A Little About AADS

AADS is one of seven interdisciplinary programs at the University of Wyoming. Committed to teaching and experiencing diversity, we provide individuals with the opportunity to study African people in America and throughout the world. AADS focuses on history, culture, media, and life from ancient times to present day. We are dedicated to providing rich dialogue through our courses, our student groups, and our sponsored events.

Save the Date!

Commencement
May 16, 2015
Do not forget to attend the University of Wyoming graduation on Saturday May 16, 2015. Congratulations!

Black Britain
May 24-June 7, 2015
Remember that two of our main faculty members leave with 12 students for two weeks! Safe travels!

Fall Semester Begins
August 31, 2015
Cheers to summer break! We look forward to your return in the fall!
Letter From the Director
Dr. Tracey Owens Paton

Happy Spring Everyone! We were spared our usual blustery winter this year, but had quite the snowy spring. Now that we are fully ensconced in the gorgeous spring weather, it is time to reflect on our incredibly busy Spring 2015 semester! As usual, this semester has been a busy one for African American & Diaspora studies with faculty being involved in everything from Black History Month to Days of Dialogue, to the Created Equal Series (in Laramie and Cody Wyoming), to bringing in nationally renowned scholar, Dr. Karsonya Whitehead, and to being incredibly busy with conference presentations, local and statewide presentations, and publications.

We want to welcome former A&S Dean Oliver Walter to our Advisory Board! We know he will bring some additional UW institutional knowledge to our already fantastic board.

The wind was knocked out of us in January when AADS lost its only office staff, Moriah Hager. Moriah began a fulltime position with Wyoming Public Media and we are so thrilled for her! Unfortunately, high office staff turnover is common particularly in part-time jobs (AADS office staff has traditionally been part-time only). The light at the end of the tunnel has appeared, because after almost 5 months without any office staff, AADS along with Gender & Women’s Studies and Latina/o Studies has entered into a shared, full-time office staffing situation which benefits all of us in terms of staff stability and provides office staff with flexibility as well as the chance to seek promotions! Dr. Kerry Pimblott, Jaime Levick (Office Assistant Sr. in American Indian Studies) Nicholas Jesse (AADS work study), and I became the unofficial office staff in AADS, along with others in the A&S Dean’s Office who helped us through this difficult time. I think it is safe to say that we are all thrilled to welcome Wendy Perkins (Office Associate, Sr.) and Maria Grossi (Office Associate) to part of the AADS team. We look forward to the insight, support, and stability they will bring office staffing.

AADS is much closer to being officially approved to offer an undergraduate major. It has taken 46 years to get to this point and the only hurdles left to navigate are those from Academic Affairs and the Board of Trustees. AADS has had unanimous support all the way up the approval chain thus far, so if our streak continues then the major will begin in the Fall 2015 semester. Having an undergraduate major like ours, which will be the only one in the Rocky Mountain region, will be an amazing achievement for Wyoming and the Rocky Mountain region, as well as hopefully assist in the recruitment and retention of Black faculty, staff, and students.

Re-launch Party! The saying is “what comes around goes around,” and ABSL (Association of Black Student Leaders) has done just that. In a move honoring the BSA from 1969 (until an administrator changed the student group’s name), ABSL is now officially the Black Student Alliance (BSA)…again. The BSA is a very active, inclusive student group on campus taking the lead during Black History month, where they partnered with the Days of Dialogue committee for various events and WASA (Wyoming African Student Association), as well as brought programming to campus such as Dear White People, the soul food dinner, and a Black Out.
AADS has reinvigorated its study abroad program; the kick off for the Summer 2015 semester is the United Kingdom (led by Drs. Tracey Patton and Kerry Pimblott) and in 2016 the study abroad opportunity has been narrowed down to Ghana, specifically the cultural area of Buluk in the north and will be led by Dr. Marcus Watson.

We continue to pursue our fundraising goals. In memory of Mrs. Byrd who passed away this February, please consider supporting a student in this endeavor through the “Liz” Byrd Speaker Series or the Student Excellence Fund.

- Because of donors, this year, we were able to fund two students through our student excellence fund. This year, our recipients were Mark Devenney and Raena Bush.
- Our Board of Visitor Award recipients were Jasmine Austin and Natawsha Mitchell.

Congratulations to all of you!!

On May 4th we held our Graduation Event and Annual Research Symposium. We had five student speakers: Raena Bush, Natawsha Mitchell, Robin Posnik, Emily Theil, and Kereston Thomas. This event honored the AADS minors who graduated as well as the award winners, and their families. The event took place at the UW Hilton on May 4th from 6-8:30 p.m. See inside for images and details from the event.

We have an exciting Summer and Fall semester of events scheduled, so please check out the “events” page on our website at http://www.uwyo.edu/aads/ and also become a “fan;” join our Facebook page at https://www.facebook.com/groups/AADS.UW/ This is a private group—and an active page—so request ask to be added!

Have a wonderful summer,

Sincerely,

Dr. Tracey Owens Patton
Director, African American & Diaspora Studies
Professor, Department of Communication & Journalism
Faculty Kudos

• Dr. Ulrich Adelt

• Dr. Mary Keller
  o (2015). Teaching Award from Arts & Sciences.

• Dr. Tracey Owens Patton
  o (2015, March 25). Each Student – A Person Award. The Division of Student Affairs sponsors a recognition lunch to celebrate achievements and acknowledge those individuals who have made significant contributions to its success.
Faculty Kudos

• Dr. Kerry Pimblott
Student Efforts

Black 14 Statue: January 2015

Upon our return to campus from the long winter break, there were two very important additions to the Union Breezeway; the Black 14 Statue and the Martin Luther King Statue had been relocated to a more visible location. During the Fall 2014 semester UW students Kaila Mills and Nicholas Jesse established a class project in Dr. Tracey Patton’s Gender, Race, and Class in the Media course. The project’s goal was to bring awareness to Black issues in the state of Wyoming, as well as, recognizing Wyoming’s history. Kaila and Nicholas were successful at bringing visibility to the history of the Black 14 by working with ASUW and the Student Union. The statue has been moved from the basement fireplace lounge to a main level lounge across from Rolling Mill Café. Plans are in the making for a rededication ceremony during homecoming in the Fall 2015 semester.

#I Too, Am Wyoming: February 2015

Over the past year, students of color across the United States have launched innovative campaigns aimed at raising awareness about racial micro aggressions and their effects on campus climate. This workshop, facilitated by UW student Natawsha Mitchell and UW faculty Dr. Kerry Pimblott & Dr. Tracey Owens Patton aimed to engage UW students, faculty, and staff in a rigorous and reflexive dialogue about racial micro aggressions on our own campus, as well as, what we can collectively do to foster a safe and inclusive campus climate. Participants were split into small groups to engage in a carefully facilitated dialogue about Black student experiences of racial animus on campus and how various stakeholders can practically work towards the promotion of a more inclusive campus climate. Mitchell, Patton, and Pimblott have moved this one-hour workshop into smaller units, programs, and RSO’s across campus to foster campus-wide dialogue and activity.
### Student Efforts

#### Body Image Awareness: March 2015
Throughout the past two semesters, UW graduate student and Carencro, Louisiana native, **Jasmine Austin** has facilitated almost 20 workshops to bring awareness to self-esteem and body image issues. She has presented self-esteem seminars for national and regional conferences, mental health awareness programs, University of Wyoming sports teams and sorority chapters. When she was not conducting the self-esteem and body image workshops, she was co-facilitating micro aggression workshops and delivering guest lectures across campus promoting effective communication strategies.

#### One Busy Guy: Spring 2015
**Marlin Holmes** is a Charlotte, NC native who is currently pursuing his M.S. and PhD. in Mechanical Engineering focusing on Experimental Fluid Dynamics, in particular the effect of swirl in wind turbine wakes. Prior to attending The University of Wyoming he graduated with Honors in Aerospace Engineering from The Georgia Institute of Technology. He is currently serving as a National Science Foundation Energy Environment and Nanotechnology Fellow and has recently been honored with the National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship. He has been published in conference proceedings, as well as, in the *Journal of the American Helicopter Society*. He has been honored as a Gates Millennium Graduate Fellow and has received many awards for his efforts in student leadership and advocating for diversity. Marlin Holmes is the outgoing Black Student Alliance President, a member of the MLK, Jr. Days of Dialogue Committee, a member of the National Society of Black Engineers, Wyoming African Students Association, and member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. as well as Sigma Gamma Tau the Aerospace Engineering Honor Society.
Student Awards

• Natawsha Mitchell
  o Recipient of the Willena Stanford Commitment to Diversity Award
  o Recipient of the Shepard Symposium on Social Justice Award
  o Recipient of the 2015 Outstanding Student Service Award

• Jasmine Austin
  o Recipient of the 2015 Outstanding Student Service Award
  o Nominee for the Willena Stanford Commitment to Diversity Award

• Marlin Holmes
  o Nominee for Jason Thompson Commitment to Diversity Award

• Nicholas Jesse
  o Nominee for Student Employee of the Year Award
AADS Graduation Event

This year African American and Diaspora Studies congratulated their graduates with food and celebration at the annual African American & Diaspora Studies 2015 Research Symposium and Graduation Celebration. This event took place at the Hilton Garden Inn of Laramie where five students gave presentations on their final student projects for the Seminar Course in AADS. These students were: Raena Bush, Natawsha Mitchell, Robin Posniak, Emily Thiel, Kereston Thomas.
UW Black Student Alliance

Changing A Culture

The spring semester was a pivotal one for the University of Wyoming’s Associated Black Student Leaders as they decided to implement a name change in an effort to change a culture.

“This semester the group formerly known as The Association of Black Student Leaders (ABSL) made a pivotal decision to change our name, but on a much more intimate level to change a culture. We have decided to return to our birthright as the Black Student Alliance: BSA is RE-Launched.

One may ask why we felt the need to change the name, why couldn’t we just do things differently? As a group we felt that the name change, the identity of, was not only necessary, but an essential step in “doing things differently.” If we felt that “community” was truly our goal, then there was disconnect between that purpose and the current naming. Furthermore the name only served to obfuscate the organization’s purpose, “Leaders” can be not only alienating, but also intimidating, and many of our allies from various ethnic groups felt disenfranchised or excluded. Thus, when provided the option between keeping the name the same, changing it to Black Student Union, or returning to Black Student Alliance the choice was clear. To return to the name and the place that started it all, to pair a remarkable history with a team of passionate individuals, and to re-brand an already impressive legacy as a group that can serves the needs of people of color and their allies in the present, is true community. The team has spoken and we have returned to BSA. If you would like to support us in our future endeavors whether that be financially or with your presence or wisdom, as we seek to build a new legacy for BSA please contact us.”

-In the spirit of Sister and Brotherhood,

Marlin Holmes, The LAST president of ABSL mholmes9@uwyo.edu

This transition became official when the University of Wyoming’s Black Student Alliance held Executive Board elections on Thursday April 23, 2015. New Board Members include: President Richelle Clifton, Vice President Madison Harp, Secretary Sam Bower, Treasurer Jonathan Cook, Media and Marketing Chair Erian Hall and Membership Co-Chairs Ashely McDowell and Chanel Benish. The organization gives many thanks to outgoing President Marlin Holmes. Holmes contributed a great deal of effort this year by recruiting new members and by making the organization feel safe and fun for UW students.

To get in touch with UW Black Student Alliance visit their revamped Facebook Page: UW Black Student Alliance
On March 12, 2015 The Black Student Alliance hosted the Soul Food dinner in the Cheney International Center basement. The dinner was an enlightening experience with food, fellowship, fun, and of course, dance routines to MJ--Michael Jackson. There were over 25 people in attendance ranging from students, faculty, staff, and community members.

A few weeks later on Thursday March 26, 2015, BSA and its allies gathered in solidarity for the “Black Out,” an event to show the presence and strength of the minority community and its allies on campus. The organization provided food and music for a crowd in excess of 30 people and recruited new members at this event. Several of these members went on to become integral parts of the Black Student Alliance. It has been agreed upon that organization will host this event again in the fall in a much larger capacity.

1. From Right to Left: President Richelle Clifton, Vice President Madi Harp, Media and Marketing Chair Erian Hall, Treasurer Jonathan Cook, Membership Chairs Chanel Benish and Ashely McDowell (not pictured), Secretary Sam Bower.
This spring the University of Wyoming received the privilege of hosting Dr. Karsonya Whitehead of Loyola University Maryland. She is an esteemed scholar in communication, history, education, cultural studies, women’s studies, and Black history. Dr. Whithead’s work extends beyond her university community as she is a three-time Emmy-nominated documentary filmmaker, a former middle school teacher, moderator for the White House’s Black History Month Panel co-sponsored by President Barack Obama and the Association for the Study of African American Life and History.

Dr. Karsonya Whitehead’s workshop, “From Ferguson to Wyoming: Finding Ways to Bend Our Privilege to Bring About Change,” was designed to bring awareness to the inherent privilege that people possess. The workshop implemented different sources to analyze inherent privilege such as; a video on Ferguson done by the Fugees and Dr. Peggy McIntosh’s list of privileges.

Dr. Whitehead’s keynote speech discussed her book, “Notes From a Colored Girl: Using Archival Sources to Reconstruct History.”
Selma’s March to Laramie
Black Issues are Wyoming Issues
By Nicholas Jesse

Released on December 25, 2014, Selma, directed by Ava DuVernay was made in recognition of the 50th anniversary of the infamous Bloody Sunday on the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma Alabama. This horrific day was witnessed by the international community and caused many to be outraged by the atrocities being implemented against the African American community. Dr. King’s movement garnered the support it needed from Bloody Sunday and in turn the Civil Rights Movement advanced.

The Civil Rights Movement is not over; however, and it needs to be acknowledged that we are not a post-racial society. Movies such as Selma highlight raw representations of the struggles of the African American community, and these films rarely, if ever, come to Laramie, Wyoming; as we have been told by theatre management, “those issues are not pertinent to the residents of Laramie.”

This spring semester, with the push of students, Dr. Patton contacted the president of the Laramie Film Society, Gary Rutkowski, worked together to bring awareness to the fact that Black issues are Wyoming issues and that the community should respect the 50th Anniversary of the infamous Bloody Sunday. The Rutkowski contacted the theatre company who agreed they would bring Selma to Laramie if at least 600 tickets were sold or have at least $6,000 in ticket sales.

With boisterous efforts, Selma made its way to Laramie in February and sold more than its minimum of 600 tickets, proving that people of the Laramie community did indeed care about issues pertaining to the African American community, thus guaranteeing that other “Black films” will come to Laramie in the future.
African American and Diaspora Studies

Fall 2015 Course Schedule

AAST 1000: Intro to African American and Diaspora Studies (C1, D, 3cr)
Section 01: MWF 9:00-9:50 am  Dr. Kerry Pimbllot
Section 03: TR 11:00-12:15pm  Jasmine Austin
Section 40: OUTREACH  Jasmine Austin
Section 41: OUTREACH  Dr. Lucas Stricker
This course surveys African presence in America.

AAST 1101: African Americans in Wyoming (FYS, 3cr)
Section 01: MWF 11:00-11:50am  Dr. Kerry Pimbllott

AAST 2350: African American Literature (WB, D, 3cr)
Cross Listed w/ENGL 2350
Section 01: TR 9:35-10:50am  Dr. Erin Forbes
This course encompasses poetry, fiction, drama, and autobiography from the Harlem Renaissance and earlier to present.

AAST 2450: Traditional African Religion (C2, CH, G, 3cr)
Cross Listed w/RELI 2450
Section 40: OUTREACH  Dr. Mary Keller
This course surveys traditional religions of Africa, both ancient and contemporary.

AAST 3670: The African Diaspora (C2, CS, G, 3cr)
Cross Listed w/HIST 3670
Section 01: MWF 9:00-9:50am  Dr. Marcus Watson
This course examines the process through which aspects of African culture have endured in the Diaspora. *Check Prerequisite

AAST 4000: Black Freedom Movement (CH, D, 3cr)
Section 01: M 3:10-5:40p.m  Dr. Kerry Pimbllot
Presents the struggle of African Americans for self-definition, self-development, and self-determination from the contemporary period.
*Check Prerequisite

AAST 4160/5160: African American Rhetoric (C3, CH, D, 3cr)
Cross Listed w/COJO 4160/5160
Section 01: TR 1:20-2:35p.m  Dr. Tracey Patton
This course examines African American discourse and its relationship to equality and participation through various media, music, speeches, and art. *Check Prerequisite

AAST 4250/5250: The Harlem Renaissance (D, 3cr)
Cross Listed w/AMST 4250/5250
Section 01: MWF 2:10-3:00p.m  Dr. Ulrich Adelt
This course examines the florescence of African American creativity, centered in Harlem, New York, between the end of World War I and the onset of the Great depression. *Check Prerequisite

AAST 4970: Internship (TBD)

AAST 4975: Independent Research/Capstone

AAST 4990-01: African Americans and the Law (3 cr)
Cross Listed w/CRMJ 4990
Section 01: W 5:30-7:50p.m  Dr. Jacquelyn Bridgeman
This course is an in-depth study of a topic not offered in regular courses. *Check Prerequisite

Why should you sign-up for African American and Diaspora Studies courses?
African American and Diaspora Studies courses are engaging, interdisciplinary, and self-reflexive courses that guide you through the understanding of African and African American cultures, while also preparing you for a global community.

Phone: 307-766-3857  Email: TOPatton@uwyo.edu ***Set subject to High Importance
Website: http://www.uwyo.edu/registrar/class_schedules/spring2015/aast.html
EXPLORE BLACK BRITAIN

May 24th – June 7th, 2015

Dr. Kerry Pimblott and Dr. Tracey Owens Patton

INFORMATIONAL MEETING – WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 29 @NOON
CHENEY INTERNATIONAL CENTER, SHS RM. 229

Sign-up for AAST3670: The African Diaspora for a once in a lifetime opportunity to explore the hidden history of people of African descent in the UK. On this 2-week, 2 credit hour study abroad, we will explore Black Britain through visits to slave heritage sites, outings to cultural centers, and walking tours of London and Liverpool.

Prerequisites: successful completion of AAST/HIST3670: The African Diaspora by the end of Spring 2015.

STUDY ABROAD - SUMMER SESSION 2015
Cheers to Summer!

We have been thrilled to share such a wonderful spring semester with our students, faculty and campus community. This semester was filled with incredible events and progressive dialogue that would not have been possible without our student and faculty efforts. Go now and enjoy the summer break! We look forward to seeing you again in the Fall! Congratulations Class of 2015!

P.S. The tree is definitely taller than Marlin.