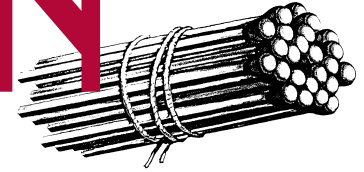


# ATUMPAN

(Ah-toom-pähn: "talking drums")



African American & African Diaspora Studies at Indiana University

Vol. 22 ♦ College of Arts & Sciences Alumni Association ♦ Fall 2008

## AAADS adds doctorate, more dual MA programs

The most momentous event at AAADS this year was the official approval of the innovative PhD program in African American and African diaspora studies, making IU the seventh university in the nation to offer the PhD in Africana or black studies. The first doctoral cohort will be admitted for fall 2009.

The 90-credit-hour doctoral program is an interdisciplinary analysis of race in the world, focusing on the experiences of people of African descent in the United States and in the African diaspora and emphasizing the

importance of transnational, global, and comparative perspectives. This diasporic approach closely examines emancipation, imperialism, decolonization, racism, and other phenomena through the disciplines of history, politics, sociology, and literature and the arts. With a choice of specializations — "Power, Citizenship, and the State" or "Race, Representation, and Knowledge Systems" — graduate students can focus their course work toward their academic goals, culminating in a dissertation project that may be both scholarly and creative.

John McCluskey, professor of African American and African diaspora studies and adjunct professor of English, chaired the PhD Proposal Committee that crafted the program that was finally approved. McCluskey describes the process thus: "On the very first day the committee met, we reviewed the requirements for the existing doctorates in African American studies and shared our thoughts on our own graduate training. We would create a program that none of us had completely experienced —

*(continued on page 5)*

## AAADS lectures bring other perspectives into focus for students

On Oct. 3, renowned filmmaker Julie Dash spoke on "My Narrative: Experiences of a Filmmaker" as part of the "Reel Images: Film in Teaching and Research" conference at the Neal-Marshall Black Culture Center.

On Nov. 5, the Black Film Center/Archive hosted filmmaker Donnie L. Betts, who screened his documentary about Oscar Brown Jr.

On Nov. 19, the AAADS Critical Issues Lecture Series was given by Tonia Poteat on the topic "Botswana to Bloomington: A Clinician's Perspective on HIV in Africa and the U.S." The AIDS activist, public health practitioner, HIV clinician, and scholar discussed the global politics of HIV representation and care, focusing on Africa, African America, and the links between them.

On Feb. 11, the AAADS Critical Issues Lecture Series featured Rashad Shabazz on "Carceral Geographies and Black Masculinity." He spoke of the intersections around prison masculinity and spatial order, drawing from history, literature, and geography and using the Robert Taylor housing projects of Chicago to expand on how spatial order prior to prison has consequences in the lives and performance of masculinity for African American males.

On April 15, the department hosted a conversation with prize-winning playwright, director, and novelist Suzan-Lori Parks, whose visit to IU was sponsored by the Department of Theatre and Drama. Parks talked about her career and answered questions posed by students and faculty.



The department hosted a conversation, with refreshments, for playwright-novelist-educator Suzan-Lori Parks (foreground) in April. Parks's visit to IU was sponsored by the Department of Theatre and Drama.

# Department News

## Faculty notes

**A.B. Assensoh** and **Yvette M. Alex-Assensoh** (political science) presented papers on Abraham Lincoln and Africa and on Abraham Lincoln, women, and other minorities at the International Abraham Lincoln Conference, sponsored by the German Historical Institute in Washington, D.C., on Oct. 4–6. The two also attended the 25th annual meeting of the Association of Third World Studies in Lima, Peru, where Assensoh presented a paper on “Teaching Third World Studies: Africa and Latin America” and chaired two conference panels and Alex-Assensoh presented “Pedagogical Issues in Teaching Third World Studies.” Their papers celebrating Ghana’s 50th independence anniversary, which were presented at University of London’s School of Oriental and African Studies, were published in the summer issue of *New African Magazine*.

**Marlon Bailey**, who also teaches in the Department of Gender Studies, has been elected chair of the National Black Gay Research Group. His co-authored article on ballroom culture and HIV/AIDS prevention was published in the *Journal of Gay and Lesbian Social Service’s* special spring issue on LGBTQ communities of color and their construction of home.

**Valerie Grim**, chair of the department, gave an invited lecture in the Common Experience Multicultural Lecture Series at IU Southeast last fall. The talk was titled “Race and Representation: The Impact of Symbolic Images and Racialized Stereotyping on African Americans’ Lived Experiences.” She is guest-editing a special issue for the *Black Women Gender and Family Journal*, focusing on rural women, children, and families of color. She was awarded the university’s 2008 Martin Luther King Jr. Building Bridges Faculty Award for dedicated service and outstanding leadership. In February, Alpha Phi Alpha honored Grim and **Fred McElroy** with the fraternity’s Unsung Hero Award for outstanding service and leadership. On sabbatical this year, Grim will be conducting research for a book on civil rights. Over the summer, she taught a Study Abroad course, in collaboration with the Hudson-Holland and Overseas Studies programs, which took students to Ghana; attended the Tepoztlan Institute for the Transnational History of the Americas, held in Tepoztlan, Mexico; and spent time at Kiel University in Germany, where she worked to build greater collaboration between AAADS and European universi-

ties and conducted preliminary research on Afro-Germans, with a special emphasis on historical rural cultures.

**Michael Martin**, director of the Black Film Center/Archive, has been appointed to the National Advisory Board of the Washington University Film and Media Archive, which includes the Henry Hampton/Blackside Collection and the Bill Miles Collection and is one of the largest and most prestigious collections of media materials chronicling the African American experience in the United States. Martin has an entry in *The Little Black Book: Movies*, edited by Chris Fujiwara (Cassell Illustrated, UK, 2007, p. 440). The piece, about a work by Gillo Pontecorvo (*Queimada!*, 1969), is titled “The Rupture of the Master/Slave Dialectic in *Burn!*” While **Valerie Grim**, chair of the department, is on sabbatical this year, Martin is serving as acting chair.

On Feb. 24, **Audrey T. McCluskey** was the featured speaker, on the topic “We’ve Come This Far by Faith: Black Women and the Civil Rights Struggle,” for the Black History Month program at Second Baptist Church in Bloomington. **Mary Smith-Forrest**, BA’01, MA’06, served as co-chair for the program. On Feb. 14, McCluskey was a presenter at the first Women of Color Symposium, which examined issues that affect women of color daily. She received the Distinguished Alumni Award in Literary Arts from her alma mater, Clark Atlanta University, on May 16.

**John McCluskey Jr.’s** well-respected *City of Refuge*, an anthology of Rudolph Fisher’s short stories, is being republished this fall. The new and revised edition, published by the University of Missouri Press, brings forth much new material, including a preface, revised introduction, seven previously unpublished stories, and two unpublished speeches, one of which is Fisher’s commencement speech. A new volume of short stories, titled *The Jazz Fiction Anthology*, coming out in 2009 (IU Press, ed. Sascha Feinstein, et al.), will include McCluskey’s short story “Lush Life.” On Oct. 24–27, *Callaloo*, the distinguished journal of literature by African American writers, was feted by the Center for Africana Studies at Johns Hopkins University with a conference that featured the 100 “best creative writers, intellectuals, academics, and artists to launch the journal into the next 30 years.” One of those 100 is McCluskey, who moderated a panel at the event on “Writing and Publishing in the U.S.A.”

**James Mumford** (emeritus director, African American Choral Ensemble) was named the first recipient of the Black History Month Trailblazer Award, which honors individuals who have been especially meaningful in the lives of black Bloomingtonians. The award was presented at the city of Bloomington’s Black History Month Gala in February.

(continued on page 3)

## *From the chair*

### Our garden grows

Over the past few years, the Department of African American and African Diaspora Studies has experienced phenomenal success in growth of our degree programs. Read more about the new PhD and additional MA programs in this issue of *Atumpan*. Such growth has been a collabora-



Valerie Grim

tion among faculty, staff, and friends, and they have my deepest thanks.

This year, I will be on leave conducting research on

black farmers, farm policies, and issues related to human and civil rights in the United States. My thanks to Michael Martin for standing in as acting chair. During this time, AAADS will have three essential focuses: preparing to admit the first cohort of PhD students next fall; conducting a search to fill a senior position; and developing the department’s programs and infrastructure. As AAADS continues to grow as a department — in enrollments, majors, and graduating students — its faculty is experiencing success through research and publication.

As always, we invite your contributions in any form, whether donating to the IU Foundation or offering ideas that can help the department become even better. Our ability to continue on this path of growth means having our alumni engaged in our endeavors. We invite your presence.

— Valerie Grim

## AAADS events inspire, stimulate

On Nov. 28, the AAADS Graduate Society held a silent auction to raise funds for its activities, including the Herman Hudson Symposium. With numerous items — such as artwork, food, and apparel — available to the highest bidders, the auction brought in more than \$400 for the group.

On Saturday, March 22, the AAADS Graduate Society presented the Herman Hudson Symposium on the theme “Lifting the Veil: Multidisciplinary Perspectives on Identity and Responsibility in Global Societies.” The conference featured Sonia Sanchez as the keynote speaker, along with a series of student panels.

In the AAADS Brown Bag Lecture Series, highlighting new research and creative activity by faculty and graduate students, took place monthly this year. Seven talks were given by faculty and graduate students:

- **Regina Barnett**, “A Change Gon Come: The Plantation in Ernest J. Gaines’s *Bloodline*,” Sept. 12;
- **Hassan Wahab**, “Assessing the Symbiotic Relationship Between Ghanaians and African Americans in the Diaspora,” Oct. 10;
- **Sylvester Johnson** (religious studies), “Black Religions, F.B.I. Surveillance, and the Rise of Black Ethnics in the Early 20th Century,” Nov. 14;
- **Micol Seigel** (AAADS), “Zero Tolerance Goes South: U.S. Police in Latin America after the Cold War,” on Dec. 5;
- **Sara Bagby Farmer**, “Triangulation of the Diaspora: Afro-Caribbean Writers in America,” on Feb. 13;
- **Kevin Brown** (law), “Lessons Learned from Comparing the Application of Constitutional and Federal Discrimination Laws to Higher Education Opportunities of African-Americans in the U.S. with Dalits in India,” on March 19; and
- **Khalil Muhammad** (history), “Disappearing Acts: White Criminality in the Age of Jim Crow,” on April 9.



Poet-activist-educator Sonia Sanchez, keynote speaker for the graduate-student-produced Herman Hudson Symposium in March, thrilled a large audience of students and faculty with a recounting of past social activism and exhortations for activism today. She ended the program with a reading of one of her poems.

## Faculty notes

(continued from page 2)

**Iris Rosa** delivered a panel paper, titled “Text and Performance: Carving Out a Space for Latina/o Performance,” at the Blackness in Latin America and Caribbean Conference. At the Evening of Contemporary Dance Concert in January, she premiered “Bolitas de Pegao,” which was restaged for the African American Dance Company’s annual spring concert on April 4. Rosa and **Stephen Selka** are the 2008–09 co-directors for graduate studies.

**John Stanfield** is the recipient of a \$250,000 grant from the BEA Foundation, which provides “grants to support organizations or programs that encourage early intellectual development of preschool-age children.” The foundation’s parent company, BEA, is a provider of infrastructure software. Stanfield was awarded the Distinguished Fulbright Chair in American Studies at the Pontifical Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, for spring 2008. His research topic was “Becoming Human Again: Race and Restorative Justice in Three Multiracial Societies — Brazil in Conversation with South Africa and the

United States.” On April 17, Stanfield lectured on “The Obama Phenomenon,” discussing how U.S. senator and presidential candidate Barack Obama “offers a message of civic healing that goes beyond the concept of reparation to achieve broad respect for individuals, considered as human beings and not simply members of a race.”

**William H. Wiggins** (emeritus) was the 2007 recipient of the William S. Armstrong Award, presented by the university for his “ambassadorship” in bringing recognition to Indiana University and developing friends for the institution over the years. Wiggins will be teaching the African Americans in Sports course while **Gary Sailes** (HPER) is on leave this year.

**Vernon Williams** published an article, titled “An Inclusive History of Sociology,” in the March edition of the *Journal of African American Studies*. In February, he gave a colloquium at the University of California at Riverside. Williams’s most recent book, *The Social Sciences and Theories of Race* (2006), was nominated for the 2008 Best Book Award in the Ethnicity and Politics Section by the American Political Science Association.

## Adjunct faculty notes

**Yvette Alex-Assensoh** (political science) has been named IU dean for women’s affairs. Assensoh is the second professor connected to AAADS to head up that office: AAADS Professor Emeritus **Phyllis Klotman** served as dean from 1986 to 1993.

**Kevin Brown** (law) published his article “Lessons Learned from Comparing the Application of Constitutional and Federal Discrimination Laws to Higher Education Opportunities of African-Americans in the U.S. with Dalits in India” in the *Harvard Blackletter Law Journal*. His essay “Reflections on Justice Kennedy’s Opinion in Parents Involved: Why Fifty Years of Experience Shows Kennedy Was Right” will be published by the *University of South Carolina Law Review* this fall.

**Edris Cooper-Anifowoshe** (theatre and drama) made her directorial debut at IU with her production of *An American Ma(u)l*, by Robert O’Hara, on March 21. Cooper-Anifowoshe received a New Frontiers Fellowship to create the first IU Black Play Lab and mini-conference, which took place July 18–Aug. 3 on the IUB campus.

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# Student Notebook

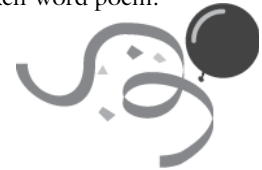
## Department welcomes new graduate cohort

The department welcomed 11 new graduate students this fall. The 2008 cohort comprises **Malaki Baxa** (University of Wisconsin, Madison), **Shannon Caldwell** (Rutgers; Hampton), **Adeyemi Doss** (Earlham College), **Heather Essex** (Indiana University), **Rafi Hasan** (University of Wisconsin, Parkside; Georgia State), **Cara-lee Jones** (DePauw University), **Bernard McFarland** (Martin University; Vincennes University), **Michael Potts** (Youngstown University), **Shana Riddick** (Clark University), **Breon Tyler** (Virginia Commonwealth), and **Carmen Williams** (University of Arkansas, Fayette; Arkansas State).

- AAADS Outreach Award: **Phillip Wagner**;
- Curriculum Committee's Outstanding Grader Award: **Langston Wilkins**; and
- Medal of Honor for Service to AAADS: **David Amponsah, Cory Brodnax, Delphine Criscenzo, Sara Bagby Farmer, J.C. Henry, Kate Hipkind, Bergis Jules, and Alyssa Liles-Amponsah.**

Students, faculty, staff, and friends enjoyed the annual AAADS Undergraduate Awards Luncheon, held in the Tudor Room on April 18. The guest speaker was **Sheryl Wilkerson, BA'85** (AAADS and telecommunications), senior vice president of marketing, strategy, and external affairs for Ygomi, an international holding and operating company for technology services, headquartered in Oak Brook, Ill.

Awards and certificates of recognition were presented to various students, including the inaugural Joe Russell Award for Leadership, which went to **Tyren Edenburgh**. Former IU Professor of Afro-American Studies and Dean of Afro-American Affairs **Joe Russell** (now at Ohio State University), who was on hand for the presentation, was honored with a surprise presentation of the AAADS Distinguished Service Award. Following the awards, **Stevener Gaskin** performed an original spoken-word poem.



## AAADS recognizes achievements

Graduating MA students and others were recognized during the annual AAADS Graduate Appreciation Reception, held on April 21. The awards and those honored:

- William Wiggins Award for Outstanding Teaching: **Regina Barnett, Sara Bagby Farmer, and Alyssa Liles-Amponsah**;
- Phyllis Klotman Award for Outstanding Thesis and Creativity: **Garlia Jones**;
- Winona Fletcher Award for Leadership: **Katie Dieter**;



*Professor Valerie Grim presents the Medal of Honor for Service to AAADS to MA student Kate Hipkind during the annual AAADS Graduate Appreciation Reception.*



*Professor Audrey McCluskey gives a congratulatory hug to MA student Katie Dieter, who received the Winona Fletcher Award for Leadership.*

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# Talking Drum

**Felita R. Bradford**, Cert'82, BA'83, is an officer for U.S. Customs and Border Protection in Indianapolis. She lives in Indianapolis.

**Matthew W. Roberts**, MA/MPA'88, PhD'91, is a real-estate agent with Hounshell Real Estate in Washington, D.C. Previously, he was the project director at the Academy for Educational Development, helping hundreds of companies establish HIV/AIDS workplace programs and policies. Roberts can be contacted at [matthewroberts.biz](mailto:matthewroberts.biz) or [matthew@hounshellrealestate.com](mailto:matthew@hounshellrealestate.com). He lives in Washington, D.C.

**Shontrai D. Irving**, BA'97, MA/JD'03, is an attorney for State Farm Litigation Counsel in Crown Point, Ind. Since October 2006, he has served as a foster parent to four siblings, ages 3–9, and he was recently named the Indiana Foster Care and Adoption Association Foster Parent of the Year. After completing training in foster-parenting classes, Irving was initially contacted about caring for only one child.

Later, however, he was touched by the siblings' attachment to each other and wanted to ensure that they stay together. Irving has also volunteered for the Boys & Girls Clubs of America and Habitat for Humanity. Recently named an Outstanding Young Lawyer by the Defense Trial Counsel of Indiana, he lives in Gary, Ind.

**Beryl A. Cobham**, MA'00, PhD'03, is assistant provost for student life at the University of Denver. She lives in Englewood, Colo.

**Jacqueline S. Wiley-Morris**, BA'02, writes, "It was a great experience attending IU. It prepared me for my ultimate challenge of obtaining a PhD in organizational leadership. In all your endeavors, continue to strive for your goals." Wiley-Morris lives in Douglasville, Ga.

**Tandra Foster Stovall**, BA'03, JD'06, is an associate for the law firm Stuart & Branigin. Her primary area of practice is litigation. An I-Woman in track, Stovall lives and works in Lafayette, Ind.

Derby, England, is also a visiting professor for 2008–09.

## Faculty notes

(continued from page 3)

**Dionne Danns** (education) was the recipient of an Indiana University New Frontiers in the Arts and Humanities grant. The \$50,000 award will assist her with her current research project, titled "The Struggle for Desegregation in Chicago."

**George Hutchinson** (English), chair of the Department of English and the Booth Tarkington Professor of Literary Studies, was presented with the Christian Gauss Award at a formal dinner in Washington, D.C., on Dec. 7, for his 2006 book *In Search of Nella Larsen: A Biography of the Color Line*, which has garnered numerous other awards. The award, made annually by the Phi Beta Kappa Society, is given to outstanding works of literary scholarship and criticism.

**Samuel Obeng** (African studies, linguistics) became director of the African Studies Program on July 1.

## Visiting faculty notes

Former visiting scholar **Claudia Drieling** earned her doctorate last summer and will be teaching part time in AAADS as a visiting professor this year. Drieling will work toward publication of her dissertation on Gloria Naylor's "Home."

**David Wall**, coming to IU from the Battery School of Art and Design, University of

## Staff notes

**Carol Edge**, BA'87, MA'03, who has served the department for three years as its PR/media specialist, retired from Indiana University in August. In addition to preparing publicity for departmental events and programs, she edited *Diaspora* and *Atumpán* and provided content for the departmental Web site.

**Arnell Hammond**, undergraduate student adviser, has been selected as one of 10 Emerging Leaders for 2008–10 by the National Academic Advising Association, headquartered at Kansas State University.

Black Film Center/Archive archivist **Mary Huelsbeck** took the lead in securing a \$9,000 grant from the New York Women's Film Preservation Fund to restore the BFC/A's copy of Jessie Maple's film *Will* (1981) — the first feature film made by an African American woman filmmaker. The BFC/A is required to raise, by April 30, 2009, additional funds of about \$2,000 to complete the project. Anyone wishing to contribute should contact the BFC/A or AAADS at (812) 855-3875.

**Yunika Jackson** was recently presented with her 10-year employment pin for a decade of service to Indiana University. She has been with AAADS since July 2006.

## Doctorate

(continued from page 1)

both interdisciplinary and comparative in nature. By the end of the first meeting, we had shaped a working metaphor: designing and assembling a plane from many parts on the floor around us. After that it was simple hard work and gathering as much useful data as we could, including what colleagues at other programs shared about their experiences in shaping their proposals and putting their programs in place. We wanted a program that would be attractive, exciting, and challenging for our students and would prepare them for the job market. So we brought the airplane gingerly out of its hangar and it is now awaiting its first crew."

The department was founded in 1971 as one of the first programs in African American studies nationally, offering the baccalaureate and, later, a PhD minor. In 1999, AAADS began offering the MA degree and now shares dual master's degree programs with several other departments and schools, including the MFA in creative writing. The new PhD program is the capstone of an outstanding department that has a track record of nearly 40 years of high-quality teaching.

To read more about the program, please visit the department's Web site at [www.indiana.edu/~afroamer](http://www.indiana.edu/~afroamer).

## 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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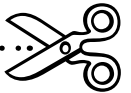
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