



Director, Dr. Tara T. Green

**"We are preparing leaders. Their knowledge as African American Studies majors and as citizens in a rapidly changing world prepares them for success and to achieve the American Dream."**

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## Director's Corner

What a wonderful time to major in African American Studies at UNCG!

Our majors are witnessing a historic era, rich with events that have scholars buzzing with excitement. In January 2009, we saw the inauguration of our first African American president and the entry of a First lady, Michelle Obama who minored in African American Studies. I expect that our majors can discuss the President as the author of an autobiography, which some read in Robert Randolph's Black Masculinity course, and within the context of history as they have studied in Michael Cauthen's

Introduction to African American Studies course or Frank Woods's Blacks in American Society course.

In addition to their studies, many of our majors are volunteering in the Greensboro community. AFS majors and minors are flexing their mental muscles through their involvement in student organizations, such as those that focus on women's empowerment, fund-raising for the International Civil Rights Museum (set to open next year), and African American cultural studies (the AFS Club).

Clearly, we are preparing leaders. For those who tell me that they will use their degree



to start non-profit community centers, to enter graduate school, law school, or even medical school, I am proud to know them at this moment. Their knowledge as African American Studies majors and as citizens in a rapidly changing world prepares them for success and to achieve the American dream.

Read ahead to learn more about our students and our faculty as we move forward in the twenty-first century.

My best to all,  
**Tara T. Green, Ph.D.**  
Program Director

## AFS Fall Celebration – Celebrating Students

On December 8<sup>th</sup>, 2008, AFS students, faculty, alumni, graduates, and their family members joined us for a reception to celebrate the end of the semester. "We want our students and faculty to know that we are proud of them," explained Dr. Green, AFS Director.

Jordan Matthews became the first AFS graduate to receive a kente cloth stole monogrammed with "African American Studies, UNCG," as pictured to the right. Her family members applauded as she was congratulated by a receiving line of AFS faculty and affiliates. In addition,

the AFS program awarded Cameron Wynn and Tiffany Watson some additional funding to help make their trip to Botswana possible. Dr. Green also updated the crowd on the many accomplishments of AFS faculty.

Professor Logie Meachum serenaded the crowd with his guitar playing and singing, while everyone enjoyed refreshments and conversation. A wonderful time was had by all!



Graduate Jordan Matthews receives her stole.



2008 Graduate Reasha Tenaye.



**"CACE provides an opportunity for faculty, students and the community to engage in discussions that may not take place on campus otherwise"**

**– Dr. Willi Coleman**



**Olokun Ologbala, Ashanti White and Ernest Hill**



**AFS Student Worker LaTisha Moore with our CACE sign.**



**Attendees enjoy a session. For more pictures, see [www.uncg.edu/afs](http://www.uncg.edu/afs)**

## Spring Conversations with the Community

AFS hosted three stimulating "Conversations with the Community" during the Spring Semester. On February 10<sup>th</sup>, Dr. C.P. Gause discussed his newest book *Integration Matters: Navigating Identity, Culture and Resistance*. Dr. Dana Williams of Howard University joined us on March 24<sup>th</sup> to speak about "The Importance of Africana Cultures Through Literature." Our own Dr. Green spoke about her most recent book, *A Fatherless Child: Autobiographical*

*Perspectives of African American Men*, on April 14<sup>th</sup> in an event co-sponsored by Multicultural Affairs and the Black Faculty and Staff Association.

The AFS "Conversations with the Community Series" takes place the second Tuesday of each month at 6 pm. The series provides members of the Greensboro and UNCG community with an opportunity to converse with faculty and students about contemporary issues impacting people of African descent.

Check [www.uncg.edu/afs](http://www.uncg.edu/afs) for more information about fall events!



**Dr. Dana Williams of Howard University**

## CACE 2009

CACE 2009, "Race, Gender & Politics: Past, Present & Future," took place Thursday April 2<sup>nd</sup> and Friday April 3<sup>rd</sup>. This year's theme was inspired by the 2008 presidential election. "We wanted CACE to provide an opportunity for people to think critically about race, gender, and politics," explained Dr. Green. "I think we achieved that!"

CACE kicked off with a "Literary Café" on Thursday evening featuring novelist Ernest Hill, local poet Olokun Ologbala (D. Noble), and novelist and AFS Alumna, Ashanti White. "The Literary Café was a great addition to the CACE conference. The turnout was great and I enjoyed how the arts were politicized in order to comment on the unique traditions, conditions, experiences and overall sensibilities of Black Americans," said Olokun Ologbala. Friday featured a day of

workshops, panels, and presentations all centered on the conference theme. Student Stephen Leeper, who also presented at the conference, told us: "CACE adds some much needed cultural diversity in terms of discussions, workshops, and speakers regarding issues that are relevant to black people. We need a forum to express our frustrations, our concerns, our hopes, and our plans, and CACE provided that." Session topics included: government policy, Black women's political engagement, politicized service learning, and politics and Black faith traditions. Dr. Willi Coleman, professor emeritus from Vermont University and UNCG AFS adjunct told us: "I thoroughly enjoyed the sessions I attended. It was a picnic of wonderful intellectual stimulation!"

The day concluded with remarks from keynote speaker Dr. Curtis Austin on

"A Woman's Place is in the Struggle: Race and Gender in the Black Panther Party," which drew from his recent book *Up Against the Wall: Violence in the Making and Unmaking of the Black Panther Party*. Over one hundred people attended the talk and participated in question and answer afterwards. "I especially enjoyed Dr. Austin's presentation," said Stephen Leeper. "He delivered very informative and enlightening subject matter and helped to dispel some of the common myths and misconceptions about the Black Panther Party."

"We look forward to our next CACE conference, which will take place in November!" says Dr. Green. Please check [www.uncg.edu/afs](http://www.uncg.edu/afs) for details.



## New Certificate Program

In a process that began when Dr. Frank Woods was director and recently culminated in success, AFS has been approved for a graduate post-baccalaureate certificate. The program is available to currently enrolled graduate students at UNCG, as well as community members with undergraduate or graduate degrees in any field. Students will study the historical and political origins and foundations of African American Studies.

"We wanted to start this program so that current graduate students focused on African American studies could receive more formal guidance for their African American related studies," explained Dr. Frank Woods. "We also found that the certificate could be invaluable to people engaged in community work." Fall 2009 will mark the first class of AFS post-baccalaureate students and our first graduate course, titled African American Theoretical Perspectives, will be offered in the Spring. "This program is going to be an invaluable addition to the UNCG community," said Dr. Green. "We look forward to getting to know our new graduate students!"

## Welcome Dr. Cervenak!

Starting in the fall, Dr. Sarah Jane Cervenak will join our faculty in a joint appointment with Women's and Gender Studies (WGS). She holds a PhD in Performance Studies at NYU and has taught at Rutgers, UC Berkeley, and Stanford. She says her excitement about working with both programs, "is largely due to [her] philosophical and political commitments to the politics and poetics of anti-racism and feminism."

Dr. Cervenak was born and raised in New Jersey. However, she has family in Virginia and North Carolina and spent some time in Raleigh during her childhood. She still remembers the delicious southern cooking! Dr. Cervenak enjoyed that time and looks forward to getting to know Greensboro and the South, especially "the rich history in the African American civil rights and freedom struggles."

As a professor in both programs, this fall Dr. Cervenak will teach introductory courses in both African American Studies and Women's and Gender Studies.

"I enjoy the practices of teaching and learning and look forward to meeting and working with the faculty and students at UNCG as well as members of the larger Greensboro/Triad community," she reports. The African American Studies Program is pleased to welcome this new faculty member!



New AFS/WGS Professor Dr. Sarah Jane Cervenak

## Faculty News

AFS Faculty affiliate **Dr. Carlina de la Cova**, (Assistant Professor, Anthropology) received New Faculty and Summer Excellence grants to continue her investigations on skeletal health disparities among nineteenth century African Americans and Euro-Americans. In April, she presented at the Annual Paleopathology Meetings on the same topic.

AFS instructor **Logie Meachum's** acoustic duo blues act "Bump & Logie" won the 22<sup>nd</sup> annual

## New Classes

Students will be able to enjoy two new classes beginning Fall 2009. Dr. Green will teach a course titled "Black Women in the US," (AFS 325) which will use music, literature and film to explore the experiences of women of African descent. AFS is also offering an internship course (AFS 492), which will provide AFS majors and minors a chance to serve African American communities and gain valuable work experience.

## Director Publishes Book

Dr. Tara T. Green recently published *A Fatherless Child: Autobiographical Perspectives of African American Men* with the University of Missouri Press. The book examines the impact of fatherlessness on racial and identity formation in black men's autobiographies, including Langston Hughes' *The Big Sea*, Richard Wright's *Black Boy*, Malcolm X's *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*, and Barack Obama's *Dreams from My Father*. (See Lanita Withers Goins' longer article at <http://www.uncg.edu/ure/news/stories/2009/feb/green021909.htm>)

Piedmont Blues Preservation Society's contest and represented the region at the International Blues Challenge in Memphis, TN in February. He also presented a keynote storytelling performance on March 28 at the day-long community symposium, "When Death Knocks," held at First Lutheran Church in Greensboro.

On March 1<sup>st</sup>, AFS instructor **Dr. Willi Coleman** presented at the Palmer Memorial Institute in Sedalia, NC. Despite snow, almost thirty people came to hear her presentation, titled "On the Road to Miss Rosa: Black Women's Resistance to Segregated Public Transportation before Rosa Parks."

**Dr. Frank Woods** reviewed a pin in commemoration of his twenty years of service at UNCG.

AFS affiliate **Dr. Shelly Brown-Jeffy** received tenure and a promotion to Associate

professor. Affiliate professors **Dr. SallyAnn Ferguson and William Hart** received promotions to full professor.

Lecturer **Michael Cauthen's** article "Thought Experiments from the Edge of Infinity: Twin Paradoxes and the Nature of Some Extra-Terrestrial Intelligences," on the Flynn effect and the possible arbitrariness of intelligence tests will be published in the South Atlantic Philosophy of Education Society (SAPES) 2008 yearbook. He originally presented it as a presidential address at the SAPES annual conference.

**Dr. Green** received an award from Girls Reaching Out on May 3<sup>rd</sup> for contributions to education.

*On the Road to Miss Rosa:*  
Black Women's Resistance to Segregated  
Public Transportation Before Rosa Parks



A Talk by **Dr. Willi Coleman**

March 1, 2009, 2:00 PM

Charlotte Hawkins Brown Museum at  
Historic Palmer Memorial Institute

6136 Burlington Road/Hwy. Sedalia, North Carolina

**UNCG**

Date: April 16, 2009  
Time: 6:00pm-7:30pm  
Location: Joyner Room in the EUC

Contact the African American Studies Department for more information at 336-334-5507

**Mission: Preparation Grad School**

**Thinking about grad school? Come hear from graduate students as they talk about their experiences applying, preparing and adjusting to graduate life. Graduate students will be there to discuss their challenges. Come listen and ask questions.**

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The African American Studies Program at UNCG

## The AFS Club

The recently revived African American Studies Club allows AFS majors, minors, and other interested students to regularly meet and discuss pressing topics of the day. It also enables club members to create structured forums where persons with expertise in relevant issues are constructively engaged.

In March the club hosted a panel on "What Black men think about Black women," and in April on the impact of the recession on African Americans. Black Cultural

Tuesdays are another project of the club. Every other Tuesday the gatherings provide an outlet for informal student-led discussions of current events and community issues.

In addition, club members plan to participate in the upcoming "Relay for Life" which honors cancer survivors and raises money for cancer research, education, advocacy and service. Lecturer Michael Cauthen serves as the club's advisor.

## AFS Student Honorees

Two AFS students are the first to receive two new awards to honor exceptional students. This year's recipient of the "African American Studies Student of the Year" award and the "African American Studies Outstanding Graduating Senior" will be presented at the 2009 AFS Convocation.

Both awards go to students with strong academic achievement. The "African American Studies Student of the Year" award goes to an African American Studies major or minor with a demonstrated record of service to African American communities or groups. The "African American Studies Outstanding Graduating Senior" award honors an African American Studies major who has consistently engaged in African American Studies related activities, on and off campus.

## AFS Ambassadors

[www.uncg.edu/afs/ambassadors.html](http://www.uncg.edu/afs/ambassadors.html)

Our three AFS Ambassadors, Angaza Mayo-Laughinghouse, Rebecca Turner, and Tiffany Watson, have been busy this semester. "I hope to see more people on and off campus become involved with the AFS program," says Angaza Mayo-Laughinghouse, a senior AFS minor and Sociology major who joined the team this semester.

Ambassadors have met with alumni about the AFS program, talked with first-year students about the AFS major and minor, and

volunteered at CACE.

They also put on two panels, one on preparing for graduate school and the other on how college-educated African Americans can relate to those without degrees.

"I love to network," explains Tiffany Watson, a junior AFS major and Sociology minor who will graduate in December. "Meeting new people is definitely the best part about being an AFS Ambassador!"

## Congrats AFS Graduates & Students!

**Congrats Graduates:** Majors: Christal Blenman, Keosha Johnson, Natasha Myrie, Latoya Tyson, Helen Wheeler, Darah Willey, Cameron Wynn. Minor: Felisha Roger (English major).

**Honorees of the Scholars' Recognition Program:** Christin Edwards, Jocelynn Franklin,

Racheal Hammond, Ronald Haynes, Jaimey Howard, Eddie Hubert, Vivian Jones-Johnson, Travis Littlejohn, Kenyatta Lowery, Angaza Mayo-Laughinghouse, Angela Mitchell, Tiffany Swepson, Rebecca Turner, Latoya Tyson, Tiffany Watson, Helen Wheeler, Marcus White,

Vincent Woolfolk, Cameron Wynn.

**Other News:** **Bernard Leak**, AFS minor, was crowned "Mr. Black North Carolina." **Cameron Wynn** was awarded a scholarship to the UNC School of Medicine and will attend in the fall. He will spend this

summer volunteering in Botswana. **Taishika Knight** received the Roxie A. King Scholarship and the Weil Memorial Scholarship, as well as a Student Excellence Award. **Raffinee Archible** is currently studying abroad in Mexico. **Rebecca Turner** will study abroad in Spain.

## Alumni Notes

### Neo-Black Society Celebrates 40 Years



The Neo Black Society (NBS) started when a group of students began meeting and planning informally in 1967. This nucleus eventually became NBS in 1968. The 40th anniversary of NBS has been celebrated throughout the 2008-09 academic year.

NBS has been an important part of student life on the UNCG campus over the past forty years.

The African American Studies Program has enjoyed contact with NBS members over the years. Numerous NBS members have been involved in the African American Studies program as students and as advocates pushing for more access to African American Studies courses. NBS leaders were some of the first to graduate with AFS minors and majors as the program grew. Last year, NBS co-hosted Dr. Michael Dyson's lecture with AFS.

The African American Studies program is pleased to salute NBS' forty years on UNCG's campus and looks forward to continued partnerships!

### AFS Alumni: We want to hear more about what you are up to these days!

Where are you living?  
Where are you working? Are you married? Do you have kids? Have you been volunteering in the community or planning community events? Have you spent time recently with any of your classmates? Have you taken any trips recently?

Please e-mail [afs@uncg.edu](mailto:afs@uncg.edu) with an update on your life so we can include it in our next newsletter!

Also, please become our friend on Facebook by searching for [afs@uncg.edu](https://www.facebook.com/afs@uncg.edu)



Past NBS members

## Alumna in the Spotlight: Shelia Cooper

Shelia Cooper graduated from UNCG in 2005 with a double major in African American Studies and English, during which time she worked closely with AFS Affiliate Dr. SallyAnn Ferguson. While a UNCG student, two of her poems were published in the *Corradi* literary magazine, and she was also inducted into Sigma Tau Delta and Phi Beta Kappa honor societies.

She then completed an MA in English and African American Literature at NC A&T University, where her research interests included traditional and neo-slave narratives as well as black women writers of the Harlem Renaissance. She was recently inducted as a member of Phi Kappa Phi.

Shelia currently teaches Freshman Composition at

Bennett college and says: "Next semester I will really utilize my undergraduate degree from UNCG! I am so excited to use both components of my double major in AFS and English when I teach a Special Topics course in African American Literature!"

In addition to teaching, Shelia works in Bennett's Writing Center as a Learning Specialist where she tutors students in writing. As an undergraduate at UNCG, she worked in the University Writing Center. Additionally, as a graduate student at NC A&T, she worked in the writing center there as well. "Based on my previous experiences, I am thrilled to be a part of Bennett's developing Writing Center!"

As if her plate is not already full enough, she also works at NC A&T in the Journalism and Mass Communications Department in conjunction with the University Writing Center as a lecturer and test coordinator. Additionally, she is working on a poetry collection tentatively titled *Selah's Story: If Life Last and the Creek Don't Rise*.

Shelia recently took time out of her busy schedule to attend the annual CACE conference and moderate a panel titled "Race, Gender, Politics and Literature," which was extremely well received by those who attended. This multi-talented AFS alumna may return to school for an MFA or PhD in the coming years. We know we will continue to track her many accomplishments as she continues on!



Shelia Cooper at her graduation with Professor Michael Cauthen and Dr. Frank Woods.

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**Also find us on Facebook!**



**Students Tiffany Watson & Cameron Wynn in Botswana**



**We're on the Web!**  
See us at:  
[www.uncg.edu/afs](http://www.uncg.edu/afs)

## Support AFS

If you like what you have read, please consider helping us to continue to grow and improve our program by making a donation.

Your gift to AFS allows us to build our scholarship fund or provide additional support for

our students to study abroad and/or attend conferences.

To support AFS, please send your donation to Advancement Services  
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clearly marked for UNCG African American Studies or give on-line at [http://www.uncg.edu/dur/studentsfirst/give\\_now.html](http://www.uncg.edu/dur/studentsfirst/give_now.html). No donation is too large or too small!

## About UNCG's AFS Studies Program

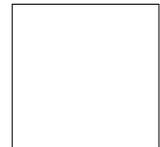
The mission of the UNCG African American Studies Program is to provide students with an opportunity to engage in the study of people of African descent.

AFS is an interdisciplinary program that is student-centered. Students are encouraged to not only engage in academic study, but

to broaden their knowledge by getting involved in community-projects and participating in the study abroad program. For More Information: [www.uncg.edu/afs](http://www.uncg.edu/afs)

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**TO:**