

AFRICANA NEWSLETTER

Department of African and African-American Studies (AAAS) @ The University of Kansas

2011



Mural by Nelson Stevens

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About AAAS @ KU

We are where Africa, the Americas, Europe and the Middle East meet.

Founded in 1970, the Department of African and African-American Studies seeks to educate students to function in a multicultural environment and in a global community. In pursuing this goal, our Department contributes in vital ways to the University of Kansas' general education requirements, providing undergraduates throughout the College as well as in other schools with courses through which they can deepen their knowledge and enrich their understanding of the history, culture and experience of African people in Africa as well as the peoples of African descent in the Americas. Our undergraduate and graduate programs recognize the centrality of Africans to the initial establishment of these United States and the continuing significance of their descendants to the nation's social, cultural, political, economic and spiritual growth and vigor. These realities our Department teaches as integral to the American experience. Our programs (minor, BA, BGS, Graduate Certificate, and MA) also seek to impart a sound knowledge of Africa and its diaspora in the Americas as a necessary, specialized preparation for effective leadership and service both domestically and internationally.

Our faculty conducts research that not only enhances our teaching of Africana but also establishes KU's leadership in Africana studies locally, nationally and internationally. Ours is the only department of its kind at a public or private University in Kansas and among the Big XII institutions. We provide general service and a specialized interdisciplinary blending of research and teaching that are critically germane to understanding the universality of human intellection, emotion, and development from a pan-Africanist perspective. Though our Department is situated within the humanities in the College, our academic wings are large enough to span a multitude of fields in the humanities, the social sciences and some professional schools. Our allied Centers and Institutes - the Kansas African Studies Center, the Langston Hughes Center, the Institute of Haitian Studies, and the Africana Leadership Institute - help strengthen our centrality to KU's mission.

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Volume 4, Number 1

Message from the Chair: Dr. Peter Ukpokodu

As we come off celebrating the 40th anniversary of the Department of African & African-American Studies, it is proper to express deep gratitude to those who had the vision and the fortitude in those inauspicious days to found our Department. Some of those founding alumni, staff and faculty graced the celebrations with their presence, and those who could not attend were duly recognized in open discussions and presentations. Their hard work and loyalty to the program were singled out for recognition. Thank you for being so special.

During the first forty years of its existence, the Department's undergraduate program has grown from one to three concentrations (BA, BGS in African Studies; BA, BGS in African-American Studies; BA, BGS in Arabic and Islamic Studies), several minors, six languages (Amharic, Arabic, Haitian Creole, Hausa, and Wolof), and the graduate certificate in African Studies, and the MA degree program in African and African-American Studies have been instituted. During that period, the Department established an African Studies Center (now called the Kansas African Studies Center) that has brought millions in grant funds to the University of Kansas, and an African-American Studies Center (now called the Langston Hughes Center) whose potential is yet to be fully realized, and the Institute of Haitian Studies that now needs revitalization after the retirement of its director. An annual Marwa Africana Lecture has been instituted, and academic linkage programs with institutions in some African countries have been created. Our faculty members have won various research, teaching, and service awards, and some of our students have won undergraduate research awards. Our administrative staff members have won awards and recognition, and our Department can boast of the best staff at the University. Thanks to some of the grants we received and thanks to our donors, we have been able to award scholarships to some of our students. The Department has grown in faculty and we have outgrown our space. I reiterate our gratitude to our donors and benefactors whose continuous generosity has helped to sustain our program and

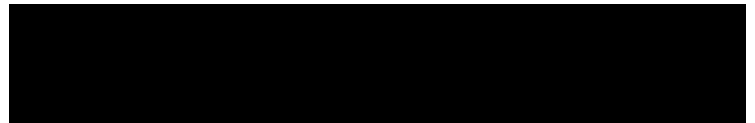
to fuel our progress in ways beyond state funding. We will need their strong financial support as KU enters a new endowment campaign, and as we envisage a stronger Department in the years to come.

The Department identifies with the University's strategic initiatives. As we begin our new journal, *The Africana Annual*, and welcome new colleagues—Yacine Daddi Addoun, Clarence Lang, and Holly

Shriner—we strengthen our ability to work towards KU's "Bold Aspirations." The impact of Beverly Mack

as the new director of the Kansas African Studies Center is already being felt. Shawn Alexander has ably directed the Langston Hughes Center with the limited resources available. The numerous roles played by Lisa Brown to facilitate our research, teaching, and service remain invaluable, and we are happy that Holly Shriner has come to lend support to these functions.

We extend our gratitude and well wishes to Garth Myers, Gitti Salami, and Kelley Lowe for their contribution and dedication to the well-being of the Department while they were at KU. We also thank our graduate students—Ginger Feather, Erika Kraus, and Chloe Scott—for their service to, and support of, the Department. I have never known other students whose identification with the department is so complete. With them, we can boast of having the best graduate students at KU, and we shall miss them when they graduate in May. My special thanks to Shawn Alexander and Lisa Brown for putting this newsletter together.



the Muslim world, Muslims in the Diaspora, and colonialism.

Departmental News:

Yacine Daddi Addoun -- The Department of African & African-American Studies welcomes Yacine Daddi Addoun to its faculty. Dr. Daddi Addoun, an Assistant Professor, earned his Ph.D from York University and was a post-doctoral fellow at the Harriet Tubman Institute for Research on the Global Migrations of African Peoples. His research and teaching areas cover African history, North African and Middle East History, Slavery in



Clarence Lang -- The Department of African & African-American Studies welcomes Clarence Lang to its faculty. Dr. Lang, an Associate Professor, received a B.A. in Journalism from the University of Missouri-Columbia, a M.A. in History from Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville (SIUE), and a Ph.D. in History from the University of Illinois. Before joining the faculty of the University of Kansas, Professor Lang taught at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, Wayne State University, and SIUE.



In addition he was the 2011 Langston Hughes Visiting Professor in AAAS.

Professor Lang's main research and teaching areas are African American working-class and labor history, the Black Freedom Movement, and black urban communities in the twentieth-century Midwest. He is the author of *Grassroots at the Gateway: Class Politics & Black Freedom Struggle in St. Louis, 1936-75* (The University of Michigan Press, 2009), and co-editor, with Robbie Lieberman, of *Anticommunism and the African American Freedom Movement* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), as well as numerous scholarly and journalistic articles. He serves on the *Journal of Urban History* editorial board and was recently elected to the executive council of the Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH).

Other Departmental News:

Promotions -- Majid Hannoum was promoted to Associate Professor with tenure. Professor Hannoum holds an appointment in the departments of African & African-American Studies and Anthropology. He lectures on North African and Arab societies, especially in areas of Islamic social and political movements; Islam, colonialism, and nationalism in North Africa.

Holly Shriner -- Holly Shriner joined the AAAS office staff in July, as administrative associate/graduate secretary. A KU grad with a journalism degree, Holly spent 4 years as a daily newspaper reporter writing about a myriad of topics, including higher education, mental health and "cops and courts" for the St. Joseph, Mo., *News-Press*.

Since then, she's spent more years than she'd care to mention working in communications, marketing and public relations (though she did take a 2-year corporate break to manage a Kansas City-metro locally owned children's toy store where she got to read books to and play games with kids, in addition to supervising the retail staff and producing a newsletter), first for the National Auctioneers Association and then for a company that specialized in providing raw materials and support services to biological pharmaceutical researchers and developers.

Holly joined the KU staff in January 2011 as administrative associate senior in the Museum Studies graduate program, where she spends her mornings before making the walk from Lippincott to Bailey for afternoons with AAAS. She and her husband, Brian, spent the previous year traveling to and from Russia to complete the adoptions of two sisters. Leah, now 5, and Hope, now 4, came home with Holly and Brian in August 2010 and quickly fell in love with American traditions like Halloween, all things KU (including the Rock Chalk Chant) and their lives in a forever family.

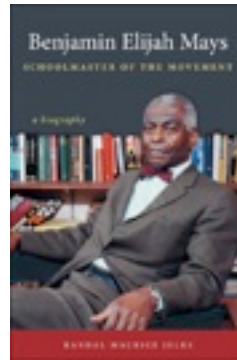
Recently, Holly received special recognition at the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences annual employee appreciation reception. She enjoys her AAAS duties, which in addition to graduate secretary responsibilities include assisting faculty with travel and event planning. She'd be happy to have you read her fiction novel, if she could just figure out the ending, or to talk to you about greyhound rescue, with which she's been involved for a number of years.

AAAS MA Program -- Hassan Bailey became the first graduate of AAAS's MA program. Mr. Bailey, who joined the program with its inaugural class after completing his B.A. in Sociology in 2009, successfully defended his thesis, "Secondary Prisonization: The Effects of Involuntary Separation on Families of Incarcerated African American Men," on April 20, 2011. His committee consisted of Dr. Shawn Alexander, Dr. Dorthy Pennington (AAAS) and Dr. Ebenezer Obadare (Sociology). Currently Mr. Bailey is back home in Ohio preparing for the LSAT exam and ultimately on to law school.

AAAS Scholarship/Awards -- AAAS awarded three undergraduates and one graduate student with \$500 scholarships for this academic year.

Faculty News:

Randal Jelks, Associate Professor of AAAS and American Studies, has completed a book, entitled *Benjamin Mays, Schoolmaster of the Movement: A Biography*, to be published in May 2012 by the University of North Carolina Press. Additionally, Professor Jelks is beginning work on a collection of letters written to Martin Luther King, Jr. with Rhoda Jones, entitled *Dear Friends of Freedom: Letters to Martin Luther King, Jr.*



Beverly B. Mack, Professor of AAAS, presented lectures entitled "Muslim Women's Religious Literacy: The Legacy of Nana Asma'u in the 21st Century and Beyond," at Harvard Divinity School, "West African Roots of American Islam: Muslim American Women's Nigerian Model," at Boston University, and "Muslim Women Re-presenting Islam in America" and "Women in Islam," at KU. Professor Mack also published or completed a number of articles this year including, "Nana Asma'u's Instruction and Poetry for Present-day American Muslimah's" in *History in Africa* and "Islamic Cultural Education and Teaching in Northern Nigeria," (with O. N. Ukpokodu) for *Contemporary Voices From the Margin: African Educators on African and American Education* (forthcoming). In addition she completed a manuscript, entitled *Asma'u's Legacy: Three Centuries of 'Yan Taru* (with Jean Boyd) for Interface publications. Finally, Professor Mack was appointed director of the Kansas African Studies Center (KASC).

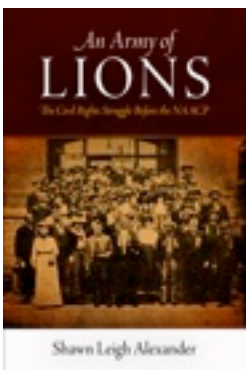
Elizabeth MacGonagle, Associate Professor of AAAS and History, worked with Christina Lux (Associate Director, KASC) to organize a KU graduate student panel at the African Studies Association (ASA) meeting in November 2011. The theme of the panel was "Women's Liberation at 50+: From Representation to Empowerment." Professor MacGonagle served as the discussant for three papers by Marwa Ghazali, DaMaris Hill, and Mary Mba. She also presented a paper about history and memory on Robben Island for another panel on South Africa at the meeting.

Majid Hannoum, Associate Professor of AAAS and Anthropology, has spent the past year in Morocco to do fieldwork on his next project. To assist in his fieldwork, Professor Hannoum was the recipient of a number of grants and awards including a General Research Fellowship from KU, a Fulbright Senior Scholar Fellowship from the Council for the International Exchange of Scholars of the Fulbright Program, the Craig Anthony Arnold Faculty Award, and an American Institute of Maghreb Studies Summer Grant.

Peter Ojiambo, Assistant Professor of AAAS, is completing a book chapter entitled “Geoffrey William Griffin and the Development of Youth Education in Kenya, 1959-2005.” He has also completed two journal articles and one book chapter, entitled: “Partnering in School Leadership: A Case Study of Starehe Boys Centre and School, Kenya” and “Wholistic and Service-Centered Learning: Emerging Educational Lessons from Starehe Boys Centre and School, Kenya”. Additionally, he has published two articles, entitled: “Beyond the Methods Course: Using Exploratory Practice for Graduate Student Teacher Development”, in *American Association of University Language Supervisors and Coordinators* and “Educational Leadership with A Difference: A Case Study of Starehe Boys Centre and School, Kenya”, in *Journal of World Universities Forum*.

Professor Ojiambo also presented papers entitled “Education as a Relational Process: Implications for Foreign Language Teaching” at the annual African Language Teachers Association conference, “Wholistic and Service-Centred Learning: Emerging Educational Lessons from Starehe Boys Centre and School,” at the International Conference on Learning at the University of Mauritius and “Called to Serve: The Story of Joseph Gikubu, Starehe Boys Centre and the Growth of Kenyan Youth Education” at ASA. Further, Professor Ojiambo together with Prof. Beverly Mack gave a talk at Washburn High School on “Hausa and Kiswahili language and Culture” in November. Finally, over summer, Prof. Ojiambo also completed the Kiswahili website to aid in the teaching of Kiswahili and he is currently in the process of adding an audio component to the site <https://www2.ku.edu/~kiswahili/>.

Shawn Leigh Alexander, Assistant Professor of AAAS, published *An Army of Lions: The Civil Rights Struggle before the NAACP* (University of Pennsylvania Press). He also completed a reprint of William Sinclair’s *Aftermath of Slavery* (1905) to be published in Spring 2012 in University of South Carolina Press’s Southern Classics Series. In addition he is completing a volume for Bedford/St. Martin’s History and Culture Series entitled, *Reconstruction, Violence, and the Ku Klux Klan Hearings, 1866-1872*. Finally, Professor Alexander chaired the plenary session at the annual ASALH conference entitled “The Legacy of the Civil War” and he directed a Gilder Lehrman American History Summer Seminar entitled, “Presidential Politics, Civil Rights and the Road to *Brown*”, in which twenty-five secondary teachers came from around the country to

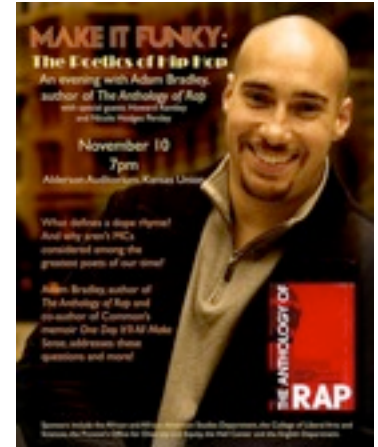


participate.

Other Noteworthy News:

Make It Funky III

Organized by Associate Professor Tony Bolden and co-sponsored by the African and African-American Studies Department, the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, the Hall Center for the Humanities, the Provost’s Office for Diversity and Equity, the English Department, and the Project on the History of Black Writing, the “Make It Funky III” symposium was truly a collaborative event. This year the symposium focused on hip hop, and the turnout was so huge that there was standing room only. The *University Daily Kansan* covered the event, and it made the front page. Students and faculty members from all over the campus came to see the dynamic scholar, Adam Bradley, who was the keynote speaker. Author of five books, including the critically acclaimed *The Anthology of Rap*, which was published by Yale University Press, the University of Colorado English professor has been a commentator on PBS, NPR and C-SPAN. The title of Bradley’s lecture was “The Poetics of Hip Hop” wherein he examined the manner in which rap artists have contributed to innovations in the English language, particularly new approaches to poetic devices such as the simile. After Bradley’s lecture, there was a panel of respondents, including KU’s own Associate Professor of Philosophy, Derrick Darby, and Assistant Professor of Theater, Nicole Hodges Persley. Other panelists included Howard Rambsy, Associate Professor of English at Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville; Glenn North, Education Specialist and Poet-in-residence at the American Jazz Museum in Kansas City; and Kenton Rambsy, a graduate student in English. After the event, there was a book signing held for Bradley and Howard Rambsy whose book *The Black Arts Enterprise and the Production of African American Poetry* was recently published by University of Michigan Press.



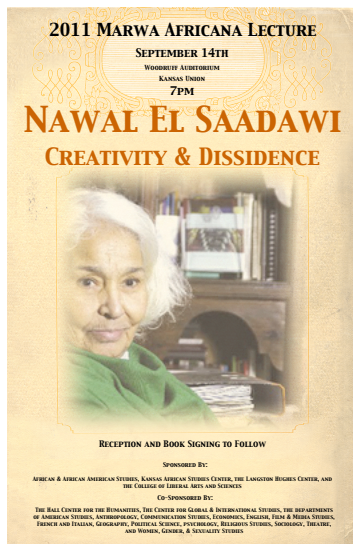
African Literatures in Global Perspective

AAAS co-sponsored a symposium entitled, “African Literatures in Global Perspective,” that took place from October 27-29, 2011. The symposium, organized by Omofolabo Ajayi-Soyinka, professor of Theatre and Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, explored the roles of African writers and their works in conjunction with the Nobel Prize in Literature. Biodun Jeyifo, renowned literary critic and theorist and professor of African and African American Studies and Comparative Literature at

Harvard University, presented the keynote address, "Inside and Outside the Whale: Take Two." Other speakers included Ghirmai Negash, Rotimi Martins, Catherine McKinley, Nozipo Maraire, Niyi Coker, Anthonia Kalu, Juliana Nfah-Abbenyi and Femi Euba.

2011 Marwa Africana Lecture

On September 14, 2011, Nawal El Saadawi, an outspoken activist, author and human rights advocate, made a passionate appeal to a crowd of nearly 400 gathered to listen to her 2011 Marwa Africana Lecture that focused on creativity and dissidence. El Saadawi, who has for years openly addressed issues such as prostitution, female genital mutilation and discriminatory family laws, was exiled from her home country of Egypt for years, was jailed by President Anwar Sadat for "crimes against the state" and has endured threats on her life. Despite those challenges, she told the Marwa lecture audience, her creativity never waned. She instead allowed her creative spark and her passion for writing to help her feel more alive than ever. Her lecture in the Woodruff Auditorium of the Kansas Union was followed by a reception and book signing.



The Marwa Africana Lecture Series (MALS):

Established in 2003 through a generous donation by Dr. Mohamed Buba Marwa, a Nigerian businessman, politician,

and philanthropist, MALS brings in a speaker annually to address matters related to Africa and/or the African Diaspora.

Previous speakers in the Marwa Africana Lecture Series have been: Amiri Baraka (2009), Martin Bernal, (2008), Molefi K. Asante, (2005), and Ali Mazrui, (2004).

40 Years: Reflection and Visualization

On April 28, 2011 AAAS celebrated its fortieth anniversary with a symposium entitled "40 Years: Reflection and Visualization." The event consisted of a series of panels chronicling the history of the department, from the student activism that led to its creation in 1970-71 to its current existence as the only university in the Big 12 Conference offering a master of arts program in African and African-American studies. In addition to reviewing the department's history, the symposium stimulated an interdisciplinary dialogue concerning the practice, the state, the history and the future of African and African-American studies. The academy and beyond.

KU's African and African-American studies department is one of a few such academic departments that were created in the late 1960s and early 1970s throughout the country.

The panels included:

Black Student Movement/ Africana Studies Commentators: William Tuttle, Norman Yetman, Robert Shelton, Roderick Bush, and John Spearman.
Chair/Commentator: Dorthy Pennington

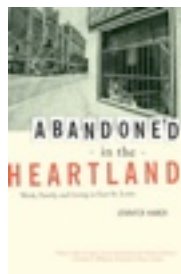
Africana Studies at KU Commentators: Jake Gordon, Arthur Drayton, John Janzen, Antonio Shepherd, and Derriars Carter.
Chair/Commentator: Peter Ukpokodu

Africana Studies: Reflection and Visualization Commentators: Garth Myers, Beverly Mack, Shawn Leigh Alexander, Maryemma Graham, and Giselle Anatol. Chair/Commentator: Tony Bolden

Notes:

Jacob Gordon, Professor Emeritus of AAAS has published *Winning the Future for Africa and the Diaspora* (Nova Publishers, 2010).

David Katzman, Professor of American Studies, and friend and ally of AAAS, retired from the University in 2010. Professor Katzman is the author of, among other works, the influential *Before the Ghetto: Black Detroit in the Nineteenth Century*.

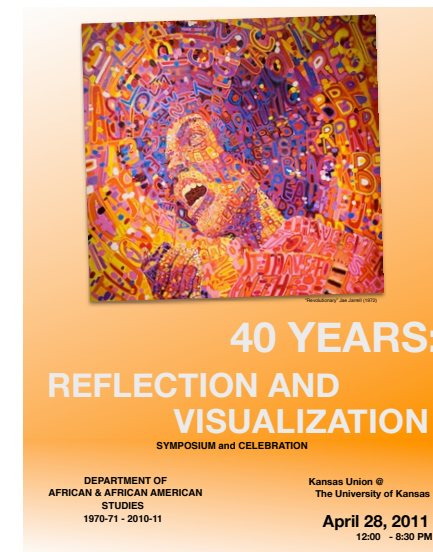


Jennifer Hamer, who joins KU in 2012 as a Professor of American Studies and an affiliated faculty member of AAAS, published *Abandoned in the Heartland: Work, Family, and Living in East St. Louis* (University of California, 2011).

Student and Alumni News:

Arabic Summer Institute

-- Five KU students took part in the Arabic Summer Institute at Al-Akhawayn University in Ifrane, Morocco, in the summer of 2011. Apart from studying Arabic intensively, the students vis-





ited interesting sites in Casablanca, Marakesh, Meknes, and Fes.

Derrais A. Carter, an alum of the program and currently a graduate student in American Studies at the University of Iowa, published an article, "Blackness, Animation, and the Politics of Black Fatherhood in *The Cleveland Show*," in the June issue of the *Journal of African American Studies*. Mr. Carter also returned to Lawrence to take part in our 40th Anniversary Symposium.

AAAS would like to hear from its students and alumni!

Please send us news about yourself to:

afs@ku.edu

Devon Lee, a graduate student in AAAS, presented a paper entitled, "Metaphysical Black Subjective Identity in Belize," as part of the Mid-America Alliance for African Studies conference.

Chloe Scott, a graduate student in AAAS, attended the annual convention of the Association for the Study of African American Life and History in Richmond, Virginia.

Erika Kraus, a graduate student in AAAS, presented a paper entitled "Positions of power and sacred forests," for the 2011 Mid-America Alliance for African Studies annual meeting. Ms. Kraus also gave a presentation at the Kansas African Studies Center's brownbag series entitled, "Arabic in North Africa."

If you are receiving this newsletter via mail and would like to receive it electronically, please contact AAAS and provide us with your email address.

afs@ku.edu

News from our Allied Centers

Kansas African Studies Center (KASC)

Beverly Mack, Director and Professor of AAAS.

The Kansas African Studies Center suffered several losses at the beginning of the academic year. The first was the departure of its former Director, Professor Garth Myers, to Trinity College in Hartford CT, where he is now the Paul E. Raether Distinguished Professor of Urban International Studies (garth.myers@trincoll.edu). The second was a 46% cut to its programming budget. Fortunately, the FLAS fellowship budget remained intact. KASC was fortunate in being able to move to new space on the second floor of Bailey, where we now have room to greet students and welcome visitors.

Several activities of the summer and fall are noteworthy. Assistant Director Christina Lux spent the first two weeks of July conducting the annual Summer Teacher Training Workshop, which included participation by South African author Veronique Tadjó. Christina also served as a Cultural Envoy to the Republic of the Congo for the U.S. Department of State, where she conducted two workshops on writing peace and conflict. This fall brought more changes to KASC. We lost Nefertari Hanna (Nona) to graduation and bigger and better activities in the world, but we gained Jessie Yoon, who joined us as the new office manager and accountant. Jessie holds a KU MA in Accounting. Our brownbag sessions throughout the fall brought Africanist-minded folks together, as did three conferences held at KU: a collaborative conference on the Cold War, sponsored by all five KU NRC Centers; Professor Ebenezer Obadare's Conference on Migration and Exile; and Professor Folabo Ajayi-Soyinka's Conference on African Literature. In addition, Professors Peter Ojiambo and Beverly Mack traveled to Washburn High School in Topeka for an outreach session on Swahili culture and Kiswahili language, and Hausa culture and language for Washburn's program on Africa in the Arts.

In the spring 2012 semester we look forward to our continued brownbag lectures and an African Film Festival, to be held in April. Keep up with KASC on our website <http://www.kasc.ku.edu>.

Langston Hughes Center (LHC)

Shawn Leigh Alexander, Interim Director and Assistant Professor of AAAS.

The Langston Hughes Center (LHC), formerly the Langston Hughes Resource Center, relaunched its activities at the University of Kansas and throughout the region in 2008-2009. This year the LHC continued its Jesse B. Semple Brownbag series with six lectures, "Terror in Tennessee: The lynching of Elbert Williams and the Pursuit of Economic Justice in Brownsville" (Zanice Bond de Perez), "A Quest for Citizenship: African American and Native American Education in Kansas" (Kim Warren), "Manning Marable: Remembering a Scholar and an Activist" (Clarence Lang & Shawn Leigh Alexander), "Speaking with a Fire-Tongue: The Soucouyant as a Vocal Subaltern" (Crystal Boson), "African American Literature: Dead or Alive" (Maryemma Graham), and "Considering Afro-Mexicans in the African Diaspora" (Robert Schwaller). In addition to this, the LHC conducted a panel discussion on the movie and the book, *The Help*.

Finally, the Center is continuing to work with African Americanists and scholars generally interested in the study of race and culture in American society at KU to outline the future activities of the LHC. Central to those activities will be the LHC's commitment to becoming a strong academic research and educational center built upon the legacy and creative and intellectual insight of African American author, poet, playwright, folklorist and social critic, Langston Hughes. To that end the Center's director is working with African Americanists at KU to seek grants and funding to carry out these activities.

For more information about the LHC including programming and scheduling go to <http://www2.ku.edu/~lhcaas/>

Support AAAS

Why support African and African-American Studies @ KU?

By giving to AAAS, you contribute to the continued development of African and African-American academic activities, outreach, lectures, seminars and research programs at KU and throughout the region. You also strengthen our international outreach.

Your donations will also aid in supporting student scholarships, faculty research, teaching awards, service awards, and overall improvement of the Department.

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