Allyship Development Program Newsletter

Georgia Southern University, Allyship Development Program

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May edition: Mental Health Awareness & Celebrating Diversity

May is Asian Pacific, Jewish, and Haitian Heritage month, and it is also Mental Health Awareness month. We hope to touch on each of these topics, further exploring diversity at GSU and discussing mental health stigma versus reality as well as resources and support. We would also like to thank our veterans and servicemembers in honor of Memorial Day. Our Summer Edition will come out at the beginning of Fall semester and cover LGBTQ+ Pride month! If you’d like to contribute, please reach out to oie@georgiasouthern.edu. Have a great summer!

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Disclaimer: This newsletter and the external references and sources do not represent the opinions or views of Georgia Southern University and are rather intended as learning material to hear from a variety of underrepresented opinions and perspectives. We do not endorse the authors or sources; rather, we hope that readers will critically consume media and use it for reflection and learning in pursuit of inclusion, openness, and cultural enrichment. Some sources may contain mature language or triggering topics, so please read with caution.
Featured: Eagle of the Month

Liz Hocevar (she/her/hers)  
Resident Director of  
Southern Pines  
Nominated by: Lisa Erin  
Noel-McFerrin

“Liz is a new staff member this year, but she has already made an impact on her students, staff, and department. On multiple occasions Liz has confronted inequities she has come across, she has educated her staff and peers on issues of justice, and she has shown vulnerability and courage in conversations she’s had with others, but always with the intent to educate, understand, and grow. She’s a great example of an ally who continues to challenge herself and others in the pursuit of justice.”

Nominate someone for us to feature in our next newsletter!

Nomination Information and Link:  
https://georgiasouthern.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_879LzXdR1O4s3gF
Articles and Readings

**Allyship Amid the Pandemic: How you can support Asian American communities**
by Chantal Wong & Lindsey Narkchareon

Article content warning for brief descriptions of violent hate crimes. The coronavirus pandemic was marked by increasing levels of xenophobia and discrimination against Asian American communities, with over 1,100 reported incidents in one week to the organization STOP AAPI HATE. This included very serious physical assaults. Chantal writes, “I was suddenly perceived as ‘dirty.’” The authors ask allies to step up, using scientific rather than nationality- or race-based language to describe COVID-19, denounce discrimination and jokes that blame any group or country for the virus, encourage anyone who is affected by discrimination or harassment to report it to STOP AAPI HATE, and share accurate and accessible, translated information about the virus. In some cities, crime watch community organizations popped up to patrol and protect people from hate crimes. Finally, she says, reach out to local officials to emphasize the need for policies protecting Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) communities and small businesses.

**The Asian American Response to Black Lives Matter Is Part of a Long, Complicated History**
by Cady Lang

This article discusses the history of Black and Asian solidarity and division in the US, culminating in Asian participation in Black Lives Matter protests but also reflection following Hmong American police officer Tou Thao’s complicity in the death of George Floyd. Lang describes the discriminatory policies and racism levied at Asian immigrants in the 19th and 20th centuries, as well as the solidarity between Asian Americans and Black Americans fighting for civil rights; for example, Frederick Douglass publicly denounced the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act. However, Lang writes, as Black Americans fought for civil rights, the model minority myth about Asian Americans was promoted to encourage divisions between the groups and hinder the civil rights movement. Lang lays out how the model minority myth is harmful to Asians and how Americans with Asian descent are often viewed as a monolith rather than individuals from over 48 countries. According to the author, politicians at the time would argue to Black Americans, “Asians have experienced racism in this country, but because of hard work, they’ve been able to pull themselves up out of racism by their bootstraps and have the American Dream, so why can’t you?” This division widened with the LA 1992 race riots, when Korean American communities and businesses became targets for looting - in connection with the death of a Black girl at the hands of a Korean store owner, later charged with manslaughter, in 1991.

However, Lang goes on to discuss how Asian communities have been a part of the Black Lives Matter movement, sharing translated resources to talk to their families, educating others, and participating in stories. The article ends quoting a professor who says that Asian solidarity in the protests sends a clear message, that the same racist systems oppress both Black and Asian Americans, and that “we need to be the authors of our own story”
Translate Hate by the American Jewish Committee
This article discusses how to identify and report anti-semitic language, both on social media and in communities. The American Jewish Committee (AJC) also links a glossary of anti-semitic language, including many examples which show how anti-semitism can be extremely covert and hard to spot. They call on allies to report this anti-semitic speech on social media and report hate in the community to law enforcement, also calling for support in advocating for legislation in Congress to improve hate crime reporting and tracking by the FBI. The AJC also advocates for the adoption of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance Working Definition of Antisemitism by the US and European governments in order to combat rising anti-semitism in those countries.

We must combat anti-Semitic hate crimes with solidarity, not violence by David Love
In this CNN opinion piece, Love discusses a series of anti-Jewish hate crimes in New York and New Jersey in January 2020 in the context of rising anti-semitism in the US and UK. The perpetrators in New Jersey included an alleged Black Hebrew Israelite and allegedly a Black man with longstanding mental health issues. Love describes the response by some as attacking and blaming Black people and Black Israelites in particular, and says as an African American Jewish man, he believes “more policing, guns and violence to fight anti-Semitic hate crimes will not make people safer. It will endanger the lives of already marginalized groups who bear the brunt of discrimination and injustice.” He describes instances of discrimination against Black Jewish people in particular and highlights inclusive responses by Jewish advocacy groups, emphasizing investing in restorative solutions and a unified front of solidarity against violence, racism, and white supremacy. He concludes, “people must... tackle the problem of hate and violence against others head-on as if it is their own, because it is.”

'We are part of this': Haitian Americans in Brooklyn align with Black Lives Matter by Sam Bojarski
Haitian Americans joined the Black Lives Matter protests in Brooklyn in August 2020, saying, “we’ve taken it upon ourselves to say that, ‘we are part of this.’” Organizers are calling for police reform, saying that just having Haitian police officers is not enough. They also seek investment in their communities. Haitian Americans have their own fraught history of experiencing police brutality in New York. One Haitian protestor emphasized that the people gathered, though representing different countries and histories, were in “lockstep” together.

Trump’s Racism Toward Haiti Is not an Aberration by Nia Imara
“U.S. policy toward Haiti has been consistently racist, violent, oppressive, and exploitative.” In this article, author Imara describes the history of the relationship between the US and Haiti, beginning with the Haitian revolution. In 1804, Haitians defeated the French, but President Jefferson refused to recognize the newly independent state; it wasn’t recognized until 1862, almost fifty years later. Black and brown immigrants do not have to prove their worth, writes the author, by being extra hardworking and “deserving.” Imara concludes that “the exploitation of African nations and Haiti by the United States and European allies is historically inseparable” and that Haitians and Africans should stand in solidarity with ties deeper than any man-made borders.
Book Recommendations

**Minor feelings: an Asian American reckoning, Cathy Park Hong**
Largely unmentioned in conversations on race and imagined as all high-achieving professionals, Hong looks at the reality of the most economically divided group in the country. This book is part memoir, part history, and part cultural criticism. Hong describes growing up as the daughter of Korean immigrants and the “minor feelings” that occur when America’s optimism doesn’t match one’s reality and racial identity. This book dives into Hong’s relationship with English, depression, and entering the poetry scene. It looks both at the Asian American psyche as well as race consciousness in America as a whole.
Available at Henderson library as a physical copy.

**The resisters: a novel, Gish Jen**
An inventive and exciting piece of fiction in which a different, future America, governed by algorithms and with the land half covered by water, pushes mostly Black and Brown Americans to the edge to live floating on houseboats. These communities living on the fringes are called the “Surplus,” while the “Netted” elite hold all the jobs and - literally - all the land. This novel focuses on Gwen, a girl recruited to play Olympic baseball against Russia and thrust into life on land. Chinese-American author Gish Jen looks at a weird, futuristic new movement for rights of those on the margin, and a family struggling to maintain their humanity.
Available as a physical copy at Henderson library.

**From a Native Daughter: Colonialism and Sovereignty in Hawai‘i, by Haunani-Kay Trask**
This non-fiction work talks about Hawai‘i and human rights, imperialism and native self-determinism, native Hawai‘ian nationalism, women, neocolonialism, and indigenous structures. It is fundamentally a criticism of the abuse of native Hawaiian rights, institutional racism, and gender discrimination on the colonized islands.
Author Haunani-Kay Trask is an activist, poet, and professor of Hawaiian Studies at the University of Hawai‘i.
Available from Henderson library as a physical copy and for pdf download from EBSCOhost.
**A Rosenberg by any other name: a history of Jewish name changing in America, Kirsten Fermaglich**

This book uses court documents, oral histories, archival records, and contemporary literature, to make the argument that name changing had a significant and enduring impact on American Jewish culture. Fermaglich challenges cliche assumptions about why and how Jewish people change their names, revealing that it was a broad and voluntary behavior to avoid anti-semitism while also not at all linked to Jewish Americans becoming inactive in their communities or attempting to hide their heritage. Name changing was even a critical part of achieving early civil rights legislation. Available as a physical copy in the Henderson library.

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**Ruth Bader Ginsburg: a life, Jane Sherron de Hart**

Ruth Bader Ginsburg was the first Jewish woman appointed to the Supreme Court. This comprehensive biography explores Ginsburg’s passion for gender equality and justice, with the foundation of her Jewish heritage. In particular, de Hart looks at the Hebrew concept of tikkun olam, an order to ‘repair the world,’ and what it meant to Ginsburg. This book also explores the development of Justice Ginsburg’s feminism, history as a lawyer, and her personal challenges. Available as a physical copy in the Henderson library.

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**The Jewish American paradox: embracing choice in a changing world, Robert H. Mnookin**

In this work, Harvard Law professor Mnookin explores the 21st century changes and challenges to the American Jewish identity. The religious, historical, and cultural identity of Jewish Americans, he argues, are becoming increasingly complicated. This book dives into Jewish history, law, and custom, with interviews with rabbis, scholars, and many other Jewish perspectives. He shares stories both of American Jews disavowing or forging their own Jewish identities, and asks a fundamental question about cultural preservation vs modern change and openness that is applicable to many cultures and identities in the 21st century. Available in the Henderson library as a physical copy.
The Haitian Americans, Flore Zéphir
This non-fiction field biography was conducted by a Haitian immigrant, researching cities across the US with large Haitian populations. Zéphir puts Haitian immigration into a historical perspective, discussing Haiti’s history, economy, and culture, as well as contemporary settlement, the interactions between immigrant groups, and more. It includes several profiles of prominent Haitian Americans and emphasizes the contributions of Haitians to American society, as well as maps and illustrations. This book is available at Henderson library as a physical copy.

The Uses of Haiti, Paul Farmer
Farmer lived in Haiti for 25 years, working as the medical director of a hospital serving the rural poor. This book discusses the uncomfortable truths of power structures and frameworks that prevent scrutiny of these systems. It includes a frank discussion of the role of the US in Haiti’s present struggle as well as a description of what that struggle is. Farmer looks in particular at what happened to the health of poor Haitians following the coup. Trained as an anthropologist, Farmer bridges US institutions and the lives of the rural poor in Haiti. He takes on the need for serious knowledge of the nature of exploitation and suffering of the people, using several case studies of violence against individuals and observing how processes disproportionately affect the poor. The title references this exploitation, and how Haiti has been used in various ways, economically, politically, and emotionally or symbolically. It comprehensively refutes the idea that Haiti’s African culture has contributed to its present struggles and highlighting international injustices. Available at Henderson library as a physical copy.

The Black Jacobins: Toussaint L’Ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution, C.L.R. James
This book, first published in 1938, is considered foundational reading on Haiti, providing a history of the Haitian Revolution and the journey to revolution of the enslaved Toussaint L’Ouverture. The author, Trinidadian historian CLR James, wrote this book after growing tired of hearing about the oppression of Africans as passive objects of history, rather than active subjects. It tells the story of the singular and successful struggle by the Black people of San Domingo against invasions by overwhelming European forces, forming the first independent nation of the Caribbean and becoming the model for the Third World liberation movements in the late 20th century. Available as a physical copy at Henderson library.
Mental Health: Resources for Education and Awareness

7 Ways to be a Mental Health Ally by the Jefferson Center
About 1 in 5 American adults experience mental illness every year. This article highlights the need to fight stigma and stereotypes that can prevent or hinder people seeking treatment or support. It lists resources to educate yourself on different mental health conditions, as well as several steps to be an ally: ask how you can help, listen with empathy and free of judgement, be mindful of your words (frequently using language like “crazy,” “insane,” & “psycho” can make people close themselves off to you), take care of your own mental health, share your story, and get involved in conversations at every level.

Conversation Guide (starting conversations about mental health) by Bell Let’s Talk
This guide provides advice on starting conversations with friends or co-workers about mental health. Ask how the person is doing and bring up specifically what you noticed that’s concerning you. Offer support, and respond at the appropriate level of urgency. This guide also identifies some feelings, thoughts, and behaviors that may be a sign of mental health issues.

How to be a better mental health ally by Mark Brown
“We want people who’ll help us fight our corner; people who’ll represent us and support us and who’ll be there to give that something extra that’ll get us through the day. In short, we all need allies.” In this article, Brown advises allies to not assume they know everything and recognize that individuals, even those with the same diagnoses, can vary significantly. Know that you’ll never really understand what they’re going through, and thinking you do can lead to harmful assumptions. Don’t try to “save” them, either, or assume your view is the only or best one. Specifically, don’t talk about theories on how to “cure” them you read on the internet or heard about from a friend of a friend. Accept that the person may change and have fluctuating conditions, and try to be helpful without blaming them or making it awkward. Brown gives one ‘final commandment’ of “Thou shalt care.”

The Noonday Demon: An Atlas of Depression, Andrew Solomon
Content warning for sensitive subjects. Solomon dives into depression, looking at his own struggle with it as well as others. He interviews researchers and doctors, exploring the various complex aspects of the disease. The book touches on the causes, symptoms, and therapies, as well as personal, cultural, and scientific perspectives on depression. It is equal parts a memoir with social commentary and a book of research on psychology, history, and pharmacology. Reviews describe the book as personal, thoughtful, and thorough, though not an easy read; it is informative and includes perspectives from people of many walks of life and parts of the world. Available at Henderson library as a physical copy.
Mental Health: Resources On- and Off-Campus

- Crisis intervention
  - (Regular Business Hours; M-F, 8:00-5:00) – Call or visit the Counseling Center at 912-478-5541 (Statesboro) or 912-344-2529 (Armstrong) and inform the receptionist that you need to be seen as soon as possible for a crisis screening. We are located at Bldg #435 on Forest Drive (Statesboro) and Compass Point (Armstrong). Special parking available for clients – Contact the Counseling Center for more information.
  - (After Hours) – If it is after hours, call the Georgia Southern Counseling Center at 912-478-5541 (Statesboro) or 912-344-2529 (Armstrong) and select option 2 to speak with an on-call counselor. You may also call the local police at 911 or Georgia Southern University Police Department at 912-478-5234 (Statesboro) or (912) 344-3333 (Armstrong).
  - (Alternative Option) – You may also choose to access the Georgia Crisis Access Line (GCAL) at 1-800-715-4225. GCAL provides services 24 hours/day, 7 days/week, 365 days/year. GCAL provides telephonic crisis intervention services, dispatches mobile crisis teams, and other services. They also have a text and chat option via an app called My GCAL. For more information, visit the GCAL website. GCAL services are free and confidential.

- Georgia Southern University Counseling Center,
  - Statesboro campus; PO Box 8011 Statesboro, GA 30460; Phone: 912-478-5541
  - Armstrong campus; 7000 Compass Point Annex, 11935 Abercorn Street Savannah, GA 31419; Phone: 912-344-2529
  - To schedule an intake appointment, please call 912.478.5541
  - Website: [http://studentsupport.georgiasouthern.edu/counseling/](http://studentssupport.georgiasouthern.edu/counseling/)
    - Resource Library
      [https://students.georgiasouthern.edu/counseling/resources/resource-library/](https://students.georgiasouthern.edu/counseling/resources/resource-library/)
    - On and Off Campus Referrals
      [https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/11xE2S0vPOb4lkNK67ck9ub_Ev7TVT2kpvvSdc1mEJM/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/11xE2S0vPOb4lkNK67ck9ub_Ev7TVT2kpvvSdc1mEJMQ/edit?usp=sharing)
    - Individual Counseling
      [https://students.georgiasouthern.edu/counseling/individual-counseling/](https://students.georgiasouthern.edu/counseling/individual-counseling/)
    - Group Therapy
      [https://students.georgiasouthern.edu/counseling/services/current-groups/](https://students.georgiasouthern.edu/counseling/services/current-groups/)
    - Telehealth: The Counseling Center is now providing services to students who are new to the center, as well as on-going clients, via telemental health. [https://students.georgiasouthern.edu/counseling/telehealth/](https://students.georgiasouthern.edu/counseling/telehealth/)
Mental Health: Resources On- and Off-Campus (cont.)

- Online workshops/videos
  https://students.georgiasouthern.edu/counseling/virtual/
- In-person workshops
  https://students.georgiasouthern.edu/counseling/current-workshops-open-groups/

- Hotlines
  - **National Suicide Prevention Hotline**
    - 1-800-273-8255
    - The Lifeline provides 24/7, free support and counseling for individuals in distress and provides prevention and crisis resources.
  - **Veterans Crisis Line**
    - 1-800-273-8255
    - Trained responders are available to provide confidential support to veterans, service members, National Guard and reserve, and their respective family members and friends.
  - **National Alliance on Mental Illness: NAMI Georgia**
    - 770-408-0625
    - NAMI Georgia is available to help navigate mental health crises and provide support to anyone with mental illness.
  - **Georgia Crisis and Access Line**
    - 1-800-715-4225
    - Delivers free, 24/7 support for people experiencing mental health crises and offers access to mental health resources in Georgia.
Nominate someone for us to feature in our next newsletter!

Nomination Information and Link:
https://georgiasouthern.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_879LzXdR1Q4s3gF

Feedback Form

Have comments, concerns, or ideas? Fill out our feedback form here:
https://georgiasouthern.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_eQo4q73jRLRdi3H

Social Media

Follow us on Instagram @gs_oie and on Facebook here!