

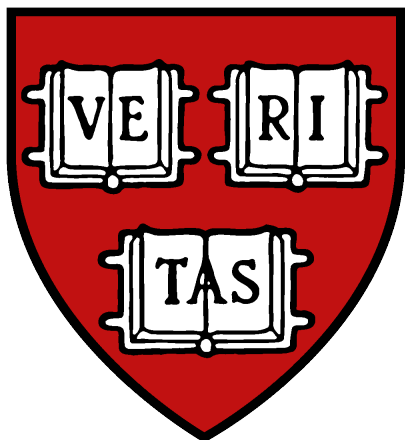
Harvard University

DEPARTMENT OF AFRICAN AND AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES

CENTER FOR AFRICAN STUDIES

**HUTCHINS CENTER FOR AFRICAN AND
AFRICAN AMERICAN RESEARCH**

CLASS OF 2021



DEPARTMENTAL AWARD CEREMONY & GRADUATION PARTY

**WEDNESDAY, MAY 26, 2021
4:00 P.M. (EASTERN)**

**"BARKER CENTER, THOMPSON ROOM"
VIRTUAL VIA ZOOM**

2021 Award Ceremony Program

▶ Welcome and Introduction

Tommie Shelby, Department Chair

▶ "Lift Every Voice and Sing" - Ray Charles

▶ Announcement of Prizes and Awards

Glenda Carpio, Director of Undergraduate Studies

John Mugane, Director of the African Language Program

▶ Recognition of Graduating Seniors

Glenda Carpio, Director of Undergraduate Studies

▶ "The Imagineers" - Crys Matthews

▶ Student Reflections

▶ Closing

Tommie Shelby, Department Chair

PHILIPPE WAMBA SUMMER RESEARCH TRAVEL GRANT

Philippe Wamba Summer Research Travel Grant

Outstanding academic performance

This grant was established in 2008 by Danny Rimer in memory of Philippe Wamba. This summer travel award is intended to support a Harvard undergraduate or graduate student carrying out field work or research in Africa. Preference is given to the student who most exemplifies the outstanding academic performance of Philippe Wamba. A 1993 graduate of Harvard College, Philippe Wamba, in his short life, had a profound impact on his fellow students and the faculty of the African and African American Studies Department. Following his graduation, he soon returned to Harvard University where he became the Editor-in-Chief of *Africana.com*.

Chrystel Oloukoi, African and African American Studies

Proposed: *Exhaustion: A Political Economy of Nightlife in Lagos since the 1920s*

Emmanuel Osayande, African and African American Studies

Proposed: *“Being Strategic?: Human Rights Activists and State Power in Urban Nigeria.”*

THESIS PRIZES

Kwame Anthony Appiah Prize

Most outstanding thesis relating to the African diaspora

This prize was established in 2005 by Professor Henry Louis Gates, Jr., and Henry Finder. The Kwame Anthony Appiah Prize is named for our distinguished colleague who served the Department from 1991-2002. Anthony Appiah was the Laurance S. Rockefeller University Professor of Philosophy at Princeton University, before moving to New York University in 2014. He currently holds an appointment at NYU's Department of Philosophy and NYU's School of Law. The premier philosopher in African and African American Studies, Professor Appiah also provided kind guidance to our students in his roles as Head Tutor and Director of Graduate Studies. This prize honors the graduating seniors who have written outstanding theses relating to the African diaspora.

Emily Orr, History and Literature

Thesis title: *Marriage, Money, and the Specter of Miscegenation: Whiteness as Inheritance in 1930's American*

Ruva Chigwedere, Theater, Dance & Media and History and Literature

Thesis title: *For Daughters of Ezili; or How to Be a Black Girl and Find Love and Survive 101.*

Dorothy Hicks Lee Prize

Most outstanding thesis concerning African or African American literature

Established in 1995 by her daughter and son, this prize honors Dorothy Hicks Lee by bringing attention to her commitment to cross-cultural studies and to her gift for making students understand the ways in which literature is relevant to their lives. She was the first African American and the first woman to earn a Doctorate from the Comparative Literature Department of Harvard University. A monetary prize will be awarded for the outstanding senior theses submitted on the topic of African American literature.

Devonne Pitts, Theater, Dance & Media and History and Literature

Thesis title: *"Everworld"*

Kathryn Ann Huggins Prize

Most outstanding thesis relating to African American life, history, or culture

This prize was established in 1987 by Kathryn Huggins's brother, the late Professor Nathan I. Huggins, W. E. B. Du Bois Professor of History and of Afro-American Studies, to remember Kathryn by bringing attention to the values she held most dear: personal commitment and dedication to studying humanism through the study of other peoples and cultures, and respect for the marginalized and dispossessed. A monetary prize is awarded to the seniors who have written outstanding theses on a topic relating to African American life, history, or culture.

Keturah Jeanene Gadson, Sociology and African and African American Studies

Thesis title: *"At What a Cost!:" A Mixed Methods Analysis of the Racial Ideas Black Students Learned from Their U.S. High Schools*

Yuke Zheng, Computer Science and History of Art & Architecture

Thesis title: *The Liminal Space Between Art and Data: Du Bois's Data Graphics as Disciplinary Misfits*

Philippe Wamba Prize

Best senior thesis in African Studies

A 1993 graduate of Harvard College, Philippe Wamba, in his short life, had a profound impact on his fellow students and the faculty of the African and African American Studies Department. Following his graduation, he soon returned to Harvard University where he became the Editor-in-Chief of *Africana.com*. Known for his remarkable personality as well as his outstanding intellectual capability, Philippe Wamba's life is celebrated through this prize honoring the best senior theses in African Studies. A monetary prize will be awarded.

Ruva Chigwedere, Theater, Dance & Media and History and Literature

Thesis title: *For Daughters of Ezili; or How to Be a Black Girl and Find Love and Survive 101.*

Ephraim Isaac Prize for Excellence in African Studies

Exceptional capability in African Languages

Inaugurated in academic year 1999–2000, the prize is named in honor of Ephraim Isaac, Director of the Institute of Semitic Studies, Princeton, New Jersey, and Visiting Professor of Religion and African American Studies at Princeton University. As the first faculty appointment in Harvard University's fledgling Department of Afro-American Studies in 1969, Professor Isaac played an important role in the early history of the Department. Deeply committed to this emerging field of scholarship, Isaac continued as a faculty member until 1977 and taught almost half of the students enrolled in the program during that time. During his tenure at Harvard (1969–1977), Professor Isaac was voted the best teacher each year by the students in the Department of Afro-American Studies. The Ephraim Isaac Prize for Excellence in African Languages is awarded annually to a graduating senior who shows exceptional capability in African Languages.

Serin Baek, Chemical and Physical Biology

Language: Swahili

DEPARTMENT AWARDS & ACADEMIC GRANTS

W. E. B. Du Bois Award

Highest Grade Point Average

Established in 2003, the Du Bois Prize is given to the graduating senior in African Studies with the highest Grade Point Average. The first African American to be awarded a Ph.D. from Harvard University (1895), Du Bois attended the first Pan-African Congress (1900) in London and was elected Secretary of the organization. By 1962, Du Bois's dedication to Africa culminated in his decision to become a citizen of Ghana. This award celebrates the connection between Du Bois and the African Continent.

Alden Fossett, History of Art & Architecture and African and African American Studies

Thesis title: *Rotimi Fani-Kayode's (No-Place): A Spiritual Offering for an Empty World*

Alain Locke Prize

Most outstanding academic scholar

This prize, established in 1993 by Professor Henry Louis Gates, Jr., honors Alain LeRoy Locke, a member of the Harvard Class of 1908. He completed his undergraduate requirements in three years, graduating magna cum laude, and was the third African American recipient of a Harvard Ph.D. Locke is best known for his writing on literature and art and is referred to by some as the "godfather of the Harlem Renaissance." A monetary prize is awarded to the most outstanding academic scholar among the graduating African American Studies Track concentrators.

Makeila Jamison, Social Studies and African and African American Studies

Thesis title: *Fuck the Police: Commonwealth v. Knox and the Decontextualization of Rap in Criminal Trials*

Serena Shah, Classics and African and African American Studies

Thesis title: *To Revive a World and Rebuild a Word: Classical Slave Names and Their Afterlives in the Antebellum U.S. South*

Clifton Lincoln and Irene Bias West Prize

Thesis on African American topic in addition to academic performance

This monetary award is to honor an African and African American Studies Senior who has displayed the best overall performance (as indicated by thesis and GPA) in the concentration.

Keturah Jeanene Gadson, Sociology and African and African American Studies

Thesis title: *"At What a Cost!:" A Mixed Methods Analysis of the Racial Ideas Black Students Learned from Their U.S. High Schools*

William Plummer French Prize

Best Personal Library focusing on some aspect of African or African American Culture and History

Established in 1997, this prize is in memory of William Plummer French who passed away on January 14, 1997. An avid bibliophile, French worked at the University Place Book Shop in New York City, which specialized in African American books. Self-educated through the books in the store, French became known to collectors, scholars, librarians, and fellow dealers as the most sophisticated and knowledgeable bibliographer of African Americana. This book prize is awarded to an undergraduate student from any academic department who has collected the best personal library focusing on some aspect of African or African American culture and history. For this prize, students must submit a bibliography of their African and/or African American library collection focusing on culture and history. This collection may include books and journals as well as film, music, and other media.

Maxwell Gillmer, African and African American Studies

Elizabeth Maguire Memorial Prize

Excellence in the study of African and African American Literature

The family and friends of Elizabeth Maguire established the Elizabeth Maguire Memorial Prize to recognize excellence in the study of African and African American literature.

Serena Shah, Classics and African and African American Studies

Thesis title: *To Revive a World and Rebuild a Word: Classical Slave Names and Their Afterlives in the Antebellum U.S. South*

Reverend Peter J. Gomes Prize in Religion and Ethnicity

Social responsibility through public service and potential for distinguished contributions to the public good

This prize is named for the Reverend Dr. Peter John Gomes, Plummer Professor of Christian Morals and Pusey Minister in the Memorial Church, to honor the work and commitment he made to Religious Studies, to the study of ethnicity and diversity, and to African and African American Studies. Established in 1995 as a celebration of Gomes's twenty-fifth year of service to Harvard University, this prize is awarded annually to the Harvard College senior who has demonstrated social responsibility through public service and potential for distinguished contributions to the public good.

Elijah Christopher DeVaughn Jr., History and Literature

Jonathan M. Levin Prize for Teaching & Social Justice

Most promising undergraduate student who intends to become a public school teacher

This award, established by Martin D. Payson, Quincy Jones, and Professor Henry Louis Gates, Jr., honors Jonathan M. Levin, a compassionate and dedicated man committed to teaching as a means of combating the social injustices that exist in American society. The Department awards this prize in two installments to the most promising undergraduate student who intends to become a public school teacher. The first monetary installment will be awarded at graduation and the remaining funds will be awarded upon the successful completion of two years of public-school teaching. The recipient will be asked to write an essay on their experiences teaching in the public schools and submit this to the Department before they can accept the second installment.

Meaghan Townsend, English

Maurice Sedwell Ltd. Prize

Undergraduate who best exemplifies the values of the Department

The Maurice Sedwell Ltd. Prize was inaugurated in 2003 to honor an undergraduate in the Department of African and African American Studies who best exemplifies the department's values. Andrew Ramroop OBE is an entrepreneur whose company, Maurice Sedwell Bespoke, 19 Savile Row, London, UK, specializes in hand-cut, hand-made, and hand-tailored suits to the highest standard attainable. An individually designed suit is given to the student winning this award. The value of the prize is \$7,000.

Keturah Jeanene Gadson, Sociology and African and African American Studies

Thesis title: *"At What a Cost!:" A Mixed Methods Analysis of the Racial Ideas Black Students Learned from Their U.S. High Schools*

2021 GRADUATES

AFRICAN & AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES GRADUATING SENIORS

Jacob Ali-Wertheimer
Ciana Biasi-Smiley
Jalen Daniels
Alden Fossett
Keturah Jeanene Gadson
Samantha Gamble
Maxwell Gillmer
Makeila Jamison
Chloe Lemmel-Hay
Romina Lilollari
Justin McMahan
Serena Shah
Gabriel Wadford
Mirielle Wright

SECONDARY FIELD GRADUATES AFRICAN STUDIES

Tanisha Mugwimi
Rediet Alemu

**SECONDARY FIELD GRADUATES
AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES**

Joshua Walton
Ifeoma Okoli
Peyton Dunham
T'Ajmal Hogue
Mari Jones
Sarah Wexner
Jadyn Bush
Camryn Turner
Isra Hamdi
Kendall Laws
Shayla Leblanc
Jasmyne McCoy
EJay DeVaughn
Festus Ojo

AFRICAN LANGUAGE CITATIONS

Comfort Abuwa (Igbo)
Serin Baek (Swahili)
Ifeoma Okoli (Igbo)
Derek Onserio (Swahili)
Ifeoma White-Thrope (Igbo)

Department of African and African American Studies
Faculty and Staff

Chair & Faculty Directors

Tommie Shelby, Caldwell Titcomb Professor of African and African American Studies and of Philosophy (*Department Chair*)

Alejandro de la Fuente, Robert Woods Bliss Professor of Latin American History and Economics; Professor of African and African American Studies and of History; Director, Afro-Latin American Research Institute, Hutchins Center for African and African American Research at Harvard University (*Director of Graduate Studies*)

Glenda R. Carpio, Professor of English and of African and African American Studies (*Director of Undergraduate Studies*)

John M. Mugane, Professor of the Practice of African Languages and Cultures (*Director of the African Language Program*)

Department of African and African American Studies
Faculty and Staff

Faculty

Daniel Agbibo, Assistant Professor of African and African American Studies

Emmanuel K. Akyeampong, Ellen Gurney Professor of History and Professor of African and African American Studies, Oppenheimer Faculty Director of the Harvard University Center for African Studies

Ali S. Asani, Professor of Indo-Muslim and Islamic Religion and Cultures

Robin M. Bernstein, Dillon Professor of American History and Professor of African and African American Studies and of Studies of Women, Gender, and Sexuality

Suzanne P. Blier, Allen Whitehill Clowes Professor of Fine Arts and Professor of African and African American Studies

Lawrence D. Bobo, Dean of Social Science and W. E. B. Du Bois Professor of the Social Sciences

Vincent Brown, Charles Warren Professor of American History and Professor of African and African American Studies

Glenda R. Carpio, Professor of English and of African and African American Studies

Bruno Carvalho, Professor of Romance Languages and Literatures (Portuguese) and African and African American Studies

Sidney Chalhoub, Professor of History and of African and African American Studies

Jean Comaroff, Alfred North Whitehead Professor of African and African American Studies and of Anthropology

John Comaroff, Hugh K. Foster Professor of African and African American Studies and of Anthropology

Alejandro de la Fuente, Robert Woods Bliss Professor of Latin American History and Economics; Professor of African and African American Studies and of History; Director, Afro-Latin American Research Institute, Hutchins Center for African and African American Research at Harvard University (*Director of Graduate Studies*)

Caroline M. Elkins, Professor of History and of African and African American Studies

Henry Louis Gates, Jr., Alphonse Fletcher, Jr. University Professor, Director of the Hutchins Center for African and African American Research

Claudine Gay, Ederley Family Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences and Wilbur A. Cowett Professor of Government and of African and African American Studies

Evelynn M. Hammonds, Barbara Gutmann Rosenkrantz Professor of the History of Science and Professor of African and African American Studies

Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, Victor S. Thomas Professor of History and of African and African American Studies

Jennifer L. Hochschild, Henry LaBarre Jayne Professor of Government and Professor of African and African American Studies

Vijay Iyer, Franklin D. and Florence Rosenblatt Professor of the Arts

Walter Johnson, Winthrop Professor of History and Professor of African and African American Studies

Ousmane Kane, Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Professor of Contemporary Islamic Religion and Society and Professor of African and African American Studies

Jamaica Kincaid, Professor of African and African American Studies in Residence

Michèle Lamont, Robert I. Goldman Professor of European Studies, Professor of Sociology and of African and African American Studies

Sarah Lewis, Assistant Professor of History of Art and Architecture and of African and African American Studies

Françoise Lionnet, Professor of Romance Languages and Literatures (French) and of African and African American Studies in Residence

Jesse McCarthy, Assistant Professor of English and of African and African American Studies

George Paul Meiu, John and Ruth Hazel Associate Professor of the Social Sciences in the Department of Anthropology and the Department of African and African American Studies

Ingrid Monson, Quincy Jones Professor of African-American Music, supported by the Time Warner Endowment, and Professor of African and African American Studies

Marcyliena Morgan, Ernest E. Monrad Professor of the Social Sciences, Director of the HipHop Archive and Research Institute

John M. Mugane, Professor of the Practice of African Languages and Cultures (*Director of the African Language Program*)

Jacob Olupona, Professor of African and African American Studies and Professor of African Religious Traditions

Robert F. Reid-Pharr, Professor of Studies of Women, Gender, and Sexuality and of African and African American Studies

Tommie Shelby, Caldwell Titcomb Professor of African and African American Studies and of Philosophy (*Department Chair*)

Kay Kaufman Shelemay, G. Gordon Watts Professor of Music and of African and African American Studies

James Sidanius, John Lindsley Professor of Psychology and of African and African American Studies

Doris Sommer, Ira Jewell Williams, Jr. Professor of Romance Languages and Literatures and of African and African American Studies

John Stauffer, Sumner R. and Marshall S. Kates Professor of English and of African and African American Studies

Brandon Terry, Assistant Professor of African and African American Studies and of Social Studies

Cornel R. West, Professor of the Practice of Public Philosophy and of African and African American Studies

David R. Williams, Florence Sprague Norman and Laura Smart Norman Professor of Public Health and Professor of African and African American Studies

Affiliates of the Department of African and African American Studies

Jarvis R. Givens, Assistant Professor on Education; Suzanne Young Murray Assistant Professor at the Radcliffe Institute

Ellis P. Monk, Assistant Professor of Sociology

Braxton Shelley, Stanley A. Marks and William H. Marks Assistant Professor at the Radcliffe Institute; Assistant Professor of Music in the Harvard Faculty of Arts and Sciences

Todne Thomas, Assistant Professor of African American Religions (HDS); Suzanne Young Murray Assistant Professor (Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study)

Marlous van Waijenburg, Assistant Professor in the Business, Government, and International Economy Unit (Harvard Business School)

Lecturers & College Fellows

Linda Chavers, Lecturer, African and African American Studies, Allston Burr Resident Dean, Winthrop House

Jacqueline Olga Cooke-Rivers, Lecturer, African and African American Studies

Bojana Coulibaly, College Fellow, African and African American Studies

Carla Denny Martin, Lecturer, African and African American Studies

Preceptors

Francis Akutey-Baffoe, African Language Program Preceptor

Taiwo Ehineni, African Language Program Preceptor

Staff

Giovanna Micconi, Director of Administration and Operations

Kriti Bajracharya, Financial Associate I and Office Coordinator

Joey M. Francoeur-Krzyzek, Coordinator of Academic Affairs & Communications

Feven Girmay, African Language Program Manager

Faton Limani, Graduate and Undergraduate Studies Coordinator

Alma Medina, Faculty Assistant II

Please use this form to submit your contribution to the Department of African and African American Studies for undergraduate and graduate student support and other uses. You may also designate the Department of African and African American Studies when giving to the Harvard Campaign or the Graduate School's Annual Fund.

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\$25 \$50 \$100 \$150 \$200 Other

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We would like to hear from you. Please email your updates to aaas_alum@fas.harvard.edu.

Congratulations to the Class of 2021!



HARVARD UNIVERSITY
CENTER FOR AFRICAN STUDIES



Hutchins Center
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African American
Research