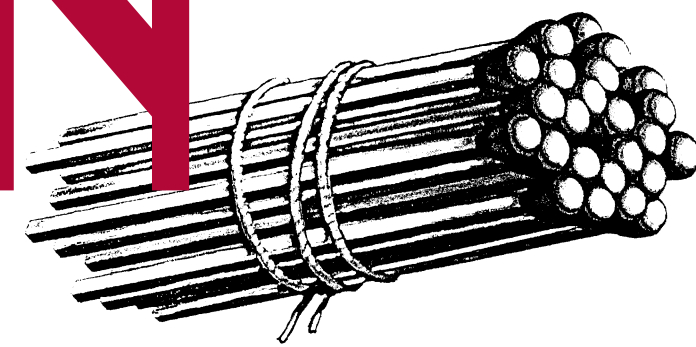


# ATUMPAN

(Ah-toom-pähn: "talking drums")



African American & African Diaspora Studies at Indiana University

Vol. 20 ♦ College of Arts & Sciences Alumni Association ♦ Fall 2006

## AAADS activities span academic spectrum

The department sponsored an array of entertaining and educational programs during the 2005–06 academic year. For more information about these activities, visit the department's Web site at [www.indiana.edu/~afroamer](http://www.indiana.edu/~afroamer).

The **2006 Black Knowledge Bowl** entertained and enlightened the audience that filled the Grand Hall of the Neal–Marshall Black Culture Center for two hours on Feb. 9. The Black Student Union took third place, the Caribbean Student Association came in second, and carrying away first place was the Delta Sigma Theta sorority.

In February, the **Black Film Center/Archive** sponsored the film series "Nollywood: Nigerian Cinema on the Rise," featuring three Nigerian films. In April, the center presented a two-day forum on "Black Women Filmmakers: An Alternative Aesthetic and Vision."

The **AAADS Guest Lecture Series** featured several outstanding speakers. On Nov.

4, 2005, Tajudeen Abdul-Raheem, secretary general of the Pan-African Movement, headquartered in Kampala, Uganda, and director for Justice Africa, a human rights and peace advocacy group based in London, spoke on "The Black Diaspora and Pan-Africanism: The Search for Binding African/African American Ties; Reparations and the Struggle for Black Freedom Worldwide."

On March 7, Clenora Hudson-Weems, professor of English at the University of Missouri at Columbia, spoke on the topic "Black Farmers and Civil Rights in the Aftermath of Katrina: An Emmett Till Continuum." On March 29, Francis Q. Farrier, Guyanese journalist and former director of drama for the Guyana Ministry of Culture, spoke on the topic "The Influence of America on Guyanese Culture."

The third annual **Herman C. Hudson Symposium** brought together students in a variety of disciplines at Indiana and other universities to present papers and readings

on the symposium theme, "The African Diaspora: The Quest for Human Rights."

The **Variations in Blackness Conference**, on the theme "Variations on Blackness: Race-Making in the Americas and the World," took place on the Bloomington campus on March 30–April 1. Co-sponsored by AAADS and the Department of Comparative Literature, the conference also featured an art exhibit of works by Eldzier Cortor, titled "Black Spirit," co-curated by AAADS master's student **Jennifer Heusel**, and an interpretive dance by Professor **Iris Rosa**.

The **African American Arts Institute** offered three spring concerts in the Buskirk–Chumley Theater in Bloomington. The African American Choral Ensemble's concert was the culminating event in retired director **James Mumford's** 25 years of service at IU. The IU Soul Revue performed under the direction of its new director, **Nathanael Fared Mahluli**.

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## Student achievements applauded, new cohorts welcomed

With each year bringing new cohorts of graduate and undergraduate students into the department, AAADS is proud to make note of their accomplishments.

On April 27, the annual **Graduate Student Appreciation Celebration** was hosted by graduate studies director Professor **A.B. Assensoh**. Attended by special guests emeriti professors **Phyllis Klotman** and **Williams Wiggins**, the event marked the first year for several merit awards, named in honor of the department's first three faculty members, to be presented. The Winona Fletcher Outstanding Leadership Award was given to **Ryon Cobb**; the William Wiggins Outstanding Associate Instructor Award was presented to **Femina Ajayi**; and the Phyllis Klotman Outstanding Thesis/Creativity Award went to **Kellie Hogue**. The Community Outreach



Carol Edge

*John McCluskey, right, presents the Community Outreach Award to MA student Garlia Jones for her theater work focusing on AIDS.*

Award was presented to **Garlia Jones** for her Black Curtain Theater productions on AIDS-related topics. Medals of Honor went to **Giva Wilkerson**, for her work with the Herman Hudson Symposium; **Damien Strecker**, for his assistance with BFA/C programming; and **Amina McIntyre** and **Jennifer Heusel** for their work with the AAADS Graduate Society.

On April 18, the department held its annual **Undergraduate Reception** to show appreciation for outstanding undergraduates in AAADS. The social hour was hosted by undergraduate studies director Professor **Fred McElroy**. Nine students were presented with the AAADS Certificate of Appreciation: **Tyrone Allen**, **Terrance Dennie**, **Brettany Ervin**, **Corinna Manion**, **Demetria McGrew**, **Paul Moore**,

*(continued on page 2)*



## Faculty Notes

Professor **A.B. Assensoh** and AAADS Adjunct Professor (political science) **Yvette Alex-Assensoh** contributed an article about Coretta Scott King for the March issue of London-based *Africa Week* magazine. Both Assensohs have been re-appointed as co-review editors for the Leiden-based *African and Asian Studies Review*. A.B. Assensoh attended a leadership conference in Ghana last fall, where he and John Pinfeld, head of the Rhodes Scholars Library at Oxford, had an audience with Ghana's president, John A. Kufuor. Assensoh and Pinfeld are actively involved in an ongoing Ghana presidential research project at Oxford.

Adjunct Professor (law) **Kevin Brown's** book *Race, Law, and Education in the Post-Desegregation Era: Four Perspectives on Desegregation and Resegregation* was published by Carolina Academic Press in 2005. His article "The Supreme Court's Role in the Growing School Choice Movement" (67 *Ohio State Law Journal* 37, 2006) was published last spring as part of the symposium issue titled "Meeting the Challenge of Grutter-Affirmative Action in Twenty-Five Years." Brown was a panelist on "From Dred Scott to Rosa Parks and Hurricane Katrina: Where Do We Go From Here?" at the 2006 American Bar Association Midyear Meeting in Chicago in February and a panelist for a seminar titled "Is There a Rebirth to Racial Segregation in Public Schools?" during the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation's 36th annual Legislative Conferences in Washington, D.C., on Sept. 8.

Professor **Valerie Grim**, chair of the department, presented a paper in January at the National Conference for African American Farmers and joined a team of researchers traveling to several sites in the rural South to investigate conditions having an impact on rural black education. She gave a paper in Memphis, Tenn., at the National Conference on African Farmers and Land and Legacy Issues in February. In the spring, Grim spoke in the National Affairs Lecture Series, sponsored by Iowa State University, and, at a forum on "Defining Values in American Politics," she made a presentation on "The Forgotten Populations: Rural Communities in the Aftermath of Katrina." During the summer, she participated in an institute at the University of Pretoria, South Africa, sponsored by the U.S. Embassy, the University of Pretoria, and IU's American Studies Program.

Professor **Matthew Guterl** is revising his second book, tentatively titled *A World Without Slaves: The South in the Americas* (Harvard University Press), and is putting

the finishing touches on an edited collection for the University of North Carolina Press, *Race, Nation, and Empire in American History*, co-edited with James T. Campbell and Robert Lee. He was co-organizer (with Vivian Halloran of comparative literature) of the conference on "Variations on Blackness: Race-Making in the Americas and the World," held in Bloomington last spring. On May 3, he gave the "Noon Talk" at the IU Art Museum, speaking on "The Return of the 'The Folk' in African American Art."

Adjunct Professor **George Hutchinson's** book *In Search of Nella Larsen: A Biography of the Color Line*, published in May, has been nominated by Harvard University Press for the Pulitzer Prize in biography. Reviews of the book have appeared, to date, in *The Nation* (by Hoosier native Darryl Pinckney), *Washington Post Book World*, *The New York Times Book Review*, *Ebony*, *Publishers Weekly*, *Weekendavisen* (Copenhagen), and *Booklist*. (Another is forthcoming in *Black Issues Book Review*.) Hutchinson gave the keynote lecture at an international conference on "Denmark and the Black Atlantic" in Copenhagen in May and a plenary lecture at the Futures of American Studies Institute at Dartmouth in June. He is chair of the Department of English and the Booth Tarkington Professor of Literary Studies.

Professor **Eileen Julien** presented a paper, "Now You See It, Now You Don't: Josephine Baker's Films of the 1930s and the Problem of Color," at the symposium on "Black Europe and the African Diaspora," at Northwestern University in April. She was a member of the panel on "Creating Blackness." In March, as director of the Project on African Expressive Traditions, Julien hosted Senegalese filmmaker Joseph Gaye

Ramaka, who showed several of his films.

Professor **Audrey McCluskey** chaired the 2006 Martin Luther King Day Committee. As a speaker with the Association for the Study of African American Life and History Speakers Bureau, she presented a lecture, titled "African American Women in Hollywood During the Golden Era," at IUPUI in February. She was the lead speaker in the Women's History Month Renowned Authors Series, sponsored by the National Park Service and held at the Bethune Council House, a historical landmark in Washington, D.C., on March 2. During the summer, she presented a paper for the African Literature Association in Accra, Ghana, on "Dancing with History: Filmmakers in the New South Africa." Her *Imaging Blackness: Race and Racial Representation in Film Poster Art*, featuring a rich selection of movie posters from the Black Film Center/Archive, and *Frame by Frame III: A Filmography of the African Diasporan Image*, a reference source from the BFC/A that surveys film production throughout the African diaspora, are forthcoming from Indiana University Press. A reception was held on May 4 to honor McCluskey's achievements during the seven years of her tenure as director of the Black Film Center/Archive, which ended on June 30.

Professor **John McCluskey** was invited to teach the Fiction Intensive Workshop at Antioch College in Yellow Springs, Ohio, in early July. He is the faculty adviser for the Herman Hudson Symposium, organized and produced by graduate students.

Professor Emeritus **James E. Mumford** received the 2006 City of Bloomington's Martin Luther King Legacy Award during the annual King Day ceremonies.

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## Student news

(continued from page 1)

**Tykia Rodgers, George Walker, and Judith Williams.**

Eleven new graduate students took part in 2006-07 orientation activities on Aug. 22-24. Comprising this versatile cohort are **David Amponsah** (University of Ghana), **Sara Bagby** (University of William and Mary/Trinity International University), **Regina Barnett** (Albany State, Georgia), **Cory Brodnax** (University of Florida), **Katie Collingsworth** (Indiana State University, Terre Haute), **Bergis Jules** (Earlham College), **Alyssa Lile** (Virginia Commonwealth), **Lamar Rice** (Western Illinois), **Phillip Wagner** (Indiana Univer-

sity), **Hassan Wahab** (University of Ghana, University of Guelph, University of Winnipeg), and **Langston Wilkins** (University of Texas, Austin).

The undergraduate program has signed up four new majors and six new minors so far this semester. Program goals are to strengthen recruiting and retention strategies; to increase the number of internship and portfolio-building activities for students; and to recruit three to five honors students to AAADS.

The department would appreciate hearing about internships or career opportunities for our students. Alumni who wish to be invited to our career fair in March 2007 should e-mail AAADSadv@indiana.edu or call (812) 855-6270.



## Exciting new endeavors under way



Valerie Grim

The Department of African American and African Diaspora Studies is striding along, arms swinging with confidence and legs stepping eagerly toward each new challenge. We've established some terrific priorities

for the 2006–07 academic year — ones that strongly emphasize continuous growth through the recruitment of top-notch students at the graduate and undergraduate levels. We're also putting emphasis on activities that bring the faculty and students closer together, especially through our mentoring program. An upcoming initiative is the establishment of an AAADS library and conference room — a place for all that intellectual fiber filling the hallway to go to engage in analyses and discourses.

One of our most ambitious and important endeavors currently is establishing a PhD program. The proposal, prepared by a committee headed by Professor **John McCluskey**, must pass several hurdles before going to the Indiana Commission

on Higher Education for review. No other program in the nation can boast the range of supporting units that we have, including the BFC/A, the Arts Institute, jazz studies, African studies, and Latin American studies. We plan to recruit PhD students regionally, nationally, and internationally.

Professor **Michael T. Martin**, the new director of the BFC/A, has a number of projects under way, including three film course proposals and participation in a Department of Comparative Literature symposium on "Literature and Arts in Senegal I." In the planning stages is a series of one-day symposiums that will revisit and critically reassess seminal black films of the late '50s to early '70s. BFC/A is exploring, with local public television affiliate WTIU, co-sponsorship of a 26-week film series.

In addition to Professor Martin, we have several other new members of the departmental family: Assistant Professor **Stephen Berrey**, visiting scholar; **Michelle Fleener**, financial officer and office manager; **Yunika Jackson**, departmental secretary; and **Hannah Wheatley**, undergraduate adviser.

AAADS is conducting two exciting faculty searches: one a joint search with American studies and the other for an assistant professor in AAADS. The department is looking for scholars who do research and teach in the areas of African American and African diaspora studies.

As always, we like to hear from our alumni and hope you will visit us online at [www.indiana.edu/~afroamer](http://www.indiana.edu/~afroamer). There you will read about what's going on in your IU home and see the people who are making AAADS vibrant. This issue of *Atumpnan* highlights last year's activities. We invite you to attend some of the exciting events the department is hosting this year.

— Valerie Grim

**Erica R. Newman Allenburg**, BA'96, lives in Edina, Minn., and is raising two sons, James and Paul. Previously, she was a marketing director at President Homes, having worked in marketing since graduation.

**Elizabeth J. Armstrong Brown**, BA'00, is a legal assistant for May Oberfell Lorber in Mishawaka, Ind. Her husband, DeMarco Brown, BA'99, is a photojournalist for WSBT. Brown writes, "We recently bought a house in South Bend and are remodeling it."

**Deadra Nelson-Mason**, BS'02, directed an innovative production this past summer. The work incorporated the spoken word, music, dance, and drama into a creative whole that received great acclaim. Nelson-Mason was a member of the African American Dance Company for four years while an undergraduate. She completed her graduate studies at New York University. While Professor **Iris Rosa** was on sabbatical in spring 2006, Nelson-Mason served as interim director of the African American Dance Company.

**Aaron K. Remenschneider**, Cert/BA/BS'04, is a student at the Yale University School of Medicine in New Haven, Conn. He is president of Yale's Medical Student Council and plans to earn a doctor of medicine degree in 2008. His address is [aaron.remenschneider@yale.edu](mailto:aaron.remenschneider@yale.edu).

*The Network Journal*, a New York City-based magazine that focuses on African American professional and business owners, conducts an annual 40 Under 40 Achievement Awards ceremony. Among the honorees of 2006 is **Dawn L. Ridley**, BA'91, vice president of corporate marketing and business development for the National Football League Players Inc. in Washington, D.C. The company is the licensing and marketing subsidiary of the NFL Players Association.

## ATUMPAN

This newsletter is published by the IU Alumni Association, in cooperation with the Department of African American & African Diaspora Studies and the College of Arts & Sciences Alumni Association, to encourage alumni interest in and support for Indiana University. For activities and membership information, call (800) 824-3044 or send e-mail to [ialumni@indiana.edu](mailto:ialumni@indiana.edu).

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## Faculty notes

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Professor **Iris Rosa** choreographed a dance performance based on the works of artist Eldzier Cortor, which was performed as part of the opening festivities of the "Black Spirit: Works on Paper by Eldzier Cortor" exhibit at the IU Art Museum in March. Rosa hosted the ninth annual African American Dance Workshop on Feb. 24–25 at the Neal–Marshall Black Culture Center. She performed a solo and choreographed a group piece for the Evening of Contemporary Dance, a faculty concert at the Ruth N. Halls Theatre in January. In December, her African American Dance

Company presented a studio concert that featured a special performance by the Kenya Dance Company.

Professor **Vernon J. Williams Jr.**'s book *The Social Sciences and Theories of Race* was published by the University of Illinois Press in August. He contributed a chapter, titled "Monroe Nathan Work's Contribution to Booker T. Washington's Fight Against White Supremacy," to the Elsevier Limited anthology *The Racial Politics of Booker T. Washington*, edited by Donald Cunnigen, Myrtle Glascoe, and Rutledge Dennis, in August. His article "Historiographical Concerns in the History of Anthropology," appeared in *The Western Journal of Black Studies* in the spring.



## Activities

(continued from page 1)

There were three panel discussions in the department's annual **Forum Series**. On Sept. 14, 2005, "Race, Media, Culture, and Health: The Black Community in the Aftermath of Katrina" featured a seven-member panel of professors and activists who spoke of the tragic events from the perspective of their respective disciplines. On Oct. 11, 2005, "Race, Media, and Representation in Public Space: Black Music and Humor" featured a panel of four addressing the responsibilities and limitations of using "race" in public spaces. On April 20, a panel of five administrators, faculty, and students presented views on the topic "Minorities and the Changing Structure of Higher Education: The Quest For Excellence with Diversity — What It Means for You at Indiana University."

On Oct. 13, in the **AAADS Brown Bag Lecture Series**, visiting scholar **Claudia Drieling** discussed "Africans on Display: A First-Person Account of the Zoo Scandal in Augsburg, Germany," describing her recent experience in Germany. On Oct. 27, Professor **Valerie Grim** reviewed the conditions and factors affecting health in the Mississippi Delta in "Of Mind, Body, and Spirit: Mental Health and HIV/AIDS in Black Rural America."

In addition, AAADS was a co-sponsor of several outstanding programs. In October, Gwendolyn Midlo Hall, a distinguished research professor of the Southern University System (Louisiana) and professor emerita of history at Rutgers University, in a lecture sponsored by the Project on African Expressive Traditions spoke on "Slavery and African Ethnicities in the Americas: Restoring the Links." In November, two-time Pulitzer Prize winner David Levering Lewis, the Julius Silver University Professor and professor of history at New York University, gave the Patten Lecture on the topic "The Contested National Narrative: W.E.B. DuBois and Others." AAADS hosted teas and informal conversations with Omofolabo Ajayi-Soyinka, Florence Dolphyne, and Audrey Gadzepko, the main speakers for the Symposium on the Achievements of African Women, sponsored by the African Student Association in November, and with Elias Blake Jr., former president of Clarke/Atlanta and director of the Benjamin Mayes Center, a not-for-profit think tank in Washington, D.C., in February.

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