BE ENCOURAGED. STAY CONNECTED.

While each of us may be impacted differently by the COVID-19 pandemic, we have collectively experienced our routines altered and frequent new challenges. The Office of Black Student Affairs offers our news from home series to support and encourage our students, staff, faculty and community members who have found their lives changed dramatically over the past several weeks. Our hearts turn toward vulnerable populations as we hear reports of climbing cases within majority-Black communities, and we are especially concerned for the safety of our students and their families who may be dealing with loneliness, worry, anxiety, an oversaturation of COVID-19-related images and news, and the realities of illness reaching loved ones. We value our connections to students, faculty, staff, alumni and our community partners, and OBSA is pleased to offer familiar and virtually accessible opportunities outlined in the pages that follow to help comfort, support and connect us.

This issue is dedicated to the graduating class of 2020. We are proud of you and hope all can attend Black Graduation on Zoom, Thursday, May 14 at 1pm; details on the pages to follow. If you’re unable to join the zoom event, it will be recorded and shared on OBSA’s website. Please remember to register to have your stole mailed to you, and take part in OBSA’s #BlackGradChallenge on Instagram as a way to celebrate your many accomplishments.

With love, The OBSA Staff: Lydia, Latreace, Esmé and Cleo
2020 GRADUATES: JOIN THE
#BLACKGRADCHALLENGE
celebrate with us online!

TAKE A PHOTO IN YOUR KENTE STOLE

If you haven't already, sign up to get your FREE Black Graduation packet by mail, that includes the 2020 kente stole, Black Graduation program and acknowledgment certificate. Mailing begins May 13!

REGISTER TODAY:
https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/XNLH5GM

When your stole arrives, pair it with something uniquely you, like a personalized cap, gown or robes, college gear, a favorite outfit--express yourself!

TAG @OBSCLAAREMONT & USE #BLACKGRADCHALLENGE

Follow @obsclaaremont and tag us in your photos, video and stories and use #BlackGradChallenge

Get featured in OBSA's virtual album and more as we acknowledge Black Graduates across The Claremont Colleges.

More about Black Graduation:
https://services.claremont.edu/obsa/blackgrad
BOTH OF OBSA'S MENTORING COMMUNITIES ARE NOW VIRTUAL. GET INVOLVED TODAY!

OBSA PEER MENTORSHIP began recruiting Mentors in February 2020, and will consider all applicants who have submitted so far (thanks for your patience as we navigate the campus closure). We will accept applications through August 2020 and be flexible with the deadline while we plan a virtual launch of the program. We expect to transition to in-person mentoring when campuses reopen. If you’ve already applied, expect to hear from us in late summer as we are initiating mentee recruitment and need time to select mentors and assign to a mentor. Mentorship will be 1-1 for fall 2020. We are looking for 5C students who are rising sophomores, juniors and seniors to participate (see right panel for application details). First year students are invited to apply starting mid May.

OBSA ALUMNI-STUDENT MENTORSHIP has been virtual since its founding in 2017 and will continue in this capacity via our growing database of 7C alumni and students. We match TCC alums with students on a rolling basis and applicants inform us of their personal and professional interests in order to be matched. This community has over 100 total participants representing all 7 Claremont Colleges. If you’re a current alumni and have not already done so, please join our 7C Black Alumni Association today: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/NLJV9HJ. Both alumni and students use the same link to apply for this program (see right panel for application details).

We encourage 5C students especially to join BOTH mentoring communities and take advantage of opportunities to create positive and useful connections while learning and living from a distance.

MORE DETAILS: https://services.claremont.edu/obsa/
BLACK GRADUATION
ZOOM KEYNOTE
Thurs May 14 2020 | 1pm-1:45pm PT

A special message to our communities from OBSA's 50th Anniversary Alumni Keynote

DR. EILEEN WILSON-OYELARAN (POM '69, CGU '77)
"HOPEFUL IN BAD TIMES"

RSVP to receive Zoom Link

GRADUATES: GET YOUR KENTE STOLE BY MAIL! SIGN UP NOW AT:
https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/XNLH5GM
ALL DEGREE PROGRAMS AND CLAREMONT COLLEGES INSTITUTIONS ELIGIBLE

SHOW US YOUR STOLE!
FOLLOW AND TAG OUR IG @OBSACLAREMONT
USE #BLACKGRADCHALLENGE

THE KEYNOTE WILL STREAM LIVE
AND BE RECORDED FOR PUBLIC SHARING ON THE OBSA WEBSITE

THE OFFICE OF BLACK STUDENT AFFAIRS | THE CLAREMONT COLLEGES SERVICES
I am a cultural worker, freelance writer, and current PhD student in sociology and critical theory at the University of California, Irvine. As a native of Winston-Salem, North Carolina, I made the coast-to-coast transition in order to attend Pomona, never thinking that I would end up committing (atleast) a full decade of my life to Southern California - the nostalgia for southern trappings like Bojangles cajun filet biscuits is everlasting.

I am driven to pose rigorous and generative questions regarding social change, violence, war, black music, and aesthetics through my scholarly research as well as through music reviews, poetry, speeches, and various forms of community involvement. Black study is my way of life and Black liberation defines my dreams.

Black study is my way of life and Black liberation defines my dreams.

As an alum, Semassa has presented as a panelist and workshop leader in the Black Intersections Conference for two consecutive years: “Funk Aesthetics and the Rejection of Narrative” (2019) and “Black Masculinity and Queer Aesthetics?” (2020).

Semassa is currently working on his PhD in Sociology and critical theory at University of California, Irvine, and is a Kugelman Fellow (Center for Citizen Peacebuilding).
Our hope is that this program is able to facilitate lifelong relationships and our 2020 Program got a glimpse of what it looks like to keep up those relationships virtually. Don’t forget to apply to participate as an OBSA Peer Mentor for the 2020-2021 academic year (p.1)!

OBSA PEER MENTORSHIP: IN REVIEW

BY ESMÉ TAYLOR, CGU DOCTORAL STUDENT & OBSA STAFF

The OBSA Peer Mentorship Program is designed to introduce first-year undergraduate students of African descent to life at the Claremont Colleges. New students are grouped together and assigned to a rising sophomore, junior or senior mentor with similar research interests, backgrounds, taking students’ individual requests into consideration. Many of the program mentees transition into becoming mentors for the next incoming class and we look forward to seeing this trend continue! We begin every year with our Meet and Greet (photo above right), followed by the Annual Mentorship Retreat at Pali Mountain Resort (photo above left) where we explore community building, self-discovery, time management, personal identity and navigating campus culture.

This year we nurtured partnerships with other mentorship groups on campus, including the CLSA Sponsor Program. CLSA Sponsors volunteered to staff the OBSA/CLSA Joint Open House and invited OBSA Mentors to partake in an Ice Cream Social (above). It’s been great connecting to other mentoring communities at the colleges!

With the difficulties of ending this year remotely, we would like to thank our 2020 Peer Mentors for their extra level of commitment that was shown early on. Thank you to those who made sure to schedule regular dinners or snack times with your mentees during the year that helped to solidify bonds. Thank you to those who planned exciting outings like concerts and movie nights that left lasting memories for everyone involved. As we see it, one benefit of the need to transition to remote communications was the ability of our participants to see what continued communication with each other outside of school might look like.

Our hope is that this program is able to facilitate lifelong relationships and our 2020 Program got a glimpse of what it looks like to keep up those relationships virtually. Don’t forget to apply to participate as an OBSA Peer Mentor for the 2020-2021 academic year (p.1)!

OBSA MENTOR SHOUT OUTS

FROM SURVEYED PARTICIPANTS

“Khadijah is amazing and I love our mentor group!"

“Y’all gave me a wonderful mentor so thank you <3 it helped with my acclimation so keep up the good work!”

“I’m glad I was matched to Amadi because he encourages me to be an active member at Pomona and discuss what’s on my mind.”

“My OBSA mentor and group are really involved and it makes this experience so worthwhile.”
DISTANCING WHILE BLACK
Supportive resources by & for people of African descent

MOTIVATION
@myliek
@yasminecheyenne
@theccnyc
@luvservedaily

WELLNESS
@blackandwell
@melaninandmentalhealth
@decolonizingtherapy

YOGA & MEDIATION
@drcrystaljones
@thepausepractice
@yogagreenbook
@sistersofyoga
@amir_yogiathlete
DISTANCING WHILE BLACK
Exploring the Impact of COVID-19 by & for people of African descent

NAACP COVID-19 UNMASKED VIRTUAL TOWN HALL SERIES

ESSENCE COVID BLACK AMERICA VIRTUAL WELLNESS SUMMIT

KIMBERLÉ CRENSHAW'S AFRICAN AMERICAN POLICY FORUM
"UNDER THE BLACKLIGHT: THE INTERSECTIONAL FAILURES THE COVID LAYS BARE"
https://aapf.org/2020
IN MEMORIAM:  
Dr. Agnes Moreland Jackson  
1930-2020  
BY DR. LATREACE COX, ASSISTANT DEAN, OBSA

The Office of Black Student Affairs has dedicated Black Graduation 2020 to honor the life and legacy of Dr. Agnes Moreland Jackson, Professor Emerita of English and Black Studies at Pitzer College. Dr. Jackson became the second Black full professor at the Claremont Colleges while continuing her involvement in civil, human and women’s rights. She also served as a community advocate for social and political justice. Retiring in 1997 after 28 years of service, Dr. Jackson remained a prominent fixture in the Claremont and Pomona communities as a charter member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Pomona Valley Alumnae Chapter, Pomona Unified School District Trustee.

On the morning of April 8th, 2020 Dr. Jackson peacefully passed away at the age of 89 after a lengthy illness. Born on December 2, 1930 in Pine Bluff, Arkansas, Agnes Moreland grew up with a love of history and the knack for storytelling. Agnes cared about others and believed that life was full of “acts of love” to be an example of how to treat people. Understanding the value of education, California offered a new life where Agnes attended University of Redlands graduating with a BA in 1952.

She would eventually obtain an MA from the University of Washington in 1953 and eventually a PhD from Columbia University in 1960. Dr. Jackson would go on to teach at Spellman College, Boston University, and Cal State L.A. In 1964 Dr. Agnes married Harold Andrew Jackson Jr. with whom she’d spend 56 years of love and partnership until his death on January 25, 2020. Dr. Agnes believed in respecting others, kind acts of love, and spending quality time having meaningful conversations to develop long lasting relationships. Known for being blunt, people loved her ability to be honest and truthful and whatever she expected from others, is what she gave of herself.

Having a host of well-known influential friends and acquaintances such as renowned choreographer Alvin Ailey, and civil rights attorney, John Payton who was also a fellow Claremont College alum. Dr. Jackson leaves behind a legacy at the Claremont Colleges of professionalism, activism, and an enriched life full of experiences that will continue to inspire those that she leaves behind; Darius Moreland (brother), chosen daughters, Barbara Ruth Arnwine, Esq., Dr. Lucretia Peebles and Margaret Smith; chosen son Dr. Melvin Merrill; and goddaughters Ashley (Barbee) Eddington and Nancy Norman.

Each year OBSA holds The Dr. Agnes Moreland Jackson Service Award ceremony during Black Graduation to recognize students, faculty and staff who have made a positive impact on their community. This year, The Office of Black Student Affairs has chosen to honor and celebrate the life of Dr. Agnes Moreland Jackson as we celebrate 50 years at The Claremont Colleges. Dr. Jackson was one of many key figures contributing to the establishment of Black Studies and Women’s Studies at The Claremont Colleges.
BLACK ALTERNABREAK

By Esme Taylor & Charity Haynes

Plan for 2020:

EVENTS
California African-American Museum (CAAM)
https://caamuseum.org/
Private tour, Q & A

World on Wheels
https://www.wowskatela.com/

VOLUNTEER LOCATIONS
Yetunde Price Resource Center
https://www.yprcla.org/

Black Women for Wellness
https://www.bwwla.org/

Compton Initiative
https://justdogood.org/

EATS
Awash Ethiopian Cuisine
5990 W Pico Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90035

Banadir Somali Restaurant
137 Arbor Vitae St, Inglewood, CA 90301

HOPE FOR 2021!

Black Alternabreak is a one-week program that takes place during spring break and is organized in collaboration with The Draper Center and OBSA. For a week, a small group of students along with two coordinators participate in culturally relevant community service projects and events. This year’s Black Alternabreak location was scheduled for the wonderful city of Los Angeles with the focus of mental health and was coordinated by Pomona student Charity Turnboe and OBSA staff member and CGU doctoral student Esme Taylor. One of the benefits of having Los Angeles as our city this year was the proximity to our OBSA Alumni network, and we are grateful to our alumni for their willingness to host dinners and participate in our scheduled events. Unfortunately, due to Covid-19, the experience will likely be postponed until 2021 with a tentative plan to offer the experience to the students that were accepted in 2020.

We look forward to fulfilling these plans and more in the coming year!
OBSA PICTORIAL
Staff picks from the 2019-2020 academic year

OBSA/CLSA 50TH ANNIVERSARY JOINT OPEN HOUSE

September: OBSA and CLSA celebrate the founding of cultural centers and ethnic studies at The Claremont Colleges with a joint open house, block party style, with food trucks, dance performances, vendors and community. The event marked a series of yearlong programming from both centers and ethnic studies departments IDAS and IDCLS.

ANNUAL OBSA PEER MENTORSHIP RETREAT

September: OBSA’s Peer Mentor program heads to Pali Mountain (Running Springs, CA) for the annual overnight retreat. 70 students attend for bonding activities, panels, workshops and more!

BLACK ALUMNI/PROFESSIONALS MIXER

October: OBSA collaborated with CGU Drucker and the Alumni associations at CGU and Pomona College to offer a mixer in Los Angeles at the private home of Pomona College alum and LA-based actor, writer and director Kelly Perine (right). The event was open to CGU and KGI students, 7C alumni, 7C staff, faculty and guests for networking and connection.
Pitzer BHM Lunch

February: For the third year, McConnell dining hall at Pitzer and Pitzer BSU invited OBSA to table at their Black History Month celebration lunch, with menu items created based on the cafe in the National Museum of African American History and Culture.

Revolutionizing Worship: Beyonce Mass

January: OBSA’s annual 7C Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. commemoration offered a groundbreaking womanist worship service, The Beyonce Mass, an international phenomenon featuring a live band, video testimonials, choir and a sermon by Rev. Yolanda M. Norton, H. Eugene Farlough Chair of Black Church Studies at San Francisco Theological Seminary.

Black Campus Ministries

March: Black Campus Ministries, 5CIV, First Love, and Christian Scholars held an exciting event open to students, faculty, staff and community members across The Claremont Colleges. REVIVE! 2020 was held on Pitzer’s campus as a praise and worship event meant to encourage students to come together for music, a positive message, and prayer before midterms. Black Campus Ministries has plans to continue similar collaborations to unify Christian faith-based groups across the campuses.
February: OBSA wrapped up Black History Month with the 4th annual Black Intersections Conference: "Transition, Transform, Transcend." The half day event created space to explore Black-centered scholarship in 9 unique panels and workshops by students across The Claremont Colleges. BIC2020 also featured a student generated art gallery curated by Brian Bishop (digital gallery visible here) and a performance by NIC Kay in collaboration with Pomona College Museum of Art. The event drew 100 students, faculty, alumni, staff and community members.

February: Sister Citizen at CGU collaborated with OBSA and CGU’s Student Life Diversity and Leadership Office for this annual self care workshop. 17 women-identified faculty, staff, students and alums attended. Dr. Shawndeeia Drinkard (Senior Staff Therapist at Mounsour Counseling) led a self-care workshop and the event included a soul food reception and raffle from Black-owned businesses. 2020 Sister Citizen Exec board: Cleopatre Thelus, Melanie Lindsay, and Elita McFadden.

March: The Center for Teaching and Learning at the Claremont Colleges invited OBSA Dean Lydia Middleton and graduate student manager Cleopatre Thelus co-lead a workshop for faculty at the Claremont Colleges centered on Black student inclusion in the classroom. Faculty were led in a discussion-based workshop that invited them to reflect on how their identities and beliefs may influence the classroom experiences they create, to consider various realities for students in and outside of the classroom as well as theory to enhance their educational approach. Some of the topics discussed at the workshop included: Black student underrepresentation at the Colleges, the Educational Survival Complex (Love, 2019), Stereotype Threat (Steele & Aronson, 1995), Impostor Syndrome and Racial Battle Fatigue, Critical Race Theory and Critical Teaching, and Microaggressions and Microaffirmations (Solorzano). Co-presenters and attendees also discussed action steps, and ways to apply workshop topics to their pedagogy.
Welcome to Upkey’s 2020 Virtual Internship Program (VIP)

In response to this uncertain time due to COVID-19, and given that thousands of Summer 2020 internship opportunities have been slashed nationwide, Upkey has decided to stay committed to our mission in helping students become career ready by offering 1,000 new internships. Talented and committed students should never miss amazing summer learning opportunities — so we are doing something about it!

Our VIP initiative is about caring for students, giving them a chance to look forward with excitement and hope, and providing them valuable remote opportunities to get ready for their career launch.

ELIGIBILITY: College students (and high-school seniors) seeking to gain skills in:

- Understanding Software as a Service (SaaS)
- Multichannel Marketing
- Financial Literacy
- Building Virtual Social Capital
- Refining Your Voice and Story
- Building Digital Awareness
- Understanding Social Equity
- Business Ethics and Corporate Responsibility

The program is expected to start on June 1st, 2020 and ends on July 24th.

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO APPLY VISIT: https://upkey.com/internship

Source: Lesli White, MBA, Director External Relations, Drucker School of Management (CGU)