

ENCOMPASS

COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS ▪ UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
NEWSLETTER FOR EQUITY, INCLUSION AND JUSTICE



In Solidarity

BY ADAM SCHOENE, PH.D.

In response to recent violent and hateful attacks against Asians and Asian Americans, we wish to express solidarity with and sympathy for all in our campus community and beyond who have been hurt, frightened, and traumatized by these intolerable, racist incidents. Racism and xenophobia are antithetical to our values and an affront to what we stand for as a university, so it is important that we, at UNH, stand together against them.



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Black History Month Organizers Reflect on the Month's Impact

BY LANEY MELDRUM '22



Since 1969, celebrating Black history has turned February into a time for listening, learning, and self-reflection. Many departments and organizations at UNH contributed by hosting important educational opportunities that made this year's Black History Month memorable despite the pandemic.

Allyson Ryder, assistant director of Community, Equity, and Diversity, discussed her office's role as the primary organizer for Black History Month. The highlight of the month for her was the kickoff event. "The event always highlights the strength of Black students and students of color on campus and really sets the tone for how we can truly honor their presence," she said.

While COVID-19 "created a wrinkle in the process" and Ryder and her students missed the energy of an in-person connection, virtual events may have been more accessible for students.

Students and faculty also unveiled the community art project, "Radical Change: It's In Your Hands," which is on display in the Memorial Union Building. The project brought students and faculty together to discuss diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA) and to create a meaningful visual based on their learning. Richard Haynes, associate director of admissions and a leader in the project, believes that art is a vessel for political and social change.

"I believe that with good conversation, good listening, and deep thinking, it literally brings about some extraordinary visuals," he said. "I believe that in our society, we don't do a lot of that, and that's why we're still in the mess that we're in today."

Laney Meldrum '22 is a third-year undergraduate student pursuing a double major in journalism, and women's and gender studies.

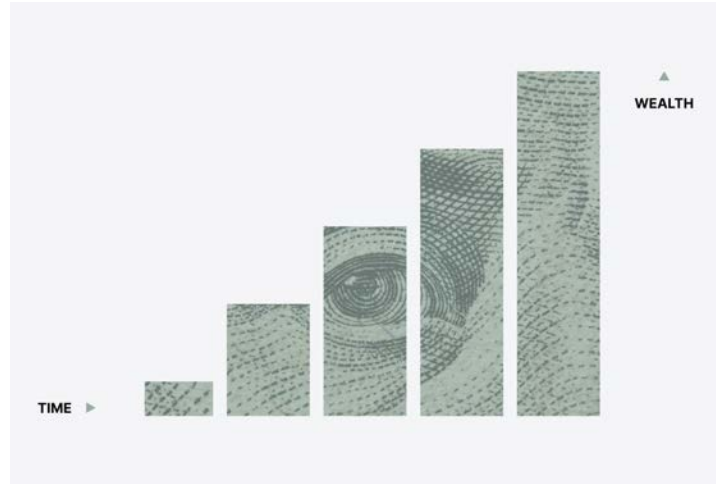
Racial Wealth Gap Lecture Series Uses History to Generate Solutions

BY LANEY MELDRUM '22

Aiming to foster dialogue on inequity, UNH assistant professor of history Michael Leese helped to organize the lecture series, “Confronting the Racial Wealth Gap,” featuring four leading scholars on the subject: Brandon Byrd, Tatjana Meschede, Marianne Wanamaker and Justene Hill Edwards.

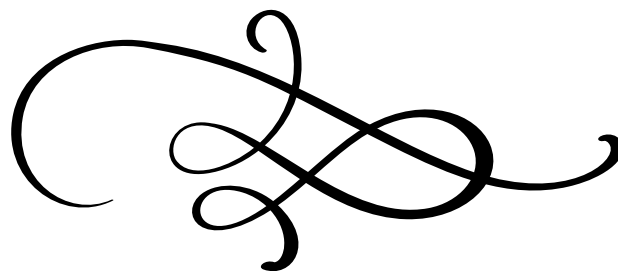
Brandon Byrd, an assistant professor at Vanderbilt University, kicked off the series in October 2020 with a discussion about the revolution of enslaved people of Haiti, France’s wealthiest colony, and European embargoes that crushed their economy.

Leese said that the series focused on the history and legacy of economic inequality. “It’s hard to make it tangible,” he said. “Some people need to see numbers.” He also knew that many Black Lives Matter activists were worried about the movement losing mainstream momentum by the end of last summer, so he wanted to help continue the conversation with a focus on tangible policy solutions.



The final lecture, “Capitalism in the Lives of Enslaved People” with Justene Hill Edwards, an assistant professor at the University of Virginia, took place on May 5. Edwards discussed how enslaved people worked to seize money and property for themselves.

This series was a collaborative effort sponsored by the College of Liberal Arts/Responsible Governance & Sustainable Citizenship Project, Peter T. Paul College of Business and Economics, and Carsey School of Public Policy.



Race & Classics Spring '21 Lecture Series

As part of her undergraduate course, Race, Ethnicity, Class & Classics, Harriet Fertik, an associate professor of classics, organized a series of virtual talks, featuring scholars doing groundbreaking research on race and ethnicity in the ancient world. This initiative was sponsored by the John C. Rouman Classical Lecture Series and the Department of Classics, Humanities and Italian Studies. Two undergraduate students shared their reflections.



Elena Chan '23 is a second-year undergraduate student pursuing a major in mechanical engineering and architectural studies.



Thomas Vachon '22 is a third-year undergraduate student pursuing a major in classics. Pictured above is Ferdinand Knab's painting of the Mausoleum of Halicarnassus.

As a mechanical engineering student, I rarely get to analyze culture, but Dr. Fertik's lecture series allowed me to draw connections between antiquity and contemporary ideas of race, language, and culture. In particular, my favorite lectures discussed differences between ancient and contemporary interpretations of art. When my peers unsurprisingly ask why I take classics and philosophy courses, I say that I want to understand other perspectives than my own. One takeaway from these lectures is that historical authors have perspectives that are reflective of their own times, and learning about them shows how our thinking has changed over time.

This lecture series has been a wonderful opportunity for a wide range of speakers with different perspectives to share their knowledge with UNH students. I love the enthusiasm each speaker has brought and how each one has drawn from a specific area of study to contribute to a broader view of the ancient world. For example, Dr. Patricia Eunji Kim used the construction of the Mausoleum of Halicarnassus as a vehicle to examine the complexities of racial identity and gender in ancient Greece. I also love how the speakers engaged with students and promoted discussion. Dr. Nicole Spigner divided us up into small groups to compare a poem by Ovid with one by Phillis Wheatley, giving us time to answer questions about both poems, and then bringing everyone back together to discuss our answers.

Alumna Profile: Julian Maduro '21

BY LANEY MELDRUM '22



Senior English and justice studies major Julian Maduro's driving passion is the idea that no human being has more intrinsic value than another.

As the events coordinator of Black Lives Matter Seacoast, the administrative assistant of a law firm, a two-time resident assistant, and a Hamel and McNair scholar, Julian is a powerhouse on campus. Her advice for undergraduates is to attend cultural events. "I think to truly cultivate an understanding of social inequity, you have to see it, and in order to do that, you have to talk to people," she says.

"You can read all the books and see all the lectures (we should be doing this), but I believe it's through human interaction that we're able to comprehend the scope of some of our societal issues."

Her most impactful experiences at UNH were the CONNECT program, which connected her with the organizations she works with today, and her research with Dr. Laura Smith in the English department. Julian has also been involved in student organizations including NALA, a support group for women students of color, and the Black Student Union.

Julian urges students to speak up in class respectfully, if race, socioeconomic class, or gender are not brought up. "Suggest a topic if asked. Write your paper on it. Go to office hours. Justice studies and social inequity are so intertwined that they need to be talked about together."

After graduation, she plans to focus her energy on prison reform through social work and graduate study in criminology. She hopes to enact policies that will transform the prison system and the way the formerly incarcerated are treated.

"I believe it's through human interaction that we're able to comprehend the scope of some of our societal issues."

— JULIAN MADURO
CLASS OF 2021



Spring Calendar Event Highlight

An Evening of Music: "I Ask You This"

Piano and voice students from the studios of Mathilde Handelsman (piano) and Deborah Rentz-Moore (voice) joined hands to present "I Ask You This," an evening of music by African American composers that took place Wednesday evening, May 5. The program featured art songs as well as solo piano pieces, with a special focus on works by women composers and poets, and several selections by living artists. The title "I Ask You This" is borrowed from the first line of Langston Hughes' poem, Prayer (1954), set to music by composer H. Leslie Adams in 1961. The selections in this program were eclectic in style, some of them inspired by blues, jazz, and spirituals, others veering toward atonality and 20th century compositional techniques. While a few selections in this performance were familiar to our ears (songs by Duke Ellington), many of them have been neglected in history. Students and faculty worked on this repertoire with enthusiasm and pleasure, and with a desire to share, celebrate and affirm great music by great musicians — of the past and of today.



Announcement: Program Launch

Diversity and Inclusion Employer Champions Program

UNH Career and Professional Success recently launched the Diversity and Inclusion Employer Champions Program. In recognition of the desire for UNH students to find employment in organizations that promote diversity and inclusion, the program recognizes employer partners who demonstrate the utmost devotion to social justice and equality through tangible actions. Through this program, students will be able to search, identify and connect with organizations committed to making progress on these values. To be recognized through the program, an employer must meet a number of different criteria that demonstrate commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility.



Announcement: New Minor

Native American and Indigenous Studies

BY ADAM SCHOENE, PH.D.

As a land-grant university located on N'dakinna (“Our Lands”), the traditional ancestral homeland and waterways of the Abenaki, Pennacook, and Wabanaki peoples, UNH has an important commitment to Indigenous Studies. The Indigenous New Hampshire Collaborative Collective (INHCC) works to frame New Hampshire’s history from an Indigenous perspective through education and social activism, and includes UNH students and faculty, Indigenous community members, and local organizers. INHCC advocated for UNH to launch a related academic program, and the COLA faculty voted unanimously in 2019 for a minor in Native American and Indigenous Studies (NAIS).

An interdisciplinary minor, NAIS offers a broad understanding of the history, lands, culture, literature, language and artistic expression, science and technology, race and identity, social organization and political status of Native American and Indigenous peoples. The minor also provides opportunities for UNH students to explore NAIS beyond the classroom through local internships and experiences abroad. The minor calls for awareness and action to help strengthen the health and resilience of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities.

Adam Schoene is adjunct faculty in the Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultures at UNH.



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