Welcome to Diaspora, the Department of African American and African Diaspora Studies’ electronic newsletter. We are all connected to AAADS in one way or another, yet we are spread far and wide throughout the university, the community, and even farther afield. We are the AAADS Diaspora.

Events and News of Note

• This fall the department welcomes Diana Louis as a CRESS post-doctoral fellow in AAADS. Dr. Louis holds a PhD in English and African American literature from Emory University. Her research focuses on representations of madness in 19th-century Black women’s narratives. She will teach two courses in the department each year.

• In May, Maria Eliza Hamilton Abegunde received her PhD, the first student from IU’s AAADS program to do so. The applause at graduation was electrifying! This fall, Abegunde was named the first director of the new Graduate Mentorship Center at the Office for Diversity, Equity, and Multicultural Affairs (DEMA) and lecturer in AAADS. As director, Abegunde guides and mentors under-represented new and continuing graduate students.
Alongside her work for DEMA, Abegunde teaches one course per semester for AAADS.

- This summer, Erica Whichello joined the department as our Administrative Assistant and Mary Nuznov became our undergraduate advisor. Erica is involved with many diverse activities and adheres to a multiplicity of needs to help AAADS function. Mary advises our students and promotes our courses across campus. Both have already proven invaluable. Welcome Erica and Mary!
- Professor Iris Rosa organized a “Meet, Eat, and Greet” event for AAADS undergraduate majors, minors, faculty, and adjuncts at Bridgwater Lounge in the Neal Marshall Black Culture Center. The event took place Monday, September 22nd, 3:30-5PM, and provided a wonderful opportunity for students to interact with faculty and learn more about the department.

- AAADS Fiscal Officer Robin Canfield will retire at the end of September 2014. Thank you, Robin, for all you’ve done for the department!
• In August, the AAADS faculty came together for the Faculty Fall Retreat to discuss items of importance to the department for the upcoming year.
• AAADS is excited to begin admitting new PhD students in the fall of 2015.
• At their May 2014 concert, the IU Soul Revue honored founding director Professor Portia Maultsby, who established the Revue in 1971. Current director Tyron Cooper remarked on the “foundation of artistry, scholarship and community for subsequent Soul Revue directors and students to build upon” that Dr. Maultsby established. Professor Maultsby has been an adjunct in AAADS for many years and is Laura Boulton Professor Emerita of Folklore and Ethnomusicology.

Ongoing and Upcoming Events

• Professor Maisha Wester is organizing the AAADS Speaker series for 2014-15 based on the theme "The Art of Activism: Black Liberation Movements and Creative Interventions in Racial Oppression." Speakers, dates, and details to follow soon! Professor Wester has also organized the fall 2014 AAADS brown bag lunch lecture series, held from noon – 1PM in M39 Memorial Hall East. On October 15th, we’ll hear Fine Arts Professor Malcolm Mobutu Smith’s presentation “Turbulent Vessels: Ceramics and Identity.” AAADS adjunct and English Professor Jacinda Townsend will discuss the historical research she conducted for her novel Saint Monkey on November 5th. On November 19th, Gabriel Peoples, PhD candidate in the American Studies Department at the University of Maryland, will present “People Hear What They See: Rumor and Branding in (Re)presentations of Black Men.”
AAADS is eagerly anticipating the 2014-2015 African American Arts Institute Performance Season, which will include the Potpourri of the Arts on November 8th at 8PM, the African American Dance Company Spring Concert on April 11 at 8PM, the IU Soul Revue Spring Concert on April 18th at 8PM, and the African American Choral Ensemble Spring Concert on Saturday, May 2nd at 8PM.

AAADS will co-sponsor with the African American Archive of Music and Culture a Themester panel entitled: “Hot Buttered Soul: The Role of Foodways and Music-making in Building and Sustaining African American Communities, Neal-Marshall Black Culture Center, October 27, 4:30 pm.

The department has co-sponsored a number of events on campus, including the Black Film Center/ Archive’s series on Blaxploitation Horror films of the 1970s, and the film, events, and workshops surrounding the BFC’s “Naked Acts: Image
Making and Black Female Sexuality.” These events took place at the IU Cinema and around campus from August - October 2014. The department also sponsored George Chakiris’s visit as a Jorgensen Guest Filmmaker Lecturer at IU Cinema. In July, AAADS sponsored “I’ll Rise,” a theatrical production by the GROUPS program. In October, the department will co-sponsor the Latino Studies Program Presentation, “The Politics of Race and Representation: Latinos and Latin Americans in the American Imaginary.”

- This year AAADS is partnering with the Atkins Living Learning Center to develop an undergraduate research program. Students are doing historical research on Blacks in an Indiana community from the 1880s to the present. They will present this research in the spring of 2015 as part of a ten-year celebration of Atkins. This work is being done in conjunction with AAADS A493 (Senior Seminar), where seniors taking the major also conduct research and present final projects that are both traditional and creative.

**Faculty**

- Professor **Tyron Cooper** composed and performed original music for the WFYI Public Television film “Bobby ‘Slick’ Leonard: Heart of a Hoosier.” Dr. Cooper has written multiple scores for films; he was nominated for regional Emmy Awards for his contributions to “Undefeated: The Roger Brown Story,” “Musical Threads: Expressions of a People,” and “Open Door: China in Indiana.”

- In June, Professor **Jakobi Williams** gave a talk about his book *From the Bullet to the Ballot*, hosted by the Department of African American Studies, University of California, Los Angeles. He published a review of Yvonne Ryan’s *Roy Wilkins: The Quiet Revolutionary and the NAACP* in *Black Diaspora Review* 4, no. 2 (2014). Professor Williams also wrote an entry on Fred Hampton for the *American National Biography*, Oxford University Press, which is forthcoming in 2014 and contributed a chapter “‘We Need to Unite with as Many People as Possible’: The Illinois Chapter of the Black Panther Party and the Young Lords Organization in Chicago” to Brian D. Behnken, ed., *Beyond Civil Rights: African American and Latina/o Activism in the Twentieth Century United States*, University of Georgia Press, which is forthcoming in 2015.
• In September, Professor Iris Rosa together with musical director Andre Rosa-Artis contributed to “Musica Cubana” as part of the Indy Jazz Fest. Professor Rosa directed Sancocho: Music and Dance Collage, which included music and dance traditions from the Spanish-speaking African diaspora such as Rumba and Bailes Orishas from Cuba and Bomba from Puerto Rico. The show centers around Gerardo Gonzalez, Dean of the School of Education, and his emotional return to Cuba after 50 years. Sancocho is conducting a workshop in Bloomington, Indiana as part of the Lotus Festival and will perform at the Indiana State Museum as part of the Indiana Latino Heritage Day. In October, Sancocho will hold an Afro Cuban dance workshop at Butler University.

• This summer, Professor Rosa co-directed IUPUI’s course Afro 325: Race and Culture in Dominican Republic with Juhanna Rogers, IUPUI PhD Student in Higher Education. Rosa was in a Dominican/Haitian community called La Piedra working with the resident. She is pictured below with the Guloyas, dancers who illustrate the dancing drama traditions of the immigrant Caribbean community of the Cocolos in the Dominican Republic. They were selected by UNESCO and given an award to preserve the cultural practice.
• In June 2014, **Professor Valerie Grim** presented a paper "From Self-Sufficiency to Commercial Food Production: Black Land-Grant Universities and Profit-Making Among African American Producers" at the annual meeting of the Agricultural History Society in Provo, Utah. The conference's theme was, "Transforming Food and Fiber." At this conference, Professor Grim also participated in a roundtable concerning "State of the Field: Rural Women's History," where she presented her paper, "Considering African American Rural Women and Black Women in the African Diaspora: A Reflection for Rural Women's Studies.” In February, Grim chaired two paper sessions at the meeting of the National Council of Black Studies in March in Miami, FL. In January, Dr. Grim participated in a roundtable on Black Farmers and Civil Rights At the 128th Meeting of the American Historical Association in Washington, D.C. This summer she published "'Just One Kind' of Southern Womanist Aesthetics: Ways Rural Black Women Established and Practiced a Culture of Self-Empowerment in the pre-Civil Rights South," *Black Diaspora Review* 4 (2) Summer 2014, pp. 16-34. She is currently conducting research for a book manuscript about Black Land-Grant Universities.

• **Professor John Stanfield** is on leave for the 2014-15 academic year as he serves as Distinguished Professor and Founding Director of the Mogae International Development and Governance Research Institute (MIDGRI) in Palapye, Botswana. From his position in Botswana, Professor Stanfield is linking with IU by inviting faculty and students to collaborate on research and exchange projects with MIDGRI.

• Professor **Vernon Williams** retired from the department this fall. He leaves a
legacy at IU as a stellar scholar and teacher. The department will host a retirement party for Professor Williams in October.

- Professor Carolyn Calloway-Thomas served as the guest faculty speaker at the Neal-Marshall’s Fourth Annual Black Freshman Pinning Ceremony on September 4, 2014. She has been invited to serve on the National Research Council’s Ford Fellowship Program review panel, which will be held at the National Academy’s Beckman Center in Irvine, California from March 5-6, 2015. Her entry “Media in a Globalized World,” for The SAGE Encyclopedia of Intercultural Competence will be published this year.

- In July, Professor Phoebe Wolfskill received a New Frontiers Exploratory Travel Fellowship through the College of Arts and Sciences to pursue her research on contemporary artist Emma Amos. Wolfskill traveled to New York in August to interview Amos and view her work at a variety of venues.

![Emma Amos, Equals, 1992](image)

- At the end of the month, Wolfskill moderated the artist talk with photographer and filmmaker Renee Cox as a part of the Black Film Center’s programming “Naked Acts: Image Making and Black Female Sexuality.” Wolfskill and graduate students including Marsha Horsley, Floyd Hobson, and Amelia Smith enjoyed lunch with Bridgett Davis and Renee Cox after the discussion.

- On September 13th, Professor Raymond Wise served as guest conductor for the 10th Annual High School Gospel Music Invitational at Ithaca College in Ithaca, NY. At this event, 150 high school students from east coast schools came together for an evening of gospel music. Professor Wise was able to share information
about IU’s program with these students. We hope to see many of them at IU in the near future!

• On July 10th, Wise was honored and featured on the Long Street Bridge Cultural Wall in Columbus, Ohio for his work in tap dance. The Cultural Wall is part of a newly renovated bridge and park that spans Long and Spring Streets as they cross Interstate 71.
• Dr. Audrey McCluskey, professor emerita of AAADS together with Dr. Jeannine Bell, professor of law at Maurer School of Law published “Police Culture Must Change to Prevent Future Fergusons” in the Providence Journal (September 15, 2014).

• AAADS Adjunct Professor Amrita Myers presented her talk, “Hidden in Plain Sight: Julia Chin and the Challenges of Reconstructing Antebellum Black Women’s Lives” for the Lecture Series in Gender Research at the IMU Oak Room on September 23.

Graduate Students

• In August, AAADS welcomed three new Master’s students into the program: Hilda Davis, Ignisco Miles, and Amelia Smith. Welcome to AAADS, we are happy to have you here! In August, faculty members of the Graduate Studies Committee hosted the Graduate Student Orientation for these new students. Many returning students joined us for lunch and conversation.

• PhD student Marsha Horsley hosted filmmaker Bridgett Davis and photographer Renee Cox in her AAAD A277 film class on Monday, September 29th from 4-5:15PM as a part of the BFC/A “Naked Acts” programming.

• PhD students Caralee Jones and Ade Doss both won AAADS’s John McCluskey Dissertation Research Awards this summer. Jones conducted research in Houston, Texas, and Doss in Gary, Indiana.
• AAADS graduate student **Ciara Miller** participated into Callaloo’s inaugural poetry workshop in Barbados in May 2014. Her expenses were largely covered through travel awards she received from the College of Arts and Sciences and the College of Arts and Humanities Institute. Last semester, Ciara won GPSO’s award for outstanding graduate student in the field of community involvement. She founded Chicago Artists Against Gun Violence, a coalition of Chicago artists that strategically address gun violence in the communities of Chicago most affected by it. This September, Ciara organized a Stop the Violence/Stay-in-School Bash on the west side of Chicago. She was able to collect over 200 backpacks filled with school supplies to hand out to attendees. The event emphasized non-violence through the presentation of art (rapping, poetry, singing) and many attendees received copies of Paulo Coelho’s “Warrior of the Light.” Her poem “From the DCFS Counselor’s Office” was recently published on Blackberry Magazine’s website. Her poems “How to Make Pancakes” and “In Search of Blackbirds” are forthcoming in *Muzzle Magazine*.

![Stop the Violence/Stay-in-School Bash](image1)

**Undergraduate Students**

• Professor **Iris Rosa** is reviving the AAADS undergraduate club. This organization will provide students with opportunities for professionalizing their academic activities and it will create collaborations with Atkins Living Learning Center and other undergraduate organizations to generate knowledge, interest, and understanding of Black studies and Black life.

• Undergraduate AAADS minor **Brooke Starks** started the student organization “Color Lines,” which is dedicated to creating, promoting, and displaying art at
IU related to issues of race and diversity. We look forward to her upcoming exhibitions!

Diaspora is published bimonthly through the fall and spring semesters. Following the contours of the academic calendar, AAADS issues the newsletter at the end of September, November, February, and April.