

► In The News

HCC, STCC to host national conference on Puerto Rico

HOLYOKE – Moriviví is a medicinal perennial native to the Caribbean and Latin America.

Known by many names – “touch me not,” “live and die,” “shame plant,” “humble plant,” “sensitive plant,” and “shy plant” – the moriviví grows under the shade of bushy trees and in full sun, produces pink blossoms, and appears dead only to revive when a source of agitation is removed or repelled.

Moriviví is also the theme the Puerto Rican Studies Association adopted this year for its national conference, which is being hosted jointly by Holyoke Community College and Springfield Technical Community College Oct. 14 to 16.

More than 200 scholars, researchers, academics, artists, and others are expected to attend the three-day conference, “Moriviví: Activating Puerto Rican Futures.”

“Thinking through the diverse ecologies of human and non-human resistance that surround us, we offer the moriviví as a metaphor for imagining Puerto Rican futures thriving in the diaspora and on the archipelago,” the PRSA executive council states in its conference materials. “We’re excited to convene academics, practitioners, professionals, artists, and



Staff from the El Centro program at Holyoke Community College celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month beneath a Puerto Rican flag during a campus fiesta on Oct. 5.

Submitted photo

activists for our conference in Holyoke and Springfield.”

The conference, which is free to all students, faculty, and staff at HCC and STCC, features more than 100 sessions, roundtables, and workshops on the subjects of race, natural disasters, debt, displacement, climate, education, labor, politics, citizenship, agriculture, art, resis-

tance, and more.

Among the sessions, there will be panels featuring professors from Amherst College and HCC as well as an HCC student panel moderated by Raúl Gutiérrez, associate professor of Spanish and coordinator of HCC’s Latinx Studies program.

Conference participants are also

invited to take a bus and walking tour of downtown Holyoke on Saturday, Oct. 15, from 1:45 to 3:45 p.m., led by local historian Maria Salgado-Cartegena.

“We’re so happy to be hosting this year’s PRSA conference with our friends at STCC and shining a light on our local communities and their close connections to Puerto Rico,” said HCC president Christina Royal. “It’s especially meaningful given that we are also now celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month.”

Both HCC and STCC are federally designated Hispanic Serving Institutions, which means more than 25 percent of students who attend the two schools identify as Hispanic or Latino. According to the 2010 Census, Holyoke has the largest Puerto Rican population per capita of any city in the continental U.S. – 44.7 percent.

Most of the conference events take place on the HCC campus during the day; STCC will host the PRSA commencement dinner and gala on the evening of Sat., Oct. 15, with a keynote address from Bárbara Abadía-Rexach, professor of Ethnic Studies at San Francisco State University.

Please follow this link to see the conference schedule: ricanstudies.com/logistics.