

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

Fitting My Piece Into The Puzzle

By Michael Bard,
Office of the Registrar

I've had the honor and privilege to be a part of Student Affairs and the Diversity Council for years. It has been such a growth experience for me, both professionally and personally. Some of the greatest value that I've received serving on the Diversity Council and attending SADC events, has been hearing the stories of others and learning about those experiences. These have included voices from others across the spectrum of our human family and it has really broadened my horizons. I've learned to question my assumptions and judgements, and to really listen more attentively and openly to others.



Getting involved in social justice has not been an easy experience for me. Being on the Autism Spectrum, I can find social interaction with others to be a confusing, unpredictable, and chaotic experience. Sometimes it's even nerve-racking. The less structured and/or more nuanced the interaction is, the more difficult it can be for me.

Navigating our social world made up of so many rules, mostly unspoken and often seemingly subjective, can be challenging. There are tons of social rules, and then rules that govern those rules. Existing rules, new rules, and constantly evolving rules. There are rules about when it's appropriate to break certain rules, and rules that are sometimes

flexible. However, it's hard to determine exactly what rules are (or are not) included in those exceptions, and exactly what rules ultimately govern the breakability or flexibility of those rules. The rules of social engagement can change with various roles, places, people, and with the movement in and out of various social "hierarchy" or situations.

All of these rules are like navigating a maze with invisible walls, but nobody tells you exactly where the walls are. Also the walls are not always in the same places. It is sometimes even hard to gauge my success in interacting with people, since people often say one thing but they mean another. Then... there

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are all the things that people don't say but still convey to one another. The more people involved in a social experience, the harder it is for me to keep pace and figure those things out. Add on top of that dealing with overwhelming visual and auditory stimulus, and things can become challenging. As a result of these and other things I haven't gone into, I am a very slow social processor. I would call it a very manual processing of social information, since it seems like I have a bent social antennae somewhere in my brain. These challenges can also cause me to have considerable social anxieties (I also have a diagnosed anxiety disorder).

I share these things not to elicit sympathy. I really don't need sympathy from others (though I'll gladly accept your kindness and straight-forward communication). It may seldom be easy, but I actually have an amazing life. Rather, I share these things so that I can highlight how I found my own way to contribute to the movement for social justice and what I've learned so far. I'm so grateful to contribute and I find it fulfilling to know that I'm able to play my small role.

I enjoy attending each month's seminar. I also learn a ton from the modules/dialogues too, but I really struggle to find my voice and to engage/navigate conversations in that type of environment. I thoroughly enjoy technology and value it as a strength of mine. Give me technology, and I am both happy and highly productive. I also feel that I communicate more easily via electronic

communications. I have really enjoyed being involved with the SADC website, newsletter, and certificate program. I really like being able to help share other people's stories and voices through the newsletter and website, something that I've found so much value in. Also, I feel useful when I work with others to help facilitate and track certificate progress through a simple access database I developed. I get satisfaction from knowing that I've been helpful to others.

I've discovered that social justice does not require everyone to be out on the front lines or to be a highly visible leader. I've learned that there is room for all kinds of talent and involvement, and that sometimes, leadership can mean more quietly influencing through individual conversations and other types of contributions.

I've realized that self-care is incredibly important and I shouldn't feel guilty for it. Without taking time to care for myself, it would be much more difficult to serve others and offer them my skillsets... especially in the long run.

Which brings me to my final point. I can influence change by taking my skillset and using that to serve others who are also pursuing social justice... and that is perfect.

Years ago, I couldn't begin to imagine how I would fit my piece into the greater puzzle of life, but I am so grateful that I found fulfilling work, good working relationships, and meaningful involvement here in Student Affairs.

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[Brittney Cooper: The racial politics of time](#)

Cultural theorist Brittney Cooper examines racism through the lens of time, showing us how historically it has been stolen from people of color, resulting in lost moments of joy and connection, lost years of healthy quality of life and the delay of progress. A candid, thought-provoking take on history and race that may make you reconsider your understanding of time, and your place in it.



[Michele L. Sullivan: Asking for help is a strength, not a weakness](#)

We all go through challenges — some you can see, most you can't, says Michele L. Sullivan. In a talk about perspective, Sullivan shares stories full of wit and wisdom and reminds us that we're all part of each other's support systems. "The only shoes you can walk in are your own," she says. "With compassion, courage and understanding, we can walk together, side by side."

Upcoming Events

Apr 4 @ 12-1pm

Pizza & Politics: Comparison of South Africa and the US with regard to racial dignity, democracy and equality or Individual Identity and Nation-Building
Building 73, Room 110 [[more info](#)]

Apr 4 @ 11:30am-1pm

Women In Business Event: Speaker Georgi Rausch
SFEBB 7170 [[more info](#)]

Apr 4 @ 3:30-4:30pm

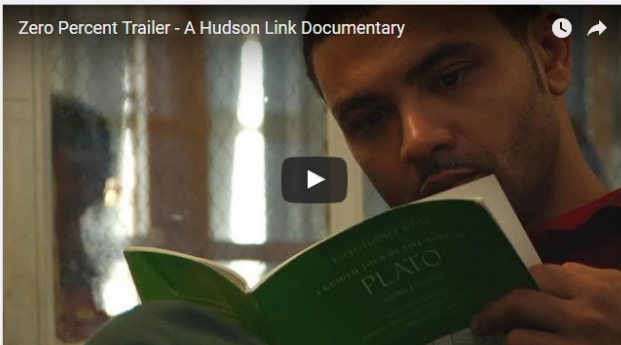
"Holy Syncretism: Muslim Poets and Hindu Devotion" by Harish Trivedi, CTIHB 101 [[more info](#)]

April 4 @ 6-8pm

Film Screening: Zero Percent
Glendale Library [[more info](#)]

April 5 @ 6-8pm

Film Screening and Discussion: First Degree
Union Ballroom [[more info](#)]



April 5 @ 6-8pm

UofU Prison Education Project Launch and Film Screening of "Zero Percent"
Sorenson Arts & Edu Complex Auditorium [[more info](#)]

Apr 6 & 7 @ 8:30am-5:30pm

The Politics of Identity—Frances D Wormuth
Symposium, Multiple Location [[more info](#)]

Apr 7 (and every Friday) @ 3-5pm

Fabulous Fridays
LGBT Center, Rm 409 Union [[more info](#)]

Upcoming Seminar



Gimmie Shelter

Kim Hall and the
Homeless Student Task Force

Wed., April 19, 2017
12-1:30pm in Union Pano East
[[more information](#)]

Apr 11 @ 5-7pm

Trans Legal Clinic
BU C Rm 308 [[more info](#)]

April 13 @ 12-1pm

Women, Work and the Will to Lead: Know Your
Strengths, Own Your Strengths
380 SSB [[more info](#)]

Apr 19 @ 3:30-5pm

"Exhibiting Transgender Histories from Germany
and the United States, 1882-1966" Michael Thomas
Taylor, Reed College, CTIHB Room 101 [[more info](#)]

Apr 20 @ 2:30-4pm

Understanding Our Differences, Shaping Our Future:
Diversity and Disparity: Race, Class, and Gender
Inequities in the U.S., Building 73 [[more info](#)]

Apr 25 @ 7:30-9:30pm

"An Evening with Sandra Cisneros" hosted by Doug
Fabrizio, Rose Wagner Arts Center [[more info](#)]



Debra Daniels (Co-chair), Women's Resource Center
Kari Ellingson (Co-chair), Student Development
Michael Bard, Registrar's Office
Gabriella Blanchard, LGBT Resource Center
Ella Butler, Career Services
Branden Dalley, Union Administration
Tim Davis, Housing & Residential Education
Kyle Ethelbah, TRIO Programs
Cairisti Flatley, Campus Recreation Services
Jonathan Holloway, Student Health Center
Darrah Jones, Center for Student Wellness

Jacquelyn Ledford, Student Leadership & Involvement
Fatima Liaqat, Office of Admissions
Carol MacNicholl, Center for Disability Services
Chuck Masoka, Assessment, Evaluation, & Research
Paul Morgan, Veteran Support Center
Belinda Otukolo Saltiban, Office of Inclusion Excellence
Matthew Plooster, Scholarships & Financial Aid
Catherine Riney, University Counseling Center
Nomani Satuala, Center for New Student & Family Programs
Tricia West, Student Development
Bryce Williams, Bennion Center