

# Diversitas

“Engaging our differences with sympathetic understanding is hard work. We want to be, and are, a community that genuinely welcomes people of all backgrounds.”

*Taylor Reveley, President of the College of William & Mary*

One Tribe. Many Voices.



## Student Happenings

Latin American Student Union

Latino Students recite poetry at W&M's first spoken word event

Delta Sigma Theta, Inc.

Rumble in the Jungle

Muslim Student Association

Celebrating the return of pilgrims from the Hajj: Eid Al-Adha at W&M.

I-Faith

What's faith got to do with it?

## A Message from the Student Assembly Secretary of Diversity Initiatives – Jahanzeb Akbar

A few years ago, I thought “diversity” was just the name of the section at the bottom of every application asking me about my race. Now, it has become one of my greatest passions and a guiding force in most of my campus engagements. I came in to William & Mary expecting to have my world turned upside down and for everything that I believed in to be changed. To my surprise, I found a community that didn't try to “change” me but rather helped guide and open my eyes to the world beyond my own skin. In this spirit, I began to involve myself in anything and everything that would teach me more about this “new world” that I was discovering. Three years down the line, I have found the activities that I am most passionate about involve exploring diversity. I am on the William & Mary Bhangra Dance Team, a member of the Muslim Students Association and a Tour Guide (following my internship as an interviewer for the Admission Office). All of these activities, and the many other ones I have flirted with over the years have taught me about the importance and relevance of diversity in all of our lives and given me an immense appreciation for the initiatives that William & Mary has made in the way of encouraging diversity.



“The College of William & Mary strives to be a place where people of all backgrounds feel at home, where diversity is actively embraced, and where each individual takes responsibility for upholding the dignity of all members of the community.”

An excerpt from the College's Statement on Diversity



## W&M Hosts its First Latino Spoken Word Event on Campus Featuring Rafael Casal

Article by Daisy Diaz '12

On October 22, 2010, the Latin American Student Union (LASU) hosted W&M's first Latino spoken word event. From original works to poems recited in Spanish, those who spoke at the event included students, Professor of Hispanic and Latino Studies John Riofrio and internationally-renowned slam poet performer Rafael Casal. Universal themes such as love, family, death and longing were presented as well as highly specific themes

including the struggles faced by Latinos in the United States, racism in society and American workers' campaign for better wages. Stephany Lazo '14 recited an original work dedicated to her Nicaraguan grandmother, a woman who accomplished much in a patriarchal society. Daniel Vivas '11 recited two original works where he addressed the question of race and ethnicity by illustrating the struggle that comes with being

a Latino male. Jessica Chilin-Hernández '12, recited a classic Salvadoran poem "Manos de mi Madre" by Alfredo Espino and the contemporary poem, "Icnocuiatl" by poet Nahautl Natalio.

The event was a great success and was widely attended. It not only showed the talent found in W&M students, but it also showcased the diversity of identities among Latinos in the U.S.

## Rumble in the Jungle

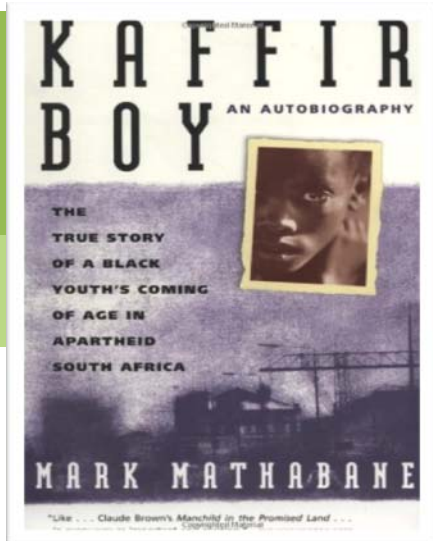
Article by Blair Smith '12

*Sponsored by the Mu Upsilon Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. and the Kappa Pi Chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.*



At the beginning of each school year, the Deltas and Alphas start the year off right with their annual Rumble in the Jungle Party. This school year was no different. The party was held in our Sadler Center and students from W&M as well as those from surrounding schools (ODU, VSU, VCU, Richmond, NSU and UVA) came out in support. All proceeds from the event go to fund Delta and Alpha service projects during the school year.





## Author of *Kaffir Boy* visits the College

Article by Christiana Kallon '11

Bestselling South African author speaks to packed crowd on xenophobia and racial intolerance

On Thursday November 18, 2010 the College had the honor of hosting Dr. Mark Mathabane, best-selling author of *Kaffir Boy*. The book captures Mr. Mathabane's gripping memoir about growing up in apartheid South Africa. An eager audience of students, faculty, and Williamsburg residents filled Andrews 101 lecture hall to listen to Mr. Mathabane's presentation titled "Xenophobia and Religious and Racial Intolerance in America: Lessons from Apartheid South Africa."

Dr. Mathabane was born in the ghetto of Alexandra, in Johannesburg, South Africa. He is the eldest of seven children, and the first one in his family to be educated. A childhood of devastating poverty, terrifying and brutal police raids and relentless humiliation drove him to the brink of suicide at the age of ten. He escaped from apartheid in 1978 at the age of 18 when Stan Smith, the American tennis professional and former Wimbledon champion, arranged a tennis scholarship for Mathabane to study at an American college.

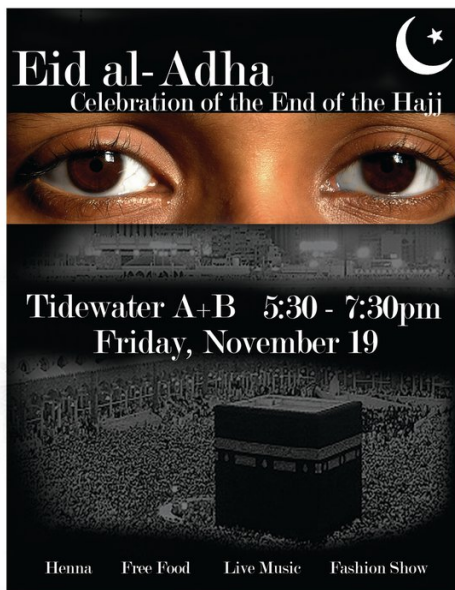
Mathabane touched the hearts of millions with the publication of his first book, *Kaffir Boy*, in 1986. Telling the true story of his coming of age under apartheid in South Africa, the book made the *New York Times* and *Washington Post* bestseller lists and was translated into several languages.

The presentation fittingly followed an information session on William & Mary's Summer Study Abroad Program in Cape Town, South Africa. The Cape Town program mixes classroom instruction and hands-on service learning, allowing students to study and experience how post-apartheid South Africa is working to combat racial, ethnic, economic and political disparity. Students take up to three three-credit courses, one of which requires students to work as English, math or computer tutors to 11 and 12 year-olds in Khayelitsha, one of Cape Town's largest townships. The Cape Town program includes excursions to locations such as Robben Island (the site where Nelson Mandela was

imprisoned), Table Mountain, Cape Point, museums and historic sites in and around Cape Town. In only its second year, the program has had the highest number of students of all 15 William & Mary summer study abroad programs.



## Celebrating the return of pilgrims from the Hajj: Eid Al-Adha at W&M



Article by Jess Chilin-Hernandez '12

On November 16, 2010, Muslims around the world celebrated the three day festival of Eid Al-Adha. It marks the end of the Hajj, the pilgrimage compulsory for every Muslim who is in good health and in good financial standing. At William & Mary, the Muslim Student Association (MSA) organized a campus-wide event

open to the community to not only celebrate Eid Al-Adha, but also to educate the community about Islam, its traditions, basic beliefs and what the pilgrimage of the Hajj is all about. Original skits written by the MSA Executive Board conveyed these themes to the audience.

The event also featured a fashion show, where students modeled different traditional clothes worn all over the Muslim World, from Pakistan to Egypt, and from Indonesia to Morocco. The fashion show was greatly enjoyed by those in attendance. In addition, the event offered traditional Afghan dishes and henna.

The goals of the MSA are to introduce the W&M community to Islamic culture and appreciation, to establish a presence of Muslim identity and to promote a sense of community among Muslims on campus.

The MSA plays an important role in promoting diversity at William & Mary. Galley Saleh '12 said "Here on campus, it can be hard to celebrate Eid, but the MSA really helps with bringing the W&M family together. It works to unite students, faculty, and the community, members of all races and faiths, to come together and celebrate the return of pilgrims from the Hajj."



## What's Faith Got To Do With It? Article by Sarah Mellman '12

I-Faith is a new interfaith organization at William & Mary. Two dedicated undergraduates established I-Faith in the spring of 2010. This semester, the organization put on its first campus-wide event: the Week of Religious Diversity. I-Faith solicited submissions from the entire campus community, submissions that expressed students' relationships to their religion, spirituality and secularism. Over 30 poems, quotes, photographs and personal statements were posted on a huge

display board in the middle of the Sadler Center.

On Friday, November 19th, the Week of Religious Diversity culminated in William & Mary's first-ever, all inclusive interfaith dialogue and dinner. Over 60 students, professors, college-affiliated religious leaders and administrators gathered over dinner to discuss different aspects of all religions, such as holidays and traditions, prayer and service to others. The event was a huge success, and I-Faith plans on organizing more events like the Week of Religious

Diversity in the future.

I-Faith aims to increase the William & Mary community's awareness of the rich religious diversity that exists on campus. It hopes to promote religious understanding and tolerance among people at William & Mary and in the broader world. I-Faith encourages members of the W&M community to learn about others' religious and spiritual identities by actively and respectfully engaging with people of diverse backgrounds and beliefs





Article by Blair Smith '10

## Student Hip-Hop Organization's "NC to VA" Concert featuring Actual Proof, Ced Hughes, Nickelus F, Intalek and Millz.

It is not every day that you see a hip-hop concert on campus. The William & Mary Student Hip-Hop Organization promises that there will be a least one great hip-hop concert or event each semester. This semester's concert featured local artists like North Carolina's Actual Proof (of Super Producer 9th Wonder's It's a Wonderful World label), Virginia Beach's Ced Hughes and Intalek, and Richmond's Nickelus F and Millz. Each artist brought their own flavor to the concert and put on a great show.



On November 6, the Students of the Caribbean Association and the Hispanic Cultural Organization celebrated their annual Comida Casera dinner. This Saturday evening event saw more than 60 students swarm into Tazewell lounge to consume delectable foods of Caribbean and Hispanic influences. Comida Casera is a free meal that allows students a brief reprieve from cafeteria food which, although good, does not compensate for a warm, home-cooked meal. With Thanksgiving not quite around the corner, there is no better way to experience a bit of culture and a taste of deliciousness during the middle of the semester.

## Cultural Cuisine

Article by Matt Sinclair '11

## Stomp Fest

Article by Matt Sinclair '11



Homecoming weekend culminated for many in the multicultural community with the Black Student Organization's annual Homecoming Stomp Fest on Saturday October 23. This sold-out event included National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC) sororities and fraternities from The College of William & Mary, Virginia Commonwealth University, Virginia State University and Virginia Tech competing for the coveted title of best fraternity and best sorority, along with a hefty \$1,000 prize.

The NPHC is the umbrella organization composed of the nine historically black intercollegiate fraternities and sororities, known as the divine nine, created in 1930 at Howard University. Service and uplift of the community are the main goals of NPHC organizations, although stepping is an integral tradition amongst them that fosters healthy competition. Stepping – which originates in African culture, in part, from gumboot dancers – is percussive dance in which the participant's entire body is used as an instrument to produce complex rhythms and sounds through a mixture of footsteps, spoken word and hand claps. Stepping was popularized by the NPHC, and today, step shows take place on local, regional and national levels, not necessarily confined to the divine nine.

This College's Kappa Pi Chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. took first prize among the fraternities. It was an electrifying night which saw the campus community united in a cacophony of steps and claps – not unusual for one of the most anticipated events of the semester.