



COLLEGE *of*
CHARLESTON

AFRICAN AMERICAN
STUDIES PROGRAM

Spring 2022 Newsletter



"Iron 'sankofa' symbol on a memorial to the enslaved workers who 'helped' build the Unitarian Church in Charleston, SC" by Spencer Means is licensed under CC BY-SA 2.0



Anthony Greene,
Director of the
African American Studies
program

From the Director

Greetings colleagues, students, staff, and friends of the African American Studies program. As we kick off the spring 2022 semester, the reality of Covid remains with us. As cases continue to mount and hospitals over-run, there continues to be a political line drawn regarding vaccinations. With the beginnings of the new semester, many of us share the excitement but also apprehension, frustration, and uncertainty. Nevertheless, we as faculty do what we always do and that's persevere.

Each spring semester is filled with programs and events highlighting the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday, Black History Month, and Women's History Month. While these celebrations are honored, many believe these acknowledgements must be kept in a vacuum. As such, there remains an ongoing

attack on American education regarding the teaching of an inclusive American history that involves discussions of race, oppression, and marginalization. It is impossible to accurately teach history without including all aspects of history. Several southern states have recommended and passed legislation to remove such discussions from the classroom. Additionally, political leaders have issued strategies and various practices to monitor classrooms. For example, the Virginia governor set up tip lines where parents can report if their child's school is covering topics that, as they state, are "divisive practices".

African American Studies and the Race, Equity, and Inclusion (REI) committee remains committed to truth telling. Our spring calendar continues the *Decolonizing the Curriculum Lecture Series: Teaching Race Across the Disciplines* to provide pedagogical support for the impending Race, Equity, and Inclusion (REI) requirement. The Spring series features Dr. Leon Prieto's (Clayton State University) lecture Decolonizing the Management Curriculum: Black History Matters; Dr. Erica Dotson's (Clayton State University) talk "Black English: Understanding and Honoring Linguistic Dexterity"; Dr. Tao Goff's (Cornell University) presentation, The Microbiome of the Plantation, is featured as the Spring 2022 Dr. Conseula Francis Emerging Scholar. We will also participate in a collaborative event with the Office of Admissions, Avery Research Center, and MUSC. This event will feature a panel discussion to engage about historical and contemporary racial and gender disparities in the medical and health professions.

With continued support from the Avery Research Center, Office of Institutional Diversity, Multicultural Student Programs and Services, and the Office of Sustainability, we strive to provide students, faculty/staff, and the Charleston community with socially and culturally relevant programming and events. Also, we are co-sponsoring events with the likes of the 1967 Legacy Scholars. One event feature Dr. Millicent Brown's public lecture *Somebody Had to Do It*. Dr. Brown, at 12-years old, was the lead plaintiff in the *Brown et al v. School District No. 20, Charleston, SC* lawsuit that challenged Charleston's segregated school system. As a part of the 1967 Legacy Scholars, Dr. Valerie Frazier (English) provides students with opportunities to research, attend public lectures, and engage with the College's African American Firsts and the significant contributions of Black Charleston to CofC.

The African American Studies Program will also continue the tradition of holding its annual film festival during Black History Month. This year's festival is in conjunction with the *Decolonizing the Curriculum Lecture Series*. Each film/documentary will serve as a visual representation of how to incorporate discussions of race, gender, and intersectionality across various disciplines. The films include *American Street: Gentrification in Charleston*, *Coded Bias*, *Medical Racism: The New Apartheid*, and *Battle for Black Land*. Films are scheduled each Monday evening (6pm) in the Septima Clark Lecture Hall (ECTR Rm. 118).

As we continue to be resilient in the face of the pandemic, African American Studies is looking forward to another exciting semester of programs and events, which will engage our students in learning about the areas of African American history and culture, domestically and abroad. We also hope that our community of students, faculty, staff, and friends continue to support our endeavors. We look forward to seeing you and these and other events.

Student Spotlight



Janae Dorsey '23

Computer Science, B.S.
African American Studies, B.A.

This past summer, I had the opportunity to intern (remotely) at AT&T in the EDGE Program. EDGE strives to give undergraduate students the chance to experience, develop, grow, and explore numerous businesses and opportunities at a company who is one of today's leaders of innovation. For the 11 weeks that I interned, I had the opportunity to do just that while working on the Transformation Technology Team, better known as T3.

Over the course of the summer, I was tasked with: creating a Change & Adoption guide to help the Transformation Technology Team with communicating and performing more efficient transitions from old/outdated technical processes to new ones that help teams and business units throughout the company; learning about new forms of technology the team was using that impacted the entire Customer Service & Operations Business Unit; and work on a

smaller team/project within T3 to assist with the recovery of particular inactive AT&T equipment.

My assignments allowed me to work in a diverse environment with individuals of different races, ethnicities, genders, age groups, geographical locations, and technical backgrounds. I also was able to network amongst other interns, the T3 team, and other full-time employees outside of my business unit. My experience at AT&T was amazing and afforded me the chance to: make an impact in projects that were much bigger than myself, learn how to effectively communicate amongst a group of people who differ from me in more ways than one, see and understand the need for minorities (specifically black women) in tech, and realize the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the workplace.

Faculty News

What's new with AAST faculty, affiliates, and friends?

- Kameelah Martin and Chris Day received the MLA Humanities Innovation Grant to support the “Black Lives” LCWA Signature Series for Spring 2022.
- Marjory Wentworth is a contributing editor for “*Won't You Celebrate with Me: An Anthology of Contemporary Black Poetry on Hope, Heart, and Heritage*” edited by Kwame Alexander. She is soliciting work for many South Carolina poets.
- Gary Jackson will be co-moderating the “P&P Live! THE FUTURE OF BLACK a poetry panel” on February 18th. The event will focus on a new Afrofuturism poetry anthology that he co-edited.
- During the Fall 2021 semester students from Michael Owens AAST 200 course volunteered with various African American organizations including the Goose Creek chapter of NAACP at a voter drive in North Charleston.



Spring 2022 Events



African American Studies Spring 2022 Film Festival

**Feb. 7th: American Street:
Gentrification in Charleston**

Feb. 14th: Coded Bias

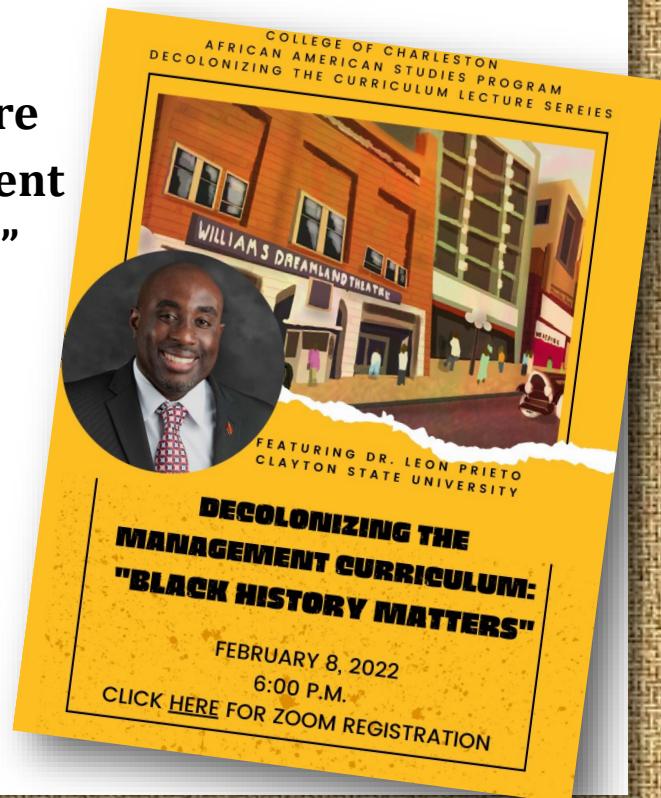
Feb. 21st: Medical Racism

Feb. 28th: Battle for Black Land

Decolonizing the Curriculum Lecture Series: Decolonizing the Management Curriculum: "Black History Matters"

February 8, 2022

6:00pm





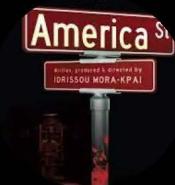
AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES
SPRING 2022

FILM FESTIVAL

6:00 PM
SEPTIMA CLARK AUDITORIUM
(EDUCATION CENTER 118)

DISCUSSIONS OF THE FILMS FACILITATED BY A
FACULTY MEMBER WILL FOLLOW EACH SCREENING.

FREE REFRESHMENTS.



American Street:
Gentrification in
Charleston
February 7



Coded Bias
February 14



**Medical
Racism**
February 21



**Battle for Black
Land**
February 28

Spring 2022 Course Offerings

AAST 200	Intro to African American Studies
AAST 300	ST: Race and Diasporic Connections in the US & Latin America
AAST 300	ST: Race in American Film
AAST 300	ST: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Historic Preservation
AAST 300	ST: Charleston Writers
AAST 300	ST: African American Art
AAST 381	African American Studies Internship
AFST 101	Intro to African Civilization
HIST 217	African American History since 1865

ATTENTION: SENIOR CITIZENS

South Carolina residents who are over 60 years old are eligible to enroll in regular College of Charleston courses on a space-available basis for a fee of \$25 for the semester. Permission of the instructor is required for African American Studies courses. Call 843.953.5620 for details.

LCWA World Affairs Signature Series “Black Lives”

Black Lives is the 2021-2022 World Affairs Signature Series Sponsored by the School of Languages, Cultures, and World Affairs. In the spirit of the Akan aphorism “Sankofa,” which emphasizes the importance of looking to the past to understand the future, this series features a number of events and a range of courses taught in 15 different disciplines in an effort to enhance our understanding of Africa and peoples of African descent across time and space. For the participatory activities, students will engage with four guest speakers from the target cultures to discuss specific folk practices. Speakers will be native to the target culture (and speak relevant dialects/languages) and have direct, applied expertise in the culture.

The modern world has been shaped by forced labor, cultural innovation, and natural resources from the African continent. Scientists have identified East Africa as the cradle of humanity, while Timbuktu and Egypt are viewed as exemplars of ancient civilizations. Today we observe how phenomena such as China’s economic reach and Boko Haram’s insurgency sway realities for states with historically weak institutions and unstable governments; while our own has sworn in the first Black and South Asian woman as Vice President. Conflict in Ethiopia. Food insecurity in Madagascar. SARS protests in Nigeria. The nomination of Black Lives Matter for the Nobel Peace Prize. Ghana’s successful “Year of Return” that invited descendants of enslaved Africans to return “home.” African footballers playing worldwide and black Olympians breaking world records. Each of these has social, economic, and political implications for Black Lives.

Here at CofC, faculty are deeply engaged in research, teaching, and service projects that coalesce around African Studies, African American Studies, and studies of the broader African Diaspora. The Black Lives series seeks to put these efforts in closer dialogue from the unique vantage point of Charleston and the Lowcountry, a space where they intersect in key ways. Being a major center of the Trans-Atlantic slave trade, enslaved Africans and their descendants have shaped our physical, cultural, economic, and political environment in such a way that Charleston can very much be described as an African city. Our theme and Charleston’s importance to the global economy calls attention to how the African continent and wider transnational Black experiences (African American, Afro-Caribbean, Afro-LatinX, Black British, Afro-European) are hubs for international engagement.

We warmly invite the College of Charleston community to participate in the Black Lives Signature Series. Check out the website to learn more about courses and upcoming events that will take part in the series! blogs.cofc.edu/lcwa-signature-series-black-lives



As we begin the start of this new academic year the African American Studies program at the College of Charleston has offered its services as a clearing house for news of events relevant to African American Studies. We have created a calendar and listings-service drawing attention to African American-related events happening across the state. The calendar is on our website and will be providing information on events that we are aware of. To keep our calendar up to date with the latest events we invite you to submit events that you believe would be beneficial to this calendar. If you would also like to be added to our African American-related Events email list please contact Casey Smith at smithcn1@cofc.edu.

The **Event Calendar** can be found here:
african-american-studies.cofc.edu/events/

How Can You Support African American Studies ?

Area of Need:

Study Abroad Scholarships (\$2,750/student)
Student Research & Conference Travel
AAST Student Merit Awards
AAST General/Discretionary Fund
African American Studies Program Endowment

Financial Goal:

\$13,750.00
\$2,000.00
\$5,000.00
\$2,000.00
\$50,000.00*

Every Gift Counts! No amount is too large or small! Please consider an individual or group donation of \$25, \$50, \$100, \$1000 or more!

All donations are tax deductible [Donate Now!](#)

In the 'Designation' drop-down menu, select 'Other'. In the 'Other' box, note your intended contribution: **R717 - African American Studies**. Thank you for your continued support of the African American Studies program.

Or visit <https://giving.cofc.edu/ways-to-give>

Where Are You Now?

Let Us Know What You're Up To

For 20 years the African American Studies Program at the College of Charleston has educated students in African American history and culture. We would love to hear what those students are up to now. Let us know about the exciting professional and personal milestones you've reached since leaving the College. You can email Dr. Martin with the details at martinkl2@cofc.edu



not just in february