

# AFAS



AFAS: African American Studies Librarians Section  
Association of College and Research Libraries - ALA

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## GREETINGS FROM THE CHAIR

### In this Issue

Greetings from the Chair	Page 1
Looking Ahead	Page 2
Nominating Committee	Page 2
New Brochure	Page 3
Committee Reports	Page 3
Other AFAS News	Page 4
ALA/ACRL News	Page 5
African American Studies Resources	Page 5
Africana Legacy: Personal Papers and Collections	Page 6
Africana Legacy contd.	Page 7

Dear AFAS Members,

It's hard to believe that my year as Chair of the African American Studies Section is coming to an end. This has been an exciting year for our section. Together we've charted a new course for AFAS through exciting initiatives. With your continued dedication to African American Studies librarianship we can directly impact academic, special and public libraries.

My year began with the unveiling of the new AFAS website which allows the section to communicate our mission and purpose to constituents. We added a new section called the "Scholars Corner" so we could advertise our scholarly endeavors and conference presentations to further promote African American Studies librarianship. We also recommitted to publishing the AFAS newsletter twice a year and included additional sections to better inform our membership about new products, collection acquisitions, and news from the field. The AFAS vision has expanded to include the organization's interest in sharing our expertise with vendors/publishers who provide access to Black Studies periodicals and resources. These conversations and focus groups give us an opportunity to impact current database content and expand the scholarly inquiry of Black Studies.

During the past year, AFAS has intentionally positioned itself to partner with learned societies and organizations. AFAS Executive Committee submitted a target organization application to Executive Committee of the ACRL Board to establish a relationship with the Association for the Study of African American Life & History, which was approved. This relationship will be maintained by the ACRL Council of Liaison. We're now waiting to hear from ACRL Council of Liaison regarding whom they selected as a liaison from the nominees recommended by the AFAS Executive Committee. ACRL supports the liaison by providing a generous travel fund to the respective organization's conferences and programs. The liaison will serve a term of three years; for more details regarding the ACRL Council of Liaison and liaison duties please consult: <http://www.ala.org/ala/acrl/acrlissues/councilofliaisons/liaisons.cfm>

I look forward to seeing many of you in Anaheim on June 28<sup>th</sup> at our general membership meeting. Please make sure you attend so that you can reconnect with other AFAS members at the membership reception, organized by the AFAS Executive Committee and the AFAS Membership Committee. This has been an exciting year for AFAS and I look forward to our many productive endeavors in the future. It's been my pleasure to serve as the Chair of the African American Studies Section.

Carmelita Pickett  
Chair 2007-2008  
African American Studies Librarian/Research Archivist  
Robert W. Woodruff Library  
Emory University  
Atlanta, GA 30322  
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## LOOKING AHEAD: AFAS 2008-2009—THOMAS WEISSINGER, VICE CHAIR/CHAIR ELECT

Greetings AFAS Colleagues,

Late in November of last year I received a call from Debbie Malone ACRL's Board Liaison to our section. She called to explain that the Board would not fund our action plan to hold a pre-conference at the 2009 ALA Annual Conference. Friends, this was heart-wrenching. We submitted a really ambitious action plan that included holding a pre-conference, travel grants for African American Studies librarians at public research libraries, and publication of a book about African American Studies collection development.

The Board decided that using the action plan for funding a workshop deviated from the normal Annual Conference pre-conference approval process. AFAS was not the only section to request funding for a pre-conference in its action plan. The Board had not made its intent clear and so took Midwinter as an opportunity to clarify matters so that other sections would not go down the same path.

Where does this leave us? There is a positive side to this story. We were encouraged to resubmit a scaled down version of the proposal through the regular conference approval process! This was conveyed in Debbie Malone's telephone call and later in a formal letter from Mary Ellen Davis, the ACRL Executive Director. In fact Davis said that our action plan demonstrated how carefully we reviewed the strategic plan and our efforts to advance the ACRL strategic plan were appreciated.

So, there are two directions I would like to follow. ACRL will announce the call for 2009 Midwinter and Annual pre-conferences in 2008 with a spring (most likely April) deadline. We will be ready! I am sure that many of us remain enthusiastic about holding a pre-conference. The 2009 AFAS Conference Program Planning Committee will have responsibility for developing this idea.

In addition our action plan called on the

AFAS Policy and Research Committee to take responsibility for editing and publishing a book. Presumably interest remains high and the committee can announce a call for papers as early as this fall. This will be an excellent opportunity for members of AFAS to publish and contribute to our field's knowledge base. In our conversation Malone suggested that AFAS submit a book proposal to ACRL for the "Publications in librarianship" series of monographs.

I encourage your active participation in AFAS committees and programs. If you would like to volunteer for a committee, please use the ACRL online volunteer form <http://www.acrl.org/volunteer>.

## AFAS NOMINATING COMMITTEE PRESENTS 2008 CANDIDATES

THE AFAS NOMINATING COMMITTEE IS PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE THE 2008 SLATE OF CANDIDATES:

### Vice Chair/Chair Elect- 2009-2010

Harry Murphy

Vivian Fisher

### Secretary- 2009-2010

Malaika Grant

### Member-at-Large- 2008-2010

Aslaku Berhanu

Gennice W. King

AFAS continues to build on a strong foundation of devoted and qualified leadership. This year's slate of candidates illustrates that AFAS is stronger and more focused on its mission of service to scholars in the field of African American Studies. As we thrive, the membership has to volunteer for committee work, be willing to serve in leadership positions, and support its leaders. We are off to a wonderful start for 2008. We have a slate of qualified individuals running for office. Now it is our turn as a membership to elect a Board of devoted and qualified leaders.

**Do your part and vote!**

On behalf of the Nominating Committee, I want to thank the candidates for volunteering to run for office. I also want to thank the Nominating Committee members Lisa Pillow and Myrtis Cochran for their efforts in developing the slate.

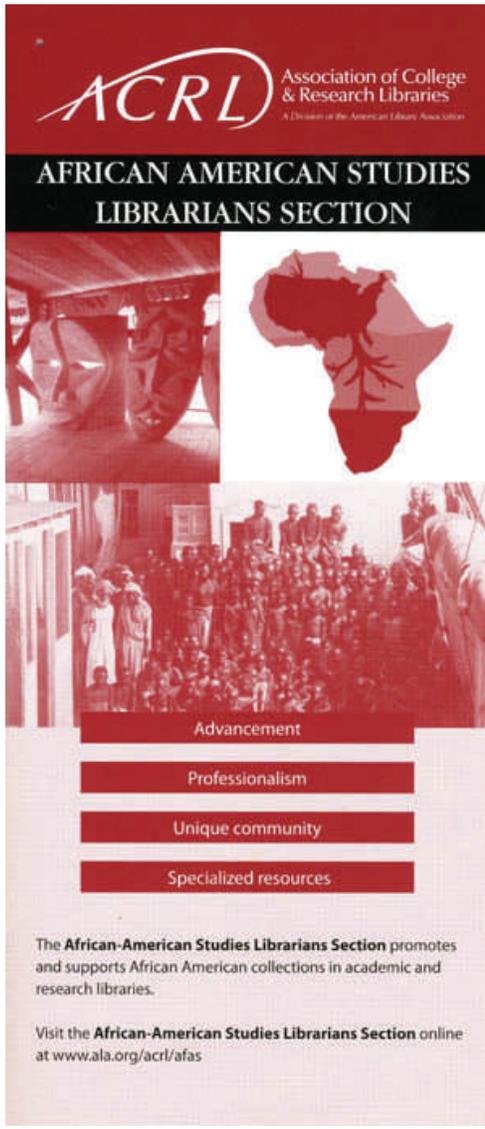
If you want to advance and sustain the work of AFAS, I encourage you to volunteer and serve your organization, run for office.

Best of luck to the 2008 AFAS Candidates!

Akilah Nosakhere

Chair, 2007 AFAS Nominating Committee

## AFAS NEW BROCHURES AVAILABLE



The graphic features the ACRL logo (Association of College & Research Libraries, A Division of the American Library Association) at the top. Below it, the text reads "AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES LIBRARIANS SECTION". The central image shows a group of people in a meeting, with a map of Africa overlaid. Below the image are four red buttons labeled: "Advancement", "Professionalism", "Unique community", and "Specialized resources". At the bottom, it states: "The African-American Studies Librarians Section promotes and supports African American collections in academic and research libraries. Visit the African-American Studies Librarians Section online at [www.ala.org/acrl/afas](http://www.ala.org/acrl/afas)".

## COMMITTEE REPORTS



AFAS at work /Philadelphia 2008  
Midwinter

### AFAS Publications Committee – Harry Murphy, Chair

The AFAS Publications Committee has completed an active and productive year. Accomplishments this past year include, a redesign of the Section home page ([www.ala.org/acrl/afas](http://www.ala.org/acrl/afas)), publishing a fall newsletter edition to compliment AFAS spring newsletter, developed a AFAS Section wiki ([wikis.ala.org/acrl/index.php/AFAS](http://wikis.ala.org/acrl/index.php/AFAS)) for the ACRL wiki, and created an AFAS ad for the National Council on Black Studies (NCBS) conference bulletin. The NCBS ad is a result of an approved AFAS Action Plan for “Strengthening ACRL’s relationship with learned societies.” We’re also excited about our newsletter editor Rebecca Hankins. Ms. Hankins careful attention to detail has enhanced the newsletter content.

### Membership Committee Allison Sutton, Chair

AFAS Membership is growing with an estimated current membership of 285 based on the last membership report. The membership committee will survey AFAS members to determine interest for future members and section activities.

### Research and Policy Committee Akilah Nosakhere, Chair

The committee is currently in the process of finalizing the Monroe Nathan Work Award for Outstanding African American Reference Resource. The biennial award seeks to recognize scholastic excellence in African American reference publications.



AFAS Executive Committee  
Members, Philadelphia 2008  
Midwinter

## About AFAS

Established as a section within the Association of College and Research Libraries of the American Library Association, AFAS is the outgrowth of a discussion group consisting of dynamic librarians with interest in and concern for African American Studies and librarianship. Its circle of founding leaders include Clarence Chisholm, Stanton Biddle, Doris H. Clack, William Welburn, and others.

### Mission Statement

The mission of the African American Studies Librarians Section is to study librarianship and collection development as it progresses and relates to African American Studies collections; to conduct ongoing evaluation and discussion of research in African American Studies; to focus on resource sharing, archival materials, bibliographic control, retrospective collecting/purchasing, mechanized information, retrieval selection policies and procedures, oral history, and others as they relate to collection development and librarianship of African American Studies.

## OTHER AFAS NEWS AND ITEMS OF INTERESTS

### **AFAS 2008 Program: "African Americans in Hollywood: Images, Performers, Films, Filmmakers, From 1903 to the Present"**

Please join the African American Studies Librarians Section for our 2008 Annual Conference program featuring noted scholar Donald Bogle. The program is scheduled for Sunday, June 29, 1:30-3:30 pm, and sponsored by ProQuest and Oxford University Press. We look forward to seeing you there.

2008 AFAS Conference Program Members:

Chair: Lisa Pillow

Members: Myrtis Cochran, Raquel Cogell, Carmelita Pickett, Courtney Young

Writings by Donald Bogle include the following:

- *Toms, Coons, Mulattoes, Mammies, and Bucks: An Interpretive History of Blacks in American Films*, Viking Press (New York, NY), 1973, 4th edition, Continuum (New York, NY), 2001.
- *Brown Sugar: Eighty Years of America's Black Female Superstars*, Harmony Books (New York, NY), 1980.
- *Blacks in American Films and Television: An Encyclopedia*, Garland (New York, NY), 1988.
- (Editor) *Black Arts Annual 1987/88*, Garland (New York, NY), 1989.
- *Dorothy Dandridge: A Biography*, Amistad (New York, NY), 1997.
- *Primetime Blues: African Americans on Network Television*, Farrar, Straus & Giroux (New York, NY), 2001.
- *Bright Boulevards, Bold Dreams: the Story of Black Hollywood*, One World/Ballantine, 2005.

### **C.L.R. James Scholar Essay Contest**

In recognition of Women's History month, the Onyx Foundation <http://www.onyxfoundation.org> would like to announce our second annual C.L.R. James Scholar Essay Contest.

This year the essay contest focuses on questions of gender in relation to democratic movements, tackling issues of patriarchy, race, class, and empire.

The contest deadline is July 1, 2008. Further details can be found on the Onyx Foundation Web site at: [http://www.onyxfoundation.org/programs/essay\\_contest](http://www.onyxfoundation.org/programs/essay_contest)

The contest is open to students of all levels, lifelong learners, community members and activists. Please share this exciting opportunity with organizations and individuals in your networks. Thanks for your support of this project.

### **Information Technology and Black Studies Workshop**

The African American Studies and Research Program (AASRP) and the Graduate School of Library and Information Science (GSLIS) at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign is accepting applications for the "Information Technology and Black Studies Workshop" to be held on the Urbana-Champaign campus \*July 24-27, 2008\*.

The goals of the workshop are to promote digital scholarship in Black Studies, transform Black Studies into a knowledge network, and build a Cooperative Research Network. Applicants must be graduate students or untenured faculty members. Please see the following link for application information: [\\_http://eblackstudies.org/NCBSworkshop/\\_](http://eblackstudies.org/NCBSworkshop/)

The workshop is sponsored by the National Council for Black Studies (NCBS) with funding from the Ford Foundation. For additional information, please contact Professor Abdul Alkalimat ([mcworter@uiuc.edu](mailto:mcworter@uiuc.edu) <mailto:mcworter@uiuc.edu>).

### **ASALH Call for Papers: 93rd Annual Conference**

*Carter G. Woodson and the Origins of Multiculturalism*

The Association for the Study of African American Life and History is soliciting papers for its 93rd Annual Conference in Birmingham AL.

Submissions are encouraged that address the origins, evolution, and implications of various concepts of multiculturalism. The theme allows for broad and varied discussions of the implications of contemporary approaches to multiculturalism for people of African descent across the world. ASALH has begun accepting proposals.

The deadline for submissions will be April 30, 2008. All proposals must be submitted electronically to ASALH. For information on how to make electronic submissions, please visit [www.asalh.org/93rdconvention.html](http://www.asalh.org/93rdconvention.html)

Academic Program Chair: James B. Stewart, Penn State University [js8@psu.edu](mailto:js8@psu.edu)

## ALA/ACRL NEWS

DAWN MUELLER-PRODUCTION MANAGER/ALA

### Save the Date: ACRL Membership Meeting/ACRL 101

All ACRL members are cordially invited to attend the ACRL Membership Meeting from 8:00-8:30 a.m., Saturday, June 28, at the ALA Annual Conference in Anaheim.

Following the membership meeting, we are offering a special First-Time Attendee Orientation from 8:30-10:00 a.m. in the same room to help new members and members new to the Annual Conference get the most out of the conference (and membership). The session will help new members and first-time attendees:

- Meet section representatives and learn how to become more involved
- Make the most of the exhibits
- Pick programs that meet your needs
- Meet other first-time attendees
- Find answers to any questions you might have about the conference or ACRL

Check the ACRL Insider (<http://www.acrl.ala.org/acrlinsider/>) for more details in early June.

### Submit a proposal for 2009 ACRL National Conference

The ACRL National Conference Executive Committee invites proposal submissions for its 14th National Conference to be held in Seattle, March 12-15, 2009. The Conference offers a forum for an exciting and energizing exchange of ideas on research, practices, developments, and visions in the field of academic and research librarianship. The conference theme, *Pushing the Edge: Explore, Engage, Extend*, reflects the promise and the challenge of the Northwest. The ACRL National Conference Executive Committee invites submitters to send their edgiest, most "out-there" proposals, to help

make ACRL 2009 a truly groundbreaking conference!

Proposals are sought for a variety of formats including contributed papers, panel sessions, pre-conferences, workshops, poster sessions, and roundtable discussions. Deadlines for proposal submissions are as follows:

- **May 12, 2008** - Contributed papers, panel sessions, pre-conferences, and workshops
- **October 20, 2008** - Poster sessions
- **November 23, 2008** - Roundtable discussions

Full text of the Call for Participation is available online at [www.acrl.org/seattle](http://www.acrl.org/seattle) (Click "Proposals"). Complete details about the conference are online at [www.acrl.org/seattle](http://www.acrl.org/seattle).

### Get Involved!

Would you like to get involved? Choose the level of involvement that meets your needs. The ACRL New Member Wiki at [http://wikis.ala.org/acrl/index.php/ACRL\\_New\\_Member\\_Wiki](http://wikis.ala.org/acrl/index.php/ACRL_New_Member_Wiki) offers a complete guide to the many avenues ACRL offers to connect, learn, contribute, and lead.

### Diversity and Outreach Fair @ Annual

Since 1998 the Diversity and Outreach Fair has taken place at ALA Annual Conference. Last year there were 563 attendees and this number will continue to grow. Each participant is given a table and space to display and share innovative services with attendees. For more information or to apply, please visit [www.ala.org/divfair](http://www.ala.org/divfair) or Issac Tufvesson at 312-280-2140 or toll free: 800-545-2433, x 2140.

## AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES RESOURCES

### Bibliographic Guide to Black Caribbean Literature

Nelly Sfeir v. de González and Thomas Weissinger, at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, have compiled a new database. It is a work in progress and its scope is gradually expanding. Eventually it will include blacks in the Caribbean, Central and South America, as well as immigrant populations in Canada, the United States, and Europe. The url for the project is: <http://media.library.uiuc.edu/projects/afla/>

### Oxford University Press's African American National Biography 8-volume set

Edited by Henry Louis Gates, Jr and Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham

Covering a broader range of African American lives than ever before, the AANB presents history through the lives of 4,100 individuals written and signed by distinguished scholars. We include not only great and famous African Americans, but a selection that will be representative of the scope of African American experience.

ISBN: 9780195160192

### Scholars Corner

Courtney L. Young has published an article titled, "Incorporating Undergraduate Advising in Teaching Information Literacy: Case Study for Academic Librarians as Advisors," in the *Journal of Academic Librarianship*, Volume 34 Number 2, March 2008, 139-144.

## Africana Legacy: Personal Papers and Collections

### Emory University's Manuscripts, Archives, and Rare Books Library (MARBL) Receives Notable Archives: Southern Christian Leadership Council (SCLC) and Alice Walker Archive

#### SCLC Archive

##### *Historical Records to Become Destination for Civil Rights Research*

The SCLC was co-founded in New Orleans, La., on Feb. 14, 1957, by Martin Luther King, Jr. and other African American leaders from across the South with the purpose of advancing the cause of racial equality. Its archive, contained in 1,100 boxes, is the second-largest collection placed with MARBL, surpassed in size only by the Sam Nunn congressional archive. The bulk of the SCLC materials date from 1968 to 1977, during the terms of SCLC's two longest-serving presidents: Ralph David Abernathy and Joseph Lowery.

The **SCLC Archive** photos document the Civil Rights Movement. Included in the archive are correspondence; press releases, speeches and other SCLC staff writings; SCLC publications; membership records; clippings and other collected print materials; photographs; audio cassette tapes; and videotapes.

The archive will complement the SCLC papers, most pre-1968, that are held by the King Library and Archives at the King Center in Atlanta. They also will enhance the holdings of African American and civil rights collections throughout Atlanta.

For more details regarding the press conference and the collection please consult the following URL: [http://www.news.emory.edu/Releases/sclc\\_conference1204836911.html](http://www.news.emory.edu/Releases/sclc_conference1204836911.html).

#### Alice Walker Archive

Alice Walker, Pulitzer Prize-winner and internationally known Georgia-born novelist and poet, will place her archive with Emory University,

"I chose Emory to receive my archive because I myself feel at ease and comfortable at Emory," said Walker. "I can imagine in years to come that my papers, my journals and letters will find themselves always in the company of people who care about many of the things I do: culture, community, spirituality, scholarship and the blessings of ancestors who want each of us to find joy and happiness in this life by doing the very best we can to be worthy of it."

Walker has written most frequently about the struggle for survival among Southern blacks, particularly black women. She also has given literary voice to the struggle for human rights, environmental issues, social movements and spirituality, as well as the quest for inner and world peace. Often considered controversial for her portrayals of racial, gender and sexual issues, Walker is widely recognized for her thoughtful weaving of realism with love for humanity and human potential.

The completeness of Walker's archive makes it truly exceptional, says Rudolph Byrd, professor of American studies and a founding member of the [Alice Walker Literary Society](#), an international organization of Walker scholars and enthusiasts.

"The archive contains journals that she has been keeping since she was 14 or 15 years old," said Byrd, who also is a friend and colleague of Walker's. "There also are drafts of many of her early works of fiction, as well as the back and forth between Alice and the editors for each book.

Faculty, students and visiting scholars from around the world who study Walker's archives at Emory will be within a 90-minute drive to her home in Eatonton, Ga., and within 20 minutes of Spelman College, which she attended for two years.

Further information about the collection can be found at this site: [http://news.emory.edu/Releases/alice\\_walker\\_archive\\_1197997696.html](http://news.emory.edu/Releases/alice_walker_archive_1197997696.html)

### Columbia University's Rare Book & Manuscript Library Acquires Papers of Activist C. L. R. James and H. Lawrence Freeman, Musician and Composer



C.L.R. James Papers

Columbia University's Rare Book & Manuscript Library is now the home of the papers of one of the preeminent political intellectuals of the twentieth century, Cyril Lionel Robert James (1901-1989), West Indian polymath and giant of 20th-Century intellectual history. During his long career

## AFRICANA LEGACY CONTD.

in North America, the Caribbean, and Europe, James was a political organizer, Marxist theorist, historian, literary and cultural critic, novelist, playwright and short-story writer, teacher, cricketer, and sports commentator.

The James papers reunite files and books from the writer's residences in London and in Washington, D.C. They include correspondence, notebooks, manuscripts, and a substantial portion of James' working library, many books of which contain substantial annotations. Of particular interest is an unfinished autobiographical manuscript.

"In terms of the diverse range of intellectual and political interests and commitments spanning Europe, America, Africa, and the Caribbean, the C. L. R. James Papers tell a fascinating story of one of the twentieth-century's most original and remarkable thinkers," said Robert Hill, Professor of History at UCLA and Historical Consultant and Advisor to the C. L. R. James Papers.

Michael Ryan, Director of the Rare Book & Manuscript Library, said that researchers will find James' papers especially valuable for James' extensive correspondence with key political figures and intellectuals such as Kwame Nkrumah, George Padmore, Mbiyu Koinange, Eric Williams, Norman Manley, Michael Manley, and Maurice Bishop. Among the intellectuals who James corresponded with are Lionel Trilling, Lewis Mumford, Mark Van Doren, Basil Davidson, Daniel Guerin, Alice Walker, Wilson Harris, V. S. Naipaul, George Lamming, Maxwell Geismar, E. P. Thompson, John Berger, Michael Foot, and many others.

"Correspondence spanning the period from 1949 until his death in London in 1989 offers valuable insight into letters and thought during this era," Ryan said. "The papers are particularly strong in material from the fifties and sixties, starting with the period following James' deportation from the U.S. in 1953 through the tumultuous events of 1968."

### Harry Lawrence Freeman Collection



Columbia University's Rare Book & Manuscript Library has acquired a large collection of manuscripts, unpublished scores, librettos, correspondence, photographs, and ephemera from

the estate of Harry Lawrence Freeman (1869-1954), one of the earliest composers in America to embellish an operatic score with jazz, blues and spirituals.

H. Lawrence Freeman, born in Cleveland, Ohio in 1869, was a musical prodigy and an ambitious composer. He is credited with being the first African-American composer to have successfully staged an original opera of his own composition, which premiered in Denver's Deutsches Theater in 1893 when Freeman was 24 years old. Freeman went on to a long career in New York, composing some fifteen full-scale grand operas, a number of which received full-scale performances.

The present archive contains the full record of Freeman's career, including original manuscripts of almost all of his operas as well as other musical compositions, set and costume designs from some of his productions, printed programs and other documents from productions of his operas and other musical performances, founding documents concerning the Negro Grand Opera Company, copious clippings of reviews and contemporary press-coverage, original correspondence, surviving recordings of Freeman's music, original artwork, portrait photographs, and other items of memorabilia including early family photographs, portrait paintings, a violin, and other personal effects. The archive also includes a great deal of materials related to the careers of Freeman's wife Carlotta, a noted soprano who appeared in his productions, and his son Valdo, himself a musician and artistic collaborator with his father.

When organized and processed, both collections will be available for research. For further information, call the RBML at 212-854-5153.

### Charles L. Blockson Donation to Penn State

Charles L. Blockson, leading black bibliophile has donated thousands of items to the Penn State library, which plans to open the Charles L. Blockson Room in April. A Penn State graduate and former member of the University Libraries Development Advisory Board, Blockson is the founder and retired curator of the Charles L. Blockson Afro-American Collection of rare texts, slave narratives, art, and a host of other artifacts significant in African American history at Temple University. The new collection consist of materials relating to African-American, African, and Caribbean history and culture will be unveiled to the Penn State community next spring. The collection will be housed on the third floor in Pattee Library, West. This will greatly enhance the existing African Diaspora resources and provide researchers with access to a rich collection of diverse and rare materials.

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### The *AFAS Newsletter*

welcomes contributions from readers. Send articles, items of interest, and news to the editor, preferably in electronic format.

The *AFAS Newsletter* is sent to all AFAS members at no additional cost. Claims and address changes should be sent to the ALA address, Attention: Membership.

### AFAS WEBSITE:

[www.afassection.org](http://www.afassection.org)

### AFAS WIKI

To directly access the AFAS Wiki use the following URL: <http://wikis.ala.org/acrl/index.php/AFAS>. You can also access our Wiki from the ACRL Wiki main page: <http://>

[wikis.ala.org/acrl/index.php/Main\\_Page](http://wikis.ala.org/acrl/index.php/Main_Page). A link will be added to the AFAS home page.

### AFAS OFFICERS 2007/2008

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Allison M. Sutton

#### 2008 Conference Program

Lisa Pillow

#### Cataloging Issues

Dorothy A. Washington

#### Nominating

Akilah Nosakhere

#### Policy and Research

Akilah Nosakhere

#### Publications

Harry Murphy