



Community through Communication

Maria Duffy, Master's Student in the School of Media and Communication

Maria Duffy is a first-generation college student from Cincinnati, OH. She shares her experiences and initiatives throughout her time here at BGSU.

"My experience at BGSU has been as good as I have made it. I think at the beginning I was a bit lost because there were so many opportunities, but I think once I got into my second or third year was when I really solidified what I wanted to do and what I was passionate about", Maria said.

Maria is currently a Teacher's Assistant for the Communication Forensic Speech and Debate Team. Throughout her time here at BGSU Maria has also been a part of The Office of Multicultural Affairs Ambassador program, Voices at BGSU, and actively takes part in the women of color support group Sister-to-Sister.

Along with Maria's involvement on campus, she also helped launch the Instagram account BC.BGSU (Black Community BGSU). "We essentially will share events, resources, and allies to the black community." Maria expresses how communication is the key not only to creating a platform for advocacy, but a way to bring a community together.

When asking Maria about her particular areas of interest, she refers to how interpersonal communication really sparks her motivation, specifically in how people communicate between one another.

“The way we talk about diversity is also really important to me. Representation always matters, no matter what and I think people sometimes underestimate the power of easy diversity”, Maria said.

For Maria, her biggest inspiration is Dr. Clayton Rosati who has supported and challenged her through her undergraduate experience and continues to do so at the graduate level.

“I am currently in a class with him now and something that is constantly talked about is finding the gray area in a lot of situations. I think that especially nowadays in America, a lot of things are politicized as well as just made black and white. But there’s so much gray area that people really need to learn about” Maria said.

When asked about what Black History Month means to Maria she stated, “Black history month is just a reminder of before, during, and after. It’s a reminder of my ancestors and what they accomplished. It’s a reminder of what work we have to do currently. And it’s that hope for the future, that there is a better tomorrow.”

In all of Maria’s involvement and initiatives she hopes that all the work that has been done will be acknowledged and put forward as a normality.

“What gives me hope for the future is that programs such as the Black Student Union and platforms like BC. BGSU won’t be as needed because it will just be a norm. To constantly promote our events, promote our organizations, and promote our work”.

Through her studies here at BGSU Maria has not only learned about herself but has learned about the power that communication brings when you just talk about the things that aren’t always talked about. She feels that if communication can be utilized, it can only create a better tomorrow.