

Center for Civic Engagement Observer

democracies need
engaged citizens

"In true democracy every man and woman is taught to think for himself or herself"
-Thomas Jefferson

Day of Dialogue A Success for Hofstra Students

By Kimberly Chin and Michael LaFemina

One can throw around the terms: 'foreign policy,' 'the economy,' 'religion,' 'racism,' or 'sexism' and each word will incite a different meaning for each person. What are the issues that matter to you?

On September 24th, our sixth Day of Dialogue series, the Center for Civic Engagement organized events around campus that addressed the issues that matter to all Americans, especially students. The CCE gathered professors, scholars, and experts from all over the world for a total of twenty events.

Day of Dialogue events cover a variety of topics in various formats. Aside from the conventional panel of scholars, students chose to watch a documentary examining pride or hate stemming from something as symbolic as the Confederate flag, listen to a veteran's story of the Iraq war, speak with political cartoonist Joe Szabo to learn how cartoons can explain reality, or catch the rhythmic beats and sounds of rap and poetry from Hofstra's very own C4 Movement. In total, over nineteen-hundred students attended the events throughout the day.

Diana Carlin, the founder of DebateWatch, discussed politics as it is shaped by television and how the Nixon-Kennedy debate changed the way the Presidential candidates debate before the election. The program also included talks about world hunger, the Iraq War and America's role in the Middle East, the challenges of the economy, and examined what the world thinks of the United States. Laura Comer, a junior in Honors College, liked the event about how Africans, Latin Americans, and Asians view the US, noting that "those areas are rarely discussed in the context of American politics, and if they are, it's usually for very different reasons."

The Day of Dialogue falls right in line with the mission of the Center for Civic Engagement, which exists to educate students about current and historical issues related to democracy and create venues for students to explore ideas about society. The Day of Dialogue is just the beginning in an ongoing discussion around campus and the political world. "It goes beyond the day itself," says Laura, "it creates a lasting conversation that will keep students interested and involved."

Sustained Dialogue Series Continues

By Michael LaFemina

The Center for Civic Engagement has been all over campus and hosting conversations from Amsterdam to Nassau. We began on September 4th in Utrecht, Netherlands South and have been in Amsterdam, Liberty, Nassau, and New Complex.

Centering around the issues that are most important to young people, the conversations have touched on such subjects as NAFTA, foreign relations, healthcare, the environment, economic stability, and the credentials of the major candidates. Asked about her feelings on the dialogue in Amsterdam, Etana Jacobi, a first-year-student from New Hampshire shared, "they have been a great way to not only meet new people but also start important conversations with peers. It gives students the opportunity to have good dialogue and creates a forum where we can become more aware of issues that concern all of us."

The conversations follow the "learn, focus, act" principle by getting it started – we can learn by talking with each other. At these events, students have been encouraged to debate, disagree, inquire of their peers in ways typically uncommon and the results have been remarkable.

Not only do students have the opportunity to voice their opinions and knowledge, but they've also been sharing from where that information is coming, empowering others to read from more diverse sources of news.

The dialogues continue throughout the semester. Be sure to check out the events calendar and look for flyers on your floor.

Upcoming Events

September:

26th @ 8 p.m. - Presidential Debate
Student Center Theatre

October:

2nd @ 9:00 p.m. - Vice Presidential Debate

4th @ 12:00 p.m. - Service Learning Day
BIRD SANCTUARY CLEAN UP

7th @ 9:00 p.m. - Presidential Debate

14th @ 8:30 p.m. - Coffee Hour
Student Center, main dining room

15th @ 9:00 p.m. - Presidential Debate

16th @ 8:30 p.m. - Sustained Dialogue Series
Amsterdam, Netherlands South

21st @ 8:30 p.m. - Coffee Hour
Student Center, main dining room

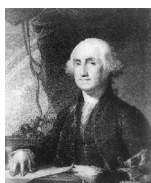
CCE Spotlight Student -

Anthony Lucci

His name is Anthony Lucci, but you might know him as the Club Affairs Chair of the SGA or the tall Republican who always wears McCain shirts. Either way, those who know him well know he's a bright guy with strong convictions, a warm heart and a big smile. As a sophomore, Anthony has already taken a proactive role in campus politics and activities. He's a second-year member of the Student Government Association, already on the cabinet, and he was one of only two Hofstra students this summer to go to the Republican National Convention - all expenses paid!

While at the RNC, he worked with Fox News transporting guests, such as Ron Paul and Karl Rove, from the outer security perimeter to the news set - no doubt it's an experience he will always remember.

In the future, Anthony plans on being a constitutional lawyer with eventual political aspirations, but for now he's pursuing a bachelors degree with double majors in Political Science and Economics. This guy never stops – he also interns for the Center for Civic Engagement, is the Treasurer of the College Republicans, and the President of the Students for McCain chapter at Hofstra.



Democracy in Performance - a public exhibition

October 14, 2008

keep a look out on south campus...

