Tia Williams, also a junior sociology major, is a member of the women’s basketball team. She believes in leading by example and has become one of the team’s leading scorers. Tia is quick to point out that, “Defense wins the game.” She also believes time management is the key to balancing academics and sports. Tia continues to practice hard and hopes to show more improvement in the upcoming game on November 18. “You can improve every day,” Tia says. Her academic and athletic accomplishments happen as a result of setting detailed goals. “Fisk helps me to see myself as someone who excels,” Tia says. The standout athlete captured recent academic honors as she was named to the Provost’s List.

Other Fisk Sociology All-Stars are Stephanie Lewis, a junior on the volleyball team; Zola Baker-Cokolman, a senior softball player for the third year; and Robert Williams, a senior on the tennis team.

Sophomore Sociology Major Spends Semester in South Africa

Sophomore Tonja Khadir (left) plans to study abroad in the spring of 2006 in Stellenbosch, South Africa and will study the country’s history as well as the culture. Tonja is involved in many campus activities including the African Students Association and the Race Relations Institute. Tonja is also a member of the Fisk University Honors Program and was recently awarded the Charles S. Johnson Scholarship.

FBI Chooses Sociology Major as Honors Intern

Senior Sociology and Psychology major Crystal T Lee had a wonderful experience this summer as an Honors Intern for the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Washington D.C. Crystal was selected as an honors intern based upon her academic success, community service, career goals and communication skills. Crystal had the opportunity to work with many professionals in law enforcement, and said she has found the perfect match with the FBI. Crystal is eagerly anticipat- ing graduating from Fisk, and she plans to first obtain her Master’s and Ph.D. degrees, and later pursue a career with the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Sociology Intern Urges Fellow Students to “Buckle Up”

This summer, Junior Kalyn Baskerville participated in the Morehouse School of Medicine’s Summer Fellows Program. This program gave Kalyn the opportunity to work at Atlanta Mayor Shirley Franklin’s Office. In Mayor Franklin’s office, Kalyn collaborated with her mentor on the Urban-Metropolitan Demonstration Project. This project aims to increase seatbelt usage among African-American and Hispanics males, ages 15-21, to reduce the number of traffic fatalities among these populations. In addition to Atlanta, the cities of Jackson, Mississippi, Memphis, Tennessee, and Columbus, Ohio are also included in the program.

Senior Sociology Major Leads SGA Senate with a Smile

Senior Sociology and Psychology major Lyn-Tise Wright II’s Introduction to Sociology and Communications and Public Relations.

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Senior Sociology Major Spearheads Katrina Relief

Elissa Johnson and Nikkion Crowder, pictured above, are two of the 37 students that participated in the recent fall break service trip to New Orleans to aid in the post-Hurricane Katrina relief. The students helped to gut a home, including tearing down drywall and removing furniture and other items. They also went to an elementary and high school to donate school supplies and spent some time talking with the students about college and their future plans. The students donated several items of clothing to a local agency. Fisk C.A.R.E.S. (Compassionate Activism through Responsible Engagement and Service) sponsored the trip and plans to return to New Orleans during spring break.

Two Sociology Majors Are UNCF/Mellon Fellows

The UNCF/Mellon Fellowship is a research program designed to strengthen and prepare undergraduates for doctorate degrees.

Seniors Laminta Poe and Duretta Johnson became UNCF/Mellon Fellows last year. Both students spent the summer of 2005 at Emory University. The overall goal of the summer workshop was to select a topic of interest for a research project and to finish a prospectus (literature review) by the end of the program.

Students from other UNCF-fulfilled schools, as well as from Emory University, participated in the summer workshop. The scholars complete the necessary tools for achievement in 2005. These classes would include lectures on how to go about constructing the prospectus, getting prepared for graduate school and the GRE, as well as presenting the research topic to the group.

Annual stipends are available for the students’ research and travel stipends are available if needed. Students can also receive funding in the program to assist with their dissertations. "I would recommend this program to others finishing their freshman year because although it is hard work, it is worth it," Laminta said.

Senior Seminar Students Research Social Issues

Senior Seminar is the last required course for Sociology majors. Each senior is required to choose a research project related to a social phenomenon. Using research methods acquired in the Sociology major, students will have the opportunity to present their undergraduate research at the Southern Sociological Society conference in Atlanta, Georgia in April. In addition to a research project, the seniors also discuss career goals and how to achieve those goals. This academic year, there are 21 seniors, which is the largest Sociology senior class in the last decade. Their projects and career goals are of a wide variety, showing the versatility of Sociology as a discipline.

Sociology Club Raises Funds for Salvation Army Angel Tree

This year the Sociology department kicked off the semester with its Annual Jamboree. Approximately 50 students attended the event, which featured faculty and current students to the freshmen and transfer students. Freshmen were provided a copy of Careers in Sociology, and seniors received Embarking on a Career in Sociology. A reception followed.

Officers were elected at the first Sociology Club meeting. Ideas were exchanged for the club to have a productive year.

The first public event this semester was the Mama’s Cookbook Fundraiser. The fundraiser was an idea developed by the officers to further Solid Food, a student group at Fisk, to the student body while raising money for the club’s charity project. The menu for this event included: Fried/BBQ chicken, green beans, macaroni & cheese, cornbread stuffing, rolls, pound cake, strawberry delight, and brownies. Over 45 faculty, staff, and students were served. The Sociology Club gained a profit of one hundred dollars from the event. These raised dollars have now been raised for the club’s annual community service project—the Salvation Army’s Angel Tree. Through this program, the club will buy Christmas gifts for underprivileged children. The Sociology Club has been donating to this organization for the past five years.

Sociology Major Experiences Research at Chapel Hill

Student interested in attending graduate school under- stands the value of obtaining research experience. For this reason, Duretta Johnson, sociology major and senior at Fisk, applied to UNCG-Chapel Hill’s Summer Pre-Graduate Research Experience.

After being accepted and enrolling in the program, she found herself among a group of fifty students from across the country.

“This experience taught me a lot about the demands of research in a 10-week time period," Duretta said. “I had regular sessions with my mentor, who was a professor at Duke and UNC, and these sessions were especially helpful as they offered excellent advice about what I wanted to do to make my research project better. Also, each week we had a writing class, GRE class, meetings that discussed various topics about graduate school, frequent meetings with our graduate student advisor, presentation sessions in which we presented our research, a poster presentation session, and a conference at the end of the program.”

Duretta’s research project was called “Understanding the Factors Related to African-American Women and Poverty.” She was able to present our research, a poster presentation session, and a conference at the end of the program.

The full semester has been dedicated to finding ways to enhance community service and scholarship. As well as on-fund raising. The Sociology Club hopes to bring speakers to campus to discuss a wide range of issues from homeownership and budgeting to the death penalty.

The Sociology Club’s mission is to keep the students of Fisk University abreast of social issues in the local, national, and global community.

Dr. Brignall Joins Sociology Faculty

New visiting assistant sociology professor, Dr. Thomas Brignall, comes from a long history of involvement with sociological issues. A child of rural parents, he spent most of his childhood in Kalamazoo, Michigan. Growing up, he enjoyed hockey, Taekwondo, and music. Since junior high school, Dr. Brignall knew he wanted to be a sociologist. He enjoyed books like the Sociological Imagination by C. Wright Mills, Marxism, and was always curious to learn about the great leaders of the twentieth century who participated in anti-Vietnam protests and the civil rights movement. Dr. Brignall often questioned authority and policies in government. After teaching at Tennessee Tech for five years, Dr. Brignall happily accepted the opportunity to teach at Fisk University. He is confident that Fisk professors encourage students to become professionals, and to continue the Fisk tradition of excellence. “There is a sense of unity and pride here that is not as common among public colleges,” he said. He finds Fisk students are more prepared for the coursework, eager to learn, and that the professors have a desire to prepare students for success.

When asked what he wanted Friskies to learn, Dr. Brignall stated that he wanted to encourage students to question everything and “be an active part of your own education.” He believes that a college education has many purposes. “An important goal of any university is for students to develop the repertoire to look at the world critically and understand that learning is a never-ending process.” He is looking forward to working with Fisk to continue the tradition of groundbreaking social change.

Three Sociology Seniors Participate in McNair Scholars Program

Three sociology majors are participants in the Ronald E. McNair Scholars Program. Senior Crystal Lee is a second-year scholar and seniors Danisha Williams and Tiki Ross are both first-year scholars. The McNair program is designed to help underrepresented, undergraduate students receive the necessary tools to obtain doctoral degrees. The scholars participated in a month-long workshop in May. During the workshop, students studied vocabulary words, suffixes, as well as mathematical strategies that will be very helpful when taking the GRE test. In the first month of the program, the scholars attend a number of informative workshops such as Why the Ph.D. and How to choose your Graduate Advisor.

“Even though the amount of work was intense, I was able to get a better understanding of what graduate school is like, especially for students of color, by speaking with the graduate students at UNC, and from the weekly meetings where we discussed the issues,” Duratta said. “From my experience, grad school is about hard work, dedication, discipline, and having a passion for knowledge. My summer was great because I understand that the patience needed to conduct an academic research project, while learning what it takes to be a graduate student.”