

LE JOURNAL

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May Week 2001 Extravaganza!

The 2001 May Week celebration at West Virginia State College will go down in the college annals as an international extravaganza. On May 3rd three special events took place: the 10th Annual Multicultural/International Awareness Festival and Disabilities Day, the opening of the 2nd Annual Middle States African Studies Association Conference, and the International Banquet.

The 10th Annual Multicultural/International Awareness Festival and Disabilities Day was celebrated at the WVSC Student Plaza from 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. Entertainment included Latin music by Monteraros, Middle Eastern Dancing, WVSC Amazina Drumming Ensemble, Reggae music by the Last Prophets, the Dunbar Junior High Step Team, and featured vendors from the tri-state area. The Festival was organized by Multicultural Counselor, Robin Guillory, who, in her first year on the job, did an outstanding job of organizing the event.



Fashion show at the WVSC Multicultural Festival

The 2nd Annual Middle States African Studies Association conference also opened during the afternoon of May 3. The conference, organized through the WVSC History Department and the Office of International Affairs (OIA), was held May 3-5 on the WVSC campus. West Virginia Department of Health and Human Services director, Faisal Khan introduced the opening keynote speaker, Senator Edwin Brown, from the Commonwealth of the Bahamas. The conference theme, "Black Plague: Health, Population and AIDS in the African Diaspora," attracted scholars from Nigeria, Malawi, the Cameroons, Tanzania, and the United States.



Senator Brown accepts key to the City of Charleston from Mayor Jay Goldman

150 banquet attendees. Senator Brown and WVSC President, Dr. Hazo W. Carter, Jr., signed a Memorandum of Understanding that will forge a partnership between WVSC and the Commonwealth of the Bahamas. Entertainment was provided by The Don Gresby Fashion Show and the Amazina Percussion Ensemble led by WVSC professor of English, Dr. Martin Japtok.

In addition to listening to a wide variety of session papers, conference participants attended a photography exhibit by Vanessa Vick titled "Genocide in Africa," in the Della Brown Taylor Art Gallery, and a film viewing of "Maangamizi--The Ancient One," (Tanzania) starring Amandina Lihamba.

The International Banquet, organized by Special Events Coordinator, Pat Cline, in conjunction with the OIA, was held during the evening of May 3 in the McGhee Suites. Charleston Mayor, Jay Goldman, presented a key to the city to Senator Edwin Brown before the

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WVSC and the National University of Benin

The WVSC Drain-Jordan Library and the National University of Benin central library began a three-year partnership in June 1999 that was designed to promote shared technology, cultural awareness, and a special collection: a selective depository of Benin's government publications in the United States. The partnership is funded by the International Development Partnerships (IDP) Activity Agreement between the College Fund/UNCF and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).



WVSC computer services director, Bob Huston

Focusing on the concept of information literacy, the grant requires exchange visits by librarians and technicians from both the NUB and WVSC. Language training is provided in French and English. NUB librarians are learning about collection development, public and technical services, and technology in American libraries. Their WVSC counterparts are learning about African librarianship, helping the NUB develop its collections, improving public and technical library services, and introducing new technologies. A special bilingual website was established as part of the partnership as well.

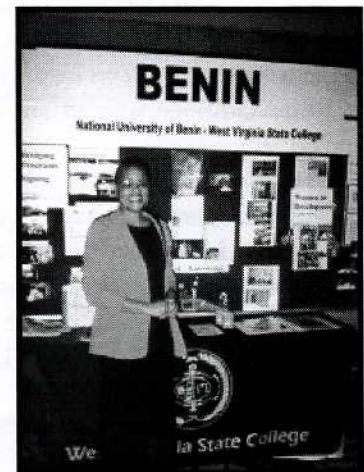
In the first two years, 7 librarians and technicians have participated in the exchange:

From the NUB to WVSC: Genevieve Sohounou, Theodore Sossouhounto, and Alban Amamion. Honorine Mensah Kpoussou arrived in West Virginia in October 2001.

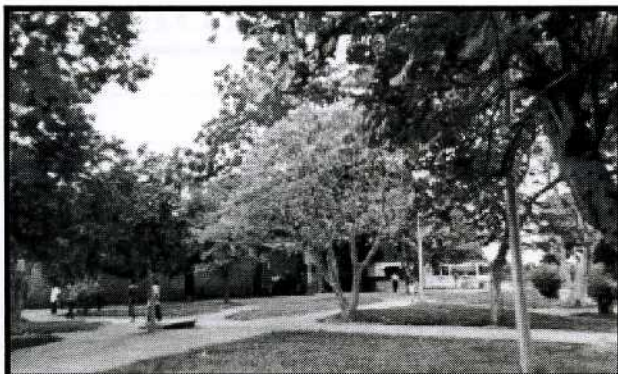
From WVSC to the NUB: Jeannie Bess, Irmin Allner, Bob Huston, and John Kistler.

During the spring 2001 semester, the Drain-Jordan Library presented a symposium titled, "Literacy, Women and Libraries: An International Collaboration." The NUB sponsored a seminar during the summer 2001 titled, "Documentation et Cooperation Documentaire à l'Université Nationale du Bénin." Both seminars were open to the public and provided a forum for discussion and increasing awareness of women's issues and librarianship, and cooperative documentation.

In the Spring/Summer of 2002 the partnership will culminate with the opening of the selective depository of Benin's government publications at the Drain-Jordan Library and the installation of a computer lab at the NUB library.



IDP program director, Dr. Shelby Lewis



The National University of Benin campus



The National University of Benin main library

West Virginia State College-Ohio University Connection

Anthony Owusu-Ansah, a Ph.D. candidate of Curriculum & Instruction at Ohio University's (OU) College of Education will teach HIST399, "Modern Africa" in the spring 2002 semester. The course will focus on the environment, health, human rights issues, and the pace of business and economic development in the nations of modern (post-independence) Africa.

Owusu-Ansah, whose focus is on multimedia technology and its application to education, holds a M. Ed. in Computer Education & Technology and an MA in International Affairs. His semester at WVSC is the result of international development partnership activities initiated in 1999 between Dr. Steve Howard, Director of the African Studies Resource Center at OU, and Co-Chair of WVSC's International/Multicultural Committee, T. Ford-Ahmed. We were motivated by the "Governor's Association call to *do more with less* nationally, as well as international partnerships between institutions of higher education being an obligation," stated Dr. Howard regarding the developing partnership between the two institutions. The "Modern Africa" course, although offered through the History Department, will serve as a content specialization course for Social Studies Education Majors and an elective for all other Education majors, stated Department Chair, Dr. Jeanette Lee.

Naomi Tutu

The West Virginia Human Rights Commission, in cooperation with the WVSC National Center for Human Relations hosted the Human and Civil Rights Conference with special guest Ms. Naomi Tutu on the campus of WVSC this past June. Ms. Tutu, daughter of the 1984 Nobel Peace Prize winner, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, spoke of racism in both South Africa and the U.S. She decried the reluctance of many to discuss the issue but, acknowledged that it should be a concern to all humanity. "We all have infinite value and [are] worthy of dignity," she opined. Following her presentation to "State's" family and community guests, a statewide Teleconference was held to respond to local as well as international issues.

Ms. Ivan Lee, Executive Director of the Human Rights Commission and Lew G. Tyree, its Chairman, explained that their concern for the human and civil rights of West Virginians was of crucial concern and through the forum they hoped to educate the public and offer a stage for discourse. Panelists for the teleconference included statewide representatives from the Coalition Against Domestic Violence, the NAACP, WVSC's Department of Social Work, and WV civil rights attorneys.

Ms. Tutu is a doctoral candidate at the London School of Economics, holds the MA in International Economic Development from the University of Kentucky, and currently coordinates the Race Relations Institute at Fisk University in Nashville, Tennessee.



Naomi Tutu

