



MRC NEWS

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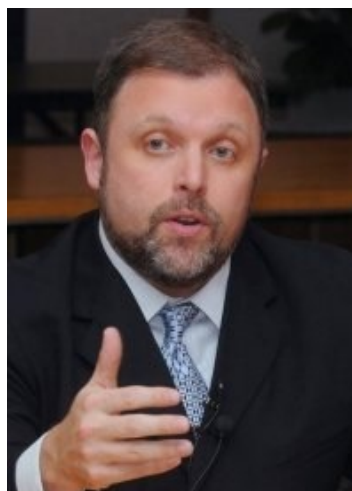
JAN/FEB 2011

TIM WISE CHARGES THE LEHIGH COMMUNITY TO TAKE “PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY”

One of the few 2011 MLK week events that survived the storm was the kickoff keynote address by anti-racist writer and educator Tim Wise. Wise addressed a full auditorium of Lehigh students, faculty, staff and surrounding community members on Tuesday, January 25 at 7:30pm. The keynote address, which followed an intimate faculty reception, was highly anticipated and well attended.

Wise has spoken in 49 states on over 600 college campuses across the world and was particularly active during the week of Dr. Martin Luther King’s birthday. Lehigh was just one of many stops for him that week, but his impression will probably last well beyond his visit. Wise began his address with a candid account of life as a college graduate in New Orleans with 8 roommates. Though the story seemed to have little to do with race or social justice, the overarching message was transferrable: a mess created by one person will continue to spread if others refrain from attending to it. It was a simple message yet very powerful, and College of Education students who occupied the first two front rows of the auditorium remarked that this is what the Lehigh community needed to hear.

As Wise continued to build on his opening story, his message became even clearer. Regardless of who is to blame for the current state of race relations in our country, we have an individual responsibility to correct these flaws. Regardless of the color of our skin, we all have a role to play in building a socially just nation. Wise continued to interweave this message throughout a string of research and historical facts often neglected in textbooks and class lectures. Data supporting the over-identification of minority men at traffic stops and the likelihood of White men possessing illegal substances when they are stopped is information rarely discussed in our classrooms.



*Anti-racist writer and speaker
Tim Wise*

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Special points of interest:

- Vagina Monologues, February 11-13
- Be a part of your own history, February 10
- Good & Bad Hair, February 15
- Percy Hughes Award winner Michele Vella!

TIM WISE CHARGES THE LEHIGH COMMUNITY TO TAKE “PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY” *CONTINUED...*

The history of a criminal case tried in Detroit against a Black doctor whose family retaliated against an attack on their home provided the audience with a picture of how inequity was legally combated at the turn of the 20th century as well as its existence above the Mason Dixon line.

Following his evidence-based address, Wise charged the audience to take one thing away—the concept of personal responsibility. More simply put, instead of playing the blame game, we all should feel personally responsible to do what’s right. When the floor was opened for questions, the audience expressed gratitude and learned about Wise’s opinions of President Obama. Then some audience members led the conversation in a different direction. Two women who appeared to be members of the surrounding community expressed outrage toward Wise for “demonizing” White people. The women went on to describe the benefits minorities receive for living in America and attributed the economic gap between minorities and the majority to illegitimate births. As Wise attempted to respond in a professional manner, the audience members continued to yell their opinions about race relations in America. Though the one-sided dialogue made audience members visibly uncomfortable, director of Lehigh’s multicultural affairs and MLK committee chair Dr. Jame’l Hodges expressed that he was glad the exchange occurred. He explained how it demonstrated to our campus that ignorance still exists and provided Tim Wise with the chance to set an excellent example of how to address and challenge this ignorance. Though many of the 2011 MLK week events were cancelled or rescheduled, the snow was unable to prevent an extremely successful kickoff event that continues to have our campus buzzing!

FEBRUARY 2011: *BLACK HISTORY MONTH & V-WEEK*

Thursday, February 10th

Haiti Discussion, 4pm, Maginnes 102. Discussion led by Professor Tanya Saunders of the Sociology and Anthropology Department on the history of Haiti and what life has been like for survivors of the earthquake.

Be a Part of Your Own History, 7pm M-Room

Sex Trivia at the Goose! 8pm, 10:00pm in the Gander Room. Come test your sex knowledge for fun prizes.



Friday, February 11th

Lunch at Deja Brew, 11am-12:00pm. A portion of the proceeds will be donated to the efforts of the Vagina Monologues. From now until the end of February, get a delicious Cherry Bomb at Deja Brew and a portion of the proceeds will be donated!

The Vagina Monologues, 7pm, Packard Auditorium 101

Saturday, February 12th

The Vagina Monologues, 7pm Packard Auditorium 101

Sunday, February 13th

The Vagina Monologues, 3pm Packard Auditorium 101

Tuesday, February 15th

Good and Bad Hair, Local barber and hair stylist will educate & demonstrate ways to maintain healthy hair, 7pm in Lamberton

Friday, February 18th

Black History Month Make and Take (OMA and Student Activities), 12pm, Lamberton “Great Room”



Thursday, February 24th

All Greek To Me: Revealing the Traditions, History & Culture of Historically Black Greek Lettered Organizations, 7pm, Packard 101

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The MRC seeks to foster knowledge, skills, understanding, and awareness in the area of multiculturalism and diversity. Its core goals are to: (1) Create a space with resources to foster discussion and development, (2) Foster a culture among faculty, staff, and students that is supportive of and open to diverse perspectives and experiences, (3) Help develop the school community to better reflect the diverse communities served by the College's fields of professional practice and (4) Strengthen the curriculum across programs to better reflect issues of multiculturalism and diversity.

Check out www.lehigh.edu/mrc for updates, events, and the monthly newsletter MRC NEWS!

COE'S MICHELE VELLA RECEIVES 2011 PERCY HUGHES AWARD

COE ANNOUNCEMENT LETTER from Percy Hughes award committee chair Dr. Iveta Silova

Michele M. Vella, a doctoral student in COE Counseling Psychology program, was nominated for her leadership in, passionate commitment to, and strong engagement with issues of social change and progressive, transformative activism, and scholarship in both the Lehigh community and beyond. She has been recognized for her outstanding contributions to Lehigh University's Council of Equity and Community, the Lehigh Valley Hospital AID Activity Office, Lehigh University's Office of Multiculturalism, and NGO Geriatric Pakistan. As one of the nominators noted, Michele "applies her education by practicing what she has learned in her work with a true desire to help people and make a real difference."

Another nominator explained: "In her own scholarly work, Michele is deeply committed to illuminating the experiences of underserved (and often culturally silenced) women, and of thinking of new approaches to improve their lives and empower them to create better futures for themselves and their families. In her engagement in the Lehigh community, Michele has consistently demonstrated her interest in fostering connections between Lehigh and the local, national, and global communities, working with the Lehigh-UN program to engage Lehigh students to become interested in helping to create solutions to global problems, and bringing speakers to campus to raise awareness about HIV/AIDS, and to empower students to most effectively prevent and treat this disease."

Michele will be donating half of her award to Lehigh University/United Nations Partnership, the American Behcet's Disease Association (ABDA), and First Hospital Substance Abuse Unit.