Welcome to Purdue University!

Welcome to Purdue University! On behalf of the Black Cultural Center, I extend my congratulations on your acceptance to Purdue University. You represent the best and most talented students in the country and around the world. The college experience is an exciting time – of dreams, hopes and fears, great joys, major adjustments and some disappointments. It is a time to grow and learn.

The Black Cultural Center is a place where the African American experience is explored, celebrated and shared. The center provides an intellectually stimulating and comprehensive program by sponsoring an array of special lecturers, performances by distinguished artists and alumni speakers who enhance cultural diversity and improve campus life at Purdue. The BCC publishes a monthly newsletter, houses a library – offering a variety of materials on African American culture, and a computer lab, all providing support for your educational needs.

Black Cultural Center staff strives to provide a welcoming, supportive and caring environment. We are here to enable you to achieve academic, intellectual and personal success at Purdue University. I encourage you to actively participate in BCC programs and activities this fall. Please utilize the BCC library for research and studying, and take full advantage of the computer lab. Your involvement in the BCC will enhance the social, cultural and intellectual vitality of campus life and will promote your personal growth and development.

The Black Cultural Center has planned two special events for first year African American students, Boilerfest and the BCC Performing Arts Ensemble call out and orientation. The purpose of these programs is to introduce you to the Purdue community and the various services available to assist you in achieving your educational goals. The events are highlighted in this newsletter. The BCC staff is anxious to get to know you personally. Staff at the BCC empower students and promote cultural and academic success. Please stop by the BCC and introduce yourself. I am confident you will appreciate the way in which all of us share in your dreams and goals. The BCC looks forward to playing a vital role in your educational journey at Purdue.

Sincerely,

Renee A. Thomas
Director
If you sing, dance, love creative writing or get dramatic on stage, then check out the BCC. We sponsor four performing groups in dance, drama, music, and creative writing to explore African American/African Diaspora traditions and experiences through artistic engagement. Or if you prefer to engage in provocative discussions and exploring subjects in depth to foster critical thinking, then check The Black Thought Collective. Each ensemble is instructed by a professional Artist/Scholar-In-Residence. We consider the Performing Arts Ensembles the heartbeat of the center. Our ensembles affirm students in the area of character and leadership development.

Introducing the Ensembles...

Black Thought Collective

Taking on a think tank approach, the Black Thought Collective (BTC) blends seamlessly with the existing BCC Performing Arts Ensembles, with a “Scholar-in-Residence” who works with the student coordinator to oversee the group. BTC has three standing committees that provide opportunities for all members. “Black Thought in the Media” focuses on current events publicized via local, national and global media; “Past to Present” explores black history and culture focusing on the resources of the BCC library and other campus departments; and “The Awareness Movement” concentrates on future action to better educate Purdue students, faculty, staff and the greater Lafayette community on black history, black culture and black thought.

Black Thought Collective presented at the 2009, 2011, and 2013 National Council of Black Studies Conference. BTC also hosts a spring symposium where they present individual research on the fall semester theme.

Jahari Dance Troupe

Named for the Swahili word, meaning “jewel,” the Jahari Dance Troupe is trained in a variety of techniques in black dance from traditional to contemporary. Over the years, Jahari’s repertoire has evolved to include African, Caribbean, ballet, jazz, modern, hip-hop, and tap. The troupe has received instruction from internationally recognized dancers and choreographers. The troupe has performed widely across the Midwest and has also participated in cultural exchange programs with similar dance companies in the region. Kevin Iega Jeff is the Artist-In-Residence for Jahari. Jeff is the artistic/producing director and one of the co-founders of Deeply Rooted Productions, which is the umbrella company for Deeply Rooted Dance Theater (DRDT). The current relationship between Jahari and DRDT has expanded beyond the traditional since Jeff came to work with the ensemble during the 2004-2005 academic year. Each year Jeff has several members of the professional staff of DRDT share their areas of dance expertise with Jahari members. This expanded relationship will continue to build Jahari’s repertoire again this year.
The Ensembles Continued...

Black Voices of Inspiration

The Black Voices of Inspiration (BVOI) choral ensemble is made up of student and community individuals committed to the performance of music enhanced by the music traditions and experiences of African Americans. The ensemble’s concert literature includes spirituals, jazz, blues, gospel, anthems, hymns, and contemporary music. The group has received international acclaim as apart of the 1999 Voices of America concert tour to Australia, New Zealand and, Fiji. BCC full-time Artist-In-Residence, Dr. Twana A. Harris, is responsible for conducting weekly master choral classes and preparing BVOI for ensemble engagements. In addition to teaching her professional experience includes 15 years as a composer and arranger. Dr. Harris is a member of the American Choral Director’s Association and The Music Educator’s Association. She is a recipient of the Vocal Extravaganza Solo Award, an honor received in a competition among black university choirs and soloists. Check out the 2014 BVOI concert with the Lafayette Symphony Orchestra on You Tube: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G9CcB1vyPmk

Haraka Writers

The Haraka Writers are a collective body of student and community writers committed to literary expression of the black experience. Haraka is a Swahili word that means “expression.” Through essays, prose, poetry, and short stories, the Haraka writers strive to reinforce the essential bonds that give hope and strength to people. To much of their credit, four publications of the Haraka Writers are currently in print: “Ebony Thoughts”, “Black Expression of Life and Love”, “Poems for a Sun Lady”, and the 1987 “Haraka Reader” containing selections from the writers workshop was published. The most recent publication in which the Haraka Writers appear is entitled, Eclipsing a Nappy New Millennium-An Anthology of Contemporary Midwestern Poetry. Haraka is under the direction of Artist-In-Residence Khari Bowden, a.k.a. Discopoet Khari B. Khari B. has been performing poetry since 1992. His presence has been requested and hailed internationally. He also has been recognized for his talents by the late great Gwendolyyn Brooks and performed with renowned Last Poets via a personal invitation. He is the host of the “The Soul Poetry Cafe,” which is recognized as the nation’s largest open mic show.

Join the BCC Ensembles!
Attend callouts September 3 or 4 at 6:30 pm

www.purdue.edu/BCC
New Directional Players

Since its debut in 1971, the New Directional Players have become a highly respected theatrical company. NDP’s repertoire ranges from outstanding works by masters of black theater to original pieces by emerging writers and playwrights. They present traditional plays, and perform poetry, dramatic monologues, one acts, musicals, and adapted works. Each production is designed to generate social awareness about various Afrocentric issues. NDP performs various engagements during the school year both on and off campus. NDP is under the direction of Artist-In-Residence Kecha Nickson-Kambe who serves as an adjunct professor at Elmhurst College and lecturer at Chicago State.

Save the Dates...

Wednesday, September 3
Thursday, September 4
2014
@ 6:30 pm

BCC Performing Arts Ensembles Call Outs
At The Black Cultural Center
Multipurpose Rm 1

Bold, cutting edge, culturally relevant performances that foster understanding is the aim of the BCC Performing Arts Ensembles.

Join us this fall!
The Purdue Black Cultural Center will sponsor a 6 day fall research tour to The Republic of Trinidad and Tobago Friday October 10-15 2014. The Carnival as a tradition is seen throughout the African Diaspora. The tradition of Carnival has existed from as early as the 16th and 17th Centuries in the Bahamas and the late 1700’s in Trinidad (New Orleans-1781). Through Carnival people of African descent offered resistance to their oppressors, preserved their African culture—specifically—language, music and religious/ritual practice. The BCC will focus on Carnival as both a cultural product and cultural practice. Participants on the research tour will learn about the richness, beauty and depth of the festivities relevant to Carnival in particular and folk traditions of Trinidad in general. Our tour is designed to be an immersion experience that encompasses scholarly, artistic and cultural exploration of African diasporic history and life. Through a combination of course readings, master classes, site tours, and presentations by experts on Carnival culture you will gain a comprehensive understanding of the history of the Carnival tradition as well as practical experience in the art forms that comprise the experience. You will also experience one of the world’s most ethnically and culturally diverse societies. The people and customs of Trinidad evolve from a rich tapestry of race, religion, class and culture from various blends of the indigenous Indians, Africans, East Indians, Spanish, French, and British among others. The tour is limited to 45 participants. Membership in one of the BCC performing arts ensembles is required for you to participate. If you are interested in joining the tour, please contact Renee Thomas, BCC director at rathomas@purdue.edu. A companion class AAS 491 – Carnival will be offered on Tuesday and Thursday from 3-4:15 pm. All tour participants must register for the 3 credit class instructed by BCC assistant director Bill Caise. Feel free to call the BCC at 765 494 3091 if you have any questions. The tour is filling up quickly so please register early to secure your spot.
The Black Cultural Center Library

Welcome to the BCC Library

The Black Cultural Center Library is charged with the special mission of preserving knowledge in the field of Africana Studies. It is the only library on campus specializing in materials related to the historical, sociological, political, and cultural aspects of people of the African diaspora.

The Library presently contains more than 7,000 books and materials and subscribes to more than 30 periodicals including popular magazines, scholarly journals, and newspapers. Holdings include such titles as African American Review, Black Scholar, Ebony, Essence, U.S. Black Engineer, and the Western Journal of Black Studies. Current subscriptions to Black newspapers include the Chicago Defender, Gary Crusader, and Indianapolis Recorder.

More resources can be found on the BCC Library’s website which contains information on various collections and databases as well as external research links all related to the Black experience from a domestic and global perspective. Patrons may access the website and online library catalog via a public use computer within the library, or remotely either on or off campus.

The library serves to enhance the patron’s knowledge of African American heritage by providing information which can be utilized for academic research and personal growth. The BCC Library works in cooperation with Purdue Libraries. Its cataloged holdings are included in the Purdue Libraries online catalog.

All Purdue students, faculty, and staff may borrow materials and use the resources and services of the Black Cultural Center Library. The public is also encouraged to interact with the collection via the website at: https://www.lib.purdue.edu/libraries/bcc.
Mark your calendars for Thursday, August 28th from 4-6 p.m. in the BCC parking lot for BOILERFEST 2014!

Boilerfest introduces new students to the BCC, various student organizations, and campus support services. Join us in celebrating the BCC fall semester theme “Unmasking Blackness: Through Rhythm, Culture and Celebration.” Join us as we kick off our celebration of the Carnival tradition. Special guests will perform and offer lessons in samba dancing.

Come out for an afternoon filled with food, music and fun. See you there!
Upcoming BCC Events.......  
Wednesday and Thursday September 3-4, 2014  
**Performing Arts Ensemble Call Outs**  
6:30 p.m.  
BCC  
If you are interested in joining one of the ensembles or even thinking about it, you are invited to come out and see what it is all about!

Saturday, September 6, 2014  
**Friends and Family Day: Featuring The Bacchanal Steel Band**  
Immediately following football game  
Black Cultural Center  
Participate in “hands on” exploration of traditional carnival dance, mask making, music and storytelling. No previous experience required, just come with your creativity!

Wednesday, September 17, 2014  
**Windy City Carnival**  
7 pm Fowler Hall  
Through a combination of music, conversation and dance, this interactive presentation will explore the cultural expressions of Trinidad & Tobago. You will be exposed to Caribbean history, folklore, steel pan and carnival.

Wednesday, September 24, 2014  
**Dr. Jerome Ringo**  
In the wake of hurricanes Katrina and Rita, local issues have become global, and environmental speaker Jerome Ringo demonstrates why making these voices heard has become more urgent than ever.