C.H.A.R.G.E. MULTICULTURAL PROGRAM

Our Strength is Our Diversity
CHARGE was established in January 1987 by David Jenkins (Former Associate Director of Residential Life) who received a grant from Affirmative Action to start a BEFRIENDER PROGRAM created in response to several racial incidents on Alumni Quad, which received national media attention. That spring semester invitations were sent to students to become volunteers.

Twenty-five people applied and eight were chosen for the program. Loretta Redfurn became the first Residential Life Professional Staff Advisor to the Program. During summer of 1987, Douglas Samuels became Coordinator for the Minority Assistance Program (M.A.P) and twelve new student volunteers were added. By July 1990 the program branched out to all quads.

It was not until the Fall of 1994 that the Multicultural Awareness Program became the CHARGE Cultural Program. An emphasis on ethnicity, particularly the experiences of people of African, Asian, Latino, and Native American heritage allowed CHARGE to address the experiences of those groups in depth. The Multicultural Student Assistants became CHARGE Assistants.

By June 1995 The CHARGE Cultural Program was expanded to encompass issues as they relate to the experience of people of Jewish descent.
C elebrating ethnicity
We will focus on Native American, African, Arabic, Asian, Jewish, Muslim, and Latino heritage, celebrating culture in joyful, positive ways.

H onoring our histories of struggle
• We will focus on the histories and issues of ethnic groups through serious, in-depth programming.

A cting for change
We will encourage students to get active in their education and their lives and emphasize and provide opportunities for community service.

R ising to our higher humanity
We will assist students in feeling good about themselves, which will help them be better equipped to be compassionate and reach beyond barriers to strive for unity amongst all people.

G aining empowerment
We will emphasize the importance of self-determination and assist students as they take control of their own lives.

E ducating self and others
We will enrich our education through a personal commitment to acquiring knowledge and serve our community by providing an outlet for gaining knowledge and understanding.
The CHARGE Cultural Program presents a wide range of high quality programming around many dimensions of diversity and difference.

The overarching goals of the CHARGE Cultural Program are to engender a deep respect and appreciation for differences in culture, race, ethnicity, religion, language, national origin, sexual orientation, and gender, as well as to provide an educational forum to discuss these issues and their impact on individuals and groups within the University at Albany community and the wider society.

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Charge Assistants provide input, assistance and support in the areas of multicultural student development, support in the area of enhancing multicultural student understanding, programming, community, and leadership development. As members of the paraprofessional staff, Charge Assistants receive training in areas of conflict resolution, cross cultural communication, and student development.

CHARGE Assistants

CA Asisat; Colonial Quad

CA Deirdre; Apartments

CA Jagdeep; Indian Quad

CA Jonathan; Dutch

CA Sarah; Alumni

CA Victoria; State Quad
Aaron Washington, the newest member of our office, is currently working towards his MS in Educational Administration and Policy Studies.

“I decided to apply for an internship in the CHARGE office because I wanted to gain a more thoughtful and educated view as to the importance of multiculturalism. Being a GA for the CHARGE Multicultural Program offers a fast paced, highly collaborative environment in which I am gaining invaluable work experience. I am learning so much from the CHARGE assistants and Arleny Alvarez about time management, cooperation and most important diversity.”

Come check out “Black People’s Hair” part of our Culture Shock series, with videos, panel discussion and more.
The Culture Shock Series was developed to identify persistent issues, which exist within every community, that have consistently been “swept under the rug.” CHARGE would like to tackle issues that are seemingly too taboo; this allows for a thoughtful and in depth discussion of issues our students face each day. It is our hope that these programs serve as the catalyst for future discussion throughout Residential Life and the UAAlbany campus.
Agenda

a. Defining Diversity
b. Advantages of Diversity
c. Identifying Characteristics of Diversity
d. Identify approaches
e. Identify differences
f. Overcoming barriers to Diversity
g. The Impact Diversity has on a Team
Defining Diversity

- Valuing individual diversity means reaching beyond stereotypical views of individuals and using the strengths and different perspectives that each person offers as a result of his or her culture, religion, ethnicity, gender, race, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, and age. NACE's Board, committees, and task forces will reflect the individual diversity of the profession. Even more important, they will embrace and derive value from the diverse views that each individual brings to a task at hand.

~NACE Statement Defining Diversity
Advantages of Diversity

Diversity is what makes us an individual. By introducing the many cultures that surround them in school, where they spend six hours five days a week, can give them an understanding of their friends and knowledge for the future. When these students finally graduate and go out into the real world they will not be scared of what they see because throughout their years in school they will have learned to assimilate themselves into this diverse nation. Most importantly teach the values to their children. Teaching ways of respect and equality. No matter the color of your skin, your ethnic background, your religion, your race, your disability, and anything else that make you who you are.

~http://www.exampleessays.com/viewpaper/17271.html
Identifying Characteristics of Diversity

- Race
- Ethnicity
- Gender
- Education
- Social Class
- Sexuality
- Language
- Religion
- Geographic Area and more...

~Sleeter and Grant, 2003
Identify approaches

1. Addressing social injustices and overcome the existing inequities.

2. Empowerment through Knowledge: Include a view of the world through a conceptual lens of race, class, and gender as interlocking systems of oppression.

3. Bridges must be built

4. Access “Funds of Knowledge” tap into community knowledge
Identify differences

- cultural
- Personality Styles
- where they are from

**Overall, it will help improve relationships and climate of your floors**
Overcoming barriers to Diversity

- Identifying stereotypes and discrimination
- Recognizing a negative approach to diversity
- Avoiding discrimination (Don’t be a BYSTANDER)

It takes RISK!!
The Impact Diversity has on a Team

- Increased creativity
- Multiple points of view
- Multiple skills
- Wider range of experiences and backgrounds
General Strategies

- **Recognize any biases or stereotypes you may have absorbed.** (NCBI – what’s on your RECORD)
  
  Do you interact with students in ways that manifest double standards?
  
  1. Do you undervalue comments made by speakers whose English is accented differently than your own? (your conversations outside the classroom w/ Residents)
  
  3. Do you assume that most African American, Chicano/Latino, or Native American students on your campus are enrolled under special admissions programs? (i.e. EOP)
  
  4. Do you assume that most students of color are majoring in Ethnic Studies? (i.e. Africana Studies)

- **Do your best to be sensitive to terminology.**

- **Become more informed about the history and culture of groups other than your own.** (C.H.A.R.G.E. resource binder!)
How can you reach us?

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- AIM: ualbanyncharge
- Phone: 518-442-5840
ANY QUESTIONS?!?
Our Strength is Our Diversity!

CHARGE DIRECTOR
Arleny Alvarez

DEAR FRIENDS,

THANK YOU FOR INVITING US TO YOUR CLASS. WE HOPE TO SEE YOU AT OUR C.H.A.R.G.E. EVENTS THROUGHOUT THE ACADEMIC YEAR.

Located on Indian Quad in Montauk Hall, the CHARGE Resource Room houses a library and other resources that help University at Albany residences develop a respect for diversity within racial and ethnic groups. For more information about the CHARGE Cultural Program, feel free to stop in during our office hours or call 442-5840.