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for many years. In 2005 I decided to return to school to complete my Ph D. My areas of concentration are International Relations, Comparative Politics, African and African American Studies and Women Studies. I have studied the political systems of America, Western Europe, East, South and West Africa. I have traveled, studied and lived in America, Western Europe, East, South and West Africa, as well as Eastern Europe, and Asia.. In my travels I have visited 34 countries other than America.

I worked for approximately fifteen years in the field of International Development., focusing on sustainable economic and educational development. In between I attended and then organized and led a delegation to the United Nations Third World Conference on Women in Nairobi, Kenya in 1985 and the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, China in 1995, respectively. My preparation for the two World Conferences on Women, my studies of political systems and public policy and my international travels particularly to Ghana solidified my interest in the impact of the world conferences, in which over one hundred nations signed the "Platform of Action" in 1995 on public policy and changes in women's lives. I am looking at the oldest democracy in the Western hemisphere and the oldest democracy in Africa and comparing their implementation of the "Platform of Action." In order to conduct my studies I chose to study at the University of Ghana in Legon, Ghana, the country formerly known as the Gold Coast..

I chose the University of Ghana after very careful investigation and analysis. The University was founded in 1948. At its inception, the University of Ghana was the University College of the Gold Coast where it functioned as an extension of the University of London. The University College maintained very high academic standards and by 1960, the University College became the University of Ghana with the power to award its own degrees. The University of Ghana is today a member of the International Association of Universities, the Association of Commonwealth Universities and the Association of African Universities. It has established academic and research links with other universities and research institutions worldwide.

The professors at the University of Ghana have studied all over the world at the top universities and have come back to Ghana with a wealth of experience and scholarship. Today, many of the professors have received their Masters and PhDs from the University of Ghana. They are all published philosophers and theorists in their perspective fields.

My dissertation committee consists of three outstanding professors Dr. Joseph R. A. Ayee, Dean, Faculty of Social Studies, Dr. Kwame Boafo-Arthur, Head of the Department of Political Science and Dr. Takyiwaa Manuh, Director of the Institute of African Studies. Thus far, my experience at the University of Ghana has been academically rewarding.

## Rowan University



## AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES

For additional information or an academic advising appointment, please contact the Office of African American Studies:

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# AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES NEWSLETTER

Rowan University  
Bosshart Hall, Room 116  
(856) 256-4793

June 2006

A Publication of the Office of African American Studies

## THE AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES PROGRAM FY2006 ACCOMPLISHMENTS - June 2006

By Corann Okorodudu, African American Studies Program Coordinator

In a recent book by Henry Louis Gates of Harvard University and Cornel West of Princeton, entitled "The African American Century: How Black Americans Have Shaped Our Country," the authors present powerful illustrations of their assertion that we cannot imagine a truly American culture that has not been shaped in profound ways by the contributions of African Americans. During the 2005-2006 academic year, the African American Studies Program continued to promote knowledge and understanding of the development, experiences and contributions of Black people in the United States of America, through the Concentration in African American Studies (AAS), through engaging co-curricular activities, and through the professional performance of faculty and staff affiliated with the program.

### The Concentration

The Introduction to African American Studies was offered in the Fall and Spring Semesters and other courses approved for the African American Studies Concentration maintained their accessibility to undergraduate students as General Education or Free Electives. Between 17 and 24 sections of AAS courses continued to be offered in each regular semester, with about eight sections having a primary focus on Africans or African Americans. With curriculum development support from the African Studies Center of the University of Pennsylvania, for the first time in the history of Rowan University, an African language was offered through the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures during this academic year. Approved as regular course offerings, Zulu I was offered in the Fall and Zulu II was offered in the Spring and taught by an adjunct instructor, Mr. Jubulani Moyo, a native speaker of Zulu.

The Office of African American Studies continued its outreach to students to acquaint them with the Concentration, its benefits, and how it could be integrated into their academic programs. Following an Open House on October 12, 2005, co-sponsored by the Council for African American Studies,

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the AAS Coordinator arranged with various student leaders to provide overview information about the Concentration at the meetings of their organizations.

In May 2006, eight students graduated with the Concentration in African American Studies, and one of these graduates, Raquel C. Welsh, was the recipient of the sixth Medallion Award for Excellence in African American Studies. The eight graduates were honored at a Breakfast Reception on Tuesday, May 9, 2006 from 9:00 to 10:30 A.M. in the Tower of Campbell Library, where they received certificates acknowledging their completion of the Concentration in African American Studies. The AAS Program was featured in the Spring 2006 Edition of Rowan University CLAS Notes: The Newsletter of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, including comments from Rowan Alumni who are building careers which benefit from their work in African American Studies.

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#### Co-Curricular Events

The African American Studies Program hosted meetings of the Black History Month Committee in the Office of AAS to plan program events for February 2006 and sponsored or co-sponsored several programs during the month. The following are a few of the highlights of programs framed by the theme "Restoring and Affirming Community: Race, Class and Gender Challenges in the US and the Global Arena." The AAS Program, joined by several divisions and programs of the University as co-sponsors, held the First Annual Rosa Parks Commemorative Luncheon on February 15 to honor the legacy of Rosa Parks, Mother of the Civil Rights Movement. On February 16, filmmaker, film theorist and social activist, Haile Gerima spoke on "Knowing History, Knowing Self," and showed and led a discussion of his film "Sankofa", an Akan word meaning we must go back and reclaim our past so we can move forward. Amiri Baraka, Afrocentric poet, novelist, and dramatist spoke on the theme of the month on February 22 and Sonia Sanchez, author of more than a dozen books of poetry, read some of her work on February 28.

#### Professional Performance of Faculty Professional Staff

Annual reports of faculty and professional staff affiliated with the AAS Program reflect substantial productivity. The following is a sample of their scholarly work. Chima Korie (History) co-authored Religion, History and Politics in Nigeria, published by University Press of America. He authored a chapter on "Other Bodies, Western Feminism, Race and Representation in Female Circumcision Discourse" published in Nnaemeka's edited volume, African Women and Imperialism: Refocusing the Circumcision Debate, published by Praeger. He also co-organized a panel on "Collaborative Hegemony: Missions, States, and European Expansion in Africa" and made a presentation on Containment and Control: Missionary Impulse and the Construction of Colonial Nigeria" at the Annual Meeting of the African Studies Association in November 2005. William Carrigan (History) published two articles: "Reconsidering Lynching" in American Nineteenth Century History and "A Dangerous Experiment: The Lynching of Rafael Benavides" (with Clive Webb) in New Mexico Historical Quarterly, and made a

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presentation on "the Law and Anti-Mexican Mob Violence in Texas, 1848-1926" at the British Association for American Studies, University of Kent, England. Julie Mallory Church completed an interview of the legendary Shirley "Joe" Payne, a famous Negro league player and WWII veteran for the Colorline Project, a Rowan University oral history initiative to record personal narratives of the Civil Rights Movement in Southern New Jersey. Douglas E. Mapp performed with the Delaware Symphony, the Reading Symphony, the Harrisburg Symphony and in numerous other venues. Tanya Clark (English) published "Joanne Braxton (1950-)" in Yolanda W. Page's edited volume, African American Women Writers: An A to Z Guide, Greenwood Publishing Group. Patrick Spearman presented a paper on "African American Studies and its Relationship to the Surrounding Community" at the Midwestern Educational Research Association on October 13, 2005. John Myers (Sociology) produced his second edition of Dominant-Minority Relations in America, published by Allyn and Bacon in 2006. Michael Ba Banutu-Gomez published a Book entitled, Africa: We Owe It to Our Ancestors, Our children and Ourselves, with Hamilton Books, New York in 2006. Corann Okorodudu presented in three symposia at the 2005 Annual Convention of the American Psychological Association on the following topics: Advocating for Women Internationally, Nationally, and Locally; APA at the United Nations; and the Effects of Global Conflict and War on Individuals, Families, and Societies. She also presented on "Psychological and Mental Health Effects of Racism at the United Nations in New York on May 11, 2006. Hector Rios supervised a master's thesis which looked at creating a climate of tolerance in an elementary school.

In addition, faculty and staff affiliated with AAS were involved in the AAS Advisory Board, in mentoring students and serving as advisors of student organizations, and serving in leadership roles within professional and civic organizations.



21<sup>st</sup> Century Address which is a lecture of 3 cd's in which this freedom fighter raises some questions for the youth about the world around them. The Bookclub also discussed articles that were in Da Ghetto Tymz Magazine, which is a newspaper written in the lingo of African American youth about issues they need to be aware of. In addition, they also watched some of the hit gospel movies that were released throughout the year.

The Neo-Underground Railroad Conductors (NURC), a national network of students, worked closely with the Council as well this year. Conductors commit their talents, beliefs, and abilities to the fostering of change and the promotion of freedom, education, enlightenment, and empowerment within the Black American community and all that are affected by it, ultimately to stimulate a new American Renaissance. During Consciousness Week, NURC hosted a weeklong of events, which included having the author of Da Ghetto Tymz Magazine, M'WEBE, speak about how to heal relationships. NURC also hosted the Styles P Panel Discussion which allowed students to voice their concerns about the preferential treatment that made minority students feel uncomfortable. Conductors also promoted their national program, Katrina On The Ground. They motivated students to help support the victims of Hurricane Katrina by going down during Spring Break to help gut out houses, give out valuable information, as well as survey survivors.

For more information about these organizations and events contact Juliet Newell at JNewell82@excite.com

#### **Requiem to a Giant**

In memory of Elwood Watson Nichols, Professor Emeritus  
June 11, 1924-May 23, 2006

*Julie Mallory Church, Assistant Director, Counseling & Psychological Services, African American Studies Steering Committee, Past President, Rowan Black Coalition*

A giant of a man went to sleep in green pastures  
closed his sparkling eyes for the very last time.  
Wise eyes, windows that opened

to a deep and wondrous soul.  
Dark and knowing eyes speaking the language  
of caring and compassion without uttering a sound.  
Said: "it is well with my soul."

A warrior laid down his sword of truth  
for the very last time,  
having fought the good fight  
stepped into eternity.  
Refusing to let pain conquer his spirit,  
pressed on for the mark of the high calling daily,  
spoke healing to all within his considerable orbit.  
Said: "it is well with my soul."

A noble man walked his last weary walk  
among ordinary men and women,  
sharing the burdens of his darker brothers,  
while making light of his own.  
Laid down his walker  
and leaning on the everlasting arms,  
left behind impressive footprints  
for any who dared to follow  
his path of social justice.  
Said: "it is well with my soul."

A learned man of science who walked by faith  
has been silenced forever.  
His melodious bass voice  
now heard only in memory's ear.  
No more lessons lovingly taught,  
giving voice to the voiceless,  
believing in the potential of all of God's children,  
empowered youth that one day  
they might become giants, warriors,  
noble men and women of faith extending His work.  
For night cometh when no man works.  
And it is well, it is well with his soul.

#### **Adjunct Professor Becomes a Ph D student at the University of Ghana**

By Tahiya McCoy Nyahuma, Adjunct Professor, Rowan University

I am an adjunct professor in the Political Science Department enjoying the profession and art of teaching. I have been ABD

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**Warren:** What advice would you give to a newcomer to the music field?

**King:** It's important to get your education in the classroom, but your real education will come from sitting in at jam sessions and learning from other musicians. High visibility is important. Meet as many people as possible in the musician's community. Leave your ego at the door. For singers, respect your musicians and know that you cannot do what you do without them. Never disrespect or belittle them on or off of the bandstand. I see that too often from some singers. Contrary to what you might think or might have been told, the world doesn't revolve around any singer. Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha!

#### **Advice from Interviews of Other Artists for Newcomers in the Music Field:**

**Jazz Bagpipe Player and Saxophonist Rufus Harley:** Are you really about music? You have to love it. The music will bring out that natural element that's in you. Life itself is music and music itself is life. As you go through life, you let life teach you because life is a teaching process on all levels. The idea is to become seasoned and understand how to play on the changing of the seasons.

**Pastor Lonnie V. Hunter III:** To study both the musical and business side of the industry in an effort to make sound business decisions regarding your career.

**Vocalist, Mrs. Katherine DeChavis:** Rehearsals are very important. Wardrobe is important. Never perform without rehearsing.

**Trumpeter and Director of the Music Program at Temple University, Terrell R. Stafford:** I'd say be patient. Just put practicing and devoting themselves as a great musician before marketing and trying to get themselves recognized or noticed.

**Stafford on the hardest thing about being a musician:** I think the travel. Being away from home is really hard to see your family and really [difficult] to maintain relationships, even as far as friendships. You're traveling all the time and you're usually with

different people. In some ways, people think that it's glamorous but it can be pretty lonely at times as well.

During the Spring Semester 2006, Dr. Turner taught another ProSeminar: Independent Black Film with thirty students who had the opportunity to talk to Haile Germina and view his landmark film *Sankofa* as well as *Bush Mama*. Students conducted research projects on important independent black filmmakers including, Oscar Micheaux, Ayoka Chenzira, The Hudlin Brothers, Julie Dash, Charles Burnett, Gordon Parks, Euzhan, Spike Lee, Zeinabu Irene Davis, and others. The semester was spent deconstructing stereotypical images of African Americans with realistic and diverse depictions of the African and African American experience.

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#### **COUNCIL FOR AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES (CAAS)**

By Juliet Newell  
Undergraduate Assistant for the African American Studies Dept.  
Student Advisor for the Council of African American Studies

This year the Council's e-board wanted to recapture the essence of the greatness of years past by establishing the theme for this year which was simply to go back to our roots of being the educational organization on campus. When the Council was created at Rowan University, its founders wanted to spread the knowledge that they learned as students of the African American Studies to the rest of the students, faculty, and community who might not come across this information otherwise. To handle this great task the Council hosted such programs as "Slave to the Master, Slave to the Dollar" where attendees were given important information about how to avoid the Black Wealth Crisis. The Council also presented a program on the controversial cartoon *The Boondocks*, to talk about the relevancy of topics that the show focuses on. Furthermore, the Council also volunteered at Glassboro's Tri-County Head-start by providing assistance to the daycare providers by helping the children celebrate Halloween.

Freshness was added to the Council's structure with the implementation of the Bookclub. The Bookclub is designed for students who want to expose themselves to books and media created by African Americans. They discussed Dick Gregory's

#### **Excerpts from the Martin Luther King Breakfast Address at Rowan University on January 16, 2006**

The purpose of the Martin Luther King Breakfast, held annually on the birthday of Martin Luther King Jr. is to raise scholarship funds for student recipients of William H. Myers Scholarships. At this year's breakfast Clarence B. Jones, former counsel and draft speechwriter for the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., was the keynote speaker. His many accomplishments include helping negotiate a settlement of the civil rights demonstrations for desegregated department stores and public accommodations with the City of Birmingham, AL. He received a White House Letter of Commendation from former President Clinton for his work in Birmingham, and he also helped negotiate the end of the Attica State Prison inmate rebellion in New York State in 1971.

A graduate of Columbia College, Columbia University, and Boston University School of Law, Jones is an executive consultant with Marks Paneth & Shron, LLP, Certified Public Accountants, and Marks Paneth's Strategy Group as well as a principal member in MPS' affiliated consultant company, The Africa Strategy Group. He is also president and CEO of CBJ Multimedia Associates Inc. and CBJ Associates Inc. Mr. Jones is vice chairman of the Advisory Board of Institutional Investors Consulting Corporation and a member of the board of trustees of The Africa America Institute, a foundation specializing in political, economic and health issues in Africa. He is also involved in numerous other business and professional ventures.

#### ***The following are excerpts from his stirring address:***

"Prior to Martin Luther King Jr., America was like a dysfunctional drug addict and alcoholic who had tried and failed with other previous treatments to end this habit—an addiction to racism and segregation. Dr. King's nonviolent tough love in the face of the most egregious and violent forms of racial resistance to assure elementary equal rights for all Americans enabled our country to kick its institutionalized addiction to segregation."

"The New York Times columnist Bob Herbert recently wrote, 'Most Blacks are not poor; most are not criminals.

Most are leading productive lives. The Black middle class is larger and more successful than ever; but there are millions who are still out in the cold—caught in a cycle of poverty, ignorance, illness, and violence that is taking a horrendous toll." It goes on to say, "Nearly a third of all Black men in their twenties have criminal records and 8% of all Black men between the ages of 25 and 29 are behind bars. HIV and AIDS have literally become the Black plague. Although Blacks are just 13% of the overall population they account for more than half of all our new HIV infections. Black women account for an astonishing 72% of all new cases among women. This is frightening. Two thirds of all Black children are born out of wedlock and nearly half of all Black children brought up in a single parent household are poor. The problems facing Black people today are comparable to the magnitude of those of the Jim Crow era of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century."

"Martin Luther King Jr. reminds us that a great nation is a compassionate nation... There is nothing more dangerous than building a society with a large segment of people in that society who feel they have no stake in it. A destructive minority can poison the wellsprings from which the majority must drink."

Quote from Dr. King's speech in 1956 in Montgomery, Alabama: "Another thing we must do in speeding up the coming of the new age is to develop intelligent, courageous and dedicated leadership. This is one of the pressing needs of the hour. In this period of transition and growing social change there is a dire need for leaders who are calm and yet positive—leaders who avoid the extremes of hot headedness and Uncle Tomism. The urgency of the hour calls for leaders of wise judgment and sound integrity... leaders not in love with money, but in love with justice... leaders not in love with publicity, but in love with humanity... leaders who can subject their particular egos to the greatness of the cause..."

"...I would be remiss if I did not say to you that we just can't talk the talk, we have to walk the walk... We woke up this morning and there must have been a purpose for us of being able to have another day other than to come to this event. And Coming to this event is a process of renewal, so I want you to pledge to yourself and one another that this will just not be another talk—that you will decide to walk."

## Remembering Rosa Parks

By Crystal Beckwith, African American Studies Graduate Assistant

To honor her legacy, the Rowan University African American Studies Program held its First Annual Commemorative Luncheon for Rosa Parks, Mother of the Civil Rights Movement, on February 15, 2006. The luncheon was a great success. This event, which was co-sponsored by The Black Coalition, the African American History Month Committee, and divisions and programs of the University, was attended by over 200 people, including administrators, faculty, some government officials, and students. Hosted by Mrs. Maia Farish, the program included poetry by Mrs. Sandra Turner-Barnes, Poet in Residence at Rutgers University, music by Farid Barron, Pianist of the Sun Ra Arkestra, and keynote address by Reverend Dr. James Donald Rice, Senior Minister, Willow Hill Community Baptist Church.

Among his many accomplishments, Dr. Rice has had broad experiences as a pastor, builder, civil-rights leader, teacher, executive administrator, and college minister at several colleges. He also served as President of Western Seminary in Kansas City, Missouri, and while a student at Howard University, he served as Assistant Pastor of the Zion Baptist Church in Washington, D.C. In keeping with the theme "Reflections on Rosa Parks and the Civil Rights Movement," Dr. Rice told of his many experiences in the thick of the civil-rights struggles of the fifties and sixties.

The luncheon marked the establishment of the Rosa Parks Commemorative Luncheon and Lecture Series, which will carry on the legacy of an extremely courageous sister. The refusal of Rosa Parks to give up her seat to a white man on December 1, 1955 in Montgomery, Alabama led to a 381 day bus boycott. Her refusal also triggered a series of events that led to the desegregation of public transportation and eventually all public accommodations across the nation. Despite threats to her life and the loss of her job, Rosa Parks continued to be active in the civil rights struggle, and in 1966 she received the Presidential Medal of Freedom and then the Congressional Gold Medal in 1999. In recognition of her contributions to our nation, the lecture series will include participation from

notable speakers in our society that will inspire leadership, awareness, and concern for social justice.

\*\*We regret to report that Dr. Rice passed away on March 10, 2006. Our prayers are with his family and friends.

## African American Studies Awards Reception

On May 9, 2006, African American Studies held their annual Awards Reception in the Library Tower. The reception was held in honor of students who were graduating with a successful completion of the African American Studies Concentration. Crystal Beckwith, African American Studies Graduate Assistant, hosted the program with opening remarks by Dr. J.A. Harper, Dean of the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences, and program remarks by Dr. Corann Okorodudu, Professor of Psychology and Coordinator of African American Studies. A lovely breakfast was provided along with pleasant conversation among administration, faculty, staff and students. Recipients of the award included:

Ms. Erica Hill, Psychology Major  
Ms. Safiya N. Lomon, Psychology Major  
Mr. Tafari C. Miller, Sociology Major  
Ms. Octavia S. Nash, History Major  
Ms. Juliet D. Newell, History Major  
Ms. Stephanie Thomas, Law/Justice Major  
Ms. Kim Warren, History Major  
Ms. Racquel C. Welsh, Writing Arts Major

Ms. Raquel C. Welsh is also this year's Medallion Award Recipient as she has graduated with the highest GPA in the concentration.

After each of the students received their certificates, the graduates gave remarks on the program and spoke on their future plans.



## CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2006 WINNER OF THE MEDALLION AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES

Raquel C. Welsh, graduated in May 2006 with the Major in English and the Concentration in African American Studies. She was selected as the winner of the 2006 Medallion Award for Excellence in African American Studies on the basis of her distinguished academic record and the laudatory comments of some of her professors. Raquel achieved a cumulative GPA of 3.85 in the African American Studies Concentration and an overall GPA of 3.4. She made the Dean's List in three years and took leadership in service projects on and off the Rowan University campus, the latest being her involvement with Dr. Holder's Katrina Project in New Orleans during the Spring Break of 2006.

## Dr. Turner's Proseminar in African American History

During her one-year appointment in the history department at Rowan University, Dr. Diane D. Turner taught a Proseminar, History of Black Music in America in the fall of 2005. The Proseminar examined the development and evolution of Black Music in America, beginning with its African origins from an interdisciplinary and multimedia approach. Students enthusiastically completed course requirements including a field trip to Bethany Baptist Church in Lindenwold, NJ where they identified the "Africanisms" in Spiritual and Gospel Music under the musical direction of Lonnie Hunter. They also visited Ortlieb's Jazzhaus in Philadelphia, PA where they experienced the sounds of jazz saxophonist Bootie Barnes. Students conducted oral history interviews with some local musicians and music personalities including Willa Ward-Royster, Terell Stafford, Denise King, Tony Williams, Rufus Harley, Bootsie Barnes, Cody Anderson, Katherine DeChavis, and others.

*The following are excerpts from some of her students' interviews of black musicians during the fall of 2005.*

## Kim Warren's Interview of Vocalist Denise King

**Warren:** Can you recall when you decided that you wanted to be a musician professionally?

**King:** In 1992 I made the decision to become a full time musician. After much agonizing, I took a giant leap of faith and quit my job. I couldn't continue to keep the pace of doing a day job and immediately running to a gig afterwards. I was exhausted. I knew that I didn't want to get to retirement age and wonder, what if or I wonder what would have happened if I had gone into music. I knew that I could always go back to work at a hospital if it didn't work out. I had a solid foundation or a base to go back to if it didn't work out. So quitting was the only answer. I knew that God didn't bring me as far as he had to just drop me like a hot potato. So in May of 1992 I quit. That's when my friends thought I was really crazy. I gave up my "good job and good benefits" to sing. [I sold] my house, sold my possessions and I moved back in with my mother. Surely, I must have been crazy. And yes I was crazy, crazy with faith. Fortunately I haven't had to look back.

**Warren:** What's the hardest/best thing about being a musician?

**King:** The hardest part is the roller coaster ride of having and not having work and trying to get to the next level. There have been many times when I said, "I can't do this anymore" or "Am I doing the right thing?" When I look at the reason that I initially got into it, it puts me back on track and some of the frustration leaves. It is not always easy to make a living as an artist and you really have to have strong armor.

**Warren:** What is the most significant experience you have had during your music career?

**King:** In 1999, I founded a community based Jazz series in West Philly. It is a series of free Jazz concerts that take place every Friday. To keep the children there entertained, I founded Be Bop and Books, a reading program. I give away free books and school supplies. This year I was recognized for my work in the community by The Mellon Corporation and awarded The Community Award. I was stunned and it was one of the most significant things to happen in my career.