

John Kalubi: Diaspora Man By Michael Jones

Educator Associate Professor John Kalubi is a real Diaspora man. The African Diaspora pertains to African descended people and their impact throughout the world. Kalubi teaches literature from the African Diaspora, courses on African and African American history and intellectual thought, and Swahili.

Kalubi had an interesting childhood growing up in Zambia. As he explains, “my childhood was a little bit different from most people’s because my parents were immigrants to Zambia. My grandfather wanted them to be tied to the culture of his background. So actually my family lived in two countries and two cultures at the same time.”

Being part of two cultures in Africa meant learning several languages. There are many local languages in use in Zambia, but English is the common language. Zambia also has two major native languages, Bemba and Njanja.

Kalubi believes that education is more prized by Africans in Africa than it is by Americans. “In Africa, education is the only thing that most people have access to that can catapult them to a better life. You use your mind to work very hard, you get a degree, and with the degree you’ll definitely be better off than most people. In poor countries, education is the only way out of poverty... People in Africa say that education is a matter of life and death.”

Sitting back in his chair to think for a moment and then laughing, Kalubi goes on, “In America, you can go the educational track or the business track, or you can just chill and then work at McDonalds from time to time and then after six months you start collecting unemployment. People just have a way of living their lives here.”

It was different where Kalubi grew up. “The area that we come from is very depressed; there’s nothing there, there’s a lake and people just fish. The Europeans disrupted the areas where there was anything to be taken, so there’s an area called the copper-belt where the bigger cities are because there’s copper and cobalt there and the copper is mined, but the area that we come from up in the north of the country has nothing.”

Kalubi’s father was a school principal in the 1960s, 70s and 80s. “My father was of a high class, since in Africa, being a teacher was a very honorable job. My father had a big house, so we lived with extended family: my grandfather and my cousins lived there, so we had close to 20 people living in our house most of the time. My life was eventful.” He goes on, “The most important thing was school of course; all these other things were second. We had to do well in school by any means necessary; we had to—first to honor the family, to honor the parents and also to do well in life...

there was no fooling around, you have to graduate and graduate with the highest grades. You come back from school, you sit down, homework. Most of my siblings have PhDs. Because of that and we had to do things very well as quickly as possible so that we didn’t find ourselves later depending on our parents.”

Talented in math and physics, Kalubi concentrated on these subjects when he first went to college. Yet he had to make the decision of changing his major to education in order to graduate quickly and to make sure that his seven siblings stayed in the city to attend school instead of leaving to go to the countryside at the retirement of his father. After graduating in two years, he got a job as a teacher. According to the custom in Zambia, the government provided Kalubi with a house, and he kept his siblings in the house with him.

Because Kalubi’s education degree included French, he received a scholarship from the French government for continued studies there. The same year he got his degree from the University of Sorbonne, he met the then-director of UC’s Romance Languages department, Prof. Winter. Winter put Kalubi’s name on his list of

potential PhD students. Winter died a few months later, but the new director found him. “Prof. Seigneuret found a note that Winter had written about me, so he contacted me and sent a telegram.” Two weeks after communicating with Seigneuret in Italy, Kalubi received a scholarship from UC.

Upon Kalubi’s graduation, Seigneuret recommended that Kalubi cast a wide net and explore other universities and cities for better opportunities and a higher salary. Yet Kalubi didn’t leave UC because he didn’t want it to affect his family. He’s been here in Cincinnati for over 25 years with his wife and three children now.

Kalubi offers sage advice on the importance of learning about Africa: “For one, most students in the United States don’t know about Africa, because Africa isn’t studied in school a lot. It’s my belief that Africa should be in the center of study in the United States because the largest minority so far is of African descent... Two, Africa is very crucial to America, not only in that Africa gave its sons and daughters to the United States to come and work and build up a very vibrant and robust economy, but Americans need to understand Africa in order to continue building economically, politically, and in other ways as Africa is now the final economic frontier to explore... It’s very profitable for students who are educated in the United States to understand the business potential... to understand that Africa will not always be the continent of the wretched, the diseased, the famined... Americans, especially the educated, need to understand that Africa could be one day the little grain of salt that can tip the scale!”



Educator Associate Professor John Kalubi



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National Council for Black Studies Moves Headquarters to UC

The premier black studies organization in the world is now based out of the Department of Africana Studies in UC’s McMicken College of Arts and Sciences. By Kim Burdett

This past summer, the National Council for Black Studies moved its headquarters to the Department of Africana Studies and made the University of Cincinnati its new home.

The move is thanks in part to rallying by NCBS vice president and Africana studies department head Terry Kershaw.

“They were looking to find a new headquarters and also find a place that is favorable to the forefront of the field. They saw what we were doing here at UC—hosting a conference, developing a graduate program, doing some recent new hiring—and they thought it was the best place to host the national office,” Kershaw says.

Established in 1975, NCBS is the leading organization of black studies professionals in the world and is the home of the International Journal of Africana Studies. The organization has a commitment to put theory into practice, with a guiding philosophy that education should engender both academic excellence and social responsibility.



These themes mirror the scholar-activist approach Kershaw has been putting in place at UC since his arrival in 2009. With faculty focusing on community outreach, partnering with the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center and much more, Kershaw hopes moving NCBS to Cincinnati will give UC and the city an elevated status.

“It’ll bring prestige and status to UC,” he says. “And it’ll really help the city, as they use their organization’s resources to improve life chances and life experiences of the people of Cincinnati.”

McMicken College of Arts & Sciences Dean Valerie Hardcastle agrees, saying the move will “only increase our national

prominence and will solidify our place as a national center for Africana Studies.”

To learn more about the National Council for Black Studies, visit their website at <http://ncbsonline.org/>.

UC | SANKOFA

November 2011

A publication for the alumni and friends of the Department of Africana Studies.

Professor Charles E. Jones: Taking Us Higher

Professor Charles E. Jones joins the Department of Africana Studies this fall 2011 as scholar, pedagogue, mentor, community advocate and institutional builder.

Professor Jones’ iconic presence has already begun enriching the Department of Africana Studies, McMicken College and UC. During the past academic year, he presented a colloquium on the field and lectured on the Black Panther Party. His role as an institution builder began at Old Dominion University, where he taught from 1983 to 1994. There, Jones, a professor in political science as well as the Director of the Institute for the Study of Minority Issues, secured a grant to develop a 15-hour minor in African American Studies. With curriculum development, outreach components and faculty workshops, Professor Jones laid a foundation for Old Dominion University’s current bachelor’s degree in African American studies. In 1994, a career move led the professor to Georgia State, where he was appointed founding chair of the Department of African-American Studies. During his 17-year tenure, he developed an extensive undergraduate curriculum which boasts 47 courses. Also while at Georgia State, Professor Jones hired eight faculty members, six of them tenured. Georgia State is now one of four universities in the South to have a master’s program in Africana studies. Equally impressive is that 30% of students graduating from the African American studies undergraduate program continue on to graduate school.

Jones’ institution building has extended beyond the walls of his respective universities. While at GSU, Jones also became active in rebuilding the National Council for Black Studies (NCBS), an organization in which he has been active since 1999. From 2002 to 2006, Jones was vice-president of NCBS, followed by four years as president from 2006 to 2010. He serves on multiple boards of scholarly journals in the field and is the current associate editor of the International Journal of Africana Studies, which is the official journal of the National Council for Black Studies.



Professor Charles Jones

In 2007, Jones was awarded a prestigious “Project Leadership and Organizational Management in African American Studies” grant from the Ford Foundation, for which he was also principal investigator. This \$279,000 multi-approach grant provided travel funds for PhD students, supported related research in the field of gender and sexuality, and offered faculty development and administrative workshops for scholars in the field.

Here at the University of Cincinnati, Jones will be leading us to higher (educational) ground. He brings a wealth of administrative and leadership experience. Moreover, he has an extensive professional network which will undoubtedly benefit the Department of Africana Studies as well as the UC community at large. In his words, he will be “stepping down” from full-time administration, but it appears he is actually pioneering a supporting path.

Having led successful minor, BA and master’s initiatives in the past, Jones’ position here will include developing and advising the graduate/PhD program in Africana studies. He is also highly motivated to step away from full-time administration to spend more time again teaching, mentoring junior faculty, being involved in the community, as well as publishing his many research projects.

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From the Head



Terry Kershaw

Dear Africana alumni and friends,

This year has been our department's proudest yet as we continue to develop new opportunities for our students, grow our faculty, and establish new partnerships with the community.

The prize we are focused on this academic year is the development of a MA and PhD program and we are well on our way. At this point we are moving smoothly through the college process. We are trying to have the program ready by 2012-13 at the earliest and 2013-14 at the latest. We have also been granted another position for 2012-13 with an emphasis on health policy.

In our 2011 newsletter you will have a chance to read about the many ways that we as a department have been improving the lives of our students and community. The beautiful Africana art now displayed in the Africana Studies wing of French Hall and in our new Africana Studies conference room are an outward sign of the vision. I invite you to read, visit and get involved.

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Taking Us Higher (continued)

A perusal of his CV tells the story of why he would make this move. Jones is the recipient of numerous awards in black studies, teaching, and community service. In light of his full-time administrative duties, he has an impressive publishing record. He has authored numerous articles on African American legislative participation, from the Congressional Black Caucus to the Parliamentary Black Caucus of Great Britain. He has also laid important groundwork on furthering the understanding of black success in majority white districts refining the theoretical constructs of "de-racialization." Jones is generally regarded as the foremost scholar on the Black Panther Party and has published a seminal text titled "The Black Panther Party Reconsidered." A notable feature of his publishing portfolio is his willingness to co-author with junior faculty and former students.

At Georgia State University, Jones' department sponsored a number of outreach programs, including lecturing and coursework at a local prison and service learning. In the course "Introduction to African-American Studies" at GSU, Jones developed a 15-hour service learning requirement. During his tenure there, his students donated over 3,500 hours of service to the Atlanta metropolitan area. Jones also served on several community boards. One program he was particularly passionate about is Aid to Children of Imprisoned Mothers. It is no wonder that the award of which he is most proud—of many proud achievements—is his Malcolm X Self-Determination Award for grassroots community support.

With fewer administrative responsibilities at UC, he is looking forward to completing an important scholarly project: an organizational history of the Black Panther Party titled "Right on!: A Political History of the Black Panther Panthers, 1966 to 1982." This text will be the culmination of years of extensive research including numerous interviews with members of the Black Panther Party (over 80 altogether).

Of his move here, Jones expresses that he is, "very excited to work with outstanding faculty under the leadership of Terry Kershaw, a longtime colleague and friend ... I share his drive to make it the best Africana studies department in the country and I am very excited to participate in the endeavor. I look forward to it as the last leg of my professional marathon." Jones is ecstatic about contributing to developing a PhD program in Africana Studies at UC. Moreover, Jones would like to help strengthen the nexus between UC and the community. He would like to raise the profile of the department in the larger Cincinnati community, which coincides with the concept of social responsibility in Africana studies.

In his (not-so!) infinite spare time, Jones is an avid collector and fan of the Negro Leagues. He is particularly interested in Rube Foster, who founded the Negro Leagues in 1920 and the East-West All-Stars, a major social event of the African American community during that time. Appropriately, Cincinnati hosted two different Negro League teams over its years. Perhaps Jones will be able to pursue additional research on Rube Foster, the Cincinnati Cuban Stars, and the great African American pastime.

Alumna Marsha Jenkins: Taking a Stand for Cultural Literacy and Community

By Cheli Reutter

For Marsha Jenkins, it really began with the confessions of a preschool child.

According to Jenkins, when she got her Africana studies degree in 2005, she was doing it for her own edification. Now it's all about the community, the kids and the future.

Jenkins, who graduated with a degree in Africana Studies in 2005, confesses, "When Professor Takougang asked me at my exit interview what I was going to do for the community with my degree, I was thinking 'I'm not going to do anything with it. This degree is for me.' But that all definitely changed."

The coursework and mentor-mentee relationships Jenkins built were to form the basis for future community involvement, both during her second bachelor's and since.

As she explains, "Africana Studies has helped me navigate where I want to go ... it has helped me pinpoint where my future focus lies as an English literature major."

The pivotal moment came when Jenkins was spending time at home with her young children. "When my son was little, we were talking about a movie, and he identified with a character that looked nothing like him. It was the guy who played Frodo from the J.R.R. Tolkien books. He said, 'I want blue eyes like him.' ... When I was with my kids and began to notice the exclusions and disparities in literature and film, that sparked something inside of me."

This made Jenkins reflect on her own experience growing up and going to school here in Cincinnati. "I think if more African American students—or any ethnic students—were exposed to more of their literature, they would gain so much: history, cultural insight ... it would just affirm a positive cultural identity."

Jenkins' goals are to return to UC for a doctorate in Africana Studies with a focus on African American literature, and to help develop the Africana outreach program, particularly the K-12 outreach initiative. As she says, "I want to be a college professor ... and I want to add value to the entire community."

Jenkins emphasizes the importance of being serious about your studies and getting your credentials. She believes, "In order to ensure the relevance of African American or any multicultural literature you have to ... have your seat at the table. That gives you the ability to challenge. But you have to have those credentials. That allows that to happen."



Marsha Jenkins

When asked for any last thoughts, Jenkins, who is a natural storyteller, bringing her narratives to life with her hands and facial expressions, talks about her opportunities in Africana studies—studying, being mentored, and working in the community—as an incredible journey. "I have been continuously blessed with professors who have allowed me to be in positions with them and to work with them, and it has continued to fuel my drive.

Professors Jameson-Hall, Reutter, Hinton—who was a student of Jameson Hall—and Chancy ... I have been blessed with some wonderful women, and it has been an affirmation."

With Professor Chancy, an accomplished Haitian-born scholar and novelist, it was about rigorous intellectual challenge. Jenkins explains that her lectures are intense, powerful, and complex. And yet, in person, as a mentor, "she is so generous with her help; so kind."

Jenkins also appreciated speaking with Hinton, her mentor at NKU, about Jameson-Hall, whom Jenkins

feels has left an unparalleled legacy. When they first met, Hinton spoke with Jenkins of her own memories being in Jenkins' place in Jameson-Hall's classroom. Jenkins felt honored by this mentoring initiative. "You really appreciate it as an older student," Jenkins explained. "I'm greatly influenced by these mentors in my life. I think this connection is very powerful."

Talk about powerful connections. Jenkins has already mentored students of her own from elementary to college age and built some strong bridges. The moment Jenkins was handed the opportunity to help with a middle school outreach at North Avondale Montessori, she took on the leadership of this project. The program, now in its third year, began with Jenkins developing after-school activities in poetry, art, and hip-hop, bringing together UC students, NAM students in grades 3 to 6, and parents and teachers from the school. Last year she had several "returnees" and they've already asked about when she is coming this year.

At NKU she has been studying community literacy and has also been involved in outreach.

Though Jenkins does not know everything that the future holds for her, she knows that she will continue her work in the community, sharing African American literature and culture with young children and the adults who support them.

Departmental Highlights

By Cheli Reutter

2010-2011 was a year during which Department Head **Terry Kershaw's** and the department's vision for national leadership, scholarly trailblazing, educational innovation and community formation began to come to fruition in ways that had previously only been dreamed of. The 2012-2013 year has already proven to be at least equally as active and opportunity-filled.

In March of 2011, coincidental with Africana Studies' 40th anniversary, UC hosted the annual **NCBS (National Council for Black Studies) Conference**. At this conference, six of our current Africana faculty members (**Kenneth Ghee, Billi Johnson, Carolette Norwood, Cheli Reutter, Joseph Takougang** and **Edward Wallace**) presented, while several others (Professors **Charles Jones, John Kalubi** and **Terry Kershaw**) were involved in conference leadership and in chairing multiple panels. Graduate and undergraduate students (**Brittany Carthen, Brandon Harper, Brittney Hudson, Ekundayo Igeleke, and Derrick Jenkins**) also presented at this conference.

Professors **Terry Kershaw** and **Charles Jones** are ranking members of the National Council for Black Studies, as current vice-president and past president respectively. They also serve as editor and co-editor of the related journal, *International Journal of Africana Studies*.

Associate Professor **Earl Wright** is president-elect of the Association for Black Sociologists and the Mid-south Sociological Association for the 2011-12 academic year; he will advance to president of both organizations for 2012-13.



Earl Wright

Last fall Africana studies celebrated its student-centered philosophy with a well-attended open house, organized by Professor **John Kalubi**.



Ken Ghee

The PRIZE mentoring program, led by **Carol Tonge-Mack** and Associate Professor **Ken Ghee**, continues to support African-American students with measurable success, and, this year, has expanded to include Latino/a students. Five full-time Africana faculty members and an AFST adjunct mentor PRIZE

students—and this number is growing to support student need.

Student-to-student outreach is also supported here in Africana Studies through the **Africana Book Club**. This club is actually a book, film and cultural study group focusing on Africana topics and is open to students, faculty and the community (no membership is required). The Africana Book Club was founded and directed by grad student **Brittney Hudson** and is advised by Assistant Professor **Edward Wallace** and Educator Assistant Professor **Cheli Reutter**. Meanwhile, for classroom and pre-professional support, Professor **Billi Johnson** is currently designing a writing center specifically dedicated to Africana majors and minors.



Carolette Norwood

Faculty members **Thabiti Asikule, Carolette Norwood** and **Edward Wallace** have all had articles published in refereed journals within the last year. **Norwood's** article, "Women, Microcredit, and Family Planning Practices: a Case Study in Rural Ghana," and **Asikule's** "Joel Augustus Rogers: Black Internationalism, Archival Research, and Black Print culture," are just

a couple that indicate the range of research in the department. Meanwhile, Professor **Joseph Takougang** is bringing his third book-length writing project home: *African Immigration in Cincinnati*.

Africana studies remains committed to top-quality collegiate education, and has developed or enhanced an impressive curriculum and course offering: the rare opportunity to learn Swahili (courtesy of **Kalubi**); the unprecedented opportunity of **Norwood's** honor's course on women, population and development (including a stay in Ghana from Dec. 9-19); the ever-popular Black Creative Expression (taught by **Ghee**); the explosively popular Black Health Care course by **Wallace**; a freshman seminar encountering the African Diaspora (developed and taught by **Reutter**, but carried by the entire department through guest lectures and other contributions from faculty and affiliates); this is just to name a few.



Cheli Reutter

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We thank the following individuals for their generous donations to the department during the 2010-2011 academic year. These gifts fund scholarships, attract and retain the finest faculty, and enrich the experiences of our students.

Patricia H. Collins, PhD
Ms. Ryan C. Ivory
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