Mental health

Racial discrimination and diversity inhibits awareness

BY MEGAN SALO
@Iowastatedaily.com

This story is part two of a series for Voices, which is a project that seeks to facilitate civil discourse and build awareness about diversity at Iowa State.

"Discrimination makes you tired. It makes you feel isolated. It makes you feel frustrated and it's a lot of pain," said Malik Burton, the president of the Black Student Alliance at Iowa State.

For the 4,290 Iowa State students who identify as a person of color, these feelings may be constants that the 28,736 white students can't relate to in the same ways.

The stress of being an underrepresented student on a predominantly white campus can be difficult and can attribute to some serious mental health issues.

Loneliness

For Mehul Shinde, current president of the Indian Students’ Association and former president of the International Students’ Council at Iowa State, this stress hit him during his first few days on campus in 2015.

"During orientation, I was left all alone and it was sort of a setback for me," said Shinde. "Just knowing that I would have to start all over again and I couldn't even remember how to make friends."

He said that everything in his social life worked out — he was able to connect to people and make and keep friends, but that wouldn't be the last time that he would feel excluded on campus.

Discrimination

"The biggest sort of discrimination I've faced is in employment," said Shinde. Shinde has experience working as a research assistant, a lab intern and a software developer, but has still struggled to find a summer internship as a junior engineering major.

"The first question that [companies] asked me after seeing my resume was if I would need sponsorship for my visa if I started full time. When I said yes, most of them said they didn't do sponsorships."

He said that it was difficult and stressful seeing people who had less experience than him getting the internships or jobs that he wanted purely based on his need for sponsorship.

The stress experienced from being discriminated against is a major factor in someone's mental health, according to the minority stress model, discussed by Dr. Carolyn Cutrona in part one of this series.

Burton talked about the discrimination he has faced, whether that he being followed around a store because the employees thought he might steal something, being pulled over for making an "illegal turn" or because his headlights were too dim and even being called on in class to answer questions about race.

"All that takes a toll, especially if you grew up around people that had the same identity as you and then you come somewhere where there's not very many people like you," Burton said.

Misdiagnosis and vicarious trauma

In addition to the stress of discrimination, misdiagnosis by mental health professionals also attribute to mental health issues among African and African American communities. According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness, African American women are more likely to describe their mental illness in physical symptoms such as bodily aches or pains, which some doctors may not recognize as mental illness symptoms.

In addition, African American men are more likely to be diagnosed with schizophrenia when in reality they may be experiencing PTSD or vicarious trauma.

"[Vicarious trauma is] when you see a black person being killed by the police every single day, that’s a mental health aspect because then you have paranoia, you don’t trust the police, you are afraid to go outside because you can literally see yourself in that situation," Burton said.

Healthcare issues

Because of the rarity of vicarious trauma in other races, Burton emphasized the need for more diverse healthcare providers who won't overlook or misdiagnose these issues because they may have experienced them themselves.

The lack of diverse healthcare providers in addition to the cost of treatment is a deterrent for families to seek mental treatment.

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Reiman juggles life’s journey
Central Iowa’s own ‘Greatest Showman’

BY KEEGAN.KEARNEY
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Growing up the youngest of three sons, Cole Reiman had trouble living up to the achievements of his brothers. One was a star athlete; the other, a brainy, high achieving student.

Reiman was neither; his grades weren’t bad, but he never had an interest in sports, thus having no skills to compare to his older brothers. Then, out of sheer boredom, he decided that he would learn a new skill: juggling. After two hours of practice and after dropping the baseballs on his hard kitchen floor an embarrassing number of times, he had learned the basics of ball juggling. Today, at 18, Reiman can juggle—in fact, he can do it on a unicycle. He can also do it while solving a Rubik’s cube behind his back. In a typical practice session, you might find him balancing a steel ladder on his chin, snapping a bottle out of the air with a bullwhip or performing a host of other feats in preparation for his next show.

Reiman is a professional performing artist, playing at large venues for a variety of events in the Des Moines area, including the Iowa State Fair, his highest paid performance to date. Despite doing his shows professionally and carrying around a stack of business cards, Reiman does’t like to think of himself as a professional. To him, all of this is just another aspect of his life, and an important part of his personal philosophy: anything can be achieved with the right effort, and the most worthwhile goals are those that affect other people.

“That’s what his business as a performance artist means to him; reaching his audience and showing them something they never thought possible—like balancing a kayak on his chin or juggling a baseball, bowling ball and ping pong ball at the same time.”

Don’t believe it? Neither do some audience members—until he proves it to them by dropping the bowling ball. “Pretty much anything can be a juggling prop,” said Reiman, who has a trunk of props that resembles a travel-sized toy store or the lost and found bin at a circus. There are clubs, hoops, rings, bottles, spinning plates and a six foot steel ladder among its contents. Reiman also recalled instances where he juggled shoes taken from audience members.

Reiman is a freshman in agricultural education at DMACC, a decision that actually came to him through his performances. After playing for a large crowd at Hilton Coliseum for the FFA, he realized that he wanted to use the skills he has learned as a performer to teach, and to hopefully impart something entirely new and unexpected on the people he meets both in the classroom and on the stage.

Although he had been performing for years for people in his community, Reiman’s decision to brand himself and start actively pursuing show business came after his largest performance, two large shows at the State Fair that amassed huge audiences. The encouragement he got from the woman who had hired him for the show changed his outlook on the possibilities of what a person can really do. This is his way of giving back to the community.

“It was always; how can I take this to the next step to make people and impressed and see something that they didn’t think they would see today… something that they didn’t think was possible.”

Although his tricks seem impossible to his audience, it is his work ethic that has brought him so far; Reiman sets a goal and chases it hard, grinding at the intricacies of a new trick until he learns the basics of juggling in two hours, unicycling took him a couple months and he generally spends a lot of time per day learning and mastering his moves.

Some people may have different aptitudes and find certain tricks easier or harder. He also says that certain studies have proven that learning complex skills like juggling may increase gray matter and connections in the brain, which he believes is definitely his experience. He encourages everyone to give juggling, or whatever skill piques their interest, a chance, no matter how difficult it seems.

“You always gotta keep at it,” he said. “If you have a passion, and you want to work towards it, you always gotta keep moving forward. If you enjoy it, then other people will too.”

Overall, Cole Reiman’s main goal in show business is to impart one of the many wisdoms he has come across in his juggling journey; “You’re always gonna have regrets,” he said. “But you just need to choose which ones are worth regretting.”
New bill potentially leads to discrimination

A new bill about religious liberty is moving through the Iowa Legislature and stirring up controversy after opponents say it will lead to discrimination.

Currently, Iowa law does not require courts to strictly follow the free exercise of religion when enforcing and reviewing laws, but this bill, SB 3171, aims to change that.

Sen. Julian Garrett, R-Indianola, who heads the bill in the Senate, said it would require the government to have the highest amount of proof before discriminating against someone’s free exercise of religion.

“If the government is impeding on religious beliefs, they would only be able to do so as a last resort, and this is essential to protect the free exercise of religion in Iowa,” Garrett said.

One example Garrett cited was in Texas where the government subpoenaed sermons of a pastor to enforce and review laws, but this bill, SSB 3171, aims to change that.

The panel will begin at 6 p.m. on Thursday at the Octagon Center for the Arts in Ames. Gray’s exhibit “A Negro From the South” is being displayed at the Octagon Center until March 9.

“Preventing the discrimination of religious beliefs, they would only be able to do so as a last resort, and this is essential to protect the free exercise of religion in Iowa,” Garrett said.

Omni, a political group at the University of Iowa, was kicked off campus for not letting a gay student lead a group.

“This group is now back on campus, but if this bill had been there, it would have protected the group’s religious freedom,” Garrett said.

Opponents see this application of the bill as problematic. Rep. Beth Wessel-Kroeschell, D-Ames, said that allowing these groups to discriminate and exclude is not a part of Iowa values and would be breaking the Iowa civil rights code.

Wessel-Kroeschell, who helped add new protections under the civil rights code in 2007, said, “this bill would be infringing upon many of the protections that were added including the accommodation protection that would prevent a religious person from discriminating against someone based on their sexuality.”

The religious group at the University of Iowa defended their decision arguing that other groups on campus were allowed to.disallow certain members from being in leadership positions.

“Discrimination of religious practice like this is really the purpose of the bill,” Garrett said.

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The conservative Christian group says they allow anyone to join their group, but the leaders in the group must affirm a statement of faith that rejects homosexuality.

Garrett said that other states with similar laws have not had issues with discrimination despite a majority of states having similar laws in place with 21 states having laws in place and 10 others with protections built into their state constitutions.

When asked, Wessel-Kroeschell denied this claim, saying that discrimination has been prevalent in states that have passed similar laws and they have faced “massive economic problems as a result.”

“Diversity and anti-discrimination policies help businesses grow and provides a reason for them to come to Iowa. The state owes its low unemployment, pro-business system largely to the protections in the civil rights code,” Wessel-Kroeschell said.

The biggest red flag for her is that, “the businesses are registered against the bill, the Methodists and other religious groups are against the bill, and the only groups for the bill are the conservative religious groups,” Wessel-Kroeschell said.

The bill was passed in the Senate committee and will face floor debate later this session.
POLICE BLITTER

2.20.18

Andrew Henderson, age 21, of 2129 Hawthorn Court Dr Unit 8130 – Ames, IA, was cited and released for leaving the scene of a traffic accident (Case update).

An individual reported the theft of a bicycle at Buchanan Hall (reported at 3:20 p.m.).

An individual reported the theft of clothing at 2119 Edenburn Dr (reported at 4:25 p.m.).

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Online feedback may be used if first name and last name, major and year in school are included in the post. Feedback posted online is eligible for print in the Iowa State Daily.

Privatizing Medicaid doesn’t work

in school we often hear or say that we can learn from our mistakes. But Iowa Republicans and Gov. Kim Reynolds doesn’t seem to have heard that advice. Or maybe they need to make many mistakes before the learning begins.

Medicaid privatization was former Governor Branstad’s initiative. Republicans argued that the service would be better and costs would be lower. In fact, since privatization began in April 2016, just the opposite has happened: service has declined precipitously and costs are higher.

But the only recognition that things have gone awry is Governor Reynolds’ statement that “mistakes were made” while offering no real path to correct them.

Privatization began with three companies taking over the administration of Medicaid, a program that covers about 600,000 Iowans. Within 18 months one company withdrew, saying it could not make a profit and arguing it had too many patients with severe medical problems. Those patients existed prior to privatization and were being cared for much better under state administration. The patients, for whom available services had already been curtailed when privatization occurred, had to deal with more disruption in their medical care.

In late 2017, the state had to assume responsibility for over 10,000 patients temporarily because the other two private companies could not take on the patients stranded by the third company’s departure.

To satisfy the two remaining companies, an increase of $128.2 million was agreed upon. But as is true of Medicaid generally, the bulk of that ($147 million dollars) was to be covered by the federal government, so Iowa officials could shirk it off.

Meanwhile, complaints by patients about denial of care and by medical personnel about lack of reimbursement continue unabated. Most recently, the Des Moines Register reported that the private administrators’ failure to pay would result in the likely closing of a very successful addiction treatment program at the Polk County Jail.

When will Republicans stop reflexively arguing that private business runs every program more efficiently than the government does? How much evidence must accumulate before they start to learn from their mistakes?
It is 75 degrees, you are within a pitch from ending your senior year of softball, and it is the end of your high school career. You have been offered a Division I scholarship to continue your softball career. Now, you could have signed with any team out there, and for some reason some coach from the Midwest convinces you that you are a key foundation of forming a new team.

You are a foundation member of a new program, and you sign your national letter of intent to Iowa State University in Ames, Iowa. A powerhouse five program for football, men’s and women’s basketball, volleyball and, yes, softball.

A power five program for football, men’s and women’s basketball, volleyball and, yes, softball. You choose to attend school in Ames, Iowa, not because you like the cold, but because you like the idea of adding to tradition and being a key member at the next level.

Fast-forward to the first practice, not outdoors in the good ole diamond in 75-degree weather, but rather in the sports facility named Bergstrom Indoor Facility, a turf-field used mostly by the football team.

Bergstrom is next to Jack Trice Stadium, the home of Iowa State football. Your sport facility is roughly a mile away. The reason you can’t train is because it is 15 degrees outside. There is snow and ice on the roads, sidewalks, and yes, on the beloved diamond.

This is the life of every southern player in the Cyclone softball program. Coming from the likes of California, Texas, Arizona, Tennessee, to Montana, Minnesota, and Iowa of course, the Cyclone softball team is composed of a diversity of players. Not just from the playing aspect, but from “what I call home” state.

We can look at the 2018 roster, Kirsten Caudle (San Bernardino), Jackie Chavez (Highland), Sami Williams (Laguna Niguel), Julie Lewis (Arroyo Grande), Sally Woolpert (Cypress), Skylee Ramos (Ventura) and Nycole Antillon (Orange) are all from the state of California.

Meanwhile, Kaylee Bosworth (Manvel, Texas) and Cara Beatty (Las Vegas, Nevada) and Savannah Sanders (Mt. Juliet, Tennessee) are also from the south.

Roughly 33 percent of the team is composed from players from outside the Midwest of the United States. With that comes a lot of learning and readjustments from the players not only to getting to college, and learning how to play at the next level, but having to learn to play in the cold and get used to the way Iowa State does softball during the winter season.

New head coach Jaime Pinkerton has recruited three top prospects for the next incoming class, including Kasey Simpson out of Keller, Texas, the No. 15 player in the recruiting class. But his recruiting style has mostly by the football team.

Antillon, a senior out of Orange, California, was recruited by former head coach Stacy Gemeinhardt-Cesler. “They definitely informed me that it was going to be cold,” Antillon said. “They didn’t really say other than bring a lot of warm stuff and that they will provide me with a lot of warm stuff.”

In her time as an infielder for Iowa State, she has adapted her playing style when practicing in the cold, and playing in warmer weather. “Coming from California I never wore [layers of clothes], and coming here I wear leggings, and three [layers],” Antillon said.

Fellow teammate and Californian sophomore infielder Sami Williams also agrees with the transition of geographical areas being strong.

“In working on fielding indoors, I hadn’t really had experience fielding indoors,” Williams said. “Making that transition from playing on turf to dirt is a tough transition.”

Iowa State, for the majority of the winter season, practices indoors, which troubles the infielders and outfielders. Specifically, in the infield it is hard for them to predict the hops and the speed of the ball.

Williams does admit that the conditions from playing in Iowa are new to a lot of these players not used to playing in wet and cold conditions.

“In Iowa, you play through a lot tougher weather. Back home if it starts raining, they call the game, but up here you play through it until it gets really bad,” Williams said.

Probably the furthest from her natural home conditions will have to be Bosworth. The Manvel high school alum, played year-round like most of the southern players, playing in Spring, Texas, for a club softball team during the offseason.

“Coming from a catcher, her biggest adjustment was not the pitching coaches, or even the head coaching changes, but rather her catching skills in different conditions.”

“When it came to catching, the biggest adjustment was getting used to not being able to feel my hand,” Bosworth said. “When it gets cold, I can’t feel it other than the first few pitches, but after a couple pitches it just goes numb.”

With all of these adjustments to the colder weather, one would think that these players would be repelled to some play in colder temperatures. But Pinkerton says it’s not surprising at all.

“We are upfront with them, we tell them that it snows, and that it gets cold,” Pinkerton said. “In the areas we are recruiting, Texas and California, where there’s only so many Division I schools, they don’t have room for all of them, so they start branching out.”

“We have a world class university to sell. We just preach academics, and that there’s not really a big professional contract waiting for them, so they gonna get a quality education. them, so they gonna get a quality education.”
DG’s WELCOMES NEW GENERAL MANAGER

BY KYLE.CRAVENS
@IOWASTATEDAILY.COM

Local music and self-expression has thrived at DG’s Tap House for years. It’s the self-proclaimed premier rock club in town. The general manager position is the middle man between an Ames audience and local talent.

The general manager, among other responsibilities, is tasked with booking a constant variety of entertainment every week. Nate Logsdon was the general manager during the restaurant’s inception, and then it was up to Adam Brimeyer, a position he held for the past two years. Now, Brimeyer has passed the torch to Haley Steen.

“Adam is touring with some bands over the summer as well as some sound engineering work,” Steen said. “It’s daunting to work as a manager of the bar along with other tasks, but he moved on to bigger and better things.”

Steen looks to expand upon the position in interesting ways, learning from the desires of the customers that she has tended to personally in the past. She is doing things her own way; staying close to home with events and entertainment, and offering something for every niche in Ames.

“We were going to do a lot more community events throughout the week, things like poetry and open mics,” Steen said. “We link up with a lot of Iowa State organizations such as a few Latinx sorority on campus. We’re going to do a lot more community nights when people from the theatre department come in and do sketches or playwrites.”

Steen excitedly explained the future of music at DG’s as well.

“Every Friday and Saturday night we will have music no matter what,” Steen said. “Most of the time it will be free but once in a while there will be a small fee for touring bands coming through. The lineups through April are pretty stacked, so the concrete schedule will be coming out very soon.”

Working as a bartender at DG’s for the past five years, Steen was an easy choice for general manage once the decision for a replacement from within the company was made.

“Once I told them I was interested, they approached me about a week later,” Steen said. “Maybe I’m still not used to the job though, because my favorite part of the job remains meeting all the different people we serve and learning their stories.”

Rudy Miller was a co-worker of Steen’s who now finds himself as her subordinate. He, like most of the employees at DG’s, is optimistic for the future under Steen’s leadership.

“Haley stepped up when no one else could and she’s making one hell of an effort to make DG’s into the grand venue she envisions,” Miller said. “She wants the bar to be successful, meaning booking the best acts locally and nationally. She is packing in the house while maintaining the DG’s legacy for being a safe and entertaining environment for anyone.”

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The stress of needing to be strong at all times can not only keep Latinx men from believing in other’s mental illnesses, it can also keep them from seeking help for their own mental health, which can make illnesses worse.

In the general population, men are 3.53 times more likely to die from suicide than women, although prevalence in diagnosed mental health issues is higher in women. This suggests that although men are experiencing mental health issues, they aren’t seeking help for them.

Garcia said that this, along with economic and immigration problems are the main stressors for Latinx families and individuals.

What can change At Iowa State

Shinde pushes for a more diverse student population on campus.

“Our campus is far from being diverse,” Shinde said. “Both local students are missing out because they aren’t experiencing as much international exposure and the international students are suffering because a lot of them are isolated from the main stream.”

Barton pushes for more culturally aware counselors and more resources on campus.

“Getting mental help is like a job process — they can get to know you on paper, but that interview is where you get to see the rest of who they are,” Barton said. “We also need more diverse mental health staff and to expand the staff in general. Adding resources specifically for minorities and advertising those resources would make it less of a taboo topic.”

Garcia pushes for more diverse counselors and teachers on campus.

“[More people of color in these positions] doesn’t mean that a person can’t identify with a person of color if they’re not a person of color, but I believe it’s easier to connect because you kind of know the struggles that you’ve faced between each other and it doesn’t need to be said — you just look at each other and you just kind of know,” Garcia said.

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Steen excitedly explained the future of music at DG’s as well.

“Every Friday and Saturday night we will have music no matter what,” Steen said. “Most of the time it will be free but once in a while there will be a small fee for touring bands coming through. The lineups through April are pretty stacked, so the concrete schedule will be coming out very soon.”

Working as a bartender at DG’s for the past five years, Steen was an easy choice for general manage once the decision for a replacement from within the company was made.

“Once I told them I was interested, they approached me about a week later,” Steen said. “Maybe I’m still not used to the job though, because my favorite part of the job remains meeting all the different people we serve and learning their stories.”

Rudy Miller was a co-worker of Steen’s who now finds himself as her subordinate. He, like most of the employees at DG’s, is optimistic for the future under Steen’s leadership.

“Haley stepped up when no one else could and she’s making one hell of an effort to make DG’s into the grand venue she envisions,” Miller said. “She wants the bar to be successful, meaning booking the best acts locally and nationally. She is packing in the house while maintaining the DG’s legacy for being a safe and entertaining environment for anyone.”

The stress of needing to be strong at all times can not only keep Latinx men from believing in other’s mental illnesses, it can also keep them from seeking help for their own mental health, which can make illnesses worse.

In the general population, men are 3.53 times more likely to die from suicide than women, although prevalence in diagnosed mental health issues is higher in women. This suggests that although men are experiencing mental health issues, they aren’t seeking help for them.

Garcia said that this, along with economic and immigration problems are the main stressors for Latinx families and individuals.

What can change At Iowa State

Shinde pushes for a more diverse student population on campus.

“Our campus is far from being diverse,” Shinde said. “Both local students are missing out because they aren’t experiencing as much international exposure and the international students are suffering because a lot of them are isolated from the main stream.”

Barton pushes for more culturally aware counselors and more resources on campus.

“Getting mental help is like a job process — they can get to know you on paper, but that interview is where you get to see the rest of who they are,” Barton said. “We also need more diverse mental health staff and to expand the staff in general. Adding resources specifically for minorities and advertising those resources would make it less of a taboo topic.”

Garcia pushes for more diverse counselors and teachers on campus.

“[More people of color in these positions] doesn’t mean that a person can’t identify with a person of color if they’re not a person of color, but I believe it’s easier to connect because you kind of know the struggles that you’ve faced between each other and it doesn’t need to be said — you just look at each other and you just kind of know,” Garcia said.

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Blaxicans and the Future of Identity in the U.S.

**Walter Thompson-Hernandez**


Thursday, February 22, 2018 - 7pm
Sun Room, Memorial Union

Sponsored by: Latino/a Studies Program and Committee on Lectures (funded by Student Government)

From Mythbusters to White Rabbit Project

**Grant Imahara**

Grant Imahara, formerly on Mythbusters, now stars on the Netflix Series The White Rabbit Project, a show about weird science and unusual tech that has been described as “Mythbusters in Wonderland.”

Thursday, February 22, 2018 - 8pm
Great Hall, Memorial Union

Sponsored by: Engineers’ Week, Committee on Lectures (funded by Student Government)

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