First Words

Carolyn Calloway-Thomas
Director

"... our continuing commitment to reach outstanding but unrecognized scholars."

When we began the Minority Summer Faculty Recruitment Fellowship Program in 1986, I wrote that our newsletter provides a unique opportunity to share the hopes and anticipations that beginnings offer. I wrote about a vision of a community committed to diversity, energy, and change, reaching out to new possibility. This year, I am happy to report that our commitment to diversity is growing. As a result of the recommendation of the Bloomington Faculty Council’s Affirmative Action Committee and the support of Vice-President Gros Louis and the Indiana University (IU) community, the program has been extended for an additional three years. We also acquired a modification with exciting potential: instead of inviting up to 15 Fellows during the summer, we now will be able to invite 10 Fellows for the eight-week summer session and 3 Fellows for the academic year. Fellows participating throughout the year will have the opportunity to develop fuller relationships with their respective departments. As a result of the change in the program, the word summer has been removed from our name, so that now, as the Minority Faculty Fellowship Program, we have a title that is shorter and a bit more graceful.

The committee’s recommendation affirmed the position of our program as a leader in promoting the hiring of minority faculty. University administrators from around the country have requested information about our program, while both the Pennsylvania State University and Purdue University have begun programs with aims similar to ours. The awareness of the achievement of minority scholars is not only being spread to other universities, but also becoming intensified on our own campus. Four additional departments and one school began participating in our program last year: the School of Business, the Department of Germanic Studies, the Department of Physics, the Department of Anthropology, and the Department of Geography.

This growing interest in minority scholars attests to the superior backgrounds of our applicants. Among last year’s applicants were recipients of fellowships from the Ford Foundation, the Fulbright-
Hays Foundation, the Mellon Foundation, the American Sociological Association, the National Science Foundation, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the American Association of University Women, and the Committee on Institutional Cooperation. Certainly, there are more excellent scholars than we can ever hope to bring to campus, and the programs starting up at other universities will aid in bringing recognition to an even greater number of individuals. The outstanding achievements of our applicants are reassuring signs amid recent reports of declining numbers of minority students and faculty in our universities.

We continue to find, however, that our applicants tend to be concentrated in certain areas. This year, 32% of all applicants were in the humanities, 28% in the social sciences, 19% in education, 11% in the sciences and mathematics, 9% in the arts, and 1% in business. In our two previous years, 20% of all applicants had been in the humanities, 29% in the social sciences, 31% in education, 3% in the sciences and mathematics, 8% in the arts, and the remaining 9% in business, health, journalism, and law. While we are encouraged by an increase in the number of applicants in the sciences, we hope to see a more even distribution in our next three years. By targeting under-represented disciplines and departments, we will have the opportunity to recruit qualified scholars in those fields more actively.

Our past Fellows continue to excel in their various endeavors and careers. We recently received word from Eddith Dashiel, who is pursuing her PhD in Telecommunications at IU, and she has continued to teach Journalism J353, “Broadcast News Editing” (which she taught as a Fellow during Summer 1988), as well as Journalism J343, “Broadcast Reporting.” She told us, “The Minority Faculty Fellowship Program was instrumental in my being able to continue to teach in the School of Journalism while I am pursuing my doctorate” in Telecommunications.

Mark Reid, a 1987 Fellow, now holds a tenure-track assistant-professor position in the English department of the University of Florida at Gainesville. Mark is teaching film and American literature. He reports that he and his wife Sylvie are well, and that she is in fact teaching a class in world literature there.

Changes have also been occurring among the program staff. Elizabeth Dodd, my former assistant, will be taking a tenure-track appointment as an Assistant Professor of Creative Writing at Kansas State University in Manhattan, Kansas.

Vince Gotera, the editor of Beginnings, is also moving on. In the fall, he will begin a tenure-track assistant professorship in the English department of Humboldt State University on the northern coast of California, where he will be teaching American literature (especially ethnic) and creative writing. Vince has continued to win awards for his poetry: in 1988, he won the Academy of American Poets Prize for the best graduate poem at IU, and earlier this year he garnered the Felix Pollak Prize in Poetry given by the University of Wisconsin at Madison.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank both Elizabeth and Vince. Their work has been exemplary, and they both have done a great deal to advance our mission. Elizabeth, in her day-to-day activities, served as an excellent representative of our program, and I have valued her candor and reliability. Last summer, she was a congenial and helpful host to our Fellows. Vince’s work in the newsletter over the past three years has accomplished much in the way of advertising the program.
nationwide. I have relied on his expertise in graphic design, his writing skills, and his effective relations with printers, without which *Beginnings* would not have been as successful as it has proved to be.

Finally, I would like to announce my new assistant, Donna Strickland. She hails from Weatherford, Texas and came to Bloomington after finishing her BA in English at Baylor University. Interestingly, she is the third poet on our staff, joining Vince and Elizabeth. Donna is pursuing a Master of Fine Arts in the writing of poetry at the English department here in Bloomington. Donna is both an artist and a critic, concurrently pursuing a PhD in English. In this respect, she also parallels Vince and Elizabeth, who both hold the MFA and are close to completing their PhD degrees.

We welcome Donna to our continuing commitment to reach outstanding but unrecognized scholars. These next three years hold exciting potential for us along with increased responsibility as other institutions begin looking to our program as a role model in the active recruitment of minority faculty. We continue with great hope, as well as great awareness that much of our work has just begun.

*Beginnings*: As a member of a minority yourself, how do you think the situation has changed for minority scholars, especially those just leaving graduate school, perhaps, and starting new appointments—i.e., the situation in which our typical Fellows find themselves?

**Gros Louis**: My sense is that there has been a great deal of change. I got my degree in the midst of the civil-rights movement, which was really directed toward national issues such as voting patterns, and somewhat less so to regional or local issues and elections, but certainly not at all directed toward the issue of minorities in higher education. But now the emphasis has moved more and more towards education and the need for minorities to take advantage as fully as possible of educational possibilities. That’s one major change.

The second major change pertains really not only to minorities but to all students. It’s very difficult these days, compared to the time when I was getting my degree, to get any young person—and perhaps particularly a minority person, though I’m not certain of that—to consider going on for the PhD and a teaching career, given the salary possible after a BA or BS and the 4-8 years he or she will need to spend to get a PhD in most fields. For example, after the baccalaureate degree in the humanities, the student can probably find a better job in terms of salary in such fields as publishing, advertising, business, marketing, whatever. That salary is probably much higher than the beginning salary for new assistant professors in the humanities, which as we know is not high. Of course this is a major problem, not only here, but across the country.

Sometimes these problems occur across the board in a specific industry. Maybe fifteen years ago, there was a great deal of competition in business for people with BS degrees in computer science. Of course, it was and still is imperative for the computer-science industry to have people go on for graduate degrees, but they were really making that very difficult by offering those with baccalaureate degrees very high salaries. In effect, this was a disincentive for those students who might have gone on for a PhD. Certainly these disincentives affect all students, both minorities and non-minorities, but unfortunately they inhibit our ability to retain minorities in graduate education and university careers.
Beginnings: How would you characterize this problem of minorities in higher education, and what has IU been doing to address it?

Gros Louis: From what I know of my colleagues here at IU, and from what I’ve observed here and elsewhere, it’s going to become very important in the next ten or twenty years to increase the numbers of faculty members from minority groups if we’re going to attract more minority students. This is really our major difficulty: not having enough minority faculty role models for these students.

One problem is that Bloomington, at least on the surface, may not seem to be the kind of place to which one would expect black, Hispanic, or other minority faculty members to be eager to come. First, because Bloomington is not a large urban area; second, because there isn’t a substantial minority population; and third, there must be some lingering history—until the late 50s, anyway—of Bloomington as being a “Southern-type town,” with all the negative connotations that may convey to prospective faculty members.

Beginnings: What can we do to surmount these obstacles?

Gros Louis: My experience has been that the minority faculty we’ve hired and been able to retain have had some prior knowledge or experience of Bloomington—either they were here as undergraduates, or they got their graduate degrees here. And those we have trouble keeping haven’t had this kind of advance experience. They come here and find that the community—both the academic and local community—are not quite right: not fully receptive or not large enough. Perhaps nothing specifically negative, but just that the peer group is not here.

Given this need for some sort of prior experience, my feeling is that all the programs we can develop to involve minority faculty here, without their making a permanent commitment, will help us to recruit minority faculty. And this is really one of the greatest advantages of the Minority Faculty Fellowship Program, which allows us to introduce minority faculty members to what life is like in Bloomington before they have to make some permanent commitment. A visiting appointment or a summer appointment—something that doesn’t lock the prospective faculty member into a five-year tenure track.

Beginnings: So that it’s essentially a “trying-out” that’s safe for both sides: the faculty member as well as the university. How else has IU been addressing the problems of minorities?

Gros Louis: During the last two or three years, Bloomington has come up with a number of good concepts: the Minority Faculty Recruitment and Retention Program, your own fellowship program, and the Minority Achievers Program for undergraduates. Based on my knowledge of schools around the country, there may well be more we could be doing, and what I hope occurs over the next six months to a year, as we change to a new Affirmative Action Officer, is that we might find somebody who, in addition to the fine programs that have been started by the current Affirmative Action Officer, will be aggressive in creating and pushing through new programs, based on models we can find wherever they exist around the country.

I and my colleagues in the CIC—that is, the Big Ten universities and the University of Chicago—have been talking about how much better the military is at attracting minorities than we are. Their advertisements in the national media—television, magazines—are really very effective in that respect. We’ve concluded that we can’t compete with their campaign, and

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therefore are trying to join with the military to attract more students, especially minorities, into higher education after one or two terms of service in the military. Therefore we’re addressing the point of separation from the military. What can we do to attract students at that point as well as in advance of their separation? These considerations may very well come together into a minority recruitment program at IU as well as throughout the CIC.

But to get back to Bloomington—I think what we’re doing at IU is good, but I’m not persuaded that what we’re doing is as much as we can be doing. I know of at least one program at Ohio State which is a very good one that we might imitate, but knowing about one leads me to believe there must be others from which we can learn how to address the minority problem better. I have a great deal of hope that IU will continue its strong minority programs and that we will develop stronger, more effective ones in the future.

Class Acts

Summer 1988

Walter Pitts

Eddith Dashiell

Charles Jones
Presenting the 1989 Fellows

Vince Gotera

Robert Aponte

Until the fall of 1988, Robert Aponte was the Research Project Coordinator of the Urban Poverty and Family Structure Project at the University of Chicago. His major area of interest is urban poverty, but his research and teaching interests also include social demography, social policy, and racial or ethnic relations.

These interests will be valuable to Aponte at IU, where he will be teaching S335, “Race and Ethnic Relations,” in the Department of Sociology. He has garnered recognition as a teacher: he has won the “Martin Luther King Jr. - Cesar Chavez - Rosa Parks Faculty Appointment” at James Madison College of Michigan State University.

The titles of Aponte’s publications and presentations testify to his qualifications and range of interests as a sociologist: “Race, Family Structure, and Social Policy,” “Race and Declining Fertility,” “Urban Poverty,” and “The Underclass: Behavior or Deprivation,” among others. He has also co-authored a chapter, “Joblessness versus Welfare Effects: A Further Examination,” in William Julius Wilson’s The Truly Disadvantaged: The Inner City, the Underclass and Public Policy.

Aponte received his BA degree in Sociology and Psychology from George Mason University, where he graduated cum laude. Since then he has been at the University of Chicago, where he was a Fellow of the Minority Fellowship Program of the American Sociological Association during 1980-1983. His PhD dissertation, “Black and Puerto Rican Poverty in the Urban North: A Comparative Analysis,” caps off a formidable career as a graduate student. Clearly, Aponte will also have a promising and fruitful career as a professional—both as a researcher and as a teacher.

Eric Bailey

Eric J. Bailey will be a Fellow in the Department of Anthropology this summer. Specializing in cultural, medical, and urban anthropology, as well as anthropology of African-Americans, Bailey received his PhD from Wayne State University. His dissertation, “Hypertension: An Analysis of Detroit Afro-American Health Patterns,” sought to determine the sociocultural and cultural-historical factors which affect health-screening participation by blacks in Detroit, and to examine the ethnomedical beliefs of African-Americans regarding high blood pressure; the eventual goal was to develop a culturally-oriented health-screening program.

Bailey is currently an Assistant Professor at the University of Houston, where he has taught “Introduction to Anthropology” and “Cultural Anthropology,” among other courses. Besides teaching at Wayne State, he has also been an instructor at the University of Michigan-Dearborn and at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio. In addition, he has conducted workshops and lectures on health-care patterns among ethnic populations for such organizations as the National Conference on High Blood Pressure, the Society for Applied Anthropology, and the American Anthropological Association as well as for
Robert Brookins has both a JD and a PhD. After completing his work at Cornell University Law School, he passed the Bar Examination in Florida. Brookins then went on to work on his PhD at the Cornell University School of Industrial and Labor Relations (ILR), majoring in Labor Law and Collective Bargaining. His dissertation was entitled “Labor Arbitration and the Merit Systems Protection Board: A Choice of Forums.”

Brookins has had a double interest in law and in business for a long time. Before entering law school, he earned his MS in Management Science from the University of South Florida in Tampa. He also received his BA from that institution, double-majoring in Economics and Management. Brookins’ double interest is a significant asset; as one colleague puts it. “He possesses the best features of both the traditional labor lawyer and the industrial relations scholar.”

It is this unique combination of skills and abilities which made him an attractive “catch” for the IU School of Business. Brookins will be teaching a course entitled “Legal Environment” (L201) in the Department of Business Law.

Brookins brings to this appointment a noteworthy career in university teaching. He is currently an Assistant Professor at the Ithaca College School of Business in New York, where he teaches “Labor Relations,” “Labor Law,” “Business Law,” and “Employment Law.” Brookins has also been an Adjunct Professor for the Cornell University ILR; there he taught an interesting complement of courses, including “Collective Bargaining,” “Employment Discrimination Law,” and “Labor Arbitration.” He has also been a Visiting Professor at Syracuse University, where one of his colleagues remarked upon his “ability to analyze critically the results of [legislative and case law] research—no mean feat in the morass of verbiage that typifies the public sector.”

Brookins has won an impressive array of awards: as a PhD student, he won the Cornell University Fellowship in Labor Relations, the Benjamin Miller Fellowship, the Cornell University Summer Scholarship, and an Exxon Fellowship. His law-school career was fully funded by a Cornell Law School Scholarship, and for three undergraduate years he held a University of South Florida Scholarship.

The combination of expertise, qualifications, and experience as an academic as well as a lawyer which Brookins will bring to IU should be of great service both to the School of Business and to business-law students.
Currently, Robert Colbert holds an Advance Opportunity Faculty Research Fellowship awarded by the Institute on Race and Ethnicity of the University of Wisconsin system. He is at present an Assistant Professor in the Department of Educational Foundations and Counselor Education of the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, where he is teaching in the areas of Counseling and Guidance as well as Child Development and Human Relations.

Colbert brings to both his teaching and his research not only strong academic preparation but also practical experience. After his BS in Elementary Education at the University of Kansas, he was a teacher for six years in the University School at Leavenworth, Kansas. This work undoubtedly stands Colbert in good stead in his current work. Concurrent with teaching primary school, he completed his MS in Counseling, again at the University of Kansas. He completed his PhD in Counseling Psychology at the University of Wisconsin at Madison; his dissertation was entitled “Counseling and Changes in State of Mind While Running: Anxiety Treatment.” Colbert has designed a computer program to assist subjects in gaining running proficiency.

Colbert’s specialties are in Counselor Education, Educational Foundations, Child Development, and Education in Urban Society. Most recently, he has been performing research with inner-city parents from Milwaukee in an effort to understand black parental involvement in the schools. As one of his colleagues writes, Colbert’s “research interests hold significant promise for enhancing our understanding of race and ethnicity in public education.”

At IU, Colbert will be affiliated with the Department of Counseling and Educational Psychology in the School of Education. His students in this department will find him a strong and committed teacher. During his first year of teaching at the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, Colbert received an “outstanding” rating for his performance as an instructor. His department chair at Whitewater calls him “bright, humanistic, interested in the needs of students, and receptive to new ideas. His ability to work with a diverse range of students and faculty makes him a highly valued colleague.”

Dorothy Figueira will be teaching a course entitled “The Oriental/Indian Context of Modern Literature [Primarily German]”—numbered C400/C520 in Comparative Literature and G625 in German Studies. Closely related to the course is her dissertation: “Saktitala’s Romantic Afterlife: The Reception of a Sanskrit Drama in Nineteenth-Century European Translation and Criticism.”

Figueira is currently an Assistant Professor in the Department of Comparative Studies at SUNY-Stony Brook. She also held a Mellon Postdoctoral Fellowship in Comparative Literature at Cornell University, where she was a dynamic presence. A Cornell colleague describes her with superlatives: “brilliant,” “compelling,” “dynamic and persuasive.” Figueira possesses “an unusual and exciting combination of interests which include religious history, theology, classics, Eastern culture, Romance and German literatures.”

At the University of Chicago, where she earned her doctorate, Figueira was a Minority Fellow of the Committee for Institutional Cooperation. She also studied at the Harvard Divinity School, at the Ecole Pratique en Sciences Sociales of the University of Paris, and at Vassar College. At these three schools, she was funded by a Harvard University Fellowship, the Maguire Fellowship for Study Abroad, and the New York State
Regents Scholarship. In addition, she spent a year at the Institut für Indologie und Iranistik of the University of Munich.

Although Figueira is still a relatively young scholar, her list of publications and presentations reads like that of a well-established critic. Her publications include: “A Methodological Technique for the Analysis of Translation”; “To Lose One’s Head for Love: The Myth of the Transposed Heads in Thomas Mann and Marguerite Yourcenar”; “Critical Reception and Linguistic Problems in Translating Sanskrit Drama in Western Languages”; “Karoline von Günderode’s Fatal Misinterpretation”; and “The Politics of Exoticism and Friedrich Schlegel’s Metaphorical Pilgrimage to India,” among others.

Figueira’s research-in-progress is equally interesting—she is completing a manuscript on the use of Indian themes in the formation of modern ideology. Figueira’s students at IU are “in for a treat,” judging merely from the breadth and articulation suggested by her background and her research.

At present, Cedric Herring is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Sociology at Texas A&M University. At IU, however, Herring will be in the Department of Afro-American Studies, where he will be teaching A263, “Contemporary Afro-American Problems.”

Herring has won many academic honors and fellowships. He has held national fellowships: The Ford Foundation Postdoctoral Fellowship, the Minority Fellowship of the Committee for Institutional Cooperation, and the American Sociological Association Minority Fellowship. His awards include the Spivack Dissertation Award of the American Sociological Association and awards specific to institutions: the University of Michigan’s Rackham Predoctoral Fellowship and the University of Houston’s Werlin Award.

As a teacher and researcher, Herring has a strong record. Besides teaching at Texas A&M, he has been affiliated with the University of Texas at Austin, taught in Michigan’s Department of Sociology in Ann Arbor, and performed research at the University of Michigan-Dearborn. In addition, he has won research grants from the American Sociological Association, Texas A&M, and the National Science Foundation.

His expertise in his academic specialties—political sociology, stratification, sociology of black Americans, and social movements—is reflected in his publication record, which includes: “Convergence, Polarization, or What? Racially Based Changes in Attitudes and Outlooks, 1964-1984”; “Acquiescence or Activism? Political Behaviors of the Politically Alienated”; “Do Blacks Still Support Civil Rights Leaders?”; and “Alienated Politics and State Legitimacy: An Assessment of Three Neo-Marxian Theories,” to name only a few. Herring also has a forthcoming book entitled Splitting the Middle: Political Alienation, Acquiescence and Activism Among America’s Middle Layers.

His community services have also been generous: he has been a guest on NBC Radio and the National Black Network, as well as local radio stations, speaking on Jesse Jackson and the presidential elections, and he served as a consultant in a court-ordered redistricting for municipal elections in El Campo, Texas.

It is hardly surprising that his colleagues speak highly of him. He has been called “a prodigious reader with a mind that synthesizes diverse and complex ideas” as well as a “highly motivated and meticulous scholar [who] is an excellent teacher. . . . He is patient with students and always willing to take extra time to make sure he and the subject matter are well understood by students.”
Sonia Santa Anna-Arriola

An Arizona native, Sonia Santa Anna-Arriola has had all of her higher-education training in the West, so her visit to the Midwest should be an interesting one. She is a doctoral student in Genetics at the University of California-Berkeley and is conducting her dissertation research in the Department of Biochemistry and Biophysics at UC-San Francisco. Santa Anna-A. began college at Arizona State University in Tempe and then transferred to UC-Davis, where she received both her BS in Zoology and MS in Genetics.

During her academic career, Santa Anna-A. has received a lion's share of academic honors. While at UC-Davis, she received the Graduate Opportunity Fellowship. More recently, she has been a Patricia Roberts Harris Fellow at UC-Berkeley, and she currently holds an Affirmative Action Dissertation Year Fellowship.

Santa Anna-Arriola's field of study is developmental genetics. Her doctoral dissertation combines her research interests—genetics and molecular biology—to identify and characterize new genes involved in the repression of the a-specific gene set in alphacells in the yeast *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*.

Her thesis director calls her work “a state-of-the-art PhD thesis project” which “utilizes techniques of classical genetics... as well as modern genetics.” According to a colleague, her research “is sure to provide information that will extend our present knowledge rather than just fill in details.”

Equally important are her instructional skills; Santa Anna-A. has been a teaching assistant for such classes as “General Genetics,” “Genetics Laboratory for Majors,” and “Human Genetics.” One of her colleagues remarks that she “was quite a hit among the students. She taught in a clear, concise, and entertaining fashion.” Such a dynamic and original talent should be a strong addition to our vigorous faculty in Biology this summer.

Roberto Vega

Roberto Vega will be teaching a Physics P700 course, “Topics in Theoretical Physics”; his specific topic will be “Higgs Physics and WW Interactions.” According to Vega, the course will be “an informal seminar-type graduate course with emphasis on learning through problem solving,” intended to familiarize experimenters and theorists with various aspects of Higgs physics and several formal and calculational features of the Standard model.” Vega plans to divide the course into a series of lecture topics, each of which will have a corresponding problem set; each lecture will then provide background for the topic of the day along with discussion and hints on problem solutions.

Vega’s dissertation, completed at the University of Texas at Austin, is closely related to the course he will be teaching—its title is “WW Physics and the Higgs Boson at the SSC.” Before he specialized in Particle Physics, Vega earned his MS in Physics at the Georgia Institute of Technology and his BS, also in Physics, at the University of Puerto Rico.

At the present time, he holds a position as a Postdoctoral Research Associate at the University of California-Davis, as part of the UC President’s Postdoctoral Fellowship Program. He has also received other academic honors: the Fermi National Laboratory Graduate Fellowship and the University of Texas Graduate Fellowship.

He has taught in the Physics Department of UT-Austin, where a colleague notes that “his students always had the highest praise for him. He seemed to spend a great deal of time helping small groups of them in his office.” Another colleague remarks that Vega “was a very conscientious instructor and...”
did a very good job in teaching his classes. He had a reputation of being demanding in his classes but fair.” In fact, Vega himself has told us, “I am very excited at the prospects of teaching at Indiana. My appointment at Davis is mainly a research position, and I miss the contact with students. The process of teaching provides me with great satisfaction.”

Perhaps the best barometer of Vega’s qualifications, however, is his research. He already has a formidable list of publications: “Monopoles and the Meaning of Mica”; “WW Production from pp Collisions”; “ZZ Production at Supercollider Energies”; and “Comparison of Exact and Effective Gauge Boson Calculations for Gauge Boson Fusion Processes,” among others. That Vega has been slated to teach a graduate-level seminar as a summer visitor indicates the considerable confidence which the IU Physics Department has in his abilities.

Beginnings

Beginnings is an annual newsletter published by the Minority Faculty Fellowship Program at Indiana University-Bloomington.

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