

DIASPORA

ДІАСПОРА

A publication of the Department of African American
and African Diaspora Studies

Winter 2010

**2010 – A YEAR TO CELEBRATE
BEGINNINGS!**

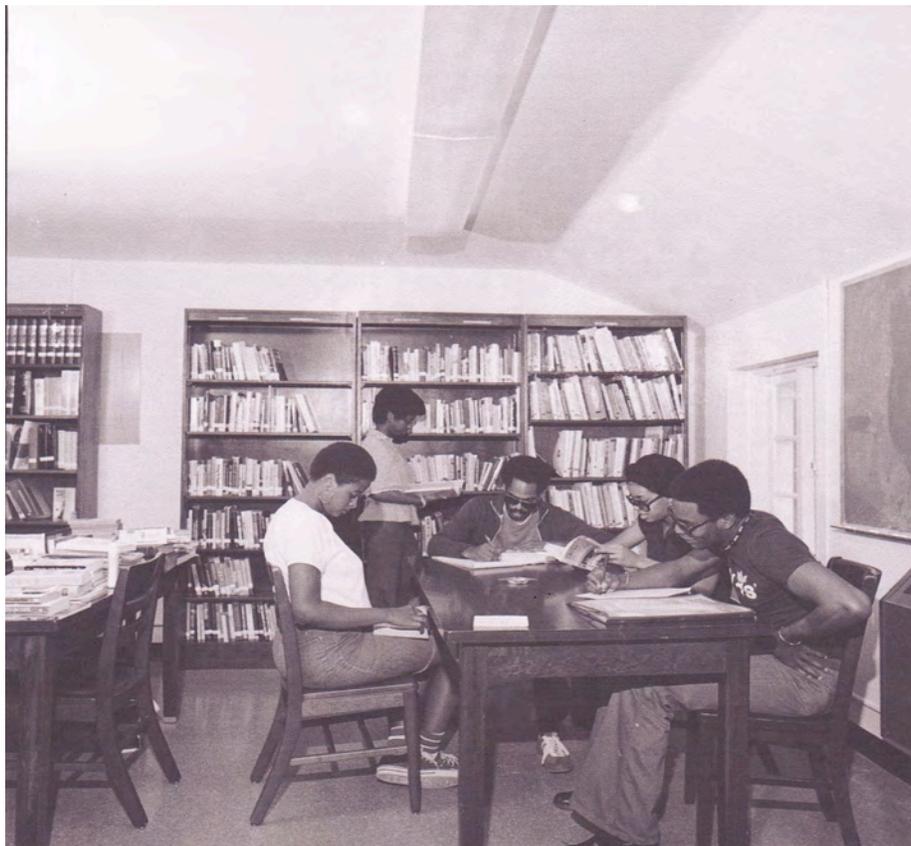


Photo Courtesy of the IU Archives

A Note from the Chair

-Valerie Grim



Ghana – Photo Courtesy of Floyd Hobson

Hello to all,

What a year it has been, and what a year it promises to be. One of the defining events of 2010 will, of course, be the earthquake that occurred in Haiti. However, it will not be solely for the magnitude of the quake, or the devastation it has left behind. In addition to these things, what will be remembered on a global scale is the ways in which communities from all over the world galvanized to support Haiti on many different levels and in many different ways. This has certainly been the case at IU where diverse departments and programs continue to collaborate to educate the campus and general public about Haiti's history, provide resources, and provide a space for individuals and groups to create more resources. Many of us know someone, perhaps our own families, who were directly impacted by this event. For some people, even some of our students, it has meant returning home in ways that could not have been planned, for reasons never anticipated.

Still, it is good to go home sometimes. For the AAADS department, one of the other defining events of 2010 will be exactly that: a return to our roots to honor the ancestors and elders who laid the foundation for our existence today. We are proudly celebrating 40 years at Indiana University. This makes our department one of the oldest in the country. We could not have thrived so long without the continued hard work and dedication of so many people, especially our own families who at times may have wondered whether or not the struggle was worth it.

It was and it is! Throughout the year, we will share with you parts of that struggle by introducing you to some of the voices and events of the founders and alumni, as well as current faculty and students. We will also share with you our dreams for the future. We invite you to dream and plan with us.

Welcome 2010. The question is not whether or not we are ready for the year, but whether or not the year is ready for us. We are on the move, and the world has changed because we have said not only yes we can, but YES WE WILL!

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Wideline Seraphin (AAADS) and Solfils Telfort (French and Italian) before their presentations at Decoding Disaster Program.

“The Haitian people are strong. We will get through this. Somehow.”
-Wideline Seraphin

Helping Haiti: It Takes the Whole Village

For more information on how to help with the Haiti earthquake relief effort, please go to the following websites:

AAADS

<http://www.indiana.edu/~afroamer/>

CLACS

http://www.indiana.edu/~clacs/haiti_relief.shtml

On January 12, 2010, a catastrophic earthquake caused major damage to Port-au-Prince, Jacamel, and other parts of Haiti. The aftershocks are still being felt, in Haiti, around the world, and here at IU.

On January 21, the AAADS department, in collaboration with CLACS (Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies) and other IU departments, sponsored *Decoding Disaster: Understanding the Haiti Earthquake of 2010*. Over 200 program attendees learned more about Haiti's history, culture, and people through presentations by IU scholars, the mayor, and Haitian and Haitian American students. In addition, they learned about how to help Haiti now and in the future in ways that would be efficient and beneficial.

Wideline Seraphin (MA, AAADS), a Haitian American student, was visibly emotional as she spoke about the pride she had in being Haitian. For Seraphin, her mother

and other family members represent the Haiti she knows and loves. “My mother worked hard to give me a better life without ever forgetting Haiti,” she said.

Throughout the week, Seraphin and other members of the AAADS Department collected donations on campus for various organizations working to provide relief and aid to Haiti. J. C. Henry (MA, AAADS), for example, set-up a booth at Memorial Hall to collect money for Yele. They joined dozens of other campus groups in this ongoing effort.

The AAADS Department is even more aware of how the diaspora in AAADS connects us to family and friends in all parts of the world. Although it was not necessary for this disaster to occur for us to know this, we are using this tragedy to renew our commitments to all our communities.



Shana Riddick, Malaika Baxa, Abegunde, Caralee Jones at the Haitian Studies Association Conference

- ## EVENTS
- Conferences
 - Exhibits
 - Performances
 - And More...

November 12-14: The Haitian Studies Association (HSA) Conference – New Ecologies: Actualizing Global Contributions and Development in Haiti - was held at Memorial Hall. Over a three-day period, local, national, and international participants engaged in dialogue about new and critical approaches to studying various Haitian communities. This was a wonderful opportunity for AAADS graduate students to exchange ideas with scholars, community activists, and students from other regions in the United States and the Caribbean. Topics included education in Haiti, teaching cultural dances, and Haitian communities in Cuba.



For more information about the HSA, please check their website at <http://www.haitianstudies.umb.edu/>

November 13-14: The Reclaiming the Right to Rock Conference: Black Experiences in Rock Music was held at the Neal-Marshall Black Culture Center. This well-attended conference examined the many contributions of Black musicians to rock music. The event brought together Black rock musicians from different generations and genders, and featured films, panel discussions, music workshops, and performances. A related exhibition was displayed in the Bridgewater Lounge.



November 14: Men and Women of Color Leadership Conference – As part of the conference, Professor **Khalil Muhammad** conducted a workshop entitled *The Price of Success: Post-Racial Leadership and the New Black Conservatism*. The workshop was geared toward collegiate students who imagine themselves in leadership positions soon after graduation. The workshop was an opportunity for rising leaders to grapple with de facto racism that they will encounter in their work lives upon graduation. Between 50-75 students attended the workshop, and were divided into small groups to engage in specific scenarios that focused on issues such as environmental justice, media bias, “white” affirmative action, gender inequalities, and educational access.



(continued)

EVENTS

November 19: An exhibition celebrating the 40th anniversary of the Neal-Marshall Black Culture Center featured the work of first-year PhD student Katie Dieter.

December 2: Kwanzaa In Action - The AAADS Graduate Society

participated in the Kwanzaa Action Celebration sponsored by the Neal-Marshall Black Culture Center. Members of the society presented their plan an African Marketplace, in accordance with the Kwanzaa principle Ujamaa (Cooperative Economics). The marketplace will feature arts, crafts, services, and foods created and offered members of the AAADS and other departments.

Please check the department website in March to learn more about this event.



Shannon Caldwell and Carmen Williams at the Kwanzaa in Action Celebration

in
for
by



Adeyemi Doss presenting at the Brown Bag Lecture

December 2: Brown Bag Lecture Series – Second-year graduate student **Adeyemi Doss** presented a Brown Bag Lecture on his thesis which deals with the psycho-analytical framework of African and African American literature for the purpose of understanding how the construction of race and racism effects the black psyche. Please check the department's website for the spring Brown Bag Lecture schedule.

January 7: The **Black Film Center/Archive** moved on January 7, and officially opened in its new space in the Wells Library (Room 044), on January 19. Check out the website for more information about upcoming events: <http://www.indiana.edu/~bfca/>

Upcoming Events

Check out **New Initiatives** (page 6) for more upcoming events.

February 23: *Thelonius Monk Revisited* – Professors David Baker and Keith McCutchen will offer an overview of Robin D. G. Kelly's book, *Thelonius Monk: The Life and Times of an American Original*.

February 26-27: African American Dance Company 13th Annual Dance Workshop. Sign up to learn African, Jazz, Modern (Horton and Cuban), and Afro Cuban dance. For more information, contact Professor Iris Rosa at rosa@indiana.edu.

March 1-2: *From Postcolonial to the Global Postmodern in African Cinema*, with African filmmakers Joseph Gai Ramaka, Gaston Kabore, and Jean-Marie Teno – a forum planned by the Black Film Center/Archive and Comparative Literature and History.

March 2: *Moses and the Exodus: A Tale of Two People* – Professor Keith McCutchen and the African American Choral Ensemble will present an overview of the oratorio *The Ordering of Moses* by R. Nathaniel Dett.

March 24-25: *Cinematic Representations of Racial Conflict in Real Time* – a Black Film Center/Archive symposium featuring panels with scholars and filmmakers, and the screening of *The Spook Who Sat by the Door* and *Nothing But a Man*.

April 2: *The African Diaspora in the Americas: Dialogues in Race and Culture* – Professor Iris Rosa and other professors will examine the African influence within Latin American musical cultures and the subsequent impact on the United States.

April 8: Opening for *Nobody Knows*, an exhibit celebrating the 40th anniversary of the founding of the African American and African Diaspora Studies Department.

April 30: Professor *Edris Cooper-Anifowoshe* will give a solo performance of her new work, *Adventures of a Black Girl... (In Search of Academic Clarity and Inclusion)*, at Northwestern University.

NEW INITIATIVES

We are happy to announce two new initiatives aimed at preparing students to be scholars in our diverse communities. We look forward to your participation in these events, as well as your input and feedback.

PREPARING FOR GRADUATE STUDY IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

The College of Arts and Sciences at Indiana University will launch a new program aimed at helping undergraduate students from under-represented groups apply to and succeed in Graduate School. Called PREPARING FOR GRADUATE STUDY IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY (PGS-21), this two-week program is the result of a hard-working committee (Claude Clegg, Arlene Diaz, Valerie Grim, Joan Pong Linton, Bob Patterer, Harmeet Sawhney) and hopes to attract some 15-20 students working in the humanities and social sciences.

In addition to helping students prepare for applications, the GRE tests, and other matters, PGS-21 will also center around the students' own writing and research skills. Students will bring their most accomplished writing with them and through mentorship on such topics as finding and employing relevant scholarship, deploying research effectively in arguments, and citing it accurately, they will leave the program with the start of an effective writing sample to include in their graduate applications. At the same time, they will also be introduced to the rigors and expectations of advanced degree work and will work with advanced graduate students as well as faculty.

With the exception of a modest registration fee to be paid by each participant, all expenses will be paid by the College.

You can read more about it at the following address:
<http://college.indiana.edu/graduate/pgs21/index.shtml>

ARC 2010

Attention Reflection Connection

Steps Toward an Inclusive Campus

Organizers include:

Valerie Grim-AAADS
Arlene Diaz-History
Joan Pong Linton-English

You are cordially invited to a historical, inaugural campus-wide series engaging faculty, students, staff, administrators, and alumni in dialogue towards building a culturally diverse and culturally literate campus at IU Bloomington.

To learn more, or be a partner, check us out at <http://www.indiana.edu/~arc2010/>

This three-part series consists of panels, workshops, lectures, and an ongoing discussion to be conducted across venues from classrooms to the Internet. Students, faculty, staff, alumni and members of the Bloomington community are invited to take part. It will unfold in three parts:

PART I: Attention: working together to address challenges

With projected demographic changes, current budget cuts, and new federal guidelines for educational reporting, how do we build a culturally literate and diverse community on campus, one that embraces the full range of our multicultural richness--while collectively addressing these challenges?

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 12:30

p.m., Georgian Room, Indiana Memorial Union. Featured Panel: Kevin Brown, (Law), Pamela Freeman (Associate Dean of Students and Director of the Office of Student Ethics and Anti Harassment Programs) and Elinor Ostrom (Professor and 2009 Nobel Laureate in Economic Sciences)

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 3:00 p.m., Georgian Room, Indiana Memorial Union. Featured Speaker: "U.S. Demographic Trends, Population Projections, and Implications for IU and other Universities," Eileen Díaz McConnell (Arizona State University)

THURSDAY FEBRUARY 24, NOON, Georgian Room, Indiana Memorial Union. Featured Workshop and event Kick-off: Thao Nelson, IUB alumna and Vice President of Credo Management Consulting, "Shift Happens: Think Globally, Respond Locally." This workshop addresses the vital importance of multicultural literacy in preparing our campus and our students to meet the challenges and capture the opportunities of globalization.

PART II: Reflection: mapping practices and setting priorities

This part is devoted to taking stock of resources and practices; mapping existing campus relations for coordinating diversity efforts; locating gaps and overlaps; coming up with a roadmap for IU Bloomington's diversity mission. (Panel and speakers on March 2nd and March 4th).

PART III: Connection: cooperatively building for the future

Are existing paradigms (e.g., black and white, over- and under-represented) adequate to our diversity mission? How do we rethink paradigms in response to the needs and vision of our diversity mission? How do individuals and units collaborate to make the best use of our talents and resources? (Panel and speakers, April 8th and April 15th).

Come and make this series truly inclusive! For more information, calendar of events, including workshops throughout campus and blogs please check the website: www.indiana.edu/~arc2010

DEPARTMENT NEWS

FACULTY

At the invitation of Professor Emmanuel K. Akyeampong of Harvard University, Professors **A.B. Assensoh** (AAADS) and **Yvette M. Alex-Assensoh** (AAADS Adjunct/Political Science) presented two seminars at the Harvard University-affiliated Institute for Advanced Studies in Accra, Ghana, West Africa (Fall 2009). A.B. Assensoh's seminar paper topic was titled, *African Political Leadership: Kwame Nkrumah's Exile Years in the Context of Pan-Africanism*. Alex-Assensoh's seminar paper was titled, *Immigrants as Newcomers in American Racial Politics*. In addition, Professors A.B. Assensoh and Yvette M. Alex-Assensoh co-chaired a panel on *Abraham Lincoln's Influence in the Third World* at the Fall 2009 annual conference of the Association of Third World Studies (ATWS) at Elmina, Central Ghana. At the conference, ATWS President Peyi Soyinka-Aiwele (Ithaca College) presented Professor A. B. Assensoh with the Outstanding Leadership and Service Award of the President of the Association of Third World Studies (ATWS). Nigeria's Anambra State Association of Dallas-Forth Worth (ASA-DFW) presented Professor A.B. Assensoh with the 2009 Africa Civic Awareness & History Preservation Award "in recognition and appreciation of [his] extensive professional efforts to uphold Black History" (ASA-DFW). Assensoh also presented a research paper on Nigeria's first indigenous President, Dr. N. Azikiwe, titled *Nnamdi Azikiwe's Contributions to Pan-Africanism and the Black Diaspora* at the annual (2009) Biennial Zik of Africa Symposium.

Professor **Lamonda Horton-Stallings** presented a lecture entitled *Already Queer: Radical Gender and Sexuality in Black Folklore* through the Department of Folklore and Ethnomusicology. Horton-Stallings discussed the ways in which Black folklore had already theorized radical theories of gender and sexuality as an alternative to heteronormative constructs.

Professor **John McCluskey** (Emeritus) was a Carnegie Foundation Visiting Lecturer in Humanities, University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa (2009). He is also serving a two-year term on the Harvard University Board of Overseers Visiting Committee to the Libraries, and a second term as Chair of the Personnel Committee for the Bloomington Playwrights Project. Professor McCluskey's short story, *Lush Life* was reprinted in *Jazz Fiction* (ed. Sascha Feinstein, Indiana University Press, 2009). *Bloom* (local magazine) profiled him in the December 2009 issue. Finally, *Chicago Black Arts Renaissance 1935-1960*, a co-edited manuscript, will be published soon.

In November, Professor **Michael Martin** served as one of three jurors for the Council of Editors of Learned Journals for the *Best Special Issue Award (CELJ Award)*. Professor Martin also edited the inaugural issue of *Black Camera* (Indiana University Press, December 2009). In addition, he served on the search committee to select the Director of University Cinema and the Review Committee for the evaluation of the University's Affirmative Action Director. He continues to serve on the COAS's International Studies Building Committee and the University's Promotion Committee (PAC).

Visiting Lecturer **Phoebe Wolfskill** essay, *Caricature and the New Negro in the Work of Archibald Motley, Jr. and Palmer Hayden*, was published in *Art Bulletin* (Vol. 91, No. 3). The issue's cover features an image from the article.

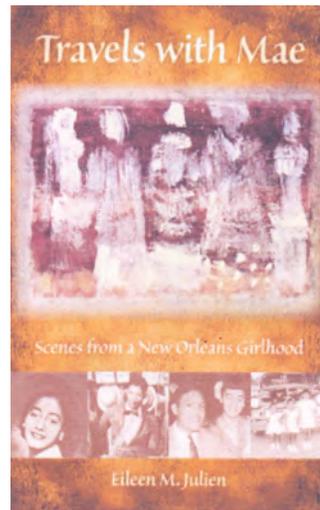
ADJUNCT FACULTY

Professor **Edris Cooper-Anifowoshe** (Theatre and Drama) represented the IU Black Play Lab at the August Wilson Center for African American Culture. The IU Black Play Lab recently became a part of the Black Theatre Initiative at the center. The BTI is a growing body of theatre professionals and scholars who will make recommendations for programming at the center. Other participants included the legendary New Federal Theatre's artistic director, Woodie King, and Lawrence Evans, director of the National Black Theatre Festival. Attendees were treated to a

performance of a new play, *Women of the Hill*, which documents the history of August Wilson's home, the Pittsburg Hill District.

Professor **Yvette M. Alex-Assensoh**, Dean of The Office for Women's Affairs, was promoted in the Fall 2009 semester to the rank of full Professor of Political Science at Indiana University-Bloomington. In addition, the University of Michigan Press published her new co-authored book, *Newcomers, Outsiders, and Insiders: Immigrants and American Racial Politics in the Early Twenty-First Century* (Spring 2010).

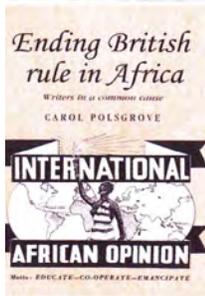
Professor **Eileen M. Julien** (Comparative Literature and French and Italian) has a new book out. *Travels with Mae : Scenes from a New Orleans Girlhood* (2009).



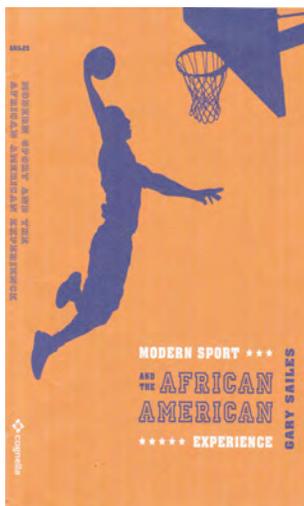
"...This is real life in New Orleans, in both its unique qualities and the universality of people in their common experiences, as well as a moving depiction of a loving relationship between a mother and daughter" (from a review by author Christine Wiltz).

Department News, continued

Professor **Carol Polsgrove's** (Emeritus, School of Journalism) new book, *Ending British Rule in Africa: Writers in a Common Cause* (2009), was published by Manchester University Press. Learn more about the book at <http://carolpolsgrove.com/>.



Professor **Gary Sailes** (Kinesiology) recently had his new book, *Modern Sport and the African American Experience* (2010), published. The book is "a collection of essays from some of America's most brilliant and vibrant sports sociologists who are race scholars...[and] highlights more of the experiences of African Americans in modern sport than any of its kind" (from jacket cover).



Students

An excerpt from **Abegunde's** work-in-progress, *The Ariran's Last Life*, was selected by Nikki Giovanni to be featured in *Best African American Fiction 2010*. The story was originally published in the Winter 2008 *Kenyon Review*.

Adeyemi Doss, Roberta Radovic, and Breon Tyler were invited to meet with the university's multicultural committee to discuss the controversial Benton Murals, and the possibility of adding student work to the panels.

J.C. Henry was assistant director for the play *The Vanity of Power* that explored "the meaning of Gai Ramaka's allegorical *Two and One-Thousand Voiced Fragments* about dictatorship in a fictive country" (from publicity information). **Wideline Seraphin, Michael Potts, Yukari Shinagawa, and Heather Essex** performed.

After so much hard work, the department and friends took a break and enjoyed each other's company and laughter before the winter holiday.



CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to AAADS faculty and colleagues who received grants for upcoming and/or continuing projects.

Akwasi B. Assensoh: \$2,500 for his proposal. Funded by IU's OVRP. Professor Assensoh also received two travel grants to conduct research in West Africa and Peru.

Arlene Diaz, Valerie Grim, and J. Linton: \$5,000 for their proposal for a *Campus-wide Diversity Series Workshop*. Funded by IU's Multidisciplinary Ventures and Seminars Fund.

Matthew Guterl: \$1,800 for his proposal, *Josephine Baker*. Funded by IU's OVRP Grant-in-Aid for Research Fund.

Lamonda Horton-Stallings: \$10,961 for her proposal *Mercy, Mercy Me! Environmental Justice and the Future of African American Studies*. Funded by IU's New Frontiers in the Arts and Humanities Fund.

Michael Martin, Eileen Julien, and M. Moorman: \$7,000 for their proposal *From the Postcolonial to the Global Postmodern. Francophone African Filmmakers and Scholars in Conversation*. Funded by IU's College of Arts and Humanities Institute (CAHI).

Micol Seigel: \$19,500 for her proposal *Foreign Police and the U.S. Criminal Justice System: Cold War Connections*. Funded by IU's New Frontiers in the Arts and Humanities Fund.



Herman C. Hudson
Photo Courtesy of the IU Archives

In the spring of 1970, the IU Board of Trustees named Herman C. Hudson, then associate professor of Applied linguistics, the first Vice Chancellor of Afro-American Affairs. Hudson set out to ensure that Afro-American Studies would last, knowing that the survival of the department depended on the ability of the new discipline to meet the high university standards of scholarship, teaching, and service.

Since that time, the department has not only met the high standards, but has also set its own by recruiting and mentoring scholars and students from all over the world.

We who stand on the shoulders of our ancestors and elders thank them!

SAVE
THE
DATES

April 8, 2010

40th Anniversary Celebration

Spring Kick-off!

Featured events and activities: Department exhibit, interviews with founding and current faculty, alumni, and students

In the coming weeks, check the department's website for more information about events and how to participate:

<http://www.indiana.edu/~aframer/>

April 9-10, 2010

The Seventh Annual Herman C. Hudson Symposium

Bodies, Borders, and Resistance in the African Diaspora

Keynote Speaker: Cynthia Perry, Former Ambassador to Burundi and Sierra Leone.

Featured events and activities: Undergraduate and Graduate Panels, Kick-off Events, African Market Place, Music, Food, Dancing, and much more!

For more information:
http://www.indiana.edu/~aframer/call_for_papers/index.html

Diaspora is the electronic newsletter of the Department of African American and African Diaspora Studies.



We are all part of the African American and African Diaspora in one way or another, and we are spread far and wide throughout the university, the community, and the world. *Diaspora* will help keep us connected.

Shown in the photo above are Katie Dieter, Malaika Baxa, Abegunde, Yukari Shinagawa, Carmen Williams, Shannon Caldwell, and Holly Mayne

SUBMISSIONS

Please submit your news to be published in *Diaspora* to Abegunde at maehamil@indiana.edu.

Text can be forwarded as a Word document, or within the body of the email. Photos can be forwarded as jpeg images. Please make certain to include the credits for photo and other materials as appropriate.

For the **40th anniversary celebration**, we invite students, faculty, and alumni to submit your stories about how taking courses in the AAADS Department, or majoring in AAADS has impacted your life, and how you are using that knowledge and experience in your communities. Your stories will become part of the permanent archive that documents the past, present, and future of the Department of African American and African Diaspora Studies at Indiana University, one of the oldest departments of its kind in the United States. We hope to include videos and oral histories on the web site as part of this project.

As we move forward with planning, we must ask each other the question: "How are you putting your privilege to the service of what you believe? How are you using it to achieve your destiny?" (M. Jacqui Alexander). As the disaster in Haiti has shown us, we are all linked in some small way, even if that is only through the desire for a better life for our children. We hope that this question will lead us all to not only offer inspirational stories to one another, but to also offer suggestions and services throughout these months as a way to reconnect with new members of our community, and to continue the tradition of community service and activism.

If you would like to volunteer for any of our activities, please contact Abegunde at maehamil@indiana.edu.

We look forward to hearing from all of you over the next six months as we gather to honor our ancestors, elders, and ourselves – and to renew our commitments to making our program stronger, creating spaces for new scholarship, and engaging with our communities in ways we have not yet allowed ourselves to imagine or dream.

We are the ones we have been waiting for! (Alice Walker).