

PODEROSA

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON CABO VERDEAN WOMEN

SATURDAY, MARCH 5, 2016

8:30AM-5:30PM

PROVIDENCE COLLEGE

1 CUNNINGHAM SQUARE, PROVIDENCE, RI 02918



Nos Storias:

HONORING OUR PAST,
RECLAIMING OUR PRESENT AND FUTURE,
CRIOLAS IN OUR OWN VOICES



PROVIDENCE
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*This Conference is brought to you by
The Office of Institutional Diversity at Providence College*

VISION AND RATIONALE

Cabo Verdean women have been at the forefront of building their communities as mothers, wives, professionals and community leaders. As the Cabo Verdean community in the United States and other diaspora locations continues to grow, it is important to have a formal platform where we discuss issues that are specific to the Cabo Verdean woman. Although conferences are held in the Cabo Verdean community in the U.S., the level of discourse on topics specific to women and gender issues remains limited. Therefore, this conference will address the need for focused discourse on issues of importance to women. The “Poderosa” conference will offer a safe space for Cabo Verdean women’s voices to be heard. Panels at this conference will celebrate their accomplishments and address the unique set of challenges they face in the areas of immigration status, self-image, health (physical and mental), education, domestic violence, community building, activism and beyond. The theme for this first conference is Nos Storias: Honoring Our Past, Reclaiming Our Present and Future, Criolas in Our Own Voices. As the theme suggests, this meeting is an important opportunity to REBRAND the Cabo Verdean woman and the way she has been portrayed beyond her physical attributes, empowering her to RECLAIM her identity and agency as an intelligent, powerful person who makes strategic choices about her life and family—not as a victim of her circumstances but as a self-determined being. Our vision is to create a network of individuals who will empower and actively support Cabo Verdean women, particularly young women and girls, in seeing themselves as capable of achieving all of their hopes and dreams.

The primary purpose of the conference is empowerment, in keeping with the following hashtags intended to be used widely to not only promote the conference, but to facilitate a wider movement around its themes: #RebrandingCriolas #CriolasTakingBackPower #CriolasTalkingBack #Poderosas #HonoringCriolas #KriolasRéinventadu #KriolasDjaTomaPoder #KriolasTaManda #KriolaDiaspora #KriolaStoria. Together, through three panel discussions and a select keynote address, participants will accomplish the goal of remembering our individual agency and collective strength. We will create an opportunity for exchanging information & resources, educating each other and the world about issues important to us in a format designed for us, by us. Thus PODEROSA will create and offer a critical platform to empower Cabo Verdean women, and one day influence civic engagement, political debates and policy. In addition, PODEROSA will institutionalize a safe space for Criolas, in which women encourage one another, making a critical intervention in Cabo Verdean/Cape Verdean Studies with cutting edge, critical gender discussions and scholarship on Cabo Verdean women. Finally, the conference will recognize trailblazing Poderosas each year.

ABOUT THE ORGANIZERS

Dr. TERZA SILVA LIMA-NEVES is a wife, mother, educator and advocate for women's rights and access to quality education for all. She was born and raised in Sao Vicente Island, Cabo Verde. As a teenager, Terza immigrated to Pawtucket, RI with her parents and two younger sisters. Dr. Lima-Neves is assistant professor of political science at Johnson C. Smith University in Charlotte, North Carolina. She received her B.A. from Providence College and M.A./Ph.D. in political science from Clark Atlanta University. She teaches courses on African, comparative and international politics. Her research interests and published scholarship focus on Cabo Verdean studies, modern African diaspora politics as well as African women and development. She's particularly interested in Cabo Verdean women empowerment as well as the politics of gender and community building in the Cabo Verdean community in the United States. Terza is also the founding president of the Cape Verdeans of the Carolinas Association, an organization that brings together the Cabo Verdean community in North and South Carolina, their friends and allies via cultural and educational events, highlighting the rich history of their homeland. Terza lives in Charlotte, NC with her husband and children. Social Media Presence: Twitter: @DrTLimaNeves; Facebook/Cape Verdeans of the Carolinas; Facebook/Political Science Program at JCSU; about.me/terzalimaneves.

Dr. AMINAH PILGRIM (OR AMINAH FERNANDES PILGRIM) is a woman of Cabo Verdean and Barbadian descent, a proud mother of one boy, who hales from Southeastern Massachusetts. She is an Assistant Professor of Africana Studies at UMass Boston, and an affiliated faculty member of the Pedro Pires Institute for Cape Verdean Studies at Bridgewater State University. Her areas of research include late 19th and 20th century African-American history, African-American women's history, African Diaspora studies, Cabo Verdean studies, education research and critical hip hop studies. She is a community organizer/activist, working on matters related to children, youth/gang violence, the school to prison pipeline, immigrant transitions, women's empowerment, and Cabo Verdean community concerns. She is an advocate of teaching using civic engagement and has empowered many students to make a difference in this field. She is the founder of the HIPHOP Initiative, an organization that uses Hip Hop to increase critical media literacy among youth in the greater Boston area, and the co-founder of SABURA Youth Program (Student Ambassadors Bonded Under Recreation & Achievement), in Brockton, MA—a project in collaboration with the Pedro Pires Institute at Bridgewater State University, that serves over 80 youth and families. She serves as a volunteer for the Cabo Verdean Historical Society, CVC UNIDO and other community programs. Her forthcoming book is entitled *Not Black Enough*. See the following social media: Facebook/Aminah Pilgrim, Facebook/SABURA Camp Brockton, Facebook/HIPHOP Initiative UMass Boston, thehiphopinitiative.tumblr.com/ and Twitter and Instagram: @aminahnailah.

PANEL DESCRIPTIONS

PANEL I: CRIOLAS PODEROSAS: HONORING THE WOMEN WHO PAVED THE WAY

In this inaugural panel, well-known Cabo Verdean women in the fields of education, politics or government, journalism, community organizing and business will share their reflections on the challenges and rewards of being pioneers. They will also discuss why women often remain invisible in the histories of our communities, while we recognize the important contributions they have made to us all.

PANEL II: CABO VERDEAN WOMEN AND REPRESENTATION

Men and women will discuss the ways that Kriolas are portrayed and perceived. Talking back to those dominant stereotypes, while uncovering little known aspects of the complex “herstory” that belongs to Kriolas, they will share important reasons why Cabo Verdean women must reclaim the power to represent themselves for themselves in order to fully capture the truth of the complex realities we experience.

PANEL III: CABO VERDEAN WOMEN ARE SURVIVORS

In this session, Poderosas will lead a discussion about many of the taboo issues that have faced Cabo Verdean girls, young women and mature Kriolas. Topics such as sexism, domestic violence, sexuality, poverty and crime will be addressed. The strength of Kriolas will be celebrated, while the need to secure healthy bodies, spirits and minds will be stressed.

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

- 8:00-9:00am Registration and Continental Breakfast
- 9:00-9:15am Welcome Remarks
- 9:30-11:00am **Panel I: *Criolas Poderosas*: Honoring The Women Who Paved The Way**
- Moderator*: Dr. Vanessa Britto
- Honorees
Ms. Aldegundes “Gunga” Tolentino Tavares
Dr. Dawna Thomas
Dr. Claire Andrade-Watkins
Ms. Ines Brito
Ms. Romana Ramos
Ms. Jeanne Costa
- 11:00-11:30am *Break*
- 11:30am-1pm **Panel II: Cabo Verdean Women and Representation**
- Panelists
Ms. Ronise Vieira
Mr. Manuel Monteiro
Ms. Laura Rodrigues
Mr. Jose Monteiro
- 1:15-2:30pm Keynote Address and Lunch: **Dr. Ambrizeth Lima**
- 2:45-4:15pm **Panel III: Cabo Verdean Women Are Survivors**
- Moderator*: Ms. Lucy Rose
- Panelists
Ms. Soraya Dos Santos
Ms. Ana P. Novais
Ms. Sonia Alves
Ms. Aline Mercury & Ms. Rosalina Barros
Dr. Leila Rosa
- 4:30-5:30pm **Closing Remarks/Light Refreshments**

OUR GRATITUDE

This conference could not have happened without the support of each of the following sponsors and community partners. We are grateful for your commitment and contributions to the vision of the Poderosa Conference.

Institutional Sponsor: Mr. Rafael Zapata and Ms. Cathy O'Leary of the Providence College Office of Institutional Diversity.

Sponsors: Providence College Black Studies Program, Women's Studies Program, Office of Media Relations, Public Affairs and Community and Government Relations, Liz Lombard of the Center for Career Education and Professional Development, and Office of Admissions; Johnson C. Smith University College of Arts and Letters, Mr. Jose Monteiro of Movimentu Shokanti, Mr. Valerio Lopes of AFRYK, and Ms. Lauraberth Lima.

Community Partners: the Pedro Pires Institute for Cape Verdean Studies at Bridgewater State University, Consulado De Cabo Verde in Boston, SABURA Youth Program (Student Ambassadors Bonded Under Recreation & Achievement), Criolas Contra Cancer, Our Children Our Future, Inc., Rhode Island Cape Verdean Heritage Sub-Committee, Cape Verdean American Community Development Center (CACD), Deputadas Milionarias, Ms. Anne Marie Ponte of the Brown University Center for Students of Color, St. Peter's Teen Center of Boston (Paulo DeBarros & Staff), CVC UNIDO (Boston, MA), Baroneza Project, Alzerina Gomes Jewelry, Ron Barboza, Manuel Da Luz Goncalves of the Cape Verdean Creole-English Dictionary, Kretcheu: A Cape Verdean Store in America, Ten Rocks Restaurant (Pawtucket, RI), International Hair Salon (Pawtucket, RI), Cabo Verde Fish Market (Pawtucket, RI), Dr. & Mrs. Abel Djassi and Helia Amado, Dr. Holly Harriel, Ms. Jael Lopes, Dr. Vanessa Britto & the late Lena Britto, Ms. Jacira Santos Catering, DJ Guelas, Ms. Luisa Goncalves and all others we may have overlooked in this section. A special thank you to all of the panelists and moderators and Dr. Leila Rosa who so graciously agreed to serve as our Kriolu/English interpreter.

We are grateful to our families and friends who supported and motivated us in carrying out our vision and accomplish this labor of love.

Thank you! Obrigadu!