ACE Assignment

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ACE #1

Event: Steps Towards Diversity

Category: Engagement and Cultural

In this event, Katie, Aarzoo, Neil, and I took a self-guided walking tour around campus on February 27th, visiting locations around campus that have special significance to the African American history at UGA. At each of the locations, there is a board set up that has a barcode that the student can scan and read about the significance of each location.

This event was hosted throughout the month of February, or Black History Month. UGA is hosting this event in lieu of Black History Month, and to highlight the hardships that were overcome throughout history at UGA. There were ten locations that were highlighted around campus, each with a special significance that deserved to be honored. This event wanted to highlight these special locations, and convey the importance of these locations to others, who may not know or understand the significance. Before doing this assignment, I didn’t know, nor understand the significance of each of the places we visited, but just as the event intended, I learned about a few historically important areas around campus.

As mentioned, in this event we walked around campus to some of the historically significant locations for the African American community. I enjoyed this tour because it opened my eyes to the significant contributions that the African American community had at UGA, and how they are remembered. At some of the places that we visited, like the Black Fraternities and Sororities Markers on the West Lawn of Tate, I didn’t know that they were in memorandum of African American history, so when I was able to understand their significance on campus, and the history behind it, I felt more educated about the history of UGA and more connected to the UGA community. Reading the stories and seeing the barriers that were broken at each site, I felt happy that this project was recognizing some of the barriers that were broken by African American students who attended UGA.

In general, the public can learn a lot from this activity. For me, it put the history of the campus into perspective, and it showed the strength of the African American community to break down the generational barriers that were built to hold them back. Each location held an example of this, like at the McBay Science Library, where Shirley McBay was the first African American to receive a PhD at UGA, before UGA was even desegregated. This highlighted that even through the many difficulties Dr. McBay was facing, she persevered through these barriers and succeeded. Furthermore, at Myers Hall, I learned about the first African American students to enroll at UGA, named Charlayne Hunter-Gault and Hamilton Holmes, breaking down the barriers of education at UGA. Each of these examples highlight not only the tremendous strides society has taken in the recent years to fight against racism, but it also highlights how important these students were to break down the barriers at UGA and around the country, and they encapsulate a greater historical fight for equality, which may help people understand that even in a place that doesn’t struggle with racism as often, it once held barriers to prevent other groups, such as African Americans, from succeeding.

**Bibliography:**

“Diversity Commitee Project.” *StoryMapJS*, uploads.knightlab.com/storymapjs/7e6aabc114e4e4fe4a5f4f022826f286/diversity-commitee-project/index.html. Accessed 27 Feb. 2024.

A group of people standing in front of a brick wall

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