Generation You!

A Newsletter for First Generation Students

MEET RICK SAUCIER, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR

I recently addressed several first generation students and told them the story of a student who grew up in a rural area where no one in even the extended family thought about graduating from high school, let alone dream of attending college. Children in this student’s family usually quit school by the time they were 16 and went to work in shoe shops, food processing plants, or on a farm. Somehow, the student’s older sibling decided to graduate and move on to college. The student found college life and study at times stressful, but also rewarding. The student went on to become the second person in the family to not only graduate from high school, but also to attend and graduate from college. That same student eventually attained an MBA and then a graduate degree and pursued a long career in education. That student is me.

To first generation students – know that many faculty on our campuses, like myself, have been in your shoes at one point in their lives. We understand the stress of being one of the first people in your family to attend a four year college. We want you to succeed and are very willing to work with you in many ways. The best way for you to get assistance is to seek us out! I know that a little courage is needed to talk to your profs! Converse with us before or after class. Come to our offices. The reason to visit with us doesn’t always need to be class related. Visiting with us allows your professor to get to know you outside of the classroom. In a typical semester I teach 90 students – many of them new faces – and advise 35 more, making the challenge of getting to know individual students difficult. Meeting with you one-on-one allows the

Don’t Miss our February Social!
Snow Tubing at Powder Ridge
Thursday, February 18
Bus leaves at 4:30 pm in front of Gorecki and returns around 8:45 pm
Co-Sponsored with the International Student Program Office
FREE!!!
Who Are You?
I am the Intercultural Center (IC), which strives to facilitate intercultural interaction, learning and appreciation with all CSB|SJU students and also provide support services to Intercultural/Multicultural Students. The IC hosts a variety of programs each academic year, some of the highlights include:

- Hispanic Heritage Month Event
- Rev. Dr. MLK Jr. Celebration
- Retreat on Race and Ethnicity

We also co-sponsor events such as:
- Kip Fulbeck
- PRiSM Safe Space Training
- Step Afrika (April 2010)

The IC advises the Cultural Affairs Board (CAB) and People Representing the Sexual Minority (PRiSM) by providing leadership guidance and development opportunities to members of each organization. We also help support and co-sponsor programming with other clubs/organizations and departments at CSB|SJU.

During the 2009-2010 academic year, the IC is promoting identity awareness through the Who Are You? campaign. The IC challenges each individual of the CSB|SJU community to reflect upon individual cultural identities and how it contributes to expanding our understanding of cultural differences. Knowing yourself well will help you to know other students, faculty, and staff better by making sense of cultural differences in our community.

This year, the IC is also spending time connecting with students through social networking sites Facebook and Twitter. The IC Facebook Fan Page is a success because we are connecting with over 350 members of the community and continues to grow each day. The IC Facebook Fan Page provides a forum to find out about upcoming intercultural events and view videos, pictures, and commentary of events happening around campus. Connect with us at [www.csbsju.edu/ic/facebook.htm](http://www.csbsju.edu/ic/facebook.htm) or [www.facebook.com/csbsjuIC](http://www.facebook.com/csbsjuIC). We want to connect with you in some way, you may never know what you will learn if you connect with us. Right now, we are adding videos and pictures from the Rev. Dr. MLK Jr. Celebration.

Other events for the rest of the year include opportunities to catch a ride to various St. Cloud area ethnic restaurants in February, March, and April. We are also sponsoring a stepping workshop with Fine Art Programming in April. Be sure to join us and learn more about stepping, which has roots in African-American heritage and slavery. If you have any programming suggestions, please connect with either BernaDette W. Suwareh or Andy Dirksen at the IC.

Who Are You? I am connected with the IC!
First Generation Student Goes Dog Sledding

Over Christmas break, I had the opportunity to go on a dog sledding trip with the Institute for Women’s Leadership thanks to funding from the First Generation program. The experience was absolutely amazing! The 13 of us Bennies arrived at Camp Menogyn after a 6 hour mini bus ride from CSB. The first afternoon was spent in orientation of the camp and getting familiar with the grounds. We were staying in the bedrooms attached to the main lodge, where there was a kitchen and a living area complete with a wood-burning stove and super comfy couches. The next morning, we split into groups and some of us went on a long cross-country ski excursion, but I chose to go on a shorter hike which was back in time for lunch. After lunch, we were able to cross-country ski across the lake and hike up to a bluff, where we got an amazing view of the area. That night, we all (excepting only one) opted to sleep outside – the weather was only zero degrees. Only two people lasted the whole night but it was definitely worth it to sleep under the blanket of stars and the Milky Way. The next morning, we were finally able to go dog sledding! There were 21 dogs in all and we took out four teams of six at a time. We went out for about an hour and a half, half of the time riding the sled, and half of the time actually “mushing.” After lunch, we were able to go on another cross-country ski excursion. On this, the last night, we sat in the sauna (which had been heating up all day) and then jumped into the lake through a hole in the ice as a final hoorah before we left again in the morning. This trip was definitely a growing experience for me as I got to know the wonderful women who also went on it through our daily escapades as well as the nightly games and discussions. It was fun to challenge my limits by being outside in the cold weather all day and staying active in addition to the more extreme challenges like sleeping outside and jumping in the lake! It was so nice to get away from technology for a bit – no cell phones, iPod, or internet – and just be in and with nature. It’s absolutely breath-taking to be able to see the vastness of the stars, undimmed by any human lighting. I highly encourage you to go on such a journey and if you can’t take the time to travel far away at least take a little time for yourself next weekend away from the stresses and demands of the world and take time to reflect to yourself in the quiet – you’ll be amazed at what you will learn!

By: Hannah Goossens, Class of 2012

Recap on First Generation Dinner

On January 26, we held the 2nd annual First Generation Faculty, Staff, and Student Dinner. We had over 24 faculty and staff attend as well as over 25 students. President Mary-Ann Baenninger spoke and shared her personal experiences as a first generation student. For dinner we had lasagna, garlic bread, Caesar salad, Mediterranean vegetables and for dessert, chocolate molten lava cake. Feedback from students was very positive. Faculty and staff really enjoyed talking to our first generation students. Our next event is a workshop on Financial Planning on Tuesday, February 9, from 4:30 pm to 5:30 pm. Located in Gorecki 204C.

First Generation Dinner, January 26, 2010
First Generation Student in Trinidad and Tobago

This past winter break, with the help of the First Generation Program, I had the opportunity to travel to the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on a service trip sponsored by the Men’s Center. It was my first time traveling outside the United States. The experience is one which words cannot adequately describe, but I attempt to do so each day. My most meaningful experiences in Trinidad were spent with HIV-positive children at an orphanage. These children were remarkably caring and generous with one another and even complete strangers. They had very little to give, yet desperately wanted to share with others. Despite their illness and poverty, they were incredibly happy and wore smiles on their faces every day. These children longed for human interaction, physical touch, and positive role models. All of the children were very intelligent and hold so much potential. As I was playing with them, I would catch myself tearing up as I thought about the pain they currently endure and will one day suffer as their illness progresses. These amazing young individuals inspired me to follow their lead in living each day to the utmost. These children have solidified my desire to be a doctor in order to help cure diseases that rob children of their childhoods. In addition to volunteering with the children, I had the opportunity to experience the culture of Trinidad and Tobago. I spent hot and humid afternoons on sunny beaches lined with palm trees, jumping off waterfalls in rain forests, and snorkeling over coral reefs. The breathtaking scenery and welcoming citizens have forever changed me.

I encourage all students, especially first generation students, to take advantage of service trips and opportunities abroad. Although the uncertainties of these trips can be intimidating and overwhelming, the experiences gained will undoubtedly change the way you view the world and your role within it.

By: Erica Manternach
Class of 2011

---

Exciting news from the library

Do U Txt? According to the Cellular Telephone Industries Association, about 4.1 billion text messages are sent each day. Many college students use text messaging as an efficient mode of communication. Considering the needs of our students, the library is now providing a text option for students. The process is very easy. Text CSBSJU (a space) & the question to 66746. The library will respond to the question as soon as possible.

The library also features Individual Research Appointments through the library homepage, http://csbsju.edu/library. The students are matched with a librarian who is a subject expert in their area of research.
Reflections on an ABE Trip to the U.S./Mexico Border

The angel sits on my desk. In the middle of a cross-shaped mosaic, her arms are open, upward. She is surrounded by broken bits of pure white glass and shaped out of deep brown glass. The grout that holds the bits of glass together in the mosaic is also brown, but lighter. It is the color of the desert sand, the color of New Mexican walls, the color of bread, the color of The Border. The angel looks at me, waiting to be hung up on the wall, waiting to have a stable place in my life. But for now, the angel is sitting loosely on my desk as a reminder of my Alternative Break Experience to the U.S./Mexico Border.

Tell, the angel says. Tell.
The Border awareness experience through Campus Ministry took our group of eight St. Ben’s women to The Women’s Intercultural Center in Anthony, New Mexico. For a week during winter break, we were immersed in social justice issues at the U.S./Mexico Border such as immigration, femicide, poverty, and the effects of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). We visited a Boys and Girls club, a women’s center, an immigration court, a National Park, and Homeland Security headquarters. We listened, we wondered, we questioned, we waited, and we learned. And no one on the trip expected to learn as much as we did in that hurried week. We leaned on our group members for support when we were bursting with feelings, and our daily group reflections soon served as our foundation. We would sit in a circle and voice our concerns and contradictions in a space that was free of judgment. We took comfort in the knowledge that the strong women we were surrounded by were struggling with us.

Breathe, she says. Breathe.
While our minds were swimming with new information, the Women’s Intercultural Center provided us with a place to stay when we weren’t staying with our host families – including Lorena’s authentic Mexican cooking, and open arms. Most importantly, they gave us endless information about the Border and let us form our own opinions. The women who came to the Center were interested in a variety of things. Some took classes on citizenship, sewing, forming their own business, using the computer, and growing gardens. Others enjoyed the social aspect of the Center and appreciated the close-knit community it formed. Whatever reason the women were here, they each had a unique story to tell. They empowered me with their successes and broke me with their losses. My journey to the Border was fulfilled in these stories that the community was so eager to tell. I often think about Carmen and her family living illegally in the United States. I think about her husband who was the victim of meaningless violence in Juarez and about her young daughter who may never be a citizen of the United States. Yet even with their struggles, she gives back to the community by teaching women valuable sewing skills and routinely holding citizenship classes. I remember her smiling brilliantly with her full skirt flowing around her, while she danced a traditional Mexican dance. Because at that moment, she was not worried. At that moment, she was free. Can a heart be so full of emotion?

Love, she says. Love.
Cristina had crosses everywhere in her beautiful house. They were in the kitchen, above the beds, next to the bathroom mirror, over the fireplace. Each one had a meaningful story. It was evident that Cristina found beauty in her religion and surrounded herself with it, and a part of me believes I stayed with Cristina on my host family stay because of what she taught me about this kind of true devotion. While people have vastly different ways of showing devotion, Cristina’s desire to constantly be near God and her family resonated with me. I bought the cross-shaped mosaic with the angel in the middle because it reminded me of Cristina. The woman who made it was selling it at the Women’s Intercultural Center, and I wanted it to constantly take me back to the devotion to God at the Border, of the stories I heard, and of the knowledge I gained. Tonight, I will hang the angel up on my wall. She will remind me that my experience to the U.S./Mexico Border is still living, and will always be, inside my heart.

By: Carrie Vandelac, Class of 2011
## Upcoming First Generation events!

Mark your calendar for these upcoming First Generation Events!

### Workshop: Financial Planning
- **Date:** Tuesday, February 9
- **Time:** 4:30 pm to 5:30 pm
- **Location:** Gorecki 204C
- **Presenters:** Mary Jepperson, Assistant Professor and Stuart Perry, Director of Financial Aid
- **Co-Sponsored with:** International Student Program Office

### Social: Snow Tubing at Powder Ridge
- **Date:** Thursday, February 18
- **Time:** Bus leaves at 4:30 pm in front of Gorecki and returns around 8:45 pm
- **Co-Sponsored with:** International Student Program Office

### Workshop: Personality and Decision Making
- **Date:** Wednesday, February 24
- **Time:** 4 pm to 5 pm
- **Location:** Fireside TRC, Main Building
- **Presenter:** Margo Thomas, First Generation Program Coordinator

---

### Upcoming Campus Events and Activities

#### February 2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sun.</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wed.</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
<th>Saturday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Passport Fair</td>
<td>Environmental Internship &amp; Career Fair Job &amp; Internship Fair</td>
<td>Michael Perry</td>
<td>Overseas Recruiting Fair</td>
<td>Expressive Arts-cooking night</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Anousheh Ansari</td>
<td>FG Workshop: Financial Planning</td>
<td></td>
<td>Vagina Monologues Reading</td>
<td>Olympics Opening Ceremony viewing party</td>
<td>Jazz band &amp; Dinner-Valentine’s Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IWL Film Showing</td>
<td>MN Private College Internship/Job Fair</td>
<td>Ash Wednesday</td>
<td>FG Social: Snow Tubing</td>
<td>An evening w/Louis Erdrich Tyrone Wells</td>
<td>Asian New Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Blood-mobile</td>
<td>Blood-mobile</td>
<td>FG Workshop: Personality &amp; Decision Making</td>
<td>Classes End at 6 pm</td>
<td>Spring Break starts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>