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UWS Black Student Union Celebrates Soul Food Dinner

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The Black Student Union (BSU) hosted its long-running Soul Food Dinner on Sunday, Feb. 25, in the YU Great Room. This long-standing and popular event, along with others at UWS, is always held in February to honor Black History Month.

The festivity is held to celebrate Black history, culture, and, of course, food. A typical menu includes items like fried chicken, macaroni and cheese, collard greens, and cornbread.

William Kefas, an Business Administration major, has been a member of the BSU since he was a freshman and served as president for

three semesters. The first Soul Food Dinner he attended as a member of the BSU was in 2020.

Kefas said that, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, 2023's Soul Food Dinner saw the first average attendance since 2020. A typical turnout for the dinner is around 500 attendees.

Planning the Soul Food Dinner starts in the fall, but the budget is submitted almost a year in advance.

"The real planning probably starts around mid-January...but the previous year, we have to submit a budget request. So, we start thinking about it early



Dr. Ephraim Nikoi spoke to the crowd about Black Experiences while spectators enjoyed the soul that was brought by the Black Student Union.

Photo by Carter Lansdale

the year before. We need to decide on the slideshows, the menu, and the performances, meet with the caterers, decide on the date and time of the event, where to buy the tickets, and get this information to Student Involvement... then we rehearse for the last two weeks before the event, put up posters, and come in early on the day of the event to set up," said Kefas.

The Soul Food Dinner involves more than just food; the president of the BSU gives a speech, there is a historical presentation, a cultural fashion show, special guests, and live music.

"We always have a presentation about Black History Month; we do short slideshows on historical leaders of the Black community, like Harriet Tubman and Martin Luther King. For the fashion show we dress out as different figures of the Black community and highlight their achievements," Kefas said.

The BSU was founded in 1972 and has hosted the Soul Food Dinner every year since its inception, according to staff advisor Dr. Ephraim Nikoi, a professor in the Communicating Arts Department.

In 2023, the BSU won the Student Involvement-Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion award for their role in promoting diversity on campus.

Black History Month exists today thanks to the efforts of Carter G. Woodson, who came up with the concept after traveling to Washington, D.C., to participate in the 50th anniversary of the emancipation of the slaves.

It was initially observed for only a week until becoming an official month-long holiday in the 1970s.



The BSU Soul Food Dinner was catered by Chartwells as a buffet experience, which allowed diverse selection of food.

Photo by Carter Lansdale

Sidewalk Listed for Future Improvements

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There're only two seasons in the Midwest, winter and road work. An idea brought up by Emem Essien, Speaker of the Senate of the Student Government Association at the University of Wisconsin-Superior. The sidewalk along Catlin Ave. problem is a little under the radar but a problem that needs to be addressed.

"From 21st and Catlin to Ross/Hawkes, there is extensive damage. Mostly cracks but there are a few sections where the slabs missing from the concrete," said Essien.

City Council member Ruth Ludwig surveyed the stretch and recognized the structural sidewalk damage from 21st and Catlin to Ross/Hawkes. The biggest worry for SGA is the risk of injuries for both students and pedestrians.

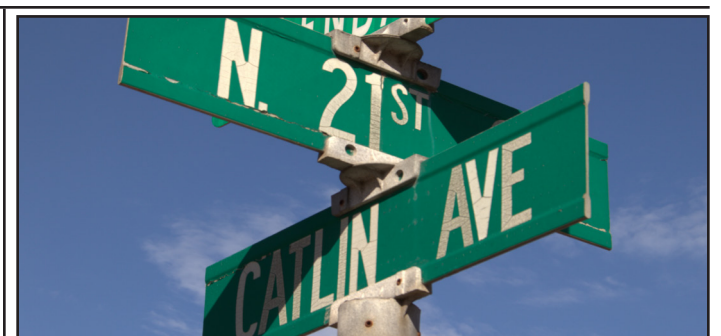
SGA first proposed the project in 2023, but they're ready to case their concerns to the City of Superior. "I'll have more details after I speak with Mayor Payne, I'm scheduled to meet with him in the next few weeks," said Essien.

The exact cost of the repairs for the sidewalk hasn't been confirmed

yet. But one thing for sure is that it's not coming out of student's tuition. "The city will pay for all the repairs on Catlin," said Essien.

Detours for both students and pedestrians along Catlin have not been confirmed. Students and faculty will be emailed via their UWS email on the construction schedule, other routes, and more information.

"We would like more people to be involved with SGA and this process because that's why I'm doing this," said Essien.



The sidewalk project is listed to fix cracks and walkability of the sidewalk from Catlin Ave. to Ross/Hawkes.

Photo by Drew Kerner



Food drop off boxes were places around campus to gather more food for the Yellowjacket Pantry in Swen 1080.

Photo by Drew Kerner



Don't be fooled by this snow pile captured in late Jan. 2023, Feb. 2024 saw a total of 0.33 inches of participation between both rain and snowfall.

Photo by Promethean Staff

If you're interested in joining the Promethean, members meet every Tuesday at noon. For other inquiry, email promethean@uwsuper.edu

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