

Professor Invited To Speak At President's Palace In Malta

Eileen Ariza, Ed.D., Florida Atlantic University professor and Fulbright scholar, was a guest speaker at the second Frederick Ofoosu Memorial Lecture, San Anton Palace in Attard, Malta under the distinguished patronage of Her Excellency Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca, President of Malta. Titled 'Ramifications of Migrants: Generation 1.5 and the Third Culture,' the lecture addressed effects that occur when a new age group, Generation 1.5, and children of third cultures face situations resulting from hybrid alliances and life in new host countries or other diverse settings. These individuals often grapple with who they are, which culture they 'belong' to, and how they should function and interact in school and everyday relations.

The Department of Inclusion and Access to Learning within the Faculty of Education of the University of Malta organized the lecture series named for Ghanaian migrant Frederick Ofoosu who committed suicide in 2017. Ofoosu, who was facing deportation from Malta due to lack of documentation, left a recorded message for friends explaining his despair, saying he was being forced to feel like a criminal when he had done no wrong.

'If Frederick Ofoosu had had the opportunity to live, work and raise a family in Malta, his children would understand their own exceptional experiences of living in multiple cultures,' said Ariza. 'Being second generation, they might have gone through experiences far gentler than he did. Malta's third culture children will offer many positive attributes to Malta in the future. Integration takes a very long time; generations. Until then, may we spread these attributes to help us get through the crisis: kindness, compassion, patience and inclusion.'

Along with Malta's president, other notable attendees included Ghana Ambassador Kenneth Enos Kofi Tachie; Helena Dalli, Malta European affairs and equality minister; Tony Hudson, American Embassy representative; and Godfrey Baldacchino, pro rector and Malta professor.

Ariza attended a national conference, 'Immigration and Education: A Need for a Policy, held at the University of Malta Valletta Campus,' earlier this year, and delivered the keynote, 'How Can Diversity become an Educational Tool?'

Ariza is a three-time Fulbright scholar to Mexico, Costa Rica and Malta. She teaches English as a foreign language methodology. Her research interests are ESOL, cross-cultural communication, preparation of mainstream teachers with English learners and displaced students in Syria.