, who's been blind since the age of fourteen, is working on answering these questions. In a charming demo, she shows off some new technology that's helping blind people explore the world ever more independently ... because, she suggests, when we design for greater accessibility, everyone benefits.

# Reflection on Unseen Differences

By Matthew Plooster,  
University Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid

After beginning my new role with the University Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid last August, I was delighted to have learned about the Student Affairs Diversity Council and the great work they are doing in making our campus more diversity-friendly. The work of the Council, I believe, is a great enhancement to the work being done by our campus colleagues with the result of better serving our students.

Completing the modules proved to be a profoundly intense experience, and I admire those who courageously engaged by sharing their personal experiences as well as allowing themselves the opportunity to internally reflect on the discussions to find personal meaning. Throughout the training, I was most moved by the discussion of dominant and subordinate traits. Unsurprisingly, our list of traits and characteristics quickly became long, and our discussions on the dominant and subordinate aspects of each trait was insightfully moving. To say the least, while we may appear similar on the outside, our differences can be – and often are – great.

On the outside, I appear rather undiverse. I grew up with the trappings of the average middle class: Caucasian, white-collar father, stay-at-home mum, private music lessons, and college. Home life was safe in my neighborhood, school, and church, and, as a child, it never struck me as different. After a short stint in journalism, I began my career in higher education and soon returned to the classroom, earning masters degrees from a private liberal arts college in New England. One might say that my background has been substantially privileged.

But what the casual observer might not see beneath the WASPy façade is my homosexuality. My coming out happened at the beginning of the country's decade-long shift in attitude toward social justice, equality, and equity.

Amid the many struggles and the less-than-desirable experiences I've had – i.e. harassment, loss of employment, and the heavy stigma I carried in my neighborhoods, offices, and houses of worship – I found strength and the adversity shaped me into who I am today, teaching me lessons of hope, understanding, and empathy along the way.



So when my module cohort discussed various dominant and subordinate traits, it was a trifle bittersweet when this huge, diverse part of my life was glossed over. When sexual orientation came up for discussion, the moderator said something along the lines of “pretty self-explanatory, I think we all understand this.” As the group moved on to the next point of discussion, I sat back thinking about what this meant to me and, more so, the campus community we serve.

Indeed, how sweet it is that the inequities of sexual orientation is commonly known and understood by my colleagues. But the more I thought about it, the more I considered my

own path. The world is a much different place today than it was for me when I came out during my freshman year of college. But the sociocultural norms, values, and practices of Utah are much different than what I experienced. While our varied life paths have helped us evolve into being more inclusive to diversity, we do not know our students' backgrounds and shouldn't assume they've had the growth opportunities we have. An issue may feel commonplace to us, but there's a good chance we're going to serve a student who doesn't feel as mainstream with their diversity.

Through her mouthpiece Atticus Finch, Harper Lee said, “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.” This is why these trainings are vital to being more student-centered in our work. No one can truly walk a mile in someone else's shoes, but we can learn to be considerate and understanding of, and advocates for, our students and colleagues who comprise the uniquely colorful tapestry of the University of Utah campus community.

# Upcoming University and Community Events

**June 3-5**

Utah Pride Festival and Parade  
Washington Square [[more info](#)]

41ST ANNIVERSARY



**UTAH**

PRIDE FESTIVAL 2016

JUNE 3RD -5TH

**June 4**

Run for Refugees 5K Run/Walk  
Liberty Park [[more info](#)]



# Upcoming May Seminar Series



**Not All Bathrooms Are Created Equal**

LGBT Resource Center Staff

**Wednesday, May 18, 2016**

12:00-1:30pm in Pano East, Union

Read more information about this and other seminars on the [SADC website](#).

## Update On Racial Climate Initiatives:

On April 19th, senior administrators released a [Summary Of The 13 Initiatives](#).

**The newsletter will not be published over the summer. The next issue will be in September.**



Debra Daniels, Co-chair Women's Resource Center  
Rob Davies, Co-chair Student Development  
Chris Anderson, Housing & Residential Education  
Michael Bard, Registrar's Office  
Stephanie Charles, Financial Aid  
Branden Dalley, Union Administration  
Marci Healy, Conference & Guest Services  
Matt McCarthy, Campus Recreation  
Nomani Satuala, Center for New Students & Family Programs  
Kassy Keen, Center for Student Wellness

Chris Macias, TRIO  
Carol MacNicholl, Center for Disability Services  
Kai Medina-Martinez, LGBT Center  
Sana Muller, ASUU  
Duane Padilla, Housing & Residential Education  
Rachana Patel, Office of Admissions  
Damien Pitts, Career Services  
Nick Robbins, Dean of Students Office  
Belinda Otukolo Saltiban, Office of Inclusive Excellence  
Bryce Williams, Bennon Center