



# Nommo

*Power of the word*



**Volume 2, 2006**

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AASRC recently celebrated the tenure and promotion of two of our faculty—Drs. Sandra Barnes and Antonio Tillis are now Associate Professors. When I arrived in 2003, I was the only tenured faculty member, but now we have four tenured Associate Professors and have just hired a new Assistant Professor, Dr. Titilayo Okoror. This is an excellent indicator of the growing strength of our program. In fact, in a recent meeting with Dean John Contreni, I commented on the strength of our faculty. I noted that although our numbers are small, we have an amazingly productive faculty with several books and numerous articles between us. Please see the Faculty Focus and Kudos section for information about our

outstanding faculty and also take a moment to read about our new faculty and affiliated faculty.

Our Senior Research Associate, Dr. Carolyn Johnson continues to organize excellent programming for the Research Center. The 2005-2006 academic year focused on Africa with a series of book discussions entitled, "Reading Africa" and the W.E.B. Du Bois Annual Pan African lecture was devoted to a discussion of development in Africa. Other programs included a Black History Month roundtable discussion of African American fraternal, social, and civic organizations as well as the annual Harriet A. Jacobs Arts & Letters Annual Lecture. However, our highlight was again our annual symposium—the theme for 2005 was "Hip Hop in the African Diaspora." In addition to the keynote address, we had several panel presentations by

faculty and graduate students as well as a special student panel featuring some of our majors and minors. More detailed information about these events may be found in the Program Review Section of the newsletter. Information about the 2006, 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Symposium on African American Culture & Philosophy:



**Venetria K. Patton**

"Blacker Than Thou': Authenticity and Identity in the Diaspora," may be found on the next page. We hope you can join us December 7-9<sup>th</sup>, 2006 for stimulating conversation about Black Identity.

In our last newsletter, I commented on recent curricular changes such as the revision of our introductory course and the creation of two new courses. While we will continue to enhance our curriculum, we're currently focusing on enhancing our Research Center. In addition to the excellent programs that we sponsor, we would like to do more with engagement and grantsmanship. For example, last year Dr. Johnson secured funding from the National Council for Black Studies for an engagement program with the Hanna Community Center and this year she has applied for funding to assist Builders of a New Generation with their Rites of Passage Program. We hope that these small grants will be just the beginning of such activities.

**"I noted that although our numbers are small, we have an amazingly productive faculty with several books and numerous articles between us."**

## Symposium Announcement

KEYNOTE ADDRESS  
STEWART CENTER  
214 A&B



Guest Speaker  
Dr. Michael Gomez

“Perception and Reality: Diasporic Identities Through Time and Space”

22nd Annual Symposium on African American Culture & Philosophy

***BLACKER THAN THOU:***  
**AUTHENTICITY AND IDENTITY IN THE DIASPORA**

December 7-9, 2006

Purdue University - West Lafayette, Indiana

The symposium will begin at 7:00pm on Thursday, December 7, 2006, with a keynote address by Dr. Michael Gomez, Chair and Professor of History at New York University and Director of the Association for the Study of the Worldwide African Diaspora (ASWAD). Dr. Gomez received his Ph.D. in African History from the University of Chicago and has held faculty positions at Washington University, Spelman College, and the University of Georgia. His research interests include West Africa, the African Diaspora, Antebellum American South, Islam, and slavery. His most recent book is an edited volume, *Diasporic Africa: A Reader* (NYU P, 2006). He is also the author of *Black Crescent: African Muslims in the Americas* (Cambridge UP, 2005), *Reversing Sail: A History of the African Diaspora* (Cambridge UP, 2005), *Exchanging Our Country Marks: The Transformation of African Identities in the Colonial and Antebellum South* (UNC P, 1998), and *Pragmatism in the Age of Jihad: The Pre-colonial State of Bundu* (Cambridge UP, 1992). Dr. Gomez also has several articles in such journals as *Journal of Black Studies*, *Radical History Review*, *Journal of Southern History*, and *Journal of African History* among others. We are quite pleased to have Dr. Gomez serve as our keynote speaker. In addition to the keynote address, there will be several panel discussions on such topics as: configuring blackness in specific geographic regions, identity formation, and interrogating blackness. All symposium events will be held in the Stewart Center. Schedule and registration information is available on our website; however Purdue University faculty, staff, and students may attend all events free of charge with the exception of Friday's luncheon and reception. Please contact the main office regarding discounted registration for the luncheon and reception. October 6<sup>th</sup> is the deadline for early bird registration and December 1st is the deadline for pre-registrations. Those who register on-site will not be guaranteed a meal for Friday's luncheon.

**College of Liberal Arts**

Dr. John Contreni, Dean

**College of Science**

Dr. Jeffrey Vitter, Dean

**Diversity Resource Office**

Dr. Carolyn Johnson, Director

**The Graduate School**

Dr. Cindy Nakatsu, Interim Dean

**Krannert School of Management**

Dr. Richard Cosier, Dean

**School of Nursing**

Dr. Julie Cowan Novak, Head

**School of Veterinary Medicine**

Dr. Elikplimi Asem, Interim Dean

**American Studies**

Dr. Bill Mullen, Director

**English Department**

Dr. Irwin Weiser, Head

**History Department**

Dr. R. Douglas Hurt, Head

**Political Science Department**

Dr. Bert Rockman, Head

**Philosophy Department**

Dr. Rod Bertolet, Head

**Speech, Language and Hearing Sciences**

Dr. Robert Novak, Head

**Women's Studies**

Dr. Patsy Schweickert, Interim Director



## 2005-2006 Symposium Review

In the fall of 2005, African American Studies and Research Center hosted the twenty-first annual symposium on African American Culture and Philosophy. The series was designed to examine the cultural and philosophical dynamics of the African Diaspora in a global society. Last year's topic dovetailed nicely with the Research Center's focus on cultural practices, as participants addressed a variety of topics related to Hip Hop in the African Diaspora. Topics included hip hop as a cultural aesthetic, the impact and influence of hip hop on popular culture; globalization of hip hop, and also hip hop as a form of community engagement, activism, and spirituality.

Dr. Jeffrey Ogbonna Green Ogbar served as the keynote speaker for the symposium. Dr. Ogbar graduated with honors and received his BA in History and a minor in African studies from Morehouse College in Atlanta. He earned his MA and Ph.D. in U.S. History with a minor in African Studies from Indiana University in Bloomington. He is an Associate Professor in the University of Connecticut's Department of History.



Dr. Jeffrey O.G. Ogbar's research interests include the 20th century United States with a focus on African American history. More specifically, Dr. Ogbar studies black nationalism and radical social protest. In the fall of 2001, Dr. Ogbar was a scholar-in-residence at the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture in New York City, while working on his second book manuscript, which is on the culture and politics of hip hop. Dr. Ogbar is the author of the book, *Black Power: Radical Politics and African American Identity*, published by John Hopkins University Press. Dr. Ogbar is also the editor of *The Civil Rights Movement*, which is part of Houghton Mifflin's Problems in American Civilization series. He is featured in "From Black Power to Hip-Hop," published in *Black Issues in Higher Education*. His essays also appear in the *Journal of Religious Thought*, *Journal of Black Studies*, *Souls*, and other scholarly publications.



### African American Studies Culture & Philosophy Award 2005 Winner Purdue Black Caucus

President of the Purdue University Black Caucus Dr. Thelma Snuggs accepted the philosophy and culture award from African American Studies and Research Center's Director Dr. Venetria K. Patton on November 18, 2005.

**Congratulations to the Purdue University  
Black Caucus of Faculty & Staff**

**Program Review: Reading Africa**

In celebration of Africa’s hundred best books of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, African American Studies and Research Center presented a series called *Reading Africa*. For three consecutive Wednesdays in September 2005, students and faculty members gathered for “Tea and Talk” book review lectures on Chinua Achebe’s *Things Fall Apart*, Tsitsi Dangarembga’s *Nervous Conditions*, and Tayeb Salih’s *Seasons of Migration to the North*.

*Things Fall Apart*  
By  
Chinua Achebe



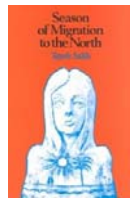
Mrs. Ruby Pentsil-Bukari

*Nervous Conditions*  
By  
Tsitsi Dangarembga



Ms. Sophie Chiermba

*Season of Migration to the North*  
By  
Tayeb Salih Sudan



Dr. Joseph Dorsey

**Program Review: Black History Month**

As a part of National Black History Month, African American Studies and Research Center held a leadership roundtable entitled "Celebrating Community: A Tribute to Black Fraternal, Social, and Civic Institutions". The event held Tuesday, February 28, 2006, served as opportunity for students to explore vital aspects for the African American experience as it related to the Purdue University campus community. Specifically, discussion focused on the issues facing Black Fraternal, Social, and Civic Institutions and recognized the invaluable contributions of these institutions.



On Tuesday, March 28, 2006 the AASRC sponsored a lecture named in honor of Ms. Harriet A. Jacobs. This year our speaker was our new affiliated faculty member Dr. Dawn Stinchcomb. Dr. Stinchcomb is an Assistant Professor in the Department of

Foreign Language and Literature at Purdue University. She received her Ph.D in Latin American Literature from the University of Tennessee-Knoxville. In the spirit of the 2006 National Women's History Month Theme "Women: Builders of Communities and Dreams", Dr. Stinchcomb presented her article entitled, "Las Cimarronas: Afro-Cuban Resistance in Post Revolutionary Cuba".



**"Las Cimarronas:  
Afro-Cuban Resistance in Post  
Revolutionary Cuba"**

Dr. Dawn Stinchcomb,  
Assistant professor,  
Foreign Languages & Literature

## Program Review: Talkin' N Testifyin'

### TALKIN' & TESTIFYIN': WORKS IN PROGRESS

#### "Panthers of Brotherly Love"



Kevin Brooks

Kevin Brooks and Omari Dyson, graduate students in the College of Education, traveled to Philadelphia Pennsylvania to research the Black Panthers of Philly. They met members of the Black Panther Party from the 1960's and 1970's. Their research was extensive and will be a chapter in Dr. Judson L. Jeffries new book entitled, *Comrades: The Local History of the Black Panther Party*.



Omari Dyson

## Course Offerings Fall 2006 and Spring 2007

The following courses are being offered **Fall 2006**:

### **IDIS 271-I**

#### **Introduction to African American**

Instructor: Mrs. Andrea D. Jasper

### **IDIS 271-2**

#### **Introduction to African American Studies**

Instructor: Dr. Joseph C. Dorsey

### **IDIS 371F**

#### **The African American Experience: The Black Athlete**

Instructor: Mr. Kevin L. Brooks

### **IDIS 371C:**

#### **The African American Experience: African American Health**

Instructor: Dr. Titilayo A. Okoror

### **IDIS 373B\*\*, 373H\*/ENGL 396B Black Women Writers**

Instructor: Dr. Venetria K. Patton



The following courses are being offered **Spring 2007**.

### **IDIS 271**

#### **Introduction to African American Studies**

Instructor: Dr. Venetria K. Patton

### **IDIS 370**

#### **Black Women Rising**

Instructor: Dr. Titilayo A. Okoror

### **IDIS 371F**

#### **The African American Experience: The Black Athlete**

Instructor: Mr. Kevin L. Brooks

### **IDIS 375**

#### **The Black Family**

Instructor: Dr. Carolyn E. Johnson

### **IDIS 376**

#### **The Black Male**

Instructor: Dr. Antonio D. Tillis

### **IDIS 473/IDIS 473L**

#### **Blacks in Hollywood Film**

Instructor: Dr. Joseph C. Dorsey

CLASSICS & AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES LECTURE SERIES:  
"Black Ulysses: Classics in Conversation with  
African American Studies"



"Behind the Minstrel Mask: Noble Sissle and Eubie  
Blake's *Shuffle Along* and its Images of  
Blackness"  
October 12, 2006 LWSN B151  
3:00 PM

Dr. Harry J. Elam Jr.  
Olive H. Palmer Professor,  
Robert and Ruth Halperin Fellow,  
Professor and Chair, Drama



"From Sophocles to Ray Charles: The  
Re-presentation of Oedipus in *The  
Gospel at Colonus*"  
October 26, 2006 LWSN B155  
8:00 PM

Dr. Davina McClain Chair,  
Classical Studies,  
Associate Professor  
Loyola University



"Zora Neale Hurston's Investigation of the  
Modern-Day 'Achilles'"  
March 1, 2007 STEW 214 C&D  
3:00 PM

Dr. James Saunders  
Professor  
Department of English  
Purdue University



"Zora Neale Hurston and the Uses of  
Mythology"  
March 8, 2007 Location TBA  
8:00 PM

Dr. Gail T. Smith  
Associate Provost,  
City University of New York  
Graduate Center

## Faculty Focus: New Faculty Member

### Dr. Titilayo Okoror



**Dr. Titilayo A. Okoror is originally from Nigeria, West Africa. Shortly after arriving in the U.S and witnessing first hand the challenges international students experience both in adjusting to life in a new culture and negotiating through the healthcare system, she volunteered, trained and serve as a Cross-cultural peer educator with the Office of Health Promotion and Education at Penn State University Health Services, working as an interpreter between physician and patient if the need ever arise, and assisting in developing workshops for international families, geared at preparing them for living in a different culture.**

**In her efforts to increase cultural awareness, she gave presentations in schools around the State College community and in classrooms on the Penn State campus. Her presentations usually start with a brief overview of what Africa and her peoples are about, and she always leaves her audience with the knowledge that “we are not as different as we tend to think and that there is more to Africa than the diseases and wars mostly reported by the media.”**

**As President of the African Students Association 2004/2005, she initiated meetings with the Diversity Chair of the State College School board, in her efforts to organize joint programs with schools on increasing cultural awareness. She collaborated with Late’ Nite PSU to bring to Penn State students a “Taste of the Touch of Africa,” the first such event ever to be organized. The event gave Penn State students the opportunity to witness first hand some of Africa’s cultural dances, skits and music.**

**Her research focus is on designing culturally appropriate and acceptable health promotion and education programs, as she usually says, “we already know what we don’t have. Let’s focus on what we have and find areas to maximize them to our benefit.” With this mindset, she works on developing programs to mitigate the impact of HIV/AIDS on minority families in the U.S and African families and communities internationally. She also assisted in training HIV/AIDS peer educators/counselors at the Office of Health Promotion and Education at the Penn State University**

**Dr. Okoror’s recent publications include “HIV/AIDS and the African American Community: Disparities of policy and identity” and a handbook called “Transforming structural barriers to improve the health of African American” (2003).**

**She received her Ph.D. from the Department of Biobehavioral Health at Penn State University in 2006.**

## “Welcome, Dr. Titilayo Okoror”



## Faculty Focus: New Affiliated Faculty

**Dr. Dawn Stinchcomb** is an Assistant Professor in the department of Foreign Languages and Literature at Purdue University. She received her Ph.D in Latin American Literature from the University of Tennessee-Knoxville. Prior to her arrival at Purdue University, she was an Assistant Professor of Spanish at Iowa State University. She is the author of *The Development of Literary Blackness in Dominican Literature* (University Press of Florida, 2004) and has published in several journals, including *Journal of Caribbean Literatures* and *Publication of the Afro-Latin American Research Association*.

**Dr. Mia Smith Bynum** is an Assistant Professor in the department of Psychological Sciences at Purdue University. Dr. Bynum received her Ph.D. in clinical psychology from the University of Virginia and was a post-doctoral fellow at the Center for Family Research at the University of Georgia. Her research interests focus on the influence of family processes on mental health in ethnic minority adults and children and she has published in such journals as *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology* and *Journal of Child and Family Studies*.

## Faculty Kudos

### Dr. Sandra L. Barnes

Dr. Barnes was recently appointed editor of *The Griot*, the newsletter for the Association of Black Sociologists and she was selected as keynote speaker for the Progressive National Baptist Convention. Dr. Barnes will also serve as the keynote speaker for the 2006 Indiana Academy of the Social Sciences (IASS), she will be speaking based on her research on the urban experience in Gary, Indiana (The Cost of Being Poor). Dr. Barnes also has an essay forthcoming in *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, "Whosoever Will Let Her Come: Gender Inclusivity in the Black Church."

### Dr. Joseph C. Dorsey

Dr. Dorsey and Dr. Barnes have a co-written article "Towards a History of Slavery in small places: Economics expansion: Demographic Diversity, and Social Stability in Fajardo, Puerto Rico, 1812-1834" Forthcoming in *Journal of African American History*.

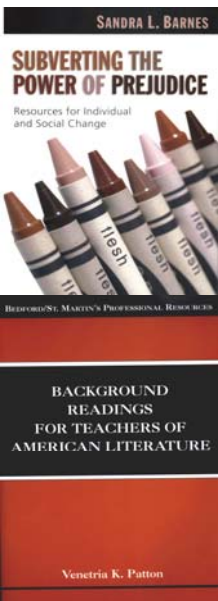
### Dr. Venetria K. Patton

Dr. Patton served as a Program Reviewer for the UNC Greensboro African American Studies Program and as a Ford Foundation Diversity Fellowship Evaluator.

### Dr. Antonio D. Tillis

Dr. Tillis has moved up from Foreign Language Representative of the College Language Association to Vice President and Program chair. Dr. Tillis has also become the managing editor of the *Publication of the Afro-Latin Romance Association (PALARA)*.

## New Books



**Barnes, Sandra L.** *Subverting the Power of Prejudice: Resources for Individual and Social Change.*

Downers Grove: Inter Varsity Press, 2006 214 pp.

**Patton, Venetria K., ed.** *Teaching American Literature: Background Readings.* Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's P, 2006. Paper. 386 pp.

## Purdue Makes an Impression at the 2006 Annual NCBS Conference

Last March, faculty and students from the African American Studies and Research Center participated in the 30<sup>th</sup> Annual National Council for Black Studies Conference held in Houston, Texas. AASRC maintains an institutional membership with NCBS and encourages faculty and students to present at the annual conference. Presenters at the 2006 conference included Dr. Antonio Tillis, Mr. Kevin Brooks, Mr. Omari Dyson, and Mr. Carl Weatherspoon, Jr. Dr. Tillis was part of a panel on Malcolm X in which participants shared research related to the forthcoming publication of a Malcolm X Reader. His paper was entitled, "Blas Jimenez and Afro-Caribbean Appropriation of Malcolm X's Revolutionary Ideology in Poetic Verse." Mr. Brooks, an AASRC Teaching Assistant and Curriculum and Instruction Doctoral Student, and Mr. Dyson, a Curriculum Studies Doctoral Student, co-presented their paper, "The Panthers of 'Brotherly Love': Examining the Black Panther Party in Context." The paper was drawn from a chapter they are co-authoring for an essay collection on the Black Panthers edited by Dr. Judson L. Jeffries, Associate Professor of Political Science at Purdue University. Mr. Weatherspoon, an AASRC minor, delivered a paper drawn from his work in our Black Athlete course, entitled, "Where is the Blackness in Baseball." It is an ongoing tradition at NCBS conferences to encourage both undergraduate and graduate student participation in the conference. AASRC was quite pleased to have our students' papers accepted for the conference.

The conference is an excellent opportunity for discussion of the latest topics in our field and a great networking opportunity. Thus, Dr. Patton has made it a point to bring students to the conference each year. In reflecting on his participation at the conference, Mr. Weatherspoon noted that he enjoyed the conference and learned a lot. Dr. Patton was particularly pleased to hear him make a link between the conference and his course work. He stated, "The issues discussed at this conference were very informative. It reinforced some of the topics I learned in class and introduced some new interesting topics for me to indulge in intellectual thought with my friends at the Black Cultural center." He plans to make the conference an annual event.

The 2006 conference was the second NCBS conference for Mr. Brooks. He comments, "It was a remarkable feeling to present my work before some of the leading researchers and intellectuals from a variety of academic disciplines and was exciting to hear their constructive feedback. The presentation created a dialogue where we would share and exchange ideas to enhance our understanding and awareness of particular subjects and related topics." He went on to note, "the experience of presenting at NCBS has afforded me several valuable opportunities. I was able to meet and network with many scholars whose books, book chapters, and journal articles I have read in and out of the classroom. Some of whom took interest in the work I was doing and offered a mentoring relationship." A similar response was made by Mr. Dyson, who observed that his participation in the conference, assisted in his "growth as person and as a continuing scholar in the areas of Education, Marriage and Family Therapy, and Black Studies." AASRC is pleased to provide our students with the opportunity to extend their learning beyond the classroom. We hope to have an even greater Purdue University presence at the 2007 conference in San Diego.



### BCC Award from NCBS

The Purdue Black Cultural Center has been awarded the 2005 Sankore Institutional Award by the National Council for Black Studies (NCBS). The award was presented at the NCBS annual conference in Houston, Texas. NCBS bestows the Sankore Award annually to an institution or organization whose work and leadership have contributed significantly to the development and institutionalization of black/Africana studies in the United States and internationally. The BCC is honored to have been recognized by this prestigious organization.

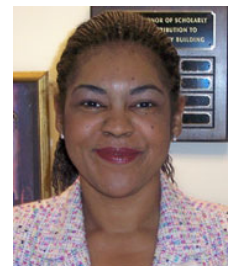


### H.H. Remmers Award Reception

The 2006 H.H. Remmers Memorial Awards were presented at a reception on April 20, 2006 to Adrienne Carter-Sowell, a master's student in the Department of Psychological Sciences and to Candace Best, a doctoral student also in the Department of Psychological Sciences.

These awards are made possible through the H.H. Remmers Memorial fund established to honor Dr. Remmers, who had been head of the Division of Educational Reference and a member of the then Psychology Department. The Remmers family had stipulated that the income from the fund be used to assist African Americans "who are pursuing graduate study in the social sciences, men and women, providing the amount of \$ 500.00 per calendar year." In 1988, the family graciously agreed to increase the Award to \$ 1,000.00 each for an African American doctoral and master's level student. Each year the selection committee solicits nominations from the heads of the social science departments, including Communication, Political Sciences, Psychological Sciences, Sociology and Anthropology, and Speech, Language, and Hearing Sciences. Nomination criteria include consistent and outstanding academic progress as well as academic, professional, and leadership potential. The 2006 honorees exemplify these criteria.

Adrienne Renee Carter-Sowell received her B.A. from the University of Virginia. She is completing her second year in the study of social psychology. Under the guidance of her primary advisor, Dr. Kipling D. Williams, Adrienne has conducted research on the effects of ostracism concerning susceptibility, social monitoring, and aggression.



Adrienne Renee  
Carter-Sowell

Candace Best attended Hampton University and graduated Magna Cum Laude. While at Hampton, she was involved in a variety of organizations, including: Golden Key International Honor Society and Beta Kappa Chi Scientific Honor Society. She is now pursuing a Ph.D. in clinical psychology at Purdue University. Currently, under the leadership of Dr. Mia Bynum, Candace is investigating how the messages that parents provide their children about race influences how they feel about themselves.



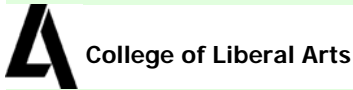
Candace Best

**Congratulations, to two outstanding and most deserving recipients.**



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 Mrs. Andrea D. Jasper  
 Ms. Mindy H. Tan

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