

# AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES NEWS

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## DIRECTOR'S WELCOME

Hello!

Once again, I have the pleasure of sharing the accomplishments of our majors and faculty with you. As usual, the African American Studies Program has been busy supporting our majors' professional development and developing stronger ties with the community.

During the Spring semester, we hosted two Conversations with the Community, which featured Mr. Bamidele Demerson, the Executive Director of the International Civil Rights Center and Museum (ICRCM) and Dr. Willi Coleman, professor emeritus. AFS core faculty, Sarah Cervenak and Omar Ali, also invited colleagues to share their work on Africa and the diaspora.

Two of our majors pre-

sented papers at the National Council for Black Studies (NCBS) in Cincinnati, Ohio in March. Following their presentations, audience members were surprised to learn that they were undergraduate students and not advanced graduate students. Also, at NCBS, one of our majors became a charter member of the organization's honor society.

Our faculty has been busy as well. In sum, we made 6 research presentations this semester. We also made presentations at a local church, school, and the ICRCM.

Lastly, we are proud to have won a \$2,500 grant from NCBS, which allows AFS faculty and students to offer cultural enrichment programs to young African American boys. Our partnership with the

Greensboro Alumnae chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. has been most productive.

As we congratulate 13 graduates and 1 Post-Baccalaureate student, we also look forward to welcoming several more first-year students who will enter in the fall. We are also admitting students into our online Post Baccalaureate Certificate Program.

I encourage you to read the details of our activities and to support our continued efforts as we move towards celebrating 10 years of the AFS degree in 2012!

Happy reading,  
Tara T. Green, PhD



Director, Dr. Tara T. Green

*"We are preparing leaders. Their knowledge as African American Studies majors and as citizens in a rapidly changing world prepares them for success."*

## CONGRATS AFS GRADUATES!

### Congrats Graduates:

Our 2011 Spring Graduates are **Kevin Andrews, Eugenia Brown, Kwame Carroll, Deryle Daniels, Damon Henry, Teshone Jones, Tracy Kemp, Nakita Knight,**

**Torrie Mitchell, Na-keenya Ray, Courtney Suggs, Marlon Williams, and Dustin Wilson.** In addition, **Jaimey Howard** will receive a Post-Baccalaureate Certificate.



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## AFS FALL 2010 CONVOCATION – CELEBRATING STUDENTS



AFS GRADUATION STOLES.

The African American Studies Program saw six of its students receive their degrees last Fall.

On December 15th, AFS faculty, students, and family members attended our Convocation ceremony to acknowledge all of our graduates' hard

work and to celebrate their achievement.

As part of the event, **Nakita Knight** delivered her "Reflections of a Senior," and the audience was entertained by a musical performance from talented graduate, **Erica Martin**.

Robert Randolph delivered his perspective as the program's first graduate and an adjunct. Congratulations to the graduates. We wish you all the best!



## AMBASSADORS PRESENT AT NATIONAL CONFERENCE

This March, our AFS Ambassadors accompanied Dr. Green to the NCBS Conference. "The 2011 National Council of Black Studies Conference was a memorable learning and cultural experience," said **Charles Chavis, Jr.**, when asked to comment. "I felt like I was right at home. It was great meeting scholars of Black Studies from all over the world, and I had the opportunity to talk with graduate program directors from all over the nation. I also enjoyed presenting alongside Dr. Green and my fellow Ambassador Jarrod Rudd."

**Jarrod Rudd**, our other ambassador, had this to say about the conference: "This NCBS conference literally opened my eyes to a whole new way to think about my major. The way that I now view certain material was influenced by all the talks we had amongst students and some of the many panels I attended. This conference is something I will certainly start waiting for."

Donors' contributions made their trip possible.



AFS Ambassadors Charles Chavis and Jarrod Rudd at the NCBS Conference.

## STUDENT NEWS

AFS Ambassador **Charles L. Chavis Jr.** published an article with Blackpast.org profiling Ethiopian Saint Yared, a 6th Century pioneer of musical notation. He was also inducted into the Ankh Maat Wedjau Honor Society of NCBS.

**Eugenia Brown** received the PrIvYledged Pearl Award from the Nu Rho Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha. Eugenia also pre-

sented her paper, "Creating Space: African American Women in History" at the 2011 Honors Symposium.

The **AFS Club** will be officially affiliated with the University in Fall 2011.

**Dwayne Barnes** will serve as President, and **Randy Griffin** as Vice President.

**Teshone Jones** received a Silver Leadership Challenge Medal from the Of-

fice of Leadership and Service Learning at the UNCG Excellence Banquet.

**Jeffrey Pulliam** was honored at the Multicultural Resource Center's Scholars Recognition Program. He received a medal and certificate, and was one of four students invited to deliver remarks.

**Deryle Daniels, Jr.**, was honorarily inducted into the Sigma Alpha Pi

National Society of Leadership and Success.

**Dwayne Barnes** received the Blue Spartan Programming Award and the Award of Academic Excellence from UNCG.

**Katrenia Shelly, Yasmeen Chism**, and **Valerie Whitley** are new AFS Ambassadors.

## SPRING CONVERSATIONS WITH THE COMMUNITY

A Conversation with the Community:  
*Choosing to Get on the Boat:  
 Early Black Women as Global Travelers*  
 Sponsored by  
 UNGC's African American Studies Program

A Discussion led by  
 Dr. Willi Coleman  
 Tuesday  
 March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2011  
 UNGC Elliot University Center,  
 Claxton Room  
 At  
 6:00 pm

Before, during, and after slavery, Black females had their own reasons for choosing to embark on voyages taking them outside of the United States. This presentation will include both an overview as well as a focus on one or more specific women.

Our Conversations with the Community series continued on February 8th with a talk hosted by **Bamidele Demerson** of the International Civil Rights Center

and Museum, titled "Bags, Brooms, Bottles, and Bedcovers: Hoodoo Folk Beliefs in African American Fine Art." Hoodoo is an African American spiritual tradition with roots in Africa, Europe, and Native America. Mr. Demerson discussed the impact that it has had on many twentieth century artists.

On March 15th, Dr. **Willi Coleman** led another of our Conversations with the Community series. Her talk, "Choosing to Get on the Boat: Early Black Women as Global Travelers," was an exploration of the lives

of Black women who, during the 19th century had their own reasons to travel across the Atlantic Ocean. In numbers larger than might be expected, they challenged both racial oppression and gender suppression by traveling to other countries. Both enslaved and free born women embarked on such voyages. Dr. Coleman's talk provided some examples of these women and the reasons for their journeys.

Conversations with the Community  
 Sponsored by  
 UNGC's African American Studies Program

Tuesday February 8<sup>th</sup>, 2011  
 6:00 pm  
 UNGC Faculty Center,  
 College Ave.

*Bags, Brooms, Bottles, and Bedcovers: Hoodoo Folk Beliefs in African American Fine Art*

Discussion led by:  
 Bamidele Demerson

Bamidele Demerson is the Executive Director of the International Civil Rights Center and Museum. Hoodoo—an African American spiritual tradition—has origins in Africa, Europe, and Native America. Its creolized beliefs and practices regarding divination, magic, and herbal lore have profoundly inspired the work of many twentieth century "fine" artists.

## ALUMNI NEWS

**Cedric M. Cooper** works for the Social Security Administration and was elected President of the North Carolina Black Affairs Advisory Council.

**Norman Phelps** received a Masters degree in School Counseling from NC A&T University and works as a counselor at James Benson Dudley High School.

**Leroy Walker, Jr.**, is in Graduate school at Wake Forest University working on a Masters in Liberal Studies. He works as a systems administrator.

**Tiffany Watson** received a Masters in Management and Leadership from Liberty University and works as an 8th grade Language Arts

teacher in the Cumberland County School System. She has accepted a position with Teach for America.

**Kenneth Crosby** currently runs his own business, Crosby Tax Services.

Please e-mail [afs@uncg.edu](mailto:afs@uncg.edu) with an update on your life so we can include it in our next newsletter!

## AFS ALUM IN THE SPOTLIGHT

**Tiffany Dyson Atkins** graduated from UNCG in 2003 with a double-major in African American Studies and Political Science.

"I chose AFS as my second major," she says, "because it was very important to me, as a minority student at UNCG, to take seriously the study

of African-American history, and the topics most pressing to me and my peers. Studying AFS gave me the opportunity to learn about the unsung heroes of our history and meet other like-minded students."

When asked what her favorite part of being an

AFS major was, she said that it was "the classroom interaction."

Tiffany is currently in her third year at Elon University School of Law. She is working at Brotherton Ford Yeoman Berry & Weaver, and plans to become a litigator after graduating.

"My AFS background," she says, "has given me the knowledge and confidence necessary to be a successful law student and future lawyer."

## SPRING NEWS AND FUTURE EVENTS

On February 10th, the AFS program brought **Dr. Kathryn Mathers**, scholar-in-residence in the Department of Cultural Anthropology at Duke University, to campus. Dr. Mathers gave a presentation called "Love in the Time of Oprah: Why America Loves to Save Africa."

AFS sponsored another event on March 1st, titled "Hip Hop and the New Gender Relations" with **Dr. T. Denean Sharpley-**

**Whiting**, who is Distinguished Professor of African and African Diaspora Studies and French at Vanderbilt University. The presentation was based on her book *Pimps Up, Ho's Down: Hip Hop's Hold on Young Black Women*.

Our program also hosted **Dr. Sylviane A. Diouf** on March 24th. Dr. Diouf, who is a curator at the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture at the New York Public

Library, gave a talk titled "The Transatlantic Slave Trade: The Human Story."

Our **22nd Annual Conference on African American Culture and Experiences (CACE)** will be held on Friday, November 11th, 2011, on the campus of UNCG. The theme for this conference will be "The Black South."

The Program's Post Baccalaureate Certificate online option begins in Fall 2011.

### Faculty and Staff News

**Omar H. Ali** has written the narrative for the new exhibit "The African Diaspora in the Indian Ocean World" for the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, New York Public Library. The online exhibit includes over 150 photographs, paintings, and maps. Dr. Ali has also given several talks, including "Islam and the Making of the African Diaspora East of the River Nile" for the Institute for Global Interdisciplinary Studies at Villanova University and "The Many Faces of Islam: Beyond the Headlines" at Wake County North Regional Library. Additionally, Dr. Ali appeared on C-SPAN as part of a national conference of independents held in New York City and has become a Road Scholar for the North Carolina Humanities Council to give public lectures on "Black History as American History."

**Sarah Jane Cervenak** has an article on David Walker and Sojourner Truth, currently in press. It is forthcoming in *Palimpsest: Journal on Women,*

*Gender, and the Black International*. She also has a book review on *Monstrous Intimacies: Making Postslavery Subjects* forthcoming in the *Women's Studies Journal* for November 2011. In May, she will attend a meeting of the Black Performance Theory Working Group in Santa Barbara, CA. She will present a paper at the Empowerment and the Sacred Conference at the University of Leeds in June.

**Michael Cauthen's** article, "A Call for A Manhattan Project-Style Attack on Racial and Ethnic Academic and Scholastic Achievement Gaps" will appear in the South Atlantic Philosophy of Education Society (SAPES) Yearbook. In March, he discussed his book, *The Student-Athlete's Guide to College Recruitment*, at UNCG's Office of Multi-Cultural Affairs' "Book Talk" series. He is also serving as the advisor to the newly affiliated AFS Club.

**Tara T. Green's** article, "Sexed-Up and Dumbed-Down: Black Southern Men in

James McBride's *Miracle at St. Anna*" has been accepted for publication in *Obsidian: Literature of the African Diaspora*. Dr. Green presented papers with two students, Jarrod Rudd and Charles Chavis, Jr., at the National Council for Black Studies conference in Cincinnati, OH in March and she received an award for Outstanding Publication in *Africana Studies* from the organization. She was quoted in an article on Langston Hughes published by the *Star-Ledger* in New Jersey.

**Frank Woods** was invited to participate in Scholar's Study Day at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts for the upcoming "Henry O. Tanner: Modern Spirit" exhibition in March 2012.

**Robert Randolph** delivered a paper titled "Here Be Dragons: James Baldwin, Langston Hughes, and the Technologies of Black Queer Studies" at The Dialogue on Progressive Enlightenment (DOPE) Conference, hosted by North Carolina A&T State University

UNCG's African American Studies Program presents...  
**Hip Hop and the New Gender Relations**

Featuring Dr. T. Denean Sharpley-Whiting

Tuesday, March 1st,  
2011  
3:30 - 4:45 pm  
Elliott University  
Center,  
Kirkland Room



Contact [afst@uncg.edu](mailto:afst@uncg.edu) or 336-334-5967 for more information.

T. Denean Sharpley-Whiting is Distinguished Professor of African and African Diaspora Studies and French at Vanderbilt University. She teaches comparative diasporic literary and cultural movements, 18th & 19th century French narratives, Black France, Black Europe, and feminist studies. She is the author/editor or co-editor of eleven books. Her latest, *Pimps Up, Ho's Down: Hip Hop's Hold on Young Black Women*, received the 2007 Emily Toth Award. Her presentation is based on her book, which interrogates the "display of black women in music videos, television, film fashion, and the internet."



UNCG'S AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES PROGRAM PRESENTS:  
**Love in the Time of Oprah:  
Why America Loves to Save Africa**  
Featuring:  
**Dr. Kathryn Mathers**

Thursday  
February 10th, 2011  
at  
4:30 pm  
UNCG Graham Building  
Room 106

Contact [afst@uncg.edu](mailto:afst@uncg.edu) for more information.

Dr. Mathers is a scholar-in-residence in the Department of Cultural Anthropology at Duke University. Her published work examines reality television, adventure travel, humanitarianism, and the tensions between tourism, development, and migration in Southern Africa.

on March 17th.

**Duane Cyrus** (affiliate, Dance) was interviewed by Denise Franklin for "Voices & Viewpoints" on radio station WFDD.

**William Hart's** (affiliate, Religious Studies) third book, titled *Afro-Eccentricity: Beyond the Standard Narrative of Black Religion*, has been published. He also completed a chapter to be included in an edited volume on Jesus and Whiteness entitled--"Jesus (Whiteness) and the Disinherited."

**Bruce Holland** received both the UNCG Staff Star Award and the College Staff Award for his outstanding service to the program and the university.

## STUDENT INTERNSHIPS



Zhayawna Johnson

During the 2011 spring semester, **Zhayawna Johnson** completed an internship with Case Management Care, Inc (CMC). CMC is an African American owned agency that strives to provide help to those that suffer from mental

and developmental disabilities. A double major in African American Studies and Psychology, through this internship she was able to utilize knowledge gained from both areas of study. The majority of the clients served are African Americans. Zhay-

awna has been able to obtain knowledge about another, less talked about aspect of the African American community: mental health.

## AFS IN THE COMMUNITY

AFS' faculty and students have been working with the **Greensboro Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.**, and local African American male youth organizations to form a community partnership aimed at providing opportunities for local youths. The program, called **EMBODI** (Empowering Males to Build Opportunities for Developing Independence), offers activities that combine a focus on both history and the arts. These efforts have been made possible with a \$2,500 grant from the Community Education and Civic Engagement Grants Program of the National Council

for Black Studies. "The EMBODI program has given me an opportunity to become involved in making a difference in the African American community," said EMBODI volunteer and AFS major **Katrenia Shelly**.

The first event, a Town Hall-style discussion, was held on December 3rd in the Elliot University Center. In the Spring, AFS faculty, with student assistance, led workshops. Frank Woods introduced the boys to African American art and Robert Randolph introduced the boys to poetry.



ABOVE: Dr. Frank Woods addresses the crowd at the EMBODI town hall meeting.

## DR. ALI'S WORK WITH THE SCHOMBURG CENTER



"The African Diaspora in the Indian Ocean World," written

by **Dr. Omar H. Ali**, is part of a new online exhibit of the Harlem-based Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture that explores the migration of Africans across the Indian Ocean world. Between the second and twentieth centuries, approximately four million sub-Saharan Africans traveled to the Arabian Peninsula, southern Iran,

the Indian subcontinent, and Southeast Asia as merchants, slaves, soldiers, and sailors. The exhibit features over 150 historical images from the region, as well as maps, and selections of documentaries on *Sidis*—the name used for men and women of African descent in India.



A portrait of Ikhlas Khan, Bijapur, India, mid-17th century, from the exhibit.

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH  
CAROLINA AT GREENSBORO

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WE'RE ON  
FACEBOOK!

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JUST SEARCH AFS UNCG!

## Support AFS

We hope that you will support our Program by making a tax-deductible donation. Your gift to AFS allows us to build our scholarship fund to support students in need or provide funding for our students to study abroad and/or attend conferences.

**To support AFS, please send your donation** to Advancement Services 1100 W. Market Street P.O. Box 26170 Greensboro, NC 27402 clearly marked for UNCG African American Studies Enrichment Fund or give on-line at [http://www.uncg.edu/ur/studentsfirst/give\\_now.html](http://www.uncg.edu/ur/studentsfirst/give_now.html).

If you have questions, do not hesitate to contact us.



## ABOUT UNCG'S AFS STUDIES PROGRAM

The African American Studies Program (AFS) advances the university's commitment to diverse perspectives and inclusive learning environments through course offerings, programming, and community involvement. It fosters interdisciplinary study for undergraduate and post-baccalaureate students by examining how people of African descent have shaped our world. As a program located in a city with a history of Black sociopolitical movements, we provide a forum to engage the complexities of Black life across African diasporas.

Visit: [www.uncg.edu/afs](http://www.uncg.edu/afs)



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TO: