Since its establishment as an organized research unit in 1969, one of the founding objectives of the Ralph J. Bunche Center for African American Studies [formerly CAAS] has been to conduct, facilitate, and disseminate research on issues central to African American communities. In 2002-2003, the Bunche Center progressed on a variety of research fronts.

Prime Time in Black and White

This research project, a five-year longitudinal study of diversity on prime time network television, had its second year of findings in 2003. The goal of the project is to explore the relationships between television entertainment and today’s American racial order. Study findings have revealed that the picture painted in prime time is of a black and white world in which Latinos, Asians and Native Americans are virtually non-existent. The series has been funded from internal sources for the past two years. We are seeking external funding for future studies. This year’s press conference received extensive media coverage from the Associated Press, Los Angeles Times, National Public Radio, La Opinion, Los Angeles Sentinel, and numerous other media.

Summer Humanities Institute (SHI)

The 2003 SHI was the second of a three-year program which aims to enhance the preparedness of undergraduate students from diverse under-represented groups in planning for a graduate program in the Humanities and Humanistic Social Sciences, through mentorship, training, and skill-enhancement. With continued outreach to undergraduates from Historically Black Colleges and Universities, we succeeded in identifying 15 high achieving students, all of whom performed extremely well. Funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, with support from the College of Letters and Science Deans, and the Graduate Division, this year the 8-week institute focused on “Global and Local Coordinates of Blackness.”

College Access Project for African Americans (CAPAA)

In 2002, the Bunche Center was awarded a five-year, $100,000 grant from the Ford Foundation to investigate the effects of the repeal of Affirmative Action via the passage of Proposition 209, and the concomitant decline in African American admissions to the University of California (UC) system. Over the next five years, the CAPAA research team will be examining the current status of, challenges to, and strategies for increasing opportunity in higher education in California for African Americans. More information is available at the CAPAA website: www.bunchecenter.ucla.edu/capaa

Affirmative Action Forum

On May 2-3, 2003, CAPAA and the Black Graduate Student Association assembled keynote speakers Kimberle Crenshaw (UC LA Professor of Law) and Walter Allen (UC LA Professor of Sociology) and a panel of educators, researchers, and community leaders to focus both on enhancing the competitiveness of students (particularly African Americans) and the policies that affect them in higher education. This event was designed to determine what can be done in the Los Angeles community to improve the competitiveness of African American students who are trying to get into college and how policies (such as Proposition 209 and admissions) influence their access to higher education. The two-day forum examined the current status of, challenges to, and strategies for increasing access and diversity in higher education.

Institute of American Cultures (IAC)

Each year the IAC, an administrative entity composed of UCLA’s four ethnic studies centers, with oversight from the UCLA Graduate Division, sponsors a competitive fellowship and grant program to support research by faculty, visiting post-doctoral scholars, and graduate students.

IAC Award Recipients 2003-2004

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<th>Post-doctoral Fellowship</th>
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RALPH J. BUNCHE: RENAMING THE CENTER AFTER A LEGEND

“In recognition of Dr. Ralph J. Bunche, a scholar and world citizen whose efforts for civil and human rights continue to inspire our work at the Center.”

(From the inscribed sculpture given to the Bunche family on the occasion of the formal renaming of the Ralph J. Bunche Center for African American Studies, Oct. 9th, 2003).

DEGREE PROGRAMS IN AFRO-AMERICAN STUDIES

Undergraduate Program

The Interdepartmental Program in Afro-American Studies (IDP) is proud to report that 2002-2003 was a banner year for producing a cadre of top graduates. As one of the country’s earliest degree-granting programs in the field, the IDP has graduated excellent students who have gone on to make significant contributions in a wide-ranging field of endeavors. The year produced sixteen undergraduate majors who successfully matriculated, and another fifteen undergraduate students who minored in Afro-American Studies graduated.

Graduate Program

The M.A. Program in Afro-American Studies continues to attract a wide range of top young graduate level scholars who wish to ground themselves in key theoretical issues regarding black Americans and the Diaspora. Instituted in 1980, the two-year degree program has been perfect for students who want to go right into professional or public sector work and is ideal for students who will continue their education through the Ph.D. level. This year the IDP admitted fifteen M.A. students, the largest group of entering students to date.

Interdisciplinary Focus

From a pedagogical standpoint, one of the major strengths of the IDP continues to be its interdisciplinary, interdepartmental approach to education. As the world becomes an increasingly inter-connected place, students need training that will equip them to analyze and negotiate across many kinds of boundaries: geographical, social, political, educational, and economic. IDP-trained students develop critical thinking skills that allow them to analyze African American issues and situate them within the matrix of global concerns.

Program Administration

In order to facilitate the admissions process, Interim Chair Dr. Darnell Hunt appointed an IDP Admissions and Awards Committee, composed of affiliated faculty. This group formally reviews files of students seeking admission to the Program and makes recommendations for admissions and awards to the Graduate Division. To strengthen and facilitate interaction between the IDP and students, the Program has also reestablished the Afro-American Studies Student Association.

Restructuring

To further enhance the Program’s curriculum in the twenty-first century, a Curriculum Committee was reconvened during 2002-03. To date, the committee has completed a proposed restructuring of the undergraduate curriculum, which includes plans for the creation of new courses and the establishment of thematic tracks that reflect cutting-edge approaches in the field and that showcase the scholarly expertise of affiliated faculty.

Cultural Studies in the African Diaspora Project (CSADP)

In 2002-2003, the CSADP concluded its six-year term by compiling products from previous events into a publication entitled “Revolutions of the Mind.” The publication was printed in February 2003 and distributed during August 2003. Diasporic Mind, the CSADP’s quarterly webzine, was integrated into the Bunche Center website. This site will be updated in the future by IDP graduate students.

Black Ethnography Project

Given the absence of a comprehensive study of the black community in Los Angeles, the Bunche Center will host a collaborative, inter-disciplinary research project that will undertake an extensive study of the cultural dynamics, social placement, quality of life, material conditions, self-identity, and media representations of African Americans in Los Angeles. Research Director, Mark Alleyne, will work to secure funding for this project in 2003-04.

Kenny Burrell Archive

In collaboration with Kenny Burrell, Director of the Jazz Studies Program at UCLA, as well as local experts on black music, including Dr. Jacqueline DjeDje, Dr. Eddie Meadows, and Dr. Steve Loza, among others, the Bunche Center has begun accruing an archive of African American music, featuring sound recordings, film/videos, iconography, musical compositions, and memorabilia from jazz pioneer Kenny Burrell.
I'm often heard around my office, when what I want to do. "What would Thurgood do?" So, tonight, I want to talk to you briefly about this whole concept of the law, using Thurgood Marshall as the ideal in the changing state of justice. On July 4th, 1992, two days before he had celebrated his 84th birthday and thirteen months after he had retired from the Supreme Court, a physically ailing Thurgood Marshall was lifted to the stage of the Independence Day Celebration in Philadelphia. His health was poor, but his message was rich. With trademark spirit he said, "The battle has not yet been won. We have barely begun. Americans can do better. America has no choice but to do better, to ensure justice for all Americans; a free and white, rich and poor, educated and illiterate—our futures are bound together."

That was over ten years ago. We are now living in a time of much uncertainty. We will be tested everyday by the external forces of the world we live in. Therefore, it is paramount that justice be administered as it was meant to be—with fairness and expediency—or we will all suffer. What would ideal justice look like? I think in an ideal society, you would have a justice system that is accurate, that is attentive, that is accountable. But if you look at the reality that we have and live day-by-day, you see there is much work yet to be done. Too many inequities play out everyday in our legal system. Minorities, immigrants, the poor—the ever disenfranchised people—deserve equal protection under the law. But, America's historical background makes that difficult to begin with. There is inherent racism. The police officer on the beat has incredible power and sometimes doesn't mind abusing it. There are problems in prosecution, those who want only to win, not to seek justice. There are problems in the prisons—great racial disparities. The courts have cut the time in which you can appeal. Resources have been severely cut. What is it then that bars true justice in this day in age? I believe that our noblest ideals are clouded by systems riddled with imperfections. Problems that plague systems everywhere, create vicious cycles that never seem to end. And then no one wins.

Consider the way the death penalty is carried out and often applied. One example would be the state of Illinois. Since the re-institution of the death penalty, after Furman vs. Georgia, there have been twenty-five individuals sentenced to death in the state of Illinois. Twelve were put to death. Thirteen have walked off death row, judicially found innocent. In a few moments I'm going to leave here, when I finish this speech, and I'm going to fly back east. If I were to invite each of you in this audience, let's say I have a private plane out at LAX, and I want you to come and fly with me. It's a beautiful plane. We'll fly at 600 miles-per-hour and we'll get to New York in about four hours. We'll be comfortable along the way. The only problem with this plane is, with twenty-five flights, it will crash thirteen times. None of you would want to fly with me, would you? That's what happens in this country right now with the death penalty. That's what happened in Illinois. I represent a man named Anthony Porter who started this whole thing. Anthony Porter was that inmate on death row in Illinois. He was one of the thirteen who walked off. Sitting in his cell, he had two days left to live. They came to measure him for his casket. They came to ask him what he wanted for his last meal. Fortunately, while this was going on, some journalism students at Northwestern were working because they believed he was innocent and, within two days of his death, they not only found that he was innocent, they went to Milwaukee, Wisconsin and they found the true perpetrators of the crime. We are involved with some lengthy litigation now to seek some justice for this man that came two days before being put to death. I worry about those twelve, who were put to death. Nobody talks about them anymore. That battle is over. But the thirteen who got out, who were innocent!

I have always been supportive of the
police. In fact my son is patrolling the freeways tonight. He is a Highway Patrol Officer here in California. So, I’m not anti-police. I am anti-bad police practices. I often have a problem with the culture of protection within the forces. The so-called “Blue Wall of Silence” that protects bad police officers from being punished for their wrongdoings must come down once and for all. The change has to come from within and from within. The rhetorical question of “Whose police is the police?” comes back to us.

When I first went to New York to start practicing, a gentleman came to my office by the name of Abner Louima. He was a Haitian gentleman, a businessman, who was subjected to perhaps the most inhumane, degrading set of circumstances and brutality I have ever seen in my life in this country. He was sodomized in a precinct in Brooklyn, because they had believed that he had struck a police officer. Of course he had not done that, and he was left in a cell, pretty much to die, because of this Blue Wall of Silence. In a police station that’s small, about half the country. He was sodomized in a bathroom, nobody stood up. When his colon was ruptured by the broom handle, it took five days—from Saturday night to Thursday morning—for the first police officer to even come forward and say what had happened—Eric Turetzky. You know what happened to him (Turetzky) when he did that? He was in police custody, in police protection for the next three years as they had various incendiary trials. We saw this case as one that could finally chip away at this Blue Wall of Silence and those who didn’t believe it existed, and we tried to do that, working very closely with the U.S. Attorney’s Office. This case in New York had ramifications around the country and the officers were all punished. Justin Vulpe, the main perpetrator, was given thirty years in prison. The others were put away through vigorous prosecuting by the U.S. Attorneys Office. Mr. Louima was handsomely compensated—but none of this entire room, as he was lead away from the sergeant’s desk, with his pants down around his ankles, nobody sought to stop that. As he was lead off to the bathroom, nobody stood up. When his colon was ruptured by the broom handle, it took five days—from Saturday night to Thursday morning—for the first police officer to even come forward and say what had happened—Eric Turetzky. You know what happened to him

you would take nine million dollars for what he went through. It was not about the money with him—we would not, did not, accept a settlement in that case until two things took place in New York City. We discovered that when a police officer was charged with an offense, they had something called the 48-Hour Rule. You could not talk to the police officer—the Chief couldn’t talk to him, the Mayor couldn’t talk to him—for 48 hours after the occurrence because they negotiated that in the labor agreement. And of course, in that 48 hours the only one who could talk to him was this one law firm that represented all the police officers. So what do you think happened as they got together and talked about this? Not only did we insist that the 48 hour rule had to go, we insisted there had to be more than one law firm to represent police officers—somebody might want to tell the truth. This is in the spirit of Thurgood Marshall. You see a wrong, and you seek to right it. You try and do something for those who have no one else to stand up and speak for them. As Dr. King said, “Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.”

We stand to lose a sense of compassion, and a sense that—as Thurgood Marshall reminded the audience that day in Philadelphia—there is a common destiny for us all. Have we reached a point where the criminal justice system is merely a weapon for all crime? Perhaps we should focus on diminishing the social roots of crime instead of increasing the penalties for committing crime. Real change has taken place in the world thanks to people whose extraordinary efforts to provide powerful examples for all of us to emulate, virtuous paths which beckon us to follow, visions of inspiration that motivate each and every one of us, and which proclaim the call, which cries out for our response and our answer. To me, becoming a lawyer was about bettering myself and serving others just as Thurgood Marshall had. People ask me all the time, “Why do you practice law?” And I say succinctly, “I practice law to comfort the afflicted, and to afflict the comfortable.”

This, then, is the time for inequities to be balanced everywhere. The needs of the world and its citizens have changed—perhaps forever; there is a new paradigm in the world. But we should use the energy of uncertainty to emerge with resolve and forge ahead with unfaltering resoluteness. Thurgood Marshall knew how he wanted to be remembered and explained it in the powerful simplicity he was known for: “That he did what he could with what he had.” To do what we can with what we’re given—that’s my hope for each of us tonight. May all of us continue to grow as individuals, to give the world what it needs from us. If you think of Thurgood Marshall as I do, in your lives and in your work, you will always stay the course on the road to justice. We can do no less.
The Bunche Center continues an aggressive campaign to procure funds to support Center programming, student scholarship funds, and faculty research. Ethnic Studies Development Director Kim Morris helped to coordinate the search for large extramural donor contributions. Also, a campaign committee has been established to assist the Center in reaching its campaign goal of $3.5 million by 2005.

Development highlights are as follows:

Rita Rothman contributed $5,000 towards the graduate research endowment fund that was established in 2000 and $4,200 to support current graduate student research travel.

The Advisory Board continued with co-chairs, Renee Campbell and Judge Sherrill Luke. The Board’s mission is to provide support to the Center to maintain the high quality of instruction and research programs, and assist the Center with outreach efforts to increase the enrollment of African American students. They have become a strong support group for the Center, providing financial resources as well as contacts and visibility.

A new Development Campaign Cabinet was established to manage the $3.5 million campaign. Rita Rothman and James Lincoln will serve as co-chairs, along with key members Peter Taylor, Oscar Turner, Bobby Smith, and Wilma Pinder.

Jazz at the Bakery was held for a fourth year featuring Kenny Burrell, December 2002.

The fund raising dinner in April 2003 netted $13,000 and commemorated the 14th anniversary of the Thurgood Marshall Lecture series.
BUNCHE CENTER IN THE NEWS

The Bunche Center has worked throughout the year to enhance our relationship with all types of media representatives, including hosting three press conferences. As a result, the Center has been featured in numerous publications and media outlets, such as:

- Associated Press
- Los Angeles Times
- National Public Radio
- UPI
- The Today Show (NBC)
- Los Angeles Sentinel
- Fox 11
- KFWB AM
- KJZZ FM
- KPCC AM
- Sing Tao Daily
- Hollywood Reporter
- KFI
- KJLH FM
- Various national local newspapers
- KTTV TV
- KABC TV
- Los Angeles Times
- Los Angeles Wave Newspapers
- USA Today
- UPN
- KNX
- Metro Network News
- La Opinion
- City News Service
- CNN Radio
- Broadcasting and Cable magazine
- Chicago Tribune
- Minorities in Business Magazine
- Numerous local radio stations

ACHIEVEMENTS/AWARDS

Affiliated faculty member **Dr. M. Belinda Tucker** was a key contributor to Newsweek’s February 24, 2003 cover story. The story dealt with how black women are faring given the problems associated with finding suitable black men.

**Associate Vice Chancellor Frank Gilliam**, a Bunche Center affiliate, headed the UCLA Center for Community Partnerships, which opened its doors this year. The Center’s goal is to nurture and develop partnerships between community groups and UCLA that produce joint efforts to improve the quality of life for area residents.

**Dr. Dolen Perkins** (Ph.D., English, George Washington University), a researcher at the Bunche Center, was named a U.C. Presidential Fellow.

2003 IDP M.A. graduate **Kameelah L. Martin** was awarded second place in the 2003 graduate student division of the National Council of Black Studies Student Essay Competition for her essay “Recapturing the Conjure Woman.”

**Stevonnie Ratliff**, a junior at UCLA majoring in Afro-American Studies/Political Science, was this year’s 2002-03 John Densmore Scholarship winner.

UPDATES

CAAS PUBLICATIONS

The CAAS Publications unit oversees the editing, production, marketing, and sales of texts relevant to the culture and history of people of African descent.


The unit is also involved in the production of the journal and newsletter: the Bunche Research Report and the Bunche Review. The Bunche Research Report is a bi-annual report on special topics pertaining to African Americans, including the Prime Time in Black and White project. The Bunche Review is our annual newsletter with highlights of events from the previous year.

LIBRARY & MEDIA CENTER

The Ralph J. Bunche Center for African American Studies Library & Media Center (LMC) supports academic programs and research projects in African American Studies, and provides specialized reference, collection and information services on diverse aspects of African American life, history and culture in the Western Hemisphere.

The collection is a non-circulating print and multi-media entity electronically linked to the catalog of the University of California libraries via Melvyl-T, UCLA (ORION 2) and the California Digital Library. The LMC has approximately 7,440 bound volumes, 325 monographs, 450 vertical files, 187 pamphlet/newsletter files, 37 film strips, 40 microfiche, 2,320 audiovisual items (708 audiocassette tapes, 150 videotapes, 40 audio reels, 873 35-mm slides, and 661 pictorial items, 88 CDs, 62 DVDs, five public access microcomputers (Internet accessible), 35 scholarly journals, six magazines, and fifteen local, regional and national newspapers that compliment the resources of UCLA’s Young Research Library.

In 2002-2003, the LMC’s outreach activities included providing space for student and staff meetings and participation in the Department of Information Studies student internship program. The 2002-2003 fiscal year ended with the promise of papers from Carlos Moore’s collection, the inclusion of more electronic resources, and a substantial increase in CD and DVD materials for the Kenny Burrell Archive of African American Music (KBAAM).

LMC open Monday-Thursday (excluding University holidays) 9AM -5PM.
FEATURED 2002-2003 GUESTS:

Peter Magubane - Lecture
January 29th, 2003

Nikki Giovanni - Poetry Reading
February 12th, 2003

Former President of Zambia Kenneth David Kaunda - Lecture
February 27th, 2003

CENTER STAFF (2002-2003):
Darnell Hunt, Director; Mark Alleyne, Associate Director, Research; Jan Freeman, Management Services Officer; Veronica Benson, Financial Officer; Lee Whin Liao, Accounting Assistant; Alex Tucker, Special Projects & Development Coordinator; Ulli K. Ryder, Senior Editor, CAAS Publications; Candace Moore, Front Office Manager & Editor, CAAS Publications; Todd Lee, Tech Support; Lisbeth Gant-Britton, Student Affairs Officer; and Itibari Zulu, Librarian

Bunche Review, Vol. 2 edited by Ulli K. Ryder and Candace Moore