MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Greetings! We are excited to be at the end of our third year as a program. This has been a successful year in so many ways. We have continued with some of the practical issues of program building, such as staffing, space, and committee work. In the less mundane areas, we are so excited to have successfully launched the TCCS blog (http://blogs.umb.edu/tccsprogram)! TCCS students and faculty have contributed wonderful pieces that highlight ways of thinking and being in the world reflecting TCCS values and approaches.

TCCS was also the primary sponsor and major organizer in this year's Wake Up, Rise Up!: Resisting Systemic Oppression teach in. The teach in offered 4 days of sessions, workshops, film screenings and more. Our goal in this initiative has been to promote understanding and analysis of White supremacy and other systemic oppressions. We also aim to offer strategies, skills, and models of advocacy to empower individuals and communities to resist oppression and its normalization. For me, these goals are the center of TCCS and I have been honored to be a part of this initiative. Check it out at wakeupriseup.org.

Looking forward to the end of this year and beyond: We have a wonderful group of applicants from around the country and the world, a rising group of first year students preparing to develop innovative capstone projects (see our Fall newsletter for their introductions), and our second group of soon-to-be graduates, who will be presenting their diverse capstone projects on May 15. See the descriptions of the capstones in this newsletter. Our students are really the best embodiment of who we are as a program, and their capstones are innovative, diverse, and clearly represent our central themes of social justice for racialized communities, transdisciplinarity, and community engagement and impact.

We hope you will join us for the capstone presentations, and for our graduation event on May 23. Looking forward to seeing you there.

Karen Suyemoto, Ph.D.
Director, Transnational Cultural and Community Studies
Jessica Faustin, "Fanm Vanyan Yon Anpil nan Pwoblèm: The Effects of Stress & Depression on Haitian Women & Their Cultural Beliefs and Coping Methods"

Exploring the cultural and religious coping methods of Haitian women in the United States in regards to accumulative stress and depression. Incorporating the experiences and voices of Haitian women that often are not heard in the healthcare system, will not only help to empower these women but also provide more information to health providers about how to treat and care for this population.

Richard Truong, "ĐỒNG TÍNH: Exploring the Intersectional Experiences of Gay Vietnamese Males in Specific Spaces"

A study documenting the intersectional experiences of queer Vietnamese American males, in relation to racism, heterosexism, language discrimination, colonialism, and more. I explore how queer Vietnamese American men navigate specific spaces such as religious institutions, families, schools, and gay spaces. The study uses qualitative interviews, storytelling and oral history techniques, with the aim of raising awareness about queer Vietnamese American men’s experiences, and empowering them to share their stories."
Katsyris Rivera-Kientz, "Distance means so little when my island means so much": The Role of Social Media in Post-Hurricane Relief Efforts from the Puerto Rican Diasporic Community of Boston, Massachusetts"

On September 19th, 2017, Hurricane María became the strongest natural disaster to hit Puerto Rico, since Hurricane San Ciprián in 1932. The incredible devastation left by Hurricane Maria uncovered a not-so-natural disaster in Puerto Rico: its vulnerability as a result of its colonial relationship with the United States. Puerto Ricans living in the U.S. quickly responded to the situation in diverse ways, including using social media to mobilize relief efforts. This is an exploratory study that aims to identify the role of Facebook as a cyber space where the Puerto Rican diasporic community of the Greater Boston Area organized during and after Hurricane Maria's landfall in Puerto Rico. This project explores the post-Hurricane relief efforts through the analysis of interviews, an online questionnaire and a social media network.

Leidy Quiceno, interned for 2 semesters at an anti-recidivist organization that supports “young people transforming their lives”

A lack of empathy breeds apathy, and education is not exempt from this. By using a social justice, transdisciplinary, and a human compassionate lens, in addition to creating trauma and culturally sensitive practices to teaching, this hands-on project tested how to engage “at-promise” Central American immigrant refugee young men, on the path back to embracing their educational learning experiences.
Loan Dao

...received 2 grants: The UMass Boston Public Service Grant to develop and evaluate a pipeline program for DACA and TPS students between Bunker Hill Community College and UMass Boston through our new Immigrant Student Program, as well as the UMass Boston Labor Studies Center Faculty Research grant to study transnational labor activism in the U.S. and Viet Nam.

...was appointed the chair of the Immigrant Student Program Advisory Board by Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs, Dr. Gail DiSabatino. The program and advisory board are the successful outcome of the former Immigrant Student Task Force on campus.

...testified at the Massachusetts State House in support of House Bill 3361 to collect disaggregated data for Asian American ethnicities in state agencies. The bill was successfully sent to a special commission that includes the Asian American Commission, the Latino Advisory Commission, and the Black Advisory Commission to expand the language of the bill to apply to all ethnic and racial groups.

...was a guest speaker in a special DACA graduate seminar course for Dr. Genevieve Negron-Gonzales at the University of San Francisco.

...spoke in 3 sessions at the Association of Asian American Studies conference in March on data disaggregation, activism in higher education, and as a reviewer in a working paper session on Vietnamese restaurant culture in Quebec, Canada. Dr. Dao is also serving on the AAAS conference committee for 2018 and 2019.

...spoke on a panel about the state of Southeast Asian Americans after the play, “Vietgone” in San Francisco in March.

...spoke at the Asian American Advancing Justice annual conference in April in Washington, D.C. on “Advancing AAPIs Through Campus, Community, and Policy Engagement.”

Karen Suyemoto

...was part of an invited panel, “Towards a More Just Psychological Practice,” at the New School of Social Research in November.

...presented a day-long training in February for the Board of the Society for the Advancement of Psychotherapy on developing racial and ethnocultural responsiveness in relationships.

...presented an invited workshop “Coping with Micro (and not so micro) Aggressions” at the Women of Color in the Academy conference at Northeastern University.

...continues her work as Chair of the American Psychological Association’s task force developing Practice Guidelines for psychological research, teaching, and practice to promote racial and ethnocultural responsiveness and social justice.
Sofya Aptekar

...had two articles accepted for publication in an urban sociology journal, City & Community: “The Public Library as Resistive Space in the Neoliberal City” and “The Unbearable Lightness of the Cosmopolitan Canopy: Accomplishment of Diversity at an Urban Farmers Market.” Another article appeared in Ethnic and Racial Studies in December: “Super-diversity as a methodological lens: recentering power and inequality.”

...released a report with Susan Moir at the Labor Resource Center on gender and race disparities in the Springfield, MA construction industry, which is supporting the town’s efforts to break down barriers to employment. Dr. Aptekar presented the results at a public hearing at the Springfield City Hall.

...interviewed dozens of undocumented and DACAmented college students at City University of New York in January and February, as part of her research with CUNY colleagues on immigrant students in higher education.

...was excited to be part of the piloting of CourtWatchNYC, “the eyes and ears of accountability in NYC courtrooms”, collecting real-time data of what is actually happening in courtrooms, such as in prosecution of broken windows violations, racist bail setting, and immigrant rights.

Andrés Fabián Henao Castro

...presented “The Fugitive Spectator,” for the panel, Theatricality and the Political, at the ACLA Annual Conference at the University of California, Los Angeles. It was co-organized with Ryan Hatch (California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo) and Joseph Cermatori (Skidmore College).

...was part of a roundtable at The F-Words: Fantasy, Flesh, Fugitivity A Queer Symposium on Sex, Disability, Race & Performance at Boston University, co-organized with Jennifer Row (Boston University), Takeo Rivera (Boston University), and Kareem Khubchandani (Tufts University).
...presented “Organs Without Bodies,” for Unpacking and re-messaging gendered and related socialization messages at structural, social, and personal levels at UMass Boston, organized by Mona Abo-Zena, also featuring Sharon Lamb (Department of Counseling & School Psychology) and Suha Ballout (College of Nursing and Health Sciences).

...presented “Settler Colonialism: A Comparative Perspective,” for the Wake Up, Rise Up: Resisting Systemic Oppression Teach-In organized by TCCS.

Publications:
Henao Castro, Andrés Fabián. “Teaching to Transgress’ Death Drive, or bell hooks as Educator.” La Deleuziana. Special Issue: Milieux of Desire. 6 (1): 145-157.

“US Neoliberal Fascism.” The Transnational Cultural and Community Studies Blog (TCCS). Posted February 1, 2018
Available at: http://blogs.umb.edu/tccsprogram/2018/02/01/278/
Myles Green
...performed with True Story Theater in the "Collective Liberation" series on race and identity at the Shambhala Meditation Center in Brookline, MA. The series combined artistic embodiment and facilitated dialogue to engage in challenging conversations with gentleness and compassion.

Juan Pablo Blanco
...was a student organizer for The Public Higher Education Network of Massachusetts (PHENOM) higher education advocacy day in March.
...attended the Bargaining for the Common Good in Higher Education Convening at Rutgers in February.
...was part of a panel at the University of Toronto in March, called "The Reality of Undocumented Youth." The panel was about higher education for undocumented folks in Canada.

Jeannette Mejia

Papers and publications:
