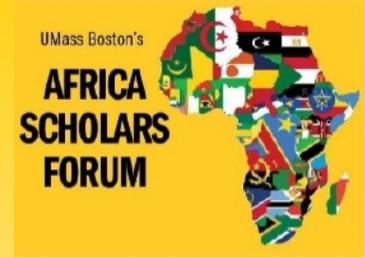




TALKING DRUM

AFRICAN SCHOLARS FORUM NEWSLETTER

Fall 2019 & Spring 2020 EVENTS



DECEMBER, 2019

December 13th - Kwanzaa Fest & Amilcar Cabral Speaker by Professor Nada Ali: Sudan's 2018- 2019 Uprising & Democratic Transition: A Gender Perspective.



February 28th - Africa Day
"Challenges to Pan-Africanism: Afrophobia and migration across

May 20th - Ubuntu Awards.

The talking drum is one of the oldest prominent among the Yorubas and of human speech. The talking drum is

musical instrument from West Africa and it is Hausas. It can be regulated to mimic the tone used as a form of communication to send

UMASS BOSTON ASF PRE-CONFERENCE RECEPTION

The [UMass Boston Africa Scholars Forum](#) (ASF) pre-conference reception took place on the 19th Nov. 2019. This was a networking event for Greater Boston and [African Studies Association](#) conference attendees to network before the four-day conference. This year's conference theme was "**Being, Belonging and Becoming in Africa**" and featured African Studies via panels, round tables, plenary events with keynotes, dance party, exhibitions, and screenings of award winning movies. Below is a picture of [Dean David Cash](#) and [Professor Rita Kiki Edozie](#) at the UMass Boston ASF PRE-conference reception.



Dean of McCormack Graduate School Dean David Cash and Professor Rita Kiki Edozie



Dean David Cash and other participants at the ASF pre-conference



UMass Boston Graduate Student Volunteers

ASA CONFERENCE 2019

The 2019 edition of the [African Studies Association](#) (ASA) conference took place at the Marriott Copley Square in Boston between the 21st and 24th of November 2019. With almost 2,000 individual and institutional members worldwide, the African Studies Association encourages the production and dissemination of knowledge about Africa, past and present. Based in the United States, the ASA supports understanding of an entire continent in each facet of its political, economic, social, cultural, artistic, scientific, and environmental landscape. ASA members include scholars, students, teachers, activists, development professionals, policymakers and donors.

This year, the [University of Massachusetts, Boston](#) provided her first co-sponsorship of the ASA conference and the Local Arrangements Committee included UMass Boston's Professor [Rita Kiki Edozie](#), [Kwamina Panford](#) from Northeastern University, [Eric Schmidt](#) from Boston University and [Abel Amado](#) from Simmons University. The opening ceremony of the meeting was an event to remember as it featured African cuisine, music, and dance performances.



Professor Edozie with other participants

The event was attended by university Presidents from Northeastern, Boston University, and Simmons University and the Chancellor of UMass Boston, Katherine Newman. In her address, Chancellor Newman commended UMass Boston's faculty and students on their study and research on Africa and for building the Africa Studies program at UMass Boston. The four day meeting featured various flavored Boston events, including panels, receptions, exhibitions, tours, and dance party featuring local African musical artists. Tours at the event included visits to the Black Freedom trail, African Meeting House, and the Nubian Art exhibition at the MFA.

Faculty from the Africa Scholars Forum, Alumni and students of UMass Boston also participated and presented papers at the meeting. Some of these include roundtable discussion on Pan Afrikan Boston, which featured **Professors Rita Edozie and Aminah Pilgrim**. *Religious Peacemaking & the Leapfrog Effect: Lessons from Nigeria's "Imam and Pastor" and their Interfaith Mediation Centre* by **Professor Darren Kew**; *Beliefs and Practices of African Immigrant Families in Early Intervention Services* by **Professor Angi Stone-MacDonald** and Ozden Pinar Irmak; *From Subsistence to Dietary Development? Historical Perspectives on Cassava and the "Nutrition Transition" in Mozambique, ca.1750 - present* by **Professor Heidi Gengenbach**; *Behind the Veil of Isidwaba (the Traditional Zulu Skirt): The Institutional In/Visibility of Female Activism in Rural South Africa* by **Professor Sindiso Weeks**; *"Speaking" Silence in Insecure Sites: the Zimbabwean Nationalist Struggle* by **Professor Jane Parpart**; *Al-Thawra di Thawrat Banat' & 'Kul Al-Balad Darfur' ['This Revolution is Girls' Revolution' & 'The Whole Country is Darfur']*: *Identities, Belonging, and Sudan's 2018/2019 Uprising* by **Professor Nada Ali** and *Excellence and Accountability: Africa's Paradigm Shift in Global Environmental Governance* by GGHS PhD program **Alumni Natalia Escobar-Pemberthy**, Universidad EAFIT and **Professor Maria Ivanova**.

Notwithstanding various UMass Boston graduate scholars also presented at various panels during the conference. Some of these presenters include **Timothy Adivilah, N. Hannah Brown, J. Michael Denney, Anna Dubrova, Jack Whitacre, Wondwossen Sintayehu, Paul Case** and **Ozden Pinar Irmak**.

Below is a brief interview with Nyingilanyeofori Hannah Brown, a GGHS doctoral student who is sharing her experience at the 2019 African Studies Association (ASA) Conference.

Why did you attend the conference, and what were your major takeaways?

I participated in the conference because I saw it as an opportunity to network with scholars working on and interested in issues and research on Africa. I was also privileged to volunteer at the conference, chair a panel session, present a paper, and be part of a roundtable on mentorship during the meeting. I enjoyed all the sessions and received valuable feedback for improving my paper.

How would you rate the overall organization of the conference?

I believe the conference was excellently coordinated. This was my first conference in the US with a diverse set of activities for participants. The meeting had a gallery, history tours, a documentary seat-in viewing section, along with exhibitions and panels. It was a great experience for me because participants always had opportunities to network and interact in various spaces.



N. Hannah Brown

What impacts did the conference have on your immediate career goals?

The conference was an excellent opportunity to present a paper I have been working on for publication and receive valuable feedback for its improvement. I was also able to network and build relationships that are already yielding positive results with colleagues working on issues related to Africa.

What did you enjoy the most from the conference?

I enjoyed the panel and roundtable discussions I attended, along with the volunteer and networking opportunities the conference presented.

How can the conference be improved upon in the future?

I think the organizers should work on increasing the number of networking and mentorship opportunities or events for graduate students in future meetings.

ASF EDITORIAL BOARD

Professor Rita Kiki Edozie—Chairperson of ASF & Editor-in-Chief.

Benjamin Daniel—Managing Editor.

N. Hannah Brown- Assistant Editor.

For more information, contact the African Scholars Forum at AfricaScholarsForum@umb.edu or at 617.287.5550