

AFRICANA STUDIES DEPARTMENT NEWSLETTER

Fall 2017

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UNC CHARLOTTE

CHAIR'S REMARKS



As the story teller-in-chief of the Africana Studies Department, one of my most enjoyable tasks is editing and producing the department's newsletter. It is an annual

booklet of information covering faculty, students, alumni, and general departmental news and events. The newsletter is also an historical record that documents our reaction to the events around us locally and in the larger society. I am therefore very delighted to introduce the latest edition of our newsletter, the ninth under my watch as editor. This academic year also marks my tenth year as chair of the Africana Studies Department.

The increased length of the newsletter, from eight leaves in 2009 to 32 in 2017, is a reflection of our growth as a viable and ambitious unit within a growing university. To cite but few examples, the number of our majors has increased by 350% since 2008. Over the same period, our student credit hours has doubled; we also have added 21 new AFRS courses to our curriculum, created a concentration in health and environment within the undergraduate major, developed a value-added graduate certificate program, and launched the AFRS Honors program. Today, we have one of the most comprehensive, integrated, and holistic Africana Studies curricula available anywhere. Covering Africa, United

States, the Caribbean, and Latin America, our curriculum privileges Africana-centered epistemology. It emphasizes history and culture, business and entrepreneurship, health and the environment, as well as policies on economic development, education, race, stratification, social justice, and diversity. Our experiential learning courses also bring real life situations into the classroom. In our alumni, the story of the relevance of Africana Studies degree is told every day. As creative and trans-disciplinary thinkers, globally-aware and locally-relevant graduates, our alumni are to be found in a wide range of professions, from banking/finance to social service sectors.

As in previous years, this edition of AFRS Newsletter is filled with exciting faculty news such as the Nigerian National Order of Merit awarded to Dr. Tanure Ojaide last December. We are also pleased to introduce our new colleagues joining the expanding Africana Studies family. Dr. Crystal Eddins belongs to this cohort of new faculty and we are already keeping her very busy. Working against a demanding deadline, she graciously served as associate editor of this newsletter. Our student news includes Evan Nash's learning experience as an intern at the International House.

Likewise, our responsiveness to local and national events is showcased here. For example, this year's Dr. Bertha Maxwell-Roddey Distinguished Africana Lecture, scheduled for September 20, will focus on the challenges of socioeconomic mobility in the

Charlotte region. The date is special for Charlotte. It marks the first year of the fatal shooting of Keith L. Scott by police officer Brentley Vinson, an incident that triggered days of protest in the city and on our campus.

As we journey on to our unfolding future, I must express my heartfelt gratitude to my colleagues (faculty and staff), university administrators, students, alumni, and community partners for their fervent belief in our mission. With the dedication, resourcefulness, and talents of these stakeholders, I am convinced that our best years still lie ahead.

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AFRICANA STUDIES AT A GLANCE

VISION

The Department of Africana Studies is the primary intellectual unit at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte holistically dedicated to the interdisciplinary study of Africa and the global African Diasporas; and it shall comprehensively pursue the production, dissemination, and application of Africana-centered knowledge as the basis for seeking improvement to the multifaceted human conditions of the 21st century.

MISSION

The mission of the Africana Studies Department is to educate and mentor students, discover and disseminate new knowledge, and engage diverse communities on the experiences of Africa-descended populations worldwide, with emphasis on culture, history, social policy, health, environment, entrepreneurship, race and diaspora studies, sustainability, social justice, and social responsibility within the critical liberal arts tradition.

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

- ◆ B.A. Africana Studies
- ◆ B.A. Africana Studies with Concentration in Health and Environmental Studies
- ◆ Minor in Africana Studies
- ◆ Graduate Certificate in Africana Studies (including 4+1 Early Entry program)
- ◆ Number of undergraduate majors and minors: 100+
- ◆ Africana Studies Honors
- ◆ Average number of Student Credit Hours (SCH) per Academic Year: 7300+
- ◆ Number of Faculty: 8 tenure-ladder and 6 part-time

ANNUAL PUBLIC ACADEMIC EVENTS

- ◆ Dr. Bertha Maxwell-Roddey Distinguished Africana Lecture (*fall*)
- ◆ Artist-in-Residence (*spring*)
- ◆ Africana Studies Conference (*spring*)

COMMUNITY OUTREACH PARTNERSHIPS

- ◆ The Harvey B. Gantt Center for African-American History + Culture
- ◆ LATIBAH Museum
- ◆ Juneteenth Festival of the Carolinas
- ◆ Friends of Old Westview Cemetery, Inc.
- ◆ The Ebony Society of Philatelic Events and Reflection (ESPER)
- ◆ NC National Alliance of Black School Educators
- ◆ Yoruba Language-in-Community Outreach
- ◆ Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools

OCCASIONAL PUBLICATIONS

- ◆ Charlotte Papers in Africana Studies
- ◆ Digital Africana Studies

FACULTY RESEARCH, TEACHING, AND SERVICE AWARDS/FELLOWSHIPS/GRANTS

- ◆ All-Africa Okigbo Prize for Poetry (twice)
- ◆ Association of Nigerian Authors' Poetry Award (four times)
- ◆ BBC Arts and Africa Poetry Award
- ◆ Carnegie Foundation Fellowship (thrice)
- ◆ Commonwealth Poetry Prize
- ◆ Certificate of Special United States Congressional Recognition for Excellence in Service
- ◆ Choice Magazine's Outstanding Academic Title
- ◆ Dumbarton Oaks Research Grant
- ◆ Duke University School of Medicine Fellowship
- ◆ Felix and Mildred Yip Fellowship, University of Cambridge
- ◆ Francis Forbes Society for Legal History Prize
- ◆ Fonlon-Nichols Lifetime Achievement Award
- ◆ Fulbright-Hays Fellowship (thrice)
- ◆ Gilder-Lehrman Center Fellowship
- ◆ Kathryn T. Preyer Scholar in American Legal History
- ◆ National Endowment for the Humanities Fellowship (twice)
- ◆ National Science Foundation
- ◆ National Humanities Center Fellowship
- ◆ Nigerian National Order of Merit
- ◆ Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture
- ◆ Social Science Research Council Research Grant
- ◆ University of Texas Africanist Award for Research Excellence
- ◆ Wenner-Gren Foundation Research Grant
- ◆ UNC Charlotte's Bank of America Award for Teaching Excellence Finalist
- ◆ UNC Charlotte's First Citizens Bank Scholar Medal Award

SAMPLE OF ALUMNI'S CURRENT EMPLOYMENT

- ◆ Museum and Cultural Officer (e.g. Reed Gold Mine State Historic Site)
- ◆ Higher Education Administrator (e.g., UNC Charlotte)
- ◆ Business Analyst (e.g., Bank of America)
- ◆ Customer Service Professional (e.g., Wells Fargo)
- ◆ Small Business Ownership (e.g., Piqasso Customs, LLC)
- ◆ Teacher (e.g. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools)
- ◆ Social Worker (e.g., Echelon Care, Charlotte)
- ◆ College Professor (e.g., Winston Salem State University)
- ◆ Park and Recreation (e.g., Mecklenburg County)

THE NINTH DR. BERTHA MAXWELL-RODDEY DISTINGUISHED AFRICANA LECTURE FOCUSES ON “ROADMAP OF OPPORTUNITY FOR CHARLOTTE”

The co-chairs of The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Opportunity Task Force - **Dr. Ophelia Garmon-Brown** and **Mr. Charles Dee O'Dell** - will serve as speakers and guests of honor at the **2017 Dr. Bertha Maxwell-Roddey Lecture**. This year's lecture, titled *A Roadmap of Opportunity for Charlotte*, is scheduled for September 20 at 5:30-7:30pm and will take place in **McKnight auditorium, Cone University Center**. Special recognition and reception will immediately follow the lecture. The event is free and open to the public.

The lecture will focus on the challenges of intergenerational poverty and socioeconomic mobility in the Charlotte region.

A 2014 study shows that only **4.4 percent** of children born into Charlotte's lowest 20 percent income bracket have the likelihood of making it to the top 20 percent income level in their lifetime. The study also shows that a child born into a poor household will most likely remain poor for the rest of his/her life. Although the chances of escaping poverty are generally low for children in poor households in most of the 50 largest U.S. cities included in the study, Charlotte exhibited the *least* chances among them for socioeconomic mobility. This dismal picture galvanized community leaders to set up the 20-member Charlotte-Mecklenburg Opportunity Task Force in May 2015, to investigate the causes of socioeconomic immobility and to make recommendations on how to overcome this challenge.

Following almost two years of consultation with over 50 experts, locally and nationally, and receiving input from thousands of people in the community across different social spectra, the Task Force released its recommendations to the public on March 27, 2017. The members identified several major roadblocks to socioeconomic mobility in the country in general and Charlotte in particular, such as the inheritance of inequality and inequity along race and income; indifference and lack of compassion; and the fear of the “Other.” The Task Force therefore noted that a sustained collective and collaborative action that cuts across many social boundaries and is based on truth, trust, and compromise must be the starting point for overcoming the problems of socioeconomic mobility. For long-lasting solutions, the Task Force urged the city of Charlotte, including its leaders, citizens, and institutions to focus on these three key areas:

- Early Childhood Care and Education
- College and Career Readiness
- Child and Family Stability



These, the Task Force members proposed, are “highly interrelated determinants” of social mobility and the ones that “are most likely to have the greatest influence on the opportunity trajectory of an individual.”

We are delighted that Dr. Garmon-Brown, Senior Vice President of Community Wellness & Education at Novant Health and Mr. O'Dell, Senior Vice President & Group Head of National Corporate Banking at U.S. Bank will visit our campus to share their thoughts with UNC Charlotte community. They will be met by eager students, faculty, and staff seeking to know more about the Task Force's recommendations and the most effective ways the university can be a partner in finding long-lasting solutions to the problems of intergenerational poverty. This event is part of the broad university initiatives. As Chancellor Philip Dubois announced in his 2017 convocation address to the university community, campus-wide efforts are in progress to identify the possible areas in which the University can take a leadership role in addressing the recommendations of the Task Force.

It is appropriate that Department of Africana Studies is contributing to this effort by focusing its annual signature lecture on the theme of socioeconomic mobility. After all, the field of Africana or Black Studies was founded on the principles of social responsibility, social responsiveness, and academic excellence. The UNC Charlotte students and faculty led by Dr. Bertha Maxwell-Roddey played important roles in defining these ideas in the early years of the field during the 1970s. The theme of this year's lecture is also consistent with the ideas that guided us in inaugurating the Annual Dr. Bertha Maxwell-Roddey Distinguished Africana Lecture in 2008:

1) to honor Dr. Bertha Maxwell-Roddey's pioneering contributions to the development of Africana Studies at UNC Charlotte; and

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DR. BERTHA MAXWELL-RODDEY DISTINGUISHED LECTURE *(continued from pg. 3)*



(2) to use the lecture as an intellectual and social forum to engage with and connect to the Charlotte region's diverse populations on issues of broad relevance.

A diverse audience, comprising of scholars, students, community activists, professionals, political dignitaries, and members of the business community have

attended the previous lectures. We expect the same this year. To walk down memory lane, the inaugural BMR lecture titled "The Future of Charlotte as a Global City: The Black Dimensions" was delivered in 2009 by distinguished attorney and widely respected Civil Rights leader, Mr. James E. Ferguson II, president of the law firm Ferguson, Chambers, and Sumter, PA. The outgoing president of the Johnson C. Smith University, Dr. Ronald L. Carter, gave the second lecture: "Avoiding the Perfect Storm: A Vision of Excellence in the Emerging New Majority." Honorable Terry Bellamy, former Mayor of the City of Asheville (NC), presented the third lecture on "Youth Empowerment:

Structure for Developing Tomorrow's Workforce." Dr. Lorand James Matory, the Lawrence Richardson Professor of Cultural Anthropology at Duke University delivered the 2012 BMR lecture on "Global Migrations and the Crisis of Identity in Black America." He was followed in 2013 by Dr. Charles V. Willie, The Charles W. Elliot Professor of Education Emeritus at Harvard University, who spoke on "African American Families in the Twenty-first Century." Dr. Yele Aluko, a former Senior Vice President at Novant Health focused the 2014 edition on "North Carolina's Rejection of Medicaid Expansion: Politicizing the Health of Our Society." On the seventh year anniversary of the lecture, Dr. Paul Zeleza, now the President of the United States International University of Africa in Kenya, spoke on the theme "Africa Rising: The Role of Higher Education and the Diaspora." Last year, Historian Bernard E. Powers of the College of Charleston spoke on the deep history of racial violence in the United States of America.

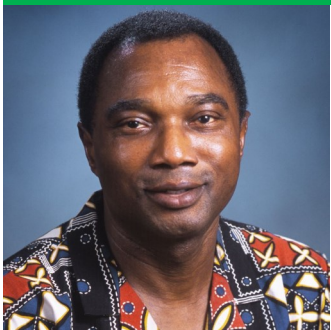
To RSVP for the lecture, please email africana_studies@uncc.edu or call 704-687-5161.



Pictures from the 2016 Dr. Bertha Maxwell-Roddey Lecture. *Clockwise, from left:* Guest speaker, Dr. Bernard E. Powers with Dr. Maxwell-Roddey and Dean Nancy Gutierrez; Mr. Theodore Roddey and Dr. Herman Thomas; Dr. Maxwell-Roddey and Delta Sigma Theta members.



TANURE OJAIDE RECEIVED NIGERIA'S HIGHEST ACADEMIC HONOR



We were elated in late November 2016 when the news came in that our very own Tanure Ojaide has been named the recipient of the Nigerian National Order of Merit in the humanities category.

Established through Act 53 of 1979, the National Order of

Merit (NNOM) is the highest academic honor in Africa's most populous country. The award is given annually to the most deserving scholar and intellectual who has made outstanding and ethical contributions to national and global attainments in one of these areas of scholarly endeavor: humanities, sciences, engineering, and medicine. Below is the citation read by Professor Igwe L. Ekwueme at the NNOM investiture ceremony in Abuja on December 2, 2016.

NNOM CITATION

Born in Okpara Inland, Delta State, in 1948, Tanure Ojaide had his early education at St. George's Grammar School, Obinomba, and Federal Government College, Warri. He later attended the University of Ibadan where he received his B.A. in English and Syracuse University in the U.S. where he obtained both the M.A. in Creative Writing and Ph.D. in English. He started his academic career at the University of Maiduguri in 1977. He returned to the United States in 1989 and joined the UNC Charlotte faculty in 1990.

Ojaide's first published creative work dates back to 1973 and ever since he has continued to refine his craft, and diversify his media of literary creativity and communication through poetry, fiction, memoir, literary criticism, and public lectures. Garnering national and international literary prizes, he is the most prolific and one of the most decorated and celebrated contemporary African writers.

As a poet, he has published twenty poetry collections, most of which received prizes, including the Commonwealth Poetry Prize for the Africa Region (1987), two All-Africa Okigbo Prizes for Poetry (1988 and 1997), the British Broadcasting Corporation Arts and Africa Poetry Award (1988), and four times the Association of Nigerian Authors Poetry Award (1988, 1994, 2003, and 2011). Socially, culturally, and ethically relevant, Tanure Ojaide's poems have had so much global resonance that they are not only studied widely at home and abroad but also have been translated into ten foreign languages including Chinese, Dutch, French,

German, Spanish, Sanskrit, and Hindi.

As a fiction writer, Tanure has published seven works made up of three short story collections and four novels. Several short stories have also been published in anthologies. Among his writings are *Sovereign Body*, which received honorable mention in the 2002 Commonwealth Prize (Africa Region), and *The Activist* which deals with environmental degradation in the Niger Delta. He has also written on the predatory practices of religious charlatans as in *God's Medicine Men and Other Stories*.

As a literary critic, he has published, either individually or jointly, ten volumes of literary criticism which serve as useful guide and reference material for students and scholars of literature and cultural studies. Notable among these works are *The Poetry of Wole Soyinka; Poetry, Performance, and Art: Udje Dance Songs of the Urhobo People*; and *Indigeneity, Globalization, and African Literature*. He was the 2005 recipient of University of North Carolina at Charlotte's highest recognition for scholarship—the First Citizens Bank Scholar Award. He has also won the American National Endowment for the Humanities Fellowship and twice the Fulbright Senior Scholar award.

As a memoirist, he has published *Great Boys: An African Childhood* and *Drawing the Map of Heaven: An African Writer in America* which was a finalist for the inaugural Penguin Prize for African Writing (2012).

As a guest speaker, Tanure has given public lectures and poetry readings in Africa, Asia, Europe, North America, and South America. He represented Nigeria at the 2005 Poetry Africa forum in Durban, South Africa; the 2008 Pan-African Poetry Festival, in Accra, Ghana; the 2013 Medellin International Poetry Festival in Colombia; and the World Poetry Festival in New Delhi, India in 2014. He continues to be a worthy ambassador for Nigeria and Africa. In April 2016, the African Literature Association gave Tanure Ojaide the Fonlon-Nichols Award for "his commitment to democratic ideals, humanistic values, and literary excellence in Africa."

For being a highly distinguished, immensely prolific and talented creative writer and scholar whose works combine social relevance, humanistic vision, quality, elegance, and accessibility, and for bringing honor to his fatherland, the National Merit Award Committee presents to you, Mr. President, this multiple award winner and renowned world writer and scholar, for the 2016 Nigerian National Order of Merit Award.

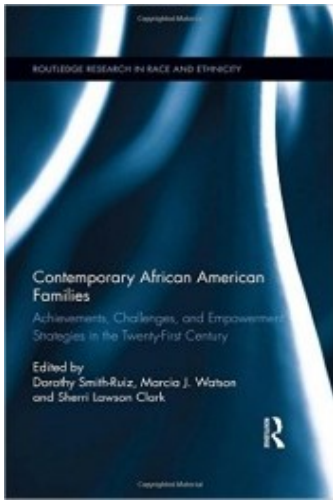
OJAIDE RECEIVED NIGERIA'S HIGHEST ACADEMIC HONOR: PICTURES



Scenes from the investiture ceremony in Abuja, *clockwise from top-left*: President Muhammad Buhari, congratulating Dr. Ojaide; Vice President Yemi Osinbajo and the honoree; Dr. Ojaide addressed Nigerian president and members of his cabinet.



NEW BOOKS BY CORE AFRS FACULTY



Contemporary African American Families: Achievements, Challenges, and Empowerment Strategies in the Twenty-First Century (Routledge, 2016) edited by **Dr. Dorothy Smith-Ruiz** with Dr. Sherri Lawson Clark and Dr. Marcia J. Watson, was published as part of the Routledge “Research in Race and Ethnicity” series. The book explores the multidimensionality of black families in the United States, thereby challenging decades-old perceptions of a singular African American community that thinks alike, acts alike, and lives alike in poor and downtrodden environments. The thirteen-chapter book corrects these deficient and prejudiced conceptions with updated empirical research on African American family formation, schooling, health, and parenting across a wide spectrum of class and socioeconomic indicators.

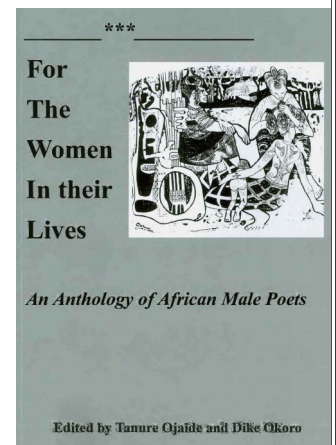
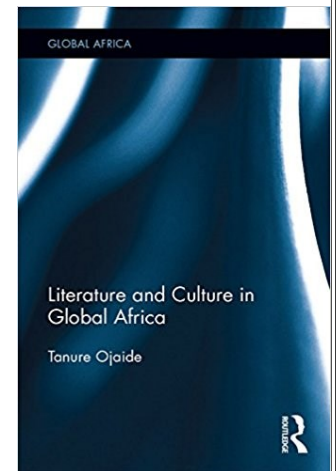
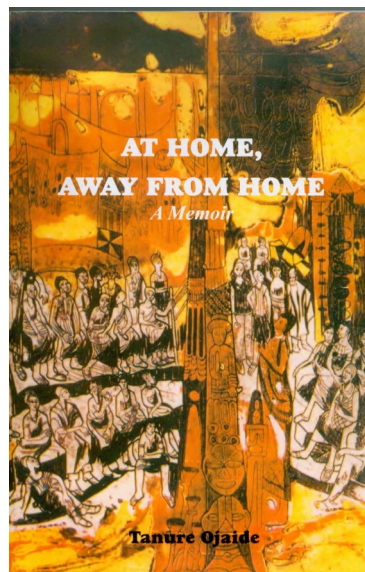
With new data, penetrating analysis, and policy-related interpretations, the cast of multigenerational contributors illuminates the persistent effects of the last recession and the troubling political climates on black lives. They also succeed in subverting much of the research resulting from Daniel Moynihan’s 1965 report, which arguably misunderstood the lived experiences of black people during the shift from slavery to “freedom” in a Jim Crow society. The book has been described as a “timely subversion of the myth that America is successfully in a post-racial era.” This multidisciplinary anthology offers promises as a text to think and teach with on the state of black families in the United States.

Dr. Tanure Ojaide has so far released three books in 2017 (and we are still counting). The first, published in March, is a memoir that focuses on his recent itineraries in the Global South and North America. In ***At Home, Away from Home: A Memoir*** (Cissus World Press, Milwaukee, 2017), Ojaide provides reflections on the plight of the former African colonial subject-turned postcolonial citizen, caught in the torrents of displacement and emplacement by the forces of global empires. Ojaide is a man of many spaces. He is a member of the global literati and a humble local “boy” from the Niger Delta (Nigeria). He therefore embodies the complications, promises, and contradictions of post-coloniality - as do billions of others in the Global South.

In this riveting memoir of fifteen short stories, Ojaide uses the self as a mirror of the postcolonial world. He addresses the agonies and joys of migration and shifting places, as well as the challenges of intercultural translations. He lucidly probes the pertinent questions of heritage, belonging, citizenship, and home in the postcolonial space where the caricature of modernity is in full display. He reflects on a

world where globalism and globalization have not transcended the epistemic ideology of inequality, control, and power which a miniscule cabal held over the world populations. For anyone seeking to know what contemporary Africa is all about and where the continent may be heading, Ojaide’s latest memoir offers a rich fodder for contemplation and understanding.

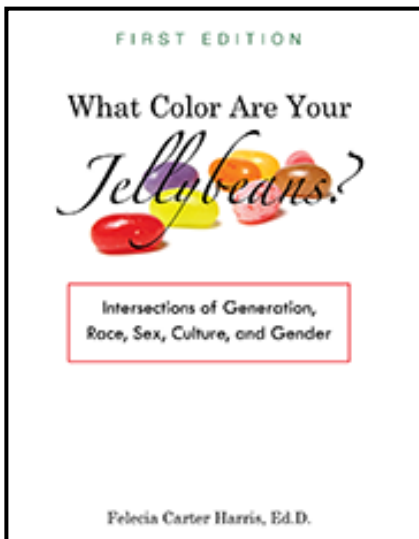
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NEW BOOKS BY CORE FACULTY (continued from pg. 7)

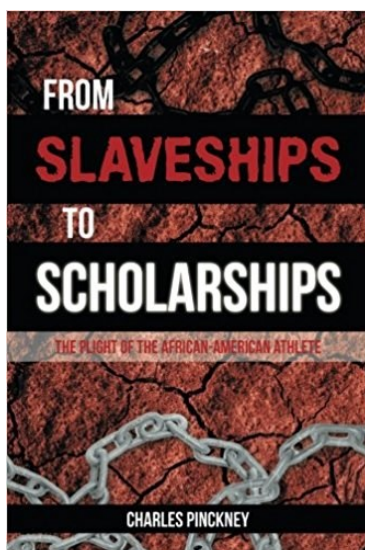
Ojaide's second book is a work of literary criticism, *Literature and Culture in Global Africa* (Routledge, 2017), in which Ojaide continues to grapple with the theme of globalism and globalization. Engaging and interrogating the idea of a 'Global Africa,' this book examines how African literary and cultural productions have changed over the years due to the social and political influences brought about by intensified globalization. The book challenges African literary artists and scholars to think creatively about culture and literature, especially on themes such as sexuality, political leadership, environmentalism, as well as activism and advocacy.

The third book is an anthology of eighty poems co-edited with Dike Okoro. Titled *For the Women in Their Lives: An Anthology of African Male Poets* (Cissus World Press, Milwaukee, 2017), the collection is a feast of ideas and styles on how African men have used poetry to respond to the women in their lives, including grandmothers, mothers, sisters, daughters, friends, colleagues, acquaintances, lovers, mistresses, and wives.



Dr. Felecia Carter Harris: *What Color Are Your Jellybeans? Intersections of Generation, Race, Sex, Culture, and Gender* (Cognella, 2017).

What Color Are Your Jellybeans? examines how the intersections of race, spirituality, politics, culture, and gender affect our views of difference in general and how we view each other at interpersonal level. Adroitly combining original commentary and outstanding reading selections, the book explores the shifting ideas of gender, sexual, racial, cultural, and generational differences in the contemporary society, especially among the millennial generation. It also examines significant historical and current events, trends, processes, and individual and organizational complexities that are inherent in any discussion of difference. Firmly rooted in a philosophy that encourages and validates diversity and inclusion, *What Color Are Your Jellybeans?* is written for students. It is an handbook that provides an intellectual "safe space" to think and talk about difficult and even taboo topics, while at the same time examining the social structures behind those issues.



Dr. Charles Pinckney is the author of *From Slaveships to Scholarships: The Plight of the African-American Athlete*, published by Authorhouse (2017). The objectification of black athletics in popular culture and sports enterprises is the subject of the book. Dr. Pinckney contextualizes this work within the historical legacy of U.S. slavery, Jim Crow segregation, and contradictions of Civil Rights integration.

Interweaving history, sociology, and current affairs, he shows the continuity of past material conditions in the present, with emphasis on the inequities that arose from racial, psychological, power, and wealth disparities in sport business. Pinckney wryly noted, "five hundred years ago, our African ancestors were running from the slave catcher and slave ships to avoid slavery; however, today the descendants of slaves are still running but in a different direction. In fact, they are running, jumping, shooting baskets, and catching odd-shaped balls for their masters. Sporting events such as track and field, football, and basketball are mainly dominated by blacks but these sports are financed by white wealth." In the ten-chapter book, Dr. Pinckney examines the plantation effect on sport business, the challenges and possibilities for black athletes in intercollegiate sports, relationships between coaches and athletes of color, and the influence of gender and sexuality in the experience of black athletes.

DR. MISSIHOUN RECEIVED CARNEGIE FELLOWSHIP

Dr. Honore Missihoun received the Carnegie African Diaspora Fellowship (CADFP) to conduct collaborative research and graduate student teaching/mentoring in the Department of Foreign Languages at the University of Jos, Nigeria. His research and teaching focused on Eco-Feminism and Eco-Criticism in Francophone Africa and the African Diaspora. He and his students scoured the university and local libraries to identify and read texts on environmental literature and bio-ecological degradation. He integrated collaborative learning and fieldwork into the curriculum and took students on field excursions to several sites in Jos area, including zoological gardens, national forestry, and Archaeological and Ecological Conservation Centers.

Dr. Missihoun, in his words, “thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to teach African literature in the context of everyday lives in which the texts were produced. Being able to feel, smell, and observe the subject of the text in social, psychological, spiritual, and material contexts offered me a wonderful pedagogical tool as well as opportunity for new discoveries and understanding. I did not have to translate every word or scene to the students. They live the experience that the text narrates. This enabled us to take the text to a high level of contemplation and explore its deepest meanings.”

There are indications that Dr. Missihoun will be engaged with the University of Jos for a long time. He has been invited to serve on the committees for two doctoral dissertations in Francophone African and Caribbean Literature, and to mentor several students in the Literature-in-French program. He has also volunteered to be a sponsor of the Campus Catholic Choir Ministry.

Dr. Missihoun’s award was the third Carnegie African Diaspora Fellowship received by the UNC Charlotte Africana Studies faculty since 2014.



Dr. Missihoun with faculty and students (Department of Foreign Languages), University of Jos, Nigeria.

Dr. Gregory Mixon, Professor of History, received the Atkins Library Faculty Engagement award in fall 2016, and he co-organized the AFRS Alumni-Students forum in spring 2017. In addition, he organized a panel for the Association for the Study of African American Life and History meeting in Cincinnati, Ohio entitled: “My Brother's Keeper: African Descendant People Serving the Race.” One of the presenters included a recent UNC Charlotte Master's graduate Ms. Christina Thomas, who is now a doctoral student at the Johns Hopkins University. Dr. Mixon is currently serving on the Southern Historical Association's Program Committee, Membership Committee, and Minorities Committee in preparation for the 2018 conference of the association in Birmingham, Alabama.

Dr. Mixon, with family members, friends, and faculty at the Faculty Engagement award ceremony.



CORE FACULTY RESEARCH/SCHOLARSHIP BRIEFS

Dr. Danielle Boaz's paper "Fraud, Vagrancy and the 'Pretended' Exercise of Supernatural Powers in Britain and South Africa," received the 2016 Francis Forbes Society for Legal History prize at the Australian and New Zealand Law and History Society annual conference in Perth, Australia. She also passed the North Carolina Bar Exam, and will receive her license to practice law in the state by the end of the year.

Dr. Oscar de la Torre was appointed to the review committee of the 2017 Frederick Douglass Prize, the most prestigious annual award that recognizes the best book on slavery, resistance, and/or abolition published in the preceding year. The award is jointly sponsored by the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History and the Gilder Lehrman Center for the Study of Slavery, Resistance, and Abolition at Yale University.

Dr. Akin Ogundiran has been named the Felix and Mildred Yip Fellow at Magdalene College in the University of Cambridge for the 2018 Easter Term. In addition, he received a UNC Charlotte Faculty Research Grant to initiate a field research project in Nigeria titled "Archaeology of Urban Mosaic in the Metropolis of Oyo Empire, 500-1820 AD." The first phase of the five-year project was conducted in June 2017 and the second phase is scheduled for 2018. Dr. Ogundiran has also been appointed to the editorial advisory board of the *African Studies Review*.



Pictures from Old Oyo: L. The 2017 Research Team; R. Dr. Ogundiran, excavating layers of earthenware in a 17th-century residence at Oyo-Ile.

ARTICLES/ESSAYS

Dr. Oscar de la Torre

- "Sites of Memory and Time Slips: Narratives of the 'Good Master' and the History of Brazilian Slavery." *Oral History Review* 39 (2017), 1-27.

Dr. Akin Ogundiran

- "Collapsing Boundaries: A Continental Vision for African Archaeology." In Karim Sadr, et al. *African Archaeology without Frontiers*. Wits University Press, South Africa (2017), 37-51.
- "Historical Ecology of Experience, Place, and Time in Osun-Osogbo Grove, Nigeria." In *Human Palaeoecology in Africa*, P. A. Oyelaran, et al., eds. Ibadan: Ibadan University Press (2017), 177-213.
- "Movementality: A Reflection on the Experience of Mobility." *Azania: Archaeological Research in Africa*, 51,4 (2016), 534-539.

Dorothy Smith-Ruiz

- "Black Families Today: the Genius of Dr. Charles V. Willie." In *Contemporary African American Families*, Smith et al., eds. New York: Routledge (2016), 180-185.
- "Criminal Justice Involvement, Drug Use, and Depression among African American Children of Incarcerated Parents." *Race and Justice*, Vol. 6, 2 (2016), 89-116 (with A. M. Kopak).

EXPERIMENTAL COURSE FOCUSED ON HIP HOP ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The department piloted a new experimental course in spring 2017 titled “The Hip Hop Entrepreneur” and taught by Dr. Charles Pinckney. This is a writing intensive course that explores ideas dealing with the bold, creative, and innovative entrepreneurial and business practices of notable hip hop artists in the U.S. Students were given the opportunity to explore and develop their own entrepreneurial interests based on these “hip hop models”.

The sixteen-week course offered students the opportunity to dream big, to work collaboratively, and to develop a variety of entrepreneurial projects of their own. Students learned the foundations of becoming 21st century entrepreneurs including innovation and creative business concepts, business plan development, business attitude and aptitude, and the features of a sustainable business.



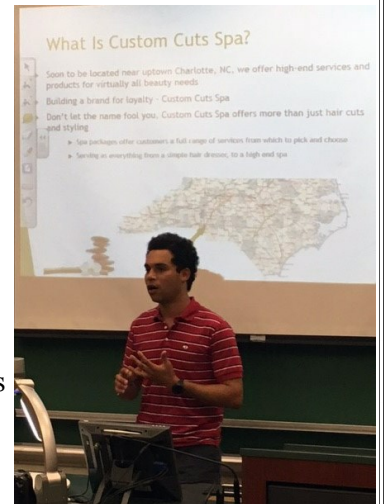
Students were introduced to core business concepts such as market trends, competition, product demand, start-up costs, advertising and website costs, and marketing. In the last weeks of the semester, students presented their business proposals to the entire class in a simulated investor environment. Students pitched their projects to potential investors by highlighting their product's line features,

target market, industry growth, product value, and the potential returns on investment. In addition, students researched likely locations to headquarter their businesses, taking into consideration conditions such as seasonality, tax incentives, eclectic population, and rent costs per square footage.

Prior to developing their business proposals, each student was assigned to interview one local entrepreneur to gain valuable insights regarding the challenges and benefits of becoming an entrepreneur. Also, local entrepreneurs were guest speakers in the class and they provided feedback on the students' business proposals.

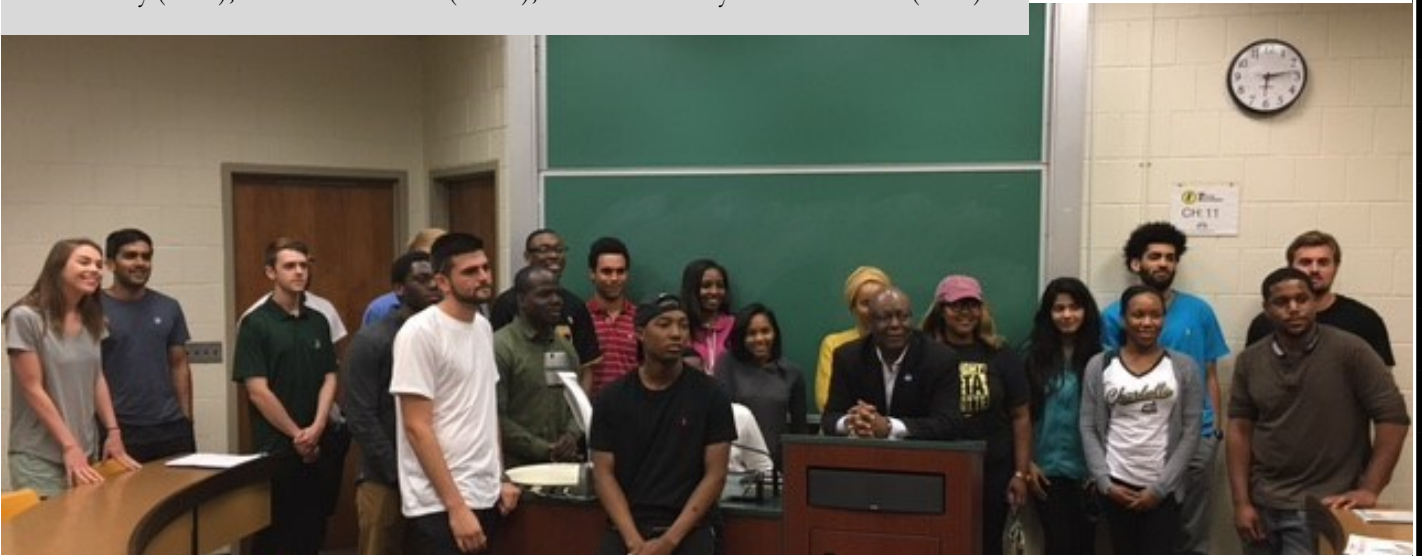


Waffles on Wheels, DimeBag Delights, Hip Hop's Illustrator, and Custom Cuts Spa were among the business proposals presented by these budding student entrepreneurs. A short documentary about the class can be viewed at:



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q17mCRI3oZQ&feature=youtu.be>

Dr. Pinckney (*above*), Student Presenters (*middle*), and Dr. Pinckney and his students (*below*).



AFRICANA STUDIES FACULTY DEBUTS “SOLUTIONS TO GREAT PROBLEMS” SEMINAR

Thirty-seven student participants in the University Transition Opportunities Program (UTOP) concluded their 5-week summer school session with a research poster presentation on potential solutions to some of the global problems of the twenty-first century. The students were enrolled in Dr. Debra C. Smith’s general education class, LBST 2102: Global Connections, where she piloted a Project-Based Learning (PBL) initiative. Students were challenged to think globally but to seek solutions locally, with emphasis on the city of Charlotte, the state of North Carolina, and the U.S.

PBL provides students with opportunities for experiential learning by working as a team to develop solutions to social problems that have local and global impact. This experiential learning is a component of UNC Charlotte’s College of Liberal Arts & Sciences undergraduate certificate in Leadership, Innovation, and Diversity (LEADS). The program is being led by Associate Dean Shawn Long who, along with Dr. Smith and a cohort of LEADS faculty fellows, attended the Institute on Project-Based Learning at Worcester Polytechnic Institute in July 2017.

In Dr. Smith’s “Great Problems Seminar,” students worked together to tackle issues like excess solid waste in Charlotte, the need for student-teacher collaboration in cultural and racial sensitivity training, education and awareness on sexual consent, the value of selecting Africana Studies as a major, and the history embedded in UNC Charlotte’s buildings and monuments.

The final project poster presentations were held in the Lucas Room in the Cone University Center on August 7, 2017. Dr. Smith’s students, who are now freshman at UNC Charlotte, shared their final products with the public audience, including stakeholders from the City of Charlotte Solid Waste Division, Charlotte City Council, Charlotte-Mecklenburg School Board, and the university community. The presentations focused on research development, collaboration, reflection, writing and oral skills, and community engagement.

Shortly after her attendance at the event, Dr. Ruby Jones from the Charlotte-Mecklenburg School Board District 3 emailed her feedback: “I...was greatly impressed with the knowledge of subject matter and presentation skills of the student presenters. WOW! It gives me such immense confidence in the future of our nation.”



photo credit: Lynn Roberson

AFRS ALUMNI RETURNED AS COACHES AND MENTORS

In response to the exit surveys completed by graduating seniors over the past two years, the department organized an ALUMNI-AFRS SENIORS DISCUSSION FORUM. Spearheaded by Dr. Gregory Mixon, with the assistance of Dr. Honore Missihoun, the inaugural forum offered opportunities for interaction between AFRS seniors and the alumni with liberal arts background. The theme of the inaugural forum was “Life After College: Preparing and Discovering Opportunities.”

The event featured five AFRS alumni as speakers: **Sara Blanchett** (Assistant Site Manager, Collections Manager, and Head of Programming and Events at Reed Gold Mine State Historic Site in Cabarrus County, NC), **Solomon Terence Franklin** (President-Elect 100 Black Men of Greater Charlotte, Inc.), **Krystion Obie Nelson** (Lecturer, Women’s and Gender Studies), **SaDonna Smith** (Academic Advisor for transfer students in the University Advising Center at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte), and **Rasheda Sykes** (Assistant Director of Learning Strategies and Instruction in the University Center for Academic Excellence at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte).

These alumni shared how they have used their experience and education in Africana Studies and related fields to work towards achieving their personal development and career goals. Three other networking events are scheduled for November 13, 20, and 27 at 5:00pm. For more details, contact Dr. Akin Ogundiran.



CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR MAY 2017 GRADUATES



Graduating Seniors, April 2017



Graduating Seniors and Faculty, April 2017

REFLECTIONS: MY INTERNSHIP AT THE INTERNATIONAL HOUSE

EVAN NASH



I completed a Citizen Diplomacy Internship with the International House last spring under the co-supervision of Ms. Johnelle M. Causwell, Citizen Diplomacy Program Director at International House, and Dr. Akin Ogundiran, Chair of the Department of Africana Studies. I am

very appreciative of the experience. A major portion of the job requirement was to organize meetings according to the wish lists of foreign guests visiting Charlotte on behalf of their organizations. I was responsible for compiling the visitors' folders which included a detailed daily agenda, Charlotte's points of interest, and a welcome letter. I also had the opportunity to meet and greet the visitors when they arrived in Charlotte. This was the icing on the cake because I was able to practice my interpersonal and networking skills. I was happy to contribute to the efforts in building strong ties that linked the Citizen Diplomacy Department, the international delegates, and various professionals and leaders throughout the city of Charlotte.

The two projects I headed were a multi-regional project called "Promoting Social Change Through Cultural Arts" for visitors from Bahrain, India, Kazakhstan, Libya, Poland, and the Ukraine; and a single country project titled "Change Through a Multicultural Society" for visitors from Germany. The delegates for the two projects arrived the same week so it was very hectic coordinating the various activities, but it all worked out very well. Our visitors had important meetings with various community leaders, including Mayor Jennifer

Roberts. These two projects gave me the opportunity to work with people from diverse countries and cultures in professional settings, and to learn about their educational systems as well as the opportunities and challenges in their countries.

The Citizen Diplomacy Internship gave me a good experience with international project development. Between my classes and my internship, I am now sure where I want my professional adventures to take me. I plan on using this experience to pursue a career in International Development. I am specifically interested in working for a non-governmental organization (NGO) or a government organization in foreign countries with focus on agriculture, water, or sustainability issues. Several of my classes at UNC Charlotte have enabled me to understand the ethical implications of international aid and project management. So, I want to find an organization that will respect the human dignity of other people around the world irrespective of their material or social conditions. I will be graduating in spring 2018 with a major in Africana Studies, and I am looking forward to entering the work world and pursuing my passion. I am currently looking at government organizations in Washington D.C. for career opportunities.

Thus far, my internship with the International House has been successful in not only teaching me project management and program planning, it has also effectively taught me the processes and methods used in Citizen Diplomacy and shown me the importance of networking in finding and maintaining professional opportunities. I enjoyed my time with the International House, and I plan on applying these new skills to my own life and future endeavors.

THE 7TH ANNUAL DR. MARIO AZEVEDO AFRICANA ESSAY CONTEST

ELIGIBILITY

The Dr. Mario Azevedo Africana Essay Contest is open to all registered students at UNC Charlotte during 2016-17 academic year.

Deadline for Submission: March 1st, 2018

PRIZE: 1st Place (\$150.00 in value and a certificate)
2nd Place (\$75.00 in value and a Certificate)

ESSAY GUIDELINES

1. Essay should focus on any aspect of the Africana

(African and/or African Diaspora, including African-American) experience,

2. Submission must be typed in Microsoft Word, using Times New Roman Font in a 12 font size, 8-10 pages in length (including references), double-spaced with one inch margins-left to right and-top to bottom.

3. Essays will be evaluated on the basis of originality, coherence, content, organization, documentation, and style.

The Essay Contest is named for Dr. Mario Azevedo, Chair of the Africana Studies Department, UNC Charlotte, 1986-2006.

For more information, contact ogundiran@uncc.edu

MEET OUR GRADUATE STUDENTS



Carolina H. T. de Oliveira was born and raised in the city of Belo Horizonte, Brazil. She is enrolled in the Latin American Studies MA program and the Graduate Certificate in Africana Studies. She also teaches Portuguese in the Department of Languages and Culture Studies. Carolina is completing her MA thesis under the guidance of Dr. Oscar de la Torre. Her study examines the connections between race, cultural production and the transformation of public spaces in Belo Horizonte. She is particularly interested in how low-income Afro-Brazilians have found alternative ways of transforming public spaces and improving their own community's living conditions by practicing cultural interventions in the urban landscape. She plans to complete her thesis and graduate in spring 2018.



Rasheda Sykes is currently enrolled in UNC Charlotte's Africana Studies Graduate Certificate program. She received her Bachelor of Arts in Psychology and Master of Arts in School Counseling from UNC Charlotte. Rasheda has over twelve years of experience in higher education working in the area of student development. She served as Academic Coordinator for the Upward Bound Programs at Johnson C. Smith University for eight years before returning to UNC Charlotte as Assistant Director of Learning Strategies and Instruction in the University Center for Academic Excellence. In her current role, she is responsible for developing new and improving existing outreach programming across campus and community. Rasheda is a member of the National College Learning Center Association and National Association for Development Education. Rasheda is earning the AFRS graduate certificate in order to improve her understanding of African American cultural production and the impacts of educational policies on African American students' learning experience.

AFRS ALUMNI: WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

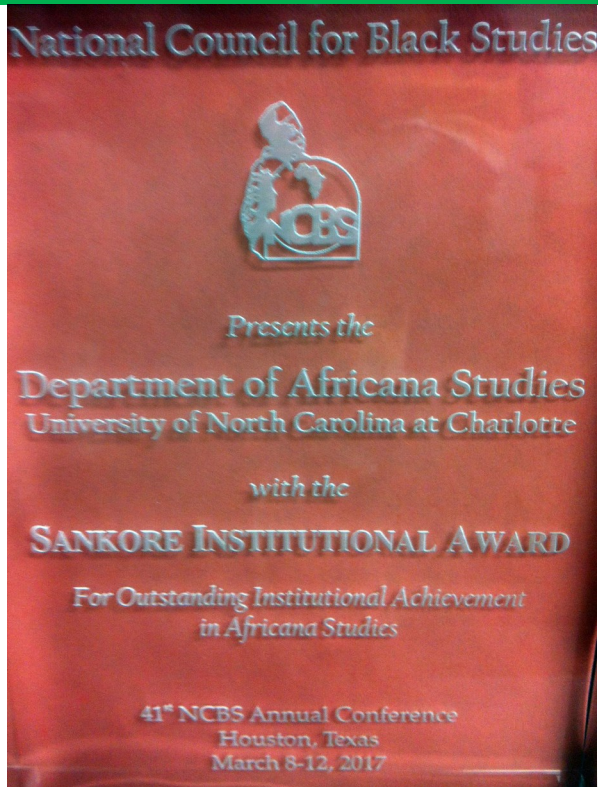
Sara Blanchett graduated from UNC Charlotte in 2008 with a Bachelor of Arts in Africana Studies and a minor in American Studies. She continued her education and received her Master of Arts in History from UNC Charlotte in 2013. Sara is currently the Assistant Site Manager, Collections Manager, and Head of Programming and Events at Reed Gold Mine State Historic Site in Cabarrus County, NC. Prior to her current job, she was an historic interpreter in the African American Historic Interpretation Department of Colonial Williamsburg in Virginia. In her formative years, Sara interned with the Smithsonian's Anacostia Community Museum in Washington, D.C, and the Harvey B. Gantt Center for African-American Arts + Culture here in Charlotte.



Kris Alston holds a BA in Africana Studies from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. He is currently a US Equity Research Sales Associate for Bank of America where he works with institutional investors, providing them with the data and other resources needed to make global investment decisions. In this role, Kris covers some of the largest and most respected financial institutions on Wall Street, including Point72, DE Shaw, Citadel, Surveyor and Soroban. Before joining Bank of America, Kris spent seven years working in the music industry and was a customer service representative for General Motors and Wachovia. Kris believes the global and intercultural scope of his education at UNC Charlotte and diverse working background prepared him with "a unique skillset that has allowed me to excel in my current role at Bank of America. Understanding how to connect with clients and being able to provide solutions to non-formulaic issues is the greatest value added."

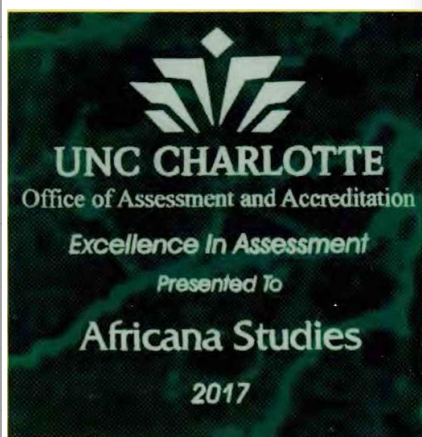


AFRS RECEIVED TWO INSTITUTIONAL AWARDS



The department received the 2017 National Council for Black Studies' (NCBS) Sankore Institutional Award. Named for the 14th-century university in Timbuktu (present-day Mali), the Sankore Institutional Award honors outstanding achievement in Africana Studies in the U.S. The award was presented at the 41st Annual conference of NCBS in Houston, March 8-12, 2017. While presenting the award on behalf of the NCBS board, the association's president, Dr. Georgene Bess Montgomery, praised the department for its comprehensive interdisciplinary academic programs, student-focused curriculum, leadership in promoting social engagement, and accomplishments in scholarship.

The department was also recognized by UNC Charlotte's Office of Assessment and Accreditation on April 10th for its "effective use of assessment results for improvement in Students' Learning Experience."



At the Office of Assessment and Accreditation Recognition event, *from left*: Dr. Honore Missihoun, Dr. Tanure Ojaide, Dr. Felecia Harris, Dr. Debra Smith, Dr. John Frederick (Director of Academic Planning and Assessment), and Dr. Akin Ogundiran.

HOLLYWOOD WRITER SERVED AS THE EIGHTH AFRICANA ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE



The department hosted Hollywood writer and producer **Calvin Brown Jr.** as the 2017 Africana Artist-in-Residence, March 13-23 (*top picture, foreground*). Brown is a successful film producer and writer with over 30 years in Hollywood. He is currently a writer and creative consultant on the popular series *Real Husbands of Hollywood* starring comedian Kevin Hart. In the early 1990s, he was the executive director of a self-created television series *My Brother and Me* which aired on Nickelodeon and was based on his life growing up in Charlotte with his parents and two sisters. Other notable producer credits include the hit television shows *The Proud Family*, *Hangin' with Mr. Cooper*, *A Different World*, *Living Single*, *Single Ladies*, *Meet the Browns*, *Moesha*, *The Parkers*, *The Sisterhood*, *Malcolm and Eddie*, *Married with Children*, *Second Time Around*, and the *Sinbad Show*.



During his residency, Brown gave guest lectures in classes, met with students and faculty in brown bag Q & A sessions, and worked with select students to produce a short film on the history of the Africana Studies department. Students took on roles as writers, researchers, producers, editors, and videographers. The 2017 Artist-in-Residence program was organized by Dr. Debra Smith (*middle*).



The Africana Studies Department established the Africana Artist-in-Residence program in 2009 to showcase the work of artists whose original perspectives and creative energy advance a deep understanding of the experiences of Africana peoples worldwide. Previous artists-in-residence included Tayo Aluko, an award-winning performer known for his work on Paul Robeson (2010); John Perpener III, dancer, historian and scholar (2011); Barbara Higgins Bond, an award-winning illustrator (2012); Kasali Akangbe, master woodcarver, folklorist, and environmental activist (2013); Baritone Emery Stephens (2014); and Tommie Robinson, an award winning member of the Guild of Charlotte Artists (2015).

photo credit: Lynn Roberson

ARTISTIC EXPRESSION AS PROTEST

In the aftermath of the fatal shooting of Mr. Keith Lamont Scott on September 20, 2016, the department organized two events. One was an “artistic protest” that featured the creative works of 28 artists (poets, spoken word, visual and voice artists). Attended by about 300 participants, the event gave local artists and students the platform to raise awareness about historical and present-day acts of injustice. The event was led by Dr. Danielle Boaz. She also organized, with Dr. Robinson and Dr. Cheryl Hicks, a Teach-In for UNC Charlotte students on “Strategies for Activism” on November 2, 2016. The event included community conversation and outreach to college and high school students on advocacy and collaboration for social justice.



15TH ANNUAL AFRICANA STUDIES SYMPOSIUM



The 15th Annual Africana Studies Symposium titled “Performing Africana Arts and Culture: Repression, Resistance, and Renewal” took place on April 5th-7th, 2017. The symposium featured more than twelve scholarly presentations, four dance workshops, a film, and a round-table discussion on the pedagogy of Africana performative arts in critical liberal arts education.

The three-day event was a kaleidoscope of activities and exchanges on the African cultural legacies in the Americas; the intersections of history, performativity, and resilience in Africana cultures; and the intellectual-discursive project of body/kinetic movement in Afro-Brazilian, Vodou, and Orisa dances. More than 50 students from the Departments of Dance and Africana Studies participated in the symposium’s movement workshops held on April 6th in Robinson Hall. The workshops were facilitated by master-artists including Maxine Montilus (NYC), Andrea Thompson (Washington, D.C.), Ann Mazzocca (VA), Dasha Chapman (NC), Jean-Sebastien Duvilaire (Haiti), and Vera Passos (Brazil). Participants explored themes such as “Dance and Social Justice” through Montilus’ Afro Haitian dance workshop. From Passos (above), they learnt about samba dance as a “movement of resistance”.

The percussionists in the Department of Dance, led by Music Director Shamou, served as accompanists for the three-day event.



The symposium was jointly presented by the Department of Africana Studies, Department of Art and Art History, and Department of Dance; and sponsored by the Chancellor’s Diversity Challenge Fund, College of Arts & Architecture, and College of Liberal Arts & Sciences. Dr. Danielle Boaz of Africana Studies Department, Dr. Lisa Homann of Arts and Art History Department, and Tamara Williams of the Department of Dance co-organized the three-day symposium.



HIGHLIGHTS OF OTHER EVENTS

Sponsored and Co-Sponsored by AFRS

- Dr. Thomas Pegelow Kaplan (Appalachian State University), “Black Genocide: Protest Movements and Social Memories of Mass Murder in the United States and West Germany of the 1960s and 1970s. Sept. 14, 2016 (co-sponsored with Center for Holocaust, Genocide & Human Rights Studies).
- Brenda Tindal, Staff Historian, Levine Museum of the New South, spoke on “Racism, Police Violence, Protests: ‘How Could This Happen in Charlotte?’” in the aftermath of the police shooting of Keith Lamont Scott (co-sponsored with HGHS and Department of History), Oct. 19, 2016.
- Dr. Olu Obafemi of the University of Ilorin, Nigeria, presented on “The State of Museums and Monuments in Africa: Nigeria’s Cultural Wealth,” November 10, 2016 (co-sponsored with African Studies Academy).
- Dr. Emmanuel K. Ngwainmbi (formerly of Jackson State University), gave a presentation on “Social Media Use among African Youth: A Positive Step Toward Globalization or a Cultural Setback?” January 30, 2017.
- Dr. Kali Gross of Wesleyan University gave a talk titled “Hannah Mary Tabbs: Black Women’s Violence and the Limits of History” Feb. 9, 2017 (co-sponsored with Department of History).
- Dr. Timothy Lovelace (Indiana University, Bloomington) presented on “William Worthy’s Passport: Travel Restrictions and the Cold War Struggle for Civil and Human Rights,” March 30, 2017 (co-sponsored with Center for Holocaust, Genocide & Human Rights Studies).
- Daysi Rubiera Castillo, founder of the Fernando Ortiz African Cultural Centre in Santiago de Cuba, spoke on Afro-Cuban Women, April 17, 2017 (co-sponsored with the Latin American Studies Program and Department of Global Studies).
- Co-sponsor of 2016 “Energizing Africa through Partnerships” conference in Charlotte, October 4-6. The conference, organized by E4 Carolinas, was aimed at facilitating partnership between African Energy Business Leaders and their U.S. counterparts.
- Co-sponsored the Progress-In-Education (P.I.E.) event held on September 24, 2016, led by Councilman Greg Phipps, Charlotte City Council District 4, to support secondary school education in Ghana and to promote cross-cultural understanding among students in the U.S. and Ghana.
- The department, in collaboration with the Black History Club, the Black Student Union, and the Multicultural Resource Center, partnered with Chartwell's at the South Village Dining Hall to celebrate the 2017 Black History Month with Africana culinary practices. Dr. Debra Smith represented the department in the planning of the event which took place on Thursday, February 23rd. The program offered the opportunity to use food to talk about African and African American culture as well as history and cultural diversity in the U.S. The cuisines served on the auspicious occasion represented regionally distinct dishes, including: the “Agricultural South” (buttermilk fried chicken, Jollof rice, green beans, corn & tomatoes) by Chef Chuck; “Creole Coast” (vegetarian Hoppin’ John & collard greens) by Ms. Angie; “South meets Creole” (Grill-Lexington style BBQ pork sandwich, cole slaw, pickled watermelon rind, potato salad, fried okra, hushpuppies, baked beans) by Dominic, Tahj, and Deshawn; and soups - “Smoking Hot” vegetarian pepper pot and chicken, Andouille, shrimp gumbo.

AFFILIATE FACULTY FEATURE: DR. MALIN PEREIRA

Dr. Malin Pereira is the Executive Director of the Honors College and Professor of English. She is a former interim chair of Africana Studies. Dr. Pereira's work in the Honors College continues to be rewarding. Since 2012, the number of students in department and college honors programs at UNC Charlotte has grown 127%. Dr. Pereira said she was "very pleased with the approval of the proposal for Africana Studies Honors program during the 2016-17 academic year."

In another exciting development, Dr. Pereira began serving as chief administrator of the new Martin Scholars Program in the fall of 2016. Funded by a 2.5 million dollar gift from Demond T. and Kia Martin, this merit scholarship targets Pell-eligible undergraduate students from underrepresented groups with zero expected family financial contribution. Students can be incoming freshmen, continuing students, or transfer students, and are expected to join an Honors program. Students apply through the Niner Scholars Portal (<https://ninerscholars.uncc.edu/>). To date, seven students are recipients of the scholarship, two of whom are minoring in Africana Studies: **Chelsea Moore** and **Nephdarlie Saint-Cyr**. Africana Studies affiliate faculty member Jeffrey Leak is serving as the Martin Faculty Fellow.



Dr. Pereira is also serving in several leadership roles nationally. Most recently, she assumed the position of co-chair of the Diversity Issues committee for the National Collegiate Honors Council.



In spite of her busy administrative schedule, Dr. Pereira continues to be an active scholar. She gave a keynote address, "Cosmopolitan Practices in Contemporary African American Poetry: Ekphrasis in Yusef Komunyakaa's and Natasha Trethewey's Work," at the Sixth Annual International Conference on English and American Literature at Shanghai International Studies University, on April 20th, 2017. She also was a speaker for a roundtable on Afropolitanism at the Collegium for African American Research Conference in Malaga, Spain, on June 15th, 2017. Dr. Pereira presented with Stephanie Otis, Associate Dean of the J. Murrey Atkins Library, at the National Collegiate Honors Council conference on "Slowing Down Honors Students: Transforming a 'Reading in Slow Motion' Course with 'Slow Research' Critical Reading & Research Instruction" in Seattle, WA, on

October 13, 2016. Closer to home, Dr. Pereira served as a panelist for a discussion on August Wilson's *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom* at the Central Piedmont Community College Sensoria Festival on April 4, 2017.

Above: Dr. Pereira in Shanghai for her keynote address with graduate student, Yingying.

Below: The inaugural class of Martin Scholars with their Honors College faculty/staff, spring 2017. *From left,* Malin Pereira, Bekim Seidju, Karen James, Chelsea Moore, Jeffrey Leak, and Nephdarlie Saint-Cyr.

AFFILIATE FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

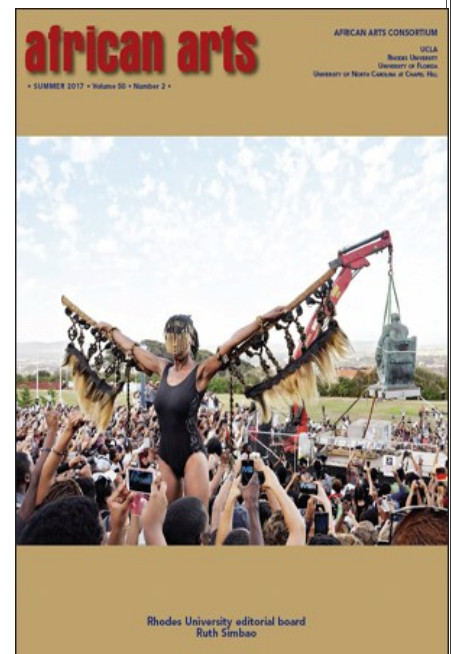
Dr. Cheryl Hicks, Associate Professor of History, participated in the 2017 National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Institute – “American Material Culture: Nineteenth-Century New York.” The program focused on providing engagement with an interdisciplinary group of scholars interested in teaching and research. For her ongoing research project entitled, “Black Enchantress: Hannah Elias, Interracial Sex, Murder, and Civil Rights in Jim Crow New York,” Dr. Hicks was awarded a 2017 Franklin Grant from the American Philosophical Society and a Mellon Scholars Postdoctoral Fellowship from the Library Company of Philadelphia for the 2017-18 academic year.



Dr. Lisa Homann has been reappointed as Assistant Professor of Art History. She was also appointed as Honors Faculty in the fall of 2016. She regularly cross-lists her courses on Contemporary African Art, West African Art, and African American Art with the Department of Africana Studies. As a result, she has helped expand AFRS course offerings in the area of visual arts and material culture.

Dr. Homann is a co-editor of the highly ranked journal *African Arts*. Her co-authored editorial, with Carol Magee and Victoria Rovine (both at UNC Chapel Hill), titled “Future Thinking: Propositions and Possibilities for African Art History,” will appear in the winter 2017 issue of the journal.

Dr. Homann has also been very active in scholarly presentations. She recently presented “Archive and Field as Sites of Exchange: Creating New Mask Forms in Bobo-Dioulasso, Burkina Faso,” and chaired the round table, “Contemplating Future Directions in African Art History,” at the Arts Council of the African Studies Association’s 17th Triennial Symposium in Accra, Ghana in August of 2017. At the invitation of the University of North Carolina Asheville, she presented the paper “Creative Differences: Banning Portrait Masks in Southwestern Burkina Faso” in February 2017. With Danielle Boaz and Tamara Williams, Dr. Homann co-organized UNC Charlotte’s 15th Annual Africana Studies Symposium, “Performing Africana Art and Culture: Repression, Resistance, and Renewal.”



Dr. Kendra Jason, Assistant Professor in the Sociology Department, has been awarded a National Institute of Aging (NIA) Research Supplements Grant of \$189,830 to promote diversity in Health-Related Research. The grant is associated with the parent NIA funded project, “Convoys of Care: Developing Collaborative Care Partnership in Assisted Living.” Dr. Jason’s proposed work addresses critical knowledge gaps in long-term care research in the context of improving health and care delivery. Her current emphasis is on the social conditions influencing care networks and how these may affect residents’ quality of life and aging process in assisted living.

Extramurally, Dr. Jason is a member of Outdoor Afro, a non-profit organization and the nation’s leading, cutting edge network that celebrates and inspires African American connections and leadership in the natural environment. Dr. Jason and the activities of the organization are featured in the September 2017 edition of *O, The Oprah Magazine*, in an article on wellness and outdoor living. The article is available online: http://outdoorafro.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/OPR090117WellOutdoorAfro_lo.pdf.

AFFILIATE FACULTY SPOTLIGHT



Dr. Janaka Lewis, Africana Studies affiliate faculty since 2009, was promoted with tenure to the rank of Associate Professor of English in spring 2017 and was appointed as the new Director of the Program of Women's and Gender Studies (WGST) in July. Her scholarly scope of work is in African American women's narratives of freedom, focusing on literature of the 19th century. Her book, *Black Women's Narratives of Freedom*, will be published by McFarland Press this fall. Her new project is on freedom and agency in the narratives of black girlhood.



Dr. Eddy Souffrant, Associate Professor of Philosophy, published an article in *International Journal of Management and Business* titled "The Renewed Case for Business Ethics: Ethics and Capitalism" in fall 2016 (Volume 7, No. 2). He is working on a book project titled *The Global Development Ethics as a Critique of Global Capitalism*. A chapter that examines the potentialities of hospitality and cosmopolitanism as antidotes to the violence of "Othernesses" is forthcoming in an anthology. His recent professional presentations include:

- "On the Possibility of Social Sustainability, (Revisited)," *24th Annual Conference of the Society for Philosophy in the Contemporary World*, Estes Park, CO, July 30 – August 4, 2017.
- "Business Ethics, Revisited," *International Research Seminar in Management and Corporate Social Responsibility*, IAE Lyon, École Universitaire de Management, Université Jean Moulin, Lyon 3, Lyon, France, January 2017.
- "Disaster Ethics: On the Possibility of Social Sustainability," *28th Annual Conference of the Haitian Studies Association (HAS)*, Auberge Villa Cana, Cap Haitien, Haiti, November 10-12, 2016.

In addition, Eddy was a recipient of Chancellor's Diversity Challenge Fund for a community project titled *Philosophy and Asian Culture via Film*, July 2017 – June 2018 (\$2,500).



Dr. Beth Whitaker, Associate Professor in the Department of Political Science and Public Administration, has been elected to serve on the executive council of the Migration and Citizenship Section of the American Political Science Association. She is also co-author/author of two new articles, "Funding Rebellion: The Rebel Contraband Dataset" due to appear this fall in the *Journal of Peace Research* (with James Igoe Walsh, Justin Conrad, and Katelin Hudak); and "Migration within Africa and Beyond," *African Studies Review* (September 2017). Dr. Whitaker also serves as the Director of Honors program in the Department of Political Science and Public Administration.

WHO IS DR. CRYSTAL EDDINS?



I hold a dual major PhD in African American & African Studies and Sociology from Michigan State University, and I am a native of Ypsilanti, MI. I am excited to be starting my first year at UNC Charlotte as an Assistant Professor of Africana Studies.

My fields of research and teaching are African Diaspora Studies; Historical Sociology; Social Movements & Contentious Politics; Postcolonial Sociology; Race and Ethnicity; Women and Gender Studies; 18th-19th Century Caribbean; and the Digital Humanities.

My interdisciplinary research looks at issues of consciousness, culture and identity in micro-mobilization processes among members of the African Diaspora, especially late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century enslaved people's rebellions. I specifically focus on the influence of African-inspired sacred rituals on oppositional consciousness and patterns of escape from enslavement before the Haitian Revolution. I rely heavily on archival data, including content analysis of digitally archived runaway slave advertisements. These allow me to ask questions about the role of race and ethnicity, gender, social ties, and forms of human and social capital used in runaways' efforts to liberate themselves.

My research has been funded by the National Science Foundation, the John Carter Brown Library, as well as the African American Intellectual History Society. I have conducted research at the national archives of France in Paris and Aix-en-Provence, the University of Florida at Gainesville, the Schomburg Center, as well as in Cap-Haïtien, Port-au-Prince, Jérémie, and Jacmel, Haiti. I have presented my work at national and international forums, such as the Notre Dame Center for the Study of Social Movements Young Scholars Conference; the Association for the Study of the Worldwide African Diaspora Biennial Conference; and the International Sociological Association World Congress of Sociology.

I'm in Garinger 135. I can be reached at ceddins@uncc.edu or 704-687-5163.

NEW

AFRICANA STUDIES HONORS PROGRAM

Goals and Objectives

The Africana Studies Honors Program provides opportunities for exceptional achievement in the Africana Studies major. The goal is to deepen the understanding of self-motivated students in the interdisciplinary field of Africana Studies.

AFRS HONORS ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

- ◆ Declare Africana Studies major.
- ◆ Completion of a minimum of 6 hours of AFRS courses with at least a B grade in each.
- ◆ GPA of at least 3.25 in all Africana Studies courses counted toward the major and taken at UNC Charlotte.
- ◆ GPA of at least 3.0 for all course work at UNC Charlotte.

AFRS HONORS GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

To graduate with Honors in Africana Studies and have this accomplishment entered on your transcript, students must:

1. Comply with all of the requirements for a major in Africana Studies.
2. Complete a minimum of two honors courses (3 credit-hour each) as follows:
 - (a). Either Research Methods Honors (AFRS 3290-H) or African Diaspora Theory Honors (AFRS 4010-H) with a minimum grade of B; and
 - (b). Senior Honors Project/Thesis (AFRS 4790) that leads to a research, creative, and/or community engagement project/thesis. An A grade is required for the project/thesis.
3. The honors project/thesis product may be in form of written (a minimum of 20-page paper), digital (e.g., web-based), database development, or a creative work.
4. GPA of at least 3.25 in all Africana Studies courses counted toward the major and taken at UNC Charlotte.
5. GPA of at least 3.0 for all course work at UNC Charlotte.

Contact: Dr. Akin Ogundiran, Garinger 113,
<http://africana.uncc.edu/undergraduate-programs>

MEET OUR NEW FACULTY AFFILIATES AND LECTURERS



Dr. Schnavia Smith Hatcher serves as the inaugural director of the School of Social Work (SSW) at the UNC Charlotte College of Health and Human Services. Hatcher coordinates strategic planning for the newly transitioned unit, promotes research and scholarly activities for approximately 20 full-time faculty and 300 students in the undergraduate and graduate programs, and sits on the College's Administrative Council. In her prior position as inaugural director of Center of African American Studies at University of Texas at Arlington, Hatcher also guided policy decisions related to administrative, academic, and research functions, student development initiatives, and community engagement opportunities.

Dr. Hatcher has been a social worker for approximately 20 years, serving as a licensed clinical practitioner, university professor, community-based researcher, and unit administrator. The majority of her scholarship has focused on issues of race, class, and social policy implications for the Black community specifically and the broader society in general. As the SSW director, she will advance the mission to prepare competent social workers and promote community well-being and social justice through teaching, scholarship, and service with special attention to vulnerable populations. As a social and behavioral scientist, Hatcher has also continued to focus on developing health promotion strategies for disenfranchised populations in social justice venues. Utilizing grant funds, her projects have examined health risk behaviors, e.g., substance abuse, suicide, risky sexual activities, of youth and adults in jails and prisons; assessed interventions that facilitate consummate care and community integration for offenders; and researched individual, systemic, and processual characteristics that influence the cycle of detention.

Hatcher earned her Ph.D. from the University of Kansas School of Social Welfare, a Master's degree from the University of Georgia School of Social Work, and her Baccalaureate degree in Psychology from Spelman College.



Dr. Huma Ibrahim joined the Africana Studies department this fall as an adjunct faculty in Postcolonial and Gender Studies. She was born in Pakistan and received her B.A. from Kinraird College in Lahore and an M.A. from Punjab University, both in Pakistan. She earned her Ph.D. at Indiana University, Bloomington where she was trained as a South African Literature specialist. Since then, Dr. Ibrahim has taught at the University of Hawaii, the American University in Washington D.C., the University of Michigan, Long Island University and other institutions in the Middle East, Europe, and Africa. Her areas of specialty are Postcolonial Literature and Theory, Black Women's Literature and Feminist Theory, Modern World Drama, and African and South Asian Anglophone Literature.

Dr. Ibrahim has published several books and articles including *Bessie Head: Subversive Identities in Exile* (University of Virginia Press, 1996); *Emerging Perspectives on Bessie Head* (Africa World Press, 2004); and *Epistemology of Colonial/Postcolonial Violence: September 11, 2001* (Africa World Press, 2015). She is currently finishing a book manuscript, *The Other Body: Silence, Sexuality, Spectacle*. Her articles have appeared in *Ariel*, *Research in African Literatures*, and *Jala*, among others. Other writings have appeared in several anthologies.

Dr. Ibrahim is also a recipient of several fellowships and honors including the Zora Neale Hurston Fellowship at the Institute for Advanced Studies and Research in the African Humanities at Northwestern University; and the Rockefeller Humanities Fellowship at the University of Georgia at Athens. Dr. Ibrahim is a founding member of the Women's Caucus of the African Literature Association and served as its president twice. She has also served as Deputy Vice President of the African Literature Association.

NEW FACULTY AFFILIATES AND LECTURERS



Dr. Elisabeth Paquette is an Assistant Professor of Women's and Gender Studies and Philosophy. Her research interests include: 1) conceptions of embodiment through the lenses of feminist and queer theory; 2) the perpetuation of colonial violence against aboriginal peoples in Canada; and 3) the intersection of poetics, humanism, and theories of emancipation. Her current research project offers an analysis of the relevance of the Négritude movement and the Haitian Revolution within contemporary French political theory, and her publications can be found in *Badiou Studies* and *Philosophy Today* (forthcoming). Dr. Paquette's pedagogy is also reflective of these research interests. Namely, her most frequently offered course on Critical Race and Feminist Theories (WGST 2050) focuses on conceptions of intersectionality, solidarity, and resistance, and in Spring 2018, she will teach a course on Indigenous Feminisms. Dr. Paquette also organizes an annual summer Feminist Decolonial Politics Workshop. More information about this workshop is located at www.decolonialthoughtworkshop.wordpress.com.



Dr. Andrea J. Pitts is an Assistant Professor of Philosophy. Their research interests include the philosophy of race and gender, social epistemology, Latin American and U.S. Latinx philosophy, and philosophy of medicine. More specifically, Dr. Pitts is currently working on a project that examines the political and legal conditions that led to the institutionalization of medical services in U.S. prisons and jails, and the connections between patterns of mass incarceration and the persistence of racial and ethnic disparities in U.S. healthcare systems. Their publications appear in *Hypatia*, *Radical Philosophy Review*, *Inter-American Journal of Philosophy*, and *IJFAB: International Journal to Feminist Approaches to Bioethics* (forthcoming in 2018). Alongside this research, Dr. Pitts' teaching interests include investigating the ethical and political significance of social identities and their relationship to structural injustices, and examining the continued impact of colonial and neo-colonial state formations in Latin America and the Caribbean.



Sheryl Westmoreland Smith is the first graduate of the University of North Carolina at Charlotte to receive a Bachelor of Arts degree in English with a concentration in Afro American Studies, under the mentorship of Professor Bertha Maxwell-Roddey. A native Charlottean, Smith left North Carolina in 1978 to pursue a Masters of Arts degree in African American Studies at The University of Iowa under the guidance of Dr. Darwin T. Turner. She is therefore part of the first generation of students to obtain a graduate education in the then nascent field of Black Studies. After completing the MA, she worked as Assistant Director for the University of Iowa's Upward Bound Program, and subsequently for Metro East Alternative High School in Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

Ms. Smith held the position of Interim Director of the H. Fred Simons Cultural Center (formerly known as The African American Cultural Center) at the University of Connecticut – Storrs Campus before returning to Charlotte in 1989. Since then, Smith has worked at various state colleges and universities, as well as secondary schools. She is currently a member of the Writing faculty at Winston Salem State University, where she has been employed for over 14 years. In the classroom, her academic focus has been the instruction of American and Western literatures, English composition, and business communication. Her teaching methods focus on intensive writing and experiential-based learning.

Ms. Smith is teaching a writing-intensive and service-learning course this semester in the Department of Africana Studies, titled "Race and Senior Citizenry in Charlotte." The class will comprise of lectures and interactions with a select group of senior citizens from a local organization in the Charlotte area. She will provide students with experiential knowledge about the plight of the elderly black men and women, while also guiding them with professional writing skills through the acts of service learning. Through verbal and written communications, as well as face-to-face interactions, students will develop and enhance their understanding of the needs and living conditions of the elderly, the challenges they face, and the opportunities they offer. We are very pleased to welcome Professor Smith back to her alma mater.

MR. THOMAS “MALIK” TILLMAN: JANUARY 1, 1955 – MARCH 28, 2017

A Personal Tribute by Akin Ogundiran

On March 26th this year, I received the shocking news that our student, Mr. Thomas “Malik” Tillman, was in coma at Charlotte’s Carolinas Medical Center-Main after suffering a massive stroke. The bearer of the news told me that the medical prognosis was not good. I had seen Malik the previous week and he was in his usual positive and ebullient spirit. “How could this have happened?”, I kept asking myself. Two days later, Malik joined the ancestors. He was survived by daughter Makeda; son Tamez; fiancé Valerie; mother, sisters, and a large family and numerous friends.

Malik’s homegoing service was held on April 5, 2017 at the New Life Fellowship Center in Charlotte. The well-attended homegoing ceremony was befitting for this great man who impacted many lives. Several hundreds of people including elected officials, community leaders, and friends came out to bid Malik farewell.

A Charlotte native, Malik embodied the great transformations that this great city has undergone over the past 60+ years. He was born on January 1, 1955 in racially segregated Good Samaritan Hospital, and lived the first six years of his life at 719 East Ninth Street, in the First Ward, before his family lost their home to the city’s eminent domain. He later attended the desegregated Myers Park High School. Upon graduation, Malik worked in several areas in the private and public sectors as computer technician, facilities manager, and cultural educator.

I had the good fortune of meeting Malik in 2008 within my first month of arriving in Charlotte. We met at the then Afro-American Cultural Center where he was working as facilities manager. I had



gone to the center with my family for the official opening of an exhibition on African American quilts. We hit it off immediately, talking about Africa, history, and culture. At the end of the formal ceremonies, Malik took it upon himself to give me and my family a private tour of the center. He took us inside one of the two shotgun buildings on the center’s premises, and used every object in that building to tell stories about the African-American historical journey. I also shared with him that the shotgun house in the American South was influenced by West African architectural traditions. As an archaeologist, I had excavated similar structures on the other side of the Atlantic. A tour that would normally last only fifteen minutes was more than an hour-long. The time passed quickly. It was a lovely evening of discovery and information exchanges between the two of us.

In the coming weeks and months, Malik introduced me to Charlotte. He was a great presence in the community and through him, I met many great people, including Pape Ndiaye, owner of House of Africa and founder of the Juneteenth

Festival of the Carolinas.

As I settled into my new role as Chair of the Africana Studies Department, Malik became my adviser on anything community-related. He was part of all the major community-related programs that the department initiated over the past nine years. He was my sounding board when our department was planning the inauguration of the Annual Dr. Bertha Maxwell-Roddey Distinguished Africana Lecture. I also sought his counsel for the design and implementation of the annual Africana Artist-in-Residence program. Each time I brought an idea to him, he would give me his “malikismo” dance and exclaim, “Let’s Do It”!

Sometime in 2009 or 2010, he told me he wanted to give his children a special gift and he needed my advice. I thought he would ask me to help him buy *dashiki* during one of my trips to Africa—we both have taste for African fabric. Instead, he shared with me that he wanted to return to school to complete his baccalaureate degree. My response to him was not only “Let’s Do It”; I told him that he should come to UNC Charlotte and pursue his degree in Africana Studies. It was a blessing for me and our department when Malik enrolled in our program in 2011.

Malik earned his Bachelor of Arts degree in Africana Studies with a Concentration in Health and Environment from UNC Charlotte (Magna Cum Laude) in December 2015. He returned in fall 2016 to pursue his Master of Arts degree in Public History and a Graduate Certificate in Africana Studies, which he was completing at the time of his transition.

THOMAS “MALIK” TILLMAN



Malik was more than a student at UNC Charlotte. He was a super advocate for our department. He took the Africana Studies Department far deeper into the community than my own legs could. Further, Malik often served as the department's liaison in government offices. He was responsible for the annual proclamations that we received from the city, county, and state officials, from the governor to the mayor, for some of our public events in the Africana Studies Department. He was also the department's official drummer at many of those events, using his djembe drums to call in the spirits of the ancestors for their blessing, an important component of all Africana cultures.

And, when we established the Africana-In-Schools Outreach program in 2013, he was the first to volunteer. The goal of the program was to provide K-12 teachers and students with cultural literacy about African and African American experiences through music, drumming, literature, and history. I still receive letters from teachers and students praising Malik's impact in their classes. As a student, Malik also served as preceptor and teaching assistant for many professors, both in the Africana Studies and History

Departments. In appreciation of his service, the department honored Malik in 2014 with the Africana Studies Outstanding Service Award.

Malik was a man of many interests. Three stood out for me.

1. He was passionate about African culture, and had a clear understanding that the art, music, and culture of a people is the genesis of their freedom. He shared with me on many occasions the need to have an annual African Cultural Festival in Charlotte. I had a long meeting with him on this issue in early 2017 on the steps we would need to take in order make such an annual educational celebration happen. He was especially a lover and student of African music, and was a regular presence in many events across the city using African drums to teach, entertain, and uplift the soul. I was a guest at many of his open-air performances. His skillful and magical manipulation of the earthy tonality of *djembe* drum would make you think that Charlotte's high-rises were in motion.

2. Malik was a history buff with a particular interest in Charlotte's African-American history. He avidly collected African-American historical documents, invaluable materials for understanding the roles of Black Charlotteans in the making of this great city. He spent the last six years of his life in pursuing methodical and systematic curation of these materials. To this effect, he built strong relationships with the Special Collections Department in the J. Murrey Atkins Library at UNC Charlotte. For one of his class projects in Public History last fall, he curated an online exhibition titled "Charlotte Black History" (<https://www.charlotteblackhistory.com/>).

3. Malik was committed to the education of the youth for the purpose of their intellectual development, self-awareness, and

personal growth. He was a constant presence in the city's museums and libraries, as well as cultural, arts, and youth centers providing instruction to the young on African arts, African American/Charlotte history, and sports. On March 24, 2017, Malik was simply fulfilling his mission of service when he had a massive stroke. He was on the basketball court tutoring and mentoring a group of young people, the future of our city. The majestic elephant fell. He did not get up.

With the passing of Mr. Thomas "Malik" Tillman, the Africana Studies Department has lost its most ardent community ambassador and advocate. We have lost a friend, a brother, a collaborator, a colleague, an alumnus, a student, and a great person. His charm and heart-warming smile we will miss. The memory of his cheerful life, congenial personality, hard work, and selfless service we will keep. Let us celebrate his passing by getting to action immediately. Let us keep building on his life of selfless service. Let us give him a befitting memorial by making sure his "Charlotte Black History" project continues. Let us work together to make the African Cultural Festival a reality. Let us make sure we use his exemplary life to motivate a new generation to pursue a life of self-improvement and service to others.

We have started on this path in the Africana Studies Department at UNC Charlotte by establishing the Thomas "Malik" Tillman Award for Excellence in Service. This will be awarded annually to a student who embodies the spirit of Malik's dedication to service and to the improvement of our common humanity. To permanently endow this award, we need your help to reach the goal of \$25,000 by March 2018. Please reach out to me or Judy Lekosky at 704-687-0085 for more information.

MALIK AT UNC CHARLOTTE



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Oscar de la Torre, Brazil and Afro-Latin American History, Race, Environment
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Akin Ogundiran, Archaeology and Cultural History of Africa and the African Diaspora
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