PEHR @ HWS

“Peer Education in Human Relations (PEHR) is the best thing going at HWS.” “Everyone needs to enroll in Making Connections.” These are just a few of the comments I heard when I first arrived at Hobart and William Smith Colleges in August. My name is Ew (pronounced E.W., – I go by my initials) Quimbaya-Winship and I was recently hired to run the Peer Education in Human Relations Program.

As many of you know, PEHR, an HWS program, focuses on Social Justice issues in a unique way. For many, their first experience with PEHR is the Making Connections (MC) class, an experiential class where HWS students explore issues like racism, anti-Semitism, classism, sexism, ageism and more. What’s unique about Making Connections is students in the class explore how these issues impact them personally. MC students learn to talk with others about these issues in an effort to build understanding and mutual support… and the class is co-facilitated by other HWS students. MC is about HWS students working with HWS students to face sometimes challenging and difficult issues directly and honestly. It is, in fact, one of the best things going at HWS. If you haven’t had the class yet, I’d ask you to consider it.

A little about me: My background and education is in theatre, specifically interactive educational and social-political theatre (based most directly in something called the “Theatre of the Oppressed” [TO]). Using various theatre techniques, including role-plays and other theatre ‘games’, a TO audience is activated to explore sometimes difficult-to-discuss issues. Audience members are challenged to discover tactics that can be used in “everyday life” to address these issues. The work is based in oppression and liberation theories. While this form of theatre sounds serious (and it is), it is also a great deal of fun. And this work informs how I work, I seek to build community, create dialogue, learn from others, and celebrate the riches we all have to offer.

As I mentioned at the start of this article, I’ve just joined HWS this past fall. I recently left Rochester Institute of Technology, where I was the Educational Program Coordinator for the Women’s Center, and before that, I was the Education Coordinator for Alternatives for Battered Women, a domestic violence shelter in Rochester, NY. I want to thank everyone at HWS for a wonderful welcome, I’m excited to be a part of your amazing community. And, if we have not met, please send an email or stop me if you see me walking by, I truly enjoy talking with students and working with students to make this world a better place for all.

OUR FACULTY’S PERSPECTIVE

It was an honor and a delight to be invited to the Intercultural Affairs House to give an informal “fireside chat” on my work and research on Palestinian women in the Middle East. Although I have heard many great things about the diversity and range of enriching programs offered by the IC, I was nevertheless surprised by the warm, welcoming and extremely dynamic atmosphere created by the students and faculty/staff. In addition to this, the large number of students and faculty who came out in the cold December evening to hear my talk was a testament to the engaging intellectual environment of HWS. Beyond the formality of classroom lectures, I quickly realized that the IC is a wonderful space to have an open, engaging and well-balanced conversation with students and faculty from a wide range of intellectual, social and political views. On a personal note, it was an especially meaningful evening for me to be able to share a few personal stories from my first-hand experiences of living in one Palestinian refugee community in the West Bank. I believe that peace is created when we take the time to recognize ourselves in the lives of others. To this end, the IC provides the HWS community with both the intellectual space and physical place for peace to take root and grow. Thank you again for such a wonderful experience!
Raritan Valley Community College
by Lisa Tucker, Assistant Professor of English, c/o 1988

While attending Hobart & William Smith Colleges, I participated in the teacher certification program for secondary English. I worked in the Geneva public school system and student taught 8th-graders in English at Geneva Middle School. I also participated in a Bank Street College Urban Fellows internship and spent my junior year abroad in London, England studying art history and the nuclear predicament. I currently serve as an admissions volunteer doing college fairs and interviews and I hope to join the alum volunteer group organized by Intercultural Affairs. Teachers in my life, my parents and my 3rd-grade teacher, along with the encouragement of my English professors at HWS, inspired me to enter the profession of teaching.

I had a joyous experience at Hobart and William Smith Colleges! I have remained in contact with faculty, peers, and the counseling office. The faculty are very supportive and the colleges provide phenomenal programming.

Feel free to contact me at: Ltuck23@aol.com

Geneva High School
by William Rotenberg, Principle, c/o 1987

As an alum of the Colleges (Hobart ’87), it is a thrill to be asked to submit something to a college supported publication. This thrill is matched by the excitement of having the opportunity to fulfill my professional goals and build a stronger connection between Geneva High School and the staff and students of Hobart & William Smith Colleges.

My connections to Hobart & William Smith have grown stronger than ever in that I have had the opportunity to work with staff, students, and dedicated members of the college administration to build a stronger relationship between the colleges and the Geneva City School District. This fall, groups of Hobart and William Smith students representing a wide array of backgrounds and cultures, graciously spent their afternoons visiting with high school students to offer campus tours, friendly conversation about college life, and most importantly, a friendly face to serve as a reminder of what students can and should strive for in an effort to continue their education. From these visits, Mary Gearan and Intercultural Affairs have collected a group of H/WS students who are volunteering their time to serve as tutors for our middle and high school students in an after school program that is being developed at this very moment.

Our own Geneva High School Multicultural Club has been invited to events at H/WS and have worked on joint projects such as the oral history project developed as joint venture between the Geneva Historical Society, Geneva High School, and the Department of Intercultural Affairs.

I toast the colleges and wish for our collaborative efforts to continue as we all strive to live and learn in Geneva.
Last summer, I got an internship in the sales department of a real estate company in China. As an economics major back then, I was going to participate in the sales project. Unfortunately, the Sichuan earthquake happened and the real estate market fell into recession. Since they already hired me, they sent me to assist an architect. I basically cleaned his office and made tea for him. However, I got to talk to him a lot and I became really interested in what he is doing. So, when I got back to HWS, I made a "crazy" decision to switch from economics to architecture and I am really happy with my decision. Maybe for other people, an earthquake was a disaster, but for me it was an opportunity. If it wasn't for that unexpected experience with the architect, I probably still wouldn't know where my real interest lies.

If you take an African kid from Harlem, place him at HWS and allow him to study abroad in China, what do you get? You get a well rounded person who's life experience is enriched by opportunities presented and the ability to take advantage of them. Studying abroad in Hong Kong gave me the opportunity to once again step into a place and a culture, and learn from a people whose influence shaped my idea of a globally interconnected world for the better. So if you take an African kid from Harlem, place him at HWS and allow him to study in China, you get Innis Baah.

I had the wonderful opportunity to intern at the US International Trade Commission (summer, 2008) and to work on a long-term project while learning from Lead International Economists. It all started at LAO’s famous Extravaganza ’08 where Reinaldo Llanos ’99, founder of Extravaganza, offered to refer me to Sandra Rivera ’85 for a potential internship. And, this is how the magic happened. While in DC, I built my network through attending panel discussions and conferences and I simply strengthened my overall professional skills. This internship allowed me to gain a deeper understanding of the field of Economics and of its applications. While there I joined Toastmasters International which has allowed me to develop both my oral and my written skills. The US ITC provided me with the foundations for my upcoming internship at the Department of State this summer. I will be interning in the Bureau for Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, and I am thrilled about the idea. Let’s see where this one will take me.

The Offices of Student Activities and Intercultural Affairs have a rich history of collaborating for a number of memorable and diverse events including a multicultural celebration for the Scandling Center’s Opening Week. Each week, our offices coordinate a number of events with the social justice and cultural student organizations to ensure that they are represented respectfully and resources are creatively combined. Some of our most successful collaborations have been our HWS Road-Trip Series in which our offices share costs, along with Global Education, to make these types of events more affordable to our students. In addition, we are also teaming up to present a series of leadership-focused workshops throughout the semester and into the fall that will better prepare our students to succeed in their club and organizational roles.
**SPRING 2009 Calendar**

**Martin Luther King Jr. Commemoration**
Monday, January 19—Thursday, January 22

**Alger L. Adam ’31 Academic Excellence Dinner**
Tuesday, February 3, 5:30 p.m.

**Drumming Circle**
(SUB Free House-775 S. Main)
Saturday, March 7, 6:30 p.m.

**International Women’s Day Tea Reception**
Monday, March 9, 5 p.m.

**Safe Space Training**
Wednesday, April 1, 4:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.

**Around the World: A Sampling of Culture Through Food and Drinks**
Saturday, April 4, 4:30 p.m.

**HWS Preview Ice Cream Social**
Thursday, April 16, 7:30 p.m.

**Student Panel: Internships, Experiences Abroad, Service Learning**
Friday, April 17, 7 p.m.

**Cross-Cultural Coffee Hour With Kathy Collins ’09**
Thursday, April 9, 5 p.m.

**Fireside Chat With Professor Neeta Bhasin**
Tuesday, April 14, 5 p.m.

**HWS Classes of 2009 Reception**
Saturday, May 16, 5-7 p.m.

**Open House & Senior Photo**
Sunday, May 17, 12:30 p.m.

**Regular Intercultural Affairs Programming**

**Cross-Cultural Coffee Hour:** (monthly)
Cross-Cultural Coffee Hour gives students a chance to talk informally about their experiences of crossing borders. Past presenters include James Secor ’10 and Prabighya Basnet ’09.

**Fireside Chat:** (monthly)
The Fireside Chat gives students the opportunity to listen to faculty discuss their research in an informal setting. Past presenters include Cedric Johnson, Political Science and Catherine Gallouet, French and Francophone Studies.

**Student Panel on Internships and Careers:** (monthly)
Students share the experiences (internships, volunteerism, etc.) that have led them to their chosen career paths.

**The Writing Table:** (Weekly)
Faculty of the Writing and Rhetoric Program hold one-on-one sessions with students who need support with their writing skills.

**Publications Available @ IC**
- The Advocate
- The Black Collegian
- Colorlines
- Crisis Magazine
- Diverse Magazine
- Islamic Horizons
- Native Peoples
- Yes!