Chatman Diversity Center Community Forum 2021
Thursday, March 25, 2021, 6:00 p.m.

**Purpose:** This event provided a safe space for student expressions concerning the social landscape; and provided a platform to share ways in which support is needed for the betterment of the CSP community.

**Description of the Event:** This event was patterned to the liking of a Community World Café—with several facilitators assisting with conversations around three purposeful questions. There were light refreshments, 3 well-crafted questions, and a system for accountability and processes shared.

**Desired Outcomes:**
It was the hope that those persons in attendance left...
- **Encouraged**—Feeling empowered to live fully and safely
- **Empowered**—Comfortable to speak freely and share concerns, feelings, and thoughts in a positive manner that embraces all
- **Valued**—Knowing that the CSP community cares and respects their individuality, voice, and convictions

**Access the Recording of the Forum:**
[https://csp-edu.zoom.us/rec/share/EFk8YmH8-SVeZo8JhgdIyHjRTc7sl9hh5ncyy7UiAk_gAyFjVWpEpE_ag6FvR6.7IGMo_fZ44QfVsB5](https://csp-edu.zoom.us/rec/share/EFk8YmH8-SVeZo8JhgdIyHjRTc7sl9hh5ncyy7UiAk_gAyFjVWpEpE_ag6FvR6.7IGMo_fZ44QfVsB5)

**Password:** L+vvTys6

**Record of Conversations and Comments Provided**

**Setting the Stage:**
- **Michael Bond**
  - Shared greetings and opened the event with prayer.
  - Introduced the Facilitators
    - [First Lady Monique Nunes, Concordia College New York](https://csp-edu.zoom.us/rec/share/EFk8YmH8-SVeZo8JhgdIyHjRTc7sl9hh5ncyy7UiAk_gAyFjVWpEpE_ag6FvR6.7IGMo_fZ44QfVsB5)
    - [Aqueelah Roberson, Director of the Chatman Diversity Center at CSP](https://csp-edu.zoom.us/rec/share/EFk8YmH8-SVeZo8JhgdIyHjRTc7sl9hh5ncyy7UiAk_gAyFjVWpEpE_ag6FvR6.7IGMo_fZ44QfVsB5)
  - Introduced the Spoken Word Artist
What Makes Me a King?

Davaris Cheeks, CSP Student, recipient of the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Service Award, and Vice President of Student Senate

Aqueelah Roberson

- “It has been a very unprecedented, strange, and challenging year considering the catastrophic events that have taken place including: the pandemic (impacting everyone, regardless of where one stands of the ladder of social stratification); the murder of George Floyd, as well as countless others, (witnessed on camera and sparking national and international civil unrest); the intensified hate crimes targeting the Asian American Community; and many other happenings.”

- Shared how the evening will flow in conversation, reviewed norms, and expounded upon purpose.

- Shared importance of having a broad perspective on issues that affect minority groups.

Question One: How are you?

- “Tired.” Balancing school, social life, and feeling worn down
- “Overwhelmed…”
- “Hopeful with vaccination coming up…and how students have been so resilient…and do neat things and support each other…and be kind.”
- “Proud of DC (Davaris Cheeks) for the speech, hopeful to learn and grow—grateful for the opportunities to work with the leaders that are present.”
- “Sick and tired of being tired…” Shared experience about having a black son and the worry of what he may encounter; and agreeing with being tired, hopeful, and proud. “We have to be so sick and tired of what’s going on that we are for an answer and a solution”
- “Grateful for the opportunity to share.” “Lost…” doesn’t want everything to slide under the rug, doesn’t know what to do to help the Asian American community,
● “Fluctuates day to day, hour to hour…discouraged, frustration, motivated.” The person tries to turn negative feelings into positive ones. A range of feelings, but can resonate … never give up hope. “Don’t get stuck on feelings unless it’s joy.”
● “Blessed just to be here, to be in the position I am…” Dealt with: major knee injury; got closer to God, teammates, and loved ones; gained confidence; and was able to get back to where they were. “There’s a bigger purpose to what you are going through.”
● COVID caused them to slow down, talk to people, “…learned a lot about myself being by myself.” “What to do with that anger to be productive.” “Sometimes we overlook the simplicity of ‘How are you?’ ”

**Question Two: How can the CSP community better support you?**

● Need more resources and support to help ALL students
  1. We need to do a better job recognizing diversity is a fact. Inclusion is an act.
  2. Being proactive instead of reactive. “What can we do now so we are not lost.” (Shared how the murder of George Floyd happened so close to CSP and how that affected them negatively and they wanted more resources.)
● Events like this, within the Diversity Center—It’s important to have diversity and welcome those who are a part of the majority to conversations with those who are a part of the minority.
● “Inviting someone to a party is different than inviting someone to dance with you. We need to be comfortable being uncomfortable.”
● “Inviting people to the table, being intentional to engage with others we don’t normally engage with…”
● “We need to provide opportunities for students to tell us how we can help.”
Question Three: *How do we grow from here?*

- “…not just focusing on the spotlight events, not waiting to react to a certain situation to build that trust…”
- “Opportunities like this, maybe that involve the whole campus, and a follow-up process that is implemented.”
- “There’s one thing that keeps me going…consistency. The lack of consistency from prior experiences, the sit-in, was how much it took to get noticed.” “…Important having conversations with people outside of social circle.”
- “…Word intention comes to mind…Challenge athletes and those a part of groups to branch out and address problems that affects us all.”
- “I may not come from the same path, but I walk a parallel line.” “We need to let BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) students know that we care.”
- Looking outside of self and people to help you look outside of yourself… having a way to learn about things that are outside of your sphere of knowledge. Seeking information about current events that affect people who do not necessarily look or live like you.
- “…Feeling of inadequacy or unequipped to have conversations, but reinforce love and resources that will help too.”
- “…Important for us to learn to be okay being misunderstood. I am a person that struggles with that, my emotions become involved…I became angry [growing up].” “Over the summer, I had great conversations with my coaches because we didn’t fully understand what we all felt. That allowed us to speak, learn and grow together.”
- “We look for platforms where people will agree with our perspective. Your perspective is not always reality.”