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## Engaged University Newsletter

### July 2007

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## Related Links

[Lyrical Storm](#)

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## Upcoming Events

### National Night Out Against Crime

Tuesday, August 7  
7:00-9:00pm  
Magruder Park (40th Avenue &  
Hamilton St.)

### National Night Out Against Crime

Tuesday, August 7  
5:00pm  
Town Hall  
4229 Edmonston Rd., Bladensburg,  
MD

### Summer Jam!

Friday August 3, 6:30-8:30pm  
Hyattsville Municipal Building  
4310 Gallatin Street  
Hyattsville, MD

### Farmers Market

Every Thursday  
3:00-7:00pm  
4650 Queensbury Road  
Riverdale Park, MD

### Hyattsville Farmers Market

Every Tuesday, 2:00-6:00pm  
Queens Chapel Town Center  
(Corner of Queens Chapel Road &  
Hamilton Street, behind shopping  
center)  
Hyattsville, MD

## What's Cooking? A Seasonal Recipe at the Riverdale Farmer's Market



### Letter from the Director: On Collaboration

By: [Margaret Morgan-Hubbard, Director](#)



Collaborating is an act of creativity and exploration.

One of the most impressive and enduring collaborations I have ever witnessed produces the soulful harmonies and intricate rhythms of *Sweet Honey In The Rock*, Washington, DC's internationally renowned a cappella ensemble. Anyone who has ever heard *Sweet Honey* perform its unique blend of Blues, spirituals, traditional gospel hymns, rap, reggae, African chants, Hip Hop, ancient lullabies, and jazz improvisation has experienced an intensive introduction to the art of collaboration.

These powerfully talented women work together to generate something far bigger, stronger and more enduring than any one of them could create on her own. *Sweet Honey's* founder Bernice Johnson Reagon defines this unique collaboration as "a path, a way, a discipline, and a process."

Many people claim they are involved in collaboration, but few actually achieve it. Collaboration requires very challenging commitments: to share resources, extend trust, suspend judgment, take risks, and invite learning, growth and change.

This summer three very different institutions—a Prince George's County Middle School (William Wirt MS); the Maryland branch of a DC nonprofit organization serving immigrant youth (Maryland Multicultural Youth Centers) and, The Engaged University at the University of Maryland—made these commitments and set out to create a very special educational experience for 100 local 7th and 8th grade youth.

Calling ourselves the "Free Minds Collective," the collaboration has required all participants to step outside of their comfort zone. Veteran public school teachers joined with local artists, university staff and students, community organizers and high school students in a cross-generational "collaboratory" where everyone listens, experiences, and contributes in equal measure.

A successful collaboration creates community. Every participant makes a contribution to the shared venture and each member has the desire, the capability and the authority to improve the outcomes and products of the

collaboration. While the Free Minds Collective has yet to complete its first summer together, it has already created a climate that recognizes and nurtures the talents, experiences, and contributions of its many diverse members, and is well on its way to creating something unusual and fragile: a community of positive energy activating constant elevation (PEACE).

As you read this issue of our newsletter and see some of the work of our collaborators, please join me in celebrating the sweet honey emerging from our rock.



## The Free Minds Collective

By: Sonia Keiner Flynn,  
Community Education Coordinator



"We are like the Phoenix rising from the dirt  
We are the renaissance of William Wirt  
We are Positive Energy Activating Constant Elevation - PEACE!"

Circled up with linked hands at the start and close of each day, the Free Minds Collective recites a mantra. 140 voices fill the cafeteria as educators, University of Maryland, College Park (UMCP) students, Parkdale High School students, and 100 middle school students affirm their collective worth and their commitment to positive energy and growth.

Building on two prior years of organizing summer enrichment programs, The Engaged University & Maryland Multicultural Youth Centers (MMYC) are working with William Wirt Middle School (WWMS) in nearby Riverdale Heights to provide experiential education.

After a morning of coursework with WWMS teachers in classes like Psychology and African Colonization, students walk up the road to the University of Maryland Center for Educational Partnership, where they participate in enrichment workshops all afternoon. A content specialist, a UMCP student, and a Parkdale High School student team teach each of the eight workshops offered through the Free Minds Collective.

The workshops in this year's program include organic gardening and cooking, drumming, drama, photography, spoken word poetry, break dancing, Capoeira - a Brazilian martial art, mural-painting and bike repair.

"These are passionate educators," says Mr. Joseph, a music teacher entering his ninth year at WWMS. "It's wonderful that different age levels are involved. The WWMS students learn from college and high school students, and the perspectives and interactions with different people open their minds."

"It's awesome," bursts Franklin Villanueva, WWMS student entering the 7th

grade.

All 40 educators spent a week prior to the camp exploring Multicultural Education, classroom strategies, and best practices for promoting democratic, peace-centered classrooms.

"I'm excited to be part of a community that's willing to confront themselves and each other. If a movement is not critical of itself it cannot grow," says spoken word assistant and UMCP junior, Henry Mills, who also co-founded the TerPoets at the university.

Seasoned instructors and high school students new to the field of education have similar sentiments with regard to the importance of stepping out of our comfort zones, exposing students to new people and experiences, and challenging our assumptions about students and communities. Forging connections across race, ethnicity, gender and other multiple identities is critical to creating sustainable, thriving communities and healthy learning environments.

Mills comments on the need for more of these types of community education experiences, "In a university of 35,000 students I've only seen community involvement in small portions and a lot of the time it's initiated by the students. It would be nice to see programs of this kind grow and receive stronger support from the administration."



## Community Profile- Maureen Herman, Site Coordinator-Maryland Multicultural Youth Centers

Interview by: Ramya Punnoose, Program Assistant

**Q. Tell me a little bit about yourself.**

I grew up in Detroit, Michigan and lived there till my senior year in high school when I went to study abroad in Germany. After that, I pursued my bachelor's degree at George Washington University in International Relations. I received a Joint Master's degree in International Politics and Communications, with a focus on journalism from Boston University. Then, I decided to become a Peace Corps volunteer in Paraguay. Currently, I am the Site Coordinator for Maryland Multicultural Youth Centers (MMYC) at the Center for Educational Partnership (CEP).



**Q. Describe your experience as a Peace Corp volunteer in Paraguay.**

Becoming a Peace Corp volunteer turned out to be a good choice because I felt that I got more experience in terms of developing countries and what the rest of the world is really like. As part of the Peace Corp program, I did a lot of work in the juvenile justice system and fell in love with working with youth.

I was so moved by their needs and the lack of attention, compassion and rehabilitation that I decided to start a nonprofit organization called Pro Joven, which translates directly into 'For Youth'. Pro Joven allowed youth to take part in service projects, build leadership skills and helped them access the resources necessary to succeed. I stayed there for 7 years before coming to Maryland.

**Q. Describe the main objectives of MMYC and your role as site coordinator.**

MMYC is the community's lead partner in getting programs off the ground here. We work with the University of Maryland to determine what organizations would or would not be appropriate for the partnership we are trying to establish. MMYC has some priorities: first and foremost academic improvement and making sure kids stay in school. Also, we have the goal of helping kids transition from whatever stage they are at into the workplace. Part of my role is to work with the MMYC and the university to continue to hammer out what gets done at the CEP. I also helped plan and supervise the Free Minds Collective Summer Enrichment Program that is taking place now.

**Q. What would you like to see MMYC accomplish in the future?**

I would like to see MMYC help the CEP be a comprehensive resource for young people. At this facility, I want youth and their families to be able to receive the support services they need including academic support, a career and university resource center, a guidance counselor to help them make decisions about their future, a substance abuse program in the community and offer mental health services.

Since January we have made a tremendous amount of progress. The Engaged University moving into the building next month will bring a lot more energy and excitement to the CEP and will allow us to continue to work closely to get more programs off the ground to help the community.



**Campus Profile - Angelo Gomez, Graduate Assistant/Latino Liaison, Office of Multi-ethnic Student Education, University of Maryland, College Park**  
Interviewed by: Genevieve Villamora, Assistant Director

**Q. Tell me a little bit about yourself.**

I was born and raised in Concepcion, Chile. I moved to the United States in 1998. I received a Master's degree from Bowling Green State University in Rehabilitation Counseling, and now I am a Doctoral candidate in the Counselor Education program at the University of Maryland, College Park's College of Education. This will be my seventh year working for the Office of Multi-ethnic Student Education [OMSE].



**Q. Could you describe your work with OMSE?**

As the Latino Liaison I connect the office with Latino organizations, activities, and special events. I work with the university on outreach programs targeting Latinos in the local community, like H.O.L.A. (Higher-educational Opportunities for Latino Achievers) Upward Bound.

I have also been teaching my own course for the past five years - EDCP 312. The class is one of the university's diversity core classes, and in it I train students to be multi-ethnic peer counselors.

Peer counseling is a great way for students to develop their interpersonal relations

skills. Students from the class have participated in the campus' crisis counseling network for peers, have had internships at the Health Center, and been involved with the Words of Engagement: Intergroup Dialogue program [run by the Office of Human Relations Programs].

**Q. This summer, you are one of the team of partners working on the Free Minds Collective. What did you learn from being connected to the local community?**

I like the balance of practice and theory - praxis.

For me it is extremely important to write and present about things that you actually live. My presentations and publications are based on my life experience. I believe that is how we actually grow - when we're able to experience something and then intellectually reflect on it.

Career academics and students have to test their ideas in the real world. We have to ask ourselves, "Can I communicate concepts in ways that others can understand and apply those concepts in ways they will be able to use?"

That's the idea of being engaged. When you're engaged in something, you are action-oriented. Being in the Free Minds Collective Educators Institute tested my ability to be able to communicate with a multi-racial, multi-ethnic group of people with a wide range in levels of experience as educators.



## Poetry from the Free Minds Collective

Below are poems written by William Wirt Middle School Students in the Free Minds Collective's Spoken Word Poetry workshop. The workshop is taught by:

- Mr. Neville Adams - an English teacher at Parkdale High School and the moderator of Lyrikal Storm, a performing group of spoken word poets from Parkdale High School;
- Mr. Henry Mills - a rising junior at the University of Maryland, College Park;
- Ms. Robin Thomas and Ms. Kenisha Samuels - students at Parkdale High School and members of Lyrikal Storm.

*I am me*  
**By: Tania Bermudez**

I am the grass plain that stretches over the heart of the earth  
I am the heart and bravery of a lion  
I am the wind flowing through the windmill  
I am the North Star you must follow  
I am the clouds you can't reach

Yet

I am gone like the departed

I am lost like their souls forever seeking  
I am dead  
And yet, somewhere deep through the confusion  
I am alive  
I am proud  
And I, I am me and no one  
**Else.**

*Peace*  
**by: Tola/Lea**

I wake up in the morning and do what I have to do  
I get on the bus and then I get off I go to my friends and then something catches  
my mind

I think about family.

Family, Family  
Every single day the principles,  
Brother Vic and Sister Artis would say "we are family"  
But, if we were a family  
we wouldn't throw fists like WWF matches

Too often people say they love each other and yet tomorrow they criticize one  
another. If they truly felt what they say they would show it because actions speak  
louder than words

People say "peace" and do the sign,  
but what they don't know truly is  
what family and peace really is

What it means is that we should treat  
each other like brother and sisters  
I am not trying to be Brother Vic or your mother  
I'm simply trying to tell you what kind of family we should be.  
I am not only a friend; I am a sister of the world  
Would you please let me just tell you something

Respect people for who they are and not how they look.

***Summer!!!!!!!!!!***

**By: Trenise**

Summer is the best

Hear the birds calling  
Feel the nice cool breeze

It's so warm, sometimes it's hot  
Sometimes you need your air conditioner

You can go to the pool and smell the chlorine  
Smell the barbeque; it's a cook-out

Do you hear the music? Guess what, it's a party  
You get to go to concerts

We don't have school - yeah!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

We have a lot of fun!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

The best thing is NO RULES!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!



## **What's Cooking? A Seasonal Recipe at the Riverdale Farmer's Market**

**By: Jodi Balis, FSNE Project Leader &  
Community Nutrition Educator**

Last week at the Riverdale Farmer's Market local shoppers had the  
opportunity to sample the fresh flavors of summer in a colorful Italian bread  
salad that I prepared.

The recipe, consisting of a bowl full of juicy tomatoes, fresh basil, crusty



bread, and seasonings, was chosen to feature products sold at the market, while providing shoppers with a practical way to utilize their produce.

But was the sampling a success? Let's put it this way: there were no leftovers at the end of the day!

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**Panzanella (Bread Salad)**  
From "This Organic Life" by Joan Dye Gussow

In a large bowl combine:  
1 pound ripe juicy tomatoes, cored and cut into 1/2 inch chunks  
1/4 cup finely chopped red onion  
1/4 cup finely chopped fresh basil  
1 or more cloves garlic, crushed  
5 teaspoons extra virgin olive oil  
salt and pepper, to taste

Add 1 1/2 cups stale Italian or other serious breads, cut into 1/2 inch chunks

Toss to blend, season to taste, and wait 30 minutes for juices to soak in. Serve at room temperature.

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