

AFRICANA NEWSLETTER

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

2012



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 Institute - the Kansas African Studies Center, the Langston Hughes Center, and the Institute of Haitian Studies, - help strengthen our centrality to KU's mission.

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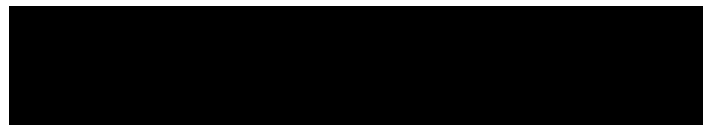
Volume 5, Number 1

Message from the Chair: Dr. Peter Ukpokodu

Last academic year, the Department went through a tripartite rigorous program review -- a self-review by departmental faculty, an external peer review by professional colleagues from peer institutions, and a mandatory review by the Kansas Board of Regents. The focus of the review was the quality of our degree programs and the qualitative and quantitative productivity of our faculty in teaching, research, and service. The review was thorough both for our oldest concentrations (African Studies, African-American Studies) and our newest one (Arabic and Islamic Studies) at the undergraduate level, and our new MA degree program. Areas for improvement were identified and are being implemented. Thanks to the support of the College, space has been identified, renovated, and furnished for the Langston Hughes Center (LHC); a new full-time lecturer in Arabic has been hired, and the Department and the Center for Global and International Studies (CGIS) are exploring areas of cooperation. The Department is considering ways to make aspects of its strong graduate curriculum even stronger. The external peer reviewers effusively lauded the robust quality of our energetic and productive faculty, the contribution of external funds by the Kansas African Studies Center (KASC) towards furthering the mission of our program, and the uniqueness of our undergraduate program "among peer institutions in the Big 12, and quite rare elsewhere." They observed that "language courses aside, KU overall offers a broader academic curriculum in African Studies than many peer institutions." To maintain this quality, to continue making our curriculum current and relevant to our time (as we did when we added our Arabic and Islamic Studies concentration in 2009), to maintain our national and international prominence, to award scholarships to our students, to support our faculty in outreach activities to communities, and to encourage faculty research, we continue to cherish the financial support of our donors. Please, continue to support us and especially during the current endowment campaign by the University of Kansas.

Help me welcome to our Department, Dr. Jennifer Hamer, Dr. Jessica Gerschultz, and Ms. Nadia Rhodes. Jennifer is a full professor and brings her experience as a former chair of

African-American Studies and an associate dean at the graduate school of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She is also the editor of a journal. Nadia is a full-time lecturer in Arabic. She brings her experience from teaching Arabic at Middlebury College, and a wealth of field experience working with businesses in Arab countries. Jessica is an assistant professor and comes to us from Emory University. Quite ambidextrous in African art history, she combines her expertise on Islamic art and architecture in Africa with weaving. She has a grant to conduct workshops on Arabic art and calligraphy. We also welcome Associate Professor Yi Li, who is our visiting scholar from the School of Foreign Languages at Central China Normal University, Wuhan, Hubei, in the People's Republic of China. Her research is on Richard Wright. We congratulate Dr. Shawn Alexander, the director of the Langston Hughes Center, for his promotion to associate professor with tenure, and for his book, *An Army of Lions*, and Dr. Randal Jelks for the biography, *Benjamin Elijah Mays*. The letter from our alumna, Ms. April Bradshaw, which gives us an update of her experience in Kenya, is heart-warming. My special thanks to Mrs. Holly Shriner for editing this newsletter before assuming her new responsibilities at the Office of Graduate Studies; our appreciation and well wishes go with her. The Department is indebted to Mrs. Lisa Brown for lending her assistance to the completion of this newsletter and for assuming a suffocating workload until we find a replacement for Holly. My sincere gratitude and that of the Department goes to our donors for their financial support.



Departmental News:



Jessica Gerschultz -- The Department of African & African-American Studies welcomes Jessica Gerschultz to its faculty. Dr. Gerschultz is an Assistant Professor of African and African-American Studies. She received her PhD in Art History from Emory University in 2012. Professor Gerschultz's research and teaching interests span modern and contemporary art in Africa and the Middle East, the linkages between textiles, gender, and materiality,

and the sociopolitical dynamics of artists' networks. She has conducted comparative fieldwork in Tunisia, Senegal, Switzerland, Kenya, and Oman. Her current research examines the political significance of women's weaving and modern art to Bourguibism in postcolonial Tunisia. She has taught courses on modern and contemporary African art, Islamic art and architecture in Africa, and the arts of eastern and southern Africa.

Professor Gerschultz has contributed to *African Art and Agency in the Workshop*, *Michael C. Carlos Museum: Highlights of the Collections*, and other volumes in progress. She has held fellowships and awards from the American Association of University Women, Fulbright, the American Institute for Maghrib Studies, the Arts Council of the African Studies Association, the Qatar Museums

Authority, the Critical Language Scholarship Program, and the Andrew W. Mellon Curatorial Internship Program. She is a member of the American Institute for Maghrib Studies and the Association for Modern and Contemporary Art of the Arab World, Iran, and Turkey.

Jennifer Hamer -- The Department of African & African-American Studies welcomes Jennifer Hamer to its faculty. Dr. Hamer, a Professor, earned her Ph.D from the University of Texas - Austin and her general field of study is the sociological and qualitative study of families, especially those within the United States. Her primary research interests are African-American fathers, mothers, and families, especially those that are urban, low-income and working class. She offers courses on varying themes regarding African American families, communities and qualitative methodologies. She has published in varying journals and is the author of *What it Means to Be Daddy: Fatherhood for Black Men Living Away from Their Children* (Columbia University Press, 2001). Her most recent book, *Abandoned in the Heartland: Work, Family, and Living in East St. Louis* (University of California Press, 2011), is an analysis of how working class African American men and women work, take care of kin, and family in a poor suburb. Dr. Hamer holds an additional appointment in the Department of American Studies at KU.



Nadia Rhodes -- The Department of African & African-American Studies welcomes Nadia Rhodes as Arabic lecturer. Prior to coming to KU, Rhodes taught Arabic at Middlebury College in Vermont in their intensive Summer Arabic Institute. Rhodes recently returned

from Damascus, Syria, where she pursued advanced studies in Arabic at the University of Damascus and at the Institut français du Proche-Orient (IFPO). Rhodes grew up in Lebanon, Jordan, Syria and Cyprus, spending more than 20 years in the region. She moved to the US to attend college at the University of North Carolina at Chapel-Hill where she received her Bachelor's degree. Following her undergraduate studies, Rhodes worked in the field of international development for nearly ten years, where she focused on issues of youth engagement and job creation for young people in the Middle East and Sub-Saharan Africa. During this time Rhodes spent a year in Doha, Qatar, working for the First Lady of Qatar, Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser, on an initiative she founded, "Silatech", to create jobs and opportunities for young people in the Middle East and North Africa. In addition to her work in Qatar, Rhodes worked for Questscope, an innovative social enterprise in Jordan whose director was named by the Schwab Foundation as Social Entrepreneur of the Year for the Middle East and North Africa Region in 2011. Rhodes' interests are in Arabic pedagogy and modern Arabic literature.

Other Departmental News:

Promotions -- Shawn Alexander was promoted to Associate Professor with tenure. His area of research concentration is African-American social and intellectual history of the 19th and 20th centuries. Dr. Alexander serves as the department's graduate director and additionally is the director of the Langston Hughes Center.

AAAS MA Program -- Three additional students have completed the AAAS master's program. **Ginger Feather** successfully defended her thesis, "A Muslim Feminist Interpretation of Women's Empowerment and Gender Parity: Case Studies of Morocco and Egypt"; her committee consisted of Dr. Shawn Alexander and Dr. Beverly Mack (AAAS), Dr. Brent Steele and Dr. Alesha Doan (Political Science). Ms. Feather is currently a doctoral student in KU's political science department. **Erika Kraus** successfully defended her thesis, "People and Forests: a Case Study from Benin, West Africa"; her committee consisted of Dr. Beverly Mack, Dr. Peter Ukpokodu, and Dr. Shawn Alexander (AAAS). Married shortly after graduation, Kraus is now a doctoral student of Forestry at Michigan State University. **Devon Lee** successfully defended his thesis, "A Preliminary Exploration of a Black Racial Project"; his committee consisted of Dr. Randal M. Jelks (AAAS/American Studies), Dr. Shawn Alexander (AAAS), and Laura Herlihy (Latin American Studies). He studies in a doctoral program at Virginia Tech University.

AAAS Scholarship/Award -- AAAS awarded \$6,000 in scholarships this academic year to graduate and undergraduate students.

Faculty News:

Shawn Leigh Alexander, Associate Professor of AAAS, published *An Army of Lions: The Civil Rights Struggle before the NAACP* (University of Pennsylvania Press) and a reprint of William Sinclair's *Aftermath of Slavery* (University of South Carolina Press's Southern Classics Series). In addition, he completed a volume for Bedford/St. Martin's History and Culture Series entitled *Reconstruction Violence, and the Ku Klux Klan Hearings, 1866-1872*. Currently he is working on a biography of W. E. B. Du Bois, entitled *W. E. B. Du Bois: An American Intellectual and Activist*, for Rowman and Littlefield's Library of African American Biography Series. Professor Alexander also directed one of the 41 Gilder Lehrman American History Summer Seminars held throughout the world. The seminar, "Presidential Politics, Civil Rights, and the Road to Brown," had 22 secondary teachers from throughout the country come to the University of Kansas for a week-long workshop on the issues of civil rights and presidential politics. This was the second seminar Professor Alexander led and it has been renewed for a third year. Finally, Dr. Alexander was selected to serve as one of the jurors for the prestigious Frederick Douglass Book Prize.

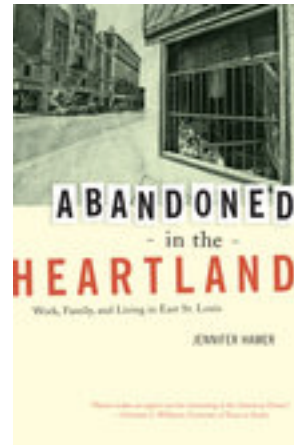
Yacine Daddi Addoun, Assistant Professor of AAAS, spent the summer doing archival research, as well as participating in two international conferences and conducting a short field trip to the Algerian Sahara. The archives he visited contained documents and reports pertaining to the topics of captivity, slavery, and abolition in Algeria, with particular interest on religious institutions, mainly Catholic orders. He spent ten days conducting research in the Padri Biachi, Missionari d'Africa, the archives of White Fathers in Rome, Italy; ten days in the Archives de la Congregation des Missions, congregation of the Lazarists in Paris (Saint-Vincent de Paul), and a week in the Congregation du St. Spirit, the Spiritans Order, in Chevilly-laRue, near Paris. This research will be valuable to his project on slavery and its abolition in Algeria. Additionally, he was invited to participate in two conferences. "Ibadi Theology: Reading Sources and Scholarly Works" was held in Naples, Italy, in May, and Dr. Addoun presented a paper on the Maghribi Ibadi Theology and Issues of Enslavement, Slavery, and Abolition. At the International meeting of Africanists in the Universidade Federal Fluminense in Niteroi, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, he participated as a keynote speaker on the Educational Aspects of Slave Agents of the Timbuktu-Ghadamis Trade Network from the mid-19th to the beginning of the 20th century. In field work research, Dr. Addoun traveled across the Algerian Sahara for a week, meeting researchers and historians and visiting university centers such as the Amekal Hajj Mussa Ag Akhamokh University Center in Tamanrasset, where he met the director Belkhir Dadda Mussa. He also visited the African University of Adar, where he met one of the administrators, Muhammed Bendara. This field trip was important to establish contacts with higher learning institutions in southern Algeria and strengthen existing links with contacts, helpers, facilitators, and assistants in the Algerian Sahara.



Jessica Gerschultz, Assistant Professor of AAAS, presented a paper this fall at the Middle East Studies Association Annual Meeting in Denver titled "Mutable Form and Materiality: 'Interweaving' Art and Politics in the New Tapestry of Safia Farhat, Magdalena Abakanowicz, Maria Laskiewicz, and Jagoda Buic," on a panel sponsored by the Association for Modern and Contemporary Art of the Arab World, Iran and Turkey. She submitted a second article examining Tunisian women's weaving to the journal *African Arts* as part of a special issue, *Converging Pedagogies in African Art Education: Colonial Legacies and Post-independent Aspirations*. Her book chapter, *Navigating Nairobi: Artists in a Workshop System*, will be published in *African Art and Agency in the Workshop* (edited by Sidney Kasfir and Till Forster), Indiana University Press, March 2013. She is currently teaching two new courses, Islamic Art and Architecture in Africa and Modern and Contemporary African Art. In October, Dr. Gerschultz received a Critical Language Scholarship Alumni Grant from the Council of Overseas Research and the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs

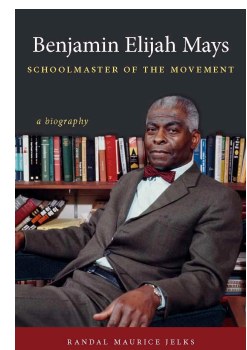
of the U.S. Department of State. The funding will be used for development of the course Islamic Art and Architecture in Africa; specifically, she will purchase tools and materials for conducting a hands-on Arabic Calligraphy workshop that will offer a vital experiential component for students.

Jennifer Hamer, Professor of AAAS and American Studies, published her second book, *Abandoned in the Heartland: Work, Families and Living in East St. Louis* (University of California Press), which has received favorable reviews in *The Crisis*, the official NAACP magazine and *Choice*. In October, she was an invited teaching fellow and panelist for the 68th Annual Family Institute Conference at Morehouse College. In the summer, she launched a new journal, *Women, Gender, and Families of Color (WGFC)*, of which she is founding editor. *WGFC* is published by the University of Illinois Press and housed in the Department of American Studies with the support of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. The first issue is scheduled for release in Spring 2013. *WGFC* replaces *Black Women, Gender and Families* (2006-2012), which Dr. Hamer also founded and edited. An article published in that journal, "Migration, Trans-Racial/National Identity Re-Formation: Becoming African Diaspora Women," by Rosalyn Terborg-Penn won the Letitia Woods Brown Best Article Prize at the 2012 luncheon of the Association of Black Women Historians.



Dr. Hamer leads the planning for the Department of American Studies 60th year celebration and offers a new course this Spring, "African American Childhood and Youth in American Film."

Randal Jelks, Associate Professor of AAAS and American Studies, has conducted numerous interviews about his book, *Benjamin Mays, Schoolmaster of the Movement: A Biography* (published in May 2012 by the University of North Carolina Press). Mays was Martin Luther King, Jr.'s mentor, as well as mentor to a generation of civil rights activist and committed civic leaders throughout the United States. In addition to radio interviews, publicity about the book has appeared on Inside Higher Ed, C-Span, History News Network and Urban Faith. In the book, Jelks follows Mays from childhood -- the youngest of eight children of former slaves -- to his presidency of Morehouse College and his world-renowned ecumenical leadership through retirement when Mays led the peaceful integration of Atlanta's public schools.



Clarence Lang, Associate Professor of AAAS and American Studies, is coediting a book, *Reframing Randolph: A Reassessment of A. Philip Randolph's Legacies to Labor and Black Freedom*, which is under contract with New York University Press. He also has a chapter, "Representing the Mad Margins of the Early Sixties: Northern Civil Rights and the Blues Idiom," in the forthcoming book *Mad Men, Mad World: Sex, Politics, Style and the 1960s*. In May, 2012, he was an invited presenter at the "National Issues, Local Struggles: The Civil Rights Movement in the Ohio Valley and Beyond" Conference sponsored by the Filson Historical Society in Louisville, KY. In the summer, he gave two invited lectures at KU for the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History. Further, in the fall of 2012, he was a participant in the Hall Center for the Humanities' Fall Faculty Colloquium, "The City Imagined: Cosmopolitan, Dystopian, Global, Adaptable."

In the area of teaching, he recently submitted a proposal for a new course, "African American Urban Community and Class in the Midwest," that is currently awaiting approval within the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. He continues to serve as Undergraduate Coordinator for AAAS, and was recently named to the College's KU Core Curriculum Ad Hoc Committee. Moreover, he served on the dissertation committees of four History Ph.D. students at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign who defended their dissertations this past summer, including a doctoral candidate he co-advised and whose dissertation ("Soul Power: The Black Church and the Black Power Movement in Cairo, Illinois, 1969-74") he co-directed. He recently joined the Langston Hughes Visiting Professor Committee at KU, and nationally served on the Executive Council and the 2012 Academic Program Committee of the Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH). He was also a member of the 2012 SAGE-Journal of Urban History-Urban History Association Graduate Student Paper Prize Committee. Currently, he serves as co-chair (with Shawn Alexander) of the 2013 ASALH Academic Program Committee, and as a member of the 2013 Conference Committee of the Labor and Working-Class History Association.

Beverly B. Mack, Professor of AAAS and Director of KASC, has been invited to present a paper at a conference in April 2013 entitled, "The Southern Shores of the Mediterranean and beyond: 1800 - to the present," sponsored by the Mediterranean Collaborative of the University of Minnesota. Her paper is entitled "Full Circle: Muslim Women's Education from the Maghreb to America and Back."

Dr. Mack's chapter, "Muslim Hausa Women's Songs," will appear in 2013 in the volume *Women's Songs from West Africa* (Siddikou & Hale) which is in production with Indiana University Press. Additionally, Dr. Mack lectured at university's Edwards Campus for the Osher program of continuing education in three two-hour sessions. Her presentation was entitled "Islam is a Thinking Chick's Religion."

Elizabeth MacGonagle, Associate Professor of AAAS and History, was invited to contribute essays in two edited volumes published in 2012: "Imagining the Past at Great Zimbabwe" appeared in *Remembering Africa and Its Diasporas*. A paper co-authored with Kim Warren of KU's History department, "How Much for Kunta Kinte?!: Sites of Memory and Diasporan Encounters in West Africa," was published in *African Hosts and their Guests: Cultural Dynamics of Tourism in Africa*.

This past spring and summer, Dr. MacGonagle travelled to southern Africa to complete fieldwork for a book project on the legacies of slavery at several African sites of memory steeped in the history of slavery. With the support of AAAS, the Department of History, and several other units at KU, she conducted research in March on Mozambique Island and made a second trip in July to the city of Cape Town in South Africa. Both places were major centers for the Indian Ocean slave trade and serve as memorial spaces today for remembering a past marked so violently by slavery.

Peter Ojiambo, Assistant Professor of AAAS, is completing an article entitled "Education as a Spiritual Journey: The Story of Starehe Boys Centre and School, 1959 to the Present." It will be published in the *International Journal of Learning*, 2013. He has also completed one journal article entitled, "An Army without Guns: Geoffrey William Griffin and the Development of the National Youth Service in Kenya, 1964 to 1988", that will appear in *Kenya Studies Review*, 2012. Additionally, he has published one article entitled, "Partnering in School Leadership: A Case Study of Starehe Boys Centre and School, Kenya", in *International Journal of Learning* and one book chapter entitled, "Transformative Leadership at Starehe Boys Centre and School in Kenya," in an edited volume, *Contemporary Voices from the Margin: African Educators on African and African-American Education* by Information Age Publishers.

Dr. Ojiambo participated in the Interdisciplinary Conference in July, 2012, at the Catholic University of Eastern Africa, Kenya, where he gave a presentation on "Gift of Education: Joseph Gikubu and the Development of Youth Education in Kenya, 1957 to the Present." He also gave a talk at Daystar University, Kenya, on "Doing Qualitative Educational Biographical Research: Reflections from the Field," in August, 2012. Finally, Professor Ojiambo participated in a panel discussion entitled, "African Educational Leaders," at the annual conference of African Studies Association in November, 2012, in Philadelphia.

Dorothy Pennington, Associate Professor of AAAS and Communication Studies, made an invited presentation at Oxford University on the discourse of victims of terror and trauma. Additionally, she presented at the Summer Conference of the National Association of African American Studies in Orlando, Fla. Dr. Pennington authored a journal article on "Emic, Etic and Andragogy: the Contributions of Nobleza Asuncion Lande to Intercultural Communication," for the *Journal of International and Intercultural Communication*. In August, 2012, Dr. Pennington was among a group of Kansas State employees recognized by Gov. Sam Brownback for service to the state.

Other Noteworthy News:

Eddie Glaude lecture

A visiting scholar from Princeton University delivered two public lectures addressing topics at the intersection of his research in religion and African-American studies. Eddie Glaude Jr., the William S. Tod Professor of Religion and African American Studies at Princeton University, came to Lawrence as the 2012 Theologian in Residence and Visiting Scholar in Religion.

The first of the lectures, "The Crisis of Black Leadership," was held on campus and was co-sponsored by the Langston Hughes Resource Center, AAAS, the Kansas African Studies Center, the Hall Center for the Humanities, the Office of Multicultural Affairs, the departments of American Studies, Philosophy, Political Science and Religious Studies.

The second lecture, "The Role of the Black Church in the Age of Obama," was held at Ninth Street Missionary Baptist Church and was sponsored by a number of community and religious organizations.

The Theologian in Residence series hosts scholars who represent a diversity of religious traditions, while bringing KU and the greater Lawrence community closer together through thoughtful conversations about issues that impact daily life and practical concerns. It supports presentations and dialogue on issues of faith and questions of religion.

Make It Funky IV

The ideas and poetry of rapper and singer, Lauryn Hill, were the focus of "Make It Funky IV: Tribute to Lauryn Hill," an event organized by Tony Bolden, AAAS Associate Professor. The program, held in November, 2012, was the fourth installment in the "Make It Funky" lecture series. These events are unique combinations of cutting-edge scholarship and progressive performance. Performers for the event included acclaimed poet, Natasha Ria El-Scari, and Kansas City rapper, MC Storm, who opened the event by collaborating with jazz drummer, Tyree Johnson. Storm has gained a reputation as one of the most insightful and lyrically-talented artists in the region.

The keynote speech was from poet, author and activist Jessica Care Moore, who first came onto the scene when she won the talent contest five weeks in a row at the nationally televised "Showtime at the Apollo" in the 1990s. Moore performed her own work and discussed the artistry and social themes in Hill's lyrics, which resonate just as powerfully today as they did when her first solo album was released in 1998.

Panelists included Nicole Hodges Persley, Assistant Professor of Theater at KU; Alysha Griffin, graduate student in English at KU; Meta DuEwa Jones, Associate Professor of English and African and African Diaspora Studies at the University of Texas, Austin; and Natasha Ria El-Scari, a Kansas City-based poet and fellow of Cave Canem poets collective. The event was followed by a book signing with Moore and Jones, whose "The Muse is Music: Jazz Poetry from the Harlem Renaissance to the Spoken Word" recently won Honorable Mention for the MLA's William Sanders Scarborough Prize.

The presentation was supported by the CLAS Acts program of the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences, which sponsors events that make KU research accessible to the community. Additional sponsors were the Office of Diversity and Equity, AAAS, American Studies, English, Project on the History of Black Writing, and the Black Faculty and Staff Council.



Race, Space and Gender

A number of AAAS faculty members participated in a roundtable discussion entitled "Race, Space and Gender: A Conversation with KU Faculty of African and African-

American Studies." The professors were described as those who investigate contemporary social issues from varied perspectives.

Shawn Leigh Alexander of AAAS; Ben Chappell of American Studies; and Jennifer Hamer and Randal Jelks who hold joint appointments in both departments spoke at the event, at the Raven Book Store in downtown Lawrence. They discussed regional and national social policy from the perspective of their various research interests, which range from civil rights history to Mexican-American culture to family life in urban areas to African-American religious history. In addition to the Raven Book Store, the event was sponsored by AAAS, American Studies and the Langston Hughes Center.

Your Vote, Your Future: Disenfranchisement in America, Past and Present

An October 2012 event allowed conversations around questions such as: What does it mean to have the right to vote? What happens when you don't have it? What is the current state of this privilege of citizenship? Organized by Jennifer Hamer of African and African-American Studies and American Studies, the event was a roundtable discussion about the history of (dis)enfranchisement and the contemporary status of this principle of American democracy. Co-sponsored by the Department, American Studies, Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies, the Langston Hughes Center, the Black Student Union, and the Office of Multicultural Affairs, the event featured panelists from AAAS, the School of Law, and the Lawrence community and attracted a standing-room only audience of students, faculty, staff and local residents.



Notes:

Jacob Gordon, Professor Emeritus of AAAS, has been named the 2012-2013 Kwame Nkrumah Chair at the Institute of African Studies of the University of Ghana. The university is in Legon-Accra, Ghana, West Africa. The appointment is named in honor of Ghana's first president who founded the Institute of

AAAS would like to hear from its students and alumni!

Please send us news about yourself to:

afs@ku.edu



April C. Bradshaw, RN, a 2005 alum, traveled to Kenya for a Medical Missions Trip. "Going to Kenya was a 'beyond-words' experience. The nature, the people, the food, the culture, *everything* that I experienced brought to life all the many things that my professors would talk about in their lectures. In short, Kenya, is *alive* to me now." See the full story on our webpage at <http://afs.ku.edu/news/index.shtml>

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afs@ku.edu

African Studies at Ghana's flagship university in 1962. Prior to this appointment Professor Gordon was a Fulbright Program Senior Specialist at the University of Ghana during the Spring semester, 2012. He worked with the faculty, research fellows, staff, and graduate students on curriculum and faculty development; and establishing linkages with American universities, particularly Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). As the Kwame Nkrumah Chair, Dr. Gordon will build on his Fulbright experiences and will focus on research and institutional development. He will also conduct research on two specific projects: the first, The Changing Role of Traditional Rulers in Africa, and the second, African Presidential Libraries: A Resource Guide to African Leadership and Governance Studies. Professor Gordon was instrumental in initiating a conference of African Studies Program Directors to be held in the University of Cape Town, South Africa, in October. The conference will focus on strategic planning for sustainable African Studies programs, centers, and departments at universities throughout the continent. Dr. Gordon's vision is to create an African-centered educational system throughout Africa as an imperative in national development.

Student and Alumni News:

Derrais Carter, an AAAS graduate, co-edited a book, *The Iconic Obama, 2007-2009: Essays on Media Representations of the Candidate and New President*, which was published in June. The book, co-edited by Nicholas Yanes, was published by McFarland Press.

JT Hammons, an AAAS senior, was accepted to the University at Buffalo Law School, his first choice because of their program/clinical opportunities, and will begin his legal education in August 2013.

Molly Nelson, a 2005 AAAS graduate, earned a master's degree in teaching from National Louis University in Chicago and has her first teaching job in inner city Chicago's Charter School Frazier Preparatory Academy.

News from our Allied Centers

Kansas African Studies Center (KASC)

Beverly Mack, Director and Professor of AAAS.

The happiest event of the summer was Assistant Director Christina Lux's being named July Employee of the Month in a surprise visit to our offices by Vice Provost Diane Goddard and Recruitment Coordinator Lynn George. We are fortunate to have her as a colleague, and I know I speak for many in thanking her and offering congratulations!

Last year's constrained budget remains the same for this coming year. Unfortunately that means that we cannot fund faculty research travel or related activities. The good news is that FLAS funding remains stable, so we are pleased to be supporting nine FLAS fellows this year. In addition, Ithar Hassaballa secured a WHO internship in Nairobi during the summer, which will complement her work as she embarks on a graduate degree program in Public Health at KU. That internship came from connections made through a USAID grant proposal collaboration with Professor Steven Fawcett, as KASC sought to support him in preparing African-related materials for his community toolbox project. KASC also collaborated with Charles Jones on a State Department grant proposal for reciprocal leadership exchanges between Egypt, Libya, and Tunisia. Another grant project, KASC's own NEH proposal for a summer teacher training workshop on Islam in K-12 classes was not successful, but received sufficient positive feedback to encourage us to reapply.

The major outreach activity of the spring was our hosting of the 5th E. Desmond Lee Africa World Documentary Film Festival, which Christina Lux orchestrated from finding the \$5000 funding for it to vetting the films in committee and staffing the screening of the films at the Spencer Art Museum. This three-day event screened twenty-one new documentary films made in and about Africa, and made by film makers from all over the world. Topics ranged from historical, cultural, religious and socio-political issues to human rights concerns. We had more than 750

audience members whose enthusiastic response led to a decision to make this an annual event.

Langston Hughes Center (LHC)

Shawn Leigh Alexander, Director and Associate 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, "Abandoned in the Heartland" (Jennifer F. Hamer), "Know Your Genes, Meet Your Ancestors, Reunite Your Roots!" (Elonda Clay), "Occupy Detroit: Race, Radicalism, and Representation" (David Goldberg), "Mad Men and the Northern Civil Rights Front of the 1960s" (Clarence Lang), "SOUL Train Chicago: NATIONALIST Beginning" (Randal Maurice Jelks), and "Accreditation and Challenges of HBCUs" (Jerry Crawford). In addition to this, the LHC co-sponsored the Theologian in Residence Series, that brought Eddie S. Glaude, Jr. to campus and the community for two lectures, "The Crisis of Black Leadership" and "The Black Church in the Age of Obama". The LHC also co-sponsored "Race, Space, and Gender: A Conversation with KU Faculty featuring, Shawn Leigh Alexander, Randal Maurice Jelks, Ben Chappell, and Jennifer F. Hamer; and "Your Vote, Your Future: Disenfranchisement in America, Past and Present," featuring Joyce McCray, Margie Wakefield, Shawn Leigh Alexander, and Clarence Lang.

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 programing and scheduling go to <http://www2.ku.edu/~lhcaas/>

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