



## 2020-2021 MID-SEMESTER (FALL) NEWSLETTER

*Note: This newsletter only contains new information since the last newsletter or new developments on information in the last newsletter. It's long, but all REALLY GOOD! Some sections may be directed at you specifically.*

Dear AAAD family,

We celebrate your resilience! On many levels, this has not been an easy semester. We recognize that for AAAD faculty the burden has been especially heavy as you have been called upon to participate on campus and in the community in the work of decolonizing the academy and anti-racist work, as well as the many initiatives towards equity and inclusion the university is engaged in. Amidst all this, you have continued to mentor and AAAD and other seeking students tirelessly. We thank you. Please take a moment (information included at the end of this newsletter) to celebrate our AAAD colleagues serving in various ways. We are sure we have forgotten some people. Our apologies. We have also included a couple of recognitions that are Covid-19 service related.

### **Announcement from Furious Flower**

The Furious Flower Poetry Center is proud to announce the Carmen R. Gillespie Fellowship in Black Poetry and Culture. Please see the Furious Flower newsletter (November 5<sup>th</sup>) for details. We will also forward their newsletter to the listserv in case you missed it.

### **The AAAD Family**

We welcome to the fold:

1. Dr. Bethany Nowviskie, Dean of Libraries. Bethany has already been a part of AAAD family for the past two years, just not added to the list. Most of you know her work in decolonial and anti-racist knowledges and technologies, & decolonizing archiving and libraries.
2. Dr. Fawn-Amber Montoya, Associate Dean for Diversity, Inclusion and External Engagement, Honors College & DEI, Honor's College. Fawn is a decolonial historian whose research and teaching focus on race, ethnicity, and gender.

3. Dr. Kayla Yurco, Assistant Professor of Geographic Science. Check out her work on human and environmental ecologies and geographies, and justice, with extensive research history in Eastern Africa. Kayla is also a scholar of women's and gender studies.
4. Dr. Matt Rebhorn, Professor of English. Matt researches/teaches race and performance and is developing a new course on "Race and Performance" that will be cross listed in English and Theatre.
5. Our faculty page is almost fully updated:  
<https://www.jmu.edu/africana/people/index.shtml>

### **The Center for African, African American and Diaspora Studies**

1. Center name: African, African American, and Diaspora Studies Center (Short: AAAD Center). Thank you to [Jennifer Coffman and Steve Reich](#) for your assistance with this. In the interest of meeting time constraints, we proceeded with what had been most faculty's choice at the meeting and Jennifer and Steve helped articulate the arguments on behalf of faculty.
2. Endless gratitude to [Steve and Sofia](#) who served as primary authors of the charter application document.
3. The document has been reviewed by the [Dean and Mollie and Besi](#). After necessary negotiations, revisions and adjustments to the document, the document was approved by the necessary parties (VP, University Advancement; VP, Research and Scholarship; Associate Vice President, Academic Resources in the Provost's Office). The document will now be sent to the faculty senate for discussion and a vote. Should that vote be successful, we anticipate having the charter by the start of the Spring semester. Should the senate require our appearance before them, we hope to include in the process the document authors and everyone who contributed.
4. We acknowledge [Dean Robert Aguirre](#)'s input in refining the application, so the signature process went smoothly.
5. This week we return to our meetings with University Advancement as we prepare for the launch of the campaign as well as the center in the Spring.
6. We will need your support in getting the center and it's launch set-up. We will therefore be calling for a meeting.

### **The Conference**

1. Please see the year-opening newsletter for details on how the conference will run. Greatest of thanks to [David Babcock](#), our convener. Many thanks to [Joanne](#) (keynote speaker arrangements), [Daniel](#) (promotion) and [Ardyn](#) (Graduate Coordinator) for their tireless work on the conference. Thanks to most of our faculty who are contributing in one way or another. If you are wondering how you can be a part of this, please reach out to David. One easy way would be to convene a panel (proposals due Nov. 16). This is a virtual conference so we all have the luxury of creating panels that include our colleagues and friends from far and wide.
2. We have an offer from the [Department of History](#) to sponsor and host a featured speaker at the conference. If there is someone else that you would like to invite as an additional featured speaker, please contact David ([babcodj@jmu.edu](mailto:babcodj@jmu.edu)).

3. JMU Libraries have stepped up to manage our conference website. Thanks in particular go to [Kevin Hegg](#) and [Kirstin Mlodynia](#) for their support.
4. Office of Access and Inclusion are offering admin support in managing conference logistics. Thanks in particular go to [Kim Moubray](#) and [Savannah Brown](#).
5. We will send out a list of the few duties left for management so you may volunteer.

### Internships

Our gratitude goes to [Case Watkins](#), our Internship Director for his service and leadership.

1. Our internship program is growing fast.
2. AAAD-Honors College and The Smithsonian continue to develop the logistics for the Smithsonian Internship Program.
3. Global Internships – In the face of Study Abroad slowing down due to Covid-19, CGE is partnering AAAD to set up a model for Global internships students can participate in remotely. The plan is to start with the JMU partners on the African continent. AAAD is developing a database of international internships partners in Africa and the African Diaspora. This database will serve AAAD as well as all other students at JMU. If you have any individuals or institutions you believe would be a fit for this program, please reach out to Case with details.
4. We continue our local and national internships. Because of Covid-19, student internship opportunities have dwindled. We would therefore appreciate it is faculty created opportunities for research assistantships for our students. Please reach out to Case for help designing internship or research opportunities in your work.

### Graduate Certificates (AAAD/Critical Race)

Thanks to [Besi](#) and [Bill Van Norman](#) for putting together the application. Thank you to [Brooks Hefner](#) for being a sounding board through the process. Thank you to everyone who sent in relevant courses.

1. First application is with the Dean for review.
2. At last count, we have identified over 75 graduate courses from 21 departments that can count towards the graduate certificates.

### AAAD Center Archives

Various AAAD faculty and student curated archives, exhibits, and bibliographies will form the foundation for Center's developing archiving project. We welcome old and new projects from our faculty and others for inclusion. Current projects include:

- Sisters in Session "Black Women in the Academy Research and Archive" (*Curator: [BJ Bryson & SIS](#)*); *A partnership of AAAD-Sisters in Session and JMU Libraries*: This archive will focus on research on and by Black women in the academy. We are looking for student interns and researchers that can support this project for credit. **Feel free to propose students to Case Watkins.** These particular interns must care about the subject.
- AAAD Faculty Scholarship and Creative Production Archive (*Curator: [Mathia Aboba](#)*); *A Partnership of AAAD-JMU Libraries; Sponsored by Provost's Office/Office of the President/The Graduate School*: A living bibliography of scholarship and creative

production and community engagement projects by AAAD faculty (attached). We didn't hear back from many of you when Mathias sent out the request for publications lists, and some departmental websites do not list publications/artistic productions, **so please send us any missing information for inclusion.**

- Black Firsts at JMU: A Timeline (Curators: [Zaria Johnson](#), [Qyaira Colbert](#), [Megan Medeiros](#)): This living digital archive originated in the course "Black Studies and Black Spaces: Black Critical Frameworks and Communities at JMU and Beyond, 1968 to the Present" and continues to grow. Look out for the initial release soon. Thanks to our many faculty and staff who have supported the project along the way. The [Ole School Alumni](#) members have agreed to look at the archive to fill in any gaps.
- Black Studies, Black Spaces (Curators and contributors: AAAD Studies students supervised by [Dr. Godfrey](#) & [Dr. Muhonja](#); Curator Traveling version: [Spencer Law](#); Ongoing research and archival preservation: [English M.A. students supervised by Dr. Godfrey](#) & [Research Intern Jenna Conrades](#), supervised by [Dr. Godfrey](#)); A partnership of AAAD-Institute for Creative Inquiry-JMU English; Sponsors so far: College of Integrated Science, ICI & JMU Libraries: This living archive originated in the Fall 2019 class and ICI exhibit, "Black Studies and Black Spaces: Black Critical Frameworks and Communities at JMU and Beyond, 1968 to the Present"; a traveling version of the exhibit has since been installed on the STEM side of canvas, and the oral histories recorded by students will soon be transferred for preservation by JMU Special Collections.
- Celebrating Simms (Curators: [Dr. Godfrey](#) and [Dr. McCarthy](#)): The "Celebrating Simms: The Story of the Lucy F. Simms School" project, which celebrates the history of education in the local Black community, received a \$10,000 grant from Virginia Humanities to undertake a number of exciting projects this year. Look out in February 2021 for the public launch of a traveling version of the exhibit and a permanent installation in the atrium of Harrisonburg High School. The web-based versions of the exhibit will also soon be accessible *en Español*.

### **International Model African Union**

Many thanks to [Melinda Adams](#). Under her leadership, JMU is set to participate in the 2021 International Model African Union as the delegation from Cameroon.

1. IMAU is a AAAD-Political Science/International Affairs partnership
2. Melinda is supported by [Biruk Haregu](#), JMU alum and PhD candidate at George Mason

### **Africana Studies Workshop**

Thanks to [Lauren Alleyne](#), coordinator of ASW this year, and to [Ardyn Tennyson](#), the workshop's graduate coordinator.

Next event:

Dr. George Paul Meiu, Harvard University

Topic: "Queer Objects: Intimacy, Citizenship, and Rescue in Kenya."

Date & Place: Nov. 10th via Zoom from 4:30 to 5:30 PM EST.

*This event is co-sponsored by the College of Arts and Letters and the Department of Sociology and Anthropology.*

If you do not have access to our password-protected site, please email Ardyn at [tennysal@jmu.edu](mailto:tennysal@jmu.edu).

### **AAAD-Accomplice Network (AAN)**

Credit and gratitude go to coordinators, [Jennifer PeeksMease](#) and [Kathryn Hobson](#).

1. This AAAD-SCOM partnership is fast growing.
2. We now have accomplices in several departments.
3. Last week the AAN started partnering with all DEIs to identify accomplices in departments within the colleges. The goal is to have one or two accomplices in each department before the end of the semester. Please share and invite colleagues or self-nominate: <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfKew-ZX2yP0pRv6vOqMa1tmApd3loEd3EID2aAF0-FnvgImA/viewform>

### **Cluster Hire in College of Arts and Letters Approved (Critical Race, AAAD, and LAXC Studies)**

1. AAAD will benefit from the newly announced cluster hire of 6 faculty in the College of Arts and Letters. This is a cluster hire for six scholars in Critical Race, AAAD, and LAXC Studies. The lines will be in Justice Studies, History, Sociology, WRTC, Political Science, and Philosophy and Religion.
2. We recognize [Dean Robert Aguirre](#) for advocating for this.

### **AAAD Critical Perspectives and Pedagogies Institute (a partnership with CFI)**

Thanks to [Mollie Godfrey](#), the designer, coordinator and chief facilitator, and our colleagues and co-facilitators of the inaugural institute: [Taimi Castle](#) (CAL), [BJ Bryson](#) (CHBS), [Josh Streeter](#) (CVPA), [Jennifer PeeksMease](#) (CAL), [Kara Kavanagh](#) (COE), and [Tolu Odumosu](#) (CISE), this space/institute has been pure fire!!! Just talk to the participants in your departments!

1. Participants will present some of their work at the AAAD conference in February.
2. This Institute is a game changer.
3. We're talking through ways to make its presence sustainable.
4. We welcome ideas.

### **Ole School Alumni**

Thank you to [Jennifer PeeksMease](#) who manages this relationship on behalf of AAAD.

1. Relationship continues to be nurtured.
2. Ole School Alumni are helping identify one of the members to serve on the AAAD Center Advisory Board.
3. Case and Jennifer will be discussing with them the solidification of the internship partnership.
4. If you have students looking for internships or if you require an expert in any field from the group to speak in your class, please speak to Jennifer and Case.

### **Emerging Strong Partnerships**

A lot is under discussion with the following units and we will report as projects are firmed up.

1. JMU Libraries
2. Sisters in Session

3. College of Education
4. Center for Global Engagement
5. Honors College
6. Professional and Continuing Education
7. JMU Partnerships with Institutions on the African Continent

### **Achievements/Celebrations**

1. We have so much related to the activities and works of our faculty and students to celebrate that we primarily use social media.
2. We are however compiling a list of achievements and events to share at the end of the semester publicly as well as with administration.
3. Please send us your list of things to celebrate.

### **Events**

Please send event details to our interns Lily Craig ([craig2lg@dukes.jmu.edu](mailto:craig2lg@dukes.jmu.edu)) and Zaria Johnson ([johnsozx@dukes.jmu.edu](mailto:johnsozx@dukes.jmu.edu)). They use this information to prepare the monthly events and other announcements bulletin.

### **AAAD Admin and Promotion**

- Many thanks to [Kim Moubray](#), Administration manager, Access and Inclusion, who continues to tirelessly serve AAAD admin needs.
- Many thanks to [Joe Fitzgerald](#) who has managed our website and has supported the transfer of the website over to Kim.
- We thank the [Cohen Center](#). They have graciously offered to share their graduate assistant with us this year. [Megan Medeiros](#) primarily supports our digital space needs, including ongoing digital projects and the upcoming virtual conference.

### **AAAD Social Media Platforms**

Thanks to our media intern, [Sophia Ferguson](#), who is simply amazing.

- We need you there! Follow us! Also share with students and others.
- Please help promote our social media spaces. Please send news and pictures for content.

Facebook: [@JMUAAD](#)

Twitter: [@aaadstudies](#)

Instagram: [@aaadstudiesjmu](#)

Here's wishing you an amazing second half of the semester! More great things in store!

In solidarity,  
Besi and Mollie

[See next page for faculty recognitions!!!](#)

## **EQUITY AND INCLUSION RELATED UNIVERSITY SERVICE BY AAAD FACULTY**

### ***JMU Climate Study Working Group***

Aderonke Adesanya (Executive Committee Member)

BJ Bryson

Taimi Castle

Josh Streeter

### ***Campus History Committee***

Mollie Godfrey

Ruthie Bosch

Gianluca Defazio

Diane Phoenix-Neal

Susan Zurbrigg

Norman Jones (AAAD Student), Student Representative, Board of Visitors

Spencer Law (AAAD Student)

### ***Campus History Committee Community Advisory Board***

Joanne Gabbin (Original convener)

Oris Griffin (co-chair)

Taimi Castle

Steve Reich

Norman Jones (AAAD Student, Convener Campus History Comm Students Advisory Board)

Zenobia Lee-Nelson (AAAD Student, Member, Campus History Comm Students Advisory Board)

### ***BFAA***

BJ Bryson

Bayo Ogundipe

Besi Muhonja

### ***Directors of Equity and Inclusion (different titles obtain in some colleges)***

Oris Griffin, College of Education

BJ Bryson, Professor, College of Human and Behavioral Studies

Dr. Fawn Amber Montoya, Honors College

Susan Zurbrigg, College of Visual and Performing Arts

### ***Engagement Advisory Board***

Jennifer Coffman

Michelle Cude

### ***Academic Affairs Strategic Planning Committee***

Lauren Alleyne

Bayo ogundipe

***Taskforce on Partnerships Between JMU and African Institutions Committee***

Besi Muhonja (co-chair)

Bethany Nowviskie

Melinda Adams

Jennifer Coffman

Michelle Cude

David Owusu-Ansah

Amy Lewis

Kayla Yurco

Mollie Godfrey

***AAAD Critical Perspectives & Pedagogies Institute***

Mollie Godfrey (Designer and Chief Facilitator)

Taimi Castle

BJ Bryson

Joshua Streeter

Kara Kavanagh

Tolu Odumosu

Jennifer PeeksMease

***President's Taskforce for Racial Equity***

*Note: Many more AAAD faculty serving on working groups. We include here Leadership Council and Working Group co-chair members.*

Jennifer PeeksMease (JMU Consultant)

Joanne Gabbin (Leadership Council)

Besi Muhonja (Leadership Council)

David Owusu-Ansah (Leadership Council)

Fawn Amber-Montoya (Working Group Co-Chair)

Venus Miller (Working Group Co-Chair)

Norman Jones (AAAD Student, Leadership Council)

***Diversity Council***

David Owusu-Ansah (Chair)

Fawn-Amber Montoya

**PANDEMIC RESPONSE**

***President's Pandemic-Related Learning and Innovation Task Force***

Bethany Nowviskie

Sean McCarthy

***Academic Affairs Infectious Disease Response Team:*** Wren Stevens

***Campus Technology Response Team***

Bethany Nowviskie (Chair)