



CENTER FOR BLACK STUDIES RESEARCH

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2024

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FROM OUR DIRECTOR



Director, Dr. Sharon Tettegah

Happy New Year from the Center for Black Studies Research! As we usher in the promise of a new year, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to the dedicated faculty, staff, and students who have played an integral role in the success of the Center for Black Studies Research. Your unwavering commitment to academic excellence, cultural exploration, and community engagement has reinforced our endeavors and strengthened the bonds within our vibrant community. As we commemorate the spirit of unity and progress, we also honor the legacy of the great Martin Luther King Jr., whose vision and activism continue to inspire us. May this new year be filled with continued collaboration, meaningful discoveries, and a shared commitment to advancing Black studies. Wishing you all a joyous and prosperous New Year!

I also want to acknowledge Dr. Duck's contribution to the newsletter. Thank you, Dr. Duck for a very special contribution celebrating Dr. King and Black History Month!!! (Open AI, personal communication, January 16, 2024)

HONORING MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. AND BLACK HISTORY MONTH SCHEDULING



Associate Director, Dr. Waverly Duck

"I accept this award today with an abiding faith in America and an audacious faith in the future of mankind. I refuse to accept despair as the final response to the ambiguities of history. I refuse to accept the idea that the 'isness' of man's present nature makes him morally incapable of reaching up for the eternal 'oughtness' that forever confronts him. I refuse to accept the idea that man is mere flotsam and jetsam in the river of life, unable to influence the unfolding events that surround him. I refuse to accept the view that mankind is so tragically bound to the starless midnight of racism and war that the bright daybreak of peace and brotherhood can never become a reality." (Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. / An excerpt from his Nobel Peace Prize acceptance speech, Oslo, Norway, 1964)

In celebrating Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday, I face a monumental challenge: articulating Dr. King's immeasurable contributions to our nation and the world. My remarks are intended to serve several purposes. First, I want to reaffirm Dr. King's profound impact, placing his life and work within historical and contemporary contexts. This involves not only looking back at his achievements ... (continued on page 4)

WINTER QUARTER EVENTS



We're looking forward to having Dr. Vernon Burton from Clemson University give his talk "Picturing Justice: Race & the Supreme Court" on January 24th, 2024 at 4pm in UCSB South Hall 4603. Dr. Burton's talk will be followed by an informal conversation January 25th, 2024 at 12pm in UCSB South Hall 4502. [You can find more information on our website.](#)

We are proud to co-sponsor Dr. April Baker-Bell in her talk for the EXITO Speaker Series. Dr. Baker-Bell's talk will be given in UCSB's Mosher Alumni House February 29th, 2024 from 3:30-5:00pm. [See more about this event here.](#)



The Center is thrilled to welcome futurist, filmmaker, and founder of Reimagine Story Lab, Anatola Araba. Anatola will be giving her talk "Imagination: A Bridge To Brighter Futures in the Age of Artificial Intelligence" March 5th, 2024 at 4pm in UCSB South Hall 4603. [Read more about this event on our website.](#)

RESERVE AN ACADEMIC SPACE WITH THE CBSR

The Center would like to connect more with our community by opening up our spaces for individuals to engage in scholarly discourse. Currently we have two spaces available to reserve in UCSB's 4603 and 4502 South Hall. The use of these spaces is limited to small academic and scholarly group discussions. At this time we are limiting reservations. Faculty, post doctoral scholars, and graduate students may reserve the space for symposiums, colloquia, and seminars. The space may only be reserved for up to 2 hours at a time. Per request, additional time will be considered on a case by case basis.

[Please see this link to access the request forms.](#)

CBSR CORNER

TRACEY GOSS, CASU MANAGEMENT SERVICES OFFICER

As the administrative unit that serves both the Center for Black Studies Research and the Chicano Studies Institute, CASU is proud of the financial, payroll and budgetary work we do behind the scenes. We are particularly honored to provide the CBSR with administrative means to facilitate payroll, timekeeping and human resources support for the students participating in the SEEDS program. It's highly unusual that students are paid a salary for the work and time that they put into programs such as SEEDS. These types of programs generally do not have the funding nor administrative support to facilitate payment for participation. We are honored to provide the CBSR with the administrative support to do so!



DR. EBENEZER LARNYO, POSTDOCTORAL SCHOLAR



Leveraging the active participation of the SEEDS students, Dr. Ebenezer Larnyo designed a hands-on Intermediate Python Training program aimed at giving students the necessary skills to scrape data from social media, clean the data, perform statistical analysis and visualization on the cleaned data and derive insights from the data through sentiment analysis using natural language processing deep learning models.

DR. ALLISON CLARK, ICHANGE TEAM PROJECT MANAGER

The Center remains committed to the IChange Network's (ICN) mission of finding solutions to the rising challenges against higher education's diversity, equity, justice, belonging and inclusion in STEM. As part of this commitment, ICN Project Manager, Dr. Allison Clark, attended the Midwest Experience in Mentoring Excellence (MEME) presentation sponsored by ICN. ICN's own Dr. Tera R. Jordan, Assistant Provost for Faculty Success at Iowa State University interviewed Dr. Gina Sanchez Gibau Associate Vice Chancellor for Faculty Diversity and Inclusion, Office of Academic Affairs, IUPUI on the purpose, goals, and outcomes of the Midwest Experiences in Mentoring Excellence (MEME) program. Dr. Gibau contextualized MEME within a broader context of faculty mentoring trends in higher education. For more information about MEME, visit <https://www.aspirememe.org/>.



DR. CHARLES TERRY, POSTDOCTORAL SCHOLAR



Dr. Terry has been continuing to work on and release the Center for Black Studies Research (CBSR) Podcast with the help of Lyla Washaha. The podcast has now released several episodes. He will be interviewing a series of guests in the upcoming weeks for podcasts including Dr. Waverly Duck and Dr. Ebenezer Larnyo. Additionally, Dr. Terry continues to sit on the Black Resource Committee. He will be attending the MLK Jr. Holiday Committee Event on January 15th, including the Unity March from State St. to Arlington Theater and the Celebration of Sojourner Kincaid Rolle event. Dr. Terry has helped plan the Healing Event Follow-Up, initially spearheaded by Dr. Della V. Mosley, for faculty and staff. Finally, the Office of Diversity and Inclusion granted a \$5,000 grant to the Center for the February Interrogating the Criminal and Legal Justice System Conference based on a grant letter written by Dr. Duck with assistance from Dr. Terry.

LYLA WASHAHA, ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT ASSISTANT

Lyla Washaha has been continuing to provide administrative support to the SEEDS program, working closely with Dr. Larnyo to ensure the student fellows are getting the most out of the data science program. Lyla has also continued organizing events for the Live and Lives initiative along side Dr. Tettegah and the CASU Team composed of Tracey Goss, Marselina Ortiz, and Karla Partida Torres. Lastly, Lyla has been working with Dr. Terry on the [Center for Black Studies Research Podcast](#).



HONORING MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. AND BLACK HISTORY MONTH SCHEDULING

...but also considering how his legacy continues to influence our current era, especially in the face of persistent anti-Blackness. Second, I want to highlight what is at stake in the struggle for equality and justice and the importance of rising to the challenges we face in pursuing them. Finally, I want to offer encouragement, particularly concerning the programming we have planned at the Center this year, which strives to embody the principles Dr. King championed throughout his life. These objectives reflect the ongoing relevance of Dr. King's work and the need to continually engage with his legacy in a meaningful and impactful way.

In 1968, following the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. at the Lorraine Motel in Memphis, my parents moved to Detroit from Birmingham, Alabama. This pivotal event not only altered my life's path but also had a profound global impact, hardening Civil Rights legislation against the backdrop of the Vietnam War and numerous high-profile incidents of anti-black violence: the murder of 14-year-old Emmett Till; the 16th Street Baptist Church Bombing, which claimed the lives of Addie Mae Collins, Denise McNair, Carole Robertson, and Cynthia Wesley, all age 14 (except for Cynthia who was 11); the murders of James Chaney, Andrew Goodman, and Michael Schwerner in Mississippi; and the assassinations of Medgar Evers, Malcolm X, and John and Bobby Kennedy.

The recent "Blacklash" experienced by Black Americans in the aftermath of the Obama Presidency and the George Floyd protests is intertwined with the murders of Breonna Taylor, Elijah McClain, Ahmaud Arbery, Trayvon Martin, Michael Brown, Tamir Rice, and many others. Despite America's vast diversity, segregation persists across race, class, gender, sexuality, and other social categories. While federal employment offices like the EEOC and Title IX are essential, the hidden discrimination impacting visible minorities, women, disabled individuals, older adults, those with mental illnesses, LGBTQ+ individuals, and others necessitates DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) offices. DEI initiatives vary across institutions, but they commonly face challenges, including lack of buy-in from many institutions that house them. These programs aim to combat implicit bias and other forms of discrimination. Without such infrastructure, reliance on federal programs becomes crucial. During my tenure at UCSB, several protests have highlighted issues around housing, cost of living, and racial discrimination. Disparities in employment, housing, income, healthcare, education, mass incarceration, and social solidarity challenge the legitimacy of institutions claiming to represent the public.

The challenges faced by Black scholars, especially women—as illustrated recently by the public degradation of Claudine Gay, Nicole Hannah Jones, and Kathleen McElroy, and others—represent broader efforts to undermine DEI initiatives. Importantly, each of these Black women writes about, works on, and critically engages with systemic and institutional racism, and that they do so in a U.S. academy where less than 4 percent of tenured professors are Black. These incidents, as well as the suicide of women like Antoinette "Bonnie" Candia-Bailey in response to the kind of chronic overwork and disrespect Black women face in academic spaces, should serve as a wake-up call for all of us. The sociologist in me also would like to point out that these are not isolated incidents; nor are they unconnected to statistics which show that educated Black women have the highest infant mortality rates of all Black women.

We are living in a moment in history when Dr. King's legacy is more relevant and urgent than ever. Last year,

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Rev. Bernice King cautioned us, we must not reduce MLK's legacy to comfortable platitudes. As she said last year at a commemorative service at Ebenezer Baptist Church, where her father once preached, "We love to quote King in and around the holiday. ... But then we refuse to live King 365 days of the year." We can do better. We must do better.

This year, UCSB Center for Black Studies Research will host two significant events: a two-day conference, from February 29-March 1, that will interrogate the criminal legal system; and a celebration honoring Black women alums for their community service, tentatively scheduled during Women's History Month.

I want to close with a quote from A. Philip Randolph.

Salvation for a race, nation, or class must come from within. Freedom is never granted; it is won. Justice is never given; it is exacted. Freedom and justice must be struggled for by the oppressed of all lands and races, and the struggle must be continuous, for freedom is never a final fact, but a continuing evolving process to higher and higher levels of human, social, economic, political and religious relationships.

