

THE GUSTAVIAN WEEKLY

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ISSUE 15

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Tolerating the intolerance



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Women's Hockey crowned MIAC champions



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Fast-a-Thon event held on Thursday, February 20 allowed students to experience cuisines from various cultures.

Cadence Paramore

Campus tastes and celebrates different cultures at Fast-a-Thon event

Emily VanGorder
Staff Writer

Gustavus held its Fast-a-Thon on Thursday, Feb. 20, an event that has been happening since 2013. The Multifaith Leadership Council (MLC) and Muslim Students Association (MSA).

"[We] decided to work on this program together. Both groups belong to the Diversity Leadership Council (DLC), which encourages partnering with other student organizations," Interfaith Program Coordinator and Professor Marian Broida said.

"[The Fast-a-Thon] aimed to introduce a platform of interfaith dialogue and encouraged followers of different religions to come together on the mutual practice of fasting," MSA co-president and Senior Mehreen Kamal said.

"[It was] inspired by the 'Better Together' initiative

of [the] Interfaith Youth Core (IFYC), a non-profit based in Chicago. The goal is to bring diverse students together to work towards a shared goal or issue," Kamal said.

"It was a natural fit for the two groups [to work together] since it highlights learning about other religious traditions and raises awareness about fasting, a central practice for Muslims during the month of Ramadan," Broida said.

"We were inspired by the other Fast-a-Thons that had previously happened in other schools in the U.S. and abroad, and we wanted to be part of it," Junior Hanaa Alhosawi said.

Kamal led the project as co-president of the MSA and member of the MLC.

"[The day was] an invitation for voluntary day-long observation to fast, whatever that might mean to each individual," Kamal said.

"[I] chaired a planning subgroup that met over J-term to do much of the planning, as well as the first two MLC meetings of spring semester. The planning group included members from the MLC, MSA and Sophie Martinez, [a] student employee of the chaplain's office," Broida said.

The planning group chose to have the Fast-a-Thon raise money for Hikmah, a local project through the St. Peter Islamic Center that focuses on helping youth English-language learners (ELL). Founder Mohamed Abdulkadir created the program to help students improve their academic skills. Twenty Hikmah participants and members of local churches were invited to the Fast-a-Thon.

"Mr. Abdulkadir reached out to five Somali families who were involved with Hikmah, [and] they came with their kids. The kids were so excited to be

there. It made for a very exciting evening," Broida said.

Attendees raised \$391 to donate to Hikmah.

There were over 60 participants in this year's Fast-a-Thon.

"[It was] a terrific opportunity for members of different religions, traditions, and worldviews to meet each other, learn about fasting practices and share an amazing meal," Broida said.

The Fast-a-Thon Feast included dates, challah bread, bobalki (sweet Slovak bread balls), fruit, chicken and vegetarian curry and frost your owns. Challah is typically served during Shabbat, the Jewish sabbath, and around the time of the Jewish New Year.

"Jews often bake a special round challah with dry fruit in it, signifying life's sweetness. This is the kind that was served at the Fast-a-Thon Feast because Jews often eat it when breaking

their Yom Kippur fast," Broida said.

"[Dates are] significant for breaking fast in Islam [the] bobalki was suggested by Angelina Hathy," Kamal said.

Student insight was important to the group.

"[We] gave priority to students to be on the panel," Kamal said. The panel included staff and student representatives for Islam, Judaism, Eastern Orthodox Christianity, Catholicism and Protestantism.

"[The panel] gave insights on fasting in their religions and some personal stories of their own practices" Kamal said.

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Letters to the Editor can be sent to lettertotheeditor@gustavus.edu.

If interested in publishing an ad, please contact our advertisement manager, Jakob Krull, at admanager@gustavus.edu.

Campus Safety Report

Monday, February 17th

- A Gustavus employee reported the loss of a campus key.
- A student reported possibly being drugged while at an off-campus gathering.
- Campus Safety was contacted in regards to a mental health concern.
- Campus Safety performed a welfare check on a student of concern.
- Campus Safety responded to Non-GAC criminal

Tuesday, February 18th

- Campus Safety responded to Sohre Hall for an injured employee. The employee was taken to urgent care.
- Campus Safety was notified of unauthorized items left in a Gustavus motor pool vehicle.
- Campus Safety responded to Sohre Hall

Wednesday, February 19th

- A CF had a resident approach them to show evidence of two students that damaged Gustavus

Thursday, February 20th

- No incidents reported.

Friday, February 21st

- Campus Safety was called to Health Services for a student that had fallen down some stairs in Norelius Hall.
- Campus Safety took a report of damage to a

Saturday, February 22nd

- Campus Safety responded to a 911 call for a fight in progress at Uhler Hall. Three students were referred to Campus Conduct for multiple violations.

Sunday, February 23rd

- No incidents reported.

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Climate talk continues at Gustavus

University of Maine professor brings book-based lecture to campus



Professor Paul Mayewski will present in Nobel Hall on Wednesday, February 26.

Nathan Habben

Parker Lindberg
Staff Writer

University of Maine Professor Paul Mayewski visited campus February 26, to present a lecture titled “Journey into Climate.”

Dr. Mayewski is an acclaimed glaciologist, climate scientist and explorer, as well as the Director of the Climate Change Institute and a Professor in the School of Earth and

Climate Sciences as well as several other departments at the University of Maine.

According to the University of Maine website, Mayewski has over 450 scientific publications and has led more than 55 expeditions to remote places on Earth including Antarctica, Tibet and Greenland.

He has also received many honors and awards, including the first Medal of Excellence in Antarctic Research, the Explorers Club Lowell Thomas Medal and an honorary fellowship

in the American Polar Society. He has also written two books and appeared on “60 Minutes,” NOVA films and the 2014 documentary film “Years of Living Dangerously.”

Some of Dr. Mayewski’s research areas include: changes in atmospheric chemistry both natural and by man-made ice loss in the Antarctic and Himalayas, behavior of abrupt climate change events in the atmosphere, use of instrumentally calibrated ice core records and demonstrated associations

between past climate and disruptions to civilization.

Mayewski’s 2011 book, *Journey into Climate: Exploration, Adventure, and the Unmasking of Human Innocence*, details his explorations into remote polar regions and his journey, and that of the scientific community, into realizing the role humanity plays in the dramatic changes in climate in modern times.

Dr. Mayewski brought this experience to campus for his lecture. Mayewski “[shared] dis-

coveries from his research on ice cores, stories of his expedition adventures, the latest scientific thinking about climate change, and new tools to improve climate predictions” according to the Gustavus event description.

The event was free of charge and did not require a ticket to attend.

Continued from page 1

“Speakers talked about what fasting means to them, how fasting looks in their religion and culture, the meaning of fasting in their culture, [and] what they eat when breaking their fast,” Alhosawi said.

“Students participated in table-talks on fasting, such as what fasting means to each individual on a personal as well as a religious level, how the practice of fasting differs across religions, and how fasting impacts their faith,” Kamal said.

“[It was] so good and pleasant... for people to sit down together in peace,” Broida said, quoting Psalm 133:1. “Truly, this event showed how easy and exciting it can be for people of different backgrounds to learn from each other over wonderful food. Barriers were broken down that night” Broida said.



Students learn how fasting differs from culture to culture.

Cadence Paramore



Fast-a-Thon served bobalki, a sweet Slovak bread roll, along with other cultural dishes.

Cadence Paramore

Sports to stats: Dennis Lock lectures on campus

NFL statistician brings Gustavus insight into the world of football



Dennis Lock gives his lecture in Olin Hall on Tuesday, February 18.

Nathan Habben

Jack Wiessenberger
Staff Writer

Last week, Gustavus students had the opportunity to hear a statistician talk about their work. However, Dennis Lock is no ordinary statistician. Lock works for the NFL as the Director of Football Research and Strategy for the Buffalo Bills. His talk gave students the opportunity to learn more about a real life application of their studies. Seminars such as this one are offered regularly by the Mathematics, Statistics and Computer Science (MCS) department.

"The MCS department is committed to bringing in speakers on a regular basis. We believe this is a valuable opportunity for students to see how to use what they learn in the classroom in their future careers. Last semester we had a mathematician that works on climate change and a data analyst that works for Securian Financial," Assistant Professor Jillian Downey said.

Downey and Lock attended graduate school at Iowa State University together where they

both finished with degrees in statistics.

"My only connection to Gustavus prior to the seminar was Dr. Jillian Downey. We attended grad school together and became close friends, but now I have several connections at Gustavus," Lock said.

Lock had the opportunity to connect with students personally both after his talk as well as during his day-long visit on campus. A few students were able to sit down and chat with Lock during lunch.

"It was cool to talk about sports analytics and the NFL with a professional NFL analyst. Dennis is not just intelligent in the sports analytics world, he is also very insightful on everything statistics," Junior Nicolas Kerbeshian said.

Lock made time to connect with students and share his experiences in statistics with them.

"My interactions with students were great. They were eager and enthusiastic and the turnout for the seminar was impressive. I shared information with several individuals and will enjoy being in contact with them as they discover their path," Lock said.

The seminar was held in a lecture room in Olin Hall. Nearly every seat was filled with Gustavus students and faculty members.

"I was very interested to hear an insider's perspective from someone who worked so closely with many parts of an NFL team. I was surprised to hear about all of the extra data that he works with, such as the equipment used to check how much exertion a player is dealing with during a practice. The League is a huge business and people such as Dennis are hired to provide the teams any possible advantage that they can," Sophomore Filip Belik said.

There were many aspects of Lock's talk that drew the large crowd. The idea of a front office NFL director brought in those interested in the sports aspect of Lock's job. The other side of Lock's job, the statistical analysis side, attracted a lot of those from the MCS department.

"I thought Dennis' talk was at a level that was understandable to students from all backgrounds and majors. During the talk students seemed very engaged, especially during the question and answer portion. I

had a number of students indicate that they are interested in a sports analytics type of career and hearing Dennis talk cemented their desire to pursue a graduate program in statistics," Downey said.

Much of what Dennis had to say was aimed at providing students with guidance for their next steps in the world of statistics.

"The main purpose of my talk was to show a cool way statistical analyses are utilized outside of academia as well as to develop an understanding of sports analytics and analytics in general," Lock said.

Lock wanted to make his seminar as informative for MCS students as possible while also keeping it interesting for those who may not have as much background in statistics as others. He left those on the MCS path with a few pieces of advice.

"Take computer science and statistics - the more computational experience you have the better. Take advantage of your opportunities at Gustavus. Work on data you are passionate about and get your work out there," Lock said.

Stats students were able to

gain a lot of important insight into their possible futures as professional analysts. The MCS department offers these talks regularly to do just that.

"Ever since I became a statistics major at Gustavus, I always thought that being a sports data analyst would be the perfect role for a guy like me who loves both sports and statistics. Lock's talk was great. I love to hear from people who have credentials like Lock has. I would certainly go to another talk like this on campus," Kerbeshian said.

The MCS department received very positive feedback regarding Lock's seminar and visit to campus. Downey and the rest of the department will continue to work on finding the best possible speakers for their students to come learn from.

Gallery Feature: The Poetics of Destruction

Sofia Boda
Section Editor

Art and Art History Instructor and Virginia A. Groot Artist-in-Residence Jacob Stanley's exhibition *The Poetics of Destruction* provides visitors with a new way to experience Gustavus's Schaefer Gallery.

A graduate of the University of Tennessee, Stanley received his Master of Fine Arts in 2010. Since then, his repurposed material sculptures have been featured in dozens of solo and group exhibitions across the United States.

Stanley's work sparks spectator inquiry through his use of available reclaimed industrial materials like wood, metal and screws. Stanley builds his large sculptures to fit the space of the exhibition, allowing viewers to experience an intersection between the blue-collar labor required to complete the sculptures and a space typically reserved for the fine arts.

"[Stanley] provides different views, but at the same time, denies other points of view by making some of his art physically out of reach."

-Senior Patrick Meadows

Many of Stanley's sculptures retain an "undone" feel to them, as the works aim to invoke a "state of ambiguity [which invites] viewers to scrutinize the work and analyze their world".

"It is my aim to create artwork that stays in dynamic stasis—between collapse and construction, tension and balance, refinement and rawness. The installations are often delicate, but not precious, using discarded materials allow me the freedom to take greater risks. These risks engage the public on a gut level by asking viewers to interact with the piece physically it acts as a bridge to theoretical understanding," said Stanley on his website.

"I feel like Stanley's work is meant to inspire different ways of thinking about the same space. He provides different views, but at the same time, denies other points of view by making some of his art physically out of reach," Senior Patrick Meadows said. Meadows serves as THE GUSTAVIAN WEEKLY's Opinion Section Editor.

Stanley's installation in the Schaefer Gallery invites visitors to interact with his art through climbing and feeling the structures. At the same time, the visible nails, bolts and screws holding the sculptures



Nate Habben



Nate Habben



Nate Habben

Top left: A view of 'Fenestrated Bridge'. Top right: 'Clerestory Stairs' from below. Bottom: 'Fenestrated Bridge' and broken platform.

together create a sense of apprehension about the safety of stepping onto the platforms.

"Gallery visitors are welcome to explore this sculpture using the stair provided to access its platform, however all risk is assumed by the gallery visitor," one sign reads.

Regardless of the posted warnings, climbing or sitting on the structures allows for the visitor to fully immerse themselves in the art. Unsanded wood, jagged edges, broken beams and unevenly measured planks add to the aura of neglect surrounding the pieces, but the viewer must negotiate what they see

and feel with the knowledge that the sculptures were intentionally designed for the space.

One piece, "Fenestrated Bridge", invites viewers to climb a series of uneven wooden steps onto an elevated plank bridge supported by broken beams that runs directly into one of the gallery windows. A section of jagged wood planks nailed together and balanced on a ledge above the structure leads viewers to ponder whether or not it was originally a part of the piece they are standing on.

"I wasn't sure about stepping onto the bridge. It was obvious that it was structurally

sound, but there was something that felt inherently wrong about actually touching and interacting with art in a gallery. I'd never done that before, but I think that a lot more students would spend time in our galleries if more exhibits were interactive," Senior Skylar Abrego said.

Another sculpture named 'girls boys, KEEP OUT', is inaccessible to visitors. The small, glowing cabin is perched between a concrete ledge and the wall. It features a small window revealing a lit interior, but viewers cannot see directly into the cabin.

"This is one of the

ways Stanley denies us a view," Meadows said.

A third installation, 'Clerestory Stairs', contrasts the rough hewn feel of 'Fenestrated Bridge' with a neatly build set of curving stairs which lead to a large platform towards the ceiling of the space. Visitors become enclosed by the ceiling and floor platform as they reach the top of the stairs.

While Stanley's formal gallery talk and opening ceremony were held on Feb. 17, *The Poetics of Destruction* will be open to students and the public until March 13.

GUSTIE of the WEEK

Amy Pehrson

Elsa Beise
Staff Writer

This week's Gustie of the Week is finishing up her twenty-ninth year as a full time employee, in addition to having graduated in the Gustavus class of 1991.

Amy Pehrson, Director of the Community Engagement Center, has been a gift to the Gustavus community for years and has dedicated her time and talent to the college, while watching herself grow into the professional she is today, starting in her undergraduate journey.

"Gustavus is really my home. I have grown up here and have had the amazing opportunity to work with so many wonderful people over the years. They are my family. And I have had the greatest blessings of being able to continue my professional development and move into positions that fit my gifts and talents," Pehrson said.

Pehrson began her higher education with the intentions of majoring in elementary education. "When I was a student at Gustavus, I was an elementary education major and during my student teaching in the fall of my senior year, I decided that teaching probably wasn't the best fit for me, so I realized early on that I would just do the next right thing...I have moved around to different positions and roles. In December 2015, I got my masters' degree in servant leadership, and I guess it has been maybe since that time that I realized that my calling is to work with student leaders who do good work," Pehrson said.

During her time as an undergraduate student at Gustavus, Pehrson worked as a student employee, eventually helping to lead her to a job after graduation.

"My student employment, for the four years I was a student, was in the Finance Office. The spring of my senior year, they asked me to stay on for a year to move data from the old computer system into the new system. So I did, and after that year, I actually ended up staying and working as the Accounts Payable clerk coordinator for six years," Pehrson said.

After those six years, she moved to other offices around campus.

"I then moved to the Office of Church Relations where I eventually became the Director of Outreach Ministries working with confirmation coordinators,

youth pastors and youth directors. I was in that role for about four years. Then I moved to the Center for Vocational Reflection and worked with students, faculty and staff on helping them discern their vocation. This was grant funded and ended after about 10 years which then rolled in the Center for Servant Leadership where I worked on vocation, the alumni mentoring program, some of the Gustavus Women in Leadership program and servant leadership," Pehrson said.

After about four to five years, Pehrson worked in the Peer Assistants Office for two years, which then led to her working in her current office, the Center for Community Engagement in February 2017.

Charlie Potts ('01), Vice President for Student Life, has supervised Pehrson for the past two years and has admired her work and loyalty to Gustavus.

"She's so incredibly dedicated to the Gustavus experience, and has taken on several different roles in her professional career here. I think that demonstrates her commitment to the institution and her strong desire to provide the best possible experience for Gustavus students...[Pehrson] does such a great job keeping our awesome service programs up and running at a really high level. She trusts and supports her student coordinators and does a great job empowering students to make the most of the opportunities they have here to be engaged citizens," Potts said.

Pehrson's role in the Community Engagement Center involves working with numerous service programs on campus including Gustie Buddies, Big Partner/Little Partner, Habitat for Humanity, among others. "I manage and advise the [ten] on-going year-long service programs that come out of the Center. I also work with others on campus who are interested in providing service opportunities to students; the Community Engagement Center hosts the annual Angel Giving Tree in the fall, and various other projects that come up. The role I have right now is a wonderful place for me to be because it utilizes my strengths working with student leaders, the many connections I have with people on campus and in the community and allows me to serve others while others serve," Pehrson said.

Senior Abbie Biegner has appreciated working closely with Pehrson over her years at Gustavus through programs

like Habitat for Humanity, Study Buddies, Big Partner/Little Partner and service other events. "Amy is an incredible person to work with. She is the leader for all of the Community Engagement Center student leaders here at Gustavus. The Community Engagement Center and Gustavus organizations wouldn't be able to accomplish half of the work we do without her endless support and dedication to the Gustavus and St. Peter community. Amy has an amazing work ethic and is a great communicator and listener to everyone she meets. She also displays great empathy for the communities we work with on and off campus. Amy's leadership and guidance is the driving force that allows students to fulfill roles as new leaders, cultivate change and advocate for equity in their communities. Amy and her work are vital to the progress and development of student role models and community outreach here at Gustavus," Biegner said.

Outside of Gustavus, Pehrson is an active member of her community as well. "Outside of Gustavus, I am active at my church, First Lutheran, here in St. Peter as an assisting minister, substitute ringer in the bell choir, and while my kids were growing up taught Sunday School and Confirmation. I am the leader of the Norseland 4-H club and love working with the youth who are in leadership positions and with the younger kids who enjoy the crafts and snack. I enjoy reading, snuggling with my dogs, Pepper and Roy, and getting hooked on a good binge-worthy series, some favorites include The Crown, Outlander and Poldark," Pehrson said.

Junior Holly Fitterer is a student worker in the Community Engagement Center and is excited for Pehrson as the Gustie of the Week.

"[Pehrson] is a great Gustie of the Week because she puts her heart into everything that she does. As a supervisor in the Community Engagement Center, she makes sure that she knows about each one of her student employees as well as the coordinators of the service programs. She asks about our majors, our passions, some of our involvements, and wants to know who we are as people. She understands the value of making connections, and doesn't underestimate what we are able to do outside of her sphere of our lives," Fitterer said.



Cadence Paramore

Pehrson feels that her calling is working with student leaders on campus.

Do you have a suggestion for a Gustavus student, professor, or staff member who could be our next Gustie of the Week?

If so, send their name, position on campus, and a short description of why you think they should be recognized to weekly@gustavus.edu for a chance to be featured!

A representative from the Gustavian Weekly will be in contact with you via email if your suggestion is chosen to be featured in an issue of the paper.

Students plan for Lunar New Year celebration

Monali Bhakta
Staff Writer

On February 28, students involved in the Vietnamese Students' Association, Global China Connection, and Asian Student Union will host the Lunar New Year Celebration in Alumni Hall.

This celebration is to honor the start of the new year according to the lunar calendar in East Asian culture.

"Lunar New Year was the conceived idea between CCC, VSA, and ASU to come together to honor a part of their heritage and have a space to enjoy this New Year because it is a big deal in a lot of other cultures,"

-Junior Kaitlyn Gruber

"We're actually super excited this year because we are bringing on a new dance troupe. This is different from last year with the Lion Dancers, which people liked a lot. But this year, we're super excited to have CAAM Chinese Dance Theatre, and they're going to perform some traditional Chinese dances for us, as well as a Dragon Dance which will be super exciting, fun, high-energy, and really engaging, so I'm really excited to have them on campus this year," Junior President of Chinese Cultures Club, Kaitlyn Gruber said.

The date of the Lunar New Year varies year to year. It usually occurs 15 days after the Western calendar, hence why the date varies annually.

This year, Lunar New Year was on February 12.

Since the holiday fell during the first week of second semester, the organizations want to host it after the official holiday has happened.

"Lunar New Year was the conceived idea between CCC, VSA, and ASU to come together to honor a part of their heritage and have a space to enjoy this new year because it is a big deal in a lot of other cultures," Gruber said.

This will give the chance for the Gustavus community to also be engaged with this universal celebration that so many members of our student body celebrate.

Although the new year is mainly celebrated in China, other countries recognize the holiday as well.

The Lunar New Year is the most important festival of the year celebrated by China and its geographic neighbors namely Taiwan, HongKong, Macao,



Submitted



Submitted

Top and bottom: Photos from last year's Lunar New Year dance performances.

Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia, Korea, Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia, Mauritius, Australia, and the Philippines.

The organization wants to incorporate the various versions of the tradition based on the places it is celebrated.

The celebration has grown with a significant number of attendees each year.

It is one of the most enriching and beautiful celebrations that is entirely planned by students. The festivities will include the celebration of this year's Chinese zodiac.

A few days before the big event, Chinese Cultures Club collaborated with CAB to host the successful Sushi and Origami event where students could have the opportunity to make origami with colorful designed paper while eating sushi catered from Tokyo Sushi and Hibachi Restaurant in Mankato.

Student leaders wanted to give attendees a "taste" previewing people about the culture and traditions they will witness on Friday.

This year, we hope to share with the Gustavus community

the celebration of the year of the rat (according to the Chinese zodiac)," Gruber said.

Food, performances, and prizes will be amongst the entertaining aspects of the event. "Students should come to learn about culture, traditions, participate in our activities, win prizes, and of course enjoy a good time with food and music," Gruber said.

On top of the games and performances, there will be educational presentations, a fashion show and great MC's who will be leading the show.

Students are excited to share this event with the campus and hope that others will learn new and interesting aspects about different East Asian cultures.

"This is one of the most beautiful and significant traditions of our culture, and we would love to share it with the Gustavus community. The uplifting and eventful atmosphere and the warmth of people gathering together to celebrate Lunar New Year are probably the reasons why Lunar New Year is such a beautiful and important festival," Gruber said.

Kyara Craven
Staff Writer

Peach Cobbler

Ingredients:

- 1/2 cup unsalted butter
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 2 cups sugar, divided
- 1 tablespoon baking powder
- Pinch of salt
- 1 cup milk
- 4 cups fresh peach slices
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- Ground cinnamon or nutmeg (optional)

Step 1:

Melt butter in a 13- x 9-inch baking dish

Step 2:

Combine flour, 1 cup sugar, baking powder, and salt; add milk, stirring just until dry ingredients are moistened. Pour batter over butter (do not stir).

Step 3:

Bring remaining 1 cup sugar, peach slices, and lemon juice to a boil over high heat, stirring constantly; pour over batter (do not stir). Sprinkle with cinnamon if desired.

Step 4:

Bake at 375° for 40 to 45 minutes or until golden brown. Serve cobbler warm or cool.



Black History Month:



It's February, Gustavus, and that means it's officially Black History Month. While celebrating African American life and culture is something that isn't restricted to one month out of the year, it is especially acceptable to be all things pro-black. This month is an important time of year to learn about, connect to, remember, recognize, and celebrate African American culture for its influence throughout history. Yet, nothing speaks more to a culture than the food that they serve. From southern states to upscale restaurants, soul food is a popular theme on many menus. Now, before you begin to craft a list of stereotypical "black food," you should take a moment to pause and think about the historical foundations that these stereotypes rest on. Soul food began as meals that were prepared from the undesirable leftovers and scraps that white slave masters gave to their slaves. Many slaves had gardens to grow vegetables, such as collard greens, to pair with the meat that they were given. After slavery, many couldn't afford to get more common meat cuts. Gardening, fishing and hunting sustained many African American families after slavery ended.

A soul food plate is typically comprised of some kind of meat, vegetables, a starch, and some type of bread. Common soul food dishes are catfish, fried chicken, biscuits, macaroni and cheese, beans, mashed potatoes, chitterlings (pig intestines), cornbread, cobbler, sweet potato pie, and grits. Lots of these foods are staple dishes in many African American households. It is very common to associate African Americans and the foods that they eat. Often times people comment on how "black people always smell like fried chicken," or "all black people love watermelon." Many establishments push fried chicken and watermelon on their employees in a bare minimum attempt to cross Black History Month off their list. Yet, soul food is more than fried foods and an assortment of spices, and it is more than the people who eat it. Soul food is the product of the unbreakable soul and hope of those who were forced to endure unjust and unfair treatment. It is the will and drive to survive in a world that was built to keep you oppressed. During this month, I welcome all to enjoy and celebrate Black History Month. Recognize all the wonderful things that African American culture has to offer, especially the food. And while you enjoy that plate of soul food, make sure you remember the people who fought and persevered so that we could enjoy the things we have today.

