

NOMMO

Power of the word Volume 4, 2008

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The pages that follow provide an over view of our activities from last year as well as a preview of our upcoming events. The 2008-2009 academic year promises to be an exciting one. We are pleased to welcome a new faculty member, Dr. Niambi Carter, who is an assistant professor of African American Studies and Political Science. We are also in the process of searching for an assistant professor of African American Studies and Sociology. Our program is growing and positioning itself to do bigger and better things.

One impending change that students will see this spring is that our courses will no longer be listed as interdisciplinary studies courses, but as African American Studies courses. We now have our own course designator: AAS. This will make our courses more readily visible to new and returning students. We are also enhancing our selection of courses. We recently added AAS 359/ENGL 359, Black Women Writers and AAS 392/HIST 392, Caribbean History & Culture to our array of courses. We are also in the process of developing a new course on the African Diaspora and on African American health. We hope students will be excited about these additional opportunities.

We are continuing to find ways to enhance our major and minor. In recent years we have provided opportunities for students to present their research at the annual National Council for Black Studies Conference. This is an excellent opportunity

to interact with scholars in the field and it has been particularly beneficial for students interested in pursuing graduate degrees. However, we are also looking for other professional development prospects



Venetria K. Patton

for our students. To that end, we are reaching out to our alumni to get more information about what they are doing and how they are making use of their degrees. So alumni, when you receive our brief survey please do complete it as this will provide invaluable information for us. We would like to provide our students with a fuller picture of what one does with a degree or minor in

African American studies. African American Studies graduates have gone on to careers in medicine, law, politics, business, the arts, sports, education, journalism, and community services. Thus it is clear that one can do anything with a degree in African American Studies but we'd like to get some more specific information about our graduates to include alongside more well known African American Studies graduates such as astronaut, Mae Jemison; actress, Sanaa Lathan; journalist, Jill Nelson; and basketball player, Vince Carter.

Please do try to make some of our exciting events, such as the symposium on the Black Caribbean, the Black History Month Art Exhibit, and the Harriet A. Jacobs Lecture Series.

Symposium Announcement



Keynote Speaker: Dr. Myriam J.A. Chancy
Professor of English at Louisiana State University

Thursday, November 6, 2008
Stewart Center • Room 214 AB at 7 pm

“(Re)Visioning the Black Caribbean: Spaces, Places, & Voices”

African American Studies and Research Center, in conjunction with PALARA: Publication of the Afro-Latin/American Research Association is pleased to host the twenty-fourth 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. Each symposium allows for an extended analysis of a timely topic. We are excited about this year’s theme of “(Re)Visioning the Black Caribbean: Spaces, Places, & Voices.” We solicited papers and panel presentations to address Anglophone, Francophone, and Hispanophone aspects of the Caribbean. Our plenary speakers include:

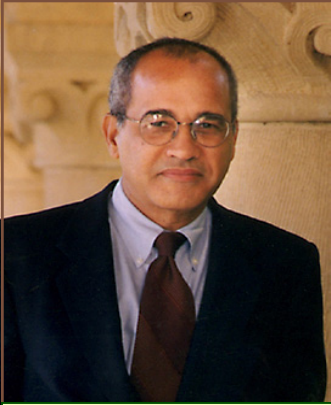
Dr. Carol Boyce-Davies of Cornell University,

Dr. William Luis of Vanderbilt University.

Dr. Françoise Lionnett of the University of California, Los Angeles,

We are particularly pleased to have Dr. Myriam J. A. Chancy, Professor of English at Louisiana State University, as our keynote speaker. Dr. Chancy is a Haitian writer born in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, and educated in Québec City, Winnipeg and Halifax. Her first novel, *Spirit of Haiti* (London: Mango Publications, 2003), was a finalist in the Best First Book Category, Canada/Caribbean region, of the Commonwealth Prize 2004. She is also the author of two books of literary criticism, *Framing Silence: Revolutionary Novels by Haitian Women* (Rutgers UP, 1997) and *Searching for Safe Spaces: Afro-Caribbean Women Writers in Exile* (Temple UP, 1997). In 1998, *Searching for Safe Spaces* was selected as an Outstanding Academic Book by *Choice*, the journal of the American Library Association. She is also the author of a second novel, *The Scorpion's Claw* (Peepal Tree Press, 2005). Her work as the Editor-in-Chief of the Ford funded academic/arts journal, *Meridians: feminism, race, transnationalism* (2002-2004) was recognized with the Phoenix Award for Editorial Achievement (2004). She has just completed a third novel entitled, *The Loneliness of Angels*, a memoir, *Fractured*, and is at work on a book length academic work entitled, *Floating Islands: Cosmopolitanism, Transnationalism and Racial Identity Formation*. She is currently Professor of English at Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. We hope you find the symposium stimulating and that you will attend next year’s symposium on “New Directions in Feminism and Womanism in African and the African Diaspora,” which will be held on November 5-7, 2009.

2007 Symposium Review



Dr. Arnold Rampersad

The African American Studies & Research Center and the Alain L. Locke Society hosted the 23rd Annual Symposium on African American Culture & Philosophy. The symposium theme was “Harlem Renaissance: Aesthetics, Values, and Identity.” The symposium opened on Thursday, November 1, 2007, with a keynote address by Dr. Arnold Rampersad, Professor of English and Sara Hart Kimball Professor in the Humanities at Stanford University. Dr. Rampersad delighted the audience with his lecture, “Locke and the Harlem Renaissance.” Dr. Arnold Rampersad has recently published *Ralph Ellison*, a biography of the novelist (Knopf, 2007). Dr. Rampersad is a previous recipient of a MacArthur Fellowship and currently is an elected member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and the American Philosophical Society.

Program Review: Harriet A. Jacobs Lecture Series in the Humanities and the Arts “Dancing on the White Page: Black Women Entertainers Writing Autobiography”

What better way to celebrate National Women’s History Month than with a presentation at the Harriet A. Jacobs Lecture on the popular autobiographies of six well known Black women entertainers: Diahann Carroll, Dorothy Dandridge, Lena Horne, Eartha Kitt, Whoopi Goldberg, and Mary Wilson. On March 5, 2008, Dr. Kwakiutl Dreher, Assistant Professor in the Department of English and Ethnic Studies at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln presented her work from the newly released, *Dancing on the White Page: Black Women Entertainers Writing Autobiography* from SUNY Press. Dr. Dreher is a performance artist, producer of her one-woman show, and is Editor of the NAACP-Lincoln Branch newsletter. Dr. Dreher received her Ph.D. from the University of California, Riverside.



Program Review: Talkin’ & Testifyin’: Works in Progress Series—2008 “Mediation and the Pullman Porters: Examining the Skeleton Brief in Support of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters”



On February 12, 2008, Dr. Cornelius Bynum, Assistant Professor in the Department of History at Purdue University presented his research on Car Porters. During the boom of railroads in the United States, the Pullman Company developed the rail sleeping car for traveling passengers. The Pullman Company is also remembered for hiring African Americans for porter positions. While still a menial job in many respects, it offered better pay and security than most jobs open to African Americans at the time in addition to a chance for travel, and was a well regarded job in the African American community of the time. Pullman porters were unionized in the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters under A. Philip Randolph. All of the Pullman attendants, regardless of their true name, were referred

to as “George” by the travelers. This tradition finds its origins after the company’s founder, George Pullman. The Pullman company was the largest employer of African Americans in the United States. Professor Bynum completed his Ph.D. in History from the University of Virginia in May 2004. Dr. Bynum’s research interests include African American History, as well as Urban history and Labor History.



Pictured right: A Pullman porter assisting a traveling passenger

NCBS Community Education and Engagement Grant

AASRC supports Rights of Passage Mentoring Program through NCBS Grant

Before departing AASRC, Carolyn Johnson worked with Kevin Brooks and Builders of a New Generation to submit a National Council for Black Studies Community Education and Engagement Grant in the amount of \$2,500.00 to support the operating costs for the Rites of Passage (RoP) Mentoring Program. Funds were requested to cover travel expenses, admission costs, and food during two of four experiential learning activities. Also, funds were used to purchase books and other resource materials which will be used during upcoming program sessions and activities.

The students went to Cincinnati Ohio, to visit the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center for their first activity. They received a guided tour of the Freedom Center, ate lunch in the cafeteria, reflected on their experience in one of the educational rooms, and bought books and materials from the gift shop. After leaving the Center, they went on a brief tour of Covington, Kentucky and Cincinnati, and then had dinner at a Black-owned "Soul Food" restaurant. For the second activity, they went to Chicago to visit the DuSable Museum of African American History. They toured DuSable and purchased books and materials from the gift shop. Afterward, they went to a Black-owned bookstore and purchased resource materials to support future programs such as their book discussions. Then they ate dinner at a Black-owned "Soul Food" restaurant on the Southside.

Builders of a New Generation runs the Rites of Passage (RoP) Mentoring Program each academic year. RoP is a free, seven-month mentoring program, which meets bi-weekly for three hours per session on Saturday mornings at the Black Cultural Center. This unique opportunity seeks to empower and enrich African American students, grades three through five, in the Greater Lafayette area. The program is designed to address specific issues regarding the African American experience. The objectives of the program are threefold: 1) to establish mentoring relationships between African American elementary students and Purdue faculty staff, and students; 2) to enhance students' knowledge and understanding of African American history and culture; 3) and to introduce students to post secondary opportunities. *RoP* mentors provide students with strategies to enhance their cultural, social, and personal development, as well as their classroom performance and academic skills. The program embraces an Afrocentric philosophy, and the curriculum is linked to the Indiana Department of Education's academic standards for content in the school setting. Session topics include self-esteem, health and nutrition, communication, decision-making, problem solving, media images and representations, financial literacy, and African American local, state, and regional histories.

The program also incorporates four service-learning opportunities to achieve the goals of the Purdue University five-year Strategic Plan, which aims to build "relationships with other educational institutions" thus "improving society through civic engagement." The experiential learning experiences include visits to the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center (Cincinnati, OH), the DuSable Museum of African American History (Chicago, IL), the Crispus Attucks Museum (Indianapolis, IN), and the Black Holocaust Museum (Milwaukee, WI). Also, the BCC's Performing Arts Ensembles offer workshops and instruction in writing, acting, singing, and dancing. Staff members for the National Youth Sports Program (NYSP) provide instruction in physical activity and fitness.



2008 Annual NCBS Conference

Majors and Minors, we hope you'll join us in Atlanta in 2009!

Eventful, enlightening, energetic, and humbling are words that best describe my experience at the National Council for Black Studies this year. The conference opened with an African-centered, spirit-filled, inspiring performance by young children of the Kilombo Pan-African Institute. NCBS always re-energizes my spirits and thirst for intellectual growth and the opening ceremonies excited to participate in what would be a memorable conference. Also at the opening session, Dr. Charles Jones, President of NCBS instructed all past winners of the student essay contest to stand up. Since I earned the honor to win the undergraduate competition in 2004, I rose not yet aware of the honors to come.

After attending a couple panel sessions and catching up with past friends and colleagues, I was asked at the registration desk, "Jamal, did you know that you won the graduate essay competition?" Of course this question caught me by surprise. In 2004, I returned to Atlanta from ASBS and questionable yet unsuccessful student essay competition in Cleveland only to be called by Dr. James Conyers late one evening. He congratulated me and informed me that I won the undergraduate essay competition. In other words, I knew of my honor before NCBS began. I later found out that all of the recipients were informed at the conference.

While I am unsure if winning both the undergraduate and graduate essay awards from NCBS is a first, I certainly was humbled and thankful that NCBS saw potential in my scholarship. I had the opportunity to make contacts with people and specifically students at San Francisco State in 1968 that certainly will influence my dissertation and I also enjoyed the professional development sessions funded by the Ford Foundation. Even Danny Glover was impressed with my speech and award and I was pleased to join elite company with my honor. With Dr. Venetria K. Patton earning an award and with Mr. Kevin Brooks sitting on a panel with distinguished faculty, Purdue certainly represented quite well this year.

Jamal Ratchford

Program Review: Experience Liberal Arts 2007

AASRC sponsored two events during Experience Liberal Arts Month. The first event was a lecture by Dr. Miriam Lucia dos Santos Jorge entitled, "Affirmative Action in Brazil: Affirming Rights or Ideologies." Dr. Jorge traveled to Purdue from Federal University of Minas Gerais in Brazil where she is an Associate Professor in the School of Education. Our second event of the month was our Annual W.E.B. Du Bois Pan African Lecture. The speaker was Dr. Nadege Veldwachter, Assistant Professor of French in the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures at Purdue. Her lecture, "Maryse Conde, Simone Schwarz-Bart, and Raphael Confiant in English: Translation from the Margins," addressed the problems of translation as literary critics serve as intermediaries during the translation process between Creole, French, and English. Both events were a wonderful opportunity to highlight the liberal arts.



Dr. Miriam Jorge received her MA and PhD in Linguistic Studies from the Federal University of Minas Gerais (UFMG), in Belo Horizonte, Brazil. Additionally, as a part of her doctoral study, she spent one semester at the University of California at Santa Barbara, through a joint-collaborative program where she focused on Cultural Perspectives and Comparative Education.

Dr. Nadege Veldwachter

Dr. Veldwachter is an Assistant Professor of Francophone literatures in the Purdue department of Foreign Languages and Literatures. She received her PhD in French and Francophone Studies from in 2005. Her research brings theories of cultural and linguistic translation to bear on basic questions about the production and reception of Caribbean literature. Dr. Veldwachter's paper examined the issues surrounding the translation of Maryse Condé, Simone Schwarz-Bart, and Raphaël Confiant's work from French into English.

H.H. Remmers Award Reception 2008

Since 1985-86, African American Studies and Research Center has coordinated the identification of an annual recipient(s) for the Remmers Award. This Award has been made possible through the H. H. Remmers Memorial Fund established in 1969 to honor Dr. Remmers who had been head of the Division of Education Reference and a member of the Psychology Department.

The Remmers family has stipulated that the income from the fund be used to assist “Afro-American men and women who are pursuing graduate study in the social sciences, providing the amount of \$500.00 per calendar year.” In 1988, the family graciously agreed that the award be increased to \$1000.00 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 Audiology and Speech Sciences, Communications, Political Sciences, Psychological Sciences, and Sociology and Anthropology. The nomination criteria include consistent and outstanding academic progress as well as academic, professional, and leadership potential.

2008 Doctoral Level H. H. Remmers Award Recipient:

John E. Spruill, III, Department of Speech, Language, and Hearing Sciences

John E. Spruill, III began his Ph.D. at Purdue in the department of Speech, Language, and Hearing Sciences in 2001, and elected to pursue a dual-title degree in Speech, Language, and Hearing Sciences-Gerontology. He is in the process of collecting research data for his dissertation which is focusing on language processing with normal aging, and he intends to return to his alma mater as a position has been offered. John is from Virginia Beach, VA, and his alma mater is Hampton University. John’s hobbies include: music (listening and playing), tennis, and cooking.



2008 Master’s Level H. H. Remmers Award Recipient:

Andrea Stokes, Department of Communications

Andrea C. Stokes is finishing her MA in communication at Purdue University this year. Her areas of interest are the intersection of race, class, sexuality, and gender as represented on television, queer theory and social justice activism. Her Masters thesis is entitled “Doing defiance: Narrative defiance in ‘The L-Word,’” which explores the intersection of cultural change and the elements of a television narrative. As a first generation college graduate, this recognition strengthens her resolve to continue her pursuit of a Ph.D. and a career in academia.

Kevin Brooks Receives Award for Service to Community Youth



Kevin Brooks and Omari Dyson received the Youth Ministry award from Ministry One at the 2008 Men's Conference on April 5, 2008 in Lafayette, IN. Kevin Brooks is a doctoral student in the Curriculum & Instruction program in the College of Education, as well as Graduate Instructor and Research Assistant for the African American Studies and Research Center. Omari Dyson is a fellow Ph.D. student. These men of distinction were honored for their service to the Greater Lafayette community with the Rites of Passage Mentoring Program.

Program Review: Black History Month Display - 2008



To commemorate Black History Month, members of AASRC created an exhibit for the College of Liberal arts display case. The theme for the display was “Black Artistry: Celebrating the Achievements of Blacks in Music, Art and Sports.” Some noted luminaries include: Jackie Wilson, Philippa Duke Snyder, Luther Vandross and Tupac Shakur (music); Romare Bearden and Jacob Lawrence (illustrators), Ora Washington, Jackie Joyner-Kersey and Lusia Harris (sports). The exhibit received numerous compliments from faculty, staff, and students for constructing a creative and informative display highlighting the accomplishments and contributions of blacks to American culture and history. Kevin

Brooks a Ph.D. candidate in Curriculum and Instruction and fellow Ph.D. students, Arthur Banton (American Studies/History) and Mindy Tan (American Studies/Philosophy) coordinated the project.

Program Review: Conversations on the Diaspora—2008 “African/Black Canadian Literature: An Introduction”



On April 3, 2008, Dr. George Elliott Clarke, E. J. Pratt Professor of Canadian Literature at University of Toronto presented his research on African/Black Canadian Literature at the Conversations on the Diaspora program. A revered poet, George Elliott Clarke was born in Windsor, Nova Scotia, near the Black Loyalist community of Three Mile Plains, in 1960. A graduate of the University of Waterloo (B.A., Hons., 1984), Dalhousie University (M.A., 1989), and Queen's University (Ph.D., 1993), he is now the inaugural E.J. Pratt Professor of Canadian Literature at the University of Toronto. Prior appointments include Assistant Professor of English and Canadian Studies at

Duke University, Seagrams Visiting Chair in Canadian Studies at McGill University, Noted Scholar at the University of British Columbia and Visiting Scholar at Mount Allison University. He has also worked as a researcher (Ontario Provincial Parliament, 1982-83), editor (*Imprint*, University of Waterloo, 1984-85, and *The Rap*, Halifax, NS, 1985-87) social worker (Black United Front of Nova Scotia, 1985-86), parliamentary aide (House of Commons, 1987-91), and newspaper columnist (*The Daily News*, Halifax, NS, 1988-89, and *The Halifax Herald*, Halifax, NS, 1992). His many honors include the Portia White Prize for Artistic Achievement (1988), Governor-General's Award for Poetry (2001), the National Magazine Gold Medal for Poetry (2001), the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Achievement Award (2004), and the prestigious Trudeau Fellow Prize (2005).



Course Offerings Spring 2009**Course Offerings Spring 2009**

The following courses or being offered Spring 2009:

AAS 271**Introduction to African American Studies**

Dr. Niambi Carter

MWF: 9:30—10:20

AAS 271**Introduction to African American Studies**

Mr. Jamal Ratchford

TTH: 9:30—10:45

AAS 371**African American Experience: African American Health**

Dr. Titilayo Okoror

TTH: 10:30—11:45

AAS 371 F**African American Experience: The Black Athlete**

Mr. Kevin Brooks

MWF: 11:30—12:20

AAS 375**The Black Family**

Dr. Joseph Dorsey

TTH 1:30—2:45

AAS 370**Black Women Rising**

Dr. Carolyn Johnson

W 2:30—5:20

AAS 373/PHIL 242**Issues in The African American Experience: Afro-American Thought, Culture & Philosophy**

Dr. Leonard Harris

M: 2:30—5:20

AAS 491**Afro-Latin American Film**

Dr. Antonio Tillis

MW: 10:30—11:20 Film Lab T: 6:00—8:00 pm

Please contact the center for more details and the class schedule. The class schedule can also be found online at:
<http://www.cla.purdue.edu/african-american/courses/spring.cfm>

Upcoming Events

Fall 2008

October

10/9 3:30 – 5:00 BCC
Experience Liberal Arts
W.E.B. Du Bois Annual
Pan-African Lecture
By Heloise Toler Gomes

November

11/5-11/8 Stewart Center
24th Annual Symposium:
(Re)Visioning the Black
Caribbean: Spaces, Places,
& Voices

11/20 3:30—5:00 BCC
Talkin' & Testifyin':
The Other Side of the Game:
African Americans in Sports

Spring 2009

January

1/28/ 3:00—4:30 STEW 313
Talkin' & Testifyin'
Dr. Neil Bynum

February

2/1-2/25
Black History Month
Art Exhibit Featuring
Delita Martin at the BCC

2/5 BCC
BHM Art Exhibit Opening
Reception, 4-6 pm at the BCC

2/25 3:30—5:00 BCC
BHM Art Exhibit Gallery
Talk by Delita Martin,

March

3/5/09 3:00—4:30 BCC
Harriet A. Jacobs Series in
the Humanities and the
Arts: Nancy J. Peterson

3/35 3:00—4:30 STEW 313
Talkin' & Testifyin'
Dr. Cerise Glenn

WEB DuBois Annual Pan-African Lecture

October 9, 2008, 3:30-5:00, BCC

“Translating Du Bois:

Souls of Black Folk in Portuguese: An Exercise in Re-Writing”

Heloisa Toller Gomes received the Doctor of Philosophy degree in Letters from the Pontifícia Universidade Católica in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. She is an Associate Professor in the School of Letters at the State University in Rio de Janeiro. Dr. Toller Gomes completed post-doctoral research in Cultural Studies through the Advanced Program in Contemporary Culture at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro. Her scholarly research focuses on Post-Colonialism, Race/Ethnicity, and Contemporary Cultural Formations. Dr. Toller Gomes' publications center the question of the Afro-descendant and include *As Marcas da Escravidão* (The Marks of the Slavery, EDUERJ/Ed.UFRJ), *O Negro e o Romantismo Brasileiro* (Blacks and Brazilian Romanticism, Current Ed.) and the critical edition and Portuguese translation of W. E. B. Du Bois' seminal work, *The Souls of Black Folk*, *As Almas da Gente Negra*.



Harriet A. Jacobs Annual Lecture Series in the Humanities and the Arts

March 5, 2008, 3:00-4:30, BCC

“Toni Morrison, Théodore Géricault, and Incendiary Art”



Nancy J. Peterson, Associate Professor of English and American Studies, is the author of *Against Amnesia: Contemporary Women Writers and the Crises of Historical Memory* (U of Pennsylvania P, 2001) and the editor of *Toni Morrison: Critical and Theoretical Approaches* (Johns Hopkins UP, 1997). A specialist in contemporary American literature and postmodern theory, she previously served as the associate editor of *Modern Fiction Studies* and guest-edited special issues of *Native American Literature* (Vol. 45, number 1) and *Toni Morrison* (Vol 39, numbers 3-4). She has taught graduate courses and seminars in contemporary American fiction, contemporary issues in American Studies, feminist theory and women's literature, Native American history and literature, and the pedagogy of teaching literature to undergraduates. She currently serves as the Associate Head of the English department.

Faculty Focus: New Faculty

Dr. Niambi Carter, Assistant Professor, African American Studies and Political Science



Dr. Carter joined the Purdue University Family in the Fall of 2008. Professor Carter received her Ph.D. in Political Science in 2007 from Duke University. She completed her undergraduate degree in African American Studies with a minor in Political Science from Temple University (1999). Her major areas of interest are American Politics and Political Theory. Her dissertation "The Black/White Paradigm Revisited: African Americans, Immigration, Race, and Nation," examines African American attitudes toward immigration. Dr. Carter's other research project explores the intersection of race, sexuality, and popular culture.

WELCOME ABOARD: Dr. Carter!

Faculty Kudos



Dr. Mia Smith-Bynum was promoted from Assistant Professor to Associate Professor in the Department of Psychological Sciences. Professor Smith Bynum is an expert in family processes and mental health in ethnic minority families, racial identity, parenting, and adolescent psychopathology. Her current research focuses on general and cultural aspects of parenting in African American families and how they predict mental health outcomes and sexual behavior in African American adolescents. She is investigating how African American parents communicate with their adolescent children about racial discrimination and how these efforts affect mental health outcomes in African American adolescents. She also is studying the longitudinal effects of racism exposure on the psychological functioning of African American adolescents.



Dr. Venetria K. Patton served again as a reviewer for the Ford Foundation Diversity Pre-Doctoral Fellowship and has recently joined the board of the National Council for Black Studies. Her contributions to the field of Black Studies were recognized with the presentation of the Paul Robeson and Zora Neale Hurston Award for Leadership in the field of Black Studies at the NCBS national conference in March 2008. She was also recognized for distinguished service at the Black Graduate Association Awards and Recognition Banquet later that month.

Staff Recognition: Matilda Stokes



Matilda Stokes, Administrative Assistant African American Studies and Research Center

On January 1, 2007 Ms. Stokes reached her 10 year mark with African American Studies. Thanks for your continued service to the Center.

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