This issue...

The Legacy of Nelson Mandela — A longer moment
Staff Check in — Sher Thao is...
Cross Cultural Love Center — A true lover story
Unsung Heroes of the Civil Rights Movement
Meet our Interns — J²: Jared and Joe
At 12:12 p.m. today, my social psychology professor closed her class with Nelson Mandela’s quote, “A good head and a good heart are always a formidable combination.”

We were talking about the psychology of helping. At 2:40 p.m., I learned that he had passed away.

In the class, we had talked about the network of traits that creates an individual who helps people. As I look at my half-scribbled notes with flowers on the side, I read through them thinking of the memory of Nelson Mandela.

Positive emotion, check.
Empathy, check.
Self-efficacy, check.

In jail, Nelson Mandela received one visitor a year and a letter every six months, yet in all those encounters he referenced the humanity he still knew existed in the world. When he left prison, he decided to leave his bitterness behind because in harboring it, he said he would still be "in prison."

It puts my life in perspective. I mean, this morning I could not find a parking spot close to school and then sulked to class for six blocks, scowling at the world for its evil ways. Bitterness, check.

Although, I agree that Nelson Mandela is a helper who cannot easily be recreated, I do not agree that Nelson Mandela has a monopoly on these traits. Mandela just knew how to access them. We all have the strength to change the world after recognizing that everything we hold to do so is inside of us.

Today, as you go through the monotony of your day, take a moment to remember Mandela’s legacy of hope and love, but right after, take a longer moment to think about how you can change the world.

Rest in Peace. You did fight for it all of your life.

A Longer Moment

Deanna Jarquin’s, a paraprofessional, thoughts on the life of Nelson Mandela

Sher Thao is...

Sher Thao is a fifth year graduating next fall with a degree in Child Development and Sociology. When she is not in the office working hard on the Global Voices Series and iLead she is motivating her six siblings and playing flag football. Her dream job is to be a director for a Young Women’s Hmong Association.

Below member of our CCLC staff answered the prompt “Sher is...” about our beloved family member and colleague.

Sher is bold, passionate change agent who is deeply committed to empowering Hmong women. (Katie Peterson, Program Coordinator at the CCLC)

Sher is the best office mate I could ever ask for. She is always there to listen to my problems and give me a good laugh. I would say she is the most underrated hilarious person I know. (Deanna Jarquin, officemate, paraprofessional at the CCLC)

Sher is a random ball of fun. She is hilarious and awesome to work with. (Griselda Avila, paraprofessional at the CCLC)

Sher is a fantastic human being who knows how to add humor to any situation. Sher is loud and determined with the most powerful voice that makes her stand out. Sher is a great family member who cares about the individuals who surround her and she has the most distinctive laugh that so contagious no one can help but join in her laughter! (Julia Walker, Paraprofessional at the CCLC)

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Cross-Cultural Love Center: Sylvia and Jovan

The Cross-Cultural Leadership Center is a unique place where family is created. This statement has never been more true than on January 24th at 4 o’clock PM when Jovan, the AS Outreach Specialist and Sylvia, an Inclusion Coordinator in the CCLC, became engaged. Jovan and Sylvia met five years ago in the CCLC when they were both first years. After exactly four years of “going steady” Jovan planned an “impromptu” poetry slam where twelve of there closest friends read poem written by Jovan for Sylvia. Concluding with Jovan’s reading, “You are truly special and you fill my heart with so much love. We have a unique relationship and that is something we should be proud of. Sylvia, I am yours and that alone is all I want to be. So my last question is simple... will you marry me?” In the words of Jovan Smith “cue mic drop,” as well as audible gasping and sobbing. Over seventy-five people where in attendance, including countless faculty members, close friends (and a few people who thought they were actually at a poetry slam) during their special moment. Please join us in congratulating our family in becoming family.

The Unsung Heroes of the Civil Rights Movement

Julia Walker’s, a paraprofessional, thoughts on the life of the Civil Rights Movement

As a middle school and high school student, I always enjoyed history, especially American history. I remember learning about the constitution and the Declaration of Independence and thinking about how great the leaders were who helped form our nations’ government. I also remember learning about activists who helped defend our government through nonviolent protests and efforts of social justice. I was the most intrigued by the Civil Rights Movement because the leaders had the courage to fight for what was rightfully theirs at a time when Jim Crow Laws and the Klu Klux Klan ruled the south. I remember wondering why, in my high school American history class, we were learning more about Abraham Lincoln than Martin Luther King. The Civil Rights Movement is an extremely important part of out nations’ history but is explored little in depth. Why is this? There are so many individuals who fought to uphold the constitution and for the rights of every person, yet we hardly ever hear names other than Martin Luther King. Luckily, I was fortunate enough to go on a trip throughout the South that taught me about the Civil Rights Movement for more than just a class period. On this trip, I learned that there is a large portion of our American History that I had never been taught.

Civil Rights are extremely important and so is having an accurate knowledge of history. Since learning about the leaders of the Civil Rights Movement I have felt strongly about social justice issues. Today I still struggle to be informed and aware of what is really going on. I feel that if my high school history class did not teach me, then it is my responsibility to teach myself. There are so many lessons to learn from the leaders who came before us. One of the ways I stay inspired to work toward social change, even today, is by remembering these individuals. I get my passion and desire to leave this world a better place from the power of the victories of the Civil Rights Movement. I chose to create an Unsung Heroes Workshop as my “Passion Project” as a Paraprofessional at the Cross-Cultural Leadership Center, because I believe that we all deserve to know more than the bare minimum. We need to know who made it so that segregation is no longer legal, and all citizens can vote regardless of ethnicity. I believe that it is important to know your history in order to learn from it and continue to move forward.

The Unsung Heroes Workshop will take place Wednesday every Wednesday of February in The Cross-Cultural Leadership Center located in Merium Library 172, across from the BMU Market Place, at 3:30PM. If you have any questions please contact Julia Walker at cclcparapro2@csuchico.edu (530) 898-4101.
Meet our Interns — J²: Jerad and Joe

Meet Jared a First year double majoring in Recording Arts and Public Administration from Vallejo (and yes, he did work at Six Flags: Discovery Kingdom). He has strong ties to this Bay Area town because he believes his community “made him” which has spurred his love of community involvement and service. You can find Jared leading meetings as the President of Sutter Hall Council, guiding the future as a Student Success Center Academic Peer Mentor or spitting lines and lyrics (with no profanity) at the recording studio. Jared joins the staff with the goal of growing as a person and helping with both Late Night Lounge and the Men’s Conference. His future goals are to get his PhD and create his own Record Label.

Joe Rogers is a Sociology major with a minor in Sexual Diversity Studies. He is from Red Bluff, CA but Chico is where he calls home. He is most excited about getting the Men’s Retreat going, but also the creation of a sustainable space for conversations about masculinity and a slam poetry event in the late spring. The driving force that keeps him going in his journey of activism is “knowing that there are others in the county, state, country, and world that are also oppressed.” In the future, he hope to be accepted as a NUFP fellow as his passion lays in helping people, specifically students, and to pursue a Masters or PhD.

February Festivities

Higher Education Speaker Series (BMU 210) Wednesday, February 5th from 12PM to 1PM
Kathy Kaiser, past chair of the Department of Sociology and assistant coach for the Women’s track and field and cross country team and current member of the Academic Senate for the California State Universities, will present on her journey in Higher Education and the lessons learners through her career.

Unsung Heroes of the Civil Rights Movement (Meriam Library 172) Wednesday, February 5th, 12th, 19th, and 26th from 3PM to 4:30PM
Join the Cross-Cultural Leadership Center in exploring some of the unsung heroes who brought about change during the Civil Rights Movement that have been left out of our History books.

African American Retreat (Shady Creek, Nevada City CA) Friday, February 7th to Sunday, February 9th
African American Retreat, “My Community is My Family: Making things C.L.E.A.R (Communication, Love, Education, Achievement, Responsibility)” is designed to provide a safe, open, and honest space for Chico State African American students to build relationships with their peers and potential mentors.

Global Voice: Spotlight European Carnival (Selvester’s 100) Thursday, February 13th from 6PM to 8PM
Come celebrate European Carnival with the CCLC and Study Abroad office. We will celebrate with traditions seen in Italy, Germany and The Netherlands during this unique festival. Join us for glitter tattoos, face painting, snow cones, mask decorating and traditional cuisine from Italy, Germany, and the Netherlands.

Late Night Lounge: Wild Cat ‘N Out (Selvester’s 100) Friday, February 21st from 8PM to 11PM
Late Night Lounge is bringing back a fan favorite from last year! The one and only WILD CAT’N OUT is making a comeback bigger and better than ever before! Two teams will go head-to-head in this epic comedic battle full of laughter and harsh competition. Come and find out who will have bragging rights this time around.

Men’s Retreat (Shady Creek, Nevada City CA) Saturday, February 22nd to Sunday February 23rd
An opportunity for those who identify as men to engage in conversations about challenges of being men in today’s society in a safe and supportive space.

Women’s Conference: Re-Defining Beautiful (Selvester’s 100) Saturday, March 1st from 4PM to 10PM
An event designed to bring women together to talk about the influence of media and other women on confidence and perception of beauty among females. Through honest conversation and artistic performances showcasing the females experience with the aim to move women from disenfranchised to empowerment.