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The Master Drummer

Eastern Washington University. Africana Studies Program

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THE MASTER DRUMMER
An Annual Publication of the Black Education Program

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From the Director's Desk

THE IDENTITY CRISIS: AFRICAN-AMERICAN STUDIES AND THE AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDENT

Programs in African American Studies, also known as Black Studies, which emerged in the 60's seem to have found their niche in the academy To­

day, progressive institutions of higher learning accept African American Stud­
ies as integral component of the stu­

dent's academic preparation for effective multicultural relations in a mul­

ticultural world. For African Ameri­

can Studies, also known as Black Studies, identity often have poor self-concepts

which American students. The most authoritative

tive multicultural relations in a

For African American students on these campuses, African American Studies presents extra benefits. These benefits include the development of positive racial identity and self-esteem - two areas which have been proven to share a common link and are also critical to the academic success of African American students.

The relationship between atti­

udes of racial identity and self-esteem has been researched and studied over many years. The most authoritative and often quoted study was done by William Cross in 1979 which concluded that African American students who possess strong racial identity are likely to have positive self-esteem or concept. On the other hand, students who have distorted interpretations of their racial identity often have poor self-concepts especially on a campus where Eurocen­

tric values dominate. The study goes on to show that African American students with strong racial identity achieve a feeling of inner security and are not preoccupied by feelings of worthlessness which affects their academic work. The study and others like it, con­

clude that the more an African American student adopts, understands and accepts beliefs, attitudes and behaviors that are characteristic of his or her race, the more his or her self concept increases.

On predominantly white camp­

uses, African American students are confronted with special problems which may affect the development of their self concepts and their racial identities. First, the environment of these campuses may not provide African American role models who can be sources of inspiration for African American students. Second, many of required social science courses on these campuses are designed to assimilate African American and other students into the Eurocentric cultural value systems. Questions that the African American student faces in such an environment, therefore, are: "How do I develop a strong racial identity when the history, politics, economics and all my experiences as a person in America are written, taught and studied from a Eurocentric perspective?"

"How do I maintain a positive self-concept when my textbooks and the environ­

ment do not present any evidences of success and achievements in the African American community?"

We believe that part of the an­

swer and solution lies in the African American students' knowledge and ac­

ceptance of themselves, their history and control over their world view. It is African American Studies that provides this knowledge and orientation.

AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES

Richard Long of Atlanta University is credited with the statement that "African American Studies is not merely the study of African American people. Courses in history, art, sociology, psychology, communications etc. that deal with Africans and peoples of African descent do not constitute the discipline of African American Studies. It is the interpre­

tation of these subjects from the Afrocentric perspective that distinguishes African American Studies from other disciplines.

Afrocentrism is a world view based on African sensibilities. It uses a humanistic and wholistic approach in its interpretation of phenomena. In its practical application, the Afrocentric differs fundamentally from other social science perspectives. If one takes anthropology as an example of the social science enterprise, the pers­

pective is almost always Eurocentric. This means that the vantage point of the theorist and researcher is deter­

mined by European centered con­

sciousness. Thus, phenomena are viewed exclusively from a Eurocentric point. Anthropologists and other soci­

al scientists can speak of primitives, culturally deprived, bushmen, warlike African etc. because they operate and view events only from their perspec­tives as Europeans. The Ashantis, for example, are described in anthropolo­

gy and history books as warlike because they resisted European imperi­

alism for so long in Africa. An Afrocentric interpretation of the same situation would describe the Ashantis as champions of the African liberation struggle or the anti-colonial move­

ment.

Continued on next page

About the name of the publication: In most West African societies, the master drummer resides in the palace of the king and has traditionally served as the custodian of the society's history and the chronicler of events in the society. On festive occasions or during important festivals, he recounts past events by playing on the "talking drums." He literally makes the drums talk. In the study of Af­

rican history, most researchers have come to de­

pend on oral tradition as an effective primary source. The master drummer has remained the rock of this tradition and an indispensable source in the study of African history.

Dr. Felix Boateng, Director
Black Education Program
Dr. Felix Boateng
Publication:

Presentations:
• "Promoting Cultural Literacy in the College Curriculum," Whitworth College Faculty Workshop. February 29, 1988

Professional Recognition:
• Dr. Boateng was appointed to serve on the National Council for Black Studies Publications and Editorial Board. 1987-1989

Professor John Hardin
Presentations:

Professional Recognition:
• Appointed for three year term (1989-1992) to editorial advisory board of Filson Club History Quarterly

AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES AND THE AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDENT SELF-CONCEPT

In a nutshell, African American Studies is a vehicle for viewing the world from the African perspective. In African American Studies, more valid set of questions and indicators, better geared to the realities of African American life are developed. It is an answer to the Eurocentric and culturally insensitive interpretations of the African American experience which prevails in traditional disciplines.

The courses in the African American Studies curriculum are therefore designed to present an African American view of reality that should strengthen the identity of African American students, clarify their world view and help them to understand and accept themselves. Programs in African American Studies exist in the academy to advance the intellectual direction of the discipline.

Unfortunately, however, there are African American students on predominantly white campuses, who express doubt about what they can do with African American Studies. The usual question is: "What do I do with African American Studies?" What these students are really asking is, "What do I do with knowledge about myself?" It is necessary to point out to African American students that a positive self-concept is not only based on what a person is today. It is also based on the individuals familiarity with the true historical record and his or her aspirations for the future. Undoubtedly, this knowledge is obtainable from African American Studies.

There are also African American students who believe that because of who they are, they do not need African American Studies. The tragedy in this assumption is that to a large extent what they know is the Eurocentric interpretation of their African American experience. It is this kind of knowledge, based primarily on European interpretations, that can give students a distorted view of their identities and create confusion on their consciousness. It is African American Studies that can free the minds of African American students from this confusion and release their creativity to achieve success in academic work.

African American Studies shows clearly that the philosophical characteristics of African American and Euro-American world views are different. African American Studies, being the epistemology attributable to the African world view, serves better to explain African American experiences and behavioral phenomena. It is therefore the field of study which would nourish strong racial identity for the African American student and promote the development of a positive self-concept and esteem.
Academic advising in the BEP is more than course selection and policy briefing, it is also addressing quality of life issues, values clarification and the setting of realistic goals. With its developmental approach and support services constituency, the BEP continues to foster a supportive environment for African-American students attending EWU. At Eastern, the concerns of minority students are the concerns of the University. Its academic support group includes faculty, administrators and staff members in financial aid, residential life, admissions and the registrar’s office. A close working relationship with other student services personnel has also proven to be valuable. Since the University includes on its agenda issues that affect the retention of minority students, the Program is able to concentrate its efforts in the area of service delivery and Program development.

African American students bring to the University community, their diverse cultural experiences which define their subjective reality. It is the African American’s level of identification with the African American race that determines his or her initial reaction to an autonomous black student services program on a predominantly white campus. Many immediately identify with the program and embrace it while others, alienate themselves until faced with academic or social problems. Oftentimes, it is a professor or administrator who contacts the Program to inform the staff of a problem that a student is experiencing. Students then become aware of the integrity of the Program and the vital role BEP plays in the welfare of the student and the overall development of the University.

The first visit to the Program is a crucial one for the student. Perceptions of professionalism and services determine the students confidence in the Program. Success in working with students has been contingent upon the capability of the Program to deliver services that meet specific needs, the counselors understanding of developmental and counseling theories and appropriate application of counseling strategies.

Gaining independence, making decisions about life goals and forming interpersonal relationships are not the only major tasks at hand for African American students. Some enter the university after being independent since junior high school. Others find it even more of a challenge to cope with the loss of the extended family support when struggling to maintain basic needs. For these students, it is not a question of self-denial or delaying gratification so that academic goals can be accomplished. Their concern is the uncertainty of the payoffs in a society predicated on racial inequities.

The Counselor must understand the student’s reality, in order to be effective. Through a close relationship with the student, the advisor is able to make an early identification of potential problems, assist students in developing skills or make appropriate referrals. If the student is satisfied with the services, the student becomes the Program’s promoter.

I value my association with the Black Education Program and I am glad I got the opportunity to make a contribution to the development of the Counseling Services. With the uninterrupted support of the University administration, the Black Education Program should continue to mentor black students and motivate them to maintain the BEP tradition of academic excellence and social responsibility.

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**Notes from Philicia Wilson, Former BEP Counselor**

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**Mr. Anthony Greenidge—New BEP Counselor/Recruiter**

Joining the BEP staff as Counselor/Recruiter for the 1988/89 academic year is Mr. Anthony Greenidge, a graduate of Evergreen State College in Olympia. Mr. Greenidge comes to Eastern with a good background in the coordination of Black Student organizations and support services. While attending Evergreen, he provided leadership for the UMOJA SOCIETY (BSU) for two years and provided academic and career counseling services for African American students. Mr. Greenidge was the organizer of the first state wide Conference for students of color in the state capital.

**From the New BEP Counselor**

I am honored to be a part of an office that is responsible for the recruiting and retention of African American students on a major state university campus. As a graduate from a predominantly white university, I recognize the need for special programs to counteract the academic and social alienation that African American students face on these campuses.

One lesson I have learned from my experience as a student leader on a predominantly white campus is that we cannot find solutions to any of our problems without discussion. It is through discussion that we develop insights into the common links we have as a people and draw strategies to deal with our problems. By maintaining an autonomous Black Education Program, Eastern Washington University remains the only university in the state that shows a serious commitment to the success of African American students in higher education. I hope my expertise and experience would be fully utilized to sustain a supportive environment for all African American students.

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Graduation Reception

In honor of the Black Graduating class of 1988, the BEP held a reception on June 2, 1988 at Eastern’s Monroe Hall Lounge. Family and friends of the distinguished graduates, community members, faculty and students were present to congratulate our graduates on their accomplishments. The graduates included:

Raphael Amosun
BS Production

Cathy Bookman
BA Communications

Eldridge Dickerson
BA Radio/Television

Letitia Reid
BA Communications

Patricia Willis
BA Social Work

Raviro Isabel Mhene
MS Urban Planning

Zhilla Baghai
BA Radio/Television

Delores Bostic
BS Biology

Darryl Hunter
BA General Studies

Bentley Williams
BA Communication

Thomas Hayes
BA Urban/Regional Planning

Michelle Prescott
BA General Management


Notes from Alumni

Rose Howell - MS Counseling
1987, Team therapist, Department of Health & Social Services - Durham, North Carolina

Dianna McCoy - MS Speech Pathology 1986, Speech Pathologist - Federal Way, Washington

Annie Cole- BA Political Science/ Pre-Law 1986, Graduating from Gonzaga Law School, June 89

P Wilson- MS Counseling 1987, Academic Coordinator, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA

Steve Cole- BA General Studies 1986, Recreation Coordinator, Dayton, Ohio

Bettie Jackson Chambers- BA Sociology 1987, Recreational Therapist, Division of Comprehensive Mental Health, Tacoma, WA

Martin J Welte- BA Business Administration 1986, Ford Motor Credit, San Jose, California

Beatrice Olive, BA Education
1987, Teacher, Tacoma School District

E.J. Dickerson, BA Radio/ Television 1988, KREM TV, Spokane, WA

John Houston, BA General Studies 1985, Advertising and Sales, United Artists Cable, Los Angeles, CA (John is also writing and producing shows for TV)

Walter Weaver, BA Criminal Justice 1985, Completed a MS degree in Elementary Education ( University of Alaska ) and now teaching in the Anchorage Public School District

Leroy McKinnon, BA Communications 1985, Foreman/ Supervisor, Burlington Northern, Spokane WA


The Marjorie Boyd Wellington Scholarship

The Marjorie Boyd Wellington Scholarship is established to honor the first Black graduate of Eastern Washington University, Cheney and Spokane. Contributions to this fund will create and endowment scholarship for Black students who excell academically at Eastern. The goal is to raise a minimum of $25,000 which will provide an endowment to support a year's tuition for the recipient.

Please send your contribution to:
Eastern Washington University Foundation
Eastern Washington University, MS-16
Cheney, Washington 99004

Marjorie Boyd Wellington

In 1935, Marjorie Boyd Wellington became the first Black student to graduate from Eastern Washington University. Her diligence, perseverance and commitment to her education enabled her to graduate with honors in teacher education. Although her career pathway was challenged by resistance to the hiring of Black educators, Mrs. Wellington's dedication and belief in academic achievement and excellence allowed her to overcome these barriers and realize numerous accomplishments. In addition to teaching in District 81's Head Start Program and operating a daycare center, Mrs. Wellington has been a strong influence on the education of Black Students, in the Spokane area, who are preparing to attend college.
The Black Student Union (BSU)

The Black Student Union at Eastern has maintained its viability as a productive and a dynamic student organization which continues to provide meaningful experiences for African American students who come to the University. In addition to the numerous seminars, dances and freshman orientation sessions it presented during the academic year, the BSU raised funds to support the Marjorie Boyd Wellington Academic Scholarship, the Martin Luther King Essay Contest and other BEP activities. The academic year ended with the raising and subsequent approval of funds by the organization to sponsor the BSU Executive Officers to the 20th Anniversary Conference of the African Heritage Studies Association in Washington D.C. in April, 1988. Arrangements were made during the D.C. trip for the Executive Officers to visit Howard University and other historical sites in the nation's capital. Below are photographic highlights and students' impressions of the visit.

**Andre Corr**
**Vice President—BSU 87-88**

Washington D.C., with the monument of Lincoln, the White House and Capitol Building, is a very beautiful city. One thing that struck me, however, was the stark difference in living conditions between the African American majority and the politicians. I really can't understand how the highest officials of the country could bear to live in such elegance while the majority are poverty stricken right under their noses. That was one thing that really bothered me. On the positive side, it was nice to be in the majority for once and really taste the African American experience. It was beautiful. One thing that sticks in my head is seeing the four of us Wendi, Anthony, Debbie and myself at Howard University in the "punch out", the dining facility, with so many African American students. Never have I seen so many African American educated youth in one room socializing, studying etc. It made me feel instantly that I have been missing out on something. Another feeling I received while in the "punch-out" was the fact that I felt so comfortable in the environment, that the feeling of belonging just came naturally.

**Anthony Whitten**
**Treasurer**

The trip to Washington D.C. was very educational in several ways. First of all we were able to visit the campus of Howard University where we received a first hand view of a predominantly African American campus. We were also able to attend many seminars directed at teaching group communication, group organization and several other skills at the African Heritage Studies Conference. But the height of the weekend was the African Fashion Show and Banquet which featured African fashions and many great speakers addressing the struggle in South Africa. No amount of classroom reading could replace the education I received on this trip. The struggle for equality has a whole new meaning for me now.
BSU Washington D.C. Visit—continued

Debbie Brooks  
Secretary, BSU

My stay in Washington D.C. was the best learning experience that I have ever received. The most memorable part of my stay was visiting the African Art Institute. I learned so much in such a short time about African History, which to me is learning about myself. I would first like to thank the people who made it possible for me to make the trip. Thank you Philicia Wilson, Dr. Boateng and the Black Education Department.

I see my experience in Washington D.C. as two-fold. I grew in knowledge of my heritage and experienced the unique and inspiring cultural atmosphere of the East Coast. The conference focused on the African and African-American heritage and education. So many of our African American students are blinded by our own limited communities. We see African American pop stars, athletes and few politicians in the media. These role models are fine but they influence us to set unrealistic goals since most of us are far from obtaining those positions. But in D.C. we were surrounded by African American educators and people starving for knowledge. The collective ingenuity and creativity of African people was exposed to me. The potential of African American people is not limited to athletics or entertainment careers. We have minds that thrive on knowledge.

Wendi Wills  
President—BSU 86-88

The group learned about our African roots at the African Art Institute of the Smithsonian. When we went to the Capitol Building and saw the statues of the forefathers who laid the foundations for this country, I was proud to be an American. However, I felt more fulfillment in seeing ancient African art detailing the strongest blood line in my roots.

Name Change

The Black Education Program has recommended to the EWU Administration that the name Black Education Program be changed to CENTER FOR AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES AND STUDENT SUPPORT (CAASS). The recommendation is based on two considerations: first the new name highlights and clarifies the academic and student service mission of the Program, and second, it is a positive response to a national trend towards the use of "African American" as the designation for the population the Program serves on campus.

The recommendation is for a name change only. It is not expected to affect any aspects or functions of the Program. The Program expects official approval of the new name before the publication of the next Master Drummer.

BSU Executive at the Supreme Court

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John Hardin

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Eastern Washington University  
Cheney, Washington 99004
Black Awareness Week 1988

By a Staff Reporter

During the 1988 observance of Black Awareness Week, a panel of students addressed the topic: "The Black Experience in Education: An African and African American Perspective" at a symposium organized by the Black Education Program. The panelists were student athlete, Bennie Hicks; Calvin Johnson, an honor student; Kimberly Buchanan, a freshman; Raviro Isabel Mhene, a Zimbabwean and a second year graduate student and Aniset Gafaranga, a second year graduate student from Rudda, Central Africa.

To the African panelists, education is referred to as the "gateway to success," "There are no shortcuts," asserted Isabel. Her experience with education in Africa dates back to the time when Zimbabwe was under the control of white supremacists and racist political systems. Rather than to be defeated or discouraged by the disparities, it was more of an impetus to succeed. "You are what you make yourself," she asserted. "It is not the money that is the motivator but the prestige that is associated with the job that you do." Her academic success both in her homeland and abroad is proof to the world that the stereotypes and references to African peoples as inferior are ridiculous. Although cultural differences have presented social problems, her self-confidence has helped her to survive at Eastern.

For the African American panelists, the concern was how desegregated school systems have impacted the learning process of African Americans. When African American students began to lose contact with African American teachers and came under the tutelage of white teachers, students noticed that they were no longer being pushed to succeed. Johnson stated that African American teachers pushed him harder because they knew that the competition would be unfair and more difficult for the black person in our society. He considers the white teacher-black student relationship as being superficial and that of black teacher relationships as being encouraging. According to the African American students, significant others such as school teachers, community leaders and parents motivate them to learn.

For the African students in pursuit of academic excellence, the task at hand was proving to the world that the racists aspersions and degrading ideologies are defiable. To the African American students, the challenge is to maintain a clear focus on educational goals without being distracted by the inequities of the American society.

1987/88 Highlights

African-American High School Students Visit to the Eastern Campus

An ongoing activity in the Black Education Program’s Recruiting office has been the visitation of Afro-American high school students to the Eastern campus. For the second time in two years, over 100 African American juniors and seniors from the Spokane School District high schools were invited to participate in a visitation on the Eastern campus. The purpose of the visit has been, and still is to encourage and better inform the youngsters about college and introduce them to special opportunities available for African American students at Eastern.

Students are given the opportunity to visit classes, learn about financial aid, scholarships, opportunities in science and teacher education fields, and talk to Eastern African American students about their experiences at the University.

Speaking to the press about the visit, Dr. Felix Boateng, Director of Black Education Program, said, "There is evidence from national reports and surveys that most African American students in high schools are likely to be the first generation college students who may consider college education unattainable or as a program reserved for special people. The high school visitation program presents an opportunity for Eastern to introduce the special services it maintains for African-Americans and, at the same time, encourages the students to view college education as a valuable and attainable goal.

Schools that are interested in participating in the visitation program may contact the Black Education Counselor.
The struggle to comprehend the African-American experience does not necessarily begin in the South or in 1619. An important facet of this story can be found in the Pacific Northwest and more specifically, the state of Washington. As we celebrate the centennial of Washington statehood, we should reflect on African-American participation in this process. What follows is a brief review of triumphs (successes) and travails (troubles) that Blacks encountered in this state since 1889.

Black persons settled in Washington long before statehood. Initially, Black explorer Marcus Lopez was killed by Native Americans at Tillamok Bay in 1788 and the slave York travelled with the 1804-1806 Lewis and Clark expedition. The first Black settler was George Washington Bush, a free person of African and white parentage. As a mulatto or biracial person, he became subject to an Oregon law prohibiting free Blacks, slaves, and mulattoes from settling there. He decided to move from the Willamette Valley to north of the Columbia River near Fort Vancouver With support from Michael T. Simmons, a white member of the Oregon Legislature, he received an exemption from the U.S. Congress to take claim to 640 acre claim in what today is Washington state.

The Bush farm became known as Bush Prairie and quickly became the center of activity in this area. Bush, who brought his family with him from Pennsylvania, often provided assistance and food to other settlers most of whom were white. Bush also developed new strains of wheat and animals thus improving agriculture in the area.

After Bush's death in 1863, his son, William Owen Bush, continued his father's effort to improve agriculture in the region. The strains of wheat produced by the junior Bush were exhibited at world's fairs in Philadelphia, Chicago, Buffalo and the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C.

William O. Bush continued his father's tradition of public service by becoming a legislator in the 1890-1892 session of the Washington legislature. Bush's presence may have had a salutary affect accorded persons of color by the state laws. Unlike the nearby states of Montana, Idaho and Oregon that enacted laws imposing restrictions on the civil rights of Blacks and other minorities, Washington refrained initially from these laws. The State Constitution of 1889, Article 9, Section Preamble, clearly prohibited racial discrimination in education.

It is the paramount duty of the state to make ample provision for the education of all children residing within its borders, without distinction or preference on account of race, color, caste, or sex.

This legal protection was commendable particularly since many states had enacted laws requiring racial segregation in public and private schools. While the constitution encouraged anti-discrimination in education, other Blacks were motivated to contribute to the state's economic development.

Another prominent example of an early Black Washington patron was George Washington who was born in 1817 to an English white mother and a slave father in Frederick County, Virginia. After adoption by a white family, he moved with them to Missouri. After a special law of the Missouri Legislature gave him all the rights of whites except holding office, he hoped to seek his fortune free of race restrictions. The nearby state of Illinois denied him permission to open a distillery. In March 1840, Washington and his foster parents migrated to Oregon and settled in the Chehalis Valley. He established a squatter claim in this area and after four years, a white friend sold Washington the claim Washington originally developed. (This process was necessary since Oregon law forbade direct Black ownership of land.)

By 1872, the prosperous Washington decided to establish a town called Centerville (later changed to Centralia) halfway between the Columbia River and Puget Sound. He was encouraged to do this when the Northern Pacific Railway decided to build across his land. Lots were sold by Washington for five dollars each if a house was erected worth $100.00. He donated money to build churches, a cemetery and funds for the destitute in the town. During the panic of 1893, he kept the faith by providing food, jobs and largely saving the town from ultimate destruction.

Tragically, he died in 1905 as the result of being thrown from his horse and buggy. His funeral and burial occurred in a church and cemetery he had given to the town. The city's main park still bears his name.

While the Bushes and Washingtons produced exceptional triumphs in the early history of the state, other Blacks sought out other

Continued on next page
areas of Puget Sound particularly after the great Yukon gold strikes in the 1890s. While some Blacks made it to Alaska, others stopped in the Seattle area. By 1900, 6000 blacks resided in the state with many in the Puget Sound working as doctors, lawyers, printers, bakers, cooks, masons, hotel operators and farmers. Blacks operated restaurants or established newspapers. For example, Horace Roscoe Cayton established the *The Republican*. Others ventured in the political and legal arenas. John T Gayton, following his arrival in 1889 as a servant, served as a deputy sheriff in 1889 and federal court librarian from 1933 to 1953. Edward Hawkins was the first Black attorney in 1890 and the first to pass the Washington bar exam.

These successes created the impression that Washington was a state with a generally positive attitude towards African-Americans. Yet, subtle and covert racial discrimination existed that made life difficult for Blacks and created the travail mentioned at the beginning.

Seattle Black historian Esther Hall Mumford has captured the stories of eight Black Washingtonians who lived in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Called *Seven Stars and Orion. Reflections of the Past*, these narratives describe Washington as a place in which emigrating Blacks experienced segregated housing, limited job opportunities at white businesses and overt discrimination in public accommodations.

Black migrants prior to World War Two found opportunities limited but enough to survive. World War Two changed the social and economic ambience for the Afro-American.

In 1940, the War Manpower Commission and the Civil Service Commission encouraged workers to migrate to the Pacific Northwest to work in the region’s rapidly expanding defense industries. At Boeing Aircraft Company’s plants, 40,000 employees were used to build B-17 bombers and other aircraft. Black military personnel were assigned to installations near Spokane, Walla Walla, Moses Lake and Tacoma.

Other Blacks recruited to work in the Tri-Cities area including Pasco were tolerated so as to help build the Hanford plutonium plant. However, the Hanford housing camps were racially segregated and remained so until the plant was finished. Blacks remaining in the area were subsequently exposed to a vicious form of harassment by local police who regularly picked up Blacks for unspecified "investigation." Pasco also permitted segregated public transportation as late as 1943.

Similar racial discrimination in housing and public accommodations was found in Walla Walla, Bremerton, Vancouver and Moses Lake. Even Spokane segregated Blacks in the Coplen Park Housing Project and by 1945, Blacks were denied purchases of private housing not "open to Negroes unless reviewed by the Spokane Realty Board." As for the rest of Spokane environment, one scholar remarked that the city in the 1940-1950 decade "exhibited the same patterns of racial discrimination that existed throughout the nation during the post-World War Two period."

Not all of Washington’s contemporary African-American history is so grim. In 1949, the state legislature enacted a series of public accommodations, anti-discrimination and fair employment laws long before passage of similar federal laws in the 1960’s. Previously, the state had passed in 1909 a law to prohibit use of masks by terrorist groups such as the Ku Klux Klan. It also approved a civil rights law (often ignored) which seemed comprehensive and clear: "every person who shall deny to any other person because of race, creed, or color the full employment of the accommodations, advantages, facilities or privileges of any place or public resort, accommodations, assemblage or amusement, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor."

Other successes in the state include its first Black mayor, William Craven of Roslyn who served from 1976 to 1980. Joseph Jackson of Pasco and James Chase of Spokane also served as mayors of their communities. In 1988, state senator George Fleming became the first black to run as the Democratic nominee for lieutenant governor though unsuccessful, his candidacy served to as an important milestone for black elected officials.

Black churches also contributed to African-American success. Seattle’s First African Methodist Episcopal Church (1886) and neighboring Mt. Zion Baptist Church (1890) served not only as religious centers but as foci of community development. These and other Black organizations continue to provide social, economic and even political leadership today.

In the cultural domain, musicians and composers Quincy Jones and the late Jimi Hendrix have roots in the Puget Sound. Countless other professionals, scholars and craftsmen and women of color trace their origins to the urban areas of Seattle, Tacoma, Spokane, Yakima, Pasco as well as smaller Washington towns.

In sum, the African-American experience in Washington has not been the ideal. Racism co-existed with a tolerance for persons of color. Yet, African-Americans in the Evergreen state have discovered that their destiny rests in their hands. It is their collective task to protect the triumphs of the ancestors and prevent the resurrection of past travails.

**Selected Biography**

The material listed below should not be considered the definitive works on Black life in Washington state. There are numerous unpublished master’s theses and doctoral dissertations at the University of Washington, Washington State University and others that have analyzed the state’s Black communities. The Washington State Division of Archives and Records Management and most state universities have invaluable collections of primary and secondary source materials on Black life that remain largely untapped.

Reports and pamphlets issued by civic organizations such as the branches of the National Urban League and NAACP are also excellent sources of historical information and contemporary data.


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The Black Education Program now awards five scholarships and intern positions for African American students who enroll at Eastern. These awards are in addition to other University wide scholarships which are open to all students. All awards are competitive.

1. **Two EWU Presidential Scholarships**: These awards are worth $1700.00 each per annum and are reserved for entering freshmen.

2. **Two BEP Internships**: Internships are designed for highly motivated African American students (freshmen to seniors) who work in the BEP as peer counselors, recruiters, BSU organizers or as research assistants. Internship covers tuition every quarter that recipient remains in the program.

3. **One Marjorie Boyd Wellington Academic Excellence Award**: Award is given annually to the African American Student with the highest GPA at Eastern. As a community based award, amount is determined by the volume of contributions the Program receives from the community. The winner is announced at the BEP annual Black History Month Banquet in Spokane. Application for all the above is made through the Black Education Program.

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**Community Briefs**

**African-American Organizations/Associations in the Spokane-Cheney Area**

- **African American Forum**
  - Mr. Edward Thomas, President
  - P.O. Box 2183
  - Spokane, Wa 99201

- **Black Education Association**
  - Mr. Wallace Williams, President
  - E. 1710 61st
  - Spokane, Wa 99223

- **Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.**
  - Mrs. Maxine Hardin, President
  - P.O. Box 3951
  - Spokane, Wa 99220

- **Links Inc.**
  - Mrs. Dorothy Webster, President
  - Spokane Falls Community College
  - W 3410 Ft. George Wright Dr
  - Spokane, Wa 99204

- **National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)**
  - Mr. Carl Boston, President
  - S. 724 Pittsburg
  - Spokane, Wa 99202

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**PRINCE HALL MASONS**

- Inland Consistory No 78 AASR
- Inland Empire Lodge No 3.
- Perfect Ashler Lodge No 40
- Sakkara Temple No 96, O. E. A.
- O. N. M. S.
- Spokane Chapter No 3, O. E. S.
- Shiliah Chapter No 18, O. E. S.

Address for all the affiliations
- E. 2702 Fifth Ave
- Spokane WA 99220

**SERVICE CENTERS**

- **East Central Community Center**
  - Mr. Ivan Bush, Director
  - 500 East Stone
  - Spokane WA 99202

- **Martin Luther King Memorial Center**
  - Ms. Annette Wilkerson, Director
  - S. 845 Sherman
  - Spokane WA 99202

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