

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT GREENSBORO

AFRICAN AMERICAN & AFRICAN DIASPORA STUDIES NEWS

Director's Welcome

Dearest Reader:

Another year has passed and another semester has bid us farewell. Congratulations to the six undergraduate students who are now our African American and African Diaspora Studies Alumni. I also offer congratulations to our Post Baccalaureate Certificate graduate who is completing her doctoral studies in the History department. What a wonderful way to end 2015! They will join a rich academic legacy that has been ongoing at UNCG since the program was established in 1982.

Trying to expose students to as many educational opportunities as possible is a goal that I have undertaken as Director. This past semester, we hosted two Conversations with the Community and a forum on race. Nearly three hundred faculty, students, and community members attended these thought-provoking events. As the articles in the following pages convey, the energy has been spirited and the conversations have been inspirational and highly informative.

We are now in the process of preparing for our annual conference (CACE). This year's theme is: "Social Justice in the 21st Century." With over 30 abstracts from undergraduate and graduate students who represent six universities, CACE 2016 promises to be another spectacular event. We welcome you to attend. Registration is open:

<http://aads.uncg.edu/cace/registration/>

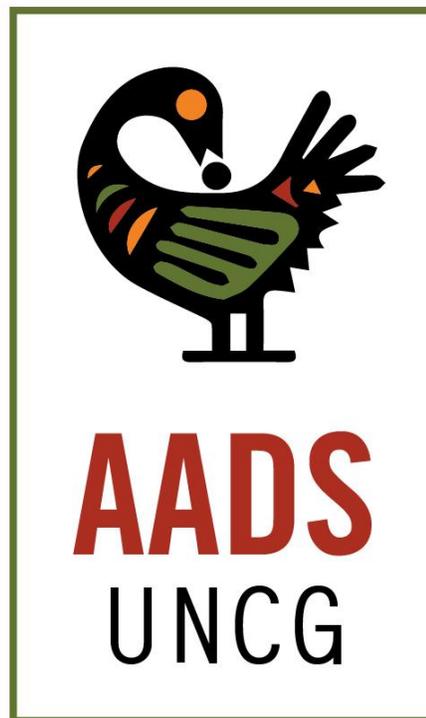
On December 9, President Barack Obama joined with others in the Nation's Capitol to commemorate the 150th Anniversary of the 13th Amendment, which ended slavery. That was the day of our December

graduation ceremony. As I shared a moment of silence with those in attendance, I thought of the millions of people across the world, today and in the past, who could only dream of earning a college degree. We have much to be thankful for as we look forward to 2016.

Wishing you peace and prosperity,



Tara T. Green, PhD
Director and Professor



Director, Dr. Tara T. Green

Not just a program, but a community.

AADS 2015 Fall Convocation

A small gathering of faculty, students, family members and friends came together in the Faculty Center to celebrate the accomplishments of our Fall graduates on December 9, 2015. George Steele and Shaylon Duncan shared heartfelt expressions about their experiences as AADS majors. Following their reflections, Mr. Armondo Collins, who earned the graduate certificate in 2013, inspired graduates with his “Words of Encouragement.” Judging from their presentations, AADS will be well represented in the larger community.

Following graduation, Zechariah Etheridge plans to work full time with Enterprise Rent-A-Car, in the Management Trainee Program while studying for the LSAT and preparing for law school. He also hopes to make more time for his music. Kiara McCain intends to pursue a Master’s Degree in Social Work at an accredited university in hopes of becoming a Licensed Clinical Social Worker. Her areas of interest include mental health, counseling, psychotherapy, mentorship as well as fostering positive behaviors and relationship among children, adults and families. Shaylon Duncan plans to join Teach For America for a few years while also obtaining her Master’s in Black studies. From there, she endeavors to pursue her PhD and begin her career teaching at the university level. Ultimately, she hopes to create social awareness while encouraging more students to engage in Black Studies and Gender Studies. George Steele will attend graduate school at Wake Forest University to obtain a Master’s Degree in Divinity Studies with a concentration in Counseling. Nashema Heard plans on expanding her education in Charlotte, NC while using her cosmetology license. She also wants to go to graduate school in the near future. Jazman Long will be continuing her education at UNCG, pursuing an MA in History with a concentration in Museum Studies. Upon the completion of her Ph.D., Virginia Summey is confident that she will remain in academia and will teach at the collegiate level, focusing on the contributions of Elreta Melton Alexander to the Civil Rights Movement in Greensboro.

We are proud of our graduates and wish them well in their academic and professional pursuits!



(Left to Right) Zechariah Etheridge, Kiara McCain, Shaylon Duncan, George Steele, and Nashema Heard, Jazman Long (not pictured)

Student Highlights



Graduating Senior, **Zechariah Etheridge** was featured on the UNCG website for his assessment work with the Center for Housing and Community Studies. Here is the story...

Attitude determines altitude.

Zechariah Etheridge's grandfather taught him that in life, attitude is everything. Now a senior at UNCG set to graduate in December, Etheridge holds tightly to his grandfather's advice. "I strive to keep a good attitude about everything and always seek the joy out of life," said Etheridge, who is double majoring in sociology and African American and African diaspora studies and minoring in religious studies. And that he has.

Whether it's been working at UNCG's Center for Housing and Community Studies as a research assistant, going door-to-door as a community organizer for the NAACP, or counseling kids at a nature camp in Asheville, Etheridge approaches everything he does with a unique blend of determination, optimism and maturity that can be hard to find these days. Etheridge credits UNCG for pushing him to grow up.

"My very first day of college, I stopped playing video games and watching a lot of TV, and I started doing things I knew would matter in the real world," he said. "UNCG has a lot of great professors who will work with you every step of the way, but a lot of the responsibility is on you. This is truly the gateway into real life." Etheridge has been involved in just about everything during his time at UNCG. He's served as a consultant at the Writing Center, protested local companies with United Students Against Sweatshops, joined Sigma Alpha Lambda, a leadership and honors organization, and immersed himself in his studies. For the past seven months, Etheridge has spent a large portion of his time with the Center for Housing and Community Studies where he researches the intersection between home and health alongside Dr. Stephen J. Sills, the center's director. Sills is investigating how different ZIP codes in Guilford County impact mental and physical health.

"My job is to organize and lead teams of canvassers as we conduct external assessments on homes in the community," Etheridge said. "We use geographic information systems applications to take pictures of each home and assess its status. We report on damages to the outside, and we also do internal assessments."

Etheridge and the volunteers work on one neighborhood each month. The work has impacted not only the community, but Etheridge as well.

"In the College of Arts & Sciences, we learn a lot about the problems facing our own community," he said. "I got a little restless when I learned about some of the issues in the Greensboro area. Serving with the center helps connect me to my community and people of all income levels."

After graduation, Etheridge plans to work full time as a management trainee at Enterprise Rent-A-Car in Greensboro, with long-term plans to go to law school. In the immediate future, he wants to make time for some of his hobbies: writing poetry, playing various instruments, reading and enjoying the outdoors.

His advice for younger students? "Find meaning in every single experience, and never stop having fun with life."

Student Highlights & Alumni News



**Virginia Summey, Graduate Student
Post Baccalaureate Certificate Recipient**

I'm a native North Carolinian. I went to high school and college in Salisbury, NC. I graduated from Catawba College in 2004 with a BA in Political Science and a minor in History. After Catawba I moved to Helena, MT to serve one year as an AmeriCorps VISTA - and ended up staying over seven and a half years! In 2010, I was accepted into the History MA program at the University of Montana. It was there that I started my research on Elreta Melton Alexander, who was the first African-American woman to graduate from Columbia Law in 1945, the first to practice law in North Carolina, and later became a district court judge from Greensboro in 1968. I wrote my MA thesis about her, and in the process learned more about the racial history of my home state than I ever did in a North Carolina classroom. This is in large part due to Dr. Tobin Miller Shearer, who is the director of the African-American Studies program at UMT and an associate history professor. I wanted to continue my work on Alexander, and was accepted to UNCG's History Ph.D. program, where I met Dr. Ali who encouraged me to pursue the post bac. The courses I took in pursuit of the post bac have greatly informed my work and have enhanced my abilities as a teacher. I have loved the teaching opportunities at UNCG, and upon completion of my Ph.D. I would love to stay in academia and teach at a collegiate level. And of course I want to make sure the story of Elreta Melton Alexander is published and her contributions to civil rights in Greensboro become well-known!

AADS Major, **Maurice Moore** was selected to read an essay at North Carolina Central University's Black Masculinity conference hosted by the Department of Language and Literature in November 2015. He was also inducted into the Golden Chain Honor Society, an organization which recognizes students who have made significant and meaningful contributions to the UNCG community, whether in quiet or prominent ways. Since the beginning of the Fall semester, he has been heavily involved in a student group, United Students Against Sweatshops, which seeks to hold accountable multinational companies that exploit the people who work on university campuses, in our communities, and in the overseas factories where collegiate apparel is produced. The group traveled to New Orleans and attended a series of workshops which provided a safe space for attendees to learn about different procedures and strategies in order to engage in activism and advocacy. Through this group, Moore has discovered a passion for social activist work and is excited about the opportunities that will present themselves to him as he embarks on more and more activist efforts.

ALUMNI NEWS

Yasmeen Chism received her M.A. in Women's Studies from the University of Louisville (2015) and is now pursuing her doctorate in Performance Studies at New York University. She is working as the assistant editor for the *Journal of Student Research*.

Tanae Downing, also a double-major in Media Studies, is one of the stars of the film *The War Room* (2015).

After receiving his M.Ed in Education from UNC-Wilmington, **Jarrold Judd** was appointed as the new Assistant Director of Student Activities for Greek Life at Queens University of Charlotte.

Nique Williams, also a double-major in Political Science and one of our first Ransome scholarship recipients, interned with State Senator Gladys Robinson the past two summers and is currently in her second year of law school at North Carolina Central.

After working at UNCG, **Eugenia Brown** (Sociology double-major) took a position with a non-profit in Charlotte called Inner Vision.

Andrea Jenkins is now director of Major and Planned Gifts at Winston-Salem State University.

The Movement & The Mission

UNCG's African American & African Diaspora Studies program has long been inextricably linked to social justice and movements for social equity. To discuss this relationship with our students, on September 30th, AADS hosted a dinner and discussion titled, "The Mission & The Movement." Students and faculty explored the ways we engage social justice academically by studying African American & African Diasporic identities, race, gender, sexuality, class, religion and region; engaging with issues of social justice as they impact people of African descent; and explaining the effects of racism, sexism, colonization and class disparities on Africana people and the ways they have responded to these issues.

Twenty-six students attended and several led a discussion on the ways they engage with social justice in and out of the classroom. Specifically, students shared their involvement in and thoughts around #BlackLivesMatter and ways that students can get further involved in social justice activities. There was also discussion about broader perceptions of Black people in the United States and how Black Americans can and can't influence them, and whether those perceptions are our responsibility at all. While our students bring a variety of different approaches and opinions on how to advance justice and equality, they are united in their desire to make the world more equitable and just.



AADS Professors and students gathered for dinner and discussion on the relationship between AADS and movements for social justice.

A Conversation with the Community: *Straight Outta Compton*



(Left to Right) Dr. Watson Jennison, Dr. Tara T. Green, Dr. Armondo Collins

On September 8th, over 120 students joined African American & African Diaspora Studies in a discussion about the historical film, *Straight Outta Compton*. The event was moderated by Dr. Tara T. Green, Professor and Director of AADS and featured Mr. Armondo Collins, an adjunct lecturer AADS and Dr. Watson Jennison, Associate Professor of History at UNCG. The presentations focused on the film's relationship to contemporary social issues including race, masculinity, politics and policing. Dr. Jennison presented on the historical context of the film, its relationship to the riots in Los Angeles following the attack on Rodney King, and the impacts of the economic austerity of the Regan Administration on the communities featured in the film. Mr. Collins focused on the way the raw emotion communicated in the music of NWA conveyed the reality of the contentious relationship between Black Americans and the police. Dr. Green presented "Chasing That Paper," a turn of phrase for making money. Green emphasized the importance of literacy by analyzing the film's attention to the "power" of contracts versus the desire to make money. Major, Olufemi Shittu asked about the group's disrespect towards women, specifically the violence perpetrated by Dr. Dre. Panelists responded by addressing the importance of seeing the full representations of Black women, even in iconic pieces of art.

A Conversation with the Community: The Status of Black Women & Girls in the United States

On October 6th, African American & African Diaspora Studies hosted a lively Conversation with the Community on the Status of Black Women & Girls in the United States. The Conversation featured a variety of voices including Dr. Valerie Anne Johnson, the Mott Distinguished Professor of Women's Studies and Director of Africana Women's Studies at Bennett College. Tiffany Dyson Atkins, an AADS alumna who is an attorney at Legal Aid specializing in Domestic Violence cases, as well as students Suquanna Butler (AADS Major) and Alaina Monts (Women's & Gender Studies and Theatre Major), and Dr. NaTisha Peacock, who works as a School Counselor & Graduation Coach at Dudley High School, and Former Ms. North Carolina USA 2010, Nadia Shirin Moffett, a UNCG alumna who founded and directs the Queen's Foundation, a nonprofit organization, also served as panelists. Dr. Green moderated the discussion, which focused on the panelists' own experiences with obstacles and opportunities for Black women and girls in the U.S. and highlighted issues such as domestic violence, an unequal education system, sexism, colorism, identity, and the need for black girls to see themselves reflected in their world. Panelists stayed afterwards to connect with students personally and to continue the conversation.



(Left to Right) Tiffany Dyson Atkins, Alaina Monts, Suquanna Butler, Dr. Tara T. Green, Dr. NaTisha Peacock, Dr. Valerie Jarrett, Nadia Moffett



(Left to Right) Dr. Valerie Johnson, Nadia Moffett, Alaina Monts, Dr. NaTisha Peacock

What is Race?

A Multidisciplinary Discussion on Race

On October 19th, African American & African Diaspora Studies teamed up with the departments of Sociology and Anthropology, and the Office of Equity, Diversity & Inclusion at UNCG to facilitate a multidisciplinary discussion on race. Dr. Joseph Graves Jr., Professor & Associate Dean for Research at North Carolina A&T State University and UNCG's Joint School of Nanoscience and Nanoengineering discussed race from the perspective of biology and argued that while various morphologies are construed as "race" as part of an oppressive social power system, there is no race biologically. He also explained that the human species, unlike other species, does not have enough biological variation among us for races to exist. Dr. Robert Anemone, Professor and Head of Anthropology at UNCG furthered the discussion by touching on the biological aspects, but also by taking some of the historical contributors to the construct of race to task. One of the more memorable points he made was that Carol Linneaus developed different racial categories that he deemed "biological" and included various cultural elements that he conflated with physical morphology. He even believed that there was a race of mythical creatures which included mermaids and werewolves, further discrediting his racial categorizations. Dr. Shelly Brown-Jeffy, Associate Professor & Interim Head of Sociology at UNCG, discussed the social aspects of race and the ways in which it has changed in the United States particularly in relation to the U.S.' immigration policies. She noted that many of the racial categories that we check in the census or on surveys did not exist years ago, because they were not categorized as a race. All three panelists discussed the construction of "race" as a power system that was created to justify oppression. Over one hundred students and faculty attended. Dr. Green organized the panel and served as moderator.

Faculty Highlights

Dr. Omar H. Ali (Core), Interim Dean of Lloyd International Honors College and Associate Professor of Comparative African Diaspora History in AADS, was named the Carnegie Foundation North Carolina Professor of the Year. His latest book, *Malik Ambar: Power and Slavery Across the Indian Ocean*, was published by Oxford University Press.

Dr. Sarah Jane Cervenak (Core) is currently working on writing connected to her second book project, "Black Gathering: Toward an Aesthetics of Un/holding." As well, she will soon have out for review a co-authored essay (with Dr. J. Kameron Carter, Duke) on W.E.B. DuBois. This summer her essay on Kenyan-born artist Wangechi Mutu will be featured as an art essay in the academic journal *Feminist Studies*.

Director Dr. Tara T. Green (Core) made presentations on her research at three conferences this semester. While the presentations varied, two of them were on activist and writer Alice Dunbar-Nelson, the subject of her book project. She also received a Global Engagement Course Development Award for AFS 376: African Literature and approval of her Study Tour in Ghana Proposal.

Dr. Elizabeth Perrill (Affiliate), in the Department of Art, has been awarded Research Assignment for the Spring of 2017 and will be working on a book writing project during that semester.

In Fall 2015, **Colleen Kriger (Affiliate)** finished a draft of her third book, *Making Money: Life, Death, and Early Modern Trade on the Guinea Coast*, a social history of the English, Euro-African, and West African individuals who participated in cross-cultural trade on Africa's Upper Guinea coast in the late seventeenth century. For a return visit to archives in England she received a UNCG Faculty First Grant.

TRAVEL TO GHANA WITH African American & African Diaspora Studies

Dates: June 19th – 27th, 2016
Application Deadline: Jan. 29th, 2016
\$400 Deposit Due: Feb 15, 2016



Elmina Castle on the coast of Elmina, Ghana

The price of the trip is \$2,400 plus an estimated flight cost of \$1,600
AADS majors may be eligible for aid to help with flight

Price covers:

- Lodging
- Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner
- Travel to sites, including Slave Castle
- Admission to historical sites
- Farewell dinner with African Drumming and Dance
- Insurance
- And Lectures by University of Ghana faculty!

Incidentals not covered by the program:

- Malaria pills (\$7/pill), Mandatory Vaccinations for Yellow Fever, and others
- Cost of Visa and Passport

Required summer course credit offered: SOC 327 and AFS 305. Financial Aid eligible—offered by
Dr. T. Green and Dr. Shelly Brown-Jeffy—to qualify for financial aid

Application: <http://studyabroad.uncg.edu/?go=aadsinghana>

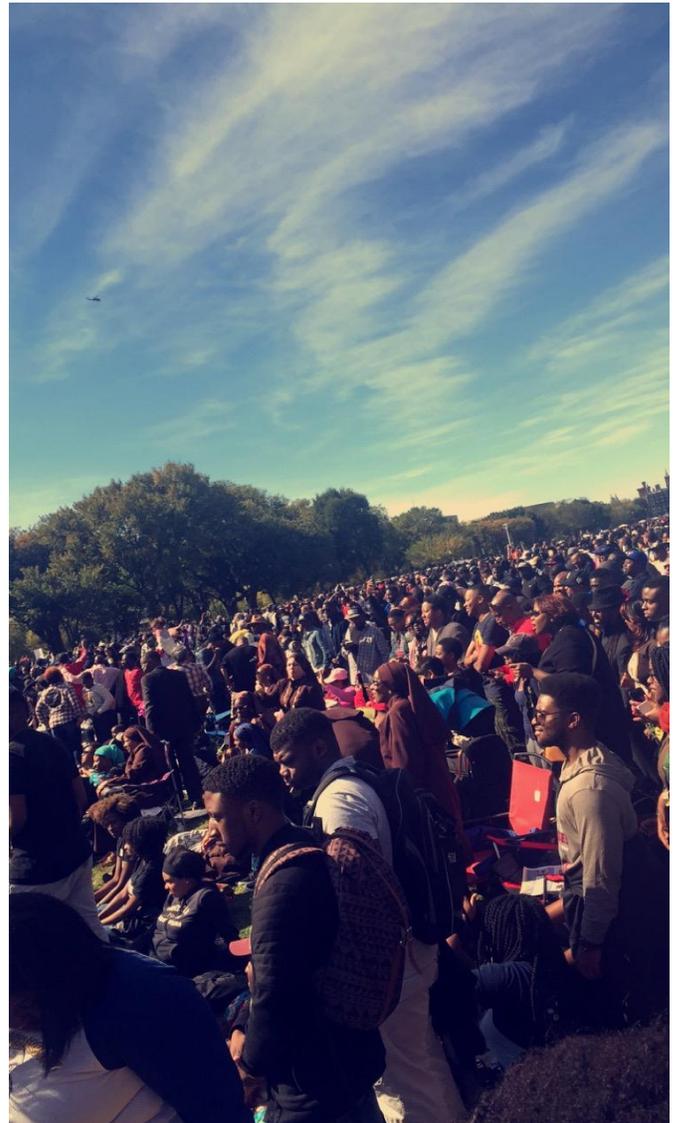
Email Dr. Tara Green at ttgreen@uncg.edu for more information

There will be an interest meeting on January 13, 2016 at 12pm in Curry 349!

20th Anniversary of the Million Man March: A Reflection by Regina Da Silva (AADS Minor)

Donor funds were used to support participation of AADS Majors and Minors

Twenty years ago during the first Million Man March, most of us hadn't even taken our first steps let alone know why the march was taking place. 20 years later, over 90 students from UNCG took part in a historic and arguably epic event. Prior to attending the march, six student leaders took on the initiative to make the trip not only a learning experience, but most of all an impactful one. In preparation for the march, we planned a week of required educational events. "It Begins, History of Marches," presented by The Neo-Black Society, exposed students to the history of past marches and informed them of the purpose behind "Justice or Else." "Mountain Tops," presented by our fellow Spartans, was a night of poetry and spoken word pieces relating to the police brutality and oppression minorities are facing. "Know Before You Go," introduced by Black Business Students Association in collaboration with the Dean of Students Office, covered important information on university policies and trip protocols. "Lift Every Voice," put on by NAACP, who organized a forum discussion featuring advice from student activists and two influential leaders both on our campus and community, Dr. Tara Green and Dr. Love Crossling. Finally, on our day of departure, Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Incorporated conducted an epic icebreaker among the participating teams as we took the road to D.C. The trip was financially possible thanks to donations from the Office of Intercultural Affairs and the African American and



Diaspora Studies Program. We will forever be indebted to the experience. Despite the lack of media coverage on the Million Man March, the voices of multiple minority groups were heard and hopefully accepted by thousands of people. We all gathered in D.C. for different reasons, but we all seemed to have one thing in common, the fight for justice. Injustice and violence is prominent in our country, but it will take the influence of the elders and the courage of the youth to truly change the course of America. Seeing the eagerness to secure their seats on the charter bus, to the anticipation of the day of the event, in addition to the overwhelming reactions of these students, made everything so much more worthwhile. This was by far one of the most memorable experiences in which I will ever have. I am truly grateful to Porshe Chiles for assisting with the trip; and also to every participant, I pray the trip was as meaningful for them as it was for me. - Regina Da Silva

Post Baccalaureate Certificate in African American & African Diaspora Studies

Online or On Campus

About the Program

While earning a Post-Baccalaureate Certificate in African American and African Diaspora Studies at University of North Carolina at Greensboro, students will engage the significance of race, gender, and class in America, and develop theoretical, historical, and political foundations in the study of African Americans. Emerging and leading scholars from various academic backgrounds teach each course. The program provides support to students wishing to pursue African American Studies at the advanced graduate level.

Who Should Apply?

- Currently enrolled graduate students at UNCG
- People with undergraduate or graduate degrees in any field
- Those with careers or seeking careers in education, business, non-profit organizations, and social services are encouraged to apply.

Admission Requirements

All documents must be sent to UNCG's Graduate School.

- At minimum, must hold a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university and must have been admitted by The Graduate School.
- Students already enrolled in a UNCG graduate program do not need to reapply for graduate admission, but must apply for admission to this program.
- All applicants must complete a two-page statement (approximately 500 words) describing why they are interested in pursuing a Post-Baccalaureate certificate in African American Studies, fill out an application form, send two letters of reference, and pay the non-refundable application fee.
- GRE is not required.

For more information, visit: <http://www.uncg.edu/afs> or
<http://www.uncg.edu/grs>

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SUPPORT UNCG'S AADS PROGRAM

We hope that you will support our Program by making a tax-deductible donation. Your gift to AFS allows us to build our scholarship fund to support students in need or provide funding for our students to study abroad and/or attend conferences.

To support AADS, please send your donation to Advancement Services 1100 W. Market Street P.O. Box 26170 Greensboro, NC 27402 clearly marked for UNCG African American Studies Enrichment Fund or give on-line at http://www.uncg.edu/education/studentsfirst/give_now.html. If you have questions, do not hesitate to contact us. No donation is too large or too small!

Can't give money, how about your time?

We are expanding our internship program. If you own a business, especially a law office or a non-profit, that serves a significant number of African Americans and are interested in sharing your professional expertise with AADS majors, please contact Dr. Tara T. Green at aads@uncg.edu or 336-334-5507.

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