

ECM Campus Ubuntu

What is happening on the University of Guelph Campus

February 6, 2012

VOL. 2 ISSUE #1

Ask Big Question is Here



Ubuntu Quotes

Did you know:

The word for work in Swahili (the language that brings us ubuntu) is 'umsebenzi' which literally means 'helpfulness'. Work is helpfulness!

'Ukwenana' means giving or sharing something without any expectation of return. This compassion is at the heart of ubuntu.

Investments also have a different connotation. For us in our western world investments are usually monetary treasures used to build up our own personal wealth. Investments in the world of ubuntu are called 'ukusisa' – a type of investment in which wealthy people sacrifice something for those less fortunate.

Is all of this not hauntingly familiar for us who are followers of Jesus?

This week marks the exciting launch of ABQ on campus. It is an event led by ECM Campus Ubuntu with the full support of the Jewish Hillel group on campus, all of the rest of the Multi Faith Resource Team and members of Student Life including the Aboriginal Resource Centre and the Office of Intercultural Affairs.

This is what is happening this week:

Posters - 50 posters have been distributed through CSA over the weekend. Seven questions were selected together with a background picture for each. At the bottom of each poster is a blank piece of paper entitled "What is your big question?"

Banner - A large banner measuring three feet by twelve feet will be hung on the porch of Raithby House first thing **tomorrow** morning. The banner reads "What is your big question?". It has info to connect to facebook, twitter and the web blog.

Ask Big Questions car - a yellow Volkswagen Beetle (bug) has been covered with professional decals with phrases like: "Ask Big Questions"; What is your big question? Human rights? / Human responsibilities?; What does peace look like?; Ubuntu - I am because we are" The car is parked in Branion Plaza beside the cannon this week. Copies of paper bearing the ASK BIG QUESTION logo are on the car. Students will be encouraged to write down their big question and drop them into the car through the moon roof.

Facebook page is up. (Ask Big Questions Guelph)

Twitter is up. (@askbigquestion3)

Web blog is up and running.

(www.askbigquestionsguelph.tumblr.com)

Ubuntu comes to us from the people of South Africa. It is the recognition that we are all part of the same human family. The philosophy is not limited to South Africa but is also throughout Africa and also in many indigenous cultures around the world. Here in Canada the Oji-cree also have a word for it – Akinna waya.

Weekly meetings

Our weekly ubuntu gathering this term is on Thursdays at noon. Every other Thursday one of the local churches provides lunch for us which the students thoroughly enjoy.

This term we have had conversations with the Aboriginal students which was a real highlight. We learned about their sadness that so much of the ubuntu teachings in their traditions have been lost. (In Ojibway the word for ubuntu is 'akinna waya'. In Iroquois it is 'donato akwekon' (dawn-nay-toh ahh-kway-kon). One student talked about his mother's encouragement to give thanks for the experiences of walking through the woods, enjoying the trees and the animals each time he left the house.

We have also struggled with the issues of sustainability from an ubuntu point of view. Ubuntu means we are all connected, we are all human through our relationships one to the other.

What does that mean when our lifestyles are not sustainable – when our lifestyles mean that we are using far more of the world's resources than is our share?

This week we will be hearing from a student who traveled to the Bhutan. She will talk about her research in agriculture in the Bhutan from an ubuntu perspective.



Upcoming Ubuntu Events on Campus

Monday January 30 – 5:30 -7:00 – Climate Change and Changing the Climate with Aboriginal Peoples – presentation in Peter McLean Hall – just attend if you can – also some help to set up the room would be great if anyone can come by 5:00

Tuesday February 6 – launch of ASK BIG QUESTIONS including three banners, lots of posters, the ubuntu car, a facebook page, a twitter page and a blog page

Thursday February 2 – noon – conversation about ubuntu and sustainability

Thursday February 9 – noon – conversation about ubuntu and the Bhutan? –

Saturday February 11 – 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. – the MFRT is hosting a volunteer day at Habitat for Humanity – they have asked for participation from all groups.

ECM Campus Ubuntu is scheduled to have three people help out – anyone interested? The house being built is here in Guelph.

Thursday February 16 – noon – conversation about ubuntu and the problem of evil –

Thursday March 1 – noon – conversation about ubuntu and Philosophy



Continuation of ubuntu activities this term



organize the cookies, hot chocolate, juice boxes and water bottles – Marty and Heather are taking the lead on this but lots more help is needed

Sunday March 25 – MFRT is sponsoring a speaker / band on mental illness and self harm called “**To Write Love on Her Arms**” – anyone interested in helping to organize this event, please let me know. ECM Campus Ubuntu will be financially offering support and it is a topic very close to my heart, but I can’t be involved at this point, other than attending the event.

Thursday April 5 – noon – conversation about ubuntu and solidarity – Marty to take lead.
END OF TERM

Friday March 2, Saturday March 3 and Sunday March 4 – Philopolis at the University of Guelph – Campus Ubuntu is working to have a panel discussion on ubuntu from a business perspective, an aboriginal perspective and a spiritual perspective. Mike is taking the lead and can tell us what he needs.

Thursday March 8 – noon – conversation about ubuntu and Asking Big Questions

Thursday March 15 - MFRT is organizing a Multi Faith Dinner hoping to attract up to 150 people. This event was held last year and was a wonderful learning experience getting to know people of other faiths and cultures. The theme of the dinner is “Let’s eat together”.

Marty will open with a few words about ‘ubuntu’ and the Aboriginal Women’s Drumming Circle will be performing.

Saturday March 10 – all day – MFRT is offering a Places of Worship Tour – we are invited to attend – we will be going to a gurdwara in Brampton I believe and also to a mosque in Cambridge.

Week of March 11 – Ask Big Questions panel discussion on topics of most interest to students – not sure what date or what time yet

Saturday March 16 and Sunday March 17 – The Great Ubuntu Cookie Hunt at College Royal – we need people to help out Saturday afternoon from 12 – 4 and Sunday afternoon from 12 – 4 as well – also help is needed to

Raithby House

ECM Campus Ubuntu together with the rest of the MFRT will be returning to Raithby House this September.

Demolition of McNally house is to begin in late April. Over the summer ECM Campus Ubuntu and MFRT will be housed on the third floor of the University Centre.

Christian Conversations over Coffee

CCOC continues to have wonderful affirming conversations on every other Thursday morning. We are hoping to grow this group. It is a group that the students who participate appreciate very much. Again thanks to John Lawson for his assistance with this ministry.

You can begin to practice ubuntu in your own life! As Christians we may call it by a different name – the Kingdom of God. It is that place where we all recognize that we are God’s children and where people live in peace and in harmony one with the other.

February 6, 2012

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Please contact Marty Molengraaf if you are interested in helping out with any of the activities of ECM Campus Ubuntu. Both your personal time and your skills and abilities are greatly appreciated. We yearn to develop strong relationships among the students but also between students and the surrounding community. Many thanks to those who are preparing and delivering soup lunches on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of each week. The students enjoy your hospitality very much.

VOL. 2 ISSUE #1

www.campusubuntu.com

See us on Facebook and
follow us on Twitter
both under the name
Campus Ubuntu

ECM Campus Ubuntu
577 Gordon St
McNally House, University of Guelph

Contact Marty Molengraaf
mmolengr@uoguelph.ca
mmolengraaf@sympatico.ca
519 820-4731 (cell)
519 824-4120 x 52390