

LOOKING GLASS

Fisk University, Department of Sociology
and Sociology Club Annual Newsletter

LET'S CELEBRATE!

Sociology's very own Candace Warren has been elected Miss Fisk 2010-2011. Some things she seeks to accomplish in her role as Miss Fisk are court-sponsored events, a Miss Fisk blog, and better communication. Her greatest hope for the legacy she will leave behind is that it will be one of "excellence" in her academic performance, court reign, and personal relationships with family, friends, mentors, and peers.

Though some people may see her as the title, she says she finds it inspiring to know that she can now have the influence of what her position holds. She says, "I still feel like Candace." She believes through encouragement, hope, and faith, along with hard work, she can help improve upon what many before her have already built. She says it is the job of Miss Fisk to recruit and retain students and to build and maintain relationships.

Candace is a member of the W.E.B. DuBois General Honors Program and Alpha Kappa Delta, the sociology honor society. She is committed to her work as a student ambassador and with a campus ministry organization. She was secretary of the Sociology Club last year and is vice-president this year.

Candace aspires to earn a Ph.D. in sociology. Her topic of interest is the socialization of youth. Her goal, she states, is to "strategically assist international faith-based youth development non-profit organizations in their efforts to challenge and assist youth to succeed in life."

Many Fiskites agree that Candace meets the standards of "The Fisk Woman." Ever graceful and encouraging, her smile and accessibility are a welcoming feature. Candace is optimistic, exuberant, and conscientious; these three qualities brought her to the attention of the campus community as soon as she arrived on campus for the pre-college program. She says that the greatest challenge she faced here at Fisk was learning to believe in herself. Thanks to the high level of expectations of her professors and peers, Candace says she has confidence in herself and her abilities.



SOCIOLOGY CLUB OFFICERS 2009-2010

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Charlette Goodin
Shanicia Goston
Courtney Jones
Tina Storey
Candace Warren

FACULTY SPOTLIGHT: DR. SHIRLEY RAINEY-BROWN

Dr. Shirley Rainey-Brown is a leading environmental justice activist and scholar. Dr. Rainey-Brown's article "Grassroots Activism: Women and Their Role in the Environmental Justice Movement" has recently been published in the journal *Race, Gender, & Class*. The 2010 article, which was co-authored with Dr. Glenn Johnson of Clark Atlanta University, provides detailed insight into the significance of race and gender in the environmental justice movement—Dr. Rainey-Brown's area of specialty.

Within the Environmental Justice paradigm, she also has published numerous articles on topics such as racism, toxic wells, and Hurricane Katrina and its impact on the students of Historically Black Colleges and Universities. Also forthcoming in 2010 is Dr. Rainey-Brown's Environmental Justice academic course textbook.

Dr. Rainey-Brown is currently conducting a case study on Macintosh, Alabama—a city she refers to as "an invisible community" that has become a victim of environmental racism.

Dr. Rainey-Brown will be teaching a new course in her area of specialty in the fall, Sociology 345, Environmental Justice. The course will provide a general overview of the history, theoretical framework, and grassroots activism of the Environmental Justice Movement.

Though Dr. Rainey-Brown's work keeps her busy, she was recently married and enjoys spending time with her three adult children.

BUILDING BRIDGES

Case Western Reserve University sociology majors Jasmine Jordan and Brittany Radford each joined the Fisk family for a one semester exchange experience. The Case Western partnership was also strengthened as Fisk sociology majors Bianca Schaeffer, Candace Warren, and Charity Witherspoon traveled to Case with other LEAD students in the fall.



Brittany Radford

Jasmine, a joint sociology and Spanish major, learned of the Fisk-Case exchange while a senior in high school. "From that point forward," she stated, "my heart was set on participating in the exchange. I wanted to experience a college atmosphere different from Case." She added, "I was always curious about the collegiate experiences at HBCUs, so I thought this would be the perfect opportunity."



Jasmine Jordan

Brittany, a sociology and pre-law major, investigated opportunities available to her at Case when she entered the university as a freshman. She found the domestic exchange program with Fisk. "I was ecstatic about this opportunity," she said. "I wanted to experience the cultural aspects of an HBCU and gain a better understanding of African American history."

The Fisk-Case Domestic Exchange Program, according to Jasmine, provided her the opportunity to "go away to college." Although she lived in a dorm at Case, Jasmine's home was only 10 miles from the campus. Jasmine said she appreciated learning more about her African American heritage at Fisk. She was also a fan of diversity. "I found the diversity among the student body to be very rewarding," she said. "There were students here from across the United States as well as from the Caribbean Islands. I enjoyed the close-knit family environment and the welcoming atmosphere." Jasmine said, "I also enjoyed the strong school spirit among the Fisk faculty and students, and of course the traditions. Simple things such as clapping for people when they drop a cup in the cafeteria, Opening Honors Convocation, coronation ceremony, and even the spirit walk, made Fisk memorable."

Brittany was a participant in the Alternative Spring Break, a service project designed to help rebuild New Orleans. She considered the trip her most memorable experience at Fisk. Students, staff, faculty, and community members from Case Western and Fisk University volunteered for a week in New Orleans. "This experience was amazing because it united and created friendships that may have never existed," Brittany said. "Furthermore, the New Orleans trip made me realize that the little things we do through volunteering truly make a difference in people's lives. Each person that I talked to gained something from the trip from wanting to bring about social change, educate others, or become actively involved in their communities and around the world." Brittany added, "I am grateful to have attended such a diverse institution." Jasmine concluded, "I consider myself to be a spokesperson for this program because I tell everyone who is willing to listen about my experience."

Jasmine accompanied the LEAD students on a trip to Case in Fall 2009. Bianca, Candace, and Charity received information on admissions, research opportunities, and met with the faculty in their programs of interest. They also attended a seminar on etiquette and visited a local middle school to speak about college life and to promote academic excellence. Alumni of Fisk, including Brandon Johnson, a 2008 Fisk graduate in business and sociology, who is completing a social work degree at Case, and other Case students provided insight on opportunities available at Case for Fisk students after graduation.

SOUTHEASTERN UNDERGRADUATE SOCIOLOGY SYMPOSIUM, INTER-UNIVERSITY UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM, AND STUDENT RESEARCH DAY PARTICIPANTS

The Effects of Culture and Parental Involvement on Academic Performance and Drug Use

Stacy-Ann Baker (SEUSS, SRD, IURS)

Physical Attractiveness: The Prevalence of the Eurocentric Beauty Standards

Charlette R. Goodin (SEUSS, SRD, IURS)

Three-Strikes and You're Out: Do Three-Strikes Laws Deter Crime?

Shanicia Goston (SEUSS, SRD, IURS)

The Effects of Parental Church Attendance on Child's Education, Religion and Socioeconomic Status

Agnes Johnson (SEUSS, SRD, IURS)

Foster Care and Delinquency: Fostering Criminals

Courtney Jones (SEUSS, SRD, IURS)

The Deterrence Effect of the Death Penalty on Murder Rates

Suen Jeffery (SEUSS, SRD, IURS)

The Effects of the Media on the Dating Expectations of African American Female College Students

Lauren Royal McDonald (SEUSS, SRD)

The Outcomes of Parental Physical Abuse

Danielle Marshall (SRD)

Speech Delay in Children

Ryan Maxwell (SRD)

The Stigma of Special Education as it Relates to Race and Sex

Nikkia Thornton (SRD)

Beauty is in the Eye of the Beholder: Dating Preferences in a College Setting

Charity Witherspoon (SEUSS, SRD, IURS)

STUDENT RESEARCH DAY SOCIOLOGY AWARD WINNERS

Agnes Johnson, First Place
Courtney Jones, Second Place
Suen Jeffery, Third Place

EXPLORING THE WORLD THROUGH SOCIAL RESEARCH

Student research is an important focus of the sociology degree at Fisk. Seniors have three opportunities to present their senior seminar research projects each spring.

In 2010, eight sociology seniors presented their senior research projects at the 28th Southeastern Undergraduate Sociology Symposium held at Emory University in February. This was the third year Fisk seniors participated in SEUSS. The symposium featured presenters from 23 universities, both public and private, large research universities and smaller liberal arts colleges.

Their projects included one qualitative study on dating. Two students conducted surveys, both related to beauty. Two quantitative studies used existing statistics related to criminal justice issues. The other three quantitative studies were secondary analyses and the topics were drug use and education, parental influence on religiosity, and foster care and deviance.

These eight students and three other sociology seniors prepared poster presentations for Fisk University's Student Research Day. Since there were 11 presenters in the discipline, sociology received awards for first, second, and third place.

The Inter-University Undergraduate Sociology Research Symposium was held at Belmont University in April. The symposium was initiated in 2004 by Fisk University and the symposium rotates between the four universities in Nashville that offer undergraduate sociology degrees. Seven sociology seniors presented at the symposium.

LIFE AFTER FISK: AN UPDATE FROM A RECENT GRADUATE



Jonique Green

I have decided that I will be an advocacy planner. I am currently a graduate student at the University of Louisville's School of Urban and Public Affairs, and I am doing very well. In the fall, I will enroll in the University of Louisville Law School. I realize that the extra degree is imperative to my line of work. I am already involved with the Black Law Student's Association (BLSA) on campus. I will work on both degrees simultaneously, and I look forward to my bright career and future.

I am interning at Preservation Louisville, Inc., a nonprofit organization focusing on historical preservation and on protecting and promoting the community's cultural, environmental and architectural heritage. This is the leverage that we will need when applying for jobs.

I am currently enrolled in Land Use and Planning Law which is an essential course for the planning field. It is one of my favorite classes along with another course, Historical Preservation. Everything is perfect timing because I am learning and applying, and applying and learning as I go.

SOCIOLOGY CLUB HIGHLIGHTS

CAREER SPEAKERS WELCOMED

Two Fisk graduates were welcomed back to campus in November to discuss careers in sociology. Joan Clayton-Davis and Shirley Nix-Davis received graduate degrees in sociology from Fisk. Clayton-Davis designed media campaigns to influence social change and collaborated on a book on health disparities in the African American community. Nix-Davis developed a family resource center to serve an inner city Nashville community and worked in the school system as a teen pregnancy counselor.

Currently, both Clayton-Davis and Nix-Davis supervise the Parent Talk Program, which encourages parents' involvement in their children's education.

When explaining the benefits of a sociology degree, Clayton-Davis stated, "Having a degree in sociology helped me become an expert in dealing with social issues that impact people's lives." Both speakers encouraged students to obtain graduate degrees, improve communication skills, gain international experience, take advantage of internship opportunities, and conduct and publish research.

THE SOCIAL CHAT EVENT

People of all ages and backgrounds came together and shared their opinions on various social issues in the Sociology Club's Social Chat event. Alumni, staff, and college students spoke intelligently about sex, drugs, religion, and love.



Participants at the Social Chat Event

The Fisk community played musical chairs; when the music stopped, the participants discussed a new question with a new face and exchanged ideas until the music started again. The topics had no restrictions and the discussions revealed insight, depth, and personal truths: what makes boys men; does weave mean a lack of confidence.

HEALTH AND BUSINESS FOCUS

Student Health Ambassador and Sociology Club member Joseph Bazelais noted a discrepancy in the amount of health information available to males on campus. The Sociology Club co-hosted The Health Care Barbershop as a part of the homecoming festivities. Local barbers were invited to give free haircuts as male students received health care information on issues such as sexually transmitted infections and prostate cancer.

A second event co-hosted by the Sociology Club was "Roots: Celebrating Black Hair, Black Enterprise, and Black Women," as part of Black History Month. The goals of the event were to inform students about healthy hair maintenance and to promote the

businesses of local entrepreneurs. Local hair care professionals were invited to provide hair care tips and product samples to Fisk students. The hair care fair honored Madame C.J. Walker and Eunice Walker Johnson, two Black female entrepreneurs who made outstanding contributions to the hair care and beauty industry. Students received gift certificates and products.

HONDA CAMPUS ALL-STAR CHALLENGE

Freshman Melissa Garcia is a member of the Fisk Honda Campus All Star Challenge team. She is one of four members selected to compete in the national tournament. Her selection is based on her knowledge of current events and history and her strong commitment to the team. She is also a strong contributor on bonus questions when team members can confer. Melissa is a joint sociology and psychology major. "This is the first time there have been two freshmen on the team," Melissa says. "The majority of schools participating in HCASC have teams comprised of juniors and seniors."

Melissa was a member of her high school's African American quiz bowl team. When tryouts were announced on campus, she says, "I knew I had to be at the campus competition."

To prepare for competition, the Fisk team practices four times a week. The team placed third in the pre-national competition and was one of the Sweet 16 participants in the national tournament. Melissa says, "I pay so much more attention to anything that I learn in class, or see on the news, or read on the Internet because you never know what will be asked in the next question."



Melissa Garcia

Melissa is a member of the W.E.B. DuBois General Honors Program as well. She also volunteers daily at the Carl Van Vechten Art Gallery. "My secret to time management and multitasking is to see the value of every moment," Melissa says.

SUMMER INTERNSHIPS

Office Discipleship Leader, Kids Across America, Candace Warren
Cook County Women's Justice Department, Chicago, Illinois, Bianca Worthy
American Bar Foundation Summer Fellowship, IRT Associate, Angela Addae



Angela Addae

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