



December Cultural Arts Festival Behind the Scenes of an Exciting Production

The Black Cultural Center Performing Arts Ensembles has another successful production under its belt. The annual Cultural Arts Festival (CAF) “What The Water Couldn’t Wash Away” was at the Loeb Playhouse on December 5, 2008. The show received extraordinary praises from participants as well as audience members. According to one of the student coordinators, “We intentionally decided not to turn the show entirely into a sad, emotional event, instead, we wanted our audience to also see hope and the strong will of people in New Orleans.” I feel comfortable declaring mission accomplished. If you attended the show I am sure you would agree.

This year’s Cultural Art Festival was different from previous ones because instead of researching topics and events that tend to be more historical in nature, the research group had the privilege to study a very recent event that we all have lived through and been able to make critical reflections about. “What The Water Couldn’t Wash Away” really emphasized the struggle to maintain Black New Orleans culture after Hurricane Katrina. One of the most encouraging observations from the research trip to New Orleans, is the resiliency of the African American community of New Orleans. Student coordinator, Jonathan Hicks explains it this way, “I saw a rich culture that is proud to say its makeup consists of Spanish, French, African, and Native American. I am inspired by all those whom we came in contact with that had survived and are now fighting to restore and rebuild New Orleans.”

CAF began with a cultural introduction and followed with the Story of the Storm, which was broken into three parts: The Day Before, the Day of the Storm and the Day After. All three parts consisted of intertwined performances of all of the ensembles. Actors played roles as political figures and mimicked their responses and reactions while Hurricane Katrina was occurring. “The Intervention” was a piece performed as a Greek chorus.

Twana Harris, the full time Artist-In-Residence and the director of the Black Voices of Inspiration shares her vision of “What The Water Washed Away” this way, “ Our goal was to share with the public that the catastrophe of Katrina has not broken the spirit of the people of New Orleans. They are determined to continue to celebrate their traditions, as well as maintain their strength as people who live in the power of community.” Now that we all have heard the story about Hurricane Katrina, and have been touched by the spirits of those not giving up, it is our turn to pass it on.



By Wenxin Zhang, Staff Writer

Director's Desk

We are rapidly approaching the last few weeks of the semester. During this time you should work as hard as your energies will permit. Study as regularly and consistently as humanly possible. Be disciplined and maximize your time and energy while at Purdue. It is important for you to maintain educational excellence in order to combat the myth that African American culture does not value education. You must excel at Purdue and encourage those that follow to carry on the African American tradition of academic excellence. As an African American student at Purdue you may encounter racial and cultural tension in the academic setting. If this does occur, I encourage you to push on to excel despite these experiences.

At some point during your college experience, you may feel like giving up. When those feelings of defeat bubble to surface, I encourage you to draw on the strength of your ancestors. Utilize your ancestors as role models. Your role models can be those people you have never known and have never seen. They are the Africans who survived the horrific middle passage journey, landed in this country and survived the cruelty of slavery. Your role models can be your ancestors who struggled to survive and became educated when it was a crime to do so. Those Black students who fought during the civil rights movement can also be your role models. Our ancestors should give us the strength to persevere. For those of you who may want a more contemporary role model, just look to our president elect Mr. Barack Obama.

Your Purdue experience will be an amazing journey. Allow yourself the courage to dream big. You are smart and capable of being anything you desire. I know that you have what it takes to grow and develop into one of our great engineers, educators, business associates, artists, or scientist, and leaders of the future.

Renee Thomas

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Fall Semester Snap Shots



Campus and Community members enjoy the Congo Square Drumming Series at the BCC.



The BCC celebrated Friends and Family Day with a Mardi Gras theme. Families and friends made masks in Multipurpose Rm. II.



Students from Sunnyside Middle School visited the BCC with their teachers

Fred Ho and the Afro Asian Music Ensemble

By Sabrina Reed, Staff Writer

Fred Ho is not just a musician. The Chinese American saxophonist is also a political activist. Ho is the leader of the Afro Asian Music Ensemble which he founded in 1982 and the Monkey Orchestra which he also founded in 1990. Ho has won numerous awards including, 5 Rockefeller Foundation grants and the 1988 Duke Ellington Distinguished Artist Lifetime Achievement Award from the Black Musicians Conference. According to an article in the John Harvard's Journal, Ho's political activism ranges from leaving the Nation of Islam, being a part of the I Wor Kuen—Asian American radical group modeled after Black Panthers—which he was thrown out of because of ideological differences. While at Harvard, Ho organized the Harvard-Radcliffe Asian-American Association and the Harvard-Radcliffe Task Force on Affirmative Action. He also worked to end the university's ties to apartheid. He is currently Artist-In-Residence at the University of Wisconsin Madison teaching a course entitled, "Revolutionary Afro Asian Spoken Word and Performance." Here, the western musical genres of jazz, opera, and text will produce a context for creation of a new sound inspired by Afro-Asian music and aesthetics

In addition to his activism, Ho's revolutionary musical style explores social and musical traditions present in the realities of Asian Americans and African Americans. Themes of identity, lost and revised histories, ethnic and racial relationships, and the conflicting forces of power in a transitional, multicultural world are concentrated in his music and work. Ho states in a tribute to the Black Arts Movement (BAM), "The black experience catalyzed my own self-awareness as a Chinese/Asian American. I came to identify with the black struggle of Asian/yellow people as a whole in US society to end racism, injustice, inequality and to achieve self-respect, dignity, and liberation."

Ho and the Afro Asian Music Ensemble recently performed at the BCC featuring jazz with an influence of Africa and Asia. Juniors Brittney Jackson and Kirby Fenton—members of the Black Voices of Inspiration—enjoyed the Asian influence within familiar sounds of jazz. "I never heard anything like it. It was good," said Fenton. Fenton and Jackson mentioned his message of how different things can influence you and be brought together. "He encouraged students to think outside the box and be inclusive especially of other genres," Jackson said.

There is no doubt that Ho's work is politically charged in a way that encourages students to be open and not afraid of the unknown or unexplored especially when it comes to music.

Fred Ho and the Afro Asian Ensemble



Bowling and Game Night

December 11, 2008
PMU Recreation Center

The BCC will be sponsoring a Bowling/Game Night Study Break at the PMU Recreation Center.

Please come and take a study break from 9 -11:00 pm and have some fun and fellowship.

Pizza and soft drinks will also be available.

Students will need to rent their own bowling shoes.

Congratulations to December graduates. We wish you tremendous success as you pursue your career goals!

The Black Thought Collective Share Thoughts About President Elect Barack Obama....

“It is amazing to see the change in this country from the 2004 election to now. Back then, Bush’s orations and speeches were attended by tens of thousands and the republican party was still dominant. By 2008, republican nominee John McCain could barely get several thousand to attend his speeches and their numbers were dwarfed by those of all backgrounds who attended those of Senator Obama. I suspect that very few people had even an inkling that the next election in 2008 would see the 1st African American not only win the presidency, but do so handily. The number of voters who went to the polls as well as the margin of victory for Obama were unprecedented. This election marks a significant milestone in American history and will go down as one of the most historic moments in our democracy. As a black man, I am just so thankful to have been alive to witness this moment and share these memories with my children and my grandchildren. As an American I am excited and hopeful to see this country once again rise to greatness and am also intrigued to think about the future which has forever been changed by the events of November 4th 2008.”

- Tion Thomas, Graduate Student

“Being able to live the dream that my parents had, and probably their parents had, about seeing a black man being elected to lead our country, it makes my fears about being a minority in the corporate world and being taken advantage of because of that fact sort of fade away. I’ll still be a little bit on edge when competing with others for jobs, but to see Obama win based on his credentials and his platform on the important issues facing everyone today, it has inspired me to do better in school and be better in general so that when I am applying for a job, my credentials will stand out much more so than my color will.”

- Schane Coker, Sophomore

“First, now the entire United States realizes what the black community and much of the international community has known: there has always been a strong tradition of black leadership in United States history. In addition, the demonization of bi-racial and/or multi-racial subjects by people and groups endorsing race purity and white supremacy—locally and globally—have received a definitive blow to the ignorance associated with assuming mixed-race peoples will dissolve a nation. Indeed, we’ve witnessed the unitary power of such citizenry. To be certain, Obama’s election is a complicated, watershed moment which problematizes identity politics, and most importantly, infuses new life into a dialogue on race, identity and citizenship.”

- Erik Wade, Ph.D. Candidate, American Studies

“I’m very happy Barack Obama was elected President because I feel my generation (millennial) need a leader. During the race Obama was able to gain a lot of support from both young and old Americans, but I hope young Americans in particular harness that energy and continue to work for change in today’s society. For older Americans, I know this Presidency is a physical representation of progress filled with many complicated emotions, but younger African-Americans in particular have taken for granted a lot of the freedoms our ancestors fought for us to be able to enjoy. As a result of less overt forms of oppression taking priority during our lifetimes, many of which the targets themselves are oblivious to, I think Obama’s Presidency is a reminder that this historic election was/is a new and great statement America’s making -- and his time in office can be an even greater accomplishment if we continue to support his vision.”

- Ashley G. Scott, Junior College of Liberal Arts

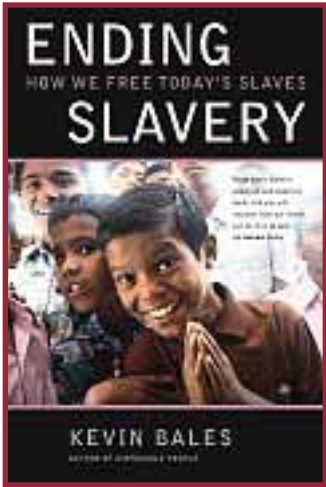
“The election of Barack Obama is a momentous occurrence in our history. I am thrilled to have been a part in it. I hope that this will provide the opportunity for a positive role model for youth of today. Obama’s story is a true success story of the American Dream.”

- Nick Krebs, Sophomore, College of Liberal Arts

Focus on the Media

Kevin Bales Slavery in the Twenty-First Century

By Juanita Crider, Editor



“Fannie Lou Hamer said it years ago, and it is just as true today; we can end slavery forever if we all go together. If you would like to see the end of slavery; if you would like to make the gift of freedom to the world and your children, then decide now to do something to make that happen (236).”

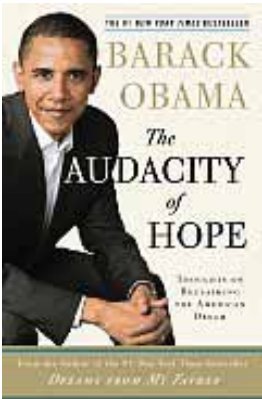
I have always been interested in what people are reading. I believe knowing what a person reads can be somewhat of a window into their personality. So one day I ran across a web site that featured former President Bill Clinton recommending a book that he was reading. This is what he had to say, “I recommend the book *Ending Slavery: How We Can Free Today’s Slaves* by Kevin Bales about the 27 million slaves around the world today. This is a bigger problem than most people know about and one we can solve.” I immediately went out to purchase the book.

Bales is not a newcomer to this subject. In a previous book, *Disposable People*, he introduces his study, some may call it his obsession, with modern slavery. However in this book he argues that in the 21st century slavery is “tangled up in both local and global economies” (4). Bales then proceeds chapter by chapter to guide the reader through the complexities of modern day slavery and the many challenges it presents. He supports his arguments not only with statistics but personal horror stories of people who have escaped from slavery across the globe even within the United States. The final chapters examine how nations and citizens can aid in ending slavery. The most provocative chapter “Ending Poverty to End Slavery to End Poverty to End Slavery,” clearly gets to the root of the basic problem as Bales sees it, “we do not have to end global poverty to end slavery, but we do have to end the poverty of slaves to secure their freedom, (226).”

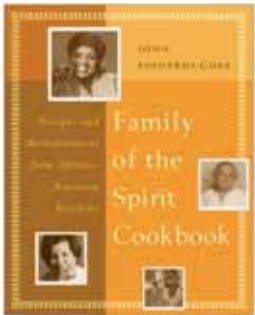
The irony for me while reading this book was a recent case of sex slavery reported in local papers. In Hammond, Indiana, two men were charged with subjecting a 16 year old girl to forced labor, sexual abuse, and beatings. Additional charges are also expected to include human trafficking. Not very often do I come across a book that ignites that fire within to make me want to go out and be the change I want to see. This book does just that. This review and must read recommendation is just the beginning.

Stay tuned for further developments.

Recommended Reading



The Audacity of Hope
By Barack Obama



Family of the Spirit Cookbook
By John Pinderhughes



It's Kwanzaa Time
By Synthia Saint James

Danita Brown: Believing the Best in The Office of the Dean of Students

By Mary Gilliam, Staff Writer



Dr. Danita Brown, Associate Dean of Students, joined the Purdue staff in August 2008. Born and raised in Kent, Ohio, graduated from Kent State University with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology and Sociology in 1997. She continued her graduate education at Loyola University and Ohio University respectively earning a Master of Arts degree in Community Counseling and a Ph.D. in Higher Education. As an Associate Dean of Students, Brown oversees the university's counseling area, testing center, and the SPAN PLAN Adult Services Program. She provides academic, personal, and career counseling to students. Additionally her duties also include crisis intervention, administering emergency loans, the withdrawal process for students, readmissions, and occasional hearing judicial cases.

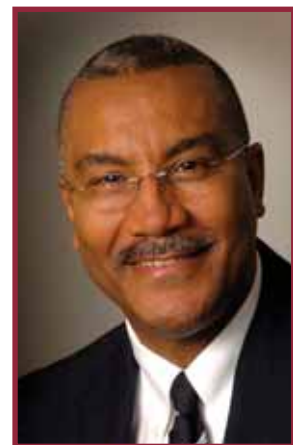
Since joining the Purdue family, Dr. Brown serves as a faculty fellow for Earhart, Vice President for the Student Services Strategic Planning Committee and is a member of the Advisory Board & Committee for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered, and Queer Office. She is actively involved in Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, INC, Phi Sigma Pi National Honor Co-ed Fraternity, Mortar Board National Honor Society, the Kent University Alumni Association, the National Association for Student Personnel Administrators Center for Women, and the ACPA College Student Educators International

Commission. Recently, December 4, 2008, Dr. Danita Brown, was inducted into the Mortar Board (Barbara Cook Chapter) Women of Purdue.

Dr. Brown enjoys listening to music, walking her dog, traveling, watching sports, and TV shows including *Grey's Anatomy* and *Without a Trace*. She enjoys her position here at the university, especially since no day is exactly like the next, and she loves working with traditional and non-traditional students. Brown sums her life using this quote, "Help people become what they are capable of becoming. By believing the best about people, you are able to bring out the best in them."

Congratulations!

Joseph S. Francisco, the William H. Moore Distinguished Professor of Chemistry at Purdue University, has been named president-elect of the American Chemical Society, the world's largest scientific society. Francisco will be president-elect in 2009 and take over as the society's president in 2010. He will be the second African-American, but the first from academia, named as president of the society, which was founded in 1876.

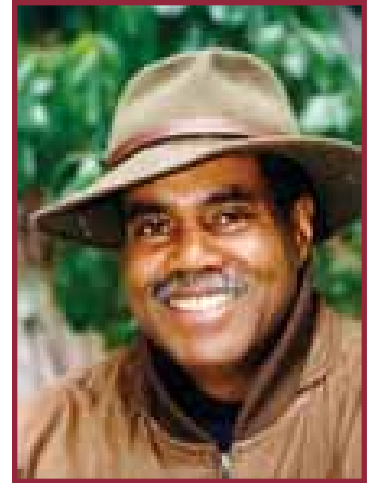


Purdue Celebrates MLK Day

University Keynote Speaker: Steve Curwood

On Monday, January 19, 2009, Purdue University will celebrate the birthday anniversary of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. As part of this observance and to provide the Purdue community an opportunity to engage in Dr. King's vision, the Office of the Vice President for Ethics and Compliance and the Diversity Resource Office, in collaboration with Housing and Food Services, is sponsoring a "Boilers Care-and-Share" drive (formerly known as Gifts-in-Kind).

Steve Curwood, executive producer and host of *Living on Earth*, will be the keynote speaker for Purdue's MLK Day 2009. Curwood has been a journalist for over 30 years. He has been with NPR, CBS News, the Boston Globe, WBUR-FM/Boston and WGBH-TV/Boston. His show, *Living on Earth*, focuses on the environment and ecological issues. It is broadcasted on approximately 300 Public Radio stations. It airs in 9 of the ten top radio markets. Curwood created the first pilot of the show in 1990. Since April 1991, it has run continuously. Curwood has won a host of awards including the 2003 David A. Brower Award from the Sierra Club for excellence in environmental reporting. He is a lecturer in Environmental Science and Public Policy at Harvard University and also the President of the World Media Foundation.



By Sabrina Reed, Staff Writer

ML King Keynote - Steve Curwood, January 19, 2009 7:00 p.m. Loeb Playhouse

Boiler Gold Rush Needs You!

Looking for a way to get more involved on campus, develop your leadership skills, and make new friends from all over Purdue? Boiler Gold Rush is looking for students who want to share their enthusiasm about Purdue to apply for a Team Leader position.

Team Leaders serve as mentors for groups of 10-15 first-year and transfer students during the Boiler Gold Rush program, August 16-21, 2009. They facilitate team building activities, give campus tours, guide participants to BGR activities, answer new students' questions, and share their personal and academic experiences in an effort to help acclimate our newest class of Boilermakers to Purdue.

Benefits of being a Team Leader include leadership development, improvement of public speaking ability, participation in team building activities and diversity trainings, the opportunity to meet motivated and fun Purdue students, and much more. Applicants must be enrolled at Purdue for the spring and fall semesters of 2009 and must have a minimum 2.5 GPA.

We invite you to attend our Team Leader Callouts, which will be held:

Tuesday, January 27 from 7pm-8pm in LILY 1105
Wednesday, January 28 from 7pm-8pm in CL50 224
Thursday, January 29 from 7pm-8pm in LILY 1105

Applications are due online on February 6th at 5pm.

For more information, please visit our web site: <http://www.purdue.edu/sats> and click on Boiler Gold Rush.

And Finally...

Grandma's Hands....

By Juanita Crider, Editor



I must confess that I am unabashedly a grandma's girl. My maternal grandmother and I shared a bedroom when I was growing up. Although she is no longer with us, according to my family many of her ways and mannerisms are all in me. This brings me to a thought about the recent presidential election. In the Obama family we see the presence of "grandma's hands." In President-elect Obama we see the influence of Madelyn Dunham, the grandmother who raised him for most of his life. Mrs. Dunham, who had been in failing health during much of Obama's campaign, passed away just one day before Obama's historic victory. Yet, in President-elect Obama we see the fruit of her dedication, work ethic and love.

Then there is Mrs. Marian Robinson, Michelle Obama's mother, i.e. grandmother to the Obama girls, Malia and Sasha. Mrs. Obama readily admits that without her mother they would have never made it through the day to day grind of a presidential campaign. You see, Mrs. Robinson was the primary caretaker of the girls when Mrs. Obama and/or the President-elect were on the campaign trail. Robinson is so important to the family that the girls have reportedly begged grandma to move to Washington with the family, welcomed of course by daughter and son-in-law alike. She even has an invitation to move into the White House if she desires.

For many, the relationships described above between grandmothers and their grandchildren are just common everyday connections of love, family and fun. However it is so nice to see the significance of grandmothers receive some national attention and perhaps long overdue recognition! Like in the words from Wither's song, "If I get to Heaven I'll look for Grandma's hands."

P.S. A special shout out also to grandfathers (you thought I forgot about you didn't you ... smile).



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