ETSU Alumna Honored

In the words of the ETSU Alumni Association, “East Tennessee State University has been blessed with thousands of talented alumni of great achievement. These alumni are a valuable resource and inspiration for today’s students. East Tennessee State University and the Alumni Association are grateful to those dedicated alumni who have given their time to come back to campus as part of this annual program. By sharing their real-world expertise with our students they add to the educational experience.”

Ms. Mary Henderson-Alexander, a graduate of the AFAM Program, was invited back to the campus on October 17, 2008, to discuss her role as coordinator of the Kingsport Weed and Seed Program, which is funded, in part, by the federal government to prevent crime through the improvement of local communities and character-building activities for young people.

Also, on November 7, 2008, Ms. Alexander was honored by the Washington County Historical Society which presented the Samuel Cole Williams Award to her for outstanding service.

Cantrell Receives Betty Hill Goah AFAM Scholarship at ETSU

Lovisha Cantrell is the recipient of East Tennessee State University’s 2008 AFAM (African and African American Studies) Scholarship, which is named in memory of the late Betty Hill Goah, who was a community leader in Northeast Tennessee.

The ETSU sophomore is the second recipient of this $2,000 scholarship. The first, Lisa Rolle-Evans, graduated Saturday, May 3, 2008. Each recipient must be a matriculating student at ETSU, declare AFAM as a minor field of study, take at least one AFAM course per semester until the minor is completed, and maintain at least a 2.5 cumulative grade point average.

Cantrell, one of three children of Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Cantrell, was born and raised in Knoxville, where she attended Austin-East Magnet High School. Her major is exercise science, and upon graduating, she hopes to operate her own spa, offering physical therapy, massage therapy, and various types of exercise.

In addition to her studies, Cantrell enjoys planning formal occasions, church activities, writing poetry, sewing, cooking and traveling.

“It is my desire that whatever I do or say, wherever I go or reside, I will make a difference, whether it be in individuals or my environment,” she says.
2008 Campaign Brings Forth Many Questions

Following is a student article on an AFAM panel discussion on the “Public Perception of Race and Gender in the 2008 Presidential Campaign” by Alex Logue.

The panel discussion that was moderated by Dr. D.L. Drinkard, Director of African and African American Studies, focused on the “Public Perception of Race and Gender in the 2008 Presidential Campaign.” It took place on October 9, 2008, in the Sherrod Library. The panel consisted of Ms. Lea Brown, Mr. Daryl Carter, and Mr. Adam Dickson. Each of them gave an informative and revealing look at the history of race and gender discrimination and the impact and current standing of it in America.

Ms. Lea Brown began the discussion. She started by talking about how women in the African American community worked in the background and formed a strong foundation for the community as a whole. She also pointed out the importance of the African American church and that if a political person wanted to get something done, they had to go through the church. She went on to discuss the difference in political interests between men and women. She said that men focus more on the economy and the free market and that women focus more on social issues such as education and family-related matters. She also voiced her dislike of female politicians who are elected into office under the assumption they will focus on social issues, and then fixate on fiscal issues instead.

After she finished, Mr. Daryl Carter discussed the historical perspective of race. He presented many interesting facts including that Abraham Lincoln said that he believed in white supremacy, that African Americans were Republicans until the 1960s, and that President Kennedy had asked Dr. King and others to stop protesting and go through the courts instead. He also talked about how, although there is no direct racism used in the 2008 presidential election, there are coded messages that are meant to have the same effect, such as emphasizing the name, Hussein, in Barack Hussein Obama. Then he pointed out that sexism and classism are both used in the current election as well.

The final panelist to speak, before the question-and-answer segment, was Mr. Adam Dickson. He discussed the impact that race has in the political process. He began by talking about how the Constitution was influenced by Plato and his ideas of a Republic. He then said that today’s main meeting place, what was the marketplace in Plato’s time, was the political arena and that this was very important. After discussing this, he moved on to make the point that the African American community does not have one person who represents it, such as Al Sharpton, but that the community has many different views held by different people. He then talked about how race has been used for political gain. George Wallace was beaten by another member of his own race because his opponent was a stronger racist than he was at the time. Bill Clinton put African Americans into positions of power to gain support from the African American community. These are two examples he gave. He also talked about how President Bush replaced many African Americans with more conservative ones in his political administration so that African Americans could more easily connect with conservatives. He ended by talking about the current political situation, which has interracial conflicts. He raised the question as to whether race or gender will get more rights first. He said that Barack Obama will have to perform a balancing act if he is elected. He must address the needs of the African American community but not cater only to it.

After Mr. Dickson finished, the question - and - answer segment began. During this time the panelists discussed how polls can be an inaccurate measurement of the views of current voters. The panelists then discussed many of the fears they had heard regarding Barack Obama being elected, mainly the “Bradley factor.” He also talked about a potential harm for civil rights if Barack Obama is elected, because some Caucasians will feel that his election will solve the problem of race, and it will no longer need to be addressed. They also pointed out that some

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On February 21, 2008, William Shellman lectured on “The Role of the Buffalo Soldiers in the Making of America.” A brief history of the buffalo soldiers is as follows:

After the Civil War, Congress passed a bill to establish a peacetime military. Provisions in the bill created six regiments of colored troops—four infantries (foot soldiers) and two cavalries (on horseback)—of about 1,000 men each. The troops were placed under the command of colonels Benjamin Grierson and Edward Hatch. African Americans from the North and South, many of them freed slaves, enlisted in what were organized as the 9th and 10th cavalries. The Buffalo Soldiers served at Wounded Knee and with Teddy Roosevelt in Cuba, battled Crazy Horse, helped capture Geronimo and Billy the Kid, and helped string telegraph lines across the West.

Although there are several theories and notions, the cavalries actually got their name from their enemies, the American Indians, who admired the colored troopers’ fearlessness and courage (qualities also found in the buffalo). The Native Americans also believed that the soldiers’ hair resembled the tuft (or rough hair) between the horns of the bison (or buffalo). The name “Buffalo Soldiers” stuck as a description of the African American soldier on the frontier. Like white units, they were called into service to, “carry out the U.S. Government public policy of Westward expansion,” as well as escort tribes to designated reservations. The soldiers built and defended the telegraph lines, built and repaired forts, and helped establish the foundation of future towns. They were also involved in settling disputes between railroads and American soldiers. To this day the African American soldiers wear the description with pride.

The primary assignment of the Buffalo Soldiers was to suppress the interference of Native American tribes with the settlement of the white Americans. In the Westward expansion, the Buffalo Soldiers mapped the vast territories in New Mexico and Arizona, as well as marking the water holes. For decades, African American Regulars were the most effective troops on the Western Frontier.

William Shellman, who resides in Johnson City, served in the 24th Infantry Regiment during the Second World War. As indicated in the article above, the 24th Infantry Regiment was one of the original four Buffalo Soldiers units. It was disbanded after World War II when President Truman issued Executive Order 9981 which desegregated the Armed Forces.
The Continuation Of “A Trip To Tanzania”
Part Two of the African Series by Marcia Songer

Home Visits

There are many advantages to traveling with a small group, but among the most important is the fact that a few people can go where many cannot. There were only four of us in Sinya, a stay described in the previous AFAM newsletter. When we returned to Arusha on Christmas Eve, we passed through the home village of our guide Abraham, who invited us to stop at his house for cake and tea. We met his wife, an elementary school teacher, and four children, all of whom were out of school for Christmas vacation. They have a modern home set in lovely grounds that transform into a minifarm at the rear of the property. Once a math teacher, Abraham switched to leading tours because he wanted better pay to support his growing family. However, when tourism stopped for a while after 9/11, he realized he needed a way of sustaining income when tourism waned. That was when he started various entrepreneurial ventures, such as raising goats and pigs as well as the crops to feed them. He sells his pigs to Happy Sausage, a meat-processing plant we passed often in Arusha.

When we returned to Mama Wilson’s, our home base in Arusha, we were joined by eight other tour members and two more guides. On Christmas morning we divided into three vehicles and headed up the slopes of Mount Meru, an active volcano almost 15,000 feet high. Unfortunately, it had started raining at 3 a.m. After we left the paved

Continued on next page

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people are not racists, they are just given bad information, such as, “Barack Obama is a terrorist.” Another point made was that the current economy has forced some people to look at policy instead of race.

The question - and - answer segment was followed by informal discussion between the attendees and the panelists. All in all, it was a very informative panel with lots of interesting facts and discussions of causes and effects in the current political campaign. It was certainly a good way to spend a Thursday night.

Authored by Alex Logue, a freshman at ETSU and a computer science major.

Since the AFAM panel discussion on “The Public Perception of Race and Gender in the 2008 Presidential Campaign,” Barack Obama has won the election by a Landslide of 365 electoral votes to McCain’s 162. While gender and race played a role in the election, the economy, health care, the war in Iraq and taxes played a greater role.

Obama won on merit; and without the support of men and women and people of all races, he could not have won. The United States and the world will benefit from his leadership.

Dorothy Drinkard-Hawkshawe,
Editor, AFAM Newsletter and
Director of African/African American Studies
highway, the roads were rough and muddy. We drove through coffee and banana plantations and passed schools and churches, the latter decorated for Christmas and filled with worshipers. We struggled upward in the continuing rain until one of our Land Cruisers got stuck. We took refuge at someone’s compound while two of our guides pushed out the third. After talking to the owners of the compound, Abraham declared defeat. He had learned that the roads above us were worse than the one we were on, meaning that our getting stuck was just a prelude of things to come. Thus we turned around and headed back down the mountain.

Our afternoon schedule included a visit to a sculptor who lived on the mountain slopes, so we simply made that visit earlier than planned. The sculptor told about being teased as a young man because pottery is considered women’s work. However, he persevered. Gradually he was able to get schooling, and little by little he built his own pottery wheel and a kiln. Today he no longer has to pay to show his pots in town. Instead his fame has spread, and now people come to him. He gave a very instructive pottery demonstration.

The highlight of the day came in the afternoon. To provide a substitute for the missed morning activity, one of our guides invited us to a confirmation celebration for four of his nieces and nephews. They had been confirmed in a Christmas morning service at a Lutheran church. Now they were having a party in the family compound. The confirmands were dressed in beautiful clothing and seated at a head table while all the guests sat on folding chairs facing them. When the food was ready, we were asked to join the other guests. We all ate, and then we got in a line and danced up to the honorees, greeting all four of them, giving them a monetary gift, and wishing them well.

Before we left we were invited to tour the compound. Surrounding the open area where the celebration took place were several houses including one of the grandmother, whom we visited. There was also a family burial plot. In some parts of Africa the disparity between rich and poor is so great that every compound is surrounded by walls topped with glass shards, spikes, or razor wire. I saw none of that in Arusha. Abraham’s home is surrounded by only a tall hedge, and the house is clearly visible through the gate. This compound, like most others in town, has nondescript walls and gates. Though there is no way to glimpse an interior that might tempt someone to enter, there is also no great deterrent to entering.

### Game Drives

For many tourists Africa is synonymous with safaris. I am interested in the literature, history, art, and culture of the continent, but I admit I too am fascinated by the wildlife. Tanzania recognizes its importance and has set aside 28 percent of the country for wildlife reserves and conservation areas. We visited several of the reserves. In the two nights we camped in Tarangire National Park, we saw baby warthogs and nursing baby elephants along with a profusion of giraffes, impalas, waterbucks, and dikdiks. We also visited another Maasai village. Less remote than the one in Sinya, this one had encountered a few tourists before, and the women happily demonstrated thatching and plastering as well as winnowing grain. These Maasai were still nomadic, but they obviously moved less frequently, giving them an opportunity to plant a garden and decorate the interior of their huts.

From Tarangire we drove up the Great Rift Escarpment to spend two nights at the Ngorongoro Farm, stopping on the way at a consignment shop where ebony carvers were at work. I had always thought ebony was totally black wood. I had no idea that only the center is black. Several of the carvers demonstrated this unique characteristic by partially carving a head or statue out of the heart of the wood, leaving the bark and light wood in
place on one side. The result is striking as well as educational.

Ngorongoro Farm is located at an altitude of 4500 feet. In the 19th century a German named Oskar Frowerk first developed the farm as a coffee plantation. In 2001 the land was purchased by Tanganyika Wilderness Camps, a firm that began reforestation and rehabilitation of the land. In addition to growing coffee, the farm now produces its own dairy products and organic fruits and vegetables. It has 41 guest cottages, all given Swahili names. My cottage was Tai, which means “vulture.” From the farm, we drove up to the 7200-foot rim of Ngorongoro Crater, then down 2000 feet into the caldera. Created by the eruption of a mountain that some scientists think once stood higher than Kilimanjaro, the 100-square-mile crater is the largest intact volcanic caldera in the world. It has a permanent population of 30,000 animals including the critically endangered black rhino. We saw all manner of animals: huge herds of wildebeests, cape buffalo, and zebra. We saw lion cubs playing with their mother’s tail, lions mating, buffalo sparring, and a couple of different rhino families. The Maasai are allowed to live in the conservation area—they are the only people given that privilege—so it is not unusual to see them grazing their cattle on the crater floor with buffalo or lions nearby.

The Serengeti

After a second night at the farm, we headed for the Serengeti Plain, stopping at Olduvai Gorge on the way. In order to get there, we followed the Ngorongoro Rim Road past the turnoff to go down into the crater and out into other areas of the conservation area. The 30-mile-long gorge is part of the Great Rift Valley that runs from Syria to Mozambique. Its correct name is Oldupai, the Maasai word for a sisal plant that grows in the gorge. Here Mary Leakey found the fossilized footprints of Australopithecus afarensis, thought to be over 3 million years old. The footprints were originally made in mud and then, as with remains in Pompeii, they were preserved by volcanic ash. The little visitor’s center has a plaster cast of the uncovered footprints. After making the cast, Mary reburied the originals to preserve them. Although many hominid skulls, bones, and tools have also been found in the gorge, none of the other discoveries has been quite as dramatic as the footprints.

As we returned to the conservation area, we passed many authentic Maasai villages, but a couple of them were obviously commercial, very unlike the two we visited. We noticed that some of the more expensive tours stopped there, however. We began to see migrating herds while still in Ngorongoro. The semiannual migration actually starts in the Maasai Mara in Kenya and extends through Ngorongoro on to the Serengeti, a name that means “endless plain” in Maasai. Almost a million wildebeests and half a million zebras and antelopes make the migration in search of food and water. Sometimes they continue westward as far as the shores of Lake Victoria. We passed the calving ground for wildebeests. Most of the female wildebeests and zebras were pregnant. They travel together because wildebeests have excellent hearing, but their eyes are on the sides of their heads. They run in a peculiar way, with their heads turned so they can see with one eye. Zebras can see straight ahead but do not hear well, so the two species help each other. As we got out on the Serengeti Plain, the herds were vast. They would run across the road right in front of us, and we never tired of seeing them leap ditches and run away. Abraham told us we could not have come at a better time to see the migration.
We spent the next four nights in a tented camp that moves with the herds. We learned that it takes three days to set up a mobile camp and another three to take it down. Ours did not move during our stay but would move again before the next safari group came in. Despite the remote location, the tent was comfortable and even had a toilet stool inside and a shower of sorts. After someone brought a bucket of warm water to fill an outdoor container, one person could pull a chain to release enough water to get wet. After soaping, he or she could pull again to release water to rinse off, but then someone needed to bring another bucket for the next person’s shower. There was also some solar power although the light was so low that it was difficult to read or write. The beds were quite good, however, so the easiest option was to simply go to bed at night, something the unelectrified world has been doing for years.

For the next three days we were scheduled to do early morning game drives, but on the first night it rained so long that I assumed the morning drive would be called off. When the wakeup call came at 5:45, I went to get coffee only to discover that we were going out despite the rain. Although some animals may hide in the rain, many do not. Gradually we saw hartebeests, topis, and a herd of impala all licking themselves dry. The highlight of the day, however, was the sight of lions eating a hippo carcass. Lions almost never kill hippo, so we assumed the hippo had died naturally. When we moved to a second location, we verified that by the smell. The smell did not deter the lions though. Two males were eating and even trying to tear off the skin while two females waited.

On another day we went to a hippo pool where we joined several crocodiles in carefully observing a large group of hippos and their behavior. The hippo’s open mouth, so frequently photographed, may look like a yawn, but it is really a display of its most serious weapons, its incisors and lower tusks, both of which can inflict terrible damage. A fight between two male hippos is an attempt to slash each other. After we left the hippos, we spotted a cheetah with its baby and a pride of hunting lions. We were able to follow the lions for miles as they hunted and hunted, walking in single file with a dominant female in the lead and two young males bringing up the rear.

On a third day we left the Serengeti Park and went to the kopjes, extrusions of igneous rock that stand out against the flat terrain. Animals love these outcroppings, and lions regularly hide their cubs there. As expected, we found lions sunning themselves, and we were able to get great close-up photos, but their proximity proved a disadvantage when we got ready to have our picnic lunch. Our guides had to search carefully to find a kopje with no lions, so that we didn’t turn into a picnic lunch for them.

On our last day on the Serengeti Plain, we drove in the midst of the migrating herds. Once we followed a cheetah chasing gazelles. It was magnificent to see him run. My pictures can reproduce the sight of the largest movement of animals on earth, but the sound lingers only in my memory. When we finally returned to the Ngorongoro Farm, I was able to wash my hair for the first time since we left there. The Serengeti was a wonderful experience, but I realized a bit of civilization wasn’t bad either. I returned to the States with cherished memories of Tanzania.

Professor Marcia Songer is an associate professor of English. She has taught African Literature in the ETSU English Department and is currently the director for the Honors-in-Discipline Programs.
Inauguration of New African Diaspora Society Officers

The inauguration of officers for the new organization, the African Diaspora Society at ETSU, took place in the spring of 2007. Reverend Charles Charlton was the keynote speaker, who talked about the responsibility of leadership. Dr. Henry Antkiewicz, an ETSU history professor, swore in the new officers who were as follows: Lisa Rolle-Evans, President; Felicia Eberhardt, Vice President and Secretary; Monika McKinney, Treasurer; and Katheryne Moore, Public Relations Officer.
Outsiders Within

Black Women in the Legal Academy after Brown v. Board

Elwood Watson
Ms. Lisa Mullins spoke at ETSU on Oct. 4, 2007, on “Women in the Civil Rights Movement.” She is author of Diane Nash The Fire of the Civil Rights Movement, and is a graduate of ETSU, where she minored in African and African American Studies. She is a native of Rogersville, Tennessee, and currently teaches in the city’s public schools.


Judge Gadsden explained how the federal judiciary system is organized, and discussed some of the major civil rights cases argued by distinguished African American lawyers in the federal courts.

Mr. William Shellman spoke at ETSU in February 2008, on the role of the Buffalo Soldiers in American history. He resides in Johnson City, Tennessee. He is a World War II veteran who served in the 24th Infantry Regiment, which was one of the original Buffalo Soldiers units. For more information on the Buffalo Soldiers see the article in this newsletter.

A Panel Discussion was held on Oct. 9, 2008, on the “Public Perception of Race and Gender in the 2008 Presidential Campaign.” The discussion was led by Lea Brown, Daryl Carter, and Adam Dickson. For more information on the panel discussion see the article by Alex Logue in this newsletter.

See related story on page 2

Lea Brown has served as President of the local League of Women Voters and is currently the director of the Testing Center at ETSU. She received an M.A. degree from ETSU’s College of Business and Technology, and in May, she expects to earn her Ed.D. degree in Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis, from ETSU’s College of Education.

Carter is a graduate of ETSU. He is currently working on his Ph.D. at the University of Memphis and he serves as assistant professor of history at ETSU.

Dickson is a graduate of ETSU. He is working on his Ph.D. at the University of Tennessee at Knoxville, and he serves as an adjunct professor in the Political Science Department.
Professor Marcia Songer is the recipient of ETSU’s Distinguished Faculty Award for Service, 2008. Songer teaches African Literature in the AFAM Program, and serves as Director of the Honors-in-Discipline Programs. In December 2006, she visited Tanzania in East Africa. The second in a series of articles on her African travels appears in this newsletter. Congratulations, Professor Songer.

AFAM welcomes a new member to its program: Professor Karen Kornweibel received her Ph.D. in Comparative Literature from the University of Texas at Austin with concentrations in Latin American Literature, African American Literature, and 19th Century Russian Prose. Her research interests are in African American Literature and the Literature of the African Diaspora in the Americas, focusing mainly on African American and Afro-Cuban Literature. She came to ETSU in the fall of 2007 from Ohio University, where she had been the literature specialist for the Department of African American Studies. Her article “The Fecundity of Folkloric Space: Revising Hierarchies of Race, Gender, and Power in Zora Neale Hurston’s Mules and Men and Lydia Cabrera’s Cuentos Negros de Cuba,” appeared in the Journal of Comparative American Studies in 2004. She is currently completing a book project titled, Banner Reflections: Afro-Cuban and African American Discourses of Identity, 1840-1940. Welcome aboard, Professor Kornweibel.

Professor Elwood Watson was recently promoted to full professor in the Department of History. Watson teaches in the AFAM Program and he has recently authored a new book, Outsiders Within: Black Women in the Legal Academy after Brown v Board. Congratulations to Professor Watson.

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Dr. Karen Ruth Kornweibel

Professor Marcia Songer

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# AFAM Course Schedules, 2008-2009

## Spring 2008
- AFAM 3989 Cooperative Education
- AFAM 4950 Senior Seminar
- CJCR 4760 Race, Gender, and Crime
- ENGL 4032 African Literature
- HIST 3270 History of Africa
- HIST 3901 African Am. Hist. Since 1877
- MUSC 1035 History of Jazz
- PSCI 4030 Black Am. Political Thought

## Spring 2009
- AFAM 3989 Cooperative Education
- AFAM 4950 Senior Seminar
- HIST 3901 African Am. Hist Since 1877
- ENGL 4032 African Literature
- ENGL 4957/5957 Caribbean Literature
- HIST 5957 or 4957 Civil Rights Movement 1940s to Present
- HIST 3270 History of Africa
- MUSC 1035 History of Jazz
- PSCI 4030 Black Am. Political Thought

## Fall 2008
- AFAM 3989 Cooperative Education
- AFAM 4900 Special Studies
- AFAM 4950 Seminar
- ENGL 4047 African Am. Literature II
- HIST 3900 African Am. History to 1877
- MUSC 1035 History of Jazz
- SOCI 3110 Minorities

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- AFAM 3989 Cooperative Education
- AFAM 4900 Special Studies
- AFAM 4950 Seminar
- ENGL 4047 African Am. Literature II
- HIST 3900 African Am. History to 1877
- MUSC 1035 History of Jazz
- SOCI 3110 Minorities

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