Director’s Welcome

Hello Reader:

Another semester has come and gone. This spring semester we have accomplished much. In February, we gave our first Whitney “Whitty” Ransome scholarship to two of our majors. Dr. Frank Woods was a successful candidate for the position of Assistant Professor of African American Art History and will begin in this tenured-track position in August. We held two successful Conversations with the Community and co-sponsored a reading of E. Patrick Johnson’s *Pouring Tea*. In April, Dr. Omar Ali received the College’s Teaching Excellence Award.

We also succeeded in amending the name of African American Studies to the African American and African Diaspora Studies Program (ADS). Effective August 1, 2014, our name change will begin a new phase of critical inquiry. Our extended name allows us to retain the identity of the Program, as it has been for over ten years, and to augment it by including studies of people and cultures of the African diaspora who do not identify as American or who are new to America. Our name now reflects our diverse course offerings in comparative African history and literature. Along these lines, I am pleased to announce that our program was instrumental in helping the university to sign an agreement with the University of Ghana.

Allow me to brag about our students who continue to make us proud. Inspired by his work with artist and art historian, Dr. Frank Woods, one of our majors exhibited his art in the Undergraduate Research and Creativity Expo. Several of our top majors have pursued and gained admissions into the Disciplinary Honors Program. Another one of our majors, who became an AFS Ambassador this year, returned from study abroad in Botswana, Africa. Two of our minors are currently studying abroad in Botswana and England. To help with her expenses, one of the minors received a $500 travel award, thanks to two of the university’s generous alumni who gave money to support students’ travel abroad aspirations. Another one of our Ambassadors is doing an internship with the African Coalition Services in Greensboro.

In addition to supporting travel abroad and awarding the Ransome Scholarship, thanks to the generous support of donors, we were able to pay the fees for students to hear celebrated poets, Maya Angelou in the Fall and Nikki Giovanni in the Spring, and to attend the Career Services networking dinner.

As I prepare to go on leave in the fall, I am pleased that Dr. Shelly Brown-Jeffy, an Associate Professor of Sociology and a program affiliate, will serve as interim Director. Dr. Shelly, as she is known, has shown her commitment to the Program over the years by serving on just about every AFS committee.

I shall allow the pages to follow to speak further of our accomplishments. Enjoy.

Looking forward,

Tara T. Green, PhD
Professor and Director

“**We are educating leaders whose understanding of race, class, and gender through their historical, literary, political, and cultural studies is preparing them for success in a diverse world.**”
Four African American Studies students received recognition for completing their graduation requirements in the Fall. The Fall 2013 graduates included undergraduate majors, Mr. Joshua Davis, Mr. Steve Mark Wilkins, and Ms. Velletta Yvette Williams. It was a special night for both Steven and Velletta who returned to college to earn their degrees from UNCG. Steven, a veteran, and Velletta both desire to use their degrees to work with youth. On the other hand, Joshua completed his degree in three and a half years. Although Ms. Tonya Doane completed her Post-Baccalaureate Certificate requirements, she remains at UNCG to complete her MA in Women’s and Gender Studies. Next year she will present her research at the National Association of Women Studies Conference.

Dr. Frank Woods addressed the students, who were then recognized by professors in the “Standing Forth” Ceremony. These new alumni graduated in the 31st year of the Program and the 11th year of the major. Faculty were pleased to give them their customary stole and to wish them well.

Front Row: Ms. Tonya Doane, Mr. Joshua Davis, Ms. Velletta Williams, Mr. Steven Wilkins
Back Row: Dr. Omar Ali, Mr. Michael Cauthen, Dr. Tara T. Green, Dr. Sarah Cervenak, Dr. Shelly Brown-Jeffy, Dr. Frank Woods.
**Major in the Spotlight**

“I am Lucy Mason, a sophomore, from Stone Mountain, Georgia. Ever since I took an African American Studies course in high school, I knew I would pursue a degree in African American Studies. I had little knowledge about UNCG or its African American Studies Program until I was able to visit the school thanks to basketball team advisors. Once here on campus, I had the chance to meet with AFS Ambassadors who helped me to verify my decision. Ultimately I couldn’t be happier with my decision. I know that the lessons I have learned here and connections I have made will be of great benefit in my future endeavors.” Lucy was recently accepted into the Lloyd International Honor's College and is on the Women's Basketball team.

**Internship with North Carolina African Services Coalition: Nique V. Williams**

Working at the North Carolina African Services Coalition (NC ASC) has been a rewarding experience. In this position, I work closely with immigrants and refugees to ensure they have a smooth transition into America. I'm exposed to the harsh experiences many of these individuals face from their homeland and in America. My co-workers and I provide our clients with opportunities that are not otherwise given to them. We assist them with finding employment, housing, and medical treatment. The smiles on their faces show that the services we are committed to providing have a positive effect on their lives. In return, our clients offer unique educational opportunities. I've interacted with countless individuals who have taught me new languages, about their cultures, and life lessons full of wisdom and faith. I'm grateful for the time I've had with NC ASC. This experience is the reason why I'm inspired to pursue Law School. My work with immigrants will not stop at the end of this semester. It is the first step in assisting others to achieve great things.
Whitney “Whitty” Ransome Scholarship in African American Studies

First Whitney “Whitty” Ransome Scholarship Recipients

Nique V. Williams is the President of the African American Studies Club, an African American Studies Ambassador, a Student Alumni Ambassador, the Community Service Coordinator for the Black Business Student Association, and has participated in the LeaderShape Institute. She has also been on the Dean’s List during Fall 2011 and 2012. She received the Bronze and Silver Medallions for the Leadership Challenge. After Ms. Williams graduates in May 2014, she will work as a Summer intern with State Senator Gladys Robinson and enter NC Central Law School in the Fall. She says, “My experience as an AFS major has enabled me to be a voice for underrepresented populations and I intend to be the help they need.” According to her supervisor in the Office of Leadership and Service-Learning, “Nique has displayed a strong work ethic, commitment to learning, and a deep understanding of people different from her.”

Stephanie A. Walton is the President of UNCG’s Campus Activities Board, serves as the 2nd Vice President and Historian of UNCG’s Neo-Black Society, and was inducted into Lambda Pi Eta Communication Studies Honor Society in Fall 2013. This UNCG Homecoming Queen participated in the LeaderShape Institute and received the Emerging Leader Award at UNCG in April 2013. She was also promoted to the Monitor Position of the Annual Giving Office at UNCG. Off-Campus she received Win Win Resolutions Ladies Organized To Serve Others Program Volunteer Participation Award in 2011. She has also been on the Dean’s List in Fall 2010, and Chancellor’s List in Spring 2011, Spring 2012, Fall 2012, Spring 2013, and Fall 2013. Ms. Walton aspires to create her own talk show that will promote positive African American images in the media. To prepare for her career, she will begin the Master’s program in Communication Studies at UNCG in the fall.

Scholarship

The Whitney “Whitty” Ransome Scholarship in African American Studies was established in Fall 2013 for AFS Majors. Awards are made on the basis of academic performance, as well as an essay that explains what inspired the applicant to choose African American Studies as a major and describes the impact the African American Studies Program has had on the applicant’s education. This Scholarship was made possible by alumna Whitney “Whitty” Ransome, who served as Co-Executive Director of the National Coalition of Girls’ Schools and is a retired educator.

Scholarship Celebration

On the afternoon of Friday, February 28th, the African American Studies Program hosted a celebration for our inaugural Whitney “Whitty” Ransome Scholars. Professors and administrators from across the university, and friends of the program from the community came to celebrate UNCG’s first ever scholarship in African American Studies.
The Artwork of Ander Jacobs

Ander Jacobs

Ander Jacobs, a senior from Raleigh, NC, is pictured above with the artwork he displayed at the 2014 Carolyn and Norwood Thomas Undergraduate Research and Creativity Expo. Jacobs majors in African American Studies with a concentration in Cultural Arts and considers himself an organic, abstract expressionist.

When asked why he paints, he said, “I can feel energized and motivated and do so much work that day because I’m so inspired. It just flows….Some people need a cup of coffee to get in a good mood. I just dive in with my emotions in my paintings. The creative process is always flowing.”

Of his subject matter, Jacobs says, “I’ve always had a connection to the earth and nature as it is, so my art style is just an expression of my surroundings, how I take things on. No one knows what I go through except for me, and that’s why it’s abstract.”

This senior aspires to continue his career as an artist in the future, and is getting ready to put his art on the market. “I believe in my artwork and I believe it’s going to take me places, but now I’m looking for the correct niche to fall into. I believe I’ve found that. I just need to find the right outlets.” You can see more of his work at “210kmen” on Instagram.
How can I put into words my semester experience in Gaborone at the University of Botswana? When I started looking into studying abroad, I knew that I wanted to travel to Africa. After further research, I knew that attending UB would be the best choice for me, and there is not a day that passes that I do not think about Botswana, all the people I met there and the experiences I had. The campus is very diverse; it not only has exchange students, but also has those who come from all over Africa to complete their degrees. Although it is called “study” abroad, the majority of my learning came from outside the classroom. I learned so much about the culture and also a great deal about myself. I participated in a lot of unforgettable activities, including spending time in Game Reserves and seeing the beauty of the Okavango Delta and Chobe. I was able to travel to Zimbabwe and see Victoria Falls, as well as visit Pretoria and Plettenberg Bay, South Africa. I participated in an excursion that allowed me to assist in the replicas of general village activities from before colonialism. I even had the pleasure to be invited to a professor’s home for lunch. My ears were opened to languages such as Setswana, Sesubia from Kasane and Kalanga from the Kalanga people. I will always remember the kindness of the Batswana and their botho, or as we say it, respect.

Since I come from a lower middle class family, I understand that the idea of studying abroad is an opportunity that usually only people who come from a very privileged background can afford. I am very thankful for the AFS program donors, UNCG Guarantee and the IPC Office for their assistance with the cost of my plane tickets and other expenses. I believe it is important for more students to go abroad and learn about different cultures outside of books and media. I enjoyed my time in Botswana and I am extremely grateful for the experience. It was the best time of my life. Traveling to Botswana gave me the travel bug and I plan to return in the future. I recommend to everyone who might be interested in studying abroad to consider going to Botswana.
Yasmeen Hardy (AFS Minor) graduated from UNCG in May, 2012. Since then she has worked for Salvation Army Greensboro and Guilford Child Development. She is expecting to start a new position with Eckerd Youth Alternative in a few weeks.

Natashua Siler (AFS Minor) decided to change careers and currently attends graduate school to earn a Master of Arts in Teaching Special Education. She recently passed all Praxis exams to teach Special Education K-12 and English/Language Arts 7th-12th and has been hired as a Special Education teacher in Guilford County Schools. The skills of thinking "outside the box" and the vast knowledge she learned from Dr. Woods and Professor Cauthen have been invaluable in designing culturally relevant and differentiated lesson plans for her students.

Zeina Mvemba (AFS Minor) is enrolled at North Carolina Central University in a graduate program to earn her Master’s of Education in Communication Disorders.

Vanessa Curtis (AFS Major), who graduated from UNCG in 2010, is graduating from North Carolina Central’s Law School and is grateful for the foundation she developed by taking AFS Courses.

Tiffany Wilson (AFS Major) recently resigned from a position as a school counselor at Andrews High School in High Point, North Carolina to pursue a doctoral degree at NC A & T State University in Rehabilitation Counseling and Rehabilitation Counselor Education. She completed a graduate assistantship at the Center for Behavioral Health and Wellness, where she saw clients and conducted research on trauma informed care. She works part-time as a therapist for The Social and Emotional

She and her husband will celebrate 8 years of marriage in May and their twin boys will turn 2 in July.

Yasmeen Chism (AFS Major), an alumna with a degree in African American Studies and Women's and Gender Studies, is finishing up her first year of Graduate school, in the Women's and Gender Studies department, at the University of Louisville. In the fall, she will be teaching an Introduction to Women's and Gender studies course that she designed herself. Her thesis research will look at the artwork of Carrie Mae Weems, Lyle Ashton Harris, Zanele Muholi and Fotimi Fani-Kayode in order to investigate how these photographers capture queer black bodies. Yasmeen has asked Dr. Green to be a reader on her thesis committee and tries to keep in close contact with faculty from the AFS and WGS programs. She hopes to pursue a PhD that will allow her to continue to build on her research interests in queer theory, Black feminist theory and visual studies.
Effective August 1, 2014 we will be changing the name of our program to African American and African Diaspora Studies. The new name reflects current trends in Black Studies. A recent report on the status of black studies programs notes, “Researchers found that nearly half of all black studies units, or 49 percent, use terms in their unit names such as ‘African,’ African and African American,’ or Pan African’ that reflect the larger African diaspora or the different waves of African-descended peoples who have come to the U.S.” (Abdul Alkalimat, 2013 Report, University of Illinois).

African American Studies at UNCG has grown tremendously in the last five years with the addition of three tenure lines. Two of those faculty, Professor Tara T. Green (Director) and Omar Ali (Associate Professor), are researchers of the African diaspora. Much of Ali’s work focuses on the African Presence in the Indian Ocean and Latin America; Green’s area of research includes the Black diaspora in the U.S. and African literature. As a result, they have developed three courses with a diasporic focus, including “Making of the African Diaspora,” “Special Topics in the African Diaspora,” and “Africana Literatures.”

We believe that our new name will not only better reflect the work that we do as scholars, but will also place us squarely within the current concerns of Black Studies as a national and international studies program.

The AFS Club

The African American Studies Club was very active during the Spring semester. In observance of Black History Month, they organized AFS Club Week—a sequence of panels on topical issues in Black America. In April, they hosted a film series titled, Looking into our Past, Present, and Future. To better inform the viewing experience, they asked AFS faculty to choose the films and to lead a discussion following the viewings. Subjects including independent politics (Omar Ali), education and race (Michael Cauthen), and Black families (Tara T. Green). Lastly they coordinated several joint activities with UNCG’s Pan-African Student Coalition. The Club is open to students of all majors.
February’s *Conversation with the Community* event featured Dr. Joseph Graves, Jr., the Associate Dean for Research and Professor of Biological Studies at the Joint School for Nanoscience and Nanoengineering (at UNCG & NCA&TSU). During the conversation, Dr. Graves pointed out that while we don’t live in a post-racial/post-racist America, we do live in a world where systematic and “scientific” efforts to divide humankind into biologically distinct racial groups have been discredited. The Human Genome Project (completed in 2000) did not find racial genes or patterns of racial genes. Also the often ballyhooed claims that medicines exist which are racially tailored have also been woefully misguided and misinformed.

On Tuesday, April 8th, John P. Johnson and Allen Johnson, editorial page editor of the *Greensboro News & Record* and AFS Adjunct lecturer, were the focus of our April Conversation with the Community on housing segregation. The pair met after Thompson wrote a letter to the editor, and the two discovered that they had lived in the same house at different times. Thompson’s family was part of the exodus of white families from Greensboro’s Woodmere Park neighborhood, and Johnson’s was one of the first black families to integrate the area. The two discussed housing segregation in the ‘60s and asked students to join in a discussion of current racial housing trends.
On Wednesday, February 26th the African American Studies Program partnered with the Stone Center at UNC-Chapel Hill to host Brazilian Filmmaker, Joel Zito Araujo. He presented, *Denying Brazil (A Negação do Brasil)*, a documentary film about the taboos, stereotypes, and struggles of Black actors in Brazilian television novellas or soap operas. Based on his own memories and on a sturdy body of research evidence, the director analyzes race relations in Brazilian soap operas, calling attention to their likely influence on Black people's identity-forming processes.

Araujo received his Ph.D. in communication sciences from the Escola de Comunicacoes e Artes at the University of Sao Paulo in 1999. Araujo was a visiting professor in the Departments of Radio, TV, and Film and Anthropology as well as the center for African & African-American Studies at the University of Texas at Austin from August 2001 to May 2002.

The film viewing was well-attended, and a rich discussion between the filmmaker and students ensued. UNCG students asked questions about the role of race in the filmmaker’s other films, as well as about the experiences of the black actors in the soap operas. There was also discussion about the differences and similarities between the ways race plays out in Brazil and in the United States.
Festive music begins to announce the entrance of Professor E. Patrick Johnson who holds the audience’s attention from that moment until the end of his informative performance. *Pouring Tea: Black Gay Men of the South* is a dramatic reading of the collection of interviews that Johnson conducted from Texas to Maryland of the lives and experiences of Black gay men. His performance gives voice to these men—through his impressive performance of the various identities as represented by dramatic changes in vocal and facial expressions. UNCG students, faculty, and community members took the opportunity to ask questions of Johnson about his performance following the show. It had been a long day for Professor Johnson who had also conducted a workshop on how faculty could integrate LGBTQ issues into their teaching. Over 100 people gathered in the EUC Auditorium at his April 1 performance and many of them stayed for the book signing that followed.

The Carlos Montezuma Professor of Performance Studies and African American Studies at Northwestern University, Dr. Johnson is also an LGBTQ activist. His work has been honored with several awards. With major funding from the College of Arts and Sciences, AFS was pleased to work with Women’s and Gender Studies, the Joint Master’s in Social Work Program’s faculty and students, UNCG’s Pride, and the Office of Multicultural Affairs to host Dr. Johnson’s visit.
Director Dr. Tara T. Green spent twelve days in Ghana, Africa as the guest of the Institute of African Studies. While there, she gave a lecture titled, “Love in the Time of the Obamas,” observed a literature class and other academic events, and worked with the Institute’s Director to develop a student and faculty exchange project. Later, in March, she gave a presentation at the College Language Association conference in New Orleans on *12 Years a Slave* and also became President of the Langston Hughes Society.

Dr. Omar H. Ali received the 2014 Senior Faculty Teaching Excellence Award for The College of Arts & Sciences at UNCG. Amanda Reams, AFS graduate ('13), who is currently conducting research in behavioral science at UNC-Chapel Hill Medical School, wrote one of his letters of support. On March 2nd Dr. Ali gave the keynote address for the Smithsonian Institute's National Museum of African American History and Culture event "Changing America: The Emancipation Proclamation to the March on Washington" in Yanceville, NC. Finally, Dr. Ali has been invited to write a feature article on the African Diaspora in Peru for *ReVista: The Harvard Review for Latin America*.

Michael Cauthen chaired the Whitney “Whitty” Ransome Scholarship Committee in African American Studies. The committee selected two outstanding UNCG AFS majors, this spring semester, as the first recipients. This committee will select a fall 2014 winner later this spring. He is also on a Committee to select the next Senior Fellow (or director) of the Warren Ashby Residential College.

Dr. Frank Woods was selected for a tenure track position as an Assistant Professor of African American Art History. He was also an honoree at the “Celebrations of Scholarship” sponsored by the College of Arts and Sciences and MERGE for two recent book publications.

*Faculty Highlights*

Dr. Naurice Frank Woods.

*AFRICAN AMERICAN FRONTIERS IN ART, FILM & MUSIC*, by Dr. Naurice Frank Woods.
Dr. Cerise Glenn has published a co-authored manuscript entitled, *Scripting Hate Crimes: Victim, Space and Perpetrator Defining Hate in Continuum: Journal of Media & Cultural Studies*. This article examines media portrayals and systems of social justice in separate attacks on gay men (one White, one African-American) in Washington, D.C. in 2008. One was considered a hate crime; the other was not. It analyzes social scripts employed within the media and police statements that contextualize these events in terms of neighborhood, as well as the race, gender and sexuality of the victims and perpetrators.

Dr. Colleen Kriger in February gave a presentation at the Biennial Conference of the Forum on European Expansion and Global Interaction (FEEGI) in New Orleans, based on her current research work on Euro-African trade on West Africa’s Guinea coast. She also continued her teaching in the Lloyd International Honors College as the Chancellor’s Resident Fellow for 2013/14. Dr. Kriger has recently been selected to be a Fellow at the National Humanities Center in Research Triangle Park, where she will spend next year completing her book manuscript, *Making Money: Life, Death, and Business on the Guinea Coast*.

Dr. Noelle Morrissette received a Lillian Gary Taylor Visiting Fellowship in American Literature, Special Collections, University of Virginia Library, Summer 2014 for work on her new book project, “Anne Spencer: Letters and Legacy.”

Dr. Elizabeth Perrill traveled to New York in February to chair a panel at the Triennial Conference of the Arts Council of the African Studies Association, the largest international conference of art historians of African and Diasporic African arts. Perrill's panel, "African Ceramics on Display: Beyond Didactics and Demonstrations," brought together scholars from the United States, Nigeria, France, the United Kingdom, and South Africa and focused on the history of contemporary African ceramic exhibition practice from the 1950s to the present. This May Dr. Perrill will be traveling to the 2014 Taiwan Ceramics Biennale in Taipei. She will be presenting at the opening conference for the biennale and has loaned a dozen Zulu ceramic vessels to the exhibition; her paper is entitled "Gesture, Symbolism, and Display: A Transforming Culture of Zulu Beer Vessels."
Eligibility: Currently full-time enrolled undergraduates; declared African American Studies major; in good academic standing; completion of at least 12 hours in the African American Studies Program.

Scholarship: $1,250 merit scholarship to one full-time undergraduate African American Studies majors, in good standing, with exemplary academic performance in the African American Studies Program.

To Apply Please Submit:

1. Application form, located on the AFS website and in 349 Curry

2. A 250 word essay

3. Reference letter: ask a UNCG teaching faculty member, or staff member, or advisor who is familiar with your work to complete a reference letter and have him or her submit it to the African American Studies Program afs@uncg.edu by the deadline.

Ransome Scholars will be chosen by a committee and the recipients will be contacted over the summer.

To Apply visit our website at www.uncg.edu/afs/program/scholarships.html by May 14th, 2014

The Whitney “Whitty” Ransome Scholarship in African American Studies is established with a gift from Ms. Whitty Ransome, a 1967 Woman’s College graduate, for the purpose of supporting students majoring in African American Studies.
About the Program
While earning a Post-Baccalaureate Certificate in African American 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.

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.

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.

For more information, visit: http://www.uncg.edu/afs or http://www.uncg.edu/grs
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SUPPORT UNCG’S AFS 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 AFS, 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.edudur/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 AFS majors, please contact Dr. Tara T. Green at afs@uncg.edu or 336-334-5507.

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