

A publication * of the Department of African American and African
Diaspora Studies at Indiana University



Welcome to Diaspora, the Department of African American and African Diaspora Studies' electronic newsletter. We are all connected to AAADS in one way or another, yet we are spread far and wide throughout the university, the community, and even farther afield. We are the AAADS Diaspora.

Events

- AAADS co-sponsored, along with the Division of Student Affairs, a screening of *Live and Become*, a film about the black Jews of Ethiopia, on March 28.
- The **Herman Hudson Symposium** and a **Horizons of Knowledge keynote lecture by William C. Rhoden** took place in the Neal-Marshall Black Culture Center on March 31. Four graduate student panels presented academic papers related to the theme "Start the Healing: Multidisciplinary Solutions to Political, Social, and Cultural Issues in the African Diaspora." At the end of the day's activities, the students presented an outstanding leadership award to Professor **Valerie Grim**, chair of the department, and an outstanding service award to Professor **John McCluskey**, who was advisor to the planning committee. Prizes for the best conference papers, which are chosen by faculty consensus, went to **Evelyn Hamilton** (education), **Hassan Wahab** (AAADS), and **Damien Strecker** (AAADS). (Also see "Graduate Students" below.) The **Black Film Center/Archive** contributed to the success of the student-run event.



Femina Ajayi prepares to register participants and guests for the fourth annual

*Herman C. Hudson Symposium, held in the Neal-Marshall Black Culture
Center on March 31. (Photo by Claudia Drieling)*

- On April 6, **Black Curtain Theater** co-sponsored "A Night of Artistic Expression II," along with Sigma Lambda Upsilon/Senoritas Latinas Unidas Sorority. The event included the sharing and expressing of a variety of arts: music, artwork, acting, poetry.
- The **African American Arts Institute Spring Concerts** entertained and inspired large audiences during April. The African American Dance Company, directed by Professor **Iris Rosa**, performed in the Buskirk-Chumley Theater on April 14, as did the IU Soul Revue, directed by Professor **Nathanael Mahluli**, on April 21. The African American Chorale Ensemble, directed by Professor **Keith McCutchen**, performed in the Ruth N. Halls Theater on April 28.
- The **AAADS Graduate Student Appreciation and Award Reception**, held on April 20, brought together students, faculty, and staff to celebrate of a year of accomplishment. Professor **A.B. Assensoh**, director of graduate studies, welcomed the attendees, Professor Emeritus **William Wiggins** offered words of encouragement to the first-year graduate students, and a number of awards were presented by various faculty members. The awards and their recipients are
 - **Damien Strecker** and **Phillip Wagner**: William Wiggins Award for Outstanding Associate Instructor;
 - **Diane Perry** and **April Smith**: Phyllis Klotman Outstanding Thesis/Creativity Award;
 - **Femina Ajayi** and **Sara Bagby**: Winona Fletcher Outstanding Leadership Award;
 - **Garlia Jones**: Community Outreach Award (for her AIDS-related work; this is the second year in a row for her to win this award!);
 - **David Amponsah**, **Alyssa Liles-Amponsah**, **Regina Barnett**, and **Katie Dieter**: AAADS Medals of Honor (for their service to AAADS);
 - **Carol Edge**: AAADS Chair's Award for Outstanding Contributions (for work in media relations and communications);
 - **Claudia Drieling**: Outstanding Service Award (for her five years of service in teaching, mentoring, programming, and outreach on behalf of AAADS);

- Professor **A.B. Assensoh**: AAADS Appreciation Award (for services rendered as director of graduate studies, with special distinction for contributions made to student publishing);
- **Michelle Fleener, Yunika Jackson, and Hannah Wheatley**: Gift Certificates (from the faculty, for their service and commitment to the work of AAADS); and
- In addition, the Hudson Symposium Best Conference Paper awards were presented (see above) and students who had recently published articles were recognized.



Professor Fred McElroy presents April Smith with the Klotman Outstanding Thesis/Creativity Award.

- Looking for something to do? The **Neal-Marshall Black Culture Center** has something planned to fit your interests. For information on events, visit the NMBCC web site at www.nmbcc.indiana.edu.

Faculty

- Professor **Stephen Berrey** gave a talk on "Spaces of Racial Trauma: The Politics of Bodily Performance in 1940s and 1950s Mississippi" as part of his candidacy for a position with AAADS. Happily, Berrey was successful in that process and has been appointed assistant professor of African American and African Diaspora Studies. Berrey, a PhD from the University of Texas, applies an interdisciplinary focus, rooted in literary and cultural studies/analyses, to address the racialized experiences of blacks in the United States, addressing topics through comparative approaches that critically assess modes of resistance, social movements, and the politics of racialized spaces. Currently, he serves as a visiting professor and will assume his new duties this fall.
- Professor **Valerie Grim** attended meetings in Kansas City and Chicago in connection to her work for the United Negro College Fund and PEW Charitable Foundation's rural

education project, titled the Pew Rural Early Education Initiative. She serves as an advisory board member for the project and as a commissioner for rural early childhood education. Grim received the Distinguished Leadership Award from the AAADS Graduate Studies Program and the AAADS Graduate Student Society. She, along with John Nierto-Phillips (Latino studies) and **Matthew Guterl** (American studies), recently received a grant from the Multidisciplinary Ventures Fund to develop collaborations that concern the Afro-Latino Experience in the Diaspora. an interdisciplinary collaborative teaching project.

- Professor **Matthew Guterl** and Professor **Claude Clegg** (history) took part in a roundtable discussion on "The Possibilities and Pitfalls of the Atlantic Paradigm," sponsored by the Department of History, on April 20.
- Professor **Eileen Julien**, chair of the Department of Comparative Literature and director of the Project on African Expressive Traditions, presented, along with POAET, the Literature and the Arts in Senegal Symposium on March 29-April 1 on the Bloomington campus. The four-day event featured scholarly presentations, works of art, and film screenings.
- Professor **Michael Martin**, director of the Black Film Center / Archive, screened his documentary film *In the Absence of Peace*, the story of Nicaraguans in the aftermath of decades of dictatorship, a revolution, and U.S. involvement in their conflict, at the Monroe County Public Library on March 22. Martin's encyclopedic article on "Diasporic Cinema" (with Marilyn Yaquinto) recently appeared (although dated 2006) in the *Schirmer Encyclopedia of Film*, published by Thompson Gale. For Oxford University Press, Martin has completed a review of a manuscript on "arguably the most controversial film ever made" — *Birth of a Nation*. The BFC / A is preparing the spring / summer issue of *Black Camera*, which will feature a lengthy interview with African American filmmaker Julie Dash.
- Indiana University Press recently announced the publication of *Frame by Frame III: A Filmography of the African Diasporan Image, 1994–2004*, edited and with an introduction by Professor **Audrey T. McCluskey**. On March 20, McCluskey was one of seven panelists in the City of Bloomington "Women of Color in the Workplace" Roundtable Discussion. She and Doris Sims, assistant director of Bloomington's Housing and Neighborhood Development Department and chair of the event, were the featured

guests on WFHB's "Bring It On" on March 26. They spoke about the roundtable and how it addressed the challenges facing women of color in academia and corporate America. On March 29, as part of the NMBCC Library's 10th annual Library Evening Extravaganza, McCluskey gave a short talk about her newest book, *Imaging Blackness: Race and Racial Representation in Film Poster Art*, followed by a book signing.



Professor Audrey T. McCluskey signs a copy of Imaging Blackness: Race and Racial Representation in Film Poster Art. (Photo by Claudia Drieling)

- The University of Illinois Press is nominating Professor **Vernon Williams**'s recent book, *The Social Sciences and Theories of Race*, for the Myers Center Outstanding Book Award, given by the Gustavus Meyers Center for the Study of Bigotry and Human Rights.

Adjunct Faculty

- Professors **Mellonee Burnim** and **Portia Maultsby** (folklore and ethnomusicology) hosted an interdisciplinary Music Theory Colloquium, titled "Critiquing African American Musics," on March 28. Burnim and Maultsby, co-editors of the recent collection of essays *African American Music: An Introduction* (Routledge, 2006), offered ideas on fruitful interactions between ethnomusicology and music analysis.
- On March 29, Professor **Edris Cooper-Anifowoshe** (theatre and drama) presented a reading from one of her new plays and offered remarks about her specialty areas of African and African American theater as part of the NMBCC Library's 10th annual Library Evening Extravaganza. Cooper-Anifowoshe, who is a new member of the theater faculty, is working with students interested in the new BFA in musicals.

Staff

- AAADS web technician **Penny Dillon** is graduating in May with an MIS/MLS dual master's degree from SLIS. She has worked with the department for about a year and a half, helping to make our web site one of IU's best. Planning to stay in the Bloomington area, where she is now job hunting, Dillon plans to continue her work with AAADS.
- **Paul Heyde**, archivist for the Black Film Center / Archive, is moving to Buffalo, N.Y., this summer, where his wife plans to attend graduate school in philosophy at the University at Buffalo. Heyde's last day at the BFC / A is June 30. Meanwhile, he is writing an article for the next issue of *Black Camera*. (See information about this job opening at the BFC / A below in "News of Note.") *Good luck, Paul!*

Graduate Students

- **Bergis Jules** will be presenting on a panel at the annual American Library Association Conference, to be held in Washington, D.C., on June 21-27. The panel's topic, "Minority Recruitment in Research Libraries: A Model for Success," will be presented on June 24.
- **Garlia Jones** successfully defended her master's thesis, a play titled *Against the Grain*, on April 26. The play debuted in Bloomington at the Waldron Arts Center in February. Jones has been admitted to New York College, where will be this fall.
- **Damien Strecker** took honorable mention as one of the best student papers delivered at the Hudson Symposium on March 31. His paper was titled "The Politics of Harry Haywood during the Interwar Years."
- **Phillip Wagner**, along with Dr. Wilson Matta, a fellow member of nontraditional development-oriented NGO Rhythm of Hope in Brazil, is facilitating an ROHB collaboration with Engineers Without Borders for a community on the island of Itaparica in the Bay of All Saints. The island is adjacent to the city of Salvador, populated by two and a quarter mostly Afro-Brazilian residents and Brazil's original capital. The work builds on that begun by Matta two years ago to reduce instances of illness among impoverished residents of the community by improving sanitation and access to clean water. Wagner contacted the EWB national office after accompanying

Matta to Itaparica last summer. In December, they submitted an application for assistance, which was approved. The EWB chapter at the University of Nevada at Reno will work with Wagner and Matta in Brazil to assess current sanitation and water needs and then monitor the community for two or three years. Meanwhile, in Indiana, Wagner's press credentials for the 2007 Indianapolis 500 have been approved. This will be his seventh year covering the 500 for Los Angeles-based *Brazzil Magazine*. Of the six past races Wagner has covered, Brazilians have won three, finished second four times, and swept to a 1-2-3 finish in 2004. After the race, he will travel to South Carolina to visit his mother before spending the remainder of the summer in Brazil.

- **Hassan Wahab** was named second-place winner of the Hudson Symposium Best Paper Award. His presentation was titled "Ghana Leads the Way Again: Understanding Ghana's Health Insurance Scheme Law of 2003."

- A hearty welcome to the incoming cohort of MA students! The newly admitted grad students are **Sade Anderson** (Bowie State University, Maryland); **Rika Anzawa** (Tsuda College, Tokyo); **Joshua Bugsby** (Langston University, Langston, Okla.); **Christina Bush** (University of Missouri, Columbia); **Delphine Criscenzo** (Universite de Provence, Aix en Provence, France); **June Evans** (Mills college, Oakland, Calif.); **Jean-Christopher Henry** (Universite de Provence, Toulon Var, France); **Katelyn Hipskind** (DePauw University, Greencastle); **Jessica Mitchell** (Fort Valley State University, Fort Valley, Ga.); **Florence Nyemba** (Midlands State University, Kisumu, Kenya); **Thersa Owusu** (University of Ghana, Legon); **Mohammed Rafiq** (Indiana University, Bloomington).

Undergraduate Students

- The Graduation Recognition Luncheon for AAADS undergraduates was held in the Coronation Room of the Tudor Room (IMU) on April 18. **Hannah Wheatley**, undergraduate advisor, welcomed the students, and Professor **Valerie Grim**, chair of the department, congratulated the new graduates and wished them well. Certificates of Appreciation were awarded by Professor **Fred McElroy**, director for undergraduate studies. **Tijideen Rowley** was presented with the Undergraduate Award for Best Academic Performance in recognition of his accomplishments as an honors student. Rowley spoke briefly about the importance of believing in oneself. The graduates for December 2006 are **Mary Davis**, **Andrea De La Rosa**, **Terrance Dennie**, and **Alise Phillips**. Those graduating in May 2007 are **Shirley Payne**, **Akwete Purifoy**, **Tahira**

Purifoy, Tijideen Rowley, Majabeen Siddiqui, Olivia Swanson, and Ladonna Wiggins. The August 2007 graduates are **Ebony Crocker, Charles "Chase" Jackson, Leila Price, Tykia Rodger, Shaquan Walker, Shila Wickware, and Kyra Willingham.**



Senior Leila Price receives a Certificate of Appreciation from Professor Valerie Grim during the Graduation Recognition Luncheon on April 18.

Alumni

- **Afena Cobham** (MA'00) has been named assistant provost for student life at the University of Denver, effective June 1, 2007. Not only a member of the AAADS first cohort of MA students, but Cobham also made history at IU by becoming the first recipient of the master's of arts in African American and African diaspora studies. She also has a BA in mass communication, a master's of education in student personnel and higher education, and doctorate in higher education and student affairs. *Congratulations and best wishes!*
- **Dennis Givens** (MA'04) is returning to IU to pursue a doctorate in education. Since earning his MA in AAADS, he has been teaching at several Indiana colleges, including Ivy Tech in Indianapolis. *Welcome back!*

News of Note

- *Congratulations are in order!* **Iris Rosa** has been promoted to full professor and **Stephen Berrey** has been appointed assistant professor in AAADS.
- *Welcome to AAADS!* The department has two new adjunct faculty members: Professor **Edris Cooper-Anifowoshe**, of the Department of Theatre and Drama, and Professor

Sylvester Johnson, of the Department of Religious Studies.

- *Coming this fall to a department near you!* Welcome to two more new AAADS faculty members, who will join the department this fall. Professor **Marlon Bailey**, who has a PhD from Berkeley in Africana Studies and Women's Studies, with an emphasis on sexuality and identity in the African Diaspora, and an MFA in Theater and Drama, with an emphasis on the African Diaspora, is a joint hire with the Department of Gender Studies. Professor **Micol Seigel**, who has a PhD from New University, focuses on race in the diaspora, with attention primarily to Brazil and the United States, including transnationalist politics and identities, immigration, and race in the Americas. She is a joint hire with American Studies. *Welcome!*

- *Memory Lane:* Former IU men's basketball head coach **Mike Davis**, now leading the University of Alabama at Birmingham Blazers, participated in the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute's presentation on "Blacks in the Mainstream: African Americans in Sports since Jackie Robinson" on April 13-14.

- *Go team!:* Team Major Taylor took fifth place in the men's Little 500 on April 20-21. The African American cyclists did 200 laps in 2:07:49.

- *Job opening!:* The **Black Film Center/Archive** has the position of archivist open. Required qualifications: Master's degree in library science, with specialization in archives, special collections, or records management desirable; competencies in communication skills, advanced computer skills, office management, and at least two-three years of archives experience. Begin: July 1, 2007. For details, visit the BFC/A web site at www.jobs.indiana.edu.



All faculty, graduate students, undergraduate students, staff, alumni, and friends of the department are invited to send your comments, suggestions, and information on your activities and interests to Carol Edge at ccedge@indiana.edu or to the department in care of Yunika Jackson at ytjackso@indiana.edu. Digital photos may be accepted if appropriate.

** Published monthly or bimonthly through the fall and spring semesters. Diaspora is not published during the summer. (Following the contours of the academic calendar, the usual schedule of issues is August-September, October, November-December, January, February-March, and April-May.)*