

MILESTONES

THE SONJA HAYNES STONE CENTER FOR BLACK CULTURE AND HISTORY

fall 2010 · volume 8 · issue 2

www.unc.edu/depts/stonecenter



EXHIBITION REVEALS THE SPIRIT OF RURAL NORTH CAROLINA TOWNSPEOPLE

It's often said that one person's life can chronicle the unwritten story of their entire community. But for the Stone Center's fall 2010 featured artist, the lives of one small North Carolina community's townspeople carried a uniquely universal narrative.

Multimedia artist Kendall Messick didn't initially intend to dedicate years to documenting the stories of the people of Corapeake, a bucolic village nestled at the edge of the Great Dismal Swamp; he simply wanted to experience the hometown his best friend from college so lovingly recounted. After his first visit in 1995 to meet her family and photograph aging relatives, Messick felt compelled to capture their rich, personal accounts of life and identity in the rural South.

Messick will bring his acclaimed exhibition *Corapeake* to the Stone Center's Robert and Sallie Brown Gallery this fall. Beginning with an artist talk and reception on September 23, 2010 at 7:00 p.m., the collection chronicles the memories and community traditions of the area's predominantly elderly, African-American citizens.

The exhibition is presented as pages from the mixed media journals Messick kept during the seven year project. Forty-six black and white silver gelatin photographs and a continuously running documentary film make up the primary artistic pieces and an assemblage of found objects from Corapeake completes the installation. The sequencing of the images thematically follows the circle of life from cradle to grave. Many of the photographs include handwritten stories that expand upon the subjects of the images.

Messick is an artist who utilizes photography and film to capture intimate stories that would otherwise go unheard. From *Corapeake* to *The Projectionist*, an exhibition about a man who dedicated his life to pursuing a dream of owning a movie palace, Messick is drawn to the stories of aging, often overlooked individuals. The experiences reflected by his art transcend the storyteller, resonating with audiences from all walks of life.



Top left: Aunt Sarah; top right: Choirboy; above: Corapeake.
photos by Kendall Messick

Messick studied at the International Center of Photography and the School of Visual Arts in New York City, and was the still photographer for the acclaimed documentary video *There is No Such Word as Can't* (1998). The *Corapeake* film was Messick's first documentary as director and was completed in 2001. After winning several film festival awards, *Corapeake* was a featured broadcast on PBS affiliates throughout the country. The film was also named a United States preselection finalist for INPUT 2003, which showcases the best of public television programming from around the world. Messick's photographs are in numerous public and private collections including the Smithsonian Institution and the Museum of Modern Art in New York.

Corapeake will be on display through December 3. The gallery is open Monday–Friday, 10 a.m. – 8 p.m. This exhibition was made possible by the generous support of friends of The Robert and Sallie Brown Gallery and Museum, Charlie Weinraub, Emily Kass, and Michelle Thomas ('93). The Brown Gallery serves as an exhibition space for the critical examination of the art and history of the African diaspora and of Africa. ■

FALL 2010 VENEZUELA PROGRAM UNDERWAY WITH 12 STUDENT PARTICIPANTS

UNC at Chapel Hill and the Stone Center have added another unique offering to its slate of international programs in Latin America, and the first to focus on an African diaspora community.

UNC's first study abroad program in Venezuela will run during fall semester 2010 from August 20–December 16, 2010. Ten UNC students, along with two students from Bennett College for Women in Greensboro, are the first contingent to travel to South America for the “Venezuelan Aspects of the African Diaspora” study abroad program, a semester-long international experience sponsored jointly by the Stone Center and the Study Abroad office. The program, in development for the last four years, is offered in cooperation with the Instituto Universitario de Barlovento (IUB), located in the coastal Barlovento region of the country.

The students will take four courses while abroad: an advanced Spanish language course; another focusing on Blacks in Latin America; an offering that examines diaspora communities through the arts and other cultural expressions; and a seminar that will focus on Venezuela's history and contemporary developments in politics, the environment and social and economic realities. Students will also engage in several service projects and will participate in an IUB project on the Intangible Cultural Heritage of the region.

The students who are participating in the study abroad program are: Hannah Eck, a sophomore from Michigan; Janae Edwards, a senior majoring in International and Area Studies and minoring in Latin American Studies; Martina Gibbs, a Senior at Bennett College for Women; Maya Jumper, a sophomore Political Science major with a minor in African-American Studies; Erin Keefe, a junior Latin American Studies major with a minor in Biology; Ellen Louis, a senior African-

American Studies major; Kelsey Moeslinger, a senior Psychology major; Colleen Muse, an International and Area Studies/Mathematics double major from Wisconsin; Claudia Nagel, a junior International and Area Studies major with a minor in Romance Languages; Samuel Pride, a sophomore African-American Studies major from North Carolina; Briana Steele, a junior and a North Carolina native majoring in Environmental Studies; and Raven Williams, a New York native and a sophomore at Bennett College for women.

Stone Center director, Joseph Jordan, will be the program's faculty and resident director. Sherry Venere, a Teaching Assistant and Doctoral student in Romance Languages, will be the assistant resident director. Venere completed an MA in Hispanic Literatures at Villanova University before coming to UNC. ■



Clockwise, from top: IUB students at Stone Center sponsored discussion, IUB students in an English language class, new academic services building at IUB slated for August 2010 opening. Photos by Joseph Jordan

THE FALL 2010 UNDERGRADUATE INTERNATIONAL STUDIES FELLOWSHIP

The Sonja Haynes Stone Center for Black Culture and History is currently accepting applications for its fall 2010 Undergraduate International Studies Fellowship (UISF). The Stone Center, established in 1988 to support the critical examination of all dimensions of African and African-American diaspora cultures, created the UISF program in support of the University's effort to globalize the campus and internationalize the curriculum. Fellowship recipients are awarded up to \$2500 toward academic research or study in an international setting. Through the fellowships, the UISF program seeks to increase the

participation of students of color and other underrepresented students at UNC at Chapel Hill in travel and study abroad programs. Students who plan to study abroad in the spring or summer of 2011 and who are in good standing and enrolled full-time are eligible to apply for the fellowship. Full instruction and applications are available at the Stone Center, suite 215 or on the Center's website at <http://sonjahaynesstonectr.unc.edu/programs/forms/uisf>. The application deadline is October 15, 2010. For more information on the fellowship, contact Joscelyne Brazile at (919) 843-2669 or email brazile@unc.edu.

OVERVIEW: STONE CENTER'S FALL 2010 INITIATIVES

This year, the Stone Center will continue its exploration of the cultures and histories of African-Americans, other diaspora communities and Africa by renewing the debate on identity and cultural politics. Our fall exhibition will open our explorations and will bring Kendall Messick's *Corapeake*, a visual and oral narrative that features the northeastern North Carolina community of Corapeake. His assemblage of stunning photographs, ephemera and artifacts challenge us to reconsider the toll exacted by the steady erosion of cultural memory and the resulting disappearance of a time-tested way of life.

The twice-yearly Diaspora Festival of Black and Independent Film pointedly reconsiders the

question posed by our 2009-2010 theme: "Is Cultural Identity (Really Only) Racial Politics?" Fall term screenings include incisive character studies such as *Shy* and *Life on Earth*, and the revealing documentaries *Afro-Iranian Lives*, *The Importance of Being Elegant* and *Beauty of the Fight*.

Our 18th Annual Sonja Haynes Stone Memorial Lecture brings noted scholar Melissa Harris Lacewell. Lacewell is an associate Professor of Politics and African-American Studies at Princeton University and a frequent commentator on contemporary African-American issues and public policy.

September also begins the 19th consecutive year that our Communiversity Youth Programs offers after-school programming for K-12 students

in the Chapel Hill-Carrboro school systems. Over the years, more than 1500 young people have participated in Communiversity sponsored programs, and more than 300 UNC students have served as mentors and tutors.

As always, the Stone Center will be supporting the programs and projects of our campus-wide partners during the term. Periodically, we'll share information from the Institute of African-American Research, the Curriculum in Latina/o Studies, The Center for the Study of the American South, the African/African American Studies Department and others. Please join us as we celebrate more than 20 years of service to the campus community.

MELISSA HARRIS-LACEWELL TO DELIVER MEMORIAL LECTURE

Princeton University professor, political commentator and author Melissa Harris-Lacewell will deliver this year's Sonja Haynes Stone Memorial Lecture on October 14 at 7 p.m in the Hitchcock Multipurpose Room.

Harris-Lacewell's book, *Barbershops, Bibles, and BET: Everyday Talk and Black Political Thought* (Princeton 2004), was the winner of a 2005 American Political Science Association Best Book Award and the co-winner of the 2005 National Conference of Black Political Scientists W.E.B. Du Bois Book Award. She is currently writing her next book, *Sister Citizen: A Text For Colored Girls Who've Considered Politics When Being Strong Wasn't Enough* (Yale University Press).

As an Associate Professor of Politics and African American Studies at Princeton, Harris-Lacewell's research focuses on the challenges facing contemporary black Americans and better understanding the creative ways that African-Americans respond to these challenges. Her work can be found in a variety of scholarly journals and edited volumes.

Harris-Lacewell is a regular contributor to MSNBC, providing commentary on U.S. elections, racial issues, religious questions and gender concerns for *The Rachel Maddow Show* and *Countdown with Keith Olbermann*, among other programs. In addition to her monthly column "Sister Citizen" in *The Nation*, her commentary often appears in major print and online publications throughout the country.

Harris-Lacewell holds a PhD in political science from Duke University and an honorary doctorate from Meadville Lombard Theological School. In 2009, she became the youngest scholar to deliver the W.E.B. Du Bois Lectures at Harvard University. She also delivered the prestigious Ware Lecture, becoming the youngest woman to ever do so.

The Sonja Haynes Stone Memorial Lecture is an annual event that brings an African-American woman who is distinguished by her scholarship, commitment to social justice and public service. ■



Melissa Harris-Lacewell

STONE CENTER AWARDS TWO INTERNATIONAL STUDY FELLOWSHIPS

This past spring, two undergraduate students were awarded Undergraduate International Studies Fellowships by the Stone Center for study abroad. The fellowship awards UNC at Chapel Hill students from underrepresented groups up to \$2500 toward academic research and study in an international setting. Since 2003, the Stone Center has awarded more than two dozen fellowships. The spring 2010 recipients, who will both study in Cape Town, South Africa in fall 2010 were:

- **Elizabeth Wangu**, a rising junior double majoring in Journalism and Mass Communications (Public relations) and African Studies; and
- **Chelsea Bailey**, a rising junior majoring in Journalism and Mass Communications with a minor in Social and Economic Justice.

The study abroad fellowship, funded through the generous gifts of alumni, contributes to the University's efforts to internationalize the campus community. Upon their return, recipients must share their research and experiences in a public forum arranged by the Stone Center. ■



Elizabeth Wangu



Chelsea Bailey

2010

Fall

PROGRAM CALENDAR

Thursday Sept. 9 | 7pm
The Stone Center
Hitchcock Multipurpose Room

Diaspora Festival of Black and Independent Film
Beauty of the Fight

This documentary film captures the heart and soul of two of Panama's most historic barrios as they face modern day struggles against poverty, urbanization and violence while attempting to maintain the dignity, joy and spirit of their communities. Director John Urbano/US/2009/69 mins

Thursday Sept. 23 | 7pm
The Stone Center
Robert and Sallie Brown Gallery and Museum
Opening Reception

Corapeake

On display thru December 3, 2010

Photographer Kendall Messick shares his personal accounts of life and identity from the small community of Corapeake, NC. The exhibit showcases the memoirs of both Messick and the primarily elderly black townspeople through intimate photographs, a documentary film and shared stories that connect us all. The night will open with Messick delivering an artist talk about his work and experiences and will continue with the unveiling of the exhibit in the Robert and Sallie Brown Gallery.

Wednesday Oct. 6 | Noon (lunch provided)
The Stone Center
Hitchcock Multipurpose Room

Diaspora Festival of Black and Independent Film
Shy | Life on Earth

Shy

Lewis, a 12 year-old, agoraphobic, African-American boy lives in the Crenshaw district of Los Angeles, with his Grandmother. We find him living alone, refusing to admit that his Grandmother has died. He goes outside to find a store and makes an unlikely friend, in the form of 16-year-old petty thief, Javi. Lewis and Javi forge an unlikely friendship as two troubled kids trying to make good with life as they know it. Director April Rouveyrol/USA/2008/12 mins

Life on Earth

This short is a coming of age story about Lea, an 18-year-old in foster care who is soon to age out of the system and the group home she calls home. Lea begins a journey to find her own place in the world in spite of her odds and forges her own path of self discovery. Director Jeff Keith/USA/2009/19 mins

Thursday Oct. 14 | 7pm
The Stone Center
Hitchcock Multipurpose Room

The Sonja Haynes Stone Memorial Lecture
Guest Lecturer: Melissa Harris-Lacewell

Melissa Harris-Lacewell is an Associate Professor of Politics and African American Studies at Princeton University, columnist for *The Nation*, frequent politics and race commentator on MSNBC, and the author of *Barbershops, Bibles, and BET: Everyday Talk and Black Political Thought* (Princeton 2004).

Thursday Nov. 11 | 7pm
The Stone Center
Hitchcock Multipurpose Room

Diaspora Festival of Black and Independent Film
Afro-Iranian Lives

This work provides a historical survey of the trade in enslaved Africans as well as current Afro-Iranian communities in various rural and urban areas of Baluchistan, Hurmozgan, and Khuzestan. It also focuses on the rituals practiced by Iranians of African descent, including interviews about African traditions and spirit possessions in Iran. Director Dr. Behnaz A. Mirzai/Canada/2007/46 mins

Tuesday Nov. 16 | 7pm
The Stone Center
Hitchcock Multipurpose Room

Diaspora Festival of Black and Independent Film
The Importance of Being Elegant

This film documents the story of one of the most unusual clubs in the world: La SAPE. Its members, the Sapeurs, come from the Democratic Republic of Congo and have elevated fashion to the status of a religion. Despite extreme economic hardship, the Sapeurs will only wear ultra-premium labels—Roberto Cavalli, Versace, Issey Miyake, Burberry. How do they afford these luxury items? The film gently unravels the secrets of the flamboyant cult, following the group's spiritual leader, Papa Wemba, the world-famous musician known as "The King of la Sape" who was released on bail in July 2003 from French prison after being charged with smuggling illegal immigrants into Europe. Threatened with legal fees and an upcoming trial, he records a new album and prepares for an extravagant come-back concert in Paris. Directors George Amponsah and Cosima Spender/UK/2004/70 mins

Diaspora Festival of Black and Independent Film

Beginning September 9, 2010
IS CULTURAL IDENTITY
(REALLY ONLY) RACIAL POLITICS?



Clockwise, from top: Miss Virginia by Kendall Messick, Beauty of the Fight (2009), Shy (2008)



DIASPORA FILM SERIES EXPLORES IDENTITY vs RACIAL POLITICS

This fall, the Stone Center will again utilize the power of film to challenge audiences to critically examine their world views and better understand who they are and how they fit in a continuously globalizing society. The films of the fall 2010 edition of the Diaspora Festival of Black and Independent Film will collectively pose the question: “Is Cultural Identity (Really Only) Racial Politics?” In other words, is how we self-identify just a form of self-segregation?

Each film in the series will explore identity in unexpected or difficult circumstances. Two short films that will be screened together, *Shy* and *Life on Earth*, follow the remarkable lives of young people faced with navigating an often unwelcoming world that they are unsure of. The three remaining documentaries—*Afro-Iranian Lives*, *Beauty of the Fight* and *The Importance of Being Elegant*—focus on the unique circumstances

of groups and communities that may seem out-of-place or forgotten.

Following each film, the Stone Center and invited scholars will facilitate a discussion exploring the subjects of the film and how they relate to the festival’s theme. The first film of the series, *Beauty of the Fight*, will be screened on September 9 in the Hitchcock Multipurpose Room.

The Diaspora Festival of Black and Independent Film is the Stone Center’s twice-a-year series featuring independent film from across the African diaspora. Please see the Fall 2010 Program Calendar for screening dates and descriptions of the Festival films. ■



Top: *Afro-Iranian Lives* (2007)
Bottom: *The Importance of Being Elegant* (2004)

COMMUNIVERSITY YOUTH PROGRAMS BEGINS 19TH YEAR



Breakdance workshop with Soul Street Dance Company sponsored by the Carrboro ArtsCenter

On September 14, 2010, Communiversity Youth Programs will embark on its 19th year of providing cultural literacy enrichment and academic services to K-12 youth in Orange and Durham Counties. The program will seek new heights during the 2010-2011 academic year through a redesigned curriculum that addresses the individual needs of program participants while implementing cultural and art based activities and lessons aligned with the North Carolina Course of Study for Language Arts, Social Studies, Arts, and Character Education. The new curriculum will provide a more cohesive foundation to assess and track program outcomes and needs.

Through a partnership with the Carolina Playmakers Repertory Company, Communiversity will assist in the development and implementation of workshops focused on the theatrical productions *Fences* by August Wilson, *Angels in America: Part I Millennium Approaches/Part II. Perestroika*, and *Big River: The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. The workshops will target multiple audiences and focus on varied topics including black athletes, HIV/AIDS awareness and antebellum Southern culture. The partnership will allow Communiversity to expand its outreach in the community while encouraging minority community members to patronize theatrical

productions.

Communiversity will operate as a three day program for its onsite program at the Stone Center, and on varying days for offsite components at the Hargraves Community School and other schools. The Teen Outreach and In Our Voices components will operate in partnership with the Blue Ribbon Mentor Advocate Youth Leadership Institute and various UNC Chapel Hill campus organizations.

The program will continue its partnerships with selected schools in the Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools system, Carrboro Arts Centers, Hargraves Community Center, Durham Arts Council and other community/campus organizations to provide the best programs and services for area youth.

Parent orientation for will take place Wednesday, September 8, 2010 at 6 p.m. in the Hitchcock Multipurpose Room at the Stone Center. More information, including the program’s online application, is available on the Stone Center website. ■

STONE CENTER WELCOMES NEW STAFF

The Stone Center was pleased to welcome two new employees during the spring term.

Gordon Ryan is the Stone Center’s new Public Communications Officer. He is originally from New York’s capital region and came to the Triangle area from Boston, MA. Gordon is a graduate of Boston University with a BA in philosophy and an MS in advertising. Before joining the Stone Center, he worked in marketing-communications at Boston University. Prior to BU, he was a member of several award winning account teams at New England’s largest independent public relations firm, Schwartz Communications.

April Spruill, our new Administrative Manager, received her BS in Accounting and Finance from UNC Greensboro. Before the Stone Center, April worked in accounting for the Department of Radiation Oncology and Pediatrics. She is an active member of the International Business Fraternity, Delta Sigma Pi, and serves as President for the local alumni chapter. April recently received an Unsung Heels Award and was featured in the University Gazette for her community service efforts with Delta Sigma Pi, Habitat for Humanity, and Kramden Institute.



Gordon Ryan



April Spruill

STONE CENTER 2009–10 Annual Report TO THE COMMUNITY

The 2009–10 academic year was an important and successful one for the Stone Center as it completed its 22nd year of service and continued support of the academic mission of the University and its constituent units. During this period, we offered a wide range of thematic programming and projects, supported student and faculty fellows, maintained our commitment to social justice outreach and provided a gathering space for students, faculty, staff and the regional community. Like most of the University community, we had to adjust to the budget crunch affecting institutions of higher learning throughout the United States, but we still managed to offer a full slate of activities that focused on explorations of African-American, African, and diaspora issues, histories and cultures.

During the past year we:

- Offered five direct fellowship awards to a diverse group of students, with four awarded to students planning international travel/study;
- Opened two exhibitions by noted artists Hamid Kachmar (*Dislocation/Relocation/Diaspora: The Art of Hamid Kachmar*), and Wendy Phillips and Lucia Mendez (*La Sombra y el Espiritu: The Work of Lucia Mendez and Wendy Phillips*);
- Worked on collaborative projects with 22 campus units, numerous statewide and regional organizations, as well as with national and international partners;
- Marked the 20th straight year we gave the George Moses Horton Award, which recognizes a graduating senior who has demonstrated outstanding leadership, initiative and creativity in multicultural education programs;
- Hosted Gloria Rolando, a celebrated Afro-Cuban filmmaker, and Geronimo Sanchez and Alejandro Correa of the Instituto Universitario de Barlovento in Venezuela as visiting international fellows;
- Closed out a successful four year collaboration with Carolina Performing Arts and their Creative Campus

Initiative with support for their 2009–10 campus-wide theme centered on global diasporas. Programs we planned in support of their project attracted more than 2500 persons, including a sellout performance by Los Pleneros de la 21 in Memorial Hall in October;

- Hosted the 16th annual Diaspora Festival of Black and Independent Film with 12 new offerings including eight North Carolina premieres;
- Completed the 18th straight year of Communiversity youth programs by providing after-school programming for K–12 students;
- Recruited 12 students for the joint Stone Center – Study Abroad Office fall 2010 Venezuela Study Abroad program, including two students from Bennett College for Women in Greensboro; and
- Co-sponsored a U.S. senatorial candidate forum with the Chapel Hill–Carrboro Branch of the NAACP in April 2010.

We also continued to provide service to the University and surrounding community. We:

- Provided classroom space for 84 courses from across the campus;
- Provided space for 223 performance, exhibition, meeting and scholarly events sponsored by campus or community units, including student organizations; and
- Provided low to no-cost event space to student groups.

These projects and programs attracted more than 3000 patrons and helped us build stronger relationships with the community we serve.

During the year, we were fortunate to receive 624 monetary gifts from donors, as well as in-kind support from local businesses and organizations including TROSA Frame Shop, Office of the Governor – Latino/Hispanic Affairs, The Freelon Group Architects, El Pueblo, and Asociacion de Puertorriquenos Unidos de Carolina del Norte.

In the coming year we will continue to offer challenging and topical programs and activities that are designed to enhance the opportunities for learning and intellectual engagement outside of the classroom. We thank the campus and our extended community for your support and involvement and invite you to join us as we enter a new season and seek new challenges. ■

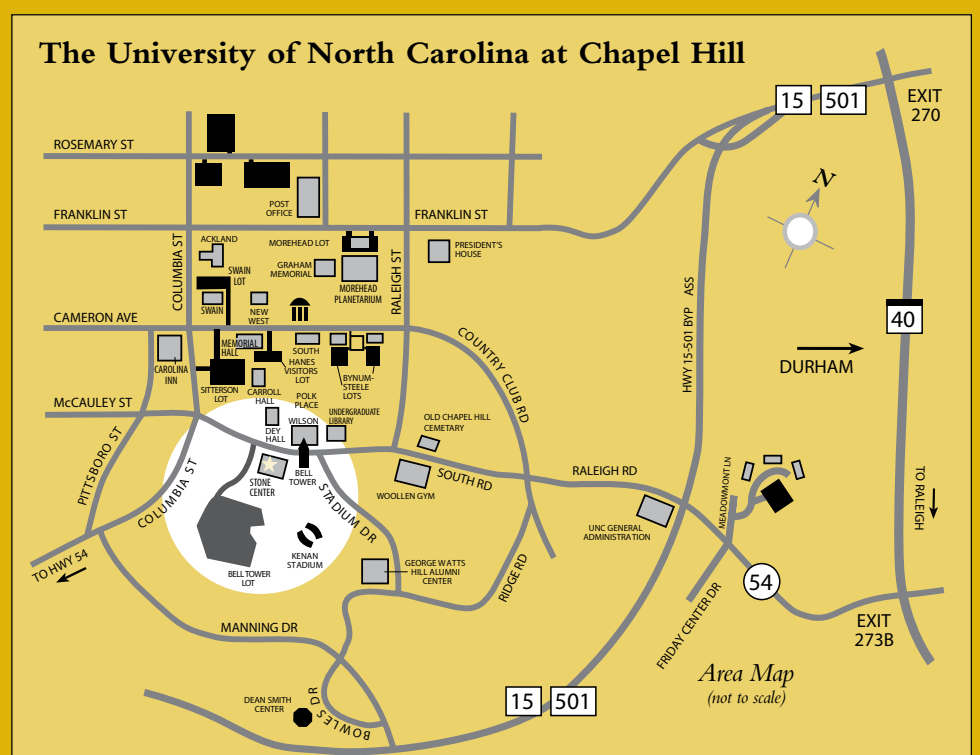
Counterclockwise, from top: Afro-Cuban filmmaker Gloria Rolando, artist Wendy Phillips at gallery opening, NC candidates for US Senate at forum hosted by the Stone Center, artist Hamid Kachmar at gallery opening.



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Donor Generosity Contributes to Success of the Sonja Haynes Stone Center for Black Culture and History

The Sonja Haynes Stone Center for Black Culture and History continues its mission with the financial support of the many alumni and friends who give generously to the organization. These individuals are key to the Center's current and future efforts. The Stone Center greatly appreciates and recognizes donors to the Center for the 2010 fiscal year through June 30, 2010:

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We have come this far by faith, perseverance and collective effort. Thank you for generously supporting our programs and mission.

— The Staff and Board of the Sonja Haynes Stone Center for Black Culture and History
The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2009–2010

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PLANS FOR BASEMENT RENOVATION IN DEVELOPMENT

The Sonja Haynes Stone Center for Black Culture and History is currently in the planning and predevelopment phase for its Basement Space Development Project (BSDP), an innovative artist space renovation initiative. The project will transform the 3,000 square foot basement area of the Stone Center into one of the few multi-use arts spaces in the region that will be technologically and aesthetically capable of supporting cutting edge multi-genre and multidisciplinary programming. This expansion will enable us to better serve the needs of the campus and the regional community by providing a dedicated arts space that will be available to

the public and to the campus throughout the week. The space will also complement three other arts performance/exhibition spaces in the Stone Center that are targeted for specific types of programming.

To learn more about how you can support this expansion project or serve on the planning advisory committee, please contact Joscelyne Brazile at brazile@unc.edu or (919) 962-9001. ■

