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Access Northeastern: Fall 2003

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Kwamina Panford Takes Over as Head of Northeastern Access Programs

By Ann Comer
Communications Manager, Office of the Provost

Kwamina Panford was named Associate Vice Provost for Academic Opportunity and Diversity, July 1, 2003. He is responsible for managing Northeastern's educational access programs, coordinating efforts to enhance first year access and secondary school outreach programs, providing leadership for improving retention and graduation rates of under-represented student populations and developing additional programs that enrich and support campus diversity. Panford will continue to carry out his responsibilities as chair of the African-American Studies department while assuming the vice provostial role.

He has served on the faculty of the Department of African-American Studies Department since 1989 and was appointed chair of the department in 2002. Soon after his arrival at Northeastern, he established the Model Organization of African Unity (OAU) and for over ten years has selected and trained students through this program to prepare for simulations of International/African Affairs in Washington, D.C. As chair of African-American Studies, he co-organized an International Educational Workshop on Africa which brought to campus African ambassadors, academics, and high-ranking policy makers and their US counterparts. Through these and other activities, such as his service on the Snell Library Advisory Committee on International/African collections, his collaboration with the Dean of Arts and Sciences in introducing a Study Abroad Program to Ghana, and his mentoring of many graduate students of color, he has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to improving the quality of the educational experience of Northeastern's diverse student population.

Panford received his B.A. from the University of Ghana, master's degrees from McMaster and Cornell Universities, and a PhD in Law and Public Policy from Northeastern University.



Kwamina Panford (right) joined the Provost's Office in July.

Save the Date!

The Office of Affirmative Action and Diversity hosts a conference:
"Race Relations on New England Campuses: New Dimensions of Inclusion"
November 20, 2003

LSAMP

Northeastern University, the University of Massachusetts Amherst, the University of Rhode Island, the University of Connecticut and Worcester Polytechnic Institute have joined to form the New England Alliance for Minority Participation (LSAMP). The program supports minority students in the fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). This alliance addresses matriculation and retention issues for minority students by enhancing, designing, and/or implementing new programs to encourage and support students in STEM fields.

Northeastern University LSAMP student Jennifer Gaines won first place at the Northeast Regional American Institute of Chemical Engineers (AIChE) paper contest, competing with students from MIT and Tufts, who won third and second place respectively. She will represent the Northeast Region at the National AIChE Conference in San Francisco. She also won first place at the ISPE (an international society for life science professionals) Boston Poster Contest held at Northeastern University, May 7, 2003, and will be presenting her research project in New Orleans at the Nationals, Nov. 2 to the 6, 2003.

Gaines' project focuses on increasing the production of pharmaceutical compounds from cell cultures of the *Catharanthus* plant. This plant produces compounds that are used as anti-hypertensives, sedatives and anti-cancer compounds. (In laymen's terms, she researched ways to increase certain compounds from the *Catharanthus* plant, which are used in medicine to help fight cancer.) When asked how this experience helped her, she answered, "It [the project] helped me to improve my ability to do independent research and to present data. This experience has helped to



Jennifer Gaines and her faculty mentor, Dr. Carolyn T.W. Lee-Parsons



Jennifer Gaines exhibiting the catharanthus plant

confirm my desire to ultimately work in a lab type setting in the future."

This chemical engineering major stated that she always loved science and math. In middle school, she would solve her math problems as if she was solving a puzzle. When applying to Northeastern University, she decided on her major because it involved chemistry and was an applied science. Support from her professors and counselors in the department have helped her to achieve her level of success. She plans to continue working in her major but hopes to be able to combine it with civil/environmental engineering when she graduates.

LSAMP Summer Research and Mentoring Program 2003

By Anu Meacham
LSAMP Coordinator

The Northeast Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation (LSAMP) Research and Mentoring Program successfully completed its first summer (June 16 – August 6). Students who participated in the eight-week summer research program were required to conduct original research or construct a project out of ongoing research under the supervision of a faculty and/or graduate mentor. The areas of research included Computer Science, Chemistry, Biology and Engineering and topics ranged from cancer to linguistics.

Additionally, students from LSAMP and Northeastern's Center for Subsurface Sensing and Imaging Systems (CenSISS) collaborated and met as a group for a series of seminars and workshops. Kaplan, Inc. gave three tutorial sessions on GRE test-taking techniques and the graduate school application process. Professor Stephen McKnight led a presentation skills seminar and a workshop on high tech tools and toys. Our guest speaker, Dr. Nadya Mason (a post doctorate researcher in physics at Harvard University), spoke to the students on preparing for graduate school.

This opportunity introduced the challenge of advanced academic work aimed at exposing students to scholarly research and independent learning. The hands-on experience helped them sharpen their problem solving skills and gain a deeper understanding of real world applications. When a student was asked what she gained out of this experience, she answered, "a deeper appreciation for scientific intelligence and perseverance."

We are currently accepting applications for the fall semester. Please see the LSAMP Web site at www.lsamp.neu.edu for more details.

MIT's Karl Reid Speaks on Achievement of African American Males in Engineering

"African American males attending colleges and universities experience higher attrition and graduate with lower GPAs than white males. They are also more likely to have negative college experiences." These are among the statistics quoted by Karl Reid, executive director of MITE2S (Minorities Introduction To Engineering, Entrepreneurship & Science) at MIT, when he spoke at Northeastern last spring on the topic: "Factors Influencing the Achievement of African Americans in Engineering: Report of a MIT Freshman Seminar for African American Males and Other At-Risk Groups."

Reid stated, "Countless theories have been advanced about the causes of underachievement among African American engineering students. Both structural factors, such as systematic discrimination and other challenging social conditions, and cultural determinants stemming from disparities in K-12 schooling have been posited for decades. Lately however, there is a growing consensus among researchers that certain psychosocial factors are at the root of the problem. That is, African Americans reconcile their identity in diverse contexts in ways that facilitate or hinder positive academic outcomes."

Reid discussed interactions between racial identity, perceived self-efficacy and academic achievement among African American males. He also explained that students' beliefs about intelligence — whether intelligence is fixed or able to be developed — play a big role in their performance.

Reid also detailed the curriculum and structure of a residence-based freshman advising seminar being piloted at MIT. The program seeks to modify students' "internal scripts," and create a "culture of excellence." Students participating in the program "commit to achieve academic excellence through group accountability, skill development and positive identity formation."

Sponsored by the NUPRIME office and the College of Engineering, the event was well attended by representatives from NU's STEM departments, in addition to individuals from other areas, including the Center for Effective University Teaching, Ujima Scholars Program, Snell Library and the EdTech Center.

Reid graduated from MIT in 1984 with a BS in Materials Science and Engineering and received his MS in Electronic Materials in 1985. He is currently pursuing a Doctorate in Education on a part-time basis. While a student at MIT, Reid served as the national chairperson of the National Society of Engineers (NSBE). As an undergraduate student, he founded and directed the NSBE High School Ambassador Program, which exposed Boston-area 7th-12th grade students to careers in engineering. Reid is a recipient of the

distinguished Karl Taylor Compton Award and was appointed to the Tau Beta Pi National Engineering Honor Society. Karl returned to MIT in 1998 after 12 years in the software industry, where he held positions in systems engineering, systems consulting, and product marketing and management for several companies including IBM.

New Briefs • • • •

Roeder Accepts Position with NU Press

Amy Roeder, administrative assistant to the Associate Vice Provost for Academic Opportunity and Diversity, assumed a new position as editorial/administrative assistant at the Northeastern University Press on September 2. She served as editor of the *Access Northeastern* Newsletter while working for both Associate Vice Provosts Leonard Brown and Kwamina Panford. Her dedicated efforts in the Office of the Provost and Academic Affairs for the past two years are greatly appreciated.

Institute Celebrates 35th Anniversary

The John D. O'Bryant African American Institute celebrated its 35th anniversary during the Black Alumni Reunion, kicking off a \$2 million capital campaign during the weekend of May 2-4. Among the festivities were a softball game sponsored by the Latino/a Student Cultural Center, a performance by Associate Professor Leonard Brown's jazz quartet Joyful Noise, and the annual Unity and Awards Banquet.

(continued on page 5)

Northeastern Hosts Roxbury Community College Students for Summer Academic Enrichment Program

Seventeen Roxbury Community College (RCC) students spent the summer at Northeastern as participants in this year's Summer Academic Enrichment Program (SAEP).

The SAEP is an academic enrichment and access program designed to assist a selected number of students who plan to continue their education after receiving their associate's degree at RCC. This year, Northeastern instructor Bob Petteruti taught Mathematics, and RCC instructor David Coleman taught Writing and Integrated Language Skills (ILS).

Coleman took a new approach to the classes this year, incorporating some innovative projects. During final project presentations in the ILS class, students imagined themselves ten years into the future. As motivational speakers for the SAEP class of 2013, the students spoke about their motivations and "current" challenges. In Writing class, students explored the role of art in society. "You can't appreciate what you don't understand," said Coleman. He asked students to respond to a photograph displayed in the John D. O'Bryant African American Institute Library, in addition to a work of art of their own choosing. Students also

examined media portrayals of particular groups in society, and wrote responses to essays by a Ku Klux Klansman and a conservative African American man who disagreed with Affirmative Action. Student essays, along with narrative summaries of the ILS presentations, will be published in the first ever SAEP literary magazine.

In addition to the course work, students participating in SAEP also have the opportunity to learn more about Northeastern. They meet with faculty or advisors from their area of interest and visit the Cooperative Education Department.

"The students find the program rigorous but extremely stimulating," said RCC's SAEP coordinator Mark Garth. This year's class was especially strong academically. All students had at least a 2.5 GPA from RCC, and four had a 3.5 or above.

SAEP is a component of the 1998 Educational Partnership Agreement between Northeastern University and Roxbury Community College. Each year, four SAEP students from the previous summers' cohort, who have met all admissions requirements, are awarded a \$10,000 Northeastern scholarship for three consecutive years.

Boston Housing Authority Teens GEARUP at Northeastern

Over the summer, NUGEARUP gave a group of local teens the chance to experience campus life. GEARUP is a federally funded program that identifies inner-city youth from underachieving schools and provides them with the academic and social skills to qualify for higher education.

Instead of adopting schools like other GEARUP programs, NUGEARUP recruits students from the four Boston Housing Authority developments that surround the University. Since the spring of 2000, more than 75 students from ages 12-16 have participated in NUGEARUP activities.

The program focuses on empowering students to take charge of their lives, academically and socially. Students explored career choices, studied English, Mathematics, and Life Skills, learned how to swim and ate in the cafeteria with college students – all the while learning to hold a job. They also participated in group discussions each day, and had the opportunity to learn about the college admissions process.

In addition to the summer program, NUGEARUP students attend enrichment classes and tutoring during the academic year.

Balfour Academy hosts annual summer program, plans to expand

Over the summer, 168 students in grades 7-12 attended Balfour Academy for enrichment study in core subjects including math, English, computers, and Spanish. This year, thanks to a \$75,000 grant from Fleet Bank, eight more students were able to participate in the program and a Human Relations course was added for the younger students. The program plans to add 20 students by the end of the three-year grant.

Topics in the summer classes are explored in some innovative ways. Last year, students studied the poetry of both William Blake and Tupac Shakur, discussed the art of Salvador Dali in Spanish, and analyzed the ways in which different media

outlets present the same news item. Upperclass students have the opportunity to participate in NU classes. They also are assisted with the college selection and application process, and attend a Values Clarification class. All students in the summer program participate in athletic activities and group field trips.

During the academic year, students attend their regular school and come to Balfour twice a week for tutoring, counseling and enrichment activities. Students

are tutored after school in one-on-one sessions with NU students.

Balfour Academy accepts Boston Public School students before they enter either the seventh or eighth grades. Students are then followed until they graduate from high school. The pre-college scope and length of the program allows students to develop confidence necessary for success, develops a learning community, and establishes close relationships with Balfour staff. Presently, Northeastern offers five-year full-tuition

scholarships to eight of the Balfour students who are accepted into the University.

Originally named Northeastern University Academy, Balfour Academy was created by Dr. Joseph Warren

in 1983 and endowed by the Balfour Foundation in 1989. The program aims to address the problems inner city students of color face in college by reaching them early. The program strengthens students' academic skills and motivation, and helps them feel comfortable on a college campus.



Balfour Academy students took enrichment courses in math, English, computer, and Spanish.

New Briefs (continued)

Disability Resource Center Awards

On May 1, the Disability Resource Center presented its Fifteenth Annual Award Ceremony to thank members of the NU Community who have made an extraordinary contribution to students with disabilities or who are Deaf or hard of hearing. The following individuals were recognized:

Gini Goulet, Center for Counseling and Student Development

Bahram Shafai, Ph.D., Associate Professor, College of Engineering

Gail Stubbs, Senior Associate Director, Student Services, College of Arts & Sciences

David Winch, Director, Customer Service

Interpreter Request Forms Online

Interpreter request (and CART) forms are now online. The request forms are on the Disability Resource Center Web site: www.access-disability-deaf.neu.edu.

President's Diversity Recognition Awards

Provost Ahmed Abdelal spoke at Northeastern's sixth annual President's Diversity Recognition Awards on May 21. Bouvé College of Health Sciences Department of Counseling and Educational Psychology was honored for its achievements in fostering a multicultural community that values and celebrates diversity on and beyond Northeastern's campus. The Office of University Counsel received an honorable mention for its work preparing an amicus curiae brief for the U.S. Supreme Court in support of the University of Michigan's use of affirmative action in its admissions policy. The event also included a performance from spoken word/dance group Shocked Alive.

DuBois Co-Directors Honored as Program Graduates First Class

William DeAngelis and Sally Solomon, last year's co-directors of the W.E.B. DuBois Program in the Humanities, were honored with a Team Award at the

(continued on page 8)

2003-2004 Diversity Grant Recipients

By Cheryl Clark
Office of Affirmative Action and Diversity

How do you achieve a multicultural community that values and celebrates diversity? One way is to be a part of the 2003-04 Diversity Grant projects. Plans are underway for the recently awarded projects called "Crossing Diverse Cultures: A Human Rights Series," "Film Series on Social Injustice," and "The Writing on the Wall Project." All were chosen to receive incentive and full grants ranging from \$500-\$1,500 through the Office of Affirmative Action and Diversity's Diversity Grant Program. Find out how you can get involved in these projects.

"Crossing Diverse Cultures: A Human Rights Series" a film and video series along with featured speakers, will be initiated by four professors in the School of Law who have worked on international and domestic human rights issues affecting communities in the United States, Asia, Africa, and Latin America. This film and speaker series on universal human rights, with events to be held from Fall 2003 through Spring 2004, will bring together and encourage dialogue between diverse communities on and off campus. Films and speakers will raise challenging questions regarding differences in race, ethnicity, culture, religion, nationality, and other forms of identity whether in our country or abroad. Presentations will be open to the Northeastern community and the public, followed by "brown bag" discussions where ideas and opinions surrounding social justice issues can be informally expressed. For more information regarding this project, please contact Professor Hope Lewis at (617) 373-8961 or h.lewis@neu.edu.

The "Film Series on Social Injustice" will showcase to the Northeastern and surrounding Boston community a series of films and speakers that will facilitate awareness of social conflicts and injustices. The Film Series holds as its basic principal that mutual respect is the basis for positive change. This project is a collaboration of interdisciplinary programs in the College of Arts and Sciences, such as Cinema Studies, Jewish Studies,

the Program of International Affairs, and the Center for Interdisciplinary Studies, along with student organization Golden Key International Honour Society. The "Film Series on Social Injustice" will take place between November and January. A confirmed listing of featured films and speakers are underway. For more information regarding this project, please contact Associate Professor Kathy Howlett at (617) 373-4554 or k.howlett@neu.edu

"The Writing on the Wall Project," motivated by student members Finessa Slater, Nicole Russo, Meagan Longley, and Vanessa Russo, and confirming additional sponsors, have adopted the mission that "to write a new future, we must build a new foundation by first tearing down the shameful structures of oppression and discrimination." For the week of October 12th through the 17th, a wall constructed on campus will stand and allow the Northeastern community to freely write personal words expressing their experiences of discrimination, outrage, hate crimes and other dehumanizing actions. During this week, related events and activities will be sponsored by other organizations on campus for 'Diversity Week.' At the end of the week, members of the Northeastern community will come together to pull down the wall by hands, which will possess true symbolism in the fight against hate and injustice. Find out how your department or organization can be a part of 'Diversity Week.' For more information regarding this project and/or to host an event during 'Diversity Week,' please contact Finessa Slater at NUDiversity03@aol.com.

As recipients of the 2003-04 Diversity Grants, these projects were chosen because they accepted the challenge to encourage collaboration between different campus communities and constituencies, promote mutual respect, and enhance understanding of diversity and social justice. So be on the lookout during the 2003-2004 academic year for these programs.

For more information about the Diversity Grant Program, visit www.aa.neu.edu, or contact Cheryl Clark at (617) 373-2133 or c.clark@neu.edu.

Previous Diversity Grant Projects

During the past three years, more than 1,580 people have participated in projects that received funding from the Diversity Grant Program. The projects listed below are a sample of the various ways in which members of the Northeastern community have collaborated to address issues of diversity and social justice.

- The film series “Documentaries with Justice” and “Speak Out! Media Activism and Social Justice”
- A theater performance and discussion of the 1992 Los Angeles riots
- A workshop on gender differences in the workplace
- An exhibit of the work of noted photo-journalist and Roxbury activist Vincent Haynes
- A Turkish music concert
- A Fiesta de Los Reyes Magos/Three Wise Men Celebration for local school children
- A focus group for international students on utilizing the library
- A day of soccer at Northeastern for Boston area youth
- A science fair, and interaction with NU representatives, for the students of Health Careers Academy
- Interactions between NU nursing students and diverse elders from the neighborhoods surrounding the University

Access Student Finds Success on Co-op

Melissa Allen
Senior, Political Science

Q: *Where have you gone on co-op?*

A: Secretary of State's Office, Senator Kennedy's Office, The Boston Athenaeum.

Q: *How was the experience?*

A: I had no idea what to expect but they all turned out great. Sometimes the work was boring but sometimes you just have to do it. I have remained friends with my coworkers at all my jobs. My time at Senator Kennedy's office was very fast paced and it was not what I thought it would be but it turned out ok. I would not recommend it for everyone though.

Q: *Is the job relevant to your career goals? Has it changed them in any way?*

A: The first two were because I would like to work for the state or federal government. The third not so much but it was still a great experience.

Q: *Did you have any trouble finding a job?*

A: Yeah because of the economy and the 3-month co-op. Employers don't want to hire anyone for three months.

Q: *What's your opinion of "Practice Oriented Education"? Do you think the experience has been worthwhile?*

A: Yeah! That's the one of the main reasons I chose Northeastern. It helps to have more work experience than other college students so maybe you can get a better job when you graduate. I am pretty impressed with my resumé.

Programs Strive for Equity and Access to Higher Education

The following programs were highlighted in the 1999 Access Task Force report to the Provost's Office. Their efforts, along with those of other equally important programs at Northeastern, illustrate a commitment to making higher education accessible for historically underrepresented populations.

Balfour Academy – Carla Oblas, director: 617-373-2328

Boston Housing Authority Scholarship – Admissions (for new students only): 617-373-2200

Disability Resource Center (DRC) – Ruth Bork, director: 617-373-2675

Health Careers Academy (HCA) – Al Holland, headmaster: 617-373-8576

Legacy 2000 Mentoring/Retention Program – Ella Robertson, director: 617-373-2787

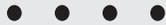
NUPRIME (Northeastern University Program in Multicultural Engineering) – Richard Harris, director: 617-373-2152

School of General Studies (SGS) – George Atkinson, director: 617-373-4434

Tobin Scholars – Earl Stafford: 617-373-2328

Ujima Scholars Program – Carrie Boykin, coordinator: 617-373-4912

New Briefs (continued)



Presidential Aspiration Awards Ceremony on April 25. They were nominated by Professors Stephen Nathanson and Leonard Brown. Fourteen students graduated from the program on May 31, thirteen of whom received Northeastern Humanities credit for their high level of achievement.

In the Community

The Roxbury Film Festival recently celebrated its fifth anniversary with its biggest program yet. Sponsored by the ACT Roxbury Consortium and The Color of Film Collaborative, the festival's goal is "to celebrate works written, produced, and directed by filmmakers of color." Films screened at the Museum of Fine Arts, Northeastern, and the Massachusetts College of Art. Highlights for this year's festival included special guest appearances by New England native and actor, Victoria Rowell (*The Young and the Restless*; *Eve's Bayou*), and Emmy Award-winning writer, producer and director, Neema Barnette (*7th Heaven*, *Cosby Show*). Barnette's highly acclaimed and award-winning film *Civil Brand* had its Boston premiere as the festival's opening night film. Starring Mos Def, LisaRaye, N'Bushe Wright, and Da Brat, the film is described as "a hip-hop tale of young Black women behind

bars who are forced to unite against a corrupt prison system." It is scheduled for theatrical release this fall. Visit www.roxburyfilmfestival.org for more information about the festival.

Assistive Technology in the Library

Thanks to a grant from the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners, the NU library is able to offer resources to assist people with disabilities or who are Deaf or hard of hearing. Services provided by the new technology include: enlarged texts, talking books, magnifying and speech recognition software for computers, closed captions for videos in the media center. Questions about library services and technology for people with disabilities can be directed to Debra Mandel 617-373-4902, d.mandel@neu.edu.

Academic Assistance Web Site Points Students Towards Classroom Help

With listings from more than 30 campus offices, the Academic Assistance Guide provides undergraduate day students with vital information about where to find help with their classes. Listings include offices providing tutoring in math, writing and English as a second language, and help with time management and job-hunting skills. The Guide is available on the Web at www.academicguide.neu.edu.

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ACCESS PROGRAMS

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