

**SPECIAL
GRADUATION
EDITION**

The Black Oaks Newsletter

Volum 2, Issue 2

Spring 2008

POINTS OF INTEREST

This special graduation edition of the *Black Oaks* boasts the achievements of our faculty, students, and staff, all of whom have made the resurgence of African/African American Studies at Elon a huge success. Congratulations to Prof. Wilhelmina Boyd and her family, our five Lumen Scholars, and the entire Elon University community for helping to fulfill the AAASE mission!

Inside this issue:

Periclean Scholars Update	2
AAASE Minors Receive Lumen Awards	2
Record AAASE -Related SURF Presentations	2
New AAASE Academic Journal	3
Civil Rights Activists Visit Elon	3
Salute to the AAASE Graduates	4
Highlights of Student & Faculty Research	6

The Black Oaks Legacy Celebration Honors Professor Boyd



On May 5, 2008 in Johnston Hall, the African/African-American Studies program celebrates the legacy of the program's founding coordinator, Professor Wilhelmina Boyd. The AAASE Advisory Committee selected two AAASE graduating seniors who embody the values and spirit of Professor Boyd's work and life: excellence and commitment in research, scholarship, and service

to the study of Black communities in the United States and abroad.

The Wilhelmina Boyd AAASE Scholar Award was created to honor the work and contributions of Professor Wilhelmina Boyd's eighteen years of service to Elon University. Colleagues have described Professor Boyd as a woman of "natural elegance" and "a warm, patient, and wise person." Professor Boyd was hired in the Department of English in 1987, and created the African/African-American Studies interdisciplinary program in 1994.

During her tenure at the University, Professor Boyd served as a member of the Minority Affairs Council, a Hand to Hand Mentor, an advisor to the Black Cultural Society. She introduced several popular African American Literature courses, ran the African-American Reading Day, which brought hundreds of students and

faculty to read the words of African-American writers, and brought in a stream of wonderful speakers. She is also a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. Most importantly perhaps, she maintained a strong commitment to see Elon become a more diverse and aware campus.

Of her mother's work at Elon, Kay Boyd writes, "This recognition of our mother's contribution to the vibrancy and richness of the culture of Elon University and to the scholarship fostered there deeply moves each member of our family. . . . Indeed my mother loved Elon deeply, and even as she contemplated retirement, envisioned a travel seminar to Wilmington exploring the North Carolina slave trade. . . .She always brightens at the word *Elon* and in response speaks of love."

At the event, Kay Boyd will present the awards named in honor of her mother .

The Selection of The Wilhelmina Boyd AAASE Scholars

The committee tasked with selecting the first recipient of the Wilhelmina Boyd African/African-American Studies Scholar Award did not reach consensus. Each of the outstanding candidates demonstrated a commitment to AAAS in their coursework, scholarship, and student activities/leadership; each is actively en-

gaged in local and global Black communities, has developed global and multicultural awareness, and each has career/professional goals that clearly demonstrate the potential to use AAAS. Among the six applicants, however, were two whose experiences best exemplify the work Prof. Boyd started here at Elon. Each mem-

ber of the committee ranked these candidates in their top three. For this reason, two awards will be given. Special thanks to the committee members: Sandra Reid, Rod Clare, Heidi Frontani, Jamane Yeager, L'Tanya Richmond, Lisa Roper, Matt Clark, Charles Irons and Prudence Layne. View complete profiles on pages 8 & 9.



An Update on the Periclean Scholars' Work for Zambia and Ghana

The Elon Periclean Scholars have continued to develop their long-term sustainable building projects for Zambia and for Ghana. Members of the Class of 2009, in partnership with Habitat for Humanity Zambia, will travel with their faculty advisor Dr. Steve Braye in January 2009 to build houses and foster sustainable living practices in support of rural Zambians. The class hopes their efforts will raise awareness in our community as to the importance of civic engagement and social responsibility,

and improve the lives and futures of Zambians. To support their work, please visit the group's website located at <http://org.elon.edu/pericleanscholars2009/about.php>.

Similarly, the Periclean Class of 2010, under the direction of Dr. Heidi G. Frontani, continues its amazing work for Kpota, Abor, and Sokode, three communities in Ghana. Thus far, the group has raised in excess of \$35,000 through

grants and other fund-raising initiatives. Several of the participants have and will study abroad in Ghana before they graduate as they continue to increase their knowledge and understanding of Ghana's history, development, and the complexities of the challenges facing this nation and the rest of the continent. For more information on the Class of 2010 projects, please visit their websites at <http://org.elon.edu/pericleanscholars2010/index.htm>. Congratulations to both classes and the faculty!

**Unprecedented
research and
scholarship
collaborations
taking place
among AAASE
students and
faculty and
across campus.**

AAASE Minors Capture Five of Fifteen Lumen Awards

AAASE minors Amanda Brown, Katie Meyer, Katie Strickland, Kristine Silvestri, and Lauren Taylor were among the fifteen recipients of the coveted Lumen Prize. The university's premier award for students comes with a \$15,000 scholarship to support and celebrate their academic achievements and research proposals. Brown, a Mathematics major from Ohio, will work on mathematical modeling of malaria epidem-

ics in various regions of sub-Saharan Africa. Meyer, a Political Science major from Indiana will focus on children's human rights, expanding the work of the Invisible Children chapter she started at Elon from Northern Uganda to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Silvestri, from NJ, majors in Public Administration & Political Science. She will explore "the Other" in both an international context (Liberian

refugees in Ghana) and a national/local context (American race relations). Strickland, a Sociology major from Tennessee, will conduct research on how cultural heterogeneity within a nation (Ghana) influences development aid. Finally, Taylor, an Independent major from NY will conduct research on international women's health issues, with special focus on the role of traditional child delivery practices in S. Africa.

Record Number of SURF Presentations Related to AAAS

The Spring Undergraduate Research Forum (SURF) at Elon University showcases student research and provides them the opportunity to present their findings to the campus. At the April 29th, 2008 event this year, a record number of students and their faculty mentors across the university focused their attention on matters related to African/African-American Studies.

The record number of presentations (listed separately) reflects the increasing interest and commitment to AAAS across our campus. Not all of the students or their mentors are directly affiliated with the program, but that too speaks to the campus-wide commitment from students and our faculty to Black Studies. African/African-American Studies in collaboration with the Center for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning and the

Office of the Dean, Elon College, the College of Arts and Sciences will continue to offer research development grants to faculty interested in creating new courses as a regular part of the AAASE curriculum. For more information on the grants being offered for 2008-2010, visit www.elon.edu/aaase. A full listing of the SURF research presenters, their mentors, and the title of their presentations can be found on page 6 of this edition of the *Black Oaks*.



*Student Undergraduate
Research*

Handprints of Africa: An Undergraduate Interdisciplinary Journal

A peer-reviewed interdisciplinary, academic journal, *Handprints of Africa* publishes original works by undergraduate writers, artists, and scholars. The journal provides a forum for informed and sustained debate among undergraduates about the study of Black life and culture throughout the world, promotes a lively exchange from students who hold diverse perspectives, and offers a mixture of fiction, poetry, plays, critical essays, interviews, book reviews, bibliographies, features/profiles, visual art, and

multimedia submissions from students in the arts and humanities, social and natural sciences, and other areas of academia. The journal is a non-profit publication, and project of the African/African-American Studies Program at Elon University. Our vision is to create the best, scholarly, undergraduate journal dedicated to the study of Black life and culture in the world. The journal's name is connected to Nelson Mandela's famous "Hand of Africa" piece, which was said to have been created

by accident while he was working on a sketch inspired by his 27 year imprisonment on Robben Island. "It is almost as if the continent is imprinted on his soul" (Lori Read, *The Times*). The name also points to the fist symbolic of the Black Power movement in the United States. Submissions and inquiries should be directed to aaase@elon.edu. Faculty members are urged to encourage students to submit work of a high caliber for publication consideration & to follow submission guidelines carefully.



AAASE Faculty—Active in Scholarship & Research

In addition to the extensive mentoring in which AAASE faculty engage with our amazing students, they are actively engaged in research and scholarly collaborations with students and colleagues at the university, across the nation, and around the globe. They are presenting their work worldwide, developing new courses, crafting new ways of incorporating technology into their teaching, and sharing their innovations with the Elon community. Dr.

Charles Irons, recently launched his "OtherSouths" searchable database, which organizes census data for Alameda county from the Civil War; Dr. Heidi Frontani and Dr. Brian Digre, Professor of History, both presented papers at the annual African Studies Conference held in New York; Prof. Sandra Reid, Lecturer in Human Services was elected to a three-year term by NC Gov. Mike Easley to serve on the state's Crime Commission; Dr.

Francis Ward-Johnson has published and been featured nationally for her work in Public Relations, and Dr. Prudence Layne has presented her work at conferences locally & globally. To support our community's research, we continue to add to the AAASE database available via our website, and increase library holdings and the funds available to support professional development expenses for faculty and students. See p. 7 for more details

**Across Elon's
Campus, faculty,
students, and staff
are deeply engaged
and committed to
the study of the
African and the
African-American
experiences and
the rest of Africa's
global diaspora.**

Elite Group of Civil Rights Activists Visit Elon

Julius Chambers, whose work as a civil rights attorney made school desegregation a reality in Charlotte and many other cities, told prospective law students that the poor and uneducated need advocates to fight on their behalf. Chambers' remarks came during the first Diversity Day at Elon University School of Law on Feb. 9. His visit was first in a long line of Civil Rights activists to visit the campus this Spring alone. Renowned journalist, author,

and civil rights activist, Charlayne Hunter-Gault visited the Elon campus on February 25th to deliver the Liberal Arts Forum lecture. Hunter-Gault, the first African-American woman to attend the University of Georgia is a correspondent for NPR and Africa Bureau Chief for *Essence* magazine. Following on her heels was Emmy-Award winning, Independent filmmaker Dante James, known for the PBS Documentary *Slavery and the Making of America*. His April

12th visit was sponsored by the End Slavery Now Coalition! at Elon, of which AAASE is a part. The most recent visitor to our campus was Senator James Wofford, who delivered the James P. Elder Lecture in Whitley Auditorium on April 17th. He was appointed to Kennedy's staff as civil rights advisor, and introduced Dr. King to Mahatma Gandhi's non-violent strategy for change. Go to the AAASE website for more details on each visit.



Charlayne Hunter-Gault Among the Group of Civil Rights Activist to Visit Elon

Congratulations to the AAASE Graduating Minors, Class of 2008

The twenty-three members of the Class of 2008, graduating with a minor in African/African-American Studies, will leave an indelible mark on the program. Their interests and talents are diverse, but their curiosity about, advocacy and passion for Black life and culture will continue long after they have left Elon.

Erica Ayala is from New York and will earn a degree in Political Science. She has served as the Elon University chapter president of Alpha Kappa Alpha, Inc. She uses the courses in her minor to help her learn more about her family's Afro-Hispanic past. These courses have allowed her to study the politics, dances, peoples, and environments of the continent. In January of 2008, she fulfilled her lifelong dream of visiting the Motherland when she studied abroad in South Africa. She plans to become a child advocate.

Merissa Baxter is from North Carolina and will earn her degree in Biology. She has an additional minor in Business. Merissa plans to work with the Environmental Protection Agency and pursue a master's degree in either Public Health or Environmental Health. Her work in AAAS has exposed her to African-American classics and history.

Douglas Boateng from Accra, Ghana, will graduate with a degree in International Studies. Doug hopes to work for a major international firm in the supply chain/trading industry. His favorite courses have been in black history, especially the ones that feed both his mind and body. He says, "I ate one of the most amazing international foods in an A/AA class."

Tawina Clarke will earn a degree in international Studies. She has an additional minor in Biology. She transferred to Elon University from Xavier University after Hurricane Katrina devastated New Orleans. In addition to completing courses in African/African-American literature and history, she is also interested in Caribbean politics and culture since her family hails from Guyana.

Phillip Collins will graduate with a degree in Business/Marketing. He hails from Kingsport, Tennessee and will use the knowledge he gains from his courses in the program to help him develop intelligent, responsible, and creative strategies to market to minority demographics.

Justine Davis will earn a degree in International Studies. She has studied abroad in Ghana and Senegal. While taking classes at the University of Ghana; she also interned at the Center for Democratic Development. She hails from Winston-Salem, NC. **(A Wilhelmina Boyd AAASE Scholar 2008.)**

Marlaena DeHaven hails from Centreville, Virginia, and will earn a degree in International Studies. She has taken courses in African Art, the History of Jazz, and the Geography of Africa.

Dionne Eleby will earn a degree in Musical Theatre. She has an additional minor in Business Administration. As an actress and entertainer, Dionne has performed in several Elon University dramatic productions, including *Blues for an Alabama Sky*. Miss Eleby uses her study of the history, culture, literature, geography, film, and dance of Black peoples to help her develop her craft and to create realistic and accurate portrayals of Black characters on the dramatic stage. She hails from Atlanta, Georgia and will be working in Charlotte, NC at the Central Piedmont Community College Summer Theatre, playing Brenda in *Smokey Joe's Cafe*, Irene in *Crazy for You*, Aladdin's mother in the children's show, and in the ensemble of *Annie Get your Gun*.

Lauren Eleuteri will receive a degree in history. She has an additional minor in Secondary Social Sciences Li-censure. In addition to the history courses she has taken on modern Africa and African-American History, she has also taken courses on education in West Africa, slavery in British North America, and African-American literature.

Nina Foucheux will earn a degree in Human Services. She hopes to become a social worker for at-risk youth out west, preferably in Colorado. She spent a semester studying abroad in Ghana. She writes, "It was the most rewarding experience of my life." She hails from Silver Spring, Maryland.

Sherita Hamilton will earn a degree in psychology. She is pursuing a career in Human Resources and will use her courses in AAAS to promote diversity within the workplace.

Sandra Kpodo will earn a degree in Biology. Her courses have allowed her to explore African-American and

Caribbean literatures, education in West Africa and the history of modern Africa. She hails from Fairfax, Virginia and plans to attend medical school after a year off.

Rebecca Kuhn took an African-American literature course that, in her words, "transformed her life and way of thinking." She will earn a degree in History. In addition to studying the history of the Civil Rights Movement and the devastation of HIV/AIDS on families, she has also explored the effects of genocide and slavery.

Caitlin Mackeown will earn her degree in Political Science. She hails from Middle Haddam, Connecticut. She plans to attend graduate school to major in International Studies/Political Economy with a focus on Africa, and perhaps serve in the Peace Corps.

Amachiyana Payton will earn degrees in History and Psychology. She hails from Washington, DC and credits her early Afrocentric educational upbringing to her continued love and interest in the lives and cultures of Black peoples. She has traveled to Ghana and studied abroad in South Africa, and credits the latter as "one of the most inspirational and educational experiences" of her life. Also a lover and practitioner of African Dance, Amachiyana plans to attend law school and become an Educational Advocate and work to bridge the educational gap between other racial groups and African American students

Thomas Pillsbury will earn a degree in Sociology. He has taken courses related to African Art, Ethics and Race, Race and American Politics and the Harlem Renaissance.

Janice Sackey is from Gaithersburg, Maryland. In addition to the wide range of courses she has taken in the study of Black arts, she has been an active member of the Elon family. Janice has been accepted to Emory University to pursue her dream of becoming a Nurse Practitioner. She has served as President of the Elon University chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. She writes, "It has been an enriching and rewarding experience to learn with greater depth the history, struggle, and beauty of the African/African-American experience I have truly enjoyed all that I have learned." She will earn a degree in Biology.

Lauren Schuster will earn her degree in Art. She supplements her love of Black art with the study of African-American literature and African politics. She has studied abroad in Ghana. She hails from the US Virgin Islands.

Samantha Sledd will receive a degree in Political Science. In addition to studying the impact of race on America's political landscape, she has also explored the politics of Africa and studied abroad in Ghana, which she credits for pushing her to pursue work in the non-profit field. She has applied to law school to pursue international and human rights law. Miss Sledd hails from Virginia.

Samantha R. Smith will receive a Business/marketing degree. Her diverse exploration into the experiences of Blacks has allowed her to take courses on African film, education in West Africa, African history, and nineteenth century African-American literature.

Ashley Titolo will receive a degree in International Studies. She has interned with The Constituency for Africa in Washington, DC where she undertook a large research project on China's engagement with Africa. In addition to studying abroad in Paris to help her develop the French-speaking skills she sees as "imperative to her African studies", she hopes to study abroad in Ghana in January 2008. **(A Wilhelmina Boyd AAASE Scholar 2008.)**

Muyinat Taiwo hails from Norcross, Georgia, but her family is originally from Nigeria. She will earn her degree in Business Administration with a concentration in Marketing. Muyinat hopes to begin a career in either marketing research, advertising, or university administration. Whichever path she chooses, Muyinat says, "I fully intend on using the knowledge that I have gained from both my areas of study to better serve the needs of the African-American market."

Krysten Trull hails from Bridgeton, NJ. Krysten says, "I chose to be an African/African American Studies minor because I am very interested in the culture of Africa and the history of the people. I took an African-American history class in my senior year of high school, and my teacher's pride and extreme knowledge in the subject helped fuel my interests and made me want to study further. I loved taking the AAAS classes, especially the literature and history classes. The works and ideas of African American men and women throughout history offer insight into the problems and concerns of modern-day society. I enjoyed all of my AAAS classes and hope to take many more in the future." Krysten will earn a degree in Sociology. She hopes to work with people of different cultures after college in a business or performing social work.

**AAASE-Related Independent Study Projects &
Student Presentations at SURF 2008**

STUDENT NAME(S)	TITLE	ADVISOR
John P. Butler & Steven J. Prazenica	Sub-Saharan Africa: The Next Emerging Market	Mark J. Snyder
Alexandra L. Hosteller	Human Rights Violations in Uganda	Laura Roselle
Justine Davis	Assessing International Support of Women's Peace Organizations in the Casamance Conflict: Senegal	Laura Roselle
Jessica Falkner	The Catholic Church in Haiti: Effects on Culture, Society, and Politics	David Crowe
Justine Davis	Ideologies of Land and Place: Voices From Zimbabwe's War of Liberation	Heidi Frontani
Alexander Hopkins	Fishermen's Livelihoods and Marine Protected Areas in the United States Virgin Islands: A Community-Based Approach to Fishery Conservation	Heidi Frontani
Amanda K. Brown & Kristine Silvestri	Media Images and Social Integration of Liberian and Togoloese Refugees in Ghana	Heidi Frontani
Matthew Benedict White	The French Language in Morocco	Sophie Adamson
Caitlin Mackeown	Uganda's Experience in the HIPC Initiative	Brian Digre
Douglas Boateng	Ghana and Two Decades of Structural Adjustment Programs: A Proven Record of Policy Failure in Ghana Today	Brian Digre
Zachary H. Smith	Race and Religion in the Wilmington Massacres of 1898	Charles Irons
Erika Lamanna	Measuring the Impact of Mircocredit on Growth in Sub-Saharan Africa	Dr. Steve DeLoach
Dillon K. Wyatt	The Construction , Adoption, and Assignment of Southern Black Social Types	Tom Mould
Kelci Flowers	Body Image Dissatisfaction Among African-American Women	Maurice Levesque
Meghan Blume	Conquering the Conqueror: The Success of <i>Things Fall Apart</i> as Achebe's Postcolonial Rebuttal to Racism in Conrad's <i>Heart of Darkness</i>	Janet Myers
Krista Naposki	Covert Racism Still Exists in Newspapers: A Study of Local and National Dailies	David Copeland
Muyinat Taiwo	African Americans in the Media (Independent Research Project)	Prudence Layne

A Sampling of AAASE-Faculty Research and Professional Development Achievements, Spring 2008

Robert Anderson, associate professor of political science, spoke about the issue of "race" as it is being discussed and addressed in the 2008 Presidential Campaign, was the guest speaker in the Twin Lakes GREAT DECISIONS Foreign Policy Lecture Series on the topic of "Engaging the Enemy: The Diplomatic Pros and Cons of Blacklisting Those With Whom We Disagree," and he spoke to the Alamance County chapter of Senior Democrats on the proposed changes to national immigration laws. Visit <http://www.questioningmatters.com/index.html>

Ocek Eke *The* (Greensboro, N.C.) *News & Record* published a guest column by Eke in its March 6, 2008, edition. The assistant professor in the School of Communications recounted his experience of helping to lead a class to the Gulf Coast over winter term for a course on volunteer work and social justice. Eke argued that the recovery efforts taking place in Mississippi and Louisiana are due in large measure to the work of volunteers.

Heidi Frontani, Associate Professor of Geography and Justine M. Davis, an International Studies major and AAASE minor, collaborated on coded memoirs of indigenous Shona and British colonial men and women who described their lives during Zimbabwe's mid-1960s to 1980 liberation struggle. Their efforts resulted in a co-authored manuscript entitled 'Ideologies of Land and Place: Memories from Zimbabwe's War of Liberation,' which has been accepted for publication in a 2008 issue of the peer-reviewed *South African Geographical Journal*.

Charles Irons created a searchable digital archive containing thousands of nineteenth-century historical records about Alamance County from 1860-1872. The database made its formal public debut Feb. 9 at a conference Irons organized and hosted at Elon. The site, allows researchers and the general public to sort through Census data and Confederate military records to glean a better understanding of the county before and after the war. To access the site, visit www.elon.edu/othersouths

Prudence Layne has three articles under peer-review: "Trading Domesticity for Duplicity: Mary Seacole's Refashioning of the Colonized Body." (*CLIO Journal*) "Finding the 'Lost Body': Caribbean Writers at the Crossroads" (*CERPAC Journal Publication—Just accepted for publication*) & "A People in Drag, A Nation Unsexed: The Politics of Dress in Caribbean Women's Fiction." Essay in *The Cross-dressed Caribbean: Gender Dynamics in Literature and Culture* edited by Maria Cristina Fumagalli and Bénédicte Ledent). She also co-presented "International Service-Learning: Ethics in Cross-Cultural Partnerships." at the North Carolina Campus Compact Conference at Elon, won Best Poster Presentation with "The Global Links Library and Literacy Initiative: Using Technology and International Service-Learning to Improve Cross-Cultural Knowledge and Understanding among South African and American Students" at the Lily South Conference on College and University Teaching-Learning by Design, UNC-Greensboro, and participated in the "2008 Institute on College Student Values" conference at Florida State University in Tallahassee, Florida.

Frances Ward-Johnson, associate professor in the School of Communications, presented "Ethical Dilemmas: The Social Media Release and Its Implications for the PR-Journalist Relationship" at the 11th annual International Public Relations Research Conference held March 6-9 in Miami. the paper focused on the rise of the social media press release, which is being debated on ethical grounds in both journalism and public relations circles. Johnson also received a national grant of \$4800 from the Public Relations Society of America Foundation to complete research for a project titled "Realities in the Workplace: The Future of Minorities in Public Relations," which will focus on minority students and practitioners and their view of public relations.

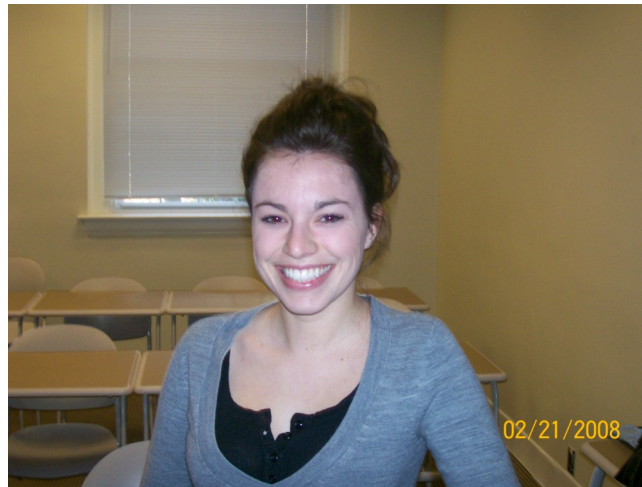
CONGRATULATIONS TO THE WILHELMINA BOYD AASE SCHOLARS 2008 MISS JUSTINE DAVIS



Miss Davis is an International Studies major with additional minors in Political Science and Geography. She has taken seven courses covering topics related to the African continent, six of them while studying abroad in Senegal and Ghana. Miss Davis served as the teaching assistant for Africa's Peoples and Environments, an upper level geography course in Spring 2008. In addition, she has completed two major research projects related to Africa, "Ideologies of Land and Place: Memories from Zimbabwe's War of Liberation" and "Assessing the International Appeal of Women's Peace Organizations in the Casamance Conflict, Senegal" for which she received funding from the office of undergraduate research. The first research project was a collaboration with Dr. Heidi Frontani and coded memoirs of indigenous Shona and British colonial men and women who described their lives during Zimbabwe's mid-1960s to 1980 liberation struggle. Their efforts have resulted in a co-authored manuscript entitled 'Ideologies of Land and Place: Memories from Zimbabwe's War of Liberation,' which has been accepted for publication in a 2008 issue of the peer-reviewed *South African Geographical Journal*. An active and emerging scholar, Miss Davis has presented at statewide and national conferences, including the Spring Undergraduate Research Forum held annually at Elon University.

During her studies abroad, Miss Davis completed an internship with a Ghanaian non-governmental organization, Center for Democratic Development, and worked with women's groups in Senegal. Throughout these experiences, she took classes, learned and used native languages, and communicated across cultural barriers. Miss Davis plans to work with non-governmental organizations or non-profit groups in development projects on the African continent after attending a graduate program with an African studies and African language components. Of her plans, Miss writes, "I am currently applying for jobs in the U.S. and abroad that would allow me to apply the knowledge I have gained as an African/African-American studies minor. My coursework and study abroad experiences have made me extremely passionate about learning more about African cultures, peoples and politics and I hope to continue this education as I pursue a career in African studies."

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE WILHELMINA BOYD AAASE SCHOLARS 2008 MISS ASHLEY TITOLO



Miss Titolo has spent her last four years dedicated to African and African American Studies, contributing to the overall diversity of Elon's campus, and she plans on continuing that commitment to issues concerning African and African Americans in the future. Miss Titolo is a major in International Studies, specializing in the region of Africa and has an additional minor in Political Science. She spent a semester in Washington D.C. completing an internship with the Constituency For Africa (CFA), a nonprofit organization that works to mobilize and organize the various stakeholders in Washington who play a role in making decisions that affect Africa. The agency also advocates for justice and improved conditions on the continent. During her internship, she completed a research project on China's engagement with the African continent and the implications of its increased presence for African peoples and their environment. Her research allowed her to meet with African ambassadors and conduct interviews with embassy officials. Among her other research pursuits is China's soft power diplomacy in Sudan, part of the focus of a presentation she made on oil in Sudan at Elon's Earth Day celebration on April 22nd.

While at Elon, she has taken courses and participated in activities that focus around African/African American studies. In addition to serving as a Periclean Scholar, she served as the Public Relations co-chair of the Multicultural Student Council and helped to execute Elon's first annual Women of Color Day, which celebrates women of color and their contributions to Elon. She also spent two years as the upright bassist in Elon's Jazz Ensemble and showcased this important African American art form to Elon's community. As part of an African art history course at Elon, she spent a semester working to catalog, research, and exhibit Elon's African art collection. Miss Titolo has taken courses focused on both the African and African-American experiences, including African-American Literature Since 1945. Unfortunately, illness waylaid her plans to study abroad in Ghana in Winter 2008, but she will travel to the region on her own after graduation.

Miss Titolo will be teaching middle school mathematics in New Orleans as a Teach For America corps member for the next two years, Teach For America is a national organization working to close the achievement gap that exists between low income and high income school districts in the U.S. This achievement gap negatively affects minority populations, particularly African Americans, and poverty in our country. She plans on going to graduate school to study international development in Africa after her stint with Teach For America.

African/African-American Studies at Elon University — Mission Statement

African/African American
Studies
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The mission of the program is to provide imaginative and productive spaces that foster excellence, nurture the scholarly and cultural pursuits of our students and faculty, bring global exposure to the program, and expose a wider cross-section of the Elon University community to the histories, societies, politics, languages, cultures, and economies of Black people within the United States, Africa, and throughout the world. In addition to its principle aim of stimulating teaching, research, scholarship, and service, the program will also serve as a national and international forum for individuals and organizations with an interest in and concern for African-Americans, Africa, and the rest of her Diaspora.

Visit our website:
www.elon.edu/aaase



The Coordinator's Corner

Let's 'Celebrate'!! AAASE continues to evolve at a phenomenal rate. From the largest graduating class in the program's history, the award of the first Wilhelmina Boyd AAASE Scholar Award, the more than 110 applications we receive for the sixty combined slots available in the South Africa and Ghana winter term study abroad programs, to our minors who received five of the fifteen Lumen awards of \$15,000 for their projects related to African/African-American studies, things just keep getting better! The campus has been abuzz with excitement as we welcomed acclaimed journalist and Civil Rights activist Charlayne Hunter-Gault, Emmy Award winning independent filmmaker Dante James (renowned for the PBS Documentary *Slavery and*

the Making of America), and Senator Harris Wofford, author of *Of Kennedys and Kings: Making Sense of the Sixties*, who was a friend of both men. The formula to our success? All credit is due to our students' energy, the amazing faculty who focus that energy, and the institution that supports us in our efforts. Yet, we are not satisfied! We've achieved what we set out to do in the past two years: rejuvenate interest on Elon's campus in the study and value of Black life and culture. As the program prepares for external review in 2008-2009, the next two years will be focused on curriculum expansion and reform and sustaining the momentum we have built. In an increasingly globalized world, the importance of Black studies assumes greater urgency and significance. Africa,

which hosts about 30% of the world's mineral & metal resources, faces huge economic and social challenges. At home, America's poorest citizens face similar issues, but our nation stands poised to make history with the Democratic Senator from Illinois, Barack Obama, who may become the nation's first African-American President. The students in our program give us all the courage to be optimistic about the future as we send them out into the world to face these challenges, so we celebrate them and say congratulations!



AAASE Program
Coordinator
Dr. Prudence Layne