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The Center for the History of the New America

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Special points of interest:

- Cluster Hire
- Conferences
- Digital Humanities Initiative
- Immigration Education Research Project

Inside this issue:

Transforming the Afro-Caribbean World **2**

The Migrant Metropolis Conference **3**

Monthly Film Series **3**

Health Across Borders Conference **3**

Smithsonian Partnership **4**

CLUSTER HIRE IN MIGRATION STUDIES COMPLETED

In May 2012, Provost Ann Wylie awarded the Center and five departments in the Colleges of Arts and Humanities and of Behavioral and Social Sciences a \$250,000 grant to add five scholars in the study of migration to the University's faculty. The award will be matched one-for-one by the two Colleges and five Departments involved—bringing the University's total new contribution to the study of migration to \$500,000.

We are delighted to announce that all five faculty members have been hired and all will be on campus by the Spring 2015 semester. Esther Kim Lee joined the faculty of the School of Theater, Dance, and Performance Studies in January 2013. Andrés Villarreal (Department of Sociology), Nancy Mirabal (Department of American Studies), and Christina Getrich (Department of Anthro-



pology) joined the faculty in Fall 2014. The School of Literature, Languages, and Cultures will welcome Thayse Lima in January 2015.

The new faculty arrivals will expand the scholarly and pedagogical reach of the Center. The Migration Studies initiative will support key goals of the University Strategic Plan, generating a more diverse, inclusive, and international culture at the heart of the university, and facilitating local and international partnerships to make University faculty and students better global citizens.

Migration is not only a central catalyst in world history; today, in our ever more global world,

it is also generating pressing policy challenges. Nations around the world are wrestling with the creation of equitable and practical policies to address the massive movement of peoples that has come to characterize the twenty-first century. Because migration today is multi-directional, its patterns constantly changing, new transnational and trans-border methodologies are recalibrating the way scholars understand this critical subject.

The hiring of these preeminent scholars in the social sciences and humanities will make UMD a world-class center for the study of human movement across boundaries and borders.

Transforming the Afro-Caribbean World



New Digital Humanities project supported by NEH grant

In March 2014, the National Endowment for the Humanities awarded the Center for the History of the New America and the Maryland Institute for Technology in the Humanities (MITH) a Digital Humanities Start-Up Grant.

The Transforming the Afro-Caribbean World (TAW) project will use the NEH startup funding to bring together scholars of the Panama Canal, Afro-Caribbean history, and experts in the digital humanities, data modeling, and visualization for a two-day planning workshop that will discuss a large-scale effort to explore Afro-Caribbean labor, migration, and the Panama Canal.

The TAW workshop has several aims: 1) digitization of a subset of the proposed records to evaluate potential costs and preservation issues; 2) exploration of structured data tools; 3) the creation of annotated bibliographies for use by teachers and the public as they begin to explore

the centennial anniversary; and 4) identification of other archives and repositories to be included in the larger project.

Scholars from across the nation have been invited to consult on the TAW project. Ultimately, TAW will map and explore the movement of Afro-Caribbean laborers between 1903 and 1920.

Potential research questions enabled by this approach include, but are not limited to: How and when did Afro-Caribbeans use movement to improve their lives, and how did strategies vary across the diverse Caribbean groups? What skills did they possess and how did those change over time? How did their race shape their mobility on the job and in their personal lives? Can combining English and Spanish

language resources change our understanding of their lives in the early twentieth century?

The full project in later stages will be a multi-lingual archive that harnesses tools from natural language processing and information visualization via linked open data, in order to give scholars and the general public the means to investigate the networks of Afro-Caribbeans engaged in shaping the Caribbean, Central America, and the United States.



The Migrant Metropolis Conference

In March 2014, the Center hosted its third conference, *The Migrant Metropolis*, examining how urban spaces in the modern United States have been built and rebuilt by the movement of people. The conference focused on the impact of migration and immigra-

tion on the networks of cities, suburbs, and hinterlands long central to organizing American life. Presentations and discussions revisited traditional questions about "assimilation," the role of "racial" or "ethnic identity," and the formal (legal) politics of belong-

ing by introducing a range of new vantage points. The conference was concluded by a day-long meeting to consult on the new exhibit on migration and immigration at the National Museum of American History (Smithsonian Institution).



Organizing for Power and Workers' Rights in the 21st Century

In March 2015, the Center will host a symposium exploring workers and organizing in the twenty-first century. Attacks on the freedom to organize in the last several decades have created new challenges for working people. New creative approaches have consequently emerged in

sectors across the economy such as in domestic care, fast food, and big box merchandising. This symposium seeks to examine all those areas while also placing them within the context of a rapidly globalizing environment. The symposium will be coordinated

with the annual meeting of the Southern Labor Studies Association in Washington, D.C. on March 6-8, 2015. In addition to the symposium, participants will be invited to view the newly acquired AFL-CIO Labor Archive at the University of Maryland.

“What are the most effective strategies for organizing and supporting working people today and in the future?”

Health Across Borders: Migration, Disease, Medicine, and Public Health in a Global Age

Co-sponsored by the Maryland Center for Health Equity in the School of Public Health, the Center will host a two-day conference in September 2014 to examine the role of race and ethnicity in narra-

tives of public health, in the health care industry, and in the availability of health care services. It will be paired with a health festival which will provide a range of dental and health services to community members.

The keynote address will be offered by the former surgeon general of the United States, Dr. David Satcher.





We're on Facebook. Friend us and we'll keep you informed of upcoming events!

One of the Center's major goals is to serve as a source of outreach and community service to the University's surrounding communities.

The Center is making strides to bring its scholars and students into active engagement and dialogue with these communities and with their associations, advocacy groups, and media workers, as well as with individual members of the wide variety of ethnic groups in the region. It hopes to engage with high school students and teachers throughout the metropolitan area. The Center is seeking projects that will bring the University and local populations together.

Reframing the Teaching and Learning of Migration/Immigration in U.S. History

Funded by a UMD-SI seed grant, the Center and the National Museum of American History (Smithsonian Institution) are undertaking an initiative to assess the state of the field regarding the teaching and learning of immigration and migration history in schools across the United States (primarily focusing on kindergarten through grade 12 settings).

The data and analysis generated by the re-

search will serve as the basis for creating a new framework for teaching migration/immigration across the country.

Preliminary research suggests that K-12 history standards related to immigration history are fragmented and, in particular, very few states include the post-1965 history of immigration.

This project will culminate

in a published report on the state of immigration and migration history in K-12 history standards, and will build towards further grant proposals for teacher training and for revision of history standards related to immigration history.

