March 2021

THE GRAPEVINE
African-American Resource Center Monthly Newsletter

QUOTE OF THE DAY:
“If you can’t fly then run, if you can’t run then walk, if you can’t walk then crawl, but whatever you do you have to keep moving forward.”

- Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
Welcome to AARC's Newsletter

This is the renewal of an older "Grapevine" in paper form. The Grapevine is back in business and better than ever! In each edition, you'll find upcoming events, opportunities for networking engagements on Penn's campus that are co-sponsored by AARC, and other affiliated resources. If you ever have anything of interest you would like to share, please feel free to contact us @aarc@upenn.edu

To connect further with AARC and stay informed about our upcoming events, please:

Follow us on our INSTAGRAM and TWITTER pages

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Request to be added to the Newsletter Mailing List: @aarc.pobox.upenn.edu

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Dear family,

Happy March! This month will officially mark one year since the onset of the Covid-19 Pandemic. This past year has brought about monumental changes to the lives of all of us. We have dealt with cancelled plans, holidays away from family, and a host of other inconveniences and hardships. One of the biggest hurdles that many of us have had to overcome has been adjusting to working or learning from home. As our home lives and work lives merged, we had to find ways to maintain a balance in our lives. As we enter March, I urge you to ponder the ways in which you have or have not practiced self-care. How have you stayed balanced? It has certainly not been easy! Zoom fatigue is real! Fittingly, March 19 is World Sleep Day. On this day, and whenever you can until this pandemic has subsided, I encourage you to rest and take care of yourself. Let yourself sleep in, meditate, watch your favorite show, do whatever you need to do to rejuvenate. Productivity is always good, but without taking the time to rest, we can't truly be productive at all. I hope you have a wonderful and restful March, and I will leave you with a poem by Laura Ding-Edwards.

If the mountain seems too big today then climb a hill instead.
If the morning brings you sadness it's okay to stay in bed.
If the day ahead weighs heavy and your plans feel like a curse, there's no shame in re-arranging, don't make yourself feel worse.
A day is not a lifetime a rest is not defeat, don't think of it as failure, just a quiet, kind retreat.
It's okay to take a moment from an anxious, fractured mind the world will not stop turning while you get realigned.
The mountain will still be there when you want to try again, so climb it in your own time, and love yourself 'til then.

The Marathon Continues,
Penned by Isaiah Williams on behalf of Valerie Dorsey Allen, DSW

*AARC has wonderful Work-Study Students who have tremendous talent! I want to publicly acknowledge their contributions to our Center. Most of the newsletter this month is composed by our students – Isaiah Williams, Ahlam Goran, and Jonathan Hanson, who is also the Grapevine editor.
List of this month's events:

1:00 PM Thursday, March 18th - Men of Color (Monthly Huddle Meeting)
12:00 PM Friday, March 19th - Women of Color at Penn Annual Awards Luncheon
12:00 PM Friday, March 26th - Community Lunch Program - Open Forum with AARC and PWC

Link to calendar: [click here]
Men of Color

‘Men of Color’ serves as a sanctuary of free speech and open dialogue for students, faculty, staff, and community members at and around Penn. Darin Toliver, Associate Director of the African-American Resource Center, is perfectly suited to organize this program as his work experience and familiarity with the Philadelphia community allows him to relate to every member of the diverse pool of attendees. Every third Thursday, Darin leads compelling monthly conversations that include the varying perspectives of the community. With lively and open discussions ranging from political power to financial literacy to fatherhood, no topic is off-limits for this progressive program. ‘Men of Color’ serves as a much-needed safe space for men that can be difficult to find around campus as there are very few places where men can congregate to share their true feelings without fear of being judged. The community vibe of ‘Men of Color’ allows members to air out their grievances and receive positive feedback from peers. One month, you might catch a mentoring session where staff and UPenn graduates advise current students about navigating a predominantly-white-institution. The next month, you might hear a discussion where an employee voices their frustration about a microaggression or macroaggression they may have experienced. The most important and productive aspect of ‘Men of Color’ is that although it serves as a platform for men to discuss their issues openly, the group is far more than a sounding board for venting. At the end of each meeting, Darin ends with key takeaways and a plan of action for the members to continue being amazing husbands, fathers, sons, brothers, and men in the future.

Keon Barney

Women of Color at Penn

Dear friends,

March 1st marked the beginning of Women’s History Month, a time when we should celebrate women and all that they have done for the United States. Oftentimes, when we consider the triumphs of women in the US, the history of women of color is brushed to the side. This is both a product of the intersection of misogyny and racism in the present and the mistreatment of women of color during feminist movements of the past. Just as women of color were forced to march in the back during suffragette protests, we continue to be considered background characters in a story we heavily contributed to. (I recommend reading about the involvement of WOC in the women’s suffrage movement in particular given that it is not often taught in schools: https://women.ca.gov/women-of-color-and-the-fight-for-womens-suffrage/)

Continued on next page
Women of Color at Penn cont.

The best way to combat the silencing of WOC during this month is for WOC to speak louder and for others to put time and energy into listening and learning. This month, read, listen, and speak. If we do not work to appreciate WOC and to encourage the appreciation of WOC, who will? However, what is equally important is that we take this time to rest. Determine your capacity to place effort into this cause, fulfill this capacity, and leave plenty of space to recharge and take time for yourself! Women’s History Month is about appreciating women, so don’t forget to appreciate yourself while working to create change. This can be as simple as thanking the women in your life for all that they do and taking a mental health day when you’re stressed. Take a second to think: Who are the women in your life that go unappreciated? Who can you extend love and care to?

Have a great Women’s History Month and remember to stay safe!

Overcome,
Ahlam Goran

Upcoming Event Announcement

JOIN US FOR THE 34TH WOMEN OF COLOR AT PENN VIRTUAL AWARDS CELEBRATION
3.19.2021

REGISTER HERE: https://tinyurl.com/3fzkzrm3

The 2021 WOCAP Virtual Awards Celebration will be held on Friday, March 19, 2021 at Noon. We hope that you will be able to join us for this wonderful event! Please take a moment to provide your attendance plans via the RSVP link above and we will send you the Zoom link closer to the event date. Feel free to share this link with family and friends to celebrate 2021 WOCAP Honorees.

Kindest regards,
Thalia Mangan, Chair
Women of Color at Penn
Women of Color at Penn
2021 Honorees

CONGRATULATIONS
WOCAPI 2021 HONOREE!
UNDERGRADUATE AWARD
SCIASKA ULYSSE
WE ARE PROUD TO HONOR YOUR
ACCOMPLISHMENTS

CONGRATULATIONS
WOCAPI 2021 HONOREE!
GRADUATE AWARD
OLUTOSIN OWUYEMI
WE ARE PROUD TO HONOR YOUR
ACCOMPLISHMENTS

CONGRATULATIONS
WOCAPI 2021 HONOREE!
STAFF AWARD
SHERISSE LAUD-HAMMOND
WE ARE PROUD TO HONOR YOUR
ACCOMPLISHMENTS

CONGRATULATIONS
WOCAPI 2021 HONOREE!
JOANN MITCHELL
OUTSTANDING LEGACY
AWARD
LASHAUNA MYERS CONNELL
WE ARE PROUD TO HONOR YOUR
ACCOMPLISHMENTS

CONGRATULATIONS
WOCAPI 2021 HONOREE!
COMMUNITY AWARD
ANTONETTE M.
COWARD-GILMORE
WE ARE PROUD TO HONOR YOUR
ACCOMPLISHMENTS