Support the Center
If you wish to make a donation to the African-American Cultural Center, please contact: AACC Director Dr. Lori Barcliff Baptista, baptista@uic.edu and 312-996-9549, or make your gift online by visiting: give.uic.edu and type in African-American Cultural Center in the search field.

For more info or to RSVP please call (312) 996-9549 or visit aacc.uic.edu
If you require any accommodations to participate, please contact the AACC.

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University of Illinois at Chicago
830 S. Halsted St.
2nd Floor Addams Hall
Chicago, IL 60607
About the African-American Cultural Center

One of 7 Centers for Cultural Understanding and Social Change, the African-American Cultural Center is an interdisciplinary unit housed in Academic Affairs under the reporting line of the Office of Diversity and the Provost. The Center curates, produces and sponsors exhibitions, performances, films and film screenings, open-mic poetry gatherings, lecture-demonstrations, dance, storytelling, visual and performing arts workshops and projects. The Center coordinates and supervises high school and college internships, supports student and postdoctoral research, and lends its expertise to a number of collaborative programs and initiatives. The Center’s gallery and library spaces are also available for quiet study, working groups, meetings and presentations.

Mission Statement

The mission of the African-American Cultural Center at UIC is to support the academic and diversity missions of the University by engaging UIC faculty, staff, students, community partners and other stakeholders in programs and initiatives that contextualize, highlight, present and critically examine Black diaspora traditions, histories and experiences.

Vision Statement

We envision the Center as a safe, brave and inclusive hub for collaboration, creative and scholarly practice, engaged learning, service and social justice.

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A Year of Remedies


table

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event Type</th>
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Library, Gallery and Other Resources

The AACC Library, located in room 200 Addams Hall, has wireless access, two pc workstations, a flat screen television, a book collection and resources for research on African-American and Diaspora topics for dissertations, theses, term papers, and projects. Members of the UIC community can check out books and other materials from our collection at no cost.

The Library and Gallery (room 207) are also available for open study. They can be reserved by registered student organizations, campus units and community partners at no cost.

To reserve either space, complete a Space Request Form on our website: http://aacc.uic.edu
In Retrospect: The African-American Cultural Center at 25
Aug 22—Dec 9/ AACC Gallery

In Retrospect paid homage to African-American Cultural Center leadership and artists who founded, curated and participated in the Visiting Artists’ Series, the Center’s longest running program. The final of three installments, the fall 2016 edition of In Retrospect showcased the works of six Chicago area artists who exhibited at the African-American Cultural Center as part of the Center’s Visiting Artists’ Series: Photographer Dorothy Perry, visual artist Rhonda Gray, and mixed media artists Ma. Victoria Bianco, Trish Williams and Patricia A. Stewart explored diverse forms and lush qualities of Africanist practices. The artworks reflected upon the state of Black women’s centrality in Africa and its diaspora, conveyed aspects of African heritage through quilt-making, and offered spiritual restoration through creative practices. They also promoted care for one’s inner and outer beauty as well as environments and attempted to reconcile multiple world views within communities of African descent. Together, the works in this exhibition offered a broad spectrum of healing practices that soothe the pain we absorb from our era’s repeated manifestations of violence.

On Beauty and Heritage: A Fabric Art Exhibition
Jan 18—Mar 16, Mar 29—June 28/ AACC Gallery

Co-curated by Mario LaMothe and Chicago fabric artist Jim S. Smoote II, whose work was also featured in the exhibit, On Beauty showcased works by Reneau Diallo, Jamin Mahan, and Trish Williams as well as La Sheron Bankhead, Doris Barnes and La Sheral Smith of The Needles and Threads Quilters Guild (NTQG) of Chicago. On display were NTQG’s 20 Year Celebration Quilt, and Remedies (Love, Unity, Peace): A Community Remedy Quiltmade by UIC students, faculty, staff and community partners under the guidance of Jim S. Smoote II. Inspired by African-American quilting traditions and communities, this exhibit adapted the Center’s “Year of Remedies” programmatic theme into textural forms that symbolize resilience, healing, creativity and countless other expressions of what it might mean to remedy past and present injustices.

“Cintio Vitier” Cuban Youth Arts Project
A visual arts exhibition Jan 18—June 28/ AACC Library

Curated by Chicago-area sculptor and visual artist Alphonso “Piloto” Nieves Ruiz, this Cuban Youth Arts Project marked its United States debut with a wide range of abstract, acrylic, watercolor, portrait, landscape and mixed media works. Foregrounding the extraordinary talents and motivations of young visual artists from Havana, Cuba’s “Cintio Vitier” community socio-cultural project founded by visual artist Pedro Miguel González Pulido, the exhibit also called attention to artistic practices as mobilizing forces that convene youth and elders from diverse geographic and ethnic communities.

Exhibits

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Tours and Workshops 2016—2017

See Appendix C for Data

Tours

Kenwood Academy
UIC Honors College PAP
Homewood-Flossmoor High School
Noble Academy Charter High School
Minnesota Latino High School
Maine Township High School
Gary Elementary School
Maine Township High School

Workshops

AACC Quilting Bootcamp with Jim S. Smoote
Portrait Workshop with Paul Branton
Visual Art Workshop with Marcus Alleyne
Ballet Basics with Mario LaMothe
Traveling Exhibits

A Choreography of Contagion: Absence and Presence of Black Bodies in Health Visual Culture
Jan 17—Jun 2 /UIC Library of the Health Sciences, Special Collections and University Archives

Contagion explored how people of African descent have been represented in public health campaigns. The traveling exhibit featured a collage of early 20th century newspaper prints and images from private institutions, health journals and popular media alongside modern health campaigns involving global epidemics from cholera to Ebola and HIV/AIDS to malaria. Contagion embraced visual arts concepts, dance concepts, and epidemiological terms to present a nuanced understanding of how metaphors, images and symbols are artfully used to convey complex meanings in public health campaigns.

Film Screening: “The American Dream”
March 16, 2017/AACC Gallery
In tandem with the closing reception of On Beauty and Heritage Phase I, AACC and Women’s Leadership and Resource Center presented “The American Dream.” Part of the Women’s Leadership and Resource Center’s Reproductive Justice film series, the 45 minute documentary focuses on African American women who tell their own stories: they share their hopes, fears and experiences about their American dream, and they denounce what is wrong about maternal health care in the United States. A post-screening discussion will follow with UIC Alumna Reneau Diallo ('91, Post-Masters in Midwifery, College of Nursing).

CCUSC Joint Tabling
2016—2017
The Centers for Cultural Understanding and Social Change have a collective purpose to broaden awareness about underrepresented groups at UIC. Through tabling events such as Market place and Student Involvement Fair, the CCUSC team is able to reach students, faculty, and staff and bring awareness of the Centers and the resources that they provide.

Heritage Garden: Tea Talks
2016—2017
Tea Talks is a public program series in which we will collectively learn, teach and share remedies for obstacles and challenges we experience. The UIC Heritage Garden interns conducted research at The Field Museum and learned that although many individuals associate remedy with tea, different people and communities have diverse ways of resolving various ailments.

Know Your Rights
Taking an intersectional approach, the Centers for Cultural Understanding and Social Change presented two moderated discussions intended to help members of the campus community better understand their civil liberties beyond a legal framework.

Reimagining Masculinities
The Reimagining Masculinities Initiative (RMI) is a collaborative project between the Centers for Cultural Understanding and Social Change that strives to cultivate, support, affirm, and create male allies and advocates. Through dialogues, films, workshops and personal stories, this initiative unpacks what it means to be masculine, and explores issues of masculinity and gender. In 2016-2017, RMI programmed the following sessions and workshops.
**Yoga for Black Lives:**

**Practice Self-care and Restoration**

Sep 26—Dec 5 / AACC Gallery

Yoga for Black Lives was a one-hour donation-based yoga sessions led by Stephanie Hicks. Proceeds benefited Chicago-area community organizations.

**Breakfast at the AACC**

Dec 5—Dec 7, May 1—May 3 / AACC Gallery

Each semester during finals week, the AACC remained open until 9 pm for extended study hours. Snacks and a hot soul food breakfast were served. 83 students joined us for the fall breakfast, and 130 students participated during spring finals.

**Daughters of the Dust and Lemonade**

Nov 2 & 4 / AACC Gallery


**BingeFest@AACC: The Movement Digital Series**

W Feb 1, 8, 15 & 22; 12—1:30pm / AACC Gallery

UIC students, faculty, staff and community allies joined the AACC staff and #streetteam to watch and discuss episodes from the cutting edge web series The Movement. Hosted by journalist/activist Darnell Moore, the series compellingly presents the stories of everyday heroes who fight to reclaim and recover marginalized communities. Pizza and refreshments were provided.

**Research and Publications**

Mario LaMothe is the first Postdoctoral Associate and curator-in-residence of the African-American Cultural Center. Born in Brooklyn, NY and raised in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, Dr. LaMothe received a doctorate in Performance Studies from Northwestern University in 2015. From 2015—2016, he was a Postdoctoral Associate in Interdisciplinary Sexuality Studies at Duke University’s Program in Gender, Sexuality and Feminist Studies. Dr. LaMothe is also a performing artist, curator and LGBTQI activist. His research agenda involves embodied pedagogies of Afro-Caribbean religious rituals, and the intersections of spectatorship, queerness and social justice in the African diaspora. His first book manuscript Vodou/Voodoo Bodies: Artistry, Memory, and Imagined Haitian Identities deals with recuperative performances of blackness in the circum-Atlantic region. Through ethnographic research, Dr. LaMothe situates how Haitian choreographers Jean-René Delsoin, Roxane D’Orléans Juste, Kettly Noël and Jeanguy Santus, working respectively in Haiti, Canada and Venezuela, Mali, and the United States, leverage the aesthetics and embodied techniques of Vodou, the Afro-syncretic religion of Haiti. He observes how the artists’ choreographies engage spectators in simultaneously reviving and destabilizing their own misconceptions about Haitians, ones with immediate ties to centuries of Global North military, political, economic, religious, and social interventions in Haiti. Dr. LaMothe’s writing is featured in peer reviewed and commercial publications such as e-misfèrica, Conversations Across the Field of Dance Studies, L’imparfaite, and Scalawag.

Dr. Baptista continued as key personnel for the Office of Sustainability led Illinois Science and Energy Innovation Foundation grant-funded initiative, training 8 UIC sustainability interns in participatory action research methods and working with community partners in Bronzeville, Chinatown and Uptown to explore culturally specific models for community engagement in energy conservation and Smart Grid technology. She also revisited her longstanding relationship with Stillpoint Theatre Collective, a theater company well known for devising performances with people with disabilities and formerly incarcerated women. Her article: “Locked Away But Not Defeated: African American Women Performing Resilience,” will appear in the forthcoming edited volume, The Routledge Companion to African American Theater and Performance.

During the summer of 2016, Dr. Baptista supervised Knox College undergrad Shantoria Pratt’s research on the relationship between Afrocentric pedagogies and their potential impact upon the self-esteem of young black men, and Sandra Muñoz directed and produced an informational you tube video filmed by former Heritage Garden intern Tania Sosa featuring our TRIO high school interns.
In 2016—2017, Dr. Mario LaMothe presented his research at the following conferences, symposia and gatherings:

- American Society for Theatre Research, November 3—6, 2016, St. Paul, MN.
- Amherst College, Department of Black Studies gathering, April 13, 2017.
- BLACK MATTERS: Black Performance Theory 2017 Annual Convening. Washington University, St. Louis, MO April 27-30, 2017

During this academic year, Dr. Baptista participated in a number of conferences, symposia, workshops and presentations. These include:

- Focused thinking around the future of live arts/performing arts in the USA, with special attention to Afro/Caribbean/Latino Communities. Invited presenter/participant, Configurations in Motion: Performance Curation and Communities of Color. Hosted by SLIPPAGE: Performance, Culture, Technology in residence at Duke University, Durham, NC. July 14-15, 2016
- "The Rise of the Supermarket," guest lecturer for HON 110 Discover Chicago: Community Health Initiatives, DePaul University, Chicago IL September 2016
- "Culture of Violence/Cultivating Peace: Looking at Education and De-escalation" guest moderator for a Town Hall meeting following a performance of Grizzly Mama, by George Brant. Directed by Megan Carney. Rivendell Theatre Ensemble, Chicago, IL October 2016
- "Museums/Cultural Centers as Community Conveners" a workshop/presentation for the Chicago Cultural Alliance Member Conference with Karin Abercrombie of the Swedish American Museum, and Joe Podlasek of Trickster Art Gallery. DePaul University, Chicago, IL November 2016
- "Everyday Use: Remedies (love, unity, peace)" Invited presenter for the panel, Invocations and/in the City for Possessing Remedies, a symposium of the UIC African-American Cultural Center. Chicago, IL April 2017
- BLACK MATTERS: Black Performance Theory 2017 Annual Convening. Washington University, St. Louis, MO April 27-30, 2017

Sandra Munoz
- The Fresh Water Lab Conference: “Untrouble the Waters”
- The Wild Things Conference

Under the guidance of Jim S. Smoote II, UIC students, faculty, staff and community allies collaborated to create the 62" x 63" quilt, Remedies (Love, Unity, Peace): A Community Remedy Quilt. Mixing media squares (patches) of cotton and assorted fabrics and machine pieced and hand quilted by Jim S. Smoote II, Remedies is a contemporary outlook on a friendship or album quilt. Each quilter presented their perspective on solutions to violence.

UIC students, faculty, staff and community allies who participated in the project include:

- Eldadig Abdalla
- Angie
- Lori Baptista
- Anis Barmada
- Leah Blocker
- Bennjamin Brown
- Sophia Cadet
- Jose Camilo
- Charis Crayton
- Demetria Dawkins
- Katherine Denemore
- Reneau Diallo
- Randy Evans
- Fatima R. Forreesh
- Viridiana Godinez
- Monica Jauch
- Josephine
- Rodney Johnson
- Kristy Kambanis
- Mario LaMothe
- Diana Martinez
- Ameenah Muhammad
- Sandra Muñoz
- Patrick N.
- Crystal Nwaokoda
- Oluseyi Oyeyemi
- Patrick Panagia
- Kevin Peralta
- Estaphanie Reyes
- Bernardo Rivera
- Derrick S.
- Stacey Salgado
- Fernando Sanchez
- Damanie Sarabia
- Salomie
- Nicole Seydlowski
- Seyi
- Sharia
- Carolyn Thomas
- Ethalle Thompson
- Kris Trandh
- Reina Wilfredo
- Kapri Williams
Campus & Community Collaborations

The Center continued to strengthen its relationships with student organizations, student support and academic units through our sponsorship and participation in events such as the Black to School BBQ, Summer College, Urban Public Policy Fellows Seminar, Civic Engagement Days, Black History Month Programming, African American Studies’ Grace Holt Luncheon and Lecture, Illinois African American and Latino Higher Education Alliance Diversity Dialogue and Student Research Forum, The Minority Health Conference and public lectures.

Remedies Symposium

The AACC’s 2016—2017 “Year of Remedies” programming concluded with the symposium: “Possessing Remedies”: Restorative Performance Practices in Black and Brown Communities,” to open up an inclusive and interdisciplinary space for UIC’s multiple stakeholders and allies—both academic and community to gather, share and critique strategies and interventions that Black and Brown communities have developed to sustain and heal themselves.

Keynote Performance

Dance, spoken word and performance art by Chicago and multinational artists shone light on the collaborative effort inherent in remembering, (re) inventing and disseminating effective remedies for Black and Brown Communities.
A Year of Remedies

African-American Cultural Center Goals:

• To positively impact the recruitment, retention and success of Black faculty, staff and students through creative practices that intentionally leverage the power of Black arts, cultures and creativity to build character and quality of place (creative placemaking)
• To draw upon diverse perspectives and methods of teaching and learning to engage and positively impact UIC students both inside and beyond the classroom
• To promote a climate of diversity and equity in which UIC students, faculty, and staff feel welcomed in their identities, valued for their contributions, and feel their identities can be openly expressed wherever they live, work and study
• To become a leader in cultivating rigorous engagements with Black diaspora communities, artistic practices, pedagogies, and scholarship
• To engage in mutually beneficial partnerships with campus, local, national and international individuals, organizations and institutions
• To develop sustainable and resilient operational models
• To promote intercultural understanding that leads to social change

Facebook Activity Stats

Date: FY 2016/17

Twitter vs Instagram Activity Stats

Date: FY 2016/17