

# KUUMBA

Volume 6: June 2018

THE ANNUAL JOURNAL OF WILLIAM & MARY AFRICANA STUDIES

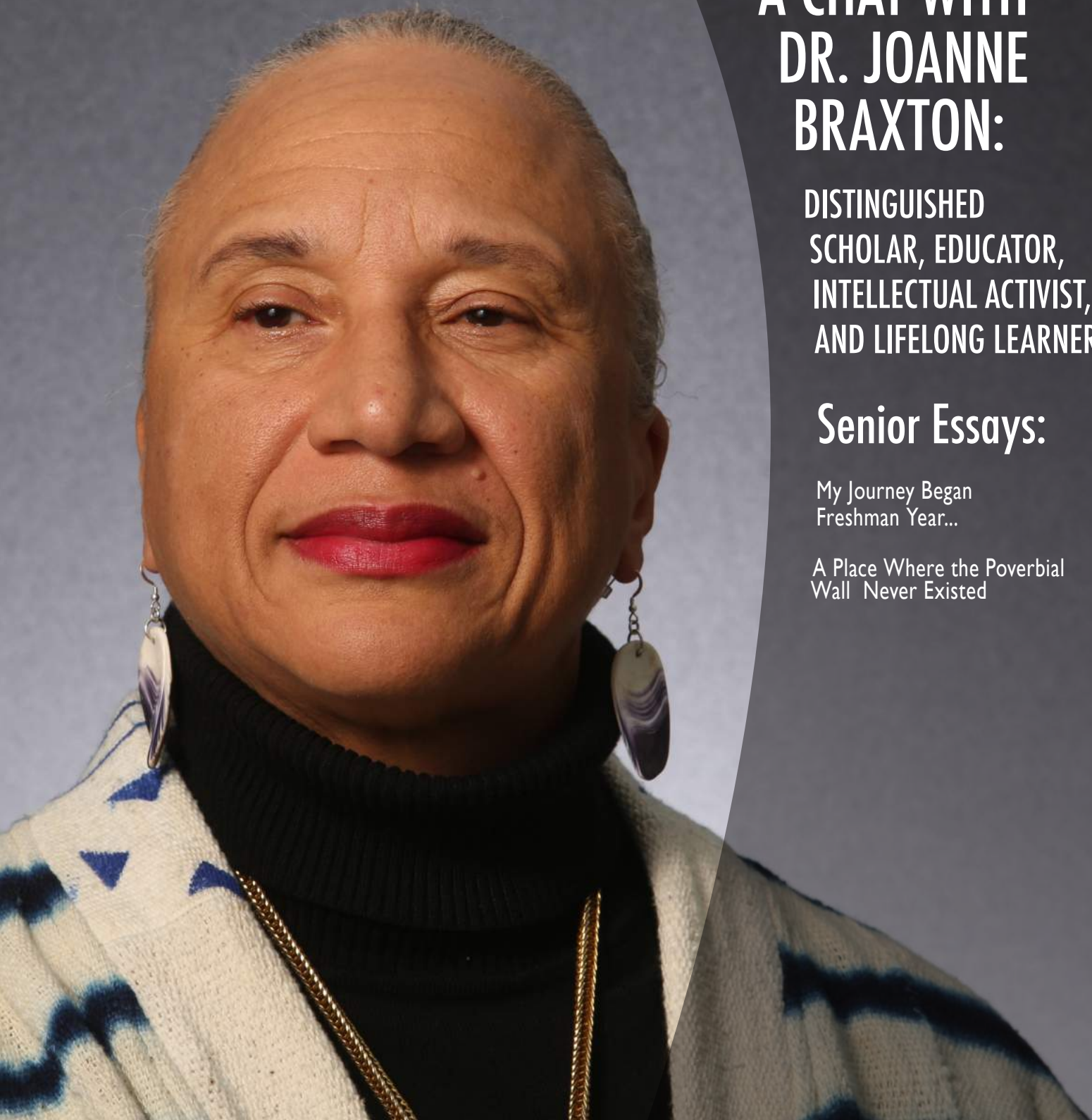
## A CHAT WITH DR. JOANNE BRAXTON:

DISTINGUISHED  
SCHOLAR, EDUCATOR,  
INTELLECTUAL ACTIVIST,  
AND LIFELONG LEARNER

### Senior Essays:

My Journey Began  
Freshman Year...

A Place Where the Poverbial  
Wall Never Existed





ANNUAL JOURNAL OF WILLIAM & MARY AFRICANA STUDIES  
VOLUME 6: SUMMER 2018

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## FROM THE DIRECTOR:

**Our influence is everywhere and I am  
resolved to continue discovering, living,  
and sharing our episteme with students.**

In last year’s *KUUMBA* publication, I told the Class of 2017 to “Go out into the world and make yourselves come true.” This academic year, I followed my own recommendation. I spent 28 days engaging the discipline of Africana Studies and my people within the Diaspora. I was part of a team of scholars on a panel for the International Society for the Oral Languages of Africa who presented in the World Humanities Conference in Liège, Belgium. I traveled to Salvador and Cachoeira in Bahia, Brazil, studied Afro-Brazilian religious culture, and spent time with The Sisterhood of Our Lady of the Good Death. I also studied cultural sustainability and community organization at the Atunfato Temple in Abeokuta, Nigeria. I took domestic research trips. I visited the Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change and attended the Omo Obátalá Egbe’s 20th Annual Conference on Striving and Achieving Social Justice through Our Culture in Georgia. I also presented at the August Wilson Society Colloquium in Pittsburgh and spent some time in the Hill District community—the birthplace of one of America’s greatest playwrights.

A number of public and private funding sources made all of these trips possible. I absolutely must thank Jane, Robert, and Timothy Sharpe through the Sharpe Community Studies Program, the Reves

Center for International Studies, the Department of Theatre, Speech, and Dance, and my supportive deans within the College of Arts and Sciences and the Charles Center.

Collectively, these trips reignited my personal commitment to engaged learning and preserving and promoting Africanist ways of knowing and being. There is beauty and power in Africana culture. Our narrative is one of resilience and sustenance. Our influence is everywhere and I am resolved to continue discovering, living, and sharing our episteme with students.

This issue of *KUUMBA* is particularly special to me. On the cover is one of my mentors, Dr. Joanne Braxton. Dr. Braxton spent nearly four decades of her distinguished career at William & Mary and almost half those years investing in my intellectual, spiritual, emotional, and creative development. I will miss her dearly, but her legacy within Africana and the campus at-large is immeasurable and conspicuous. I wish you well on your much-deserved retirement.

Farewell to our 2018 graduates. I will remind you as I did the graduates of 2017, “You are the wildest dream of your ancestors.” Move out into the world and learn more about yourself through learning about others.

**Artisia Green**

*Director, Program in Africana Studies*

*Sharpe Associate Professor of Civic Renewal and Entrepreneurship of Theatre and Africana Studies WMSURE Mellon Faculty Fellow*

*W. Taylor Reveley, III Interdisciplinary Faculty Fellow*

# A CHAT WITH DR. JOANNE BRAXTON

Distinguished scholar, educator, intellectual activist, and lifelong learner, Dr. Joanne Braxton, discusses her 38 years at William & Mary.

by Sakinaa Rock '18

Photo by Stephen Salpukas

**JB: First and foremost, I would say, “Always stand in your own truth.”**

A highly regarded scholar of Black Atlantic literature, African American literature, rituals, religion and the arts, Dr. Joanne Braxton was instrumental in the establishment of the Africana Studies and American Studies Programs at William & Mary. She has received many awards and honors, including the Thomas Jefferson Teaching Award and W&M Society of the Alumni Teaching Award. As part of W&M’s 325th birthday celebration in February 2018, Dr. Braxton received the Thomas Jefferson Award for Service, the university’s highest honor. Other awards include Outstanding Faculty Member Award from the State Council of Higher Education in Virginia and numerous lifetime achievement awards, including the “Oni Award for uncompromising commitment to African People,” from the International Black Women’s Congress. She is also proud to have taught more than half a dozen individuals who now serve W&M as faculty members or administrators. Overall, Dr. Braxton’s impact on W&M and the larger field of African American Studies during her 38 years here is truly immeasurable.

**SR: “What prompted you to pursue a career devoted to the study of African-descended peoples?”**

**JB: “I was guided to the study of African-American literary and cultural traditions because as a child I wondered why the stories of my grandmothers were not in books. This led me to study**

Dr. Braxton is the Frances L. and Edwin L. Cummings Professor of Africana Studies and English, one of the first African American professors to earn an endowed chair at W&M. She received a B.A. in Literature from Sarah Lawrence College, her Ph.D. and M.A., in American Studies from Yale University, and much later as her research and community service interests broadened, an M.T.S., in Spirituality from Pacific School of Religion; and the M.Div., in Ministry from Virginia Union University. Dr. Joanne Braxton joined the faculty of William & Mary in 1980. For the past three years, she has also been community faculty in the Family and Community Medicine Department at EVMS, bringing EVMS faculty into W&M classrooms to discuss such important topics as unconscious and inherent bias and narrative ethics and how they impact African American people.



**with Professor Gerda Lerner “the mother of Women’s Studies” at Sarah Lawrence College and graduate study at Yale with Charles T. Davis, C. Vann Woodward and John W. Blassingame. The wondering about the absence of these voices also led to write my first three books.”**

Dr. Braxton has authored or edited seven books: *Sometimes I Think of Maryland* (1977), *Black Women Writing Autobiography: A Tradition Within a Tradition*

(1989), *Wild Women in the Whirlwind: The Renaissance in Contemporary Afro-American Writing* (1990), *The Collected Poetry of Paul Laurence Dunbar* (1993), *Monuments of the Black Atlantic: Slavery and Memory, Maya Angelou’s I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings: A Casebook* (1998), and *Black Female Sexualities*, (2105). She also edited the multi-volume *Women Writers of Color Biography Series* for the Praeger-Greenwood Publishing Group. Most of her works sought to remedy the erasure of the narratives of black women by bringing their stories to life, and she was doing this at a time when many of these works by black women were out of print. Her efforts, among others, laid the groundwork for the explosion in black feminist criticism that we are seeing today.

Over time, Dr. Braxton has developed and taught several courses specific to the Middle Passage and the history of the slave trade at W&M. In 1995, she founded the Middle Passage Project to examine the historical legacy and collective memory of the transatlantic slave trade and its impact on African-descended peoples in the Americas and their representation in the humanities through a variety of genres and interdisciplinary methods. These have included a lecture series funded by the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities and Public Policy that served as training for public school teachers, the historic “International Monuments of the Black Atlantic: History,

Memory and Politics” conference held at W&M in May 2000, and exhibitions in public schools, museums and universities. Dr. Braxton has also taught African American literature and non-fiction creative writing as a Fulbright Professor in Germany, Italy and Spain, and lectured in France, the Netherlands, Cuba and Brazil. She has been a lecturer, panelist, and keynote speaker at numerous conferences, workshops, and universities, including the University of Muenster in Germany, where

she served as a senior Fulbright Professor and keynoted the Collegium of African American Research conference on “African Liberation in the Americas.” The Middle Passage Project officially became a part of the Africana Studies Program in 2014.

Following this thread of remembrance, I asked Dr. Braxton about how establishing the Africana Studies Program and the Middle Passage Project has helped William & Mary begin to grapple with its legacy of slavery, Jim Crow, and systematic racism in general, and she stated, “The Middle Passage Project has helped hundreds if not thousands of people touched by this heritage cope with their own perceived historical trauma. We have also produced new knowledge in the form of the May 2000 “Monuments of the Black Atlantic” conference co-sponsored with the Collegium for African-American Research (CAAR), Colonial Williamsburg, Hampton University and the Omohundro Institute and held here in Williamsburg.” We have also contributed scholarly publications, “Crossing a Deep River: A Ritual Drama in Three Movements,” individual lectures and a lecture

series and symposia. In February 2018, the Middle Passage Project partnered with Evolution 2019 and Norfolk State University to present a half-day symposium, “1619 and the Making of America: The Encounter of Africans, Indigenous People, and ‘The English’ in Early Virginia” at

When asked about what Africana Studies, as a discipline, offers students, Dr. Braxton eloquently stated, **“Information, Values, Aesthetics, and an inherent critique of systems of power. Africana Studies also teaches us that we are not only citizens of our communities, states and nations, we are citizens of the world. And it prepares us to live into that reality with moral and ethical responsibility.”**

the Library of Congress John W. Kluge Center. Panelists included Frances L. and Edwin L. Cummings Professor Robert Trent Vinson, Norfolk State University History Professor Cassandra Newby-Alexander and Lynette Lewis Allston, Chief of the Nottoway Indian Tribe of Virginia, Incorporated. The symposium was the culmination of Braxton's one-year appointment as the David B. Larson Fellow in Spirituality and Health at the Kluge Center, an appointment that was supported in part by the Library of Congress, in part by William & Mary, and in part by Professor Braxton herself.

**SR: "What opportunities do you see for the Middle Passage Project in the years ahead?"**

**JB: "A world-class opportunity has emerged right here in Williamsburg, as I have just learned that the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation will be serving as the U.S. archive of the UNESCO Slave Routes Project. In this setting, the work of the Middle Passage Project takes on added importance. In addition, the W&M Middle Passage Project will be one of the sponsors of the Tenth Biennial Conference of the Association for the Study of the Worldwide African Diaspora (ASWAD) from November 5-10, 2019. As stated in the official ASWAD press release, 'the ASWAD conference continues the longstanding work**

**of the William & Mary Middle Passage Project, which raises awareness of the 400th anniversary of the arrival of enslaved Africans to this region.' There is also the 2019 Making of America Summit at Norfolk State University on September 27-28, 2019. W&M Africana Studies, the Middle Passage Project, Norfolk State and the Nottoway Indian Tribe of Virginia, Inc. have formed a strong team. I will continue to be involved, both as a planner and a presenter and maybe in ways I have not yet imagined. Our W&M Africana Studies program is sure to benefit."**

**SR: "You are awe-inspiring, Dr. Braxton. Any final words for the class of 2018?"**

**JB: "Thank you for giving me this opportunity to touch the lives of the Africana Studies Program graduating class of 2018. Please know that this is a blessing to me. I am deeply honored and truly humbled. As professor emerita, I will always have ties to W&M Africana Studies. I will always feel a special connection with the class of 2018 because you are the best, and as you see, we are graduating together to serve a higher purpose. For this I am truly grateful and I have complete confidence in knowing that you will do amazing things. Go forth in joy, to lead and to serve. May it be so!"**



Photo by Stephen Salpukas

# MY JOURNEY BEGAN FRESHMAN YEAR

by *DeLauren Davis '18*

**A**fricana Studies has played a crucial role in my life. I am immensely grateful for the knowledge that the faculty, and department overall, has given to me. As I reflect on my time at the College, I think back to the Intro to Africana Studies course I took with Professor Osiapem, my freshman year. Like many other students, I did not know about the innumerable contributions that my ancestors and countless Black people have made to American society. At the time, I had no idea the impact that an Africana Studies education would have on my life. Africana Studies changed my outlook on life and education for the better. Africana Studies has taught me more about myself in the last four years than I could have ever imagined. My passion for providing students with the resources needed to succeed, and interest in pursuing a career in administration in higher education has been fostered by my Africana Studies education. I have learned about the interplay of power, oppression, and privilege, and how understanding them can aid in understanding the roots causes of major societal issues. Kimberlé Crenshaw’s theory of intersectionality has helped me further understand my position and analyze my experiences as a black woman in American society. Moreover, I have learned how understanding the experiences of those at the margins of society can help me understand the world we live in, how issues of power, and privilege affect all aspects of our lives.

Aside from educating me, the Africana Studies Program has become my home. The faculty are extremely welcoming, and I will cherish the relationships I have developed with the people in Africana Studies. I endeavor to create educational equity for all people, regardless of their background or level of access to adequate education. I will never forget my experiences and the education I received at William and Mary, and I will be forever grateful to the Africana Studies Department for enlightening me—helping me become an open-minded member of society and a lifelong learner.



▲ DeLauren will be attending the University of Georgia this upcoming fall, pursuing her M.Ed.



# THIS WAS A PLACE, A PLACE WHERE THE PROVERBIAL WALL NEVER EXISTED

by *Alexandra Yeumeni-Towo '18*

If I am being honest, with both the broader William & Mary community and myself, I have to say that I spent much of my time at William & Mary deeply uncomfortable. Uncomfortable, because I was in a new environment that never quite felt like the all-inclusive community that the brochures promised. Nervous that one day I would smash into the proverbial wall, which I could never see, but kept me from ever really being a part of the exclusive campus community. Africana Studies is one of the spaces in which I was able to place myself solidly, and the proverbial wall had never existed. I will be forever grateful to the Africana Studies Program for being my community.

Professor Lott's Intro to Africana Studies seminar forced me to challenge what I thought I knew about this society. I interrogated my experiences as a black woman through a black feminist lens and I learned to present my work with confidence. Professor Osiapem gave me an understanding of how language and culture are rooted in colonial and neocolonial relations of power. Professor Glenn showed me the power of dance as resistance, and Professor Vinson gave me

the historical context to ground the social, cultural, political, and economic conditions I observed during my study abroad trip to Cape Town, in the summer of 2016. Professor Thelwell allowed me to envision myself as a creator of knowledge and detailed the history behind the music I love in his History of Hip-Hop course. Professor Allen shined a light on the often-forgotten Black communities affected by massive resistance. Professors Nwabara and Spencer gave me literature that will stick with me for the rest of my life and facilitated conversations that urged me to think more critically about the world around me.

Choosing to study ethnic studies is not without the occasional, "What are you going to do with that?", but since I came to W&M I have never seen myself anywhere else. In Africana Studies, my professors were storytellers, passionate about their work, and supportive of me, not only as a student, but as a human being, balancing more than just academics. My time in the Africana Studies Program, alongside the faculty and students, that I both worked and learned with, has given me a critical eye and a desire to unearth the stories of those, most silenced.



- ▲ This fall, Alex will be completing her Master's in Higher Education and Student Affairs at Ohio State University.

# LESSONS LEARNED

by *Ebony Martin '17*

Since graduating from William & Mary in May 2017 with a B.A. in Africana Studies (African American Studies concentration), I have been working as an English Language Learning teacher for nearly a hundred students, at two middle schools, in my hometown of Martinsville, VA. I have always been extremely passionate about three things: youth, education, and Sankofa. Sankofa is an Akan philosophy which means that it is only by reaching back and looking at the past that we can understand the present world we live in. Moreover, when the opportunity presented itself to me, to return home and teach local youth, I jumped on it. I can honestly say that I have never been so overjoyed about my contributions to my community because teaching makes the world go round. Teachers do not single handedly create doctors, lawyers, actors, artists, etc., but we certainly guide them on their way to their desired career paths.

When I was asked to do this “assignment,” I started to get anxious even though it was not going to be graded. I was worried about what I was going to say and how well it would be received. My nervousness about writing a piece for *Kuumba* reminded me of all the advice that I wish someone would have given me



▲ This fall, Ebony, will be completing her Master’s in Criminal Justice at George Mason University.

about being black at William & Mary, but I had to learn the hard way.

I am going to give four pieces of advice to help all those black students struggling to make it through: (1) There are no greater lessons than the ones we learn about ourselves. Do not ever let anyone assume that the path you have taken for your degree is useless. If you don’t know who you are, the history of your people, and the person you want to be for yourself and for your people, you will get nowhere. (2) You will get through this, not in terms of straight A’s in every class, but in terms of surviving this institution. I am giving you this advice as someone who was once on the verge of dropping out of college at one point. Despite that constant fear of failure, the pressure to “look busy but not drown”, and the fact that you are angry, which no one ever told you would be nearly constant, you can get through this very hard time. I understand struggling with those feelings of being black while,

simultaneously, a William & Mary student, an institution that lives up to its designation as a public ivy. (3) For those of you who have yet to graduate, please remain strong, keep pushing through, and call on your professors when you need assistance because you are lucky enough to be in a discipline with professors who care deeply about your mental and emotional well-being. (4) Sit in the front and engage in class discussion, and be critical of all that you read and hear. When I finally was able to navigate college, with minimal stress, I actually got the chance to enjoy my classes. What I regretted most of all was leaving class thinking, “Maybe I shouldn’t talk so much.” Don’t do that. Discourse is powerful. Questions are powerful, and the various texts, at times in conflict with what you have grown up thinking, are challenging you to think critically, not only about yourself, but the world around you. This major is not just an academic pursuit, it is a way of knowing, of being.



Open yourself up, to the vast amounts of knowledge that your professors manage to fit into four years, and when those four years are up, don't stop searching for knowledge. Read more, do more, talk more, and share the knowledge that you have learned at William & Mary with the rest of the world. Lastly, pay attention to the way your heart and your mind feel when you aren't doing what your inner spirit truly desires, even if it challenges dominant power structures. You may feel weighed down, purposeless, or lost, but trust that you know what you need to do. There is a world outside of college and it is scary, exciting, new, and totally different, but something that will be consistent is that no one is going to take care of you, like you will. If it's costing you peace right now, tell it goodbye.

I cannot give enough thanks to the Africana Studies program for saving me and helping me discover who I am destined to be. All the joy that is being created in my life right now, I owe to Africana Studies.

To all my professors, I truly love you and I will never be able to repay for all of the invaluable knowledge you have imparted to me, and all of the support you have given me along the way.

**“Questions are powerful, and the various texts, at times in conflict with what you have grown up thinking, are challenging you to think critically, not only about yourself, but about the world around you.”**

**“Despite that constant fear of failure, the pressure to “look busy but not drown”, and the fact that you are angry, which no one ever told you would be nearly constant, you can get through this very hard time.”**

# FROM STUDENT TO TEACHER

by Marvin Shelton '15

It is always interesting when I am asked about how Africana Studies impacted my career and social trajectory because the answer evolves with each year, each new social space I enter, and each occupational space that I have been a part of since graduating in 2015. In the resume form of my career path, since graduating from William & Mary, I have since received my Master's of Science in Education (M.S.Ed) from the University of Pennsylvania's Graduate School of Education, in December of 2016. I am currently a middle school English and History teacher, which I have been for the past two years, in independent schools: one year on a teaching fellowship at William Penn Charter School in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and one year as a full-time teacher at Riverdale Country School in Bronx, New York. As Africana Studies taught me, and as I continue to learn in these elite, white spaces, is that what is more valuable than a credential or name of an institution is who shows up for you in these spaces and what being in as well as a part of community looks like in these environments. These considerations are especially important for my journey as a self-identified black, queer, femme, gender non-binary, first generation educator from a low-income background.

The three most important lessons that I learned while being a scholar in the Africana Studies program were that working in community is better for one's self care; paying it forward to underrepresented scholars who come after you through social, academic, and financial support is essential; and writing one's self into the scholarship that they want to read and the world they want to see is key for producing representation for the most vulnerable. The professors I had in Africana classes and who were affiliated with Africana encouraged



▲ Marvin alongside Africana Studies Program Director, Artisia Green at graduation, 2015.

me to study all parts of myself: my blackness, my queer femme identity, and my socio-economic status. They collectively saw my worth before I was able to see it and, unlike most of my professors in the English department, they guided me towards asking the more difficult questions about curriculum, pedagogy, and community: why are my voice and experiences not represented fully and consistently in what I am studying? Why do my community members not understand the significance of seeing all of my multiple identities reflected and impacted at a single moment?

Even after conducting qualitative research around the impact of humanities curriculum on Black, gay males under Africana Studies, I have continued to ask the aforementioned questions in my Master's research on balancing agency and victimization in the narratives of queer of color students in K-12 educational environments as well as a practicing middle educator.

Especially as an educator in a predominately white and upper-middle-class environment, I realize the significance of the work I do academically with middle schoolers by moving conversations around racism, sexism, homophobia, ableism, and elitism from the distant and the abstract (through the characters we read about and study) to the close and practical (through their lives and community). As we read about gender expression and race, I ask my mostly white, cisgender students to think of the implications of the underrepresentation of transgender identities and people of color in our community. As we discuss poverty in our short stories, I share my own experiences growing up in a low-income family and ask my students to think about the invisibility of conversations on class in our own community. In addition, as a gender non-conforming



**“...I learned from Africana Studies that representation matters.”**

educator, I find that showing up to class with nails on, lips painted, and gender fluid clothing in-tact causes me great anxiety, but I remember the lessons I learned from Africana Studies that representation matters. I am “writing” myself into the world I want to see my students grow up in through the questions I pose, through the political act of my presence, and through having them step bravely into answering questions that impact real people and community.

Do I face overt and covert racism from colleagues? Yes. Am I challenged by students in ways that my colleagues are not because of my multiple underrepresented identities and implicit bias? Yes. Am I fearful and

vulnerable in the academic and social spaces I occupy? Yes. I can equally say that I feel I am thriving and representing at this moment in my life through each brave and political act I make as an educator. As I show up to school and queer clubs in the middle and upper school in my gender non-binary manner, I know the impact that it has on students who are struggling to come into their own sexual orientation and gender expression. When I praise my students of color for their work and pose questions about assimilation or micro-aggressions (yes, it is possible to have accessible conversations with middle schoolers about these concepts), then I know I am paying it forward as I act as the educator I needed in K-12 and had in Africana Studies.



# IMAGINING A BETTER WORLD

by Armirio Freeman '17

Since graduating from William & Mary in 2017, I have relocated to Washington, D.C. and have been working as a Bill Emerson National Hunger Fellow with the Congressional Hunger Center. The fellowship is a one-year program that uses an anti-racist lens to train individuals to end hunger and poverty in the U.S. For the first half of the program, I engaged in community outreach and engagement work at Martha's Table—a D.C.-based nonprofit that is dedicated to supporting “stronger children, stronger families, and stronger communities” through food access programs, early childhood education services, and community supports. Currently, for the second half of the fellowship, I am at the National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty (an organization that uses legal avenues to curtail domestic homelessness), preparing a report that will document the recent nationwide trend of private citizens starting vigilante groups to target people experiencing homelessness through intimidation and violence.

While working as a fellow, I have become incredibly grateful for my Africana Studies education. On one hand, the Program has provided me with a number of practical skills that I use routinely, including conducting research with a critical eye and producing well-written content in a short period of time. Further, the Program, through introducing me to the robust archive of Afro-Diasporic radicalism and resistance, has made me more confident in the fact that it



is possible to allow your work to be aligned with larger social justice objectives. So often young people internalize the myth that they have to make a choice between sustaining themselves and making an impact on their society. As the College's Africana Studies Program taught me, empowering me to pursue the fellowship program I'm in now, imbuing your career with the intention of building better worlds is a possibility and not just lofty idealism. With that in mind, I'd like to offer the following advice to current Africana minors and majors: don't be afraid to follow in the steps of so many powerful Black people who decided that leaving the world as it currently is isn't enough.



## From Top:

1. Amirio at the 2017 Grocery Walk sponsored by nonprofit DC Greens
2. Amirio at the beginning of the fellowship, in front of the Capitol Building
3. Amirio presenting on his work at Martha's Table on the Hill

# OWN YOUR POWER

by *Ebony Lambert, '16*

**A**fter graduating in 2016, I was accepted into the Health Psychology doctoral program at Virginia Commonwealth University. Currently, I am a second-year student in the program, and a lab manager for the Discrimination and Health Lab, run by Dr. Nao Hagiwara. I am also a graduate research fellow, funded by the National Science Foundation. I am finishing up my master's thesis, which examines racial disparities in school discipline, this summer, and plan to begin working on my dissertation, next fall.

My experiences in the Africana Studies Program taught me many things. There are two notes in particular, however, that I wish to impart to majors/minors who are in the process of starting careers. The first note is to be intentional about seeking out mentors, whether you are still on campus or leaving to start new chapters this fall. You will need mentors to help with your professional development, but also your personal and spiritual growth. Having multiple mentors helps you to develop a sense of community and accountability and allows you to get advice and guidance from people with different perspectives.

The second note is this: own your power. Learn to embrace and walk in the strength and the value of your life and your work. It is crucial that you all understand the significance of who are you in this present socio-political and historical moment, and that you understand who you are in relation to the rest of the world. If you have not already, start cultivating spaces outside of academia for yourself, in order to be human and vulnerable and complex within yourself, without criticism or judgment. Spaces where you can be open and accepting of your flaws and spaces that celebrate you because of, and not in spite of, your mistakes and failures. Understand that while you are responsible for building a career and contributing to society, you are responsible, first and foremost, for allowing yourself to be fully human.





# AFRICANA STUDIES @ WILLIAM & MARY



▲ Homecoming 2015 celebration at the Africana House.

## MISSION AND STRUCTURE

Africana Studies is an interdisciplinary major that explores the scholarship on the history and cultural traditions, and the political and economic circumstances which together define over 1.2 billion people of African descent. Students take a common set of core courses, and may select one of three tracks in which to concentrate:

**African American Studies**

**African Studies**

**African-Diaspora Studies**

The central mission of the program is to prepare students for lifelong learning, graduate study in various fields, and careers in private and public organizations worldwide. Africana studies seeks to develop a habit of thinking that is inter-disciplinarily analytical and a habit of heart that is cross-culturally empathetic. Embracing more than the centrality of race, it is designed to apply a comparative lens to the study of imperial, national, ethnic, linguistic, and religious currents and intersections in Africa, and its far-flung Diaspora in North America, the Caribbean Basin, Latin America, the Middle East, South Asia, and Western Europe.

## STUDENT ACTIVITIES AND RESEARCH

Students are supported by over thirty affiliated faculty. Majors are expected to engage in research in various forms, including independent study, Honors, and structured internships. Majors and Minors are encouraged to combine their scholarly study with service learning, study away in the U.S., and study abroad, especially in Africa, the Caribbean, and Latin America. The program is a lead sponsor of the William & Mary summer program in Cape Town, South Africa. In the near future, we hope to add summer programs in the Caribbean and Brazil. The student-run African Cultural Society, Black Studies Club, and Africana House are open to all members of the William & Mary community.

## CAREERS AND GRADUATE STUDY

Students with a major in Africana Studies (or its predecessors, African Studies and Black Studies) have attended graduate programs in various disciplines and professions. Several alumni have joined the public sector at all levels, while others work for a variety of private employers. Many served as Peace Corps volunteers or joined a variety of non-profit organizations in the U.S. The analytical skills and broad perspectives acquired in life-long learning or to prepare for myriad occupational opportunities.



# SUPPORT AFRICANA STUDIES

## *Ways to Contribute*

Your contribution to the Africana Studies Program will help our faculty members provide the best learning experience to our students.

- The **Africana Studies program fund (2965)** will enable the faculty to focus on designing, implementing and branding marquee programs (like a major symposium or distinguished lecture series) that would raise the program's visibility, assist with recruiting students and faculty, and further engage students across W&M.
- The **Jacquelyn Y. McLendon Prize in Africana Studies (3754)** honors Professor McLendon for her leadership and innovative administration that paved the way for ethnic studies at W&M. Donations to this fund will go to honor students of Africana Studies that demonstrate academic and leadership excellence as well as dedication to the program.

To make a donation online, visit [www.wm.edu/as/africanastudies/support](http://www.wm.edu/as/africanastudies/support).

To contribute by mail, make your check payable to The College of William & Mary Foundation. Please be sure to enter either Africana Studies (2965) or the Jacquelyn McLendon Prize (3754) in your check's memo area and mail your contribution to: **William & Mary, P.O. Box 1693, Williamsburg, VA 23187-1693.**

## CURRICULUM: MAJOR AND MINOR

### *Disciplines Studied:*

Anthropology  
Art and Art History  
Economics  
English  
Government  
History  
Modern Languages and Literatures  
Music  
Philosophy  
Religious Studies  
Sociology  
Theatre, Speech, and Dance

### *Distinguishing Features:*

Foreign Languages  
Research Methods  
Core and capstone  
Interdisciplinary  
Globally comparative  
Melds the Local with the Diasporic  
Study away  
Study abroad  
Internships  
Community Engagement

## ALUMNI AND FRIENDS

### *Your News and Contact Information*

For your convenience, we have provided an online form ([www.wm.edu/as/africanastudies/alumni/sendusyournews](http://www.wm.edu/as/africanastudies/alumni/sendusyournews)) for your news and contact information. As always, we look forward to your visit to campus.

### *Alumni Career Connections*

One of the most helpful and popular resources provided by the Office of Career Services is Alumni Career Connections—a searchable database of alumni who have volunteered to support students and fellow alumni by sharing information about their career field, internships and job search strategies

## CONTACT

### *Program Director:*

**Artisia Green**

*Sharpe Associate Professor  
of Civic Renewal and  
Entrepreneurship of Theatre and  
Africana Studies*

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Morton 104E

757-221-2616

### *Website:*

[www.wm.edu/africanastudies](http://www.wm.edu/africanastudies)

# PURSUING A MAJOR IN AFRICANA STUDIES

- ▶ Africana majors and minors join Professors Pinson and Green in the opening acquaintance lunch.



## 36 CREDITS NEEDED TO GRADUATE

### COMMON CORE (MINIMUM 12 CREDITS)

#### 1. Major Gateway (3 credits)

- AFST 150: Introduction to Africana Studies OR
- AFST 205: Introduction to Africana Studies

#### 2. Methods (3 credits)

- AFST 399 Research Methods in Africana Studies

#### 3. Coll 400 Senior Capstone (3 credits)

- AFST 495/496 Honors OR
- AFST 499 Senior Project in Africana Studies

#### 4. Language (3 credits)

- AFST 250 African American English OR
- AFST 251 Caribbean Languages OR
- One course beyond the 202-level OR
- 202-level proficiency in 2 languages OR
- Off-campus study
- AFST 458 Caribbean Archaeology

### ELECTIVES (MINIMUM 18 CREDITS, SELECTED WITH FACULTY ADVISOR)

1. Students are required to complete at least 18 credits through recognized AFST courses in the social sciences and arts & humanities within their chosen area of concentration.
2. Students must take at least one three-credit course in one field if they are more inclined to take the majority of their electives in another. For instance, a student more interested in the arts & humanities must take at least one three-credit course in the social sciences in order to complete the degree.
3. Students are also strongly encouraged to take one elective in a concentration outside of their own.
4. The program publishes recognized and accepted electives for each of the concentrations in the online catalog of the university.
5. Other courses may also be credited towards the electives after approval by the major advisor and program director.
6. Courses credited towards the major and concentration core may not be credited as electives. There is no double crediting within the Africana Studies major.

### CONCENTRATION (MINIMUM 6 CREDITS)

#### AFRICAN STUDIES

##### 1. Concentration Gateway (3 credits)

- AFST 302 Introduction to African Studies

##### 2. 400 level Seminar (3 credits)

- AFST 406 Advanced African Studies Topics OR
- AFST 426 The Rise and Fall of Apartheid OR
- AFST 427 History of Modern South Africa

#### AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES

##### 1. Concentration Gateway (3 credits)

- AFST 303 Introduction to African American Studies

##### 2. 400 level Seminar (3 credits)

- AFST 406 Advanced African American Studies Topics OR
- AFST 414 Major African American Women Writers OR
- AFST 417 Harlem in Vogue OR
- AFST 425 Blacks in American Society

#### AFRICAN DIASPORA STUDIES

##### 1. Concentration Gateway (3 credits)

- AFST 304 Intro to African Diaspora OR
- AFST 305 African Diaspora Since 1808

##### 2. 400 level Seminar (3 credits)

- AFST 406 Advanced African Diaspora Studies Topics OR
- AFST 418 Anthropological Reflections of the African Diaspora OR

### MINOR IN AFRICANA STUDIES (MINIMUM 21 CREDITS)

*The list of electives under all three concentrations remains the same.*

#### 1. Major Gateway (3 credits)

- AFST 150: Introduction to Africana Studies OR
- AFST 205: Introduction to Africana Studies

#### 2. Methods (3 credits)

- AFST 399: Research Methods in Africana Studies

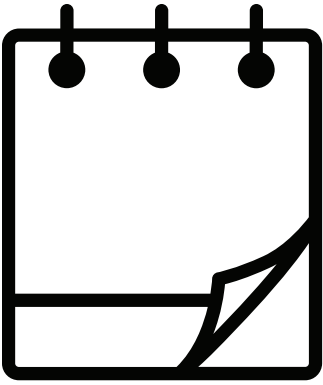
#### 3. Concentration (3 credits)

- AFST 302: Introduction to African Studies OR
- AFST 303: Introduction to African American Studies OR

- AFST 304: Intro to African Diaspora OR
- AFST 305: African Diaspora Since 1808

#### 4. Electives (12 credits)

- Students are required to complete at least 12 credits through recognized AFST courses in the social sciences and arts & humanities within their chosen area of concentration.
- Courses fulfilling the student's major cannot be counted toward the minor.
- Major electives policies #2-6 also apply to the minor.



# 2017-2018 AFRICANA SPONSERED EVENTS

September 22, 2017

*Reading the Oracular System System of Ifa in the Pittsburgh Cycle* | **Artisia Green**

October 4, 2017

*Africa in the Early Spanish Atlantic Cross-Cultural Trade and Overlapping Iberian Empire* | **David Wheat**

November 14, 2017

*The Place From Which All Funky Things Come: Outkast's Hip Hop South* | **Regina Bradley**

March 1, 2018

Chat and Chew with **Zena Howard**

March 26, 2018

*Music, Community, & Sustainability in Africa* | **Dr. Ama Aduonum and Dr. Michelle Kisliuk**

April 4, 2018

*Music, Community, & Sustainability in Africa* | **Dr. Ama Aduonum and Dr. Michelle Kisliuk**

*Decolonizing Anthropology: African American and Other Ex-Centric Scholarship* | **Dr. Faye Harrison**

April 11, 2018

*The Importance of Trans Visibility* | **Janet Mock**

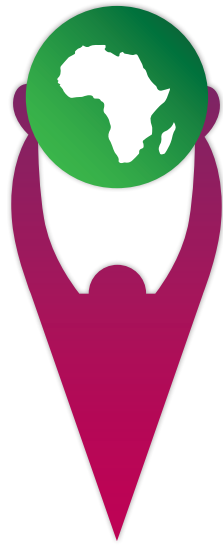
April 13, 2018

ACS Musical - "**Good Hair**"

**Africana Studies 2nd Annual Research Symposium**

A special "**thank you**" to our supporters who make funding of these events possible.





# AFRICANA STUDIES

@ WILLIAM & MARY



▲ Dr. Braxton speaking at her last lecture at William & Mary.  
*Photo by Stephen Salpukas*