

# AFRICANA STUDIES DEPARTMENT NEWSLETTER

Fall 2018



UNC CHARLOTTE  
College of Liberal Arts & Sciences  
Department of Africana Studies

Volume 14

## GLOBALLY CONNECTED, LOCALLY RELEVANT



I am delighted to introduce this latest edition of our, and your newsletter. First, I would like to thank everyone who contributed contents to this edition.

In the following pages, we tell the stories of what our faculty and students have been doing to fulfil the mission of the department: "educate and

mentor students, discover and disseminate new knowledge, and engage diverse communities on the experiences of Africa-descended populations worldwide . . ."

From Charlotte (NC) to Cambridge (UK), Brazil to Nigeria, Canada to Haiti, faculty fanned out across two-thirds of the globe engaging in the enterprise of the mind, asking new questions, pursuing new evidence, making discoveries, sharing knowledge, and building new relationships. In the process, many of us won the accolades of our peers, a validation of the strong reputation of the department as a community of scholars. We are also teachers and mentors continuously fine-tuning our pedagogical crafts in order to make a difference in the lives of our students.

You will read about the academic events organized to celebrate Dr. Tanure Ojaide's 70<sup>th</sup> birthday between April and June on two continents. My own induction as a fellow at University of Cambridge was a great honor for which I am grateful to my sponsors. Dr. Oscar de la Torre's book, *The People of the River* is out, hot and fresh from the oven of UNC Press. He also secured tenure and promotion to the rank of Associate Professor. Likewise, affiliate faculty Beth Whitaker's book, *Africa's International Relations*, has just been published, and Dr. Gregory Mixon received a Fulbright Research Chair fellowship. External funding for AFRS faculty research came from other sources, including an American Philosophical Society grant. You will also meet our new faculty and affiliates in the following pages.

What's more, our diverse, expanding curriculum, anchored by the principle of global connection and local relevance, garnered record-high 7,820 student credit hours last academic year. And, our students continued to take advantage of the relationships that we have developed with our community partners. For example, three students recently participated in an internship program at the Harvey B. Gantt Center for African-American Arts + Culture. AFRS major Kristen Gooding tells the story of that experience.

We are also committed to new approaches in teaching and learning, and bringing the understanding of the world into our classroom through engaged pedagogy. With Prof. Sheryl Smith's service learning project, Dr. Debra Smith's Global Problem Solving seminar for rising freshmen, and my Taste of Africa project, we have made the City of Charlotte and its suburbs an integral part of our classroom experience. All of these initiatives emphasize learning-by-doing.

What else is going on? The tenth annual Dr. Bertha Maxwell-Roddey lecture will take place on October 18 to be delivered by a leading figure in Africana Studies, Dr. Tara T. Green from UNC Greenboro. And, don't forget that we are temporarily housed in Cedar Hall while Garinger building undergoes a major renovation. So, come visit us in our swanky temporary shelter. We will be in Cedar hall for at least one year.

You may be the last person to know that I am stepping down as chair of the Africana Studies Department on December 31 after ten and a half years on the beat. I have enjoyed every minute of it, thanks to wonderful colleagues, students, and community partners.

I'm pleased to share with you that our incoming chair is Dr. Julia Jordan-Zachery. She is coming to us from Providence College, RI (page 3). I look forward to serving the department in other capacities under her leadership.

Enjoy the newsletter and have a wonderful academic year. And the beat goes on . . .

Akin Ogundiran  
Outgoing Chair

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AFRICANA STUDIES DEPARTMENT**

Your donation will support our community outreach efforts, annual lectures and conferences, student scholarship, and artist-in-residence program.

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Thank you.

## MEET OUR INCOMING CHAIR: DR. JULIA JORDAN-ZACHERY

I came to Black Studies/Africana Studies in somewhat of an indirect manner. I entered college with the goal of becoming an economist who would one day return to Barbados to serve as the Governor of the Central Bank. I eventually earned a Ph.D. in Political Science and became a professor. But in hindsight, Black Studies have always been central not just to my academic pursuits, but to me as a Black girl and now woman.

My desire to run the Central Bank of Barbados was the result of a then nine-year-old girl having conversations with her father about the less than positive impact of the International Monetary Fund on Caribbean islands such as Barbados. But it stretches further back than that. I have memories of my mother greeting her co-workers with “Good morning my beautiful Black people!” Black Studies/Africana Studies is something I lived before I stepped foot into the academy.

Black Studies/Africana Studies is a lived experience—it is theoretically grounded and socially functional. And this is how I imagine my service to the Africana Studies Department. In collaboration with faculty, staff, students and the community, I envision working to create an environment that gives birth to questions and ways of addressing them.

Africana Studies is as needed today as much as it was needed in the 1960s. Now, like then, we have to work collaboratively to address issues such as social mobility, education equity, and state sanctioned violence that rob our communities of our most valuable resources. My central focus is to continue to build a comprehensive curriculum that is integrated across the humanities, social sciences, science and technology. My efforts will also focus on fostering reciprocal learning relationships between the community and the academy, in part, by challenging artificial boundaries regarding the production of knowledge. My teaching will focus on issues related to gender, race and public policy and on Black feminisms.

There are a number of initiatives that I am currently involved with that will help me to make my vision real; thereby, advancing the larger mission of the Africana Studies Department. For one, I serve as the president of the Association for Ethnic Studies (formerly the National Association for Ethnic Studies). AES, founded in 1972, seeks to promote research, curriculum design, and publications of interest to Native American, African American/Black, Chicano, Puerto Rican, Asian American and other ethnic groups. Hosting the headquarters of AES at UNC Charlotte, and the Africana Studies Department specifically, positions the



Department to play a critical role in shaping much of the ongoing discussions on the role and value of Ethnic studies in K-12 education.

Additionally, I organize the Black Women and Girls Collaborative, a multidisciplinary research group that centers the experiences of Black women and girls. It is interested in exploring the diverse lived realities of Black women and girls across varied geographical and social locations. The purpose of the group is to explore the ways in which Black womanhood and girlhood intersects and interacts with other social categories such as nationality, religion, class, sexuality, etc. The Collaborative also seeks to support scholars who engage in research on Black women and girls, and develop practical ways to bring the knowledges of Black women and girls into the classroom and other critical spaces.

Overall, my vision is to encourage a space that is radical and open to diverse ideas on Blackness and liberation. To this end, I look forward to being the next steward of the Africana Studies Department, and to working in collaboration with you.

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## THE DR. BERTHA MAXWELL-RODDEY DISTINGUISHED LECTURE TO CELEBRATE TENTH YEAR ANNIVERSARY



The tenth edition of the annual Dr. Bertha Maxwell-Roddey Distinguished Africana Lecture will take place on October 18, 2018 in the McKnight Hall of the Cone University Center, starting at 5:30pm.

Titled *They saw everything that was going to happen*: *Remembering the Middle Passage in Black Artistic Expressions of Resistance*, the lecture will be delivered by Dr. Tara T. Green, the Linda Carlisle Excellence Professor of Literature & Gender Studies, and Professor of

African American and African Diaspora Studies, University of North Carolina at Greensboro. This year's lecture is based on the speaker's latest book, *Reimagining the Middle Passage: Black Resistance in Literature, Television, and Song* (The Ohio State University Press, 2018). Reception and book signing by the speaker will immediately follow the lecture at 6:30pm.

The annual lecture honors Dr. Maxwell-Roddey's pioneering contributions to the development of Africana Studies as an academic discipline and the building of Black cultural institutions in Charlotte and across the nation. The event is an annual intellectual and social forum on pertinent issues of broad relevance to the Charlotte region's diverse populations.

Councilman Gregory A. Phipps (District 4) will bring a message from the City Council. Dr. Bertha Maxwell-Roddey and family are also being expected as special guests of honor.

### About the Upcoming Lecture

Two centuries after the last ship with enslaved persons sailed to the Americas, people of African descent remain haunted by forced engagement with the Atlantic, especially the leg of the journey known as the Middle Passage. Professor Green examines the work of Black artists who probe the historical and symbolic meaning and legacy of the Middle Passage. In the post-Civil Rights age of Black Lives Matter, mass protests over social inequality, assault on civil liberty, institutional efforts to suppress minority votes, and debates over ethical behavior in governance and leadership, Professor Green examines how the metaphor and lived experience of the Middle Passage are being deployed by artists to inform and shape contemporary concerns. Green will show that the Middle Passage and its legacy, from African-descendants' creative perspectives, is a painful but necessary exercise for what they reveal about the persistent abuse of power, the unfulfilled promises of democracy, and the resolute resistance of people of conscience and the oppressed against persistent social injustice. Green will conclude with a roadmap on what the literary and visual arts that are rooted in memory and history may teach us about the process of healing the past trauma and creating a new social compact for a better society.

## DR. BERTHA MAXWELL-RODDEY



Dr. Bertha Maxwell Roddey has spent a lifetime educating generations of students, building institutions for the promotion of Black Studies, and working tirelessly for racial integration and social equity. She earned her bachelor's degree from Johnson C. Smith University (Charlotte), Master's degree from UNC-Greensboro, and her doctorate from Union Graduate School in Cincinnati.

Dr. Maxwell Roddey joined UNC Charlotte in 1970, and assumed the leadership of the Black Studies Program in 1971. She served as the founding chairperson when the program became a department. During her tenure, she presided over the development of a four-year curriculum for the undergraduate major in African American and African Studies (now Africana Studies), and initiated a number of programs on multicultural

photo credit: Lynn Roberson

education, service learning, and community outreach. In 1977, Dr. Maxwell Roddey spearheaded the establishment of the National Council for Black Studies (NCBS), an organization dedicated to the research and study of African American life and culture. NCBS is the largest professional organization for Africana Studies in the United States. She is also a co-founder of Charlotte's Afro-American Cultural Center, now the Harvey B. Gantt Center for African-American Arts + Culture.

TEN YEARS OF THE BERTHA MAXWELL-RODDEY LECTURE: PEOPLE AND IDEAS

THE AFRICANA STUDIES DEPARTMENT PRESENTS  
*The 2nd Annual*  
**Dr. Bertha Maxwell-Roddey Distinguished Africana Lecture**  
**AVOIDING THE PERFECT STORM:**  
 A VISION OF EXCELLENCE IN THE EMERGING NEW MAJORITY

FEATURED SPEAKER  
**DR. RONALD L. CARTER**  
 PRESIDENT, JOHNSON C. SMITH UNIVERSITY

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 2010 . 4:30 PM  
 ROWE ARTS BUILDING (LECTURE HALL 130)

EVENT IS FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC | RECEPTION WILL FOLLOW THE LECTURE

DATE: SEPT. 30 | TIME: 4:30 PM | LOCATION: ROWE ARTS (RM 130)

THE AFRICANA STUDIES DEPARTMENT PRESENTS  
**THE 3rd ANNUAL DR. BERTHA MAXWELL-RODDEY DISTINGUISHED AFRICANA LECTURE**  
**YOUTH EMPOWERMENT:**  
 STRUCTURE FOR DEVELOPING TOMORROW'S WORKFORCE

FEATURED SPEAKER  
**HONORABLE TERRY BELLAMY**  
 MAYOR, CITY OF ASHEVILLE, NC

EVENT IS FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC  
 RECEPTION WILL FOLLOW THE LECTURE

THE AFRICANA STUDIES DEPARTMENT PRESENTS  
**THE FIRST ANNUAL DR. BERTHA MAXWELL-RODDEY DISTINGUISHED AFRICANA LECTURE**

FEATURING:  
**MR. JAMES E. FERGUSON II**  
 FOUNDING PARTNER & PRESIDENT OF FERGUSON, STEIN, CHAMBERS, GRESHAM AND SUMTER, PA.

**'THE FUTURE OF CHARLOTTE AS A GLOBAL CITY: THE BLACK DIMENSIONS'**

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 2, 2009 . 4:30 PM  
 ROWE ARTS BUILDING (LECTURE HALL 130)

UNC CHARLOTTE . 9201 UNIVERSITY CITY BLDG. CHARLOTTE, NC 28223  
 CONTACT DEANNE JENKINS (704) 687-2371 OR AFRICANA\_STUDIES@UNCC.EDU

EVENT IS FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC  
 A RECEPTION WILL FOLLOW THIS EVENT

CO-SPONSORS: AFRICANA STUDIES CLUB, TRANSNATIONAL EDUCATION IN A GLOBAL CITY, COLLEGIATE 100

THE AFRICANA STUDIES DEPARTMENT PRESENTS  
**THE 5th ANNUAL DR. BERTHA MAXWELL-RODDEY DISTINGUISHED AFRICANA LECTURE**

**A NEW LOOK AT BLACK FAMILIES**  
 SPEAKER AND GUEST OF HONOR:  
**DR. CHARLES VERT WILLIE**  
 CHARLES WILLIAM ELIOT PROFESSOR OF EDUCATION  
 EMERITUS HARVARD UNIVERSITY


WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 16, 2013 . 3:30 PM  
 EPIC BUILDING G256  
 UNC CHARLOTTE . 9201 UNIVERSITY CITY BLDG. CHARLOTTE, NC 28223

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CO-SPONSORS: CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE, DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY, COLLEGIATE 100

*The 7th*  
**Bertha Maxwell-Roddey Distinguished Africana Lecture**  
 2015



40th Anniversary Logo

UNC CHARLOTTE College of Liberal Arts & Sciences  
**THE 9th ANNUAL DR. BERTHA MAXWELL-RODDEY DISTINGUISHED AFRICANA LECTURE**

WED. SEPTEMBER 20 | 5:30 PM | CONE CENTER (MCKNIGHT HALL)

DR. OPHELIA GARMON-BROWN | MR. CHARLES DEE O'DELL

Leading on Opportunity

FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC | SPONSORED BY THE AFRICANA STUDIES DEPARTMENT

THE AFRICANA STUDIES DEPARTMENT PRESENTS  
**THE 4th ANNUAL DR. BERTHA MAXWELL-RODDEY DISTINGUISHED AFRICANA LECTURE**

**GLOBAL MIGRATIONS AND THE CRISIS OF IDENTITY IN BLACK AMERICA**

FEATURED SPEAKER:  
**J. LORAND MATORY**  
 DIRECTOR OF THE CENTER FOR AFRICAN AND AFRICAN AMERICAN RESEARCH AND LAWRENCE RICHARDSON PROFESSOR OF CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY, DUKE UNIVERSITY

MONDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2012 . 5:00 PM  
 ROWE ARTS BUILDING (LECTURE HALL 130)  
 UNC CHARLOTTE . 9201 UNIVERSITY CITY BLDG. CHARLOTTE, NC 28223

RSVP: JAN CASTEEL  
 PHONE: (704) 687-2371 | EMAIL: AFRICANA\_STUDIES@UNCC.EDU  
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THE AFRICANA STUDIES DEPARTMENT PRESENTS  
**THE 6th ANNUAL DR. BERTHA MAXWELL-RODDEY DISTINGUISHED AFRICANA LECTURE**

**NORTH CAROLINA'S REJECTION OF MEDICAID EXPANSION: POLITICIZING THE HEALTH OF OUR SOCIETY**

SPEAKER AND GUEST OF HONOR:  
**DR. YELE ALUKO**  
 SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT AT NOVANT HEALTH AND MEDICAL DIRECTOR OF THE NOVANT HEALTH HEART AND VASCULAR INSTITUTE, CHARLOTTE (NC)

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2014 . 5:30 PM  
 ROWE ARTS BUILDING (LECTURE HALL 130)  
 UNC CHARLOTTE . 9201 UNIVERSITY CITY BLDG. CHARLOTTE, NC 28223

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40th Anniversary Logo

UNC CHARLOTTE College of Liberal Arts & Sciences  
**THE 8th ANNUAL DR. BERTHA MAXWELL-RODDEY DISTINGUISHED AFRICANA LECTURE**

THURS. SEPTEMBER 29 | 5:30 PM | FRETWELL 100

SPEAKER AND GUEST OF HONOR:  
**DR. BERNARD E. POWERS, JR.**  
 PROFESSOR OF HISTORY  
 COLLEGE OF CHARLSTON

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## OJAIDE AT 70: A FIESTA OF IDEAS

Our colleague, **Professor Tanure Ojaide**, turns 70 this year. One of the most prolific and celebrated African writers of our time, Ojaide has made UNC Charlotte his intellectual home for twenty-eight years. It is therefore deserving that the activities marking his 70<sup>th</sup> birthday started right here on campus. Hence, a session titled "The Ordeal of Globalization and the Quest for Social Justice in the Poetry of Tanure Ojaide" was organized as part of the 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Africana Studies conference (February 22-23) to launch the celebration.

Three of Ojaide's mentees were invited to present on this topic. Dr. Lami Adama, Texas College, Tyler presented on *Reinventing Female Identity through Eco-Womanism in Tanure Ojaide's "The Activist", "The Tale of the Harmattan", and "Songs of Myself"*; Dr. Adetayo Alabi of The University of Mississippi titled his presentation *Tanure Ojaide and The Udje Quartet: Song, Satire, Social Justice, and Globalization*; and Dr. Onookome Okome, University of Alberta spoke on *Tanure Ojaide and the Literature of the Niger Delta*. The celebrant then read poems from his vast environmental justice series to the pleasure and critical reflection of the audience. A special dedication honoring Dr. Ojaide was made at the conference reception attended by faculty, well-wishers, and family members.

The center of gravity for "Ojaide at 70" celebrations then moved to Nigeria where several events were organized by his former students, mentees, and colleagues over a period of three months to honor and reflect on the septuagenarian's legacies as a mentor, writer, and scholar. The events took place at the University of Port Harcourt, University of Maiduguri, Delta State University (Abraka), and Kwara State University (Malete).

The first event was the Third Ojaide International Conference, themed "Tanure Ojaide: Life, Literature, and Environment." It took place May 2-5 at the University of Port Harcourt, Nigeria. The four-day event hosted ninety scholarly presentations and over 300 participants. Our own Dr. Honore Missihoun attended the conference. The following is his report of the four-day event.

I attended the "Tanure Ojaide: Life, Literature, and Environment" conference in Port Harcourt, Nigeria. I represented UNC Charlotte's Department of Africana Studies, presented a paper on environmental degradation and eco-political activism in the Niger Delta of Nigeria, and participated in various academic and cultural events of the conference.

**May 2:** Arrival of delegates and conferees (6:00 pm

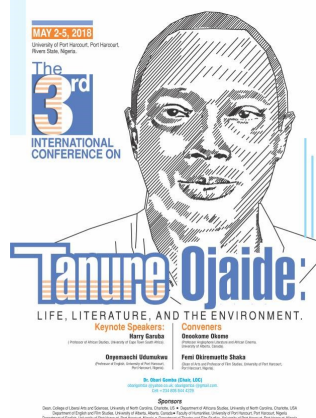


(above) Prof. Ojaide enjoying a celebratory moment; and (below) Dr. Adetayo Alabi and Dr. Ono Okome participating in the session on Ojaide's literary works, 2018 Africana Studies conference.

– 8:00 pm) followed by a cocktail reception, performances, and dance.

**May 3:** 10:00 am – 11:30 am: Professor Femi Shaka, Dean of the Humanities, University of Port Harcourt gave the opening speech. Professor Onookome Okome of University of Alberta, Canada gave a citation on Professor Ojaide as a poet-scholar, mentor, teacher, and social activist. I presented a congratulatory speech on behalf of the Africana Studies Department. The Vice-Chancellor (President) of the University of Port Harcourt, Professor Ndowa E. S. Lale, then delivered the welcome address.

## OJAIDE AT 70 (continued from pg. 6)



11:30 am - 12:30 pm, keynote speaker #1, Professor Harry Oludare Garuba of the University of Cape Town, South Africa, delivered his lecture on "Tanure Ojaide and the Poetics of Eco-Animist Citizenship." For Garuba, Ojaide's poetry pioneered the concept of eco-animist citizenship in world literature. He foregrounded how Ojaide has wielded his pen to critique, protest, and mobilize against "the destruction of the Niger

Delta environment by an intrusive extractive oil economy." Garuba explored how Ojaide's poetry has given us a new set of theories to analyze the idea of double alienation and loss. He also argued that Ojaide has used his poetry to perform a symbolic restoration or reclamation of the animistic or psychic bonds between the self and the society, be it the homeland or the diaspora. Ojaide's verses and prose have emboldened the people of the Niger Delta to think of a better future and have galvanized them to act on the realization of that future.

May 3 afternoon - May 4: Many academic presentations and cultural activities were featured, including conversations with the celebrant, literature workshops, and opening and viewing of an art exhibition in honor of Professor Ojaide.

Keynote speaker #2, Professor Onyemaechi Udumukwu of the University of Port Harcourt presented his keynote address on "Trembling in the Balance: Liminality and Nationness in Ojaide's Poetry." Udumukwu's presentation foregrounded the postcolonial concepts of nationness and liminality in Ojaide's literary works especially as these relate to the politics of neo-colonialism or internal colonialism. To him, the politics of oil exploitation and environmental devastation in the Niger Delta has pushed the people towards liminality in a nation that is supposed to be theirs. Citing prodigiously from Ojaide's *Delta Blues and Home Songs*, *The Endless Song*, *The Fate of Vultures*, *The Blood of Peace and Other Poems*, Udumukwu's incisive analysis of Ojaide's literary works identified the canons of Ojaideism (literary, philosophy, activism) and its relevance for understanding sociological and political issues in postcolonial Africa. The audience greeted Udumukwu's presentation with a thunderous applause.

Ojaide also interacted with students and conferees under the theme: "The State of African literature in the 21st

century." In a Question and Answer format, Ojaide shared knowledge with the audience on the current trends in African literature.

Performances were also part of the celebration, staged by students in the Departments of Theatre, Film Studies, and Music. One of these was the theatrical enactment of Oshue Ogbiyerin's revolt against the tax policies of the British during the colonial period. Ojaide had captured this historical event in his poem entitled 'Oshue' and the students brilliantly adapted this poem for live stage performance (below).



Young poets from across Nigeria read some of their poems at the conference. It was inspiring to see the rapport between the elder and the young Nigerian poets discussing form and style, contents and meaning, and cordially reflecting on the social responsibility of the writer/artist in Africa.

The leading scholars, writers, and artists from across Nigeria who graced the conference included Professors G.G. Darah of Delta State University; Abdul-Rasheed Na'Allah (President of Kwara State University); Renowned artist Bruce Onobrakpeya; and president of the Association of Nigerian Authors (ANA), Malam Denja Abdullahi.

The gala and the dance party that continued late in the night on May 5 was an unforgettable experience.

### Report ends

Ojaide is author of 20 collections of poetry, six collections of short stories, four novels, hundreds of critical works, reviews and articles, and several lifetime awards. This is to wish the poet laureate of the Niger Delta, one of world's finest writers, the Ominigbon of our time, Aridon's favorite son, and Africa's most lyrical minstrel, a very happy birthday and many happy returns!

## AFRS ANNUAL CONFERENCE FOCUSED ON FACULTY'S ENGAGED AND DIASPORIC SCHOLARSHIP

The department hosted its sixteenth annual conference on February 22-23. The theme of the two-day conference was "UNC Charlotte at the Intersection of Black Studies in the Carolinas." The goal of the conference was to showcase the broad range of scholarship that faculty and their collaborators are pursuing in the field of Africana Studies at UNC Charlotte; highlight ongoing research collaborations, areas of strength, and potential synergy among faculty; review the pedagogical and curricular innovations that are (re)defining the Black Studies academic landscape; identify areas of critical needs and gaps; and explore potential opportunities for collaboration across the disciplines, and with community partners.

The conference featured 55 presentations divided into 13 sessions in the form of scholarly presentations, poster sessions, workshops, and a film screening/discussion.

The sessions included:

- Building Bridges, Creating Intersectional Alliances: Bertha Maxwell-Roddey, Ann C. Carver, and the Formation of Black Studies and Women's Studies at UNC Charlotte, organized by Dr. Sonya Ramsey;
- "Intersecting Minority Status of Black Gay and Bisexual Men and Gender Diverse Individuals," whose participants included LGBTQ individuals from the community;
- How Students' Understanding of Being Black in America Evolved through a Study Abroad to Malawi: A Video-Supported Panel Presentation, organized by Dr. Diana Rowan.

AFRS core and affiliated faculty also presented at sessions that focused on

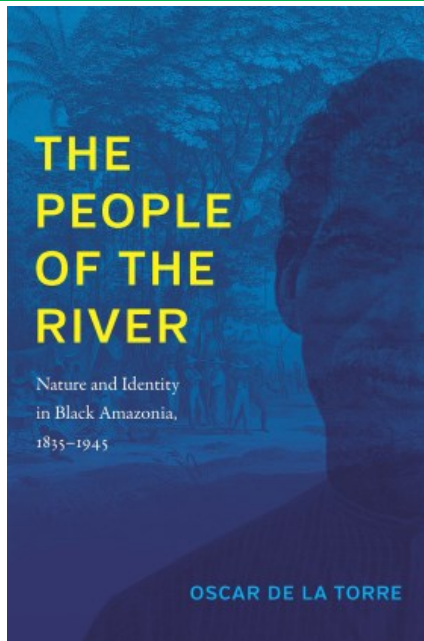
- The Black Quest for Freedom and Citizenship;
- New Research in African Diaspora Research;
- Africa in Politics and Imagination;
- Overcoming Racialized and Gendered Challenges in the Classroom and in Research; and
- Black Critics.

AFRS/History student, Rebecca Byrd (sitting next to Dr. Mixon in the third picture below) also presented at the conference.





## DR. OSCAR DE LA TORRE'S MILESTONES



**Dr. Oscar de la Torre** has been promoted to the rank of Associate Professor with Tenure, effective July 2018, and his book *The People of the River: Identity and Environment in Black Amazonia, 1835-1945* is officially scheduled for publication on October 15, 2018 by the University of North Carolina Press. The book is a social and environmental history of Africa-descended people in Brazil's Amazonian forest. It is a story of the difficult journey from slavery to peasantry, and how Black Amazonians used their environment to forge new overlapping identities as citizens, black, and indigenous in the post-emancipation years.

Based on many years of archival, oral historical, and ethnographic research, the author shows the intimate relations between ecology and ethnicity, and how a community of Afro-Brazilians negotiated the terms of their citizenship by exercising control over their land and labor. The process involved confrontations with slaveowners, state authorities, and agricultural capitalists. Nevertheless, by using their intimate knowledge of the local environments to create innovative agro-ecological traditions, black Amazonians succeeded in defining an emergent identity that made them important political stakeholders in the young Brazilian nation-state. *The People of the River* has been garnering advance praises from scholars of Brazil and the African Diaspora. A scholar described the book as “the most comprehensive study of slavery and black peasantry in Amazonia.”

De la Torre also published an article, “Places of Memory and Time Slips: Narratives of the ‘Good Master’ and the History of Brazilian Slavery,” in *Oral History Review*, “the U.S. journal of record for the theory and practice of oral history and related fields.” *Oral History Review* 44, Issue 2, September 2017, 237–259.

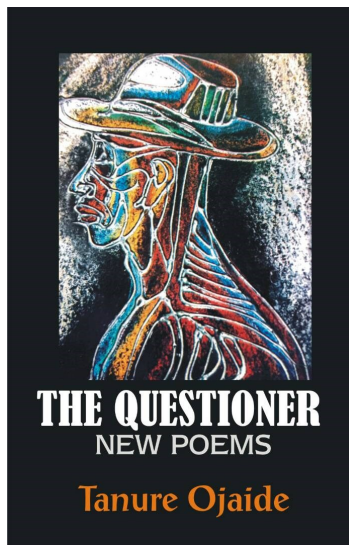
His other publications include book reviews in *Bulletin of Latin American Research* 37, no. 3 (2018), 370-372; and *Canadian Journal of History* 52, no. 1 (2017), 168-170 respectively. He also wrote two blog entries:

- "Why Is There Racial Inequality in a Society Without Racists? [original is in Spanish: "¿Por qué hay desigualdades raciales en una sociedad sin racistas?"]", *Debate Callejero*, January 30, 2018.
- "Beyond the Cold Fact: The WPA Narratives, Brazil's Black Peasants, and the Conduct of Oral History," *The Oral History Review Blog*, October 24, 2017.

In addition, De la Torre served as a jury member for the prestigious 2017 Frederick Douglass Book Prize, created jointly by the Gilder Lehrman Center for the Study of Slavery, Resistance, and Abolition at Yale University's MacMillan Center and the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History in New York City. Below (*right*), De la Torre posed with the three finalists: Rashauna Johnson, Al Brophy, and Manisha Sinha (winner); and (*left*) with David Blight, director of the Gilder Lehrman Center, at the award ceremony on February 23, 2018.



## MORE BOOKS BY AFRS FACULTY



**Dr. Tanure Ojaide's** latest books are *God's Naked Children* (Malthouse Press, 2018) and *The Questioner* (Kraftgriots, 2018). The former is a collection of short stories written over a period of five years. The stories are fictional but inspired by the author's experiences and reflections on the everyday encounters. The 21 short stories include such intriguing titles as "The Priest's Dog Falls in Love," "The Pregnant Widow," "The Women's Final Solution," and "Foolish Professor!". The author said he wrote these stories for pleasurable reading but he also wanted them to "provoke thoughtful discussion" about social life and its compounding contradictions. In *God's Naked Children*, the reader may find him/herself becoming a member of the cast of characters paraded on these pages, thanks to the success of the author in using stories to dig deep into the stratigraphy of our imagination.

The second book, *The Questioner*, is a collection of unprecedented 105 brand new poems by Ojaide. The springing septuagenarian announced in the preface that he wrote these poems taking "into consideration the African experience in the age of globalization and . . . technology, and the need to sharpen the intellectual appetite through novel aesthetic experimentations". He continued: "The poet of today has to be an enchanter to turn the world from its many distractions to a new type of artistic beauty." Ojaide has recently critiqued contemporary African poetry as losing its vigor and relevance, and has argued that the genre is on life support. *The Questioner* may be the tonic that the anemic genre needed for revitalization. But in these verses, the reader would also enjoy a tasty and refreshing cocktail of African poetry.

## FACULTY BRIEFS

**Dr. Daniel Boaz** was reappointed as Assistant Professor of Africana Studies in May. She also received a University Faculty Research Grant and the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences' Junior Faculty Development Award to continue with her legal history study titled "Witchcraft Obeah and Vagrancy Spiritual Practice and Colonial Law in Britain's Atlantic Empire 1830s 1960s." She co-authored, with Tracey Benson (College of Education) an article titled "Leadership Amidst Racial Trauma and Unrest: UNC Charlotte's Response to the Shooting of Keith Scott," *Journal of Cases in Educational Leadership* (2017): 1-14.

**Dr. Crystal Eddins** has been named the 2018-19 Brown University's Ruth J. Simmons Postdoctoral Fellow for the Study of Slavery and Social Justice. She will take up residence in the university's Center for the Study of Slavery and Justice (CSSJ) during the academic year to work on her book manuscript tentatively entitled *African Diaspora Collective Action: Rituals, Runaways & the Haitian Revolution*. Eddins was also awarded a University of Florida Center for Latin American Studies Archival Research Grant, and the UNC Charlotte's Faculty Research Grant to support archival research in France and the United Kingdom, and qualitative field research in Jérémie, Haiti in summer 2018. Eddins also authored a book review on "Black Grassroots Activism", published in *Social Movement Studies* 16, No. 5 (2017): 629-632.

## DR. AKIN OGUNDIRAN'S ITINERARY



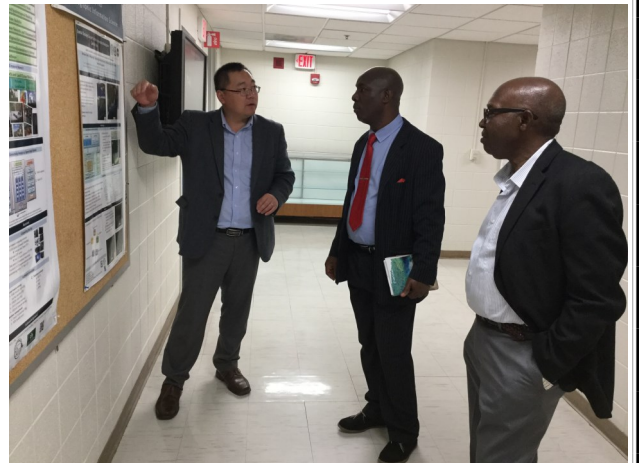
**Dr. Akin Ogundiran** was inducted as a Visiting Fellow of Magdalene College, University of Cambridge on May 17, 2018. This followed his election as a Yip fellow of the college last year, an honor of distinction that is bestowed annually on a scholar resident in the United States. Established in 1428, Magdalene College is one of the oldest in the 31-collegiate system of the University of Cambridge. The induction ceremony was led by the Master of the College, Dr. Rowan Williams (middle), who is also the Baron of Oystermouth and former Archbishop of Canterbury. The ceremony was attended by more than thirty other fellows.

Ogundiran spent the Easter term, April-July in Magdalene College carrying out research on the topic of early modern global commerce, political economy, and cultural history. Simultaneously, he held the Visiting Scholar position at the MacDonald Institute for Archaeological Research. He advised Cambridge graduate students working in the fields of African archaeology and African history, and he delivered a lecture titled "Colonist Strategies in the Making of Oyo Empire, 1570-1790" at the Cambridge Center for African Studies.

Earlier in the academic year, he hosted a meeting of members of the "Oyo Empire Archaeology" research team on campus (October 6, 2017). Participants included Dr. Wenwu Tang, Director of the Center for Applied Geographic Information Science (CAGIS); Dr. Babatunde Agbaje-Williams, professor emeritus, University of Ibadan; and Mr. Cornelius Oladipo, Conservator of Parks in the Nigerian National Park Service. The research team is investigating the long-term political, economic, and environmental history of one of ancient Africa's largest urban landscapes. The goal is to use the results to develop a deep-time understanding of how a complex society managed its fragile ecological landscape from about 500 to 1800 AD. Dr. Ogundiran and Dr. Tang presented the preliminary results of the research to the university community during the two-day meeting.

Ogundiran also received the Franklin Research Grant of the American Philosophical Society to support his research. And, in February and March, he led the second year of fieldwork in the metropolis of the ancient Oyo Empire investigating how household economy intersected with the political economy of the state. His research team made progress using landscape archaeological approaches to investigate past settlement ecology and water management strategies in the empire's metropolitan area.

At the Society of Africanist Archaeology conference in Toronto (June 18-22), Ogundiran co-organized a half-day session where he led a team of students and colleagues to present on the recent research findings from the Oyo Empire Archaeological Project. UNC Charlotte's PhD student Minrui Zheng (CAGIS) was one of the presenters. She presented a paper titled "Spatially explicit predictive modelling of settlement distribution in the Old Oyo Metropolitan Area" at the session.



## ON- AND OFF-CAMPUS: DR. DEBRA SMITH LED SEMINARS FOR RISING FRESHMEN AND K-12 TEACHERS

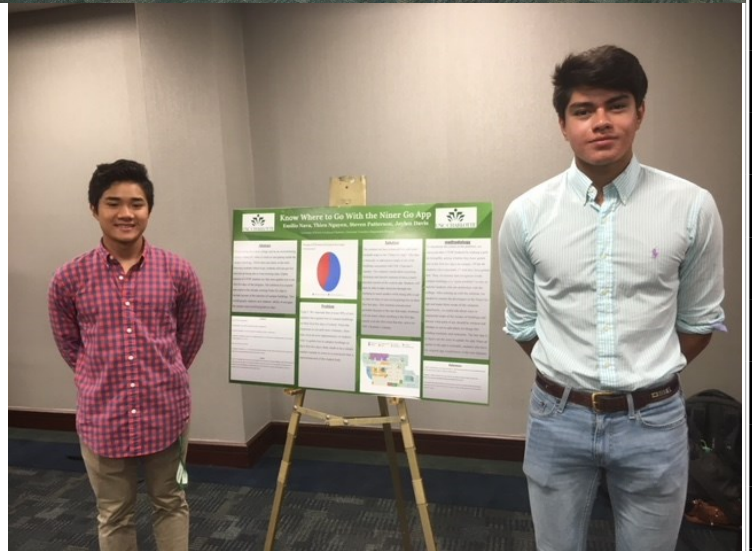
Fifty-six rising freshmen in the 2018 cohort of the University Transitional Opportunities Program (UTOP) participated in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Great Problems Seminar (GPS) led by **Dr. Debra C. Smith** in July and August.

GPS is one of the programs within the LEADS (Leadership, Entrepreneurship, Applied, Development, Skills) Initiative. The program helps students take ownership of their learning experience, guides them with the tools to identify and offer solutions to global and local issues/problems, and assists them with techniques on how to present ideas to different stakeholders. The program also emphasizes project-based learning (PBL), and provides students with the opportunities to develop their skills in creativity, critical thinking, communication, and collaboration.

The issues that the 2018 cohort of UTOP students worked on included:

- Expanding the Niner App to include the layout of the interior of classroom buildings so that students can better navigate them.
- Enhancing campus transitional programs to include domestic skills like cooking, doing laundry, and balancing funds.
- Increasing Charlotte public transportation ridership by offering rewards incentives.
- Implementing incentives for high school students to discourage distractive and disruptive use of mobile phones during class time.
- Implementing pet care training sessions in order to reduce the number of pets returned to shelters after holidays.
- Addressing sexual harassment in a group setting for college students.
- Creating an on-campus consignment shop to recycle clothing on campus.
- Partnering with local organizations to assist in the resettling of refugees in Charlotte.
- Mitigating weight gain during the first year of college.

Students began working on their projects in early July. They were required to identify roles for each group member, research their issue, write an abstract, and make contact with potential stakeholders. Representatives from Charlotte Solid Waste, The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Sheriff's Department (Sheriff-Elect Garry McFadden), and Charlotte-Mecklenburg Animal Care and Control, along with many UNC Charlotte staff and students engaged students during the poster presentation of their



projects on August 6.

Hosted by the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, LEADS "is designed to help students grow into critical and imaginative thinkers and engaged citizens, with a practical understanding of future careers."

Dr. Smith is a LEADS Faculty Fellow. Prior to this year's GPS, she participated in a Project-Based Learning workshop facilitated by faculty from Worcester Polytechnic Institute. The workshop was held at the UNC Charlotte Center City Campus in June, a follow-up to the workshop that Dr. Smith attended with other LEADS faculty fellows at Worcester Polytechnic Institute in 2017.

## DR. SMITH'S SEMINARS

The Charlotte Teacher's Institute (CTI) also selected **Dr. Smith** to serve as a seminar leader for K-12 teachers. CTI, a partnership of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools (CMS), UNC Charlotte, and Johnson C. Smith University, is dedicated to the professional development of CMS teachers.

Fourteen teachers (CTI Fellows) enrolled in Dr. Smith's *Minorities in Media: Unpacking Stereotypes* seminar in Fall 2017. The goal was for the teachers to use contents from the seminar to write curriculum plans for their respective grades; and to share the knowledge with fellow teachers in their schools. The seminar participants discussed how television portrayals and advertising can potentially manipulate our thoughts and beliefs on notions of inferiority and systems of inequality. They studied film, television, and advertising contents and discussed their often shallow, inaccurate and simplified depictions of gender, race, and minority cultures. Dr. Smith also elaborated on media and representation theories that could inform the Fellows' curriculum plans. The teachers collaborated on identifying effective reading materials and resources for the grade level they taught. Their subject areas included science, English, and history from kindergarten through high school. They also worked through drafts of their curriculum plans with Dr. Smith.



Final curriculum units written by the Fellows represented creative and innovative interpretations of the seminar. One English teacher used satire in her unit to correct media misrepresentations, while another "redefined" great literature for her kindergarten students by challenging the stereotypes within them. A history teacher examined identity development in August Wilson's play "Fences" using content from Dr. Smith's seminar. Finally, a science teacher wrote her curriculum unit on media's stereotypical representation of scientists.

## AFRS FALL 2018

### Chancellor's List

Daviana A. Fraser  
Patresha J. Williams

### Dean's List

Uthmann Abdus-Salaam  
Carryl L. Alston  
Ashton S. Hunter  
Aikera Mclean  
Demetria R. Percival  
Jaron B. Smalls  
Tameria L. Smith

*Congratulations!*

## SERVICE LEARNING FOCUSED ON SENIOR CITIZENRY IN CHARLOTTE

During fall 2017 and spring 2018, the Africana Studies Department offered an experimental writing intensive-cum-service learning colloquium titled "Race and Senior Citizenry in Charlotte." The course enabled students to engage one-on-one with senior citizens.

The first half of the course provided students with classroom instruction on the contemporary sociological and theoretical perspectives about the aged and the aging process. Themes such as healthcare, family caregiving, employment and retirement were explored with a specific focus on diversity, gender, social class, and race/ethnicity, to name a few. **Professor Sheryl Smith**, UNC Charlotte alumna and one of the pioneer graduates from a Masters program in African American Studies in the country, developed and taught the course. Her goal was "to expand students' perspectives and awareness about aging as a social phenomenon, as well as the personal and societal responsibilities to senior citizens.

The second half of the course offered the Service Learning Project component. This introduced students to face-to-face engagement with elderly residents, particularly those of African-American descent. Various senior living/healthcare facilities were contacted to solicit their participation and support. To date, the following facilities have hosted our students for service learning: Bette Rae Recreation Center Senior Nutrition Center; Saturn Nursing and Rehabilitation Center; The Mallard Creek Recreation Center; Ebenezer Baptist Church Senior Nutrition Program; Northlake House; and Greater Mt. Moriah Primitive Baptist Church Senior Ministry.

Students worked in groups. Their volunteer hours and tasks were coordinated and assigned by their facility's site directors and program coordinators. Each student committed to a minimum of fifteen (15) service hours over a period of five (5) weeks. Team Leaders documented the attendance and activities of their members and forwarded the information in a report that was due by 6:00pm each Friday.

Finally, each team combined their documented experiences to produce a collaborative essay, and a visual presentation of their accomplishments and assessment of their experience. All of which were shared with their classmates at the end of the semester.

Below is the abbreviated report of the Saturn Nursing and Rehabilitation Center Team in spring 2018. The members of the team are Lamar Fedrick, Jordan Morrison, Kelechi "Austin" Ajukwa, Devaughn Benion, Olivia Mainor, and Antionette Dyer.



"Working as a group at Saturn Nursing and Rehabilitation Center (Saturn), we all had the opportunity to . . . step out of our comfort zones and get a chance to interact with older citizens who grew up with a way of living that was different from that of our generation.

This was definitely a great learning experience and an opportunity for everybody in our group and in the class as a whole. . . . what we learned, saw, (and) heard would stick with us for a very long time. A great percentage of the residents at Saturn are of the Baby Boomer generation which accounts for about 20% of the U.S. population. This generation is the farthest from ours so there was a great opportunity to learn from them.

Interacting with this population was a great experience. We developed an understanding of what they are comfortable with, what they know, don't know, and even how to converse with them. Though they may be physically dependent on others for many things, the experience taught us that you can enjoy the little moments in life no matter how young or old you are. If our time at Saturn has made even just one resident feel

valued, heard, loved or appreciated . . . we hope we have laid the foundation for bridging the disengagement gap between our generation and theirs."



*Prof. Smith (above); Kurtis Mathieu with the residents / staff of Mallard Creek Recreational Center (below).*

## MY INTERNSHIP AT THE HARVEY B. GANTT CENTER --- KRISTEN GOODING

From July through September 2018, I had the privilege of interning at the Harvey B. Gantt Center for African-American Arts + Culture. I am currently pursuing my Bachelor's degree in Africana Studies, and my most recent courses have taught me how to evaluate and interpret sources, frame historical questions and develop thesis, and conduct research using the resources in the Special Collections and University Archives at J. Murrey Atkins Library. My courses in African American Experience (taught by Dr. Gregory Mixon) gave me the skill to identify and make use of relevant primary and secondary sources (i.e. voice recordings, video documentaries, written text, online sources, etc.) for understanding the past and present experiences of peoples of African descent in the United States.

Considering my educational experience and my interest to work in an African-American historical museum in future, I jumped at the internship opportunity that opened up at the Gantt Center in the summer. The application and vetting process was elaborate, including a written statement, completion of a lengthy questionnaire, and an oral presentation to the executive staff of the Gantt Center. I am grateful to be one of the three students from the department selected for the internship.

The three of us (including Tabitha Jones and Jamel Sowell) were charged to put together an exhibit that would be on display in the main hallway to the entrance of the Gantt Center. We worked under the supervision of Ms. Angela Chandler, Gantt's Educational Initiatives + Public Programs Manager, Emory Graduate Sariyah Benoit, and Professor Ogundiran. Our project examined the role that African Americans played in the history of Charlotte since 1865. The goal is to provide the visitors to the center with some of the highlights of African-American accomplishments in Charlotte.

I was specifically tasked with researching the role of religion in Charlotte's Black community. I researched the origins of several historical churches, and interviewed the pastor and staff members of Clinton Chapel A.M.E Zion (the oldest African American church in Charlotte) and Little Rock A.M.E Zion Church (whose founding members were originally members of Clinton Chapel). I compiled all of this information into digital access, adding it to the groups' collective efforts. I also completed research on the Afro-American Cultural Center (the precursor of the Gantt Center). In the process, I discovered the roles that Black churches played in the establishment and consolidation of the center. In addition, I helped to acquire the copyright permissions for the images that we wanted to use in the exhibition.



I am proud and grateful to be part of this historical exhibit. I hope my effort will meaningfully contribute to the preservation of the memory and history of African-American legacies in our rapidly changing city. There is the saying that "people who do not know where they are coming from would not know where they are going." An exhibit such as this helps dispel negative stereotypes, strengthens Black consciousness about the travail and triumph of our African and African American ancestors, and educates the general public about Black history in the United States.

I see this exhibit as a contribution to the continuous, shared fight for mental and physical freedom from oppression, injustice and inequality. It is so important to preserve our history and recite it in as many ways as possible. African-American history is not only an integral part of the U.S. history but it also informs our understanding of global history. Considering the role of the Atlantic slave trade and slavery in the making of the Americas, African American history is an important part of the history of the modern world. Our local history therefore feeds into the world history. It is my passion and my personal goal to join the efforts of those who are working on validating and preserving black history. I also hold interest in participating in archaeological projects that would allow me to handle and understand historical artifacts that speak to African and African American experiences from around the world.

## THE 2017-18 AFRS GRADUATES

## AFRS MAJOR

Princess	Akwasiamese Hampton
Elizabeth	Alls
Devaughn	Benion
Justin	Bridges-Thompson
Rebecca	Byrd
James	Covington
Astou	Dieye
Letaeja	Fitzgerald
Akayla	Galloway
Derrick	Glover
Tahira	Huff
Briana	Laws
Uriah	Lemay
Erikka	Martin

Aikera	Mclean
Janay	McAllister
Brittany	Moss
Peter	Nash
Madison	Pinkney
Ashely	Robinson
Lela	Rucker
Gabrielle	Small
Tameria	Smith
Nicole	Smith-Galloway
Kira	Taylor
Sarah	Teumer
Shon	Tillett
Nickie	Tyler

*Graduating AFRS seniors, family members, and faculty, December 2017*



## AFRS MINOR

Tanisha	Anderson
Jennifer	Benbow
Paris	Blackwell
Deja	Braham
Lauren	Bullock
Kenyatta	Carter-Reese
Naim	Cooper
Nasir	Grayman

Quincy	Kelly
Valerina	Ojukutu-MacAuley
Kamaria	Okolo
Bruce	Owen
Ronald	Reynolds
Chanel	Sherrod
Melania	Si Modjeca
Patrice	Somerville
Landis	Williams



## TASTE OF AFRICA: STUDENTS USED FOOD AND CUISINE TO DISCOVER CHARLOTTE'S CULTURAL DIVERSITY AND INTERNATIONAL FLAVOR

As a regional metropolis, Charlotte offers students the opportunity to learn about the diversity of cultures and international experiences that recent immigrants have brought to the city, especially from Central and South America, South and East Asia, the Middle East, and of course Africa. Policies and public commentaries about immigrants tend to focus on places other than Africa. Yet, immigrants from about fifty African countries are living in Charlotte, and many are building cultural institutions and businesses in the Queen City.

Dr. Akin Ogundiran wanted students to know about these new communities, their cultures, and social lives. Therefore, in his AFRS 2156 (African Civilization) class in spring 2018, he set students on a discovery path, using foodways as signposts. He called it the "Taste of Africa" project. Activities focused on the African food experience in Charlotte. Through ethnographic fieldwork, oral interviews, and participant-observer activities, students investigated how recent African immigrants are shaping the food culture of the city. They visited African and mainstream grocery stores to collect samples of African foods. They also dined in African restaurants and learned the variations in African dining etiquette and social interactions. They were fascinated that many of the foods currently being labeled as "super foods" in the media and health clubs (e.g., fonio, teff, amaranth, baobab fruit and leaf, sorghum, and moringa) originated in Africa.



*AFRS 2156 Students*

The project enabled students to connect the deep-time history of Africa with their own immediate community and environment. Through foods and cuisines, they met Charlotte's new African immigrants and business owners. They were able to connect the new food cultures with the ones brought centuries ago by the older African diasporas—African Americans and Afro-Caribbeans. Students gained practical and applied knowledge about African civilizations and they used cuisines to understand the hybridity and intersections of all cultures. They also learned about African environments, the health benefits of "eating African", and the challenges that globalization and climate change pose to food security.

Students presented their findings in an exhibition titled "African Foods: History and Culture" on April 16. Packaged African foods from Egypt to South Africa, and Senegal to Ethiopia were on display. Nigerian and Caribbean dishes were served for the enjoyment of all students and guests. The CLAS Dean's Office was ably represented by Associate Dean Banita Brown and Associate Dean Shawn Long. AFRS faculty affiliate, Dr. Jeffrey Leak was also present. The final version of the exhibition will be installed in the Department of Africana Studies.



*Ikechukwu Asiegbunam with his group poster*

## THE 2018 AFRICANA ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE FEATURED TRANSNATIONAL FILMMAKER AND GENRE-BENDING THEMES



We were very pleased to host Burkinabe/French filmmaker, Cedric Ido, as this year's artist-in-residence (April 2 - 8). Spearheaded by **Courtney Singleton**, AFRS affiliate and College of Business staff, the residency was organized in coordination with the International Film Festival on campus and with the support of the Chancellor's Diversity Mini Grant.

Cedric Ido is a versatile artist, author, director, actor and illustrator. Born in Burkina Faso, he grew up in Stains, a small suburban town near Paris. He considers himself a storyteller. His previous short film, the award winning and critically acclaimed *Hasaki ya Suda*, was exhibited worldwide in festivals at London, Toronto, Durban, Dubai, and Venice, among others. He has also directed documentaries such as *Un Stains de musique*, in which he followed several artists from his hometown, and recorded their struggle to exist through their art. As an actor, Mr. Ido starred in several TV series, as well as many films,



such as *Mirage at St-Anna* by Spike Lee (2008) and *Les enfants du Pays* (2006) with Michel Serrault. His short film *Twaaga* which takes place in Burkina Faso (West Africa) was also exhibited in previous festivals all over the world, and it has received several awards including best short

film at Seattle International Film Festival and the African Movie Academy Award for best short film, alongside a pre-selection to the Oscars. His latest Feature film "Chateau", co-directed with M. Barry, came out in France during the summer of 2017, and it is currently exhibiting in many countries across the globe.

Ido participated in many events during his week on campus including the screenings of his films *Twaaga*, *Hasaki Ya Suda*, and *Chateau*. Students, faculty and staff as well as the general public were invited to these open screenings where Cedric spoke about the films in an open dialogue, engaging in discussions related to transnational cinemas, the unique location of diasporic filmmakers, global environmental issues, and more. The film festival, run by Dr. Michele Bissiere (Professor of French) featured Cedric's work in a collection for African Cinema. This was part of an initiative championed by Courtney Singleton and the Africana Studies department to introduce a different narrative of Africa and African films to the university and local community.

While in residence, Ido attended several classes including African Cinema, Topics in Japanese Film, and Introduction to Film. Students were shown his short films in class or before his visit and were able to spend more than an hour speaking with the artist-in-residence about filmmaking and his work. Special thanks to Dr. Honore Missihoun (Africana Studies), Dr. Phillip Kaffen (Japanese Studies), and Will S. Davis (Film Studies) for hosting Cedric in their courses and incorporating his films into their coursework.

Meetings with faculty resulted in potentials for future collaboration. Dr. Lisa Homann (Assistant Professor of Art History) met with Cedric Ido to discuss her research and knowledge of mask rituals in Burkina Faso, the country where he was born and in which one of his films is set. Cedric also met with Dr. Eddy Souffrant of the Philosophy department and Dr. Tanure Ojaide (Professor of Africana Studies). His visit prompted in-depth discussions of what exactly is African cinema and the future of filmmaking on the continent and by Africans in the diaspora.

We are grateful to Dean Nancy Gutierrez, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, for sponsoring Ido's visit, and for meeting with the filmmaker to share ideas about representation, media, diversity and internationalization in the university curriculum.

## PROFESSOR EMERITI RECEIVED THE AFRICANA STUDIES FOUNDERS AWARD

Retired UNC Charlotte faculty, Dr. Ann Carver and Dr. Herman Thomas, were honored at this year's Africana Studies conference with the department's inaugural Founders Award. The honor recognized the significant and outstanding roles these professor emeriti played in establishing and nurturing Black Studies at UNC Charlotte. Presiding at the ceremony, the department chair, Dr. Akin Ogundiran, explained the need "to have accurate institutional memory, and to always use history as a guide in our planning for the present and the future." He extolled the strong commitment of Dr. Carver and Dr. Thomas to the project of Black Studies; as well as their unalloyed support for Dr. Maxwell-Roddey, the founding director of Black Studies and founding chair of African American and African Studies (now Africana Studies) at UNC Charlotte. "Dr. Maxwell-Roddey could not have done it all by herself. These two senior colleagues made the dream become a reality," Ogundiran added. Faculty, students, and family members were in attendance to celebrate the occasion. Both Dr. Carver and Dr. Thomas expressed appreciation for the honor.



*Dr. Herman Thomas and Dr. Ann Carver (second and third from left) with faculty and staff.*

## CITATION OF DR. ANN C. CARVER

Ann C. Carver earned her Ph.D. from Emory University in 1968 and joined Morehouse College the same year as Assistant Professor of English. She came to UNC Charlotte in 1969 as Assistant Professor of English. That was the very same year that the Black Students in the university began making demands for social and curricular changes. These demands included the recognition of Black Students Union, development of curriculum on Black experience, and establishment of Black Studies program.

With her background in Morehouse College, Dr. Carver was appointed in 1969 to serve as chair of the Faculty-Student Black Studies Program Creation and Institutionalization committee. The committee was charged with the responsibility to develop curriculum for Black Studies program, and a mechanism for its administration. Holding this position until 1979, Dr. Carver was instrumental in galvanizing campus-wide support for the program in an environment where some members of the university community initially questioned the legitimacy of Black Studies in the academy. Dr. Carver's forceful presence, persistent advocacy, and persuasive strategies changed many minds. She systematically drew attention to the irrational attitudes of the American public towards Black citizens, and the ignorance of a section of the university professoriate about Africana history and civilization. She became a moral torch bearer for social justice on campus, and insisted UNC Charlotte has an obligation to serve the needs of its students for a broad education that includes African and African American experiences.

Dr. Carver succeeded in leading the effort to select the first director of UNC Charlotte's Black Studies Program, Dr. Bertha Maxwell Roddey, in 1971. And, she worked side by side with Dr. Maxwell Roddey to teach, advise, and help students in the Black Studies Program. She was one of the first faculty at UNC Charlotte to teach courses on Africana humanities. She created and taught a course on the African and African-American Studies within the freshman block. She also co-developed and co-taught "Survey of Black Studies".

Likewise, Dr. Carver was one of the first faculty to teach courses on Women's Literature, and served as the first Coordinator of UNC Charlotte's Women's Studies Program. She led the efforts for many years to create the Concentration in Women's Studies as an interdisciplinary program. In the spring of 1984, after years of negotiations, the program was approved by the UNC administration.

## CITATION OF DR. HERMAN E. THOMAS

**Herman E. Thomas** was educated in the public schools of North Carolina, Tennessee, and Ohio and he holds four earned degrees – Bachelors of Science from North Carolina A&T University (1963), Bachelors of Divinity and Masters in Theology from Duke University Divinity School (1966), and Ph.D. from Hartford Seminary Foundation (1978). Thomas joined UNC Charlotte in 1974 as a professor of Religious Studies. He arrived at the very time that Professor Maxwell-Roddey was developing the curriculum and vision for one of the oldest Black Studies programs in the U.S. Professor Thomas immediately joined this effort. He worked tirelessly alongside Dr. Maxwell-Roddey to establish the African American and African Studies (AAAS) Department at UNC Charlotte, and to develop the curriculum that led to the baccalaureate degree in AAAS.

Professor Thomas also played a leading role in organizing the first meeting that led to the establishment of the National Council for Black Studies, the official accrediting body for Black and African-American Studies.

A visionary who believed in the community engagement mission of Black Studies, he was one of the key UNC Charlotte faculty who supported the efforts to establish the Afro-American Cultural Center, what is now known as The Harvey B. Gantt Center for African-American Arts + Culture. He served as the founding member of the center's board of directors, and later as chair of the board from 1979 to 1984, and again from 1999 to 2001.

A beloved teacher and mentor, Dr. Thomas realized the need to ensure incoming freshmen were supported and successfully transitioned into the new university

environment. Hence, in 1986, Thomas founded the University Transitional Opportunities Program (UTOP), which brings incoming students to campus in the summer before their freshman year. The counseling, tutoring and social activities the students receive help them get a running start on their college experience. UTOP is one of the anchor programs at UNC Charlotte geared towards student success, retention, and timely graduation.

In appreciation of his multifaceted contributions to the Charlotte community's life, the Pride Magazine honored Thomas as Citizen of the Year in 1999 and as one of Charlotte's 47 Most Influential African American Leaders in 2002.

On April 11, 2005, Thomas was recognized with the UNC Charlotte 2005 Distinguished Service Award for his personal commitment to educational opportunity for all students.

In May 2005, Professor Thomas officially retired from UNC Charlotte after 31 years of service. After that, he joined Shaw University, the oldest historically Black institution in the South, as Vice President for Academic Affairs. He retired from Shaw in 2009.

Dr. Thomas is retired but not tired. He continues to engage with UNC Charlotte, supporting the mission of UTOP and the mission of the Africana Studies Department.



*Dr. Thomas, accepting the award*

## AFFILIATE FACULTY SPOTLIGHT-1



Photos by: Rob Houseman

**Dr. Lisa Homann**, Department of Art and Art History, received a Faculty Research Grant in spring 2018 to develop a unique artist-patron collaboration in Burkina Faso. She also received a Mini Diversity Grant (co-authored with Aspen Hochhalter) from the College of Arts + Architecture for the fall 2018 exhibition, *Vibrant Practices: Masquerade in Southwestern Burkina Faso* which displays a selection of her research photographs and videos from over the past ten years. The exhibition opened in the Rowe Side Gallery on August 22 and will run through September 22.

Homann's editorial, "First Word: Future Thinking: Propositions and Possibilities for African Art History," co-authored with Carol Magee and Victoria Rovine, was published in the Winter 2017 issue of *African Arts*. This special volume, "African Art Histories' Futures" celebrated the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the journal.

Homann was also very active in academic presentation circuit. In June 2018, she presented "Personal Archives as Creative Catalyst: Photography, Collaboration, and Masquerade in Bobo-Dioulasso, Burkina Faso," at the Royal Anthropological Institute, The Department of Africa, Oceania, and the Americas of the British Museum and the Department of Anthropology at SOAS conference, *Art, Materiality and Representation*, in London. At the African Studies Association 60<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting in Chicago, she presented the paper, "Visibly Muslim: Consolidating Aesthetics and Identity in a West African Masquerade Institution." And, at

the 16th Annual Africana Studies (UNC Charlotte) Symposium, she presented the paper, "Banned!...Sort of: Portrait Masks in Southwestern Burkina Faso", and served as a discussant for the Film Screening of *Hasaki Ya Suda*.

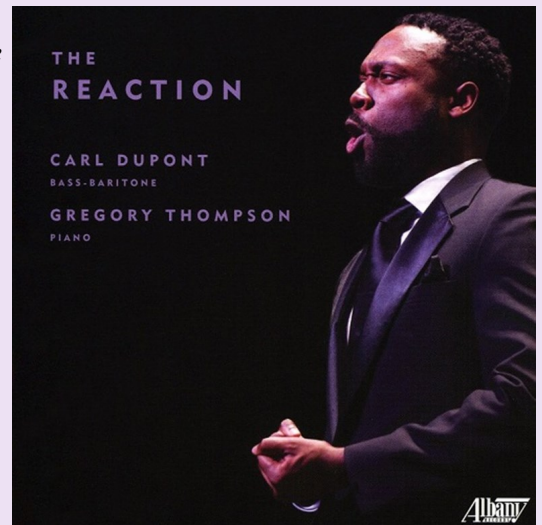
**Carl DuPont**, Assistant Professor of Voice, recently released an album of art songs by Black Composers for bass and baritone voice entitled *The Reaction* on Albany Records. With Dr. Gregory Thompson of Winston-Salem State University on the piano, *The Reaction* features songs by Black composers, most of which have never been recorded.

The album is a culmination of the quest by Prof. DuPont to find and perform "songs that celebrated Blackness and the Black experience in order to make sure the next generation of students and teachers who searched for art songs by Black composers found resources that were easily accessible, practical, and appropriate."

*The Reaction*, according to Albany Records, "charts new territory in recording many previously unrecorded works by Black composers for the low male voice, and showcases a wide range of languages and styles that exist for this genre."

DuPont plans to publish in future a musical score that could accompany the works. The full track listing of the songs on the albums can be found at [https://www.albanyrecords.com/mm5/merchant.mvc?Screen=PROD&Store\\_Code=AR&Product\\_Code=TROY1735&Category\\_Code=a-NR](https://www.albanyrecords.com/mm5/merchant.mvc?Screen=PROD&Store_Code=AR&Product_Code=TROY1735&Category_Code=a-NR).

The songs are available on iTunes, Spotify, and Amazon, among others.

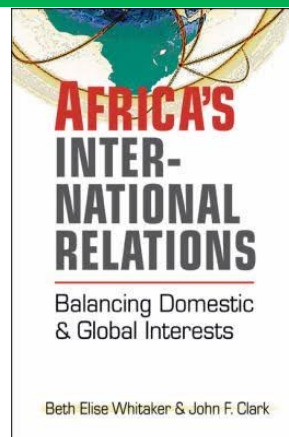


## AFFILIATE FACULTY SPOTLIGHT-2



**Dr. Beth Elise Whitaker** is the co-author (with John F. Clark) of *Africa's International Relations: Balancing Domestic and Global Interests*, Lynne Rienner Publishers (September 2018). She is also co-author of the following forthcoming articles and chapters:

- “Which immigrants should be naturalized? Which should be deported?: Evidence from a survey experiment in Côte d’Ivoire.” *Political Research Quarterly* (with Nathaniel Cogley and John Doces).
- “Natural Resource Exploitation and Sexual Violence by Rebel Groups.” *Journal of Politics* (with James Igoe Walsh, and Justin M. Conrad).
- “Rebel Natural Resource Exploitation and Conflict Duration.” *Journal of Conflict Resolution*. (with Justin M. Conrad, Kevin T. Greene, and James Igoe Walsh).
- “Funding Rebellion: The Rebel Contraband Dataset.” *Journal of Peace Research* 55(5), 2018: 699-707 (with James Igoe Walsh, Justin M. Conrad, and Katelin M. Hudak).



**Dr. Kendra Jason** was reappointed as Assistant Professor of Sociology in May 2018. She coauthored (with Kevin Stainback and Charles Walter) a forthcoming article in *Research in the Sociology of Work* titled “Organizational Context and the Well-Being of Black Workers: Does Racial Composition affect Psychological Distress?” And, she is co-author (with Kimya Dennis) of “Black Women Academics: Artistic Expression through Teaching, Research, and Social Activism” in *Issues in Race & Society: An Interdisciplinary Global Journal* (forthcoming). She was named the Butler-Williams Scholar of the National Institute on Aging; and Catalyst Faculty Fellow at UNC Charlotte.

Dr. Jason is currently developing a Study Abroad Program to Cuba titled "CUBA: Race, Identity, and Culture" and scheduled for June 9-23, 2019. The goal of the program is to facilitate a cross-cultural understanding of race, ethnicity, and identity formation in the U.S. and Cuba. The course is open to undergraduate and graduate students across multiple departments (SOCY 4090, AFRS 4050, LBST 2102, and LTAM 3002; SOCY 6090, AFRS 5000, and LTAM 6801). An information session will be available at the Study Abroad Fair, September 26, SAC Food Court, 10am-2pm. Contact: [kjason@unccl.edu](mailto:kjason@unccl.edu).



**Dr. Eddy Souffrant's** publications in the past year included “Hospitality, Identity, and Cosmopolitanism: Antidotes to the Violence of Otherness”, *The Routledge Handbook of Pacifism and Nonviolence*, Andrew Fiala (ed.), Routledge, 2018.

His next book *Global Development Ethics: A Critique of Global Capitalism* is in production with Rowman and Littlefield (London).

He was invited to the 25<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the Society for Philosophy in the Contemporary World, Portland, OR where he gave a paper on “Patriotism and the Foreigner”, July 14 – 19, 2018. And, he delivered a talk on “The Ethics of Disaster” in the Department of Philosophy, Hofstra University, NY, March 18-20, 2018.

Dr. Souffrant chaired the plenary session on “RSE et les Écoles de Management”, at ADERSE- Semaine du Management 2018, Cité Internationale Universitaire in Paris, May 2018, and served as a speaker at the session.

He also served as a Visiting Professor at IAE Lyon, École Universitaire de Management, Université Jean Moulin, France, May 2018.



**Dr. Felicia Harris** was a finalist for the 2017-2018 Part-time Faculty Teaching Award administered by the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. She was a panel speaker at the Southeastern Women's Studies Association (SEWSA) Annual Conference in February 2018 (Clemson University, SC). Her presentation was titled "Sociological Aspects of Sports Culture." Dr. Harris also gave a paper on "21st-Century Sara Bartmaan: Commodification of Gender in Hip Hop Culture, Reality TV, Black Women, Wives and WAGS" at the 2018 National Women's Studies Association conference in Atlanta, GA, Nov. 8-11, 2018.

## DR. MALIN PEREIRA: COLLAPSING BOUNDARIES

For **Dr. Malin Pereira**, Executive Director of the Honors College, Professor of English, and Africana Studies Faculty Affiliate, it's all about collapsing boundaries and creating opportunities. She continued to work across the areas of research, teaching and service, and administration of the Honors College.

She finalized revisions to two essays on contemporary African American poets: "An Angry, Mixed Race Cosmopolitanism: Race, Privilege, Poetic Identity, and Community in Natasha Trethewey's *Beyond Katrina and Thrall*." In *Cosmopolitanism, Race and Ethnicity*, Ewa Luzcak, Anna Pochmara and Samir Dayal, eds. (forthcoming, 2018); and "Thylas Moss's *Slave Moth: Liberatory Verse Narrative and Performance Art*." In *Slavery and the Post-Black Imagination*, Bert Ashe and Ilka Saal, eds. (forthcoming, U Washington P, 2019).

Pereira presented a paper at the Multi-Ethnic Studies in Europe and the Americas [MESEA] Conference in Graz, Austria, in June 2018 on a panel with her colleague Jeffrey Leak: "Flying Home? Race, Identity, and Transnational Kinship in Contemporary Black Poetry." She also served as the keynote speaker at Norfolk State University's Undergraduate Research Conference on March 21, 2018, speaking on "*Slave Moth: Research, Poetry, and New Ideas about Slavery*."

In her honors education work nationally, she collaborated on and presented as part of a panel with honors administrators from two community college and from two honors colleges at large public 4-year universities on "The Struggle for Justice in Transfer Student Access to Honors: Challenges and Best Practices," National Collegiate Honors Council (NCHC) Conference, Atlanta, GA, October 8-12, 2017.

Closer to home, Dr. Pereira continues to serve on UNC Charlotte's Council on University Community Working Group (to further diversity, inclusion and access) under the leadership of Dr. Chance Lewis; the Student Success Working Group; the Undergraduate Research Conference



Dr. Pereira, her students, and poets at the Furious Flower Poetry summit.

Committee; and as a mentor for Charlotte Research Scholars.

In the spring of 2018, she underwent a comprehensive review of her leadership of the Honors College and has been reappointed to another three-year term as executive director. She has led the Honors College since 2012.

The highlight of Dr. Pereira's past year professionally was taking eight of her students to Furious Flower Poetry Center's Collegiate Summit in March 2018 at James Madison University, where she served as one of the Center's advisory board members. The summit featured readings by, and workshops with, leading contemporary black poets, including Pulitzer Prize winner Tyehimba Jess, Brenda Marie Osbey, and Anastacia-Renee. The students had the opportunity to speak with many of these poets, including Kevin Young, poet and director of the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture. It was an amazing experience for the students.

## MIXON NAMED A FULBRIGHT RESEARCH CHAIR AND BAGGED GEORGIA'S RESEARCH EXCELLENCE AWARD

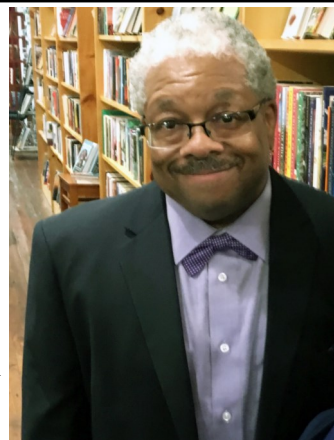
It has been a busy year of accolades, awards, and service for **Dr. Gregory Mixon**. In May, he received the news that he has been awarded a Fulbright's Research Chair in North American Studies for spring 2019 at York University, Canada. He will teach one undergraduate course on the United States Civil War and its Legacy, 1840-1877 while also researching the history of black militiamen in the Carolinas, 1865-1898, as well as making public presentations of his research.

In addition, the Georgia Historical Records Advisory Council (GHRAC) named Dr. Mixon a recipient of its 2018 Award for Excellence in Research for his book *Show Thyself a Man: Georgia State Troops, Colored, 1865-1905*.

Mixon has also been busy in conference circuits. He served as a judge at Charlotte Research Symposium, July 30, 2018, and National History Day, March 2, 2018, both on campus. He was a discussant at "#Hashtag to Action: A Conversation of the state of the Country and UNC Charlotte Regarding Race Relations and How to Have Discussions around Civil Discourse," January 25, 2018. He presented a paper: "Creating Black Power: South Carolina at the Dawn of Freedom" at the National Council for Black Studies annual meeting in Atlanta (March 17, 2018); and served as a commentator on the panel: "Black Thought Matters: Race, Gender, and Abolition, Maria Stewart in Historical Perspective," at the African American Intellectual Historical Society annual meeting at Brandeis University, March 30, 2018. He organized and chaired the panel: "Examining the African Diaspora: New Research by UNC Charlotte Faculty," for the Africana Studies Annual Conference, February 23, 2018.

At the Association for the Study of African American

Life and History annual meeting, October 3-7, 2018, in Indianapolis, he will present a conference paper: "Robert Brown Elliott, Assistant Adjutant General, National Guard, South Carolina, 1870-1875" on a panel he organized: "Land, Power, Sex, and War: Blacks Exercising Power in the 19th and 20th Centuries,"; and will serve as commentator on the panel: "Atlantic Port Cities in the African Diaspora: Environmental and Labor Perspectives" organized by Dr. Oscar de la Torre on October 4, 2018.



He organized a plenary session for the 2018 Southern Historical Association annual meeting in Birmingham, Alabama and will preside at this event on November 10, 2018: "Having our Say: African American Museum Professionals in the 21st Century". The session will feature Dr. Lonnie Bunch, Director National African American Museum and Culture, Dr. Meredith Evans, Director, Jimmy Carter Presidential Library, Dr. Khalil Muhammad, Harvard University Kennedy School of Government, Dr. Howard Robinson, Alabama State University, and Dr. Brenda Tindal, former UNC Charlotte Africana Studies/History Major, and now Director of Education and Engagement at the International African American Museum in Charleston, South Carolina.

Mixon is the author of a review essay: "Liberation Warriors, African American Troops, Northern States, and the Civil War" published in the *Journal of African American History*, 103 (1-2), 2018: 197-209.



More pictures from the 16th Annual AFRS Conference, February 22-23



## NEW LECTURERS AND FACULTY AFFILIATES

**Dr. Honore Missihoun** has been appointed to a full-time Lecturer position in the department. Dr. Missihoun is not new to the university. He has been teaching in the Africana Studies Department since 2010 as adjunct faculty during which he offered courses in eleven different areas at the lower and upper divisions, including writing intensive, liberal arts, film, and senior seminar courses. He developed two new classes during that period – "Black Atlantic Literature" and "Environmental Literature in Africa and African Diaspora".

Dr. Missihoun earned his Ph.D. in Romance Languages and Comparative Literature at UNC Chapel-Hill, majoring in Spanish and Black Atlantic Culture with minors in Portuguese Studies (Afro-Brazilian Culture and Lusophone Literature) and French Studies (Francophone Africa and Caribbean).

Missihoun will play a major role, on behalf of the department, in the university's curriculum initiatives, especially in the areas of critical thinking and communication. He will also use critical pedagogy to advance the teaching mission of the department in three areas: ecocriticism, Black Atlantic Culture, and African Cinema.



Photo credit: Lynn Roberson

A scholar-teacher, Dr. Missihoun is the author of *Reading the World and Reading the Word, Négritude Critique: Literary Anthropology or Critical Pedagogy* (2009). He was a Carnegie Foundation fellow at the University of Jos, Nigeria in summer 2017.



We welcome **Dr. Monika Sawhney** as Africana Studies affiliate faculty. Dr. Sawhney is an Associate Professor in the Department of Public Health Services, College of Health and Human Services. She holds Bachelors of Science and Master of Social Work from the University of Baroda, India, and Ph.D. in Public Health (International) from Tulane University's School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine. Her professional and research interests are in the areas of demographic and health issues with a focus on maternal and child health, nutrition, reproductive health, immunizations, human resources for health sector, and strengthening of health systems.

Prior to coming to UNC Charlotte in 2017, Dr. Sawhney served as an Associate Professor and Director of Bachelors of Public Health Program at Marshall University. She has also worked as a consultant for UNICEF, WHO, and John Snow Inc. in program implementation and evaluation projects. Working in Ethiopia with WHO and CDC, she coordinated and managed the measles immunization campaign and designed and implemented training programs for the country's health staff working at different levels. Some of the other recent Public Health assignments that Dr. Sawhney has undertaken include:

- (1) End Child Hunger and Under-Nutrition Initiative – Meta analysis for nutrition programs implemented across the globe;
- (2) Missed opportunities for immunization in developing countries;
- (3) Evaluation of HIV/AIDS programs;
- (4) Facility based assessments (mainly in African countries); and
- (5) Childhood mortality dynamics (including immunizations, child mortality, child nutrition, antenatal and pre-natal care, breastfeeding) in developing countries.

Dr. Sawhney has research, field, and program related experience in the following countries: Austria, Bangladesh, China, Costa Rica, Ethiopia, India, Kenya, Tanzania, Turkey, and United States.

## NEW FACULTY AFFILIATES AND LECTURERS



We are also pleased to welcome Professor **Lydia C. Thompson** as Africana Studies affiliate faculty.

Professor Thompson is the new Chair of the Department of Art and Art History. She has held positions as the Director of the School of Art at Texas Tech University; Department Head at Mississippi State University; and Assistant Dean of Undergraduate Studies at Virginia Commonwealth

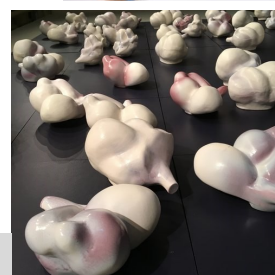
University, among others. She has also served on the boards for National Council of Education for Ceramics; National Council of Arts Administrators; and most recently the Lubbock Arts Alliance in Lubbock, TX.

A ceramic artist and Africana Studies scholar, Professor Thompson received her Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from The Ohio State University and her Master of Fine Arts degree from the New York College of Ceramics at Alfred University. She received a Fulbright Hayes grant to conduct research on traditional architecture in Nigeria, a VCUarts Institutional Grant for research at the International Ceramic Research Center Artist-in-Residency in Denmark, and also completed a residency at the Medalta Ceramic Center in Medicine Hat, Canada.

Professor Thompson's work has been included in galleries, art centers, and museums such as the Society for Contemporary Crafts, Pittsburgh; Baltimore Clayworks; the Ohr O'Keefe Museum in Biloxi, Mississippi; the Kentucky Museum of Art and Craft; Te Temauta Gallery

in New Zealand, and Guldegaard in Denmark. She has completed public commissions for businesses and her work is in private and public collections in North Carolina, Virginia, New Mexico, New Zealand, Austria, Switzerland, and Italy. She has conducted community workshops with children, adults and universities, given lectures throughout the United States and has served as both juror and curator for national and regional exhibitions.

Her creative scholarship explores agriculture plant life as they relate to cultural identity, migration patterns, and traditional African utilitarian and ceremonial objects. She utilizes these images to create figurative amorphic forms and landscape patterns that may capture a particular geographic region. The abstract forms such as a group of floating cotton (*lower right*) speak subtly to the connectivity of atmosphere, earth and human existence, as well as cultural signifiers. She is also interested in how the atmosphere is controlled by commodity and nature.



A sample of Prof. Thompson's ceramic works



Prominent Charlotte attorney, **Kenneth Harris**, joined the department this fall as an adjunct professor of law and race. A North Carolina native, he earned his Juris Doctorate from University of Chapel Hill in 1988. He is the founder and principal of Ken Harris & Associates, a law firm that specializes in Civil Rights law, criminal law, sports and entertainment industry, business and real estate law, and worker's compensation, among others. Mr. Harris has represented many prominent sports and entertainment stars and businesses including Magic Johnson, Mathew Knowles, and Young Lord.

An entrepreneur and a major presence on Charlotte social scene, Mr. Harris is also a writer. His writings have been adapted into a screenplay. He is author of *Dark Trades* (Warren Publishing, 2017), a novel that explores 'What if slavery never ended and the South won the Civil War?' He is teaching "African Americans and the Legal Process" this fall, and he plans to teach other courses on race and the criminal justice system, entrepreneurship, and entertainment industry in the future.

## AFRICANA STUDIES FACULTY COUNCIL, 2018-19

## CORE FACULTY

**Danielle Boaz**, Legal History, Social Justice, Human Rights in Africa and the African Diaspora  
**Oscar de la Torre**, Brazil and Afro-Latin American History, Race, Environment  
**Crystal Eddins**, Social Movements, African Diaspora, Race and Ethnicity, Caribbean  
**Julia Jordan-Zachery**, Race, gender and public policy; African American Women and Politics  
**Honore Missihoun**, Black Atlantic, Lusophone & Spanish Literature, Africana Eco-Critical Literature  
**Akin Ogundiran**, Archaeology and Cultural History of Africa and the African Diaspora  
**Tanure Ojaide**, African and African Diaspora Literature/Culture  
**Veronica N. Robinson**, African Politics, Economic Development, and Conflict Studies  
**Debra Smith**, Media, Health, and Race in the U.S.  
**Dorothy Smith-Ruiz**, African American, Grandparenting, Aging, Health and Race

## ADJUNCT FACULTY

**Deonte Harris**, Ethnomusicology, African Diaspora  
**Felecia Harris**, Women's and Gender, African American Studies, and Diversity  
**Kenneth Harris**, Race and Law  
**Huma Ibrahim**, Postcolonial Studies, Feminism, African Literature  
**Charles Pinckney**, Hip-Hop Studies and Black Psychology  
**Sheryl W. Smith**, African American Studies  
**Annette Teasdell**, African American Literature and Culture

## AFFILIATED FACULTY

**Jose Batista**, Spanish and Caribbean Literature  
**Tracey Benson**, Educational Leadership, Equity, and Social Justice in School Administration  
**Lloyd Blenman**, International Finance, Futures, Asset Pricing; Africa, United States and the Caribbean  
**Jessamyn Bowling**, Sexual and Community Health  
**Christopher Cameron**, Colonial U.S., Religion and African American Intellectual History  
**John Cox**, Comparative Genocide; Modern European History: Social and Labor History  
**Carl Dupont**, Voice, Diversity and Music in Higher Education  
**Erika Edwards**, Colonial Latin American History,

African Diaspora

**Schnavia S. Hatcher**, Social Work, Race, and Class in the U.S.  
**Lisa Homann**, African, African-American, and African Diaspora Art History  
**Karen Flint**, History, Health and Healing in Modern Africa  
**Cheryl Hicks**, U.S./African-American History  
**Karen W. Hubbard**, Modern Dance, Contemporary and Traditional Jazz Dance, Ballet and Mime  
**Charles Hutchison**, Urban Education, Middle & Secondary Education  
**Kendra Jason**, Stratification, Race and Gender, Organizations  
**Peta Katz**, Cultural Anthropology of Africa: Gender  
**Jeffrey Leak**, African American Literature  
**Richard Leeman**, Rhetoric and African American Experience  
**Janaka Lewis**, African American Literature  
**Shawn Long**, Diversity and Organizational Communication  
**Gregory Mixon**, U.S./African American History  
**Julia Robinson Moore**, African American Religion and history  
**Krystion Obie Nelson**, Sports, Race, African Diaspora  
**Elisabeth Paquette**, Feminist and Queer Theory, Colonial Violence and Haitian Revolution  
**Malin Pereira**, African American Literature, Mixed Race Studies  
**Andrea J. Pitts**, Philosophy of Race and Gender; Latin American and U.S. Latinx Philosophy  
**Sonya Ramsey**, U.S./African American Gender History  
**Diana Rowan**, Social Work with HIV/AIDS, Africa, Social Group Work  
**Monika Sawhney**, International Public health, Africa  
**Courtney Singleton**, African Cinema  
**Eddy Souffrant**, Ethics in International and Corporate Affairs, Caribbean Philosophies  
**Peter Szanton**, African Studies, Sponsored Research  
**Lydia C. Thompson**, Ceramic Art; Africana Art, Aesthetics and Culture  
**Jodi Turner**, African American Studies, Gender, Body Aesthetics  
**Beth Whitaker**, African Politics, Refugee Studies, and Development  
**Greg Wiggan**, Black Intellectual Tradition, Urban Education, and Middle & Secondary Education  
**Tamara Williams**, African and African Diaspora Dance, Modern Dance

## AFRICANA STUDIES DEPARTMENT AT A GLANCE

**MISSION**

The mission of the Africana Studies Department is to educate and mentor students, discover and disseminate new knowledge, and engage diverse communities on the experiences of Africa-descended populations worldwide, with emphasis on culture, history, social policy, health, environment, entrepreneurship, race and diaspora studies, sustainability, social justice, and social responsibility within the critical liberal arts tradition.

**ACADEMIC PROGRAMS**

- ◆ B.A. Africana Studies
- ◆ B.A. Africana Studies with Concentration in Health and Environmental Studies
- ◆ Africana Studies Honors Program
- ◆ Minor in Africana Studies
- ◆ Graduate Certificate in Africana Studies (including 4+1 Early Entry program)
- ◆ Number of Student Credit Hours (SCH) in 2017-18 Academic Year: 7820
- ◆ Number of Major (Fall 2018): 73
- ◆ Number of Minor (Fall 2018): 42
- ◆ Number of Faculty: 10 full-time and 6 part-time

**ANNUAL PUBLIC ACADEMIC EVENTS**

- ◆ Dr. Bertha Maxwell-Roddey Distinguished Africana Lecture (*fall*)
- ◆ Artist-in-Residence (*spring*)
- ◆ Africana Studies Conference (*spring*)

**COMMUNITY OUTREACH PARTNERSHIPS**

- ◆ The Harvey B. Gantt Center for African-American Arts + Culture
- ◆ LATIBAH Museum
- ◆ Juneteenth Festival of the Carolinas
- ◆ Friends of Old Westview Cemetery, Inc.
- ◆ The Ebony Society of Philatelic Events and Reflection (ESPER)
- ◆ NC National Alliance of Black School Educators
- ◆ Yoruba Language-in-Community Outreach
- ◆ Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools
- ◆ Levine Museum of the New South
- ◆ Charlotte Area Senior Assisted Living Facilities
- ◆ Charlotte Area African and African Diaspora Businesses

**OCCASIONAL PUBLICATIONS**

- ◆ Charlotte Papers in Africana Studies
- ◆ Digital Africana Studies

**CORE AFRS FACULTY AWARDS, FELLOWSHIPS, AND GRANTS**

- ◆ All-Africa Okigbo Prize for Poetry (twice)
- ◆ Association of Nigerian Authors' Poetry Award (four times)
- ◆ BBC Arts and Africa Poetry Award
- ◆ Carnegie Foundation Fellowship (thrice)
- ◆ Commonwealth Poetry Prize
- ◆ Certificate of Special United States Congressional Recognition for Excellence in Service
- ◆ Choice Magazine's Outstanding Academic Title
- ◆ Dumbarton Oaks Research Grant
- ◆ Duke University School of Medicine Fellowship
- ◆ Yip Fellow, University of Cambridge
- ◆ Francis Forbes Society for Legal History Prize
- ◆ Franklin Research Grant, American Philosophical Society
- ◆ Fonlon-Nichols Lifetime Achievement Award
- ◆ Fulbright-Hays Fellowship (thrice)
- ◆ Gilder-Lehrman Center Fellowship
- ◆ Kathryn T. Preyer Scholar in American Legal History
- ◆ National Endowment for the Humanities Fellowship (twice)
- ◆ National Humanities Center Fellowship
- ◆ Nigerian National Order of Merit
- ◆ Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture
- ◆ Social Science Research Council Research Grant
- ◆ University of Texas Africanist Award for Research Excellence
- ◆ Wenner-Gren Foundation Research Grant
- ◆ UNC Charlotte's Bank of America Award for Teaching Excellence Finalist
- ◆ UNC Charlotte's First Citizens Bank Scholar Medal Award

**SAMPLE OF ALUMNI'S CURRENT EMPLOYMENT**

- ◆ Museum and Cultural Officer (e.g., International African American Museum; Reed Gold Mine State Historic Site)
- ◆ Higher Education Administrator (e.g., UNC Charlotte)
- ◆ Business Analyst (e.g., Bank of America)
- ◆ Customer Service Professional (e.g., Wells Fargo)
- ◆ Small Business Ownership (e.g., Piquasso Customs, LLC)
- ◆ Teacher (e.g., Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools)
- ◆ Social Worker (e.g., Echelon Care, Charlotte)
- ◆ College Professor (e.g., Winston Salem State University)
- ◆ Park and Recreation (e.g., Mecklenburg County)
- ◆ Healthcare (e.g., Carolina Medical Center)