

# A Bit of Me

This series of profiles on SUNY Broome community members is a part of the Student Village diversity calendar initiative. We will be highlighting members in our community who identify with or can speak on the diversity theme or topic for each month. The theme for November is Native American Heritage and the topic is intersectionality/identity. To be featured in this series please reach out to Pamela Alvarez or Alexandria Donkor.

## Mamadou Diallo

SUNY Broome Friend



**Background:** Mamadou Diallo is a game development major and a Junior at the New York City College of Technology. He is a certified graphic designer, photographer, 3d modeler, and video editor. Hobbies include drawing, gaming and writing stories.

### WHAT IS YOUR MAJOR AND WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THAT MAJOR?

I am a game development major and I grew up my entire life playing video games and always wanted to be a part of the creation of one.

### WHAT ARE SOME OF THE ASPECTS OF YOUR IDENTITY THAT YOU FEEL COMFORTABLE SHARING?

Being Black, and my struggles with mental health issues (depression, insomnia, lack of self esteem).

### WHAT IS AN ASPECT OF YOUR PERSONAL OR CULTURAL IDENTITY THAT YOU STRONGLY ASSOCIATE WITH AND WHY?

One aspect of my identity that I strongly identify with is being African. I was born in America and when I was 2, I was sent to Africa for 4 years. So despite being born American I was raised African and still have a lot of strong African values. I value honesty, it is something that is not only something I aspire to achieve but something I expect of everyone regardless of circumstance.

### WHAT ARE SOME OF THE ASPECTS OF YOUR PERSONAL OR CULTURAL IDENTITY THAT YOU FEEL HAVE CHANGED THROUGHOUT YOUR LIFE? WHAT HAS STAYED THE SAME?

Even though a lot of African values were instilled in me and many are held in high regard there are certain ones that through my own experiences through school and through life that I would rather not hold on to. One thing I found is that in the country I'm from, women are not treated with the respect that they should be treated with. So the entire thing of putting women down all the time and not letting them make their own decisions, I decided to just throw away.

### WHAT ARE SOME STEPS YOU TAKE TO MANAGE YOUR MENTAL HEALTH?

One thing that always helps me feel better is gaming. Although I don't encourage this, it has become a habit to play games early in the morning and night. I also draw when I'm free and write occasionally to keep myself occupied.

### WHAT IS SOME ADVICE THAT YOU WOULD GIVE TO STUDENTS STRUGGLING WITH MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES?

One thing that you have to understand about mental health is that it is in your mind and the only person who knows how to beat you down the most is yourself. If you stay alone and try to fight your thoughts alone, you will lose. It's good to have someone you trust to talk to or someone to confide in so that you don't go through anything alone.

### WHAT IS SOME ADVICE YOU WOULD GIVE TO OUR STUDENTS IN GENERAL?

Going through life you are going to meet people who are vastly different from you and have achievements that you haven't yet reached. Always be open to learning new things not only about other people, but also about yourself and be willing to change.

### IS THERE A TIME WHEN YOU EXPERIENCED IMPOSTER SYNDROME?

Soon after graduating highschool I was no longer in an environment that constantly pressured me to bring out great material and provided me with ways to improve. I

felt like all the skills I had gained were false and solely meaningful in the sense of school. I felt like I had no talent on my own. In order to deal with that I focused on my work and bringing out results for myself rather than for the sake of teachers to remind myself that my work is my own.