A Letter from President Fry

Dear Member of the Drexel Community:

Education should be available to everyone regardless of gender, ethnicity, race or socioeconomic background. This is one of the core principles upon which Anthony J. Drexel founded our University, and we remain committed to providing a welcoming, inclusive and respectful environment for students, faculty, professional staff and alumni, so that together we can strengthen our own competencies to live and work in a diverse and global environment.

Drexel is proud to have a reputation as one of the most innovative, exciting and entrepreneurial research universities in America. One of the reasons for our success has been the diversity of our dedicated and talented students, faculty and professional staff, people who embody creativity and outside-the-box thinking.

Our future success depends on continuing and enhancing our commitment to diversity in all of its forms, and cultivating respect for each member of our community. This will enable us to harness and sustain our creative and innovative spirit.

Drexel launched our Intercultural Engagement & Diversity Initiative in 2008, and opened the James E. Marks Intercultural Center in 2010. Our goal is to foster a community grounded in ideological tension, dialogue and a respect for diversity—a community that can engage with curiosity and humility, honoring and celebrating our fundamental differences and similarities.

I encourage you to personally contribute to Drexel’s welcoming and inclusive environment, and to challenge yourself to create opportunities that will raise awareness of and respect for diversity and build upon Drexel’s founding principle of inclusion. In doing so, we will ensure that Drexel is a community that attracts and retains the best and the brightest.

For more information about diversity and creating an inclusive community, as well as about programs and events, visit the Intercultural Engagement & Diversity website at www.drexel.edu/intercultural.

John A. Fry
President
Who Has Time To Celebrate
By Brian Musser, Campus Baptist Minister and Coordinator of Spiritual and Religious Life

I recently perused the interfaith calendar available at www.interfaithcalendar.org and noticed how many of our faith traditions have significant celebrations during the month of April. I'm not an expert on all traditions; I may not even be an expert on my own traditions, but here are some holidays I noticed. Hindus will have the opportunity to celebrate the New Year, Ramnavami (which is the birth of the Lord Rama), and Hanuman Jayanti (a day of devotion and selfless work). Sikhs may enjoy Majak Jashan, which commemorates the founding of the Khalsa brotherhood. Baha'i will be required to do no work on the first and ninth day of Ridvan (both fall within the month of April this year). Jains will hold Mahavir Jayanti in celebration of their founder's birthday. Certain Buddhists will celebrate the New Year as well. Many faith traditions will hold festivals marking the beginning of spring, if they have not already done so in late March. Jews will hold their week-long Pesach, remembering their Exodus from Egypt. And Christians will pack many holidays into the month of April, including Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter, plus a few other saints' days.

As a Christian Minister, what I am about to say might sound irreligious. Holidays, or “Holy Days,” often seem like an unnecessary intrusion into an already unbelievably busy life. I dread the Easter season. In “church life,” it is as busy as Christmas. I do more work during the holidays than at any other time of the calendar year. After a major holiday, I need a vacation, especially while working at Drexel. Drexel’s typical daily schedule is so action-packed and fast-paced that any added event creates a huge disturbance in the barely manageable rhythm. I don’t have time for a holiday, let alone the obligatory vacation afterwards.

That last statement convicts me. Although it is true, every part of me screams that it ought not to be true. I should not be too busy to worship, to celebrate, and to re-create. I should not dread the busyness of holidays because my normal life should not be overwhelming. I should not dread holidays because holidays should not need to be narrated by someone with the linguistic talents of an auctioneer. The decisions I have made in my life have taken me a great distance from where my life ought to be.

Recently, as I sit still quietly in my home, on the train or in my office, I have tried to think deep thoughts, those kinds of thoughts about my life that require great concentration, those thoughts that require my undivided attention. When I try to think those thoughts, my brain interrupts me. My mind quickly wanders to my next assignment, my next worry, my next appointment. My mind has been trained to constantly do this. Reflection has become uncomfortable for me. The poet within me has died. He was killed by my Google calendar.

However, when I examine the context of religious celebrations, I realize the busyness of my life is one of the very things that holidays were designed to directly engage. There are many different reasons for religious observances. Some are in remembrance of a historical reference point within the religion. Some are times to publically make verbal and demonstrative commitments of faith. Some are in celebration of a significant change within us, our communities or our environments. Many make a bold counter-statement against humanity’s dependence upon busyness. Holidays are the times set aside for us to step outside the routine and place our lives into a greater context.

Our religious traditions have come to the unanimous conclusion that we need a break. We need to stop and reflect, enjoy, relax, even party. We need moments that we stop running. So much of our lives are engaged in the asking of what’s next. What is my next assignment? What is the next event? What is my next achievement? Holidays ask us to put aside what’s next and ask “why?” questions instead. Why am I doing this in the first place? Why do I care about myself, my family, my friends? Why am I here at Drexel? Why do I want this degree? Why do I help students? Why do I care about education? The answers to these questions are shrouded by movement and busyness. These answers only appear during the breaths, the pauses. I haven’t been breathing enough recently. I need to schedule some time to look for my inner poet’s remains. I need to block off a day in which I relearn how to think. I need to sequester myself from the normal routine and retrain myself to relax. I need to exercise my celebration skills. I need a twelve-step program to re-acclimate myself into a balanced world and wean myself off of a busyness addiction. I need a vacation to reprioritize my life. I need a holiday to examine what is important. I need time to ask myself if what’s next is the same as what’s important.

Who has time to celebrate? I know I don’t. Who needs to make time to celebrate? I know I do. So, as I celebrate the upcoming holidays in my Christian tradition, I plan to put my life back into context. I encourage you to find time to do the same.

May you always find time to enjoy life. May you always find time to celebrate. May you truly learn how to take moments in each day, in every week, in the months, during the year to place your life in a greater context. May the busyness of life be something that happens to you but not something that defines you. I pray that your holidays are truly able to provide for your needs.
I often take the Dragon Shuttle from Center City to/from the University City campus. After the shuttle drops me off at 33rd and Market, I walk past the Intercultural Center on my way to the Creese Student Center, where my office is located. One morning, without my coffee having fully kicked in, I noticed something different about the Intercultural Center – the name "James E. Marks" was added to the building.

Immediately, I wondered who is "James E. Marks" and why did Drexel name the Intercultural Center—the hub of the University’s multicultural initiatives—in his honor. With help from my colleagues in Institutional Advancement and University Communications, I find out why...

Drexel named its Intercultural Center to recognize the generous gifts and leadership of distinguished alumnus, emeritus trustee and benefactor James E. Marks. “On behalf of the students, faculty and professional staff at Drexel, I extend my gratitude to Mr. Marks for his leadership as a trustee and dedication as an alumnus,” said President John A. Fry. “His recent gift to Drexel is a vote of confidence in the future of our University.”

Marks endorsed the vision of creating a center on Drexel’s campus that would make every student feel welcome. “Tolerance and diversity across all dimensions are important,” he said.

The James E. Marks Intercultural Center welcomes all University students and alumni regardless of religious traditions, humanistic beliefs, or cultural values. The Center embraces the University’s broad definition of diversity, which includes socioeconomic status, ability, political beliefs, racial and ethnic background, sexual orientation, and gender identity.

Diversity and acceptance are important to Marks, who remembers his years at Drexel with the fondest of memories. “Drexel has in many ways shaped who I am today,” said Marks. “As a student I learned valuable lessons both in my classes and while on my co-op jobs that greatly developed my business habits and shaped my entrepreneurial spirit.”

Mr. Marks is president of the real estate management firm Marks & Co., Inc., builder and owner of apartment, office, and warehouse complexes in the Delaware Valley. Marks graduated from Drexel in 1947 with a bachelor’s degree in mechanical engineering and in 1949 with a master’s in business administration. As a student at Drexel, Marks was inducted into the Blue Key Honor Society and Pi Tau Sigma, a national mechanical engineering honor society. Marks also served as captain of the cheerleading team and was elected to Gold Key, a service organization. He served as a Drexel trustee from 1988 to 1995 and was elected an emeritus trustee in 1996. In 1992, Marks was named to the Drexel 100, the University’s highest level of alumni recognition given to a small, select group of graduates whose lifetime achievements have brought great honor to the University. Marks was also honored with the College of Engineering’s Alumni Circle of Distinction Award which honors the achievements and service of alumni. Before enrolling at Drexel, Marks served in the United States Navy from 1944 until 1946.

The James E. Marks Intercultural Center will be dedicated on Wednesday, May 11, 2011. More details to come, but I hope to see you all there as we celebrate Mr. Marks’ philanthropy and commitment to Drexel University.
The stigma and discrimination faced by those who have disabilities is mirrored in many ways by the discrimination faced by the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) community. Oftentimes, people with disabilities are excluded from full participation in events, activities, academics, and the workforce because the environment is designed in an inflexible and inequitable way. Members of the LGBTQ community are also blocked from full participation in society. For example, same-sex marriages (and the benefits associated with marriage) are banned in most states.

Another thing that people with disabilities and people in the LGBTQ community share is that individuals who have disabilities (both hidden and more visible) often engage in “coming out” experiences that are similar to those who are LGBTQ. This could be due to the fact that our society’s stereotype of a disabled person is someone who has a physical or visual impairment; individuals who don’t “look disabled” make a conscious decision about whether to disclose or keep that part of their identity to themselves.

Another similarity relates to the current civil rights movements in this country. Both the disability and the LGBTQ communities are fighting for their rights and helping to build a stronger foundation for equal treatment of all people. As part of these movements, members of both communities are in the process of reclaiming identifying language that for so long has been used against them. For example, the words “queer” and “crip”, when used by members of the groups themselves, are seen by many as indicators of collective power and pride.

Even though the LGBTQ and disability community may experience similar societal stigmatization, discrimination, and now political action toward equal opportunities, there are important differences that exist in the way our society regards the two groups. People with disabilities are often seen as incapable of meaningful societal contribution and at times are viewed with pity for their circumstances. Members of the LGBTQ community, on the other hand, are often denigrated for their “choice” of sexual orientation or gender identity/expression, even though most LGBTQ individuals would argue that this aspect of their identity is as intrinsic to them as a disability is to someone else. And finally, it is common in the media and elsewhere to see people with disabilities portrayed as asexual or unable to be sexually active while those who identify as LGBTQ tend to be portrayed as hypersexual and promiscuous.

While people in the disability and LGBTQ communities do the work of embracing their true, individual identities in the face of stereotypes, there is work for everyone. Whether or not we are part of the LGBTQ or disability communities, it is our responsibility to identify the stereotypes we still believe. Simply paying attention to a stereotype is a good way to start taking away its power to oversimplify our world. Reducing the power of stereotypes opens us up to seeing the truth of the people around us.
Reflections on Singgalot: The Ties that Bind
By: Kathryn Carly King, Graduate Intern in the Office of Multicultural Programs

Smithsonian create an exhibit about it just makes me even more proud of my culture. Because of this exhibit, we were able to teach people about Filipinos, a group that is often overlooked in history classes, and spread awareness about the struggles and obstacles that our ancestors overcame to get where we are today,” said Rena Eleázar, a Drexel senior majoring in Health Sciences, FISDU External Vice President, and volunteer at the Singgalot exhibit.

The exhibit offered not only a historical and social education, but also a close sense of community and pride. Speaking about Singgalot’s opening night, freshman Health Sciences major MyLinh Nguyen said, “The night felt like a huge family and friends gathering and I enjoyed myself very much.”

Perfecto Galido, a freshman majoring in Biology/Pre-Med, reflected on his thoughts at Singgalot, “The Filipino people who came before us took their life to better not only their own, but for all those who would eventually succeed them. Being Filipino, this exhibit opened up my eyes to the amazing things that the Filipino were capable of. It made me appreciate how rich my culture was and how we as a group can accomplish anything.” At the heart of Singgalot was the fundamental need to know the history in order to know where one is going.

From November 19, 2010, through January 15, 2011, the James E. Marks Intercultural Center featured the Smithsonian’s Singgalot, an exhibition of the history of Filipino communities in America. Singgalot was brought to Drexel through the collaboration of the Filipino Executive Council of Greater Philadelphia (FECGP), the Asian American Women’s Coalition (AAWC), Student Life, the Office of Equality and Diversity, and the Filipino Intercultural Society of Drexel University (FISDU).

Singgalot unearthed stories of the past and explored experiences of the Filipino community through rarely seen images and documents. The exhibition depicted the political struggles and challenges of Filipinos in the U.S.—from experiences of Filipinos as colonial subjects and nationals to their struggles to acquire full citizenship as immigrants in the U.S. The exhibition also spoke to the pride and heart of Filipino-Americans through the display of achievements such as Filipinos’ contribution to public service in the U.S. military, arts, sports, literature, and health care. “It was great to see my cultural history right in the heart of our campus,” said Jeffrey Urbano, a Drexel sophomore majoring in Marketing and a volunteer for Singgalot.

Singgalot provided a platform to illustrate a history that many Americans have not been exposed to. “The general public, including many Filipino-Americans, know very little about Filipino-American history, and to have an institution as recognized as the

“Being Filipino means living our life, remembering those who have gone before us, and looking to the future for the Filipino people.”
- Perfecto Galido

Are you hosting an event that you would like to see spotlighted in Intersections? Please send all information and photos to Intersections@drexel.edu
Bánh rán

By: Ahn Pham, International Area Studies, 2015

In this recipe, I would like to introduce one of the most popular plates in Vietnam. It does not often appear on the Vietnamese formal table; however, it has been so familiar to Vietnamese people no matter what classification. It is called “bánh rán” (fried cake) in Northern Vietnam and “bánh cam” (orange cake) in Southern Vietnam. Actually, the two cakes have slight differences because of different taste in two regions. In this recipe, I will present how to make in the Northern style.

There are two types of “bánh rán”: “bánh rán ngọt” (sweet fried glutinous cake) and “bánh rán mặn” (salty fried glutinous cake). The difference between these two is that the sweet one has mung bean as the filling and the salty one has meet inside. Furthermore, people often have the salty one with fish sauce.

The first recipe is “bánh rán ngọt”:

Ingredients: (for about 20 cakes)
2 cups glutinous flour
4 tablespoons rice flour
2 ¾ oz sugar (1)
¼ teaspoon salt
300ml water (1)
½ cup mashed potatoes
1 teaspoon vegetable oil
125g mung beans
4 tablespoons flakes coconut
3 tablespoons sugar
3 tablespoons water
Sesame

Instruction
Make the crust:
Mix the flour, potatoes, salt, sugar (1), water (1) together until the mixture is smooth and does not stick anymore. If the mixture is still stick and pasty, put in more rice flour.

Cover the mixture with a plastic bag for about 3 hours in cool weather, or we can put it into the fridge.

After 3 hours, knead the dough to regain the smooth situation.

Make the filling:
Peel, split, rinse and soak the mung beans and steam for 15-20 minutes. Mashed the beans.
Use a small pan, pour the water (2) and melt sugar (2). Until sugar has all melted, mix with beans and coconut until the mixture is dry (in low heat so that the mixture is equally mixed and not burnt)

Let the mixture cool and divide into small round balls.

Shape:
Take a piece of crust, round and flatten it. Put the small filling ball at the center then cover the ball with the crust.

Do the same step until there’s no more filling and crust.

Roll the ball dough in sesame so that the sesame will stick on the dough.

Fry:
Use a deep pan and pour the oil for at least half full. Turn on the stove.

Wait until the oil boiled, put the cake in one by one. Use medium heat.

When all faces turn orange, the cake is finished. We can take them out and enjoy!
The second recipe is “bánh rán mặn”
The crust of “bánh rán mặn” is not so different from that of “bánh rán ngọt”. The only difference is the filling so I will just introduce how to make the filling.

We need:
- 125g ground pork
- 4 large pieces of Jew’s year
- 1 small carrot
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper

“Miến” – a Vietnamese noodle, which will be transparent when being cooked.

Instruction
Mix all the ingredients together and divide into small pieces just like “bánh rán ngọt”. However, normally “bánh rán mặn” has the diamond shape.

“Bánh rán mặn” always comes along with the fish sauce which is mixed with lime juice and sugar. Here I will present how to do the supplement sauce:

**Sauces**
- 300ml water
- 25g sugar
- 15ml fish sauce
- Lime juice/Vinegar
- Green papaya
- Carrot

Mix all the ingredients together. Satisfactory sauce is the one that is not salty but sweet and sour. Red pepper can be added to be spicy.