



NEWS FROM THE CENTER

A publication of the Multicultural & Community Engagement Center at Glendale Community College

Fall 2021/Winter 2022- Issue 20

Sara Kruzan's Journey to Healing

by Hoover Zariani

Sharing our life stories is more than just hearing each other out. It is an important part of sharing in our humanity. Our lives and our individual stories help us to not only get to know each other but also to understand each other at a deeper level and make meaningful connections to our own lives. The MCEC and the Rising Scholars program were extremely honored to host a presentation of this caliber at GCC.

On November 23rd, the Multicultural & Community Engagement Center and the Rising Scholars program proudly sponsored a presentation by Sara Kruzan on her journey to healing after her daunting experiences with the criminal justice system.

Many readers may recall Sara Kruzan's case as it made national and international headlines. Sara served almost 20 years at the Central California Women's Facility. She was sentenced to life without parole at the age of 17 for violence which resulted in the death of George Howard who was her trafficker.

About 12 years into her sentence, the Human Rights Watch finally gave her a voice to share her story with the world. This attention eventually led to a new trial which led to clemency and eventually parole.

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FYE and SPARK Join Forces

by Cynthia Vasquez and Hoover Zariani

The First Year Experience (FYE) Program at GCC prepares students for academic success and helps them select the career path that's right for them.

With this goal in mind, the FYE program implemented a peer mentoring model for the Student Development Course taught this fall. Since the SPARK mentors were already trained and many were available to work, the two programs "merged" in the sense that they worked well together along the lines of goals and student success aspirations.

Cynthia Vasquez, one of the counselors and instructors of the fall 2021 FYE classes describes her experience in the following way:

"I had the opportunity to teach an FYE Student Development 125 8-week synchronous course during the first half of the fall 2021 semester. Two amazing peer mentors joined me throughout all the live course lectures through Zoom, and I appreciated that they always had their camera on even though the students had it off. On the first day I introduced the two peer mentors Jose and Benji (Benjamin) to my class. Right away some students recognized them since they were also peer mentors for the Summer Bridge program.

In my course lectures, the peer mentors also participated during class discussions, and it was valuable for them to provide their student perspective on relevant topics such as student involvement and their own development.

The peer mentors also made themselves available to meet with students outside of the class environment through Zoom meetings, email, or a phone call. I also divided my students into two groups and assigned a peer mentor to each group. On Canvas, using the Groups feature, I had the peer mentors create icebreakers to engage the students and create a community. The peer mentors were also invited to attend the FYE campus events we hosted for students to get to meet them in person.

I look forward to continuing to have peer mentors in the FYE courses I teach since their presence in a course shows that someone besides the instructor cares about their success."

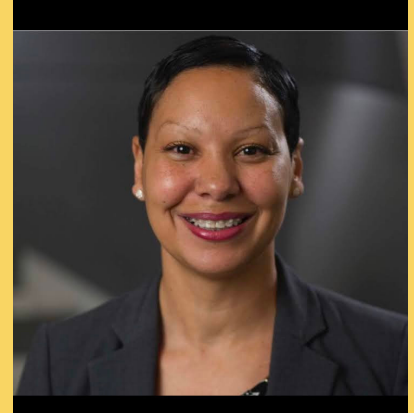
The MCEC looks forward to continuing the partnership with the FYE program in future years.

Sara Kruzan's Journey to Healing

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Sara's presentation began with a critique of the criminal justice system and its treatment of children. Her talk included a discussion about understanding and healing in order to help youth. She also shared the story of how she developed resilience over time.

Although her childhood experiences were traumatic, the resilience she developed helped her on a daily basis when she was incarcerated.



At the beginning of her presentation, Sara hoped that the takeaways from her story would include understanding untreated childhood trauma, the strength that is required to show up in public spaces to be vulnerable, and how resiliency is defined and nurtured. It would be an understatement to say that her story helped the audience understand all these aspects of not only her life but also our own.

Another important aspect of sharing our story is that others realize that they are not alone in their experiences and that regardless of how difficult our circumstances may be, we can survive and thrive. This was what several students as well as other participants commented about Sara's sharing of her story and how brave she must be for doing so.

Her upcoming book, *I Cried to Dream Again: Trafficking, Murder, and Deliverance* will be out in May and can be pre-ordered now on Amazon.

We look forward to hosting Sara again very soon.

Multicultural & Community Engagement Center Staff

This newsletter is created with the contributions of all staff at the MCEC. Everyone, including our students contribute to the articles you read here. It is also our pleasure to be able to work with some amazing students in our office as well as staff in our various programs.

Nane Kakosian
Student Services Program Coordinator

Anthony Garcia
DRC/Equity Counselor

**Keren, Jose, Jenevieve, Rene, Chaquitta,
Jannet, Marvin, and Milena**
Student Assistants

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Student Services Technician

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CARECEN Fellow

Arely Martinez
DRC Intern

Hoover Zariani
Program Manager

Reflections on Working with Formerly Incarcerated Students

by Stephanie Yau

This past Fall semester, I've had the absolute privilege of working with our brilliant students in the Rising Scholars program as their academic and career counselor. I've had the opportunity to get to know these wonderful students through appointments, mixer events, workshops, and regular meetings.

I believe I learn from my students as much (if not more) as they learn from me. Piece by piece, I have had the honor of learning about the intersecting layers of many of their lived experiences. As students have shared their unique journeys, I have listened to stories that span the spectrum of triumph and tragedy. As these students share, one unifying theme always seems to emerge: persistence and resilience. The Rising Scholars students never cease to amaze me with their ambition and dedication to building a better future for themselves and their families.

As I reflect back on this past semester, I am met with a flurry of emotions. I feel so much pride as I think about the hope, courage, and resilience of our students that continue to reach towards their goals, day after day, no matter what challenges they may face. Yet, my heart aches when I reflect on the difficulties that they, and others in their situation, continue to face as a direct result of systemic inequities in our society. However, this ache gives way to a sense of determination to continue to work towards dismantling structures of institutionalized oppression, such as the school-to-prison pipeline and systemic racism, that have been such a detriment to our students and our communities.

The students in the Rising Scholars program are some of the most hard-working, compassionate, and resilient students I've ever had the pleasure to work with. I look forward to watching these students flourish on their journeys toward a brighter future, as the Rising Scholars program continues to expand in the years to come.

Time for Transition: Rising Scholars Program Moves to the MCEC

by David Crawford

The MCEC is thrilled to announce the Rising Scholars (RS), formerly known as Re-entry Pathways, as the newest edition to the MCEC family. The Rising Scholars Program assists formerly incarcerated and system impacted students beginning or restarting their educational journey, providing scholars with the tools and resources to pursue and achieve their academic goals at GCC and beyond.

Rising Scholars is committed to creating a safe and inclusive on-campus environment for justice-involved students and removing barriers that hinder academic success. Program participants qualify to receive bookstore vouchers, grocery store gift cards, academic and career counseling, peer support, and mental health counseling. Participants are also connected to off-campus resources such as potential jobs and career training opportunities geared specifically for this population since there are additional barriers for them in the work/career sphere.

Furthermore, the Rising Scholars will be moving into its own office space in the coming months. This space will serve as a refuge for Rising Scholars, educating and creating awareness around the stigma and social inequalities associated with incarceration.

Before transitioning to the MCEC, the Rising Scholars was under College Services (Counseling) and, most recently, Career Services. We want to thank Counseling and Career Services for the necessary and critical work they've done with the program.

If you or someone you know is interested in joining or learning more about the Rising Scholars program, please email us at risingscholars@glendale.edu.

Glendale Regional Community Action Partnership

by David Crawford

After a nearly three-year hiatus, Glendale Regional Community Action Partnership (RCAP) resumed its regularly scheduled monthly meetings on Wednesday, September 1st, 2021.

Glendale RCAP is one of five regional partnerships, serving as a place where service providers can network, explore other programs, build partnerships and develop collaborations to assist formerly incarcerated students and community members. Additionally, we typically hear from a student or community member impacted by the judicial system during our meetings.

If you are interested in learning more about Glendale RCAP or joining us at our next network meeting, please email me at dcrawford@glendale.edu. We hope to see you in the winter/spring at one of our meetings.

Upcoming Glendale Regional Community Action Partnership Meetings:

Wednesday, February 2nd, 2022, at 10:00 AM

Wednesday, March 2nd, 2022, at 10:00 AM

Wednesday, April 6th, 2022, at 10:00 AM

Wednesday, May 4th, 2022, at 10:00 AM

Wednesday, June 1st, 2022, at 10:00 AM

Safe Zone Training - Level 2 and Level 3 in 2022

Many of you reading this newsletter have participated in the Level 1 Safe Zone Trainings offered the last few years through the Pride Center. In the past, we have had only one Level 2 training but we have planned for level 2 and 3 trainings for winter and spring semesters. We hope that in future years, we will offer Level 1 every fall, Level 2 every winter intersession and Level 3 during Pride Week in May. At this time, we are not certain whether these trainings will be in person or remotely. Please watch for the announcement in mid January.

Save the Dates!

Safe Zone Training Level 2
Friday, February 4, 2022 - 12:30 to 3:00 p.m.

Safe Zone Training Level 3
Friday, May 6, 2022 - 12:30 to 3:00 p.m.

Live Zoom Help Hours Continue for Spring 2022

Since the start of the pandemic, the various MCEC programs have hosted live Zoom hours to assist students, staff, and community members while we have been working remotely. Even with some planned return to campus activities, we will continue all live Zoom help session during the spring 2022 semester. Below are our tentative hours for spring. Final hours may be different so we suggest checking the MCEC website for updates.

Multicultural & Community Engagement Center

Monday Through Thursday - 10 to 11 a.m. and 4 to 5 p.m.

DREAM Resource Center - Monday through Thursday - 2 to 3 p.m.

(supporting our undocumented, DACAmented, and AB 540 students)

Pride Center - Monday through Wednesday - 9 to 10 a.m.

(supporting our LGBTQ+ students)

Rising Scholars - Tuesday through Thursday - 3 to 4 p.m.

(supporting our formerly incarcerated and system impacted)

Family Welcome Events

Fall 2021







by Nane Kakosian and Hoover Zariani

The MCEC began a new tradition this past summer with the implementation of Family Welcome Events for various student groups served through our programs. The goal of these specific events was to give students a safer space to ask questions as well as to learn about specific services provided for each group since they vary in their scope.

The positive feedback has encouraged us to make these annual events which will take place immediately before the start of the fall semester. Feedback also indicated that students appreciated the time devoted to their own specific groups as their needs are slightly different than other students.

Some of the general information shared at all welcome events included basic financial aid info about FAFSA and CADAA which were presented by Eunice Petron from the Financial Aid Office; general study skills for college which was presented by Anthony Garcia and Jamie Sanchez; and Health Center information including mental health services

Additionally, each event featured information on related student clubs and organizations on campus such as VOICES and SAGA to help students plug into supportive peer communities. One of the main goals for our events include making sure that students are aware and connected to the campus, particularly during remote instruction and services. Below are the flyers for our various welcome events for 2021.

<p>The DREAM Resource Center Presents</p> <p>ALL DREAMER STUDENTS, PARENTS, AND FAMILY MEMBERS ARE INVITED TO LEARN WAYS TO SUPPORT STUDENT SUCCESS.</p> <p>TOPICS DISCUSSED:</p> <p>IMMIGRATION UPDATES</p> <p>DRC SERVICES AND RESOURCES</p> <p>VOICES STUDENT CLUB</p> <p>WE WILL ALSO HAVE A STUDENT PANEL DISCUSS THEIR COLLEGE EXPERIENCE.</p> <p>Students who participate in the event will earn an entry into a drawing for a \$50 gift card.</p> <p>PREFERRED RSVP BY AUGUST 23, 2021: CLICK HERE TO RSVP</p>	   <p>FAMILY WELCOME EVENT WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 25TH 3:00-4:30PM</p> <p>ZOOM LINK: HTTPS://ZOOM.US/MY/GCCMCEC</p> <p>QUESTIONS OR ACCOMMODATIONS CONTACT ANTHONY GARCIA AT: ANTHONYG@GLENDALE.EDU OR 818-240-1000 EXT. 5810</p> <p>PLEASE INDICATE YOUR NEED FOR SPANISH AND/OR ASL TRANSLATION IN THE RSVP.</p>	<p>GLENDALE COMMUNITY COLLEGE</p> <p>MULTICULTURAL & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT CENTER PRESENTS</p> <p>LATINX FAMILY WELCOME EVENT AT GCC WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 25, 2021 4:30 PM TO 7:00 PM</p> <p>ALL GCC LATINX STUDENTS, PARENTS, AND FAMILY MEMBERS ARE INVITED TO LEARN WAYS TO SUPPORT STUDENT SUCCESS.</p> <p><u>WE WILL ALSO HAVE A PANEL OF STUDENTS WITH THEIR PARENTS DISCUSSING THEIR EXPERIENCES.</u></p> <p>TOPICS DISCUSSED INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ACADEMIC PLANNING FINANCIAL AID HEALTH & WELLNESS STUDENT CLUBS STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS <p>QUESTIONS OR ACCOMMODATIONS CONTACT ANTHONY GARCIA AT: ANTHONYG@GLENDALE.EDU OR 818-240-1000 EXT. 5810</p> <p>PLEASE INDICATE YOUR NEED FOR SPANISH AND/OR ASL TRANSLATION IN THE RSVP.</p> <p>STUDENTS WHO PARTICIPATE IN THE EVENT WILL EARN AN ENTRY INTO A DRAWING FOR A \$50 GIFT CARD.</p> <p>PREFERRED RSVP BY AUGUST 23, 2021 WWW.GLENDALE.EDU/ESTUDIANTESUNIDOSFAMILYDAY</p> <p>Zoom Link: https://zoom.us/my/gccmcec</p>	<p>FIRST ANNUAL PRIDE FAMILY WELCOME EVENT</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td data-bbox="1073 1507 1328 1774"> <p>JOIN US!</p> <p>For the first annual welcome event for incoming LGBTQIA+ and ally freshmen!</p> <p>This welcome event will share many resources and help new and incoming students to adjust to college life, specifically, to GCC.</p> <p>All new students and their families, both chosen and biological, are invited.</p> </td> <td data-bbox="1328 1507 1589 1774"> <p>Highlights Include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The Pride Center -How to be a successful student -LGBTQIA+ ally counselors -Scholarships/Financial Aid Info. -Health Center Services -The SAGA (Sexuality and Gender Alliance) student Club </td> </tr> </table> <p>TUESDAY, AUGUST 24TH 2021</p> <p>4:30 P.M. TO 7:15 P.M.</p> <p>ZOOM.COM/GCCMCEC</p> <p>PREFERRED RSVP BY AUGUST 23, 2021 - CLICK HERE TO RSVP</p> <p>  </p> <p>STUDENTS WHO PARTICIPATE IN THE EVENT WILL EARN AN ENTRY INTO A DRAWING FOR A \$50 GIFT CARD.</p> <p>Please contact Lead Interpreter/Coordinator, Kim Weissman at kweissman@gendale.edu if you need ASL interpreting services. Closed captioning will be provided at this event.</p> <p>PLEASE INDICATE YOUR NEED FOR ASL TRANSLATION IN THE RSVP.</p>	<p>JOIN US!</p> <p>For the first annual welcome event for incoming LGBTQIA+ and ally freshmen!</p> <p>This welcome event will share many resources and help new and incoming students to adjust to college life, specifically, to GCC.</p> <p>All new students and their families, both chosen and biological, are invited.</p>	<p>Highlights Include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The Pride Center -How to be a successful student -LGBTQIA+ ally counselors -Scholarships/Financial Aid Info. -Health Center Services -The SAGA (Sexuality and Gender Alliance) student Club
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2021 Undocumented Student Action Week (USAW) at GCC

by Anthony Garcia

October is a special time of the year for undocumented students as we observe the Undocumented Student Action Week (USAW) at Glendale Community College and throughout California. The week-long events are curated to raise awareness, support, and advocate for the student community that identifies as undocumented or DACAmented.

This year, the Dream Resource Center and the AB540 Support Committee organized a series of events highlighting undocumented diversity. The week's first event was "Undocu - Mental Health," hosted by Monae Dale, a Licensed Clinical Social Worker. She presented resources and coping strategies for students struggling with mental health.

On Tuesday, the student club VOICES hosted "Open Mic" highlighting Immigration Reform. Students were able to share their individual struggles in a non-judgmental and safe space. The VOICES club continued presence on campus has positively impacted many undocumented students.

Wednesday's event "Undocu - Entrepreneur" presented by Michele Segura highlighted ways students could start their own business using an individual tax identification number (ITIN). Segura inspired students by sharing business models, resources, and support to become independently employed.

"The Immigrant Experience - Student Panel" event highlighted a diverse group of undocumented students. The purpose of the event was to shed light that undocumented students come from all over the world. The undocumented struggle is not unique to Latinx students.

GLENDALE COMMUNITY COLLEGE The Dream Resource Center and the AB 540 Support Committee Presents:

Undocumented Student Action Week
October 18-October 22, 2021

Undocumented Student Action Week is a system-wide campaign across all California Community Colleges, to advocate and provide support resources to undocumented student and allies.

MONDAY, OCTOBER 18 11:00AM-12:00PM UNDUCU-MENTAL HEALTH	Monae Dale, a Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW), will be discussing the importance of mental health, coping strategies and providing mental health resources. In addition, she will discuss how cultural stigma impacts mental health among undocumented folk.
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 19 12:30-1:30PM VOICES PRESENTS: OPEN MIC	Open Mic: Immigration Reform Safe space for student to express freely their personal struggle as undocumented/DACAmented through poetry, song, or anecdote. This event will focus on Immigration Reform.
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 20 4:00-5:00PM UNDUCU-ENTREPRENEURSHIP	Overview of entrepreneurship. Discover a variety of business models that allow you to become your own boss! Create income without a social security number and how to obtain an ITIN. Learn about licensing opportunities, intellectual properties, resources and additional support to get you started.
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 21 2:00-3:00PM UNDUCU-STUDENT DIVERSITY PANEL	A panel of undocumented immigrants from diverse backgrounds will share their American experience. The event will highlight that undocumented folk come from all over the world not just Latin America.
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 22 10:00AM-12:00PM UNDUCU-ALLY TRAINING	Faculty & Staff interested in creating a safe and welcoming space for undocumented students are invited to participate in our Undocu-Ally Training. Participants of Undocu-Ally training will learn about the needs, concerns, and challenges faced by immigrant students and their families.

All events will be hosted using the following ZOOM ID: GCC.DRC
Zoom Link: <https://cccconfer.zoom.us/j/gcc.drc>

The week ended on a high note, with the Undocu-Ally Training. Academic Counselors and AB 540 Committee Chairpersons Jamie Sanchez and Anthony Garcia facilitated the training to GCC Faculty and Staff. In this training, allies learned how to create and sustain a welcoming and safe space for undocumented students.

In conclusion, I want to share with you, kind reader, how much it warms my heart to see the increased support towards undocumented and DACAmented students.

Thank you for seeing the potential, for listening, and supporting a community that will never forget a helping hand. Cheerfully, I look forward to the 2022 Undocumented Student Action Week at GCC, I hope you do too.

