



N O V E M B E R 2 0 0 2

# A Pilgrimage Through Time

## Resurrecting the Spirit of the Harlem Renaissance

By Christen Tibbs  
Staff Writer

Often, historians, researchers, students or just curious thinkers make pilgrimages to historic sites to take part in an educational, life-changing experience. In most cases, these pilgrimages transform those involved into more aware and thought-provoking people as they become involved in an emotional, soul-searching event. The members of the Black Cultural Center Performing Arts Ensembles were granted the privilege of traveling to Harlem, New York during October Break 2002. The purpose of this trip was to perform field research about the historically significant city to learn of the impression the artistic and creative developments produced during the renaissance era left on American culture and African American history.

The excitement of the trip was evident from beginning to end. As the travelers crossed the George Washington Bridge, leading them into New York, expectations of Harlem were voiced aloud. Inspiring poems were read in addition to phrases from Zora Neal Hurston's Glossary of Harlem Slang, echoing the frequently used language of the Harlem Renaissance era. The suave brothers of the era were termed



Students and Staff outside of the Harlem YMCA

"jar heads" while the sophisticated sisters were called "coal scuttle blondes." Upon arrival in Harlem, the performers were given a thorough, two-hour tour of the city, starting with the Claude McKay Harlem YMCA and ending at the renowned Apollo Theatre.

During this tour the students were provided detailed, historic information about how each site related to the events and the way of life in Harlem during the 1920's. After the tour, the students performed field research on specific topics related to the

beloved era. Journeys to the historic Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture and the New York Public Library were made to achieve the desired information. The Schomburg Center was founded by Arturo Schomburg. After being told that Blacks and Puerto Ricans had not made any contributions to civilization, Schomburg proved this statement wrong by finding their contributions. He donated his collection of artifacts acquired through this research to the center. This establishment houses a collection of original manuscripts, photographs,

audio materials, and visual images that provide insight into the lives of the individuals represented in each antique relic. From the first and only issue of FIRE!! A Quarterly Devoted to Younger Negro Artists to Aaron Douglas' love letters to his wife, the materials within the walls of the Schomburg Center represent living proof of these contributions.

With the research complete, the students gathered with Purdue Alumni from the New York area who graduated between the years of 1956 and 2001 for an evening of fine dining at Harlem's Sylvia's. This

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# DIRECTOR'S DESK



Dinner with Vinie Burrows learned from the Harlem tour. From running numbers to lively dancing in juke joints, from mandatory taxes to the mob, the stage performers took the audience back to the early Harlem days.

On Sunday, the second day in Harlem, the travelers attended Abyssinian Baptist Church, founded in 1808, to hear the spiritual teachings of Rev. Calvin O. Butts. Rev. Butts previously presented the lecture *The New Harlem Renaissance* at Purdue on September 23. After service, members of the church met Johnny Cochran, who graciously greeted admirers during his book signing. Following the church service, Dr. Michael Dinwiddie delivered the lecture *"Poets in Protest: Footsteps to the Harlem Renaissance."*

The lecture examined the tradition of poetic protest in the African Diaspora, exemplifying how poets, lyricists, and rap/hip-hop artists have sought to reclaim and reshape images of themselves and their communal experiences during various black movements throughout history.

After taking part in numerous festivities, the group united for a Gospel Brunch at Jimmy's Uptown, a local restaurant. The food was delectable and the exquisite, six-member gospel choir stole the stage. They performed many contemporary gospel songs in addition to traditional and "Down South at Your Grandma's Church" gospel. The Black Voices of Inspiration joined the singers on stage to perform while they sang angelic notes for a live radio broadcast.

On the final, full day in Harlem, each performing arts ensemble took a master class from a specific performance company to encourage their talents and inspire their drive to pursue their dreams in those artistic areas. The Jahari Dance Troupe was given a masterclass by the highly regarded Alvin Ailey



Students hanging out at Sylvia's

dinner provided intellectuals with the opportunity to network with the learned professionals, solicit advice, learn of their educational experiences and understand their decisions to settle in New York.

Following dinner, all traveled to the John Houseman Theater where they viewed Langston Hughes' Off Broadway Production, *Little Ham-A Harlem Jazzical*, a play set in Harlem during the 1920-1940's. The ensemble artists connected aspects of the performance to what they had previously



BOVI join performers at Jimmy's Uptown

Dance Company, while the Black Voices of Inspiration apprenticed with the soulful Boys Choir of Harlem. The marvelous Awakening Dance Production Dance Theater of Harlem led the New Directional Players and Haraka Writers through exercises, which allowed them to recite poetry, compose a script for a play, and perform the scripts that were constructed on the stage of "The Little Theater," located in the Claude McKay Harlem YMCA. Famous talents such as Ossie Davis, Ruby Dee, Langston Hughes, Sidney Portier and a host of other greats got their start in the performing arts acting on this very stage.

# Reflections of Harlem



In the Spirit Stephany Spaulding rocks along with soulful gospel music.

## Journeying to Harlem

Excitement ignites deep within  
 journeying to places never been  
 anticipation guides thoughts  
 fantasizing of what is/not  
 daydreaming time suspend

always a sense of belonging  
 passion driven longing  
 to taste the sweetness of Sugar Hill  
 inhale Lenox Avenue thrills  
 approaching moments of knowing

ancestral exchange revitalized  
 poets, dancers come alive  
 experiencing culture of before  
 uniting ideas of present and yore  
 fulfillment awaits these eyes  
 2002  
 Stephany R. Spaulding



Meet and Greet  
 Purdue alumni gather at Sylvia's.

**20 things that I expect from Harlem, NY:**

1. jazz
2. YMCA
3. diversity
4. culture
5. busy
6. Harlem Renaissance
7. art
8. funky fashion
9. the New Yorker's accent
10. New York cheesecake
11. Soul food
12. African art
13. graffiti
14. noisy
15. dirty
16. raggedy streets
17. tons of people walking on the streets
18. buildings very close together
19. buildings with ornate architecture
20. FUN!!!

**E. P. Smith**

# Against the Odds

## The Artists of the Harlem Renaissance

By *Faithé Ways*  
Staff Writer

Eloquently narrated by acclaimed actor, Joe Morton, “Against the Odds: The Artists of the Harlem Renaissance,” is a film that tells a powerful story of how African American artists triumphed over racial, social and economic barriers during the Harlem Renaissance (1920’s and 1930’s). The documentary examines the history of racism in the arts and explores the essence of the artists’ struggle for independence in early Harlem. Through a rich collection of archival photographs, paintings, film footage, artifacts, sculptures and writings, the film chronicles the era of the Roaring ’20s.

In addition to the visual images depicting the talents of the artists, the film offers the opinions and personal accounts of the era from historians, scholars, and surviving artists. “Against the Odds” gives the audience a firsthand account of the extraordinary artistic and socio-political movement that not even the horrors of racism could oppress. It highlights many influential supporters of black art and artists and their contributions to the cause.

Dr. Alain Locke was one of the key supporters of the Harlem Renaissance. The first African American Rhodes scholar, Locke was extremely influential in bridging the gap for black artists by helping them gain social acceptance. William E. Harmon, another well-known supporter, was a white philanthropist. He provided blacks with the opportunity and property to showcase their superior artwork by establishing the William E. Harmon Foundation of New York. The film recounts how mainstream museums and art galleries ignored African American artists and left them with no place to showcase and sell their art. However, blacks managed to display their art for an enthusiastic and encouraging audience and by default, the William E. Harmon Foundation became the reigning authority on African American art.

The Harlem Renaissance was an expressive and explosive time for African-American culture. Through the presentation of their brilliant and vivid artwork, blacks were able to flourish during a period of social unacceptance and racial inequality. Their artwork depicted the virtues of the race and gave them a sense of pride and prestige. “Against the Odds” is a remarkable documentary that appeals not only to the artistically inclined, but also to those interested in learning more about the rich and vibrant historical cultural movement known as the Harlem Renaissance. Gain not only knowledge and information, but also an amazing appreciation for black art through “*Against the Odds: Artists of the Harlem Renaissance.*” The film will be shown on Friday November 8th at 7:00 PM. at the Black Cultural Center.

# More than History

## Lives in African-American Museums

By *Faithé Ways*  
Staff Writer

Our past, our present and our future are embodied in some of the most moving and provocative displays of African American history throughout various memorials and museums dedicated to our rich heritage. The lives and stories of our ancestors’ trek into slavery, their existence in the brutal homestead of early America, the costly Civil Rights battles, the horrible attacks and lynching, and the remarkable feats of survival and success all come to life in the national museums and memorial exhibits across the country. It is imperative that we visit them.

The DuSable Museum of African American History in Chicago is the oldest non-profit historical institution in the country. Established in 1961, this independent institution has a diverse collection of artifacts, films, photographs and books depicting the achievements and accomplishments of African Americans. This museum breathes life

(Continued on page 4)

Cultural Arts Series

Friday, November 8, 2002  
BCC Film Series

### Against the Odds- The Artists of the Harlem Renaissance

Come explore how Harlem in the 1920’s and 30’s was such a focal point of artistic creativity for African American artists. Their work proudly demonstrates how these artists transcended the prejudice that often surrounded them. A facilitated discussion will follow the film.

*Black Cultural Center*  
7:00 PM

Wednesday  
November 15, 2002

### “Ain’t Nobody’s Business If I Do: Reflections of Women in the Harlem Renaissance” ~ by Dr. Carole Marks

Dr. Marks will provide a wonderful introduction to the context of the works of Renaissance artists by addressing the contributions of several women artists from this period. Her lecture will be accompanied by slides of rarely seen photos appearing in her book, *The Power of Pride: Stylemakers and Rulebreakers of the Harlem Renaissance.*

*Stewart Center 206*  
7:00 PM

Friday, December 6, 2002

Cultural Arts Festival  
*Loeb Playhouse*  
7:00 PM

BCC Rent Party  
(Immediately following  
the Cultural Arts Festival)  
*Stewart Center 306*



# Purdue Black Alumni Organization Host Annual Meeting

By Collette C. Emery  
Senior Writer



All In Pride Alumni Members of Omega Psi Phi present their original charter of to be displayed at the BCC

During Homecoming weekend, African American alumni gathered at the Black Cultural Center (BCC) to catch up on old times, share a traditional soul food dinner and enjoy the fall weekend. However, the main reason for the gathering was to conduct business for one of the most influential African American organizations of the Big 10 colleges, the Purdue Black Alumni Organization (PBAO).

Resurrected in 1980 after a period of dormancy, the PBAO was recharged by a group of alumni who wanted to sustain the organization that specifically spoke to the needs of African American alumni.

The Homecoming setting offered alumni a congregation spot to develop new ways to reach out to the current students, while sharing memories of their own Purdue experiences. Hence, the PBAO serves as a voice for students, staff, alumni and faculty while focusing on promoting collaboration between those same groups. PBAO's goal is to enrich the Purdue experience for African American students and facilitate social and professional networking among a worldwide network of African American alumni.

Over the years, celebrated highlights and accomplishments of the PBAO include the organization's voting seat on the Purdue Alumni Association Board of Directors, the development of Homecoming festivities that attract a large number of alumni back to the university, the establishment of a mentoring program that currently pairs 27 students with alumni, and the implementation of the PBAO Young Alumni Award; Erica L. King received this year's award.

All of the PBAO members, established and successful in their careers, were pleased with the organization's financial standing and social ranking among other alumni organizations. Members did, however, voice frustration as to why more African Americans are not joining the PBAO. Students may be asking, 'What can the organization for them?' On the other hand the members are asking, 'What can the students do for the organization?'

The continued success and growth of the organization will come from both ends of the spectrum. The PBAO must offer something

to attract future alumni while at the same time, the alumni must offer of free membership for the first year. The voice of the PBAO will not be heard with financial support alone, but with the dedication to uplift the standard of Purdue University as a whole. In addition, the PBAO will continue to enrich the lives of African American students on campus while increasing both retention and recruiting efforts.

As president, Viveca Fairbanks-Henderson is committed to making PBAO the number one organization of its kind. "We want to make PBAO a credible, action-oriented organization in the eyes of Purdue African American alumni, students, faculty, staff and the Purdue University administration," she said.

With many opinions voiced and hearts and minds cleared, PBAO members left the weekend with the intention of increasing interaction between present and future African American alumni. Hence, this fall a new leaf has been turned over in the name of the PBAO promising to uphold its mission and extend a hand even further to all of the Purdue students. Perhaps upcoming alumni will consider their contribution to the PBAO with an open mind for the sake of its history, the fellowship and for the prestige.

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## More than History (from page 3)

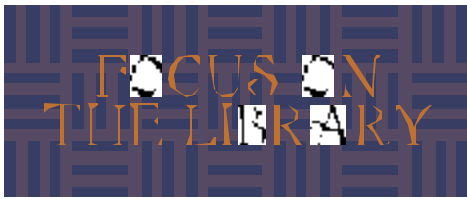
into the thriving metropolitan area by way of its interpretive programs, performances, workshops, classes and exhibits.

Another renowned museum is Detroit's Charles H. Wright Museum of African and African American History. Established in 1965, this museum is the largest international compilation of our history. It teaches the world about our unique ethnicity through a series of exhibits, cultural celebrations, festivals, lectures and programs. The cornerstone exhibit here features a moving pictorial that examines the richness of African cultures and civilization. It tells a story that journeys from the "Middle Passage" to the "Underground Railroad," and finally to freedom.

African American art, history and culture all come to life at the California African American Museum, established in 1981 in Los Angeles, California, and at the Black American West Museum & Heritage Center (1971, Denver, Colorado). Each preserves and displays artifacts, memorabilia and documents that depict how Blacks settled the West. The Museums focus on completing our story through a kaleidoscope of programs, exhibits and educational lectures that tell the untold story of how African Americans helped shape and define the great Western America.

The National Civil Rights Museum (NCRM), established in 1991, lives at the site of the Lorraine Motel in downtown Memphis, where Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was assassinated. Devoted to educating the American public on the legacy of the Civil Rights Movement, the NCRM's exhibitions remind us of the great influence the movement had on the world.

All of these museums educate us about the prestigious past of African Americans. As a nation, we endeavor to remember and learn from all kinds of things from the past, including events, people and places. These museums and memorials allow us to embrace our past, heal our hearts and shape our future.



# AIDS & Development in Africa

## A Social Science Perspective

By *Faithe Ways*  
Staff Writer

Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS), a growing epidemic, is devastatingly infecting our black community. In 2000 more African Americans were reported with AIDS than any other racial group. And in Africa, AIDS is especially prevalent among adults and children. Seventy percent of all adults and eighty percent of all children living with Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), which causes AIDS, live in Africa. These startling facts are evidence that we need to be educated and informed about this crucial disease.

*AIDS and Development in Africa: A Social Science Perspective*, by Kempe Ronald Hope Sr., provides a great deal of accurate and pertinent information about the AIDS epidemic in Africa. With an analytical look at the disease as well as prevention and intervention methods, the book takes readers on an exploration of AIDS throughout the African continent. Beginning with the causes of AIDS in Africa, Hope proceeds to discuss the costs and social reactions to the large number of infected people. He also takes a look at the lack of information and education Africans receive about AIDS. Hope details social, economic and legal aspects associated with the AIDS pandemic in Africa, and provides readers with specific statistics that are shocking as well as informative. Most importantly, the book explains how Africans are coping with this tragic disease despite their economic condition.

The author aims to reach an audience that would appreciate and utilize the information he is providing about AIDS. He is mainly focusing his attention towards African Americans so that we will be informed instead of ignorant about the specifics of AIDS. He carefully outlines the book in a clear and understandable manner while simultaneously providing numerous statistics that help shape the book.

I was personally impressed with the book, because it taught me a lot. Packed full of information, Hope's book tells the entire story of AIDS in Africa. Anyone interested in learning about this global problem can benefit by turning a reading eye to *AIDS and Development in Africa: A Social Science Perspective*.

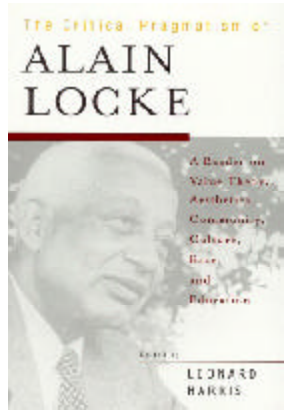
Hope is writing for an African American audience about a largely African problem that still looms as a threat in our own cities. His personal hope, however, is that African Americans will come away with a better understanding of AIDS, along with all the power inherent in that knowledge.

Purdue University  
Black Cultural Center Library

Presents

**HARLEM RENAISSANCE AND BEYOND:  
THE INFLUENCE OF ALAIN LOCKE**

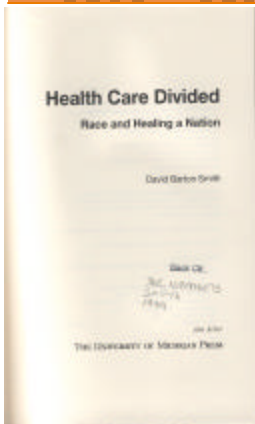
*a lecture and book signing by Professor Leonard Harris*



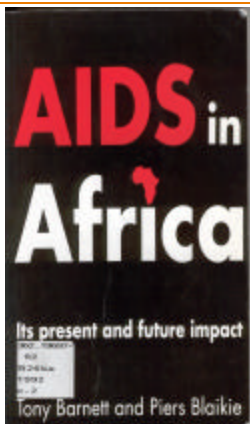
**Monday, November 25, 2002, 7:00-9:00 PM**  
**Multipurpose Room I**  
Black Cultural Center  
1100 3<sup>rd</sup> Street  
West Lafayette, IN 47906

For more information contact  
BCC Librarian Dorothy Ann Washington,  
(765) 494-3093 or [dwashin2@purdue.edu](mailto:dwashin2@purdue.edu);  
web site <http://www.purdue.edu/bcc/library>

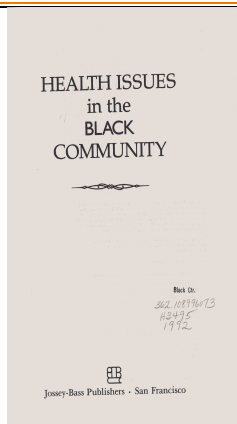
### Recommended Reading



Health Care Divided  
Race & Healing  
a Nation  
By David Barton Smith



AIDS in Africa  
Its Present & Future  
Impact  
By Tony Barnett  
&  
Piers Blaikie



Health Issues  
in the Black  
Community  
By Ronald L.  
Braithwaite  
&  
Sandra E. Taylor



# Purdue University Welcomes

Dr. Gilbert Rochon, of the Information Technology Department

*By Collette C. Emery  
Senior Writer*

While centered in the evolution of the information age, Purdue University is maintaining its standard of providing cutting edge technology to the students. Its most recent brainchild is the birth of Information Technology at Purdue (ITaP). ITaP's mission is to provide and create an evolving infrastructure and services for computing and telecommunications to support user needs in learning, discovery, engagement and business applications.

ITaP's vision is to "create a world-class digital infrastructure driven by user needs that leverages Purdue's academic information technology knowledge and infrastructure for economic development within the State of Indiana."

One of the administrators on the forefront of this technology wave is Dr. Gilbert Rochon, Associate Vice President for Collaborative Research and Engagement, located in Young Graduate House. His position entails facilitating multi-disciplinary projects that engage departments on campus as well as providing partnerships with external entities such as government agencies, national research laboratories, the private sector, foreign research institutes along with other groves of Academe including minority-serving institutions. Rochon also is a Courtesy Professor in Purdue's Department of Earth & Atmospheric Sciences. He's been at Purdue since February 2002, and is happy to be here. "I am delighted to work with multiple schools and departments at Purdue University, while encouraging external collaborations", he said.

Dr. Rochon feels empowered to make a contribution that bridges the digital divide. "We need to assist the university in establishing cutting edge information Technology (IT) related interdisciplinary research opportunities and to reach out to regional community development," he said.

In these contexts, he recently obtained support to establish the Purdue Terrestrial Observatory (PTO), which will be a real-time satellite remote sensing receiving station supporting research and instruction within thirteen departments at Purdue. Furthermore, ITaP has received a small grant from INTEL to facilitate the transition of minority undergraduates at Purdue and at selected Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU's) and Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU's) to graduate degree programs in IT, Engineering and the Sciences. The PTO plans "to engage the broader community by providing public domain satellite imagery and analytical software to local K-12 institutions, as well as sharing data with Purdue's regional campuses and with the select group of black and Hispanic universities that have remote sensing research and training capabilities."

Dr. Rochon's resume comprises of a Bachelor's degree in English from Xavier University, a Master's degree in Public Health in Health Services Administration from Yale University School of Medicine and a doctorate degree in Urban and Regional Planning from Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). In addition, he has conducted research on drought-related famine in Sudan and on environmental applications of remote sensing in Jamaica, Puerto

Rico, Siberia and Brazil. Rochon's credentials and experience have afforded him joint appointments and research fellowships with many universities and organizations such as Tulane University School of Public Health & Tropical Medicine, Oxford University's Environmental Change Unit, United Nations University International Food & Nutritional Planning Program, NASA Goddard Space Flight Center, NASA Stennis Space Center, NASA/Cal Tech Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) the USDA Forest Service Institute for Quantitative Studies and International Institute for Tropical Forestry, DOD Naval Oceanographic Office and the DOD High Performance Computing Modernization Office's (HPCMO) Programming Environment & Training (PET) program.

A strong advocate of education and empowerment of minorities, Dr. Rochon along with a group former colleagues, established the Columbia University (New York) and Dillard University (New Orleans, LA) Joint BA/MS Degree Program in Urban Planning. In this program, students at Dillard University skipped their senior year and went directly to graduate school at Columbia. While at Columbia, the students earned Masters' degrees in Urban Planning, while simultaneously completing requirements for their undergraduate degrees at Dillard. So far, 27 students have successfully completed the program, and one of them has been appointed to an endowed professorship at Columbia.

Among many role models, Rochon hails Nelson Mandela, whom he heard present at the Waterdome dedication during the World Summit for Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, for his victorious fight for independence in South Africa. He also admires Tanzania President, Julius Nyerere for his struggle to attain independence for Tanzania.

Having attended both a historically black college and an Ivy League university, Rochon realizes that many more students could utilize their undergraduate training as a springboard to higher level careers that can make profound social contributions. In his position, Dr. Rochon wants to encourage more students to prepare themselves for rigorous graduate programs. Hence the importance lies in the type of societal contribution students are willing to make by virtue of their advanced training."

He hopes to reach students at Purdue by equipping selected campus computers, including the ones in the BCC, with Geographic Information Systems (GIS) software. He also plans on conducting short-term training courses to encourage collaboration on complex interdisciplinary research initiatives between students and faculty from the social sciences, liberal arts, engineering, sciences and other professions.

Dr. Rochon displays strong leadership skills and has relationships with many notable organizations and universities all over the world. Nevertheless, with all of his prestige and influence, he has made it his mission to "be accessible to all undergraduate and graduate students at Purdue."

## Systematically Erasing Black Women

By Christen Tibbs  
Staff Writer

*I am the quintessential Buppie: I'm young-32. Well educated. Professional. Attractive. Smart. I've been drug and alcohol free all of my life. I'm a Christian. I've never been promiscuous. Never had a one-night stand. And I'm dying of AIDS... I made a way out of no way. Stayed off the welfare rolls and managed never to get pregnant. I graduated magna cum laud from college. I've worked with and dated the best and the brightest. It's scary that eventually I will have to surrender my independence and my vibrancy to this disease.*

Rae Lewis-Thorton

The year was 2000. The month was May. The seniors at Homewood-Flossmoor High School were looking forward to graduation. As we all planned for the big date, decided on what we would wear, and conversed about how exciting college would be, I paused for a second to remember the intelligent, distinguished black woman who four years prior, opened my eyes to the reality of AIDS.

**Rae Lewis-Thorton spoke to us in eighth grade at Gwendolyn Brooks Jr. High School. I remember not being too worried or feeling threatened by the disease while she spoke. It wasn't until she said, "By the time these eighth graders graduate from high school, I will probably be dead," that the junior high students fell into a hushed silence, understanding the severity of her illness.**

**As I walked across the stage to receive my high school diploma four years later, I wondered if that strong woman, a professional, intelligent and positive image of a black woman, had been defeated by AIDS. I could only question why she and so many other black women were being targeted by this horrific, disparaging illness.**

**It was once thought that AIDS was a gay, white male disease. Many believed that they were safe because they were heterosexual or because they were not drug addicts sharing needles. The reality of the disease is that all are susceptible, and it seems as though black women specifically are being systematically erased by this monster. As the numbers of black women suffering from this death sentence increase, I can only hold my head down sadly as I envision the future for alarming masses of black women across the world.**

What is the fuel that allows this fire to torch the women of the black community? This disease is stealing the lives of our sisters, mothers, aunts, daughters, friends and grandmothers. Our pinnacles of life are at stake, and these women are not expendable.

Now is the time to fight back. Oddly, it is not completely known where to begin. As the number of black women becoming infected through sexual intercourse with men increases, researchers and medical experts place the blame on women engaging in sexual activities with bisexual men. According to Lora Branch, director of the Chicago Department of Public Health, the undetermined numbers of bisexual black men are strong contributors to the tripling of HIV/AIDS cases in black women over the last few years.

Most times, homosexuals are frowned upon and viewed negatively. In many instances, the black community ignores the fact that homosexual individuals, particularly bisexual individuals exist. Many gay black men live secretly, fearing the ill treatment they will receive from other men, women, family members and the church. E. Lynn Harris, author of *Invisible Life*, told *Jet Magazine*, "There's no way you're going to get these men to be honest, because being gay is not an option in many of our black communities."

Secrets and lies throughout the black community drive this illness. Bisexual black men do exist, and that needs to be known and accepted. Although it will take much effort to end this pandemic and heal the black community, we can start with facing realities. In addition, black women should not be afraid to confront their sexual

partners and speak openly and honestly with them, paying close attention to the warning signs that can expose a man's life-style.

Antonio Le Mons, deputy director of Health Education for the California AIDS Clearinghouse, in the July 2001 issue of *Jet Magazine*, made a case for disclosure. "The black community needs to be honest about who in the African-American community is infected and how they are becoming infected," Le Mons said. "If we don't get really honest about this issue expeditiously, we might as well convert building fund plates passed in churches each Sunday into burial funds."

There is no one, definite solution that will terminate the spread of HIV, but it is my prayer that the black community will practice the correct precautions that will save our own lives and the lives of many black women in the future.

### Did you know?

- The Center for Disease Control estimates that one in 160 black women and one in 50 black men have HIV.
- More than 60 percent of black women with AIDS were likely infected through sex with a man.
- 30 percent of gay black men in America are HIV-positive.
- In 1999, 2,400 black women died of AIDS, nearly seven black women every day.
- By the end of 1999, 37,862 black women had died of AIDS since the start of the epidemic.
- In the 34 states with HIV reporting (2000): 68 percent of reported HIV cases among women occurred among black women.



# Introducing Editor William Meiners

This is my first page with the Black Cultural Center (BCC). I'm very happy to be here. As a full-time writer and editor for Purdue's Schools of Engineering, I've signed on with the BCC to lend a part-time editorial hand with the monthly newsletter. I've enjoyed working with the staff of students here, and we hope to make this newsletter a work in progress that improves with each read. These are your stories, and we'll try to report them, tell them, the best way we know how.

As someone who is not African American, I suspect I'll learn more from the BCC than I could ever hope to return in the form of sentence and paragraph work. I've already learned a lot. In late September I attended the BCC's fall series to hear Reverend Calvin O. Butts III talk about the "Harlem's New Renaissance: America's Best-kept Secret." Butts is the pastor of the Abyssinian Baptist Church in New York City and president of the State University of New York College at Old Westbury. He began the evening by telling us he was speaking more as a pastor than a president that night. To me, he seemed to be speaking as a teacher.

Butts talked of the great migrations of black folks from the South. The boll weevil chewed up much of the cotton in the southern states and the out-of-work masses headed north by train to cities like Cincinnati, St. Louis, Chicago, Detroit and New York City. Those same hands that had been battered by work in the fields would turn to the physical labor of building Wall Street.

The reverend spoke that night of great African American men. He told stories of Adam Clayton Powell, Jr., who was the "architect of the war on poverty," and Marcus Garvey, who so many people referred to as the "Black Moses."

Harlem began, Butts said, as a sleepy bedroom community that was Manhattan's first suburb for the white middle class. Harlem became a black community when it turned out to be a real estate bust, with more apartments than people available. Over time, as landlords neglected their properties, even the classic brownstones fell into disrepair.

Now, however, Harlem is on the rebound. Butts hopes the same excitement that surrounded the artistic boom of the Harlem Renaissance of the 1920s and 1930s will echo within a 21st century community redevelopment phase. "It used to be," Butts said, "that urban renewal meant Negro removal."

Not so these days. Butts maintains that you can't rebuild a community with one class of people, even if Bill Clinton has an office there. In addition to Clinton, and the refurbished luxury lofts, the new Harlem should and will include affordable housing for people of all tax brackets. Butts hopes this new renaissance will combine a cultural, commercial and residential explosion that raises Harlem on every level.

There are several more events in the BCC's fall series, more learning opportunities. I hope you will attend.

*William Meiners*



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