



“At all times, Black men need to think and re-evaluate where they are as men, co-workers, lovers, husbands, fathers, and brothers in a healthy and developmental manner.” Haki R. Madhubuti

Black Male Development Symposium 2008

The **5th Annual Black Male Development Symposium** will be held at Arcadia University, Saturday, May 10, 2008 titled ***Stand Up, Speak Up, Speak Out: Conversations with Real Men.*** Over the last four years the event has been attended by over 4000 young men, families and professionals. The Symposium was created to address the life threatening issues facing Black males and their families. Over the last four years Philadelphia has had to deal with the deaths of too many young African American males. The role call has become too long and too painful. Young men like college-bound Quaid Staten, who was killed during a holdup by an all too familiar profile – a young, lost Black man. The tragedy of the crossfire shooting death of 10-year-old Faheem Thomas-Childs and second grader Jarren both encountering violence at the very place we would think them safe – the school yard. The senseless murder of Terrell Pough, the devoted single father profiled in *People Magazine* or the vicious beating of thirteen year old Jacob Gray. There is a sad and inescapable truth — Black males live at great risk and they and their families and communities must learn strategies of survival and empowerment. The Symposium provides a forum for practical solutions by providing informative presenters and interactive workshops to assist attendees in developing realistic strategies and concrete recommendations that they can put into practice in their respective communities.

The Symposium becomes a place of finding practical solutions. The Symposium’s five topic pathways include: *Reclaiming the Black Male Image, Educate to Elevate, Family and Relationships, Health, Wellness and Spirituality and Strategies and Techniques in Service Delivery to African American Males.* This year’s Symposium offers a *Literary Pavilion* featuring some of today’s most promising authors, a *Health Fair* targeting the needs of African American men and a special presentation of the hit multi-media stage play *Real Men Talking*. The Symposium will host its Annual Symposium Reception, Friday, May 9th at the African American Museum in Philadelphia.

For registration, sponsorship, general information and to receive an e-newsletter please visit www.blackmaledevelopment.com or call the symposium hot-line at 215-572-8510.

Digital Diasporas: Digital Humanities and African American/African Diaspora Studies

University of Maryland, College Park

May 1-3, 2008

This conference, organized by the African American / African Diaspora Area Group of the English Department and the Maryland Institute for Technology in the Humanities will address the increasing centrality of digitization to the archiving of materials, as well as the growth of digital technology in the teaching, scholarship and artistic production in the field of African American/African Diaspora Studies. The conference is a collaboration involving the African American/African Diaspora Area Group of the English Department, the Maryland Institute for Technology in the Humanities (MITH), and the School of Architecture, Planning & Preservation, as well as other faculty and students from the College of Arts and Humanities (ARHU) and the College of Behavioral and Social Sciences (BSOS).

The conference, the first of its kind, will bring together approximately 150 national and international scholars, high school and middle school teachers, artists, students, and funders to discuss a growing body of work that has not as yet benefited from an organized forum that would allow practitioners to meet one another not only to discuss on-going projects, but also to debate the theoretical, methodological, and pedagogical issues raised by the intersection of the fields of Digital Humanities and African American/African Diaspora Studies. As the field of African American/African Diaspora Studies can benefit from a thoughtful consideration of the application of new media tools, so, too, can the field of digital humanities benefit from a focused discussion of scholarship informed by critical race studies.

The program will begin on May 1st and 2nd with hands-on workshops, including one sponsored by the TEI Consortium and funded by the NEH, which will provide a practical introduction to text encoding and another that will focus on navigating online resources in African American and African Diaspora Studies. The workshops will be followed by a panel showcasing work by scholars in the field of African American/African Diaspora Studies that address and/or make use of digital technologies and new media. The keynote address by Abdul Alkalimat (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign) will be followed by a reception and the presentation of a multi-media art installation by the artist, Pamela Z. The last day will be taken up by panels and seminars; an informational box lunch session with leading funders; a digital "poster" session, where presenters will use laptops to introduce projects by students, faculty and independent scholars; a book fair; and a closing multi-media performance and book/cd signing by DJ Spooky. For more details, contact Zita Nunes (Associate Professor of English and Comparative Literature) at znunes@umd.edu, or visit <http://www.mith2.umd.edu/diaspora2008/>.

In Memoriam: William A. Little (1941-2008)

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William A. Little, emeritus professor and chair of Africana studies at California State University, Dominguez Hills, died on March 1 of complications from a genetic lung disease. Little joined the campus in 1994 as chair of the Department of Africana Studies, a position that he held until 2006. During his tenure at CSU Dominguez Hills, Little made enduring contributions as coordinator of the Division of World Cultural Studies, coordinator of the Social and Behavioral Sciences program, and chair of the California State University system-wide African American Studies Lower Division Pattern Project.

Little served on numerous college and university committees including the Academic Senate, University Curriculum Committee, General Education Committee, and the University Retention, Tenure and Promotion Committee.

Munashe Furusa, chair and professor of Africana studies, describes Little's commitment to developing faculty at Dominguez Hills.

"Dr. Little encouraged students and young scholars to draw from his fountain of wisdom. He was a friend, confidant, advisor, coach, and father figure to many in the discipline," he says. "He was there for us from the beginning of our careers and served as a steadfast advisor to many scholars, instilling confidence and responsibility in his mentees and showing them by example the role they must play as they develop into leaders within their respective communities."

Little founded the Frederick Douglass-Mary McLeod Bethune Graduation Celebration which brings together more than 2,000 family members every year to celebrate student achievement. He also established the Martin Luther King, Jr. Unity Breakfast, in collaboration with the Carson community, to celebrate the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. In addition, he founded the CSU Dominguez Hills Fannie Lou Hammer Queen Mother Society, an organization of women from the on- and off-campus community who mentor and support Dominguez Hills students.

"Dr. Little worked diligently to create greater understanding and harmony across ethnic and cultural groups and had a profound impact on me and my own understanding of leadership," says Irene Vasquez, director, World Cultural Studies and professor and chair of Chicana/o studies. "He was the first faculty member who was not involved directly with the Chicana/o studies department who reached out to me with guidance and support. At the time, I was the only Chicana/Latina faculty member holding a partial administrative post in the College of Liberal Arts and he gave me instrumental advice in building the Chicana/o Studies Department. Moreover, he always promoted a positive, mutually beneficial relationship between our departments and encouraged me to assume a stronger leadership role in the Division of World Cultural Studies."

William A. Little was born on February 13, 1941 in Elizabeth City County, Virginia. He graduated from Jefferson High School in Los Angeles and entered the U.S. Marine Corps. Following his service, Dr. Little attended Wenatchee Valley Community College in Wenatchee, Washington, where he received his associate of arts degree in political science. He continued his education at Western Washington State College in Bellingham, where he received his bachelor's degree in political science. Little received his M.S.W. and a doctorate in political science from the University of Washington.

As an academic leader at Portland State University, in Portland, Ore. (1977-1983), West Virginia University (1990-1994), and CSU Dominguez Hills (1994-2006), Little played a pivotal role in building Africana studies into a distinct and viable discipline. He served as president of the National Council for Black Studies (NCBS) from 1992 to 1998, continuing as a member of its executive board until the time of his death, and was honored in 2006 by the organization for his contributions as a mentor.

Through his travels, Little made it a point to develop relationships and ties that would strengthen not only his personal knowledge and awareness of African people, but also relationships that identified talented scholars who contributed to the growth and development of the discipline of Africana studies. In 1993 and 1996 Little served as the Director of the NCBS Ford Foundation Africana Studies Summer Institute in Ghana, bringing together scholars and educators from the United States and Ghana to share ideas for courses and curriculum. He also served as the director of the NCBS Ford Foundation Administrative Institute, which provided training for Africana studies educators and administrators, many of whom have become university department heads, deans, provosts and presidents.

Little's recent publications include *The Borders in All of Us: A New Approach to Global Diasporic Societies* (co-edited, 2006); *A Walk with the Ancestors Across Time: A Collection of Poems and Reflections* (2000); and the forthcoming co-authored *The Study of Race, Ethnicity and Class: A Case Study of Durban, South Africa*. Donis Leonard, associate professor of theatre arts, recalls the impact of Little's poetry.

"What I will remember the most is his artistry," says Leonard. After a very late rehearsal one night years ago, I recall getting my hands on a copy of one of his poetry manuscripts. After reading a few pages, I immediately put on a pot of coffee. I couldn't put it down. That part of Bill on those pages had a way of lifting the human spirit with both tenderness and a wonderful sense of truth on display, as big as life."

Little is survived by his wife of thirty-seven years, Monica M. Little, four sisters, Rosa Little Scott, Addie Little, Debrae Little, and Terri Gill and a brother, Jonathan Little.