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THE
DAVIS
center
educate | support | lead

2017-2018



"I am an act of kneading, of uniting and joining that not only has produced both a creature of darkness and a creature of light, but also a creature that questions the definitions of light and dark and gives them new meanings."

-- Gloria Anzaldúa

As a true believer in authenticity, I cannot enter into a written welcome without acknowledging the current political positionality of the U.S. We are living in such a state of unrest and polarization that the phenomenon has to be named. Acting as if social issues do not affect our lives at Williams inevitably proves detrimental to our efforts towards forming a healthy, well-established community. As we enter into a new academic year, we must recognize world events with as much intentionality as our fervent exploration of new pedagogical practices or our recognition of academic excellence.

This year, we are calling for a radical change in how we choose to address social issues. We envision a community whose ethos espouses care, empathy, and compassion. If we are truly committed to nurturing an inclusive and equitable curricular and co-curricular experience at Williams, we must be willing to come together in dialogue that allows for mistakes, learning, and growth. It is important for us to listen for the sake of understanding and to speak for the sake of learning. It is possible for diversity in thought and ideology to co-exist. Still, in today's world, underrepresented communities continue to be targeted and harmed. Harm serves as a barrier to connectivity, which fuels splintering stratifications that are fracturing the world. However, I believe we can make significant strides towards achieving peace and equity.

Scholar-activist Gloria Anzaldúa challenges us to view the world from different perspectives, questioning what we thought we knew, and creating new meaning as our viewpoints are edified. Let us be creatures of darkness and light; individuals with complex, contradictory identities and values. Let us blur divisions and embrace the ambiguity of existence. Let us become the source of new definitions and understandings of self, community, and society. Let us knead, unite, and join together.

Shawna Patterson-Stephens, Ph.D.
Director of the Davis Center

Our Mission

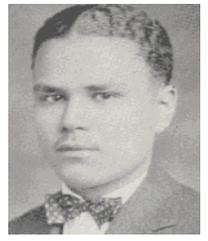
The Davis Center advances broad campus engagement with complex issues of identity, history, and cultures as they affect intellectual, creative, and social life.

Collaborating with all sectors of the College community—students, staff, faculty, and alumni—and with off-campus partners, the Center initiates and supports dialogue about and action toward access, equity, and inclusion at Williams and elsewhere. The Center:

- Leads campus conversation on issues of diversity and equity, especially around race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, socio-economic class, first-generation status, religion, ability, and other intersectional identities;
- Advises, mentors, and supports students from historically underrepresented and underserved groups;
- Supports affinity groups and their programming;
- Works with academic departments and programs to advance pedagogical and curricular initiatives that foster inclusion and effectively address issues of power and equity;
- Serves as a resource for students, staff, and faculty.

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WILLIAM ALLISON DAVIS



Allison Davis, eminent social anthropologist and psychologist, graduated summa cum laude and valedictorian from Williams in 1924. He earned a master's degree in English from Harvard in 1925. That year, Davis applied for - but was denied - a junior faculty position in the English department at Williams. Davis was certain that racial politics were the cause of his rejection and bore a lingering resentment toward Williams for most of his adult life.

Davis went on to teach at Hampton Institute - a historically Black institution in Virginia - from 1925-1931, where he worked rigorously to inspire rural Black students to think and write critically. An inveterate scholar, Davis knew that ideas drive change and historic change requires ideas of the broadest possible scope. So he returned to Harvard to earn a second master's degree in anthropology and continued his study of human societies and cultures at the London School of Economics. At Dillard University in 1935, he embarked on a major course of fieldwork in collaboration with Yale psychologist John Dollard. The pair studied Black adolescents in both New Orleans and Natchez. Davis then spent a year as a research fellow at the Institute of Human Relations at Yale. He and Dollard published their joint research in the book, *Children of Bondage: The Personality Development of Negro Youth in the Urban South* (1940). This work highlights the role of class in education and acculturation.

Davis earned a Ph.D. in anthropology from the University of Chicago in 1942. He was recruited by the education department there and became the first Black scholar in U.S. history to hold a tenure-track position at a predominantly White institution. His doctoral research helped lay the groundwork for the book, *Deep South: A Social Anthropological Study of Caste and Class* (1941), a cooperative effort by a team of social anthropologists to document the economic, racial, and cultural character of the Jim Crow South. This pivotal study was the first to apply anthropological techniques to the American landscape and to critically analyze the roots of racism. W.E.B. DuBois' review read, "as a contribution to our knowledge of sociology and the interactions of a small, deeply divided human group, this book deserves a high place." Davis' wife, Elizabeth Stubbs Davis, played an instrumental role in advising Davis until her passing in 1966. The couple had two sons, Allison S. Davis (b. 1939) and Gordon J. Davis (b. 1941), '63.

In 1967, Davis was appointed by President Lyndon B. Johnson to serve on the Civil Rights Commission. In 1970, he became the first John Dewey Distinguished Service Professor at the University of Chicago. Two years later, Davis became the first scholar of education to be inducted into the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. In 1974 - nearly 50 years after Williams denied him a teaching position - Davis received an honorary degree from his alma mater.

Davis was honored with a commemorative stamp from the U.S. Post Office in 1994. He is most widely known for his social science research on the relationship between academic performance and child development, in addition to his persistent criticism of intelligence testing. He frequently challenged the assumption that children from low-income families are inferior in intelligence to their upper-income counterparts. Davis' commitment to increasing access to quality education for low-income children revolutionized policy and paved the way for compensatory education programs, such as Head Start and Affirmative Action.



JOHN AUBREY DAVIS

John Aubrey Davis, esteemed political scientist, educator, and activist, graduated summa cum laude from Williams in 1933. Davis was an English major with a passion for politics and public policy that was kindled at an early age. "My father," he reminisced, "used to carry me on his shoulders at anti-lynching demonstrations."

At 21, Davis helped found the New Negro Alliance (NNA), an organization dedicated to using street-level activism as a way of influencing public policy mobilization. The NNA earned nationwide recognition when it argued the case *New Negro Alliance v. The Sanitary Grocery Co.* before the U.S. Supreme Court, becoming the first group to win the right of non-employees to picket against employment discrimination. Thurgood Marshall was assistant attorney for the case, the outcome of which was vital for future National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) boycott decisions and legislative victories.

Davis was strongly encouraged to pursue a degree in political science by political scientist, Ralph Bunche, the first person of color to win the Nobel Peace Prize. Heeding Bunche's advice, Davis went on to earn an M.A. in political science from the University of Wisconsin in 1934. He taught for many years at both Howard University and Lincoln University before completing his degree in political science at Columbia University in 1953. He also taught at The Ohio State University and at City College of New York, where he chaired the political science department. He credited his wife, Mavis Wormley Davis - a library scientist and published scholar - for being a great help to his research. Mavis and John had two sons, John A. Davis (b. 1941), '63 and Smith (Smitty) W. Davis (b. 1943).

Davis worked again with Thurgood Marshall as the lead academic researcher in the historic *Brown v. Topeka Board of Education*. His research was integral to the argument on which the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund based its landmark case. The Supreme Court's unanimous 1954 decision ended the separate-but-equal doctrine for public schools in the United States. Davis' skilled leadership served the public in many ways. He was Assistant Director of the first State Committee Against Discrimination in the U.S.; he served on the Review and Analysis Division of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's Committee on Fair Employment Practice; and he headed the Review and Analysis Division Commissioner of the New York State Commission Against Discrimination. John Davis served as a trustee at Williams College for several years and was awarded an honorary degree in 1979.

Davis also played a critical role in developing relations between the emerging independent nations of West Africa and the United States; led the American delegation to the First World Conference of Negro Writers and Artists in Paris in 1956; and participated in the formation of the *Societe de Culture Africaine*. Davis also established its U.S. counterpart - the American Society of African Culture - which, among other things, sponsored cultural exchanges featuring celebrated artists and performers.

Davis, a remarkably humble man, summarized his career by saying: "...since activism was the cause of my entering political science...I did not hesitate to practice what I learned." In truth, his distinguished career as an activist, educator, and public administrator helped transform the social, educational, and political landscape of the United States.



2017-2018 *Calendar of Events*

Framing Community: Creating a Culture of Care

September 5th @ 7:30 pm | '62 Center

Social Change Film Series: Accidental Courtesy

September 12th @ 7 pm | Images Theater

Reception for New Faculty/Staff of Color

September 14th @ 4:30 pm | Faculty House

Davis Center Block Party

September 19th @ 6 pm | Walden Street

"A Summer of Protest": Davis Center Townhall Meeting & Reception

September 20th @ 7 pm | '62 Center

Davis Center Brown Bag Lecture: Toya Camacho

Title IX at Williams: Demystifying Processes, Procedures, and Resources

September 27th @ 12 pm | Hardy House Lounge

DC Sips: First Fridays for Faculty & Staff

October 6th @ 7 pm | Hops & Vines

Social Change Film Series: Beatriz at Dinner

October 11th @ 7 pm | Images Theater

Davis Center Brown Bag Lecture: Dr. VaNatta Ford

LouWEEZYana: Lil Wayne, Colorism and New Orleans

October 19th @ 12 pm | Hardy House Lounge

The Davis Center Lecture: Dr. Monique Morris

October 26th @ 7 pm | '62 Center

DC Sips: First Fridays for Faculty & Staff

November 3rd @ 7 pm | Hops & Vines

Williams Reads and Social Change Film Series: 13th

November 8th @ 7 pm | Images

Davis Center Brown Bag Lecture with the Zilkha Center: Katie Dix

Coffee Production and Environmental Justice in Guatemala

November 15th @ 12 pm | Hardy House Lounge

Social Change Film Series: *The Last Dalai Lama?*

December 5th @ 7 pm | Images

DC Sips: First Fridays for Faculty & Staff

February 2nd @ 7 pm | Hops & Vines

Social Change Film Series: *AWAKE, A Dream From Standing Rock*

February 13th @ 7 pm | Images

Social Change Film Series: *I Am Not Your Negro*

March 3rd @ 7 pm | Images

Social Change Film Series: *American Revolutionary*

April 10th @ 7 pm | Images

Davis Center Research & Development Symposium

April 20th @ 12 pm | Griffin Hall

Social Change Film Series: *Agents of Change*

May 1st @ 7 pm | Images



SAVE THE DATE!

9.25.17: Dr. Rod Ferguson

11.7.17: Dr. Mae Jemison

11.12.17: Trans Day of Remembrance

12.1.17: World AIDS Day

1.15.17: MLK Day of Remembrance

2.1.18: Claiming Williams

3.2.18: DC Sips

4.6.18: DC Sips

4.12.18: Dr. Beronda Montgomery

5.8.18: Davis Center Block Party

5.18.18: Professionals of Color Social

6.9.18: Cocktails & Conversation: An Alumni Event



Signature Events

identiTeas

identiTeas is an informal, drop-in, open space to explore, discuss, connect over many facets of our identities and learn about one another – snacks and tea provided. Students of all identities are welcomed in this introductory, low pressure space to talk about the parts of ourselves that can be hard to bring up in everyday conversation.

Fall Sessions:

Gender and Sex
Socioeconomic Class
Race and Ethnicity
Sexual Orientation
Physical, Emotional, and Mental Ability
Religious or Spiritual Affiliation

Spring Sessions:

What's your experience with relationships & dating?
Where is home?
How have you been educated?
How do you think about body image?
What's your relationship to money?
Who is your family?

Winter Study Sessions:

Where is home?
What is your family like?
What are your traditions?
What is your family's immigration story?

Social Change Film Series

We work in partnership with our local independent theater, Images Cinema, to highlight mainstream or independent films that speak to issues of diversity in ideology, social identity, injustice, as well as prejudice and discrimination. We aim to give students and our community the opportunity to learn about communities and cultures through film – to thereby broaden or deepen our appreciation and understanding.

Voices

On the first night of First Days, the entire first year class gathers in the '62 Center Main Stage to discover the diversity of the experience that make up Williams in the form of storytelling. Over the summer, the Davis Center works with 5 student performers and the Theater Department to develop and perfect their story performances. Examples of shared narratives include: a stand-up set discussing the perils of Mountain Day, a reflection on the meaning of "home", an inspiring story of struggle and success on the road to Williams, a tour of the "effortless perfection" Instagram and the truth behind it, and a call to action for everyone to "find your team".

ROOT

ROOT is an ephVentures program developed in collaboration with The Zilkha Center for Environmental Initiatives. First years experience field trips, self identity exploration and workshops around the intersections of sustainability and identity, and learn how students at Williams flex their activist muscles on and off campus.

The W. Allison Davis '24 and John A Davis '33 Lecture

The W. Allison Davis 1924 and John A. Davis 1933 Lecture commemorates the remarkable work of the two distinguished scholars for which the Center is name. Brothers who, throughout their adult lives, made important contributions to equal rights and opportunity in the United States. Allison Davis, valedictorian of the Class of 1924, was a pioneer in the social anthropological study of class and caste in the American South. John A. Davis pursued wide-ranging political science work on race in both the United States and Africa. The Davis Lecture is delivered each year by a scholar whose work concentrates on some aspect of race, class, or education in the United States.

Davis Center Community Builders

The Davis Center Community Builders is a trained, peer-to-peer diversity education group. The DC Community Builders work closely with the DC staff and are part of the Davis Center's effort to provide education for the campus on issues of identity, power, and privilege. Together, Community Builders and Davis Center staff work towards building a more inclusive community.





MinCo is a unified voice against prejudice and discrimination in serving as a mechanism for minoritized groups to come together in organizational, social, academic, and political spheres.

"Whenever I feel like I'm shouting into a void that no one is listening to, I go to my weekly MinCo meeting, and then at least, I am strengthened with the reassurance that others are shouting with me."

*From the Williams Record
October 19, 2011*

The Minority Coalition

AASiA: Asian American Students in Action
BSU: Black Student Union
CASO: Chinese-American Student Organization
International Club
KOW: Koreans of Williams
MSU: Muslim Student Union
QSU: Queer Student Union
SASA: South Asian Student Association
SOCA: Students of Caribbean Ancestry
VISTA (Latinx Organization)
WASO: Williams African Student Organization
WCJA: Williams College Jewish Association
Women's Center

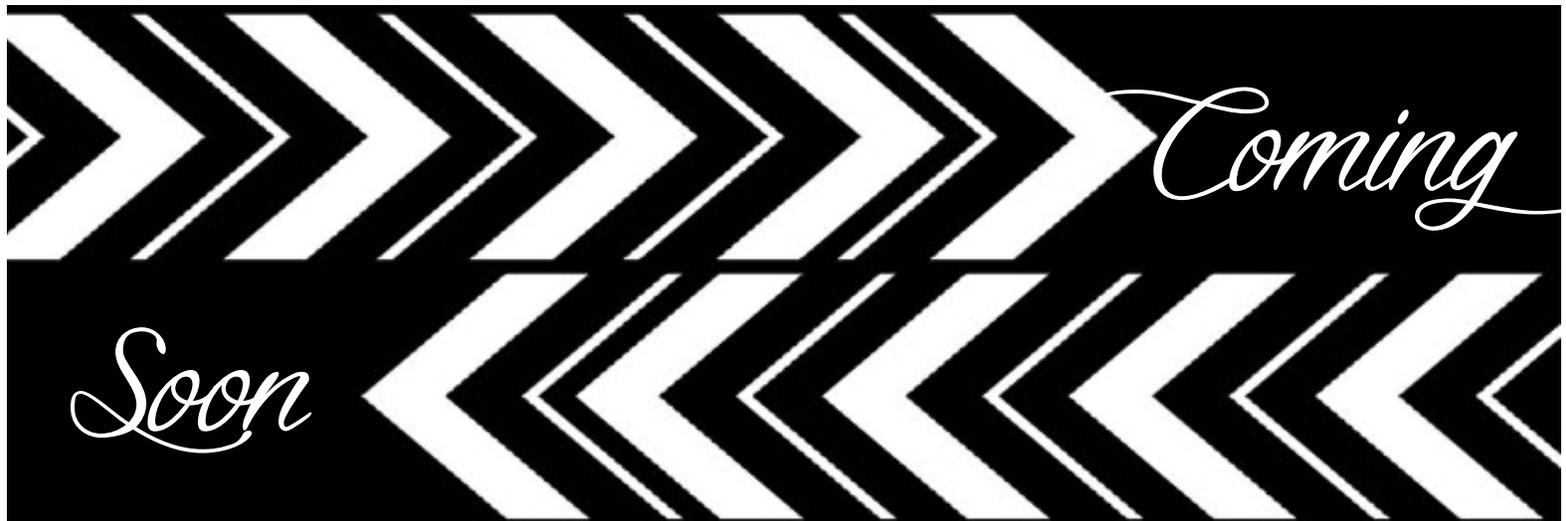
Davis Center Space

Hardy House was built in 1946 and bought by the college from Nona M. Hardy in 1948. It houses the Office for Special Academic Programs (OSAP), the International Student Center, the Women's Resource Center, and the Race & Ethnicity Resource Center.

Jeness House was named after Professor of Psychology, Arthur Freeman Jenness, who occupied the home from 1946-1965. The house later served as the Deans' Office while Hopkins Hall was being renovated. Jenness was the site of the 1988 student sit-in, which led to the creation of the Multicultural Center (MCC). Today, Jenness serves as the home to the Davis Center staff; Dr. Annie Valk, Associate Director for Public Humanities; and the Gender & Sexuality Resource Center.

Rice House is named for Richard Austin Rice, Professor of Modern Languages and founder of the Art Department at Williams College. After a number of Williams employees rented the house, it historically became known as the home of the Black Student Union (BSU), when the organization moved from the Mears House in 1983.

Students have 24-hour access to each house with the use of their IDs.



Intergroup Dialogue Series
Alumni Mentorship Program
Community Outreach Initiative
Faculty & Staff Training Workshops

The Davis Lecturer of 2017

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Dr. Monique W. Morris
Thursday, October 26th
62' Center | 7:00pm



Monique W. Morris, Ed.D. is an award-winning author and social justice scholar with nearly three decades of experience in the areas of education, civil rights, juvenile and social justice. Dr. Morris is the author of *Pushout: The Criminalization of Black Girls in Schools* (The New Press, 2016), *Black Stats: African Americans by the Numbers in the Twenty-First Century* (The New Press, 2014), and *Too Beautiful for Words* (MWM Books, 2012). She worked with Kemba Smith on her book, *Poster Child: The Kemba Smith Story* (IBJ Book Publishing, 2011) and has written dozens of articles, book chapters, and other publications on social justice issues and lectured widely on research, policies, and practices associated with improving juvenile justice, educational, and socioeconomic conditions for Black girls, women, and their families.

Dr. Morris is the Founder and President of the National Black Women's Justice Institute (NBWJI), an organization that works to interrupt school-to-confinement pathways for girls, to expand the landscape of economic opportunity for formerly incarcerated women, and to increase the capacity of organizations working to reduce sexual assault and domestic violence in African American communities. She is also an adjunct associate professor for Saint Mary's College of California and has taught at the University of San Francisco and California State University, Sacramento. Dr. Morris is a 2012 Soros Justice Fellow, the former Vice President for Economic Programs, Advocacy and Research at the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and the former Director of Research for the Thelton E. Henderson Center for Social Justice at the UC Berkeley Law School.

