

Drawing attention to diversity: Area youngsters invited to try work with cartoonists

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Area children ages 6-17 are invited to attend an Alfred University event where professional cartoonists provide personal lessons on drawing their published creations. The event will occur from 4 to 5 pm Saturday, March 17, in the Powell Campus Center and will be followed by a pizza party for participants. The event is one component in the university's Drawn to Diversity program, an annual series designed to explore diversity in various art forms. Four syndicated cartoonists have already been confirmed including Charlos Gary, creator of "Working It Out" and the upcoming "Caf Con Leche;" Jerry Craft, creator of "Momma's Boyz;" Cory Thomas, creator of "Watch Your Head" and Tim Jackson, editorial cartoonist for the Chicago Defender. All participating children will be given a complementary sketch pad and will rotate to different stations learning from each artist. Those who visit with every artist will be given a coupon for a free pizza dinner. Parents and guardians are also invited to join the children in participating and meeting the guest artists, said Dan Napolitano, director of Student Activities and Multicultural Affairs for AU and coordinator of the "Drawn to Diversity" program. Additional events that are appropriate for all ages have been planned for later in the evening. At 7, an educational program will feature students dressed as comic strip characters depicting the history of comic strips and our society. An 8 pm panel will allow the visiting artists to share more details about their careers, characters, and inspirations. The Drawn to Diversity program is currently planning a tour of elementary schools, high schools, and libraries to occur within the next year. Alfred University students involved in the program recently returned from the New York City Comic Con where they networked with educators and sought corporate sponsorship. Questions regarding the March 17 event may be directed to Dan Napolitano, director of Student Activities and Multicultural Affairs at 607-871-2175 or napolitano@alfred.edu. It is not required for children to pre-register for the event, but responding to Napolitano is appreciated and will help in the planning process.