



“Divided We Fall” Connecticut Premier

Provided by the Asian American Cultural Center

On Tuesday, February 6 at 7 p.m., in Jorgensen Center for the Performing Arts in Storrs, the public is invited to the premier showing in Connecticut of “Divided We Fall,” a full-length documentary that was undertaken by Stanford student Valarie Kaur to find answers about hate crimes after 9/11. The creators, Kaur and award-winning director and producer Sharat Raju will be present to answer questions at the end of the program. The event is free and open to the public. For information, call (860) 486-0830.

As grief turned into rage after the attacks on September 11 in New York and Washington, some so-called “patriots” across America burned homes of Muslims or people they thought looked like Arabs, vandalized sacred buildings, and even killed people.

According to the FBI, such anti-Muslim hate crimes increased from 354 in 2000 to 1,501 in 2001 with nearly 80 percent of the 2001 crimes happening in September 2001.

Kaur traveled across the country asking “Who counts as an American?” “Who looks like an American?” “Who looks like an enemy?” The project first garnered awards as a senior thesis and book before being made into a full-length documentary.

“Divided We Fall” weaves expert analysis into a cross-country road trip that

confronts the forces dividing Americans in times of crisis to discover who counts as “one of us” in a world divided into “us” and “them.” “Divided We Fall” shares individual voices that capture history and show that even the darkest stories contain seeds of hope.

A third-generation Sikh American, Kaur, age 20, encountered such violence in her small California farming community. A man from her hometown was killed, an elderly man was nearly beaten to death, a woman was stabbed in the head. Most hate crimes were not reported on the evening news.

Kaur had planned to visit India and write her senior thesis about the 1947 Partition of India. But after 9/11 and the murder of a family friend on September 15, Kaur set out across America where she videotaped stories of Sikhs, Muslims, Hindus, Christians, Jews and countless other Americans as they told stories of their experiences.

Her senior thesis, including her 30-minute video was called “Targeting the Turban: Sikh Americans in the Aftermath of 9/11,” won a humanities medal. Kaur then presented more than 50 lectures at conferences, film festivals, and community events around the country. In October 2003, she showed her video at the Spinning Wheel Film Festival in Toronto. Producer Sharat Raju, a recent graduate of the American Film

Institute, saw it and offered to join the project. The two formed New Moon Productions, taped more interviews and made the full-length documentary, which premiered this past fall.

On Wednesday, February 7, from noon-2pm a post-film workshop – “A Community Dialogue” is open to 60 participants. Please contact Angela Rola at the Asian American Cultural Center at the University of Connecticut (860) 486-0830 or e-mail angela.rola@uconn.edu to reserve a seat. At 4:30pm there will be a Reflection Session opportunity at the Asian American Cultural Center at which both Kaur and Raju will be present.

The presentation of this documentary is sponsored by UConn’s Asian American Cultural Center, African American Cultural Center, Puerto Rican/Latin American Cultural Center, Women’s Center, Rainbow Center, Asian American Studies Institute, Women Studies Program, Institute of African American Studies, Native American Cultural Society Office, NEAG School of Education, Jorgensen Center for the Performing Arts, SUBOG, Dept. of International Services & Programs - Office of International Affairs, Office of the Vice Provost for Multicultural and International Affairs, Indian Students Association, Pakistani Community at UConn, and Tarang.

Welcome back!

Here’s to a wonderful spring semester!



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Message from the Director

By Monica Rudzik



Happy New Year! Welcome to the first spring semester at the New U. I was reminded over the break that it's a pretty boring place to be without the students. Thank you for making this campus an exciting, invigorating, and interesting place to be. We miss you when you are gone.

I want to extend a warm welcome to Anthony's Hair Salon and its manager, Kathy LaJoie. At the time of this letter, the salon was a day or two away from its official grand opening but I'm hoping by the time you read this, you'll have scheduled an appointment to be coiffed by Kathy and her staff. This is a wonderful addition to the Student Union's list of services and amenities that we hope the campus will enjoy.



The truly most significant change for the U occurred behind the scenes and is the result of many hours of hard work by the Policy Council. The wheels are now in motion to change our policies and procedures for reserving space in the Student Union. Essentially, the new plan will allow student organizations an opportunity to reserve space a



year at a time and make those requests before we open the process up for the rest of the campus. It will also give everyone an opportunity to schedule priority events in the U before the reservation process really even begins.

So how does it work? There are three steps to this process. First, all student organizations and campus departments will be given an opportunity to have an event reviewed for priority status. The students on the Policy Council have developed criteria that will allow the group to evaluate these requests and establish such importance. Some of the questions they will ask are: how does this event benefit students and UConn; is this a UConn tradition; will it be free for students, etc. Once these events are evaluated and scored, they will be placed in the reservations system.

During step two, registered student organizations in good standing (no outstanding bills) will be permitted to request weekly meeting space for an entire academic year. They may also request a special event venue for one program

each semester. We hope this will allow for better lead time for programming opportunities and secure space for everyone in an equitable way.

Once steps one and two are complete, Student Union space will be available to the rest of the campus. This will occur at the end of April this year but will be moved forward to March in future years. This was a very large project and I want to commend the members of the Policy Council for tackling this challenging task. I am sure the benefits of this revised process will enhance our service to the UConn community for many years to come. If you have any questions about this policy, please feel free to contact me in room 309 at the U.

We have many other exciting changes in store for U at the U. Keep your eyes and ears open and you just might see or hear something new. And if you have an idea, feel free to share it with us. You can fill out our on-line survey, complete a suggestion box card, or just send me an email at monica.rudzik@uconn.edu. I'd love to hear from U.

IMPAACT Conference 2006

By Vu Tran

For many Asian Americans growing up in Connecticut, embracing their cultural identity is something that doesn't come easy. Along with this handicap, Asian Americans face an uphill battle to have their voices heard in a state where they are the fastest growing ethnic minority group. The IMPAACT

2006 Conference was held Saturday, December 2. Appropriately enough we brought William Tong, Connecticut's first Asian American elected to legislation, to be our opening keynote speaker. Along with his inspirational message to the group of approximately 100 enthusiastic delegates

from all over the state, there were workshops, a panel, and cultural performances as a part of the day's schedule. When all was said and done, the conference was a great success, and the planning for next year's conference is already in the works. The date for IMPAACT 2007 is slated for November 3, 2007.



UConn's Annual Culinary Competition

By Colleen Ruppert

The annual Culinary Competition on campus took place on January 11 at Putnam. The Student Union was well represented this year. One of the categories of the individual competition, the vegetarian dish, was swept by our Student Union representation. An employee from Chuck & Auggies took 1st, and two employees from Union Street Market took 2nd

and 3rd. Employees of Union Street Market also participated in the Mystery Basket team competition. Each team of three was provided with a basket of unknown ingredients and had 45 minutes to create and plate their dishes. Again Union Street Market took 2nd and 3rd in this competition.

Sarah Gittere, the manager of Union Street Market was

extremely pleased with all of those who competed. Many were in this competition for the first time. She said she always knew her chefs were very talented, but she was glad that the rest of campus had an opportunity to see that as well. In the future, she would like to try implementing a weekly program her chefs' food creations at Union Street Market.



Student Union Recognized

By Chuck Morrell

On Thursday, January 25th the University of Connecticut Student Union received an award from the Associated Builders and Contractors Association. The Student Union project was submitted for consideration by the Konover Construction firm hired as the Construction Manager for the renovation and addition project.

The juried award was for a public project in excess of fifty million dollars. The multi-phased renovation was a

delicate balance between construction, budget and on-going campus life. Konover provided assistance in keeping the Student Union operational throughout the massive four year project. The building project doubled the size of the original building from 100,000 to 200,000 square feet. It encompassed the creation of a food court, catering facilities, a digital theatre, an art gallery, meeting rooms, event space, a student radio and television media suite, and retail space.

The collaborative effort between the University, the design team, and the construction staff was the foundation for the success of the project.

Chuck Morrell, Associate Director of the Student Union accepted the award along with Shaun St. Lawrence, Senior Project Manager for Konover Construction at the award banquet held at the Aqua Turf in Southington, CT.



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See you at the U!