



INSTITUTE ON BLACK LIFE ANNUAL CONFERENCE

**TUESDAY –
WEDNESDAY
FEB. 2–3, 2021**

From 9:00 a.m.
To: 6:00 p.m.

VIRTUAL EVENT

*Understanding
and Addressing
Blackness and
Anti-Black
Racism in our
Local, National,
and International
Communities*

INSTITUTE ON BLACK LIFE
usf.to/IBLcon21



**UNIVERSITY of
SOUTH FLORIDA**
College of Arts & Sciences



WELCOME!

Welcome to the 2021 annual conference of the Institute on Black Life (IBL) at the University of South Florida. Founded in 1986, the Institute continues its core mission to serve as a resource center on the history and culture of the Black experience in Africa and the African Diaspora. Faculty all across the University of South Florida collaborate with the institute to conduct interdisciplinary community-engaged research and outreach programs in our local Tampa Bay African American communities, the wider African Diaspora and on the African continent. Our students assist in the important work of collecting and analyzing data. The title of our conference this year is **Understanding and Addressing Blackness and Anti-Black Racism in our Local, National, and International Communities**. The variety of departments, schools and colleges our conference presenters represent shows the importance of taking a multidisciplinary approach to understanding and addressing anti-Black racism.

Presenters are experts in Africana Studies, Anthropology, Art, Education, Engineering, English, Geosciences, Child and Family Studies, Social Work, Medicine, Psychology, Public Affairs, Public Health, Social Work, Sociology, and Student Success. The support of community research partners in the public and private sectors is central to our success as researchers. Partners supporting the anti-Black racism grants include Federation of Families HMM, Inc., Robles Park Village and Robles Park Tenant Council Association, Hillsborough County Branch of the NAACP, Carter G. Woodson African American Museum, Florida Public Archaeology Network, Cardno, and Diamond View Studios. We thank you for joining us and look forward to meaningful and fruitful deliberations.

Sincerely,

Fenda A. Akiwumi, Ph.D.

Director, Institute on Black Life

ABSTRACT

The Institute on Black Life (IBL) and its research partners have historically interrogated issues of relevance to African Americans such as how to combat systemic anti-Black racism and associated threats to community development, sustainability, health and well-being. Examples of past IBL annual conference themes addressing racism include: Teaching Racism: How, Why, When (2018); Activism Matters: Scholarship, Engagement and Action! (2016); Race and Place: Cultural Landscapes of Black Life in America (2014).

The turbulent events of 2020 - the Covid-19 pandemic that disproportionately affected Black and Brown people and the rise of the Black Life Movement following the murder of George Floyd by a policeman highlighted the continuation of systemic anti-Black racism, and underscored the relevance of the IBL mission and goals. Aligning with cries for change nationally and globally, the USF Offices of the Provost and Research & Innovation jointly provided \$500,000 to seed a research grant program on *Understanding and Addressing Blackness and Anti-Black Racism in our Local, National, and International Communities*.

Our conference this year will focus on this theme with USF faculty and community partners discussing how systemic racism continues to impact peoples of African descent in the African Diaspora and Africa. Areas highlighted include education, economics, media, the law, health, and cultural sustainability, and policies, strategies and practices to resolve the problem.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Handel Kashope Wright has been variously Canada Research Chair of Comparative Cultural Studies and David Lam Chair of Multicultural Education and is currently Professor of Educational Studies and Director of the Centre for Culture, Identity and Education, University of British Columbia. He is currently Senior Advisor to the President of the UBC system on Anti-Racism and Inclusive Excellence, has served as the Chair of the Race and Leadership Committee and was a founding member and interim executive member of the Black Caucus.



Prof. Wright's community engagement includes service on the Mayor of Vancouver's Advisory Committee on Black History Month and the City of Vancouver External Advisory Committee on Equity and Diversity. In November 2020 Prof. Wright gave the keynote address at a series of four Forums on Systemic and Other Racisms organized by Metro Vancouver for its 23 municipalities. Prof. Wright is also Senior Associate Professor of the Department of Communications Studies, University of Johannesburg, South Africa. He has published extensively on continental and diasporic African cultural studies, cultural studies of education, critical multiculturalism and its alternatives, qualitative research and curriculum theorizing, including being author of *A Prescience of African Cultural Studies* (Peter Lang, 2004) and co-editor of *Africa, Cultural Studies and Difference* (Routledge, 2011); *Transnationalism and Cultural Studies* (Routledge, 2012); *Precarious International Multicultural Education* (Sense, 2012); *The Dialectics of African Education and Western Discourses* (Peter Lang, 2012) and *The Promised Land: History and Historiography of the Black Experience in Chatham-Kent and Beyond* (University of Toronto, 2014). His work in progress includes two co-edited books on *Black British Columbia* (Fernwood, forthcoming) and *The Nuances of Blackness in the Canadian Academy* (University of Toronto Press, 2021).

DAY 1 – FEBRUARY 2

EMCEE: GEVERYL ROBINSON, MFA, DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH, USF ST PETERSBURG CAMPUS

- 9:00–9:10 a.m. Opening Remarks
Prof. Fenda A. Akiwumi, Director, Institute on Black Life, USF
- 9:10–9:15 a.m. Welcome Remarks on behalf of USF
USF President Steve Currall
- 9:15–9:20 a.m. Welcome Remarks on behalf of USF
USF Provost Ralph Wilcox

PANELS

- 9:20–10:25 a.m. **Cultural Heritage and Art in Anti-Black Racism Education**
- African American Burial Grounds & Remembering Project – Living Communities Challenging Silenced Histories in Florida.
Prof. Antoinette Jackson, Director, USF Heritage Research Lab, Dr. Julie Armstrong, College of Arts and Sciences, St. Petersburg campus, Khalia Jenkins, Muma College of Business, Tampa campus, Dr. Cheryl Rodriguez, Africana Studies Program, USF Tampa campus and Dr. Kathryn Weedman Arthur, College of Arts and Sciences, USF St. Petersburg campus
- Still Here: The Griffith J. Davis Photographs and Archives in Context.
Prof. Noel Smith, Curator, Contemporary Art Museum and Prof. Antoinette Jackson, Director, USF Heritage Research Lab, USF Tampa campus

Storytelling Saves Lives: Challenging the Stigma of Mental Illness through Stories from the Black Community.

Dr. Kyaïen Conner and Dr. Kristin Kosyluk, Department of Mental Health Law and Policy, USF Tampa campus

Dismantling Drivers of Racial Disparities (DDoRD).

Dr. Denise Davis-Cotton, Director, Florida Center for PAInT, USF Sarasota-Manatee campus

Moderator: Ms. Abby Vidmar, Ph.D. Student, Department of Anthropology, USF

10:35–11:35 a.m.

Health and Healing: Overcoming Challenges from Systemic Anti-Black Racism

Ending Racism to End HIV: A Qualitative Pilot Study to Examine the Impact of Racism and Intersectional Stigmatizing Identities on Black Adolescents Living with HIV in Tampa Bay.

Dr. Tiffany Chenneville, Dr. Kemesha Gabbidon, Department of Psychology, USF St. Petersburg campus, Mr. Hunter Drake, College of Public Health, Ms. Alexandra Cario, Mr. Bernard Washington, Carina Rodriguez, M.D., USF Tampa campus

Black Men for CHAT (Community Healing through Activist Transformation) and the Emotional Freedom Train(ing): Get on Board!

Prof. Gary Lemons, Department of English, USF Tampa campus, Min. Risasi Milima, Executive Director of the Federation of Families HMH, Inc., Mr. Marques A. Clark, Ms. Briget Horne, Ms. Maggie Romigh, and Mr. Christopher Glass

The BEST Way to Support Black Men/Youth in Medical and Healthcare Fields.

Dr. Vonzell Agosto, Ms. Andrea Williams, Ms. Michelle McNulty, and Ms. Sarah Thomas, College of Education, USF Tampa campus

Moderator: Mr. Walter Jennings, Assistant Director, Diversity Initiatives, University of South Florida Foundation

11:50–12:50 p.m.

Global Perspectives: Africa-African Diaspora Experiences of Anti-Black Racism

Education and Resilience among Congolese Refugee Families Coping with Remote Learning, COVID-19, and Sustained Anti-Black Racism.

Dr. Dillon Mahoney, Dr. Roberta D. Baer, Dr. Mathews Wakhungu, Ms. Lisa Armstrong, Department of Anthropology, USF Tampa campus, Dr. Asa Oxner, USF Morsani School of Medicine and Ms. Renice Obure, USF School of Public Health

Blackness in a Time of Global Protest: African Diasporic Negotiations of Anti-Racism and the Global #BlackLivesMatter Movement.

Dr. Omotayo Jolaosho, Africana Studies Program -SIGS, USF Tampa campus

Afrolatinx in Florida: Mapping Ethnic and Racial Experiences in Higher Education.

Dr. Beatriz Padilla, Director, Institute for the Study of Latin America and the Caribbean, USF

Gut Microbiota Composition and Function During Pregnancy and Lactation in Rwandan Mothers.

Dr. Adetola Louis-Jacques, Morsani College of Medicine, USF Tampa campus

Moderator: Mr. John Pendygraft, Ph.D. student, Dept. of Anthropology, USF

12:50–1:50 p.m. **BREAK FOR LUNCH**

1:50–1:55 p.m. Introduction of Keynote Speaker
Dean Eric Eisenberg, College of Arts and Sciences, USF

1:55–3:00 p.m. **KEYNOTE SPEAKER**
Professor Handel Kashope Wright, Director of Centre for Culture, Identity and Education, The University of British Columbia Vancouver
TITLE: “We The North!” The Insufficiency of Anti-Racism and the Urgency of Black Canadian Studies.

3:10–4:10 p.m. **Racial Disparities in Education: Challenges, Innovative Strategies and Opportunities**

A Strengths-Based Approach to Addressing Racial Challenges Impacting Black Students.

Ms. Ruby Joseph, MPA, Florida Center for Inclusive Communities, USF, Prof. Fenda Akiwumi, Institute on Black Life, Dr. LaTosha, Thomas, Office of Student Success, Ms. Rene Anderson, Dr. Angela Vatalaro, Florida Center for Inclusive Communities, USF, Dr. Richard Briscoe, Retired USF Assistant Professor, and Mr. Ernest Coney Jr., Corporations to Develop Communities of Tampa, Inc.

Racism in School Exclusionary Suspensions (RISES).

Prof. Brenda Walker, College of Education, USF St. Petersburg campus

Engineering Identity Development of Black Teachers and Students Through the PHASES of Success Design Process and AREN

Technology

Dr. Jonathan Gaines, College of Engineering, USF Tampa campus

Enlightenment Workshop Series: Catalyzing Systemic Changes to Promote Inclusive Excellence in Higher Education Settings.

Dr. Ruthmae Sears, College of Education USF Tampa campus and Geveryl Robinson MFA, Department of English, USF St. Petersburg campus

Moderator: Dr. Stephanie Williams, Judy Genschaft Honors College, USF

4:20–5:20 p.m.

Anti-Black Racism Challenges in Business and Professional Life

Depicting Race: How Football Recruiting Websites Construct Quarterbacks Through Coded Language as a Sporting Racial Project.

Dr. Travis Bell, Zimmerman, Ms. Kalin Valez, School of Advertising and Mass Communications, Prof. Deirdre Cobb-Roberts College of Education, USF Tampa campus, Dr. Jaime Robb, Marquette University

The Impact of Mentoring on Persistence, Resilience, and Success Outcomes of Black Women Academics.

Dr. Tanetha Fisher and Prof. Deirdre Cobb-Roberts, College of Education; Dr Kyaien Conner, College of Behavioral and Community Sciences, Kayla Nembhard, MA, LMHC, Family Studies Center, USF Tampa campus

Black Microbusiness Economic and Social Resilience to Natural Disasters: The Case for Targeted Policy Interventions and

Resiliency Support Network for Minority Lead Microbusinesses.

Dr. Matthew Mullarkey, Muma College of Business, USF Tampa campus

Tier 1 - Game On: Grooming Black Youth for Leadership Excellence Using Video Gaming.

Dr. Sylva Thomas, College of Engineering, USF Tampa campus

Moderator: Ms. Dawn Brown, School of Social Work, USF

5:20 p.m.

Closing Remarks/Discussant

DAY 2 – FEBRUARY 3

EMCEE: MR. KRISTOFER NEWSOME, PRESIDENT, BLACK FACULTY AND STAFF ASSOCIATION

10:00 a.m.

Welcome Back and Overview of Day 1

Prof. Deirdre Cobb-Roberts, College of Education, USF

PANELS

10:15–11:15 a.m.

Media and Law

Colorism, Police Killings, and Anti-Black Discipline.

Dr. David Ponton III, Africana Studies Program – SIGS, USF Tampa campus

Mad Men: Using Cultural Competency to Reduce Racist Portrayals of Blacks in Advertising.

Dr. Kelly Cowart, Muma College of Business, USF Sarasota-Manatee campus

Argumentation Games to Cognitively Inoculate Against Anti-Black Bias.

Dr. David Ponton III, Africana Studies Program - SIGS, Dr. John Licato and Ms. Lindsay Fields, College of Engineering, USF Tampa campus

Moderator: Dr. Tangela Serls, Department of Women's & Gender Studies, USF Tampa campus

11:30–12:30 p.m.

Maternal Health and Family Life

Challenges to Engagement with Parent Education and Early Childhood Programming in a Historically Black Neighborhood.

Dr. Anna Abella, Department of Child & Family Studies and Dr. Elizabeth Hodge-Freeman, Department of Sociology, USF Tampa campus

Increasing Job Opportunities for Young Black Fathers to Improve Child and Community Health.

Dr. Ronee Wilson, College of Public Health and Dr. Will Tyson, Department of Sociology, USF Tampa campus

Exploring Unique Experiences and Needs of African American/ Black Pregnant Women.

Dr. Vanessa Hux, Morsani College of Medicine, USF Tampa campus

Trauma-informed Infant-Family Mental Health: Expanding a Multi-agency Collaborative to Address Anti-Black Bias.

Dr. LaDonna Butler, Assistant Program Director, USF Family Study Center and CEO, The Well for Life and Dr. James McHale, Director, USF Family Study Center

Moderator: Dr Sherrisse Bryant, Department of Chemistry, USF Tampa campus

12:30–1:30 p.m.

BREAK FOR LUNCH

1:30–2:50 p.m.

The Road from Research to Policy and Practice

Panelists:

Dr. Heidi Castañeda, Dept of Anthropology, USF Tampa campus and Scholar Strategy Network, Prof. Christian Wells, Director, Center for Brownfields Research, USF Tampa campus, Dr. Cynthia Peurifoy, retired Director for Environmental Justice efforts for Region 4 EPA

Moderator: Prof. Heidi Castañeda, Dept of Anthropology, USF Tampa campus

3:05–4:20 p.m.

An “Affinity Moment”: Black Researchers Committed to Racial Equity.

Panelists:

Dr. Stephen Aikins, School of Public Affairs, USF Tampa campus, Dr. Denise Davis-Cotton, PAInT, USF Sarasota-Manatee campus, Dr. Michelle Madden, Campus Diversity Officer, USF St. Petersburg campus, Dr. Will Tyson, Department of Sociology, USF Tampa campus Prof. Brenda Walker, Associate Dean, College of Education, USF St. Petersburg campus

Moderator: Dr. Michelle Madden, USF St. Petersburg campus

4:30–5:30 p.m.

Closing Remarks: Where Do We Go from Here?

Panelists:

*Dr. Elizabeth Hordge-Freeman, Senior Advisor, President and Provost’s Office
Prof. Antoinette Jackson, Director, Cultural Heritage Lab
Dr. Cheryl Rodriguez, Africana Studies Program, School of Interdisciplinary and Global Studies*

Dr. Ruthmae Sears, *College of Education*

Prof. Maya Trotz, *Department of Civil and Environmental
Engineering*

Moderator: Prof. Fenda Akiwumi, Director, Institute on Black Life

THANK YOU!

I want to take a moment to express my sincere gratitude to all of our sponsors for this event. Furthermore, I want to extend a very special thanks to the Ivory Club of Tampa Bay and the Helios Education Foundation. Because of their support, IBL and USF are able help more first-generation, low-income, and minority students attain a postsecondary degree, and, develop important scholarly research and service projects in areas affecting and important to the Black and African American community.

We are so grateful for their support of the Institute on Black Life's mission and advancing our message within and beyond the community.

To all of our sponsors, your support of this Institute, its goals, and USF students means the world to me, and I am grateful for your continued generosity.

- Fenda A. Akiwumi, Ph.D.
Director, Institute on Black Life

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