

Ninth Annual **Emerging Scholars Special Edition**

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BEAUTIFUL MINDS

Twelve socially conscious academics challenge status quo with scholarship.

Dr. Erika Camacho
Assistant Professor of
Mathematical Sciences
& Applied Computing
Arizona State University

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CNN's Soledad O'Brien



January 7, 2010

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Personal experiences and social consciousness shaped the distinguished work of this year's class of emerging scholars. Their inspiring stories shed light on what gives their scholarship purpose and drives them to succeed.

BY HILARY HURD ANYASO, GARRY BOULARD, WILLIAM J. FORD, B. DENISE HAWKINS, ARELIS HERNANDEZ, CHRISTINA HERNANDEZ, LYDIA LUM, MARÍA EUGENIA MIRANDA, MICHELLE J. NEALY, MARY ANNIE PEMBER, LEKAN OGUNTOYINBO AND RONALD ROACH



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Five Questions for Soledad O'Brien

Committed to reporting on undercover communities, CNN's Soledad O'Brien spoke to *Diverse* about 2009's "Black in America" and "Latino in America" documentaries and other issues she'll cover through the expanded "in America" series. The half Afro-Cuban, half Australian New Yorker says her mixed background has given her the ability to relate to many different communities. Visit diverseeducation.com to hear more on her "in America" work.

1. Is there anything you regret or wish you had done differently in last year's "in America" specials?

Oh gosh, always. ... We did Latinos but didn't look at all at Afro-Latinos. They're absolutely missing from the documentary. My mom is Afro-Latino and so she even says 'Oh so none of that in your documentary, huh?' Understandably, it's four hours and you're looking at 51 million people. It's not possible to get everything in. ... The beauty of it is, I get to do it again because we will do more Latino stories, and we will do more "Black in America" stories. And we'll expand even more what we consider to be the "in America" series. To me the mantra is we'll go do stories that are undercover.

2. What was the driving purpose behind "Latino in America"? Was it to explain this group, clarify stereotypes or bring forward issues?

I find a great story with a great character and I let them tell their story because it's a documentary. There are a lot of unexplored stories in both the Black and Latino populations. I know that to be true. There are a lot of stories for gay Americans that never get told; certainly for Native Americans there are none [and] Asian-Americans. ... My job is not to say 'OK, this is a story for Asian-Americans.' Not at all. My job is to find a great character and tell their story in a way that everybody is compelled, everybody is interested. It's not about, 'Well I'm here to explain this to this.'

3. In an article in *Latina* magazine you said education is the most pressing issue facing Black and Latino communities.

Why do you believe this?

It's the next front in civil rights. If you can deny someone a good education, you can deny them everything. You will get in the way of their earnings potential. You will determine whether their children are likely to be educated. You will determine whether they live in poverty. You will determine what job they are likely to have. You will determine their health care. ... So I think that if we are not able to figure out how to make public education a real opportunity for all people who cannot send their children to private education, [if we are not able to] make public education safe and available and good quality, you will effectively condemn a large number of people, mostly brown and Black to being underclass.

4. What are you working on in regards to higher education?

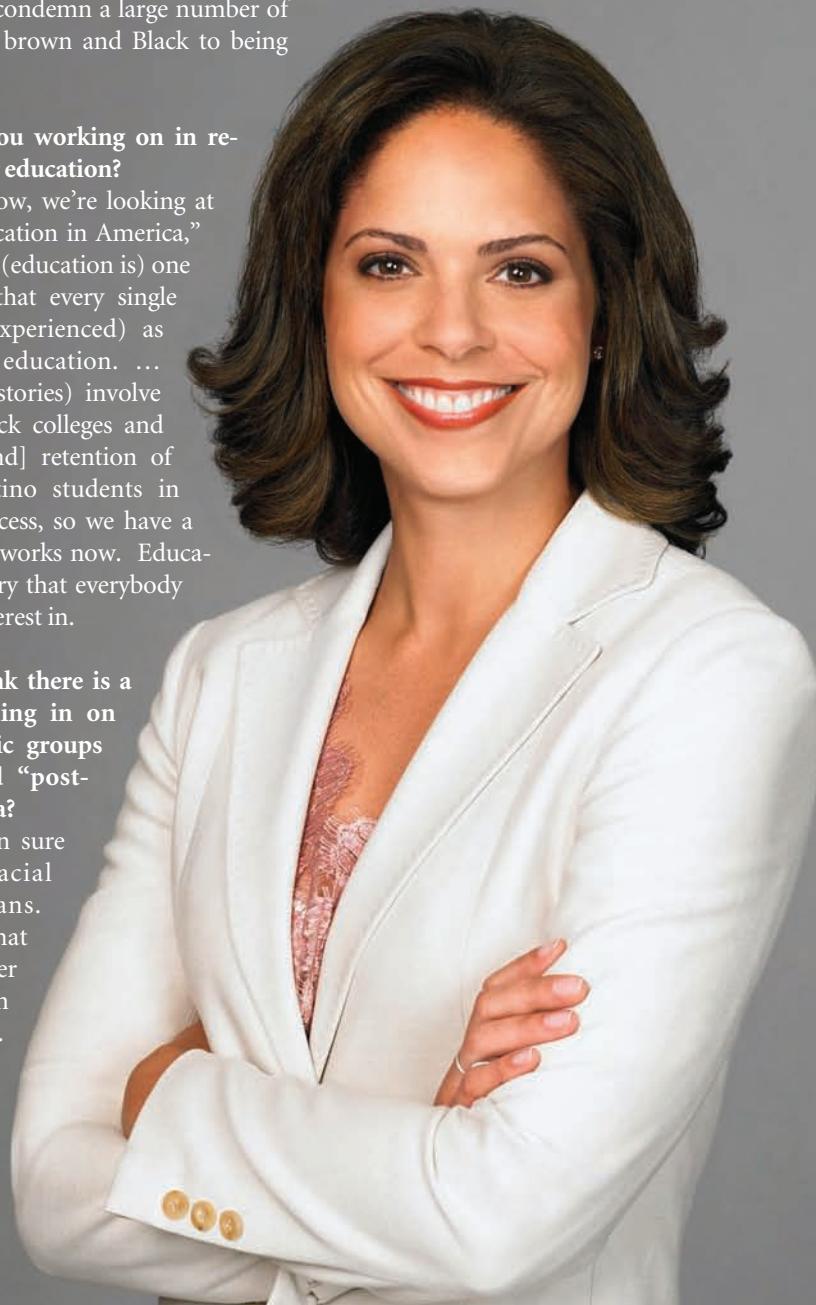
Well, right now, we're looking at doing an "Education in America," because I think (education is) one of the things that every single person has (experienced) as a touchstone education. ... Some of (the stories) involve historically Black colleges and universities (and) retention of Black and Latino students in the college process, so we have a number in the works now. Education is ... a story that everybody has a vested interest in.

5. Do you think there is a place for honing in on different ethnic groups in a so-called "post-racial" America?

I'm not even sure what post-racial America means. If it means that race is no longer an issue then that's insane. So I think that there is no post-racial America. And any-

body who says that never fully understood "pre-racial" America. America has had a long and difficult history with race, and it's really, really interesting and compelling to explore. And one of the most interesting things about my job is I get to explore that and the ramifications of some of those complications over the hundreds of years of history that present themselves today in present-day America and the challenges that certain people face. And some of the incredible successes that certain people are able to achieve. But there is no "post-racial America." Race is a conversation that America is having very much currently. □

— María Eugenia Miranda



Angelique EagleWoman
Dr. Yaohang Li
Madhavi Sunder
Shadra Amy Snipes
Brendesha Tynes
Dr. Michael Dorsey

Emerging Scholars: The Class of 2010

Dr. Luis Urrieta Jr.
Gonzalo E. Torres
Said Sewell III
Dr. David Treuer
Erika Tatiana Camacho
Stephanie Y. Evans

Every year, the Emerging Scholars edition features a diverse group of rising researchers, thinkers and leaders in various fields. Their credentials and accomplishments distinguish them, but it's the level of social consciousness among the members of this year's class that makes them truly excellent.

Whether it's lending a hand to society's struggling Black men or training lawyers in Native American law, these scholars use their work to build upon the cornerstones of societal change. Their research represents the fruit of decades of diversity advocacy that has expanded the depth and breadth of knowledge in higher education. These scholars use their specializations to intercede on behalf of our nation's most vulnerable communities.

The audacity of their hope mirrors that of President Barack Obama, calling on citizens like this group of young crusaders to embody the legacy of service that made many of their careers possible. As you will read, the class of 2010 acknowledges the guidance of mentors that allowed it to imagine deeper and wider. Today, many members of the class do the same to empower others.

As academicians, these scholars are stretching the limits of research, inquiry, technology and public policy to include all peoples while remaining faithful to unraveling the injustices of our society. We applaud the work of these scholars through the vignettes in the following pages.

This year, we increased the class to 12 and gathered more information that can be found at DiverseEducation.com. We invite you to get to know them and their exceptional work.

Untangling the Web

Brendesha Tynes

Title: Assistant professor of African-American studies and educational psychology, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign

Education: Ph.D., psychological studies in education, University of California, Los Angeles; M.A., education and social policy-learning sciences, Northwestern University; B.A., history, Columbia University

Age: 38

Career mentors: Patricia Greenfield (UCLA), Yasmin Kafai (UCLA), Claudia Mitchell Kernan (UCLA), Belinda Tucker (UCLA), and Helen Neville (UIUC)

Words to live by: “One phrase I always say is, ‘Let them tell you no.’ By that I mean don’t do things to disqualify yourself, but in everything you do, give your all. You may face rejection and naysayers, but that voice that says ‘no’ should not be inside of you.”

Dr. Brendesha Tynes, like most scholars, was always a good student — vice president of her high school senior class, president of the National Honor Society, editor in chief of the yearbook. Yet despite her academic and extra-curricular achievements, she had professional aspirations that weren’t exactly what her parents and teachers had in mind.

“All I did was dream about becoming a model,” says the Detroit native. So with \$80 in her pocket, she moved to New York, leaving Michigan State University after her first quarter. She got a few modeling assignments; however, during one casting call she got a harsh reality check.

“The person who was doing the hiring looked at me and said, ‘Oh, we’re not hiring Black girls this season,’” recalls Tynes.



“Something clicked in me and I said [to myself], I want to be judged for who I am on the inside, for what I have in my head, not for the way that I look.”

Shortly thereafter, Tynes again applied to college and never looked back. Instead she has forged ahead, obtaining degrees from three top-tier universities.

Furthermore, she has, in her own words, “charted my own little research agenda.” While focusing on the role the Internet plays in adolescent development, Tynes is taking a close look at online victimization and how that relates to and/or is associated with psychological adjustment. She also studies how race and identity are constructed online.

Tynes aims to paint a holistic picture of the experiences adolescents and emerging adults have on the Internet.

“A lot of the media reports that you hear say, ‘There’s so much danger on the Internet and there are predators lurking,’” says Tynes. “I don’t want to minimize the fact that kids experience online victimization, including sexual solicitation and online racial discrimination, and that they have negative outcomes that are associated with those experiences, but I also like to focus on the educational and psychosocial benefits of the Internet.”

Tynes’ area of research came into focus as a graduate student while working on UCLA psychology professor Dr. Patricia Greenfield’s National Science Foundation study on the construction of sexual identity online.

“We were supposed to identify utterances that had to do with sexual identity and I saw all of these racial epithets in the transcript. I said, ‘This is what I’m going to study,’” says Tynes. “There wasn’t much (research) out there. Still there is relatively little out there on racial issues and the Internet.”

Dr. Helen Neville, professor of counseling and educational psychology at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, notes that Tynes published the first empirical study to show a link between online racial discrimination, depressive symptoms and anxiety.

“She is among one of the few scholars examining the influence of new media on the psychosocial and educational development of African-American youth,” says Neville, one of Tynes’ mentors. “This work is absolutely critical considering the influence of new media in the lives of youth and the fact that we know very little about African-American youth as consumers of new media and the influence or implications of these media.”

Tynes has examined the interface between technology and race in several publications, including *Developmental Psychology*, the *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology* and *The Black Scholar*. In addition, she has plans to conduct a longitudinal study of online racial discrimination. She hopes the new year will bring the research grant she’s been waiting for.

In the meantime, Tynes continues to prepare for the upcoming tenure process and acknowledges that a number of people have helped her to get where she is, namely her mother who raised three children as a single parent while working for Chrysler as a press operator. She tried to provide opportunities for Tynes and her siblings that she didn’t have growing up.

And what did her mother think about the two-year modeling stint in New York?

“I later found out that she was scared out of her wits,” says Tynes. “But she let me go!” □

— Hilary Hurd Anyaso

Real Science for Real People

Shedra Amy Snipes

Title: Fellow, National Cancer Institute Cancer Education and Career Development Program, University of Texas School of Public Health (present - fall 2010)

Assistant professor of Biobehavioral Health, The Penn State University (starting fall 2010)

Education: Ph.D. and M.A., biocultural anthropology, the University of Washington; B.S., anthropology and human biology, Emory University

Age: 32

Career mentor: Lovell Jones, University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center, Sharon Cooper and Maria Fernandez, University of Texas School of Public Health

Best advice you were given regarding your career path?

"Choose an academic home, colleagues, collaborators and mentors who will promote your scholarship to its highest level, all while giving equal consideration to your personal happiness and familial commitments. One should not be compromised for the other."

Not much has changed about Dr. Shedra Amy Snipes since she was a little girl in Savannah, Ga., who grew up loving science, cherishing the "well-stocked" chemistry set her mother made sure was at her disposal, realizing that she was part tomboy and part "nerd," and always asking "why?"

And that's a good thing. At 32, Snipes, a biocultural anthropologist, says she has found the perfect home for her inquisitiveness and all that she loves about science, people, culture and health. Snipes credits the undergraduate course in medical anthropology she took by chance while at Emory University for shaping what became her life's work.

"I learned how important faith and belief and art were to how people made their health decisions. When you and I define health, we may define it as the absence of illness. Someone from another culture may define it in a spiritual way or by connecting to an ancestor," says Snipes, a lecturer who holds dual postdoctoral fellowships in public health and cancer prevention at the University of Texas School of Public Health and in health disparities research at UT's MD Anderson Cancer Center. "When I learned that I could have a career understanding the nuances of health rather than the reactionary parts of health, that's what inspired me."

Dr. Lovell Jones, director of the Center for Research on Minority Health at the MD Anderson Cancer Center, advised Snipes and other Kellogg Health Scholars. He calls Snipes "one of those rare jewels that has been able to effectively blend" science and health policy.

"She is a protégé every mentor wishes that they would come across in their lifetime," he says. "She is my academic daughter."

Snipes' scientific tentacles and interests are multidisciplinary, intersecting health disparities, biology and culture. And even justice.

"I want to understand the unjust pieces of health and disease that don't have a biological explanation. Unless we link the biology with other things like people's cultural and belief systems, we only get a piece of the picture," she explains.

Snipes' research has allowed her to view aspects of the environment and health through a cultural lens. The work she began as a



student researcher on a National Institutes of Health study titled "For Healthy Kids: Reducing Pesticide Exposure in Children of Farmworkers" has bourgeoned into her passion and taken her from the laboratory to the cotton fields.

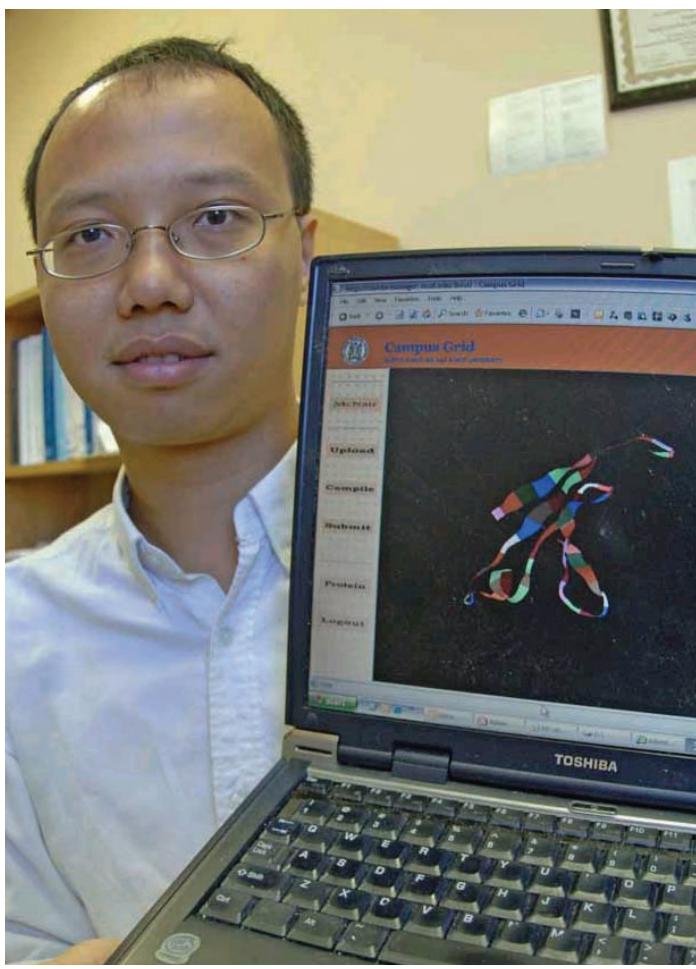
In 2005, Snipes began working in fields and orchards in Washington's Yakima Valley. Now she travels along the Texas-Mexico border, primarily in Lubbock, Texas, with Mexican farmworkers, sharing their often substandard living quarters, their labor of picking cotton and their lives while managing to collect urine and other biological specimens from a population on the move. Snipes' up-close-and-personal approach to examining the cultural beliefs and behaviors on farmworkers' vulnerability to pesticide exposure has earned her recognition from the scientific community and her subjects' coveted trust and respect.

In November, the *American Journal of Public Health* published the results of Snipes' study of 99 Mexican farmworkers in Washington, which found that the risk of pesticide-induced illnesses and potentially cancer-causing agents increases for Mexican farmworkers who labor in the nation's fields and orchards. "For one thing, Mexican immigrant farmworkers' knowledge of and beliefs about pesticides differ from traditional occupational health definitions, such as those of the Environmental Protection Agency," says Snipes.

With each research trip she makes to the fields, she takes a piece of her grandmother and other family members who knew the "uninterrupted hours of stooped labor and the open cuts and scratches on your skin that increase the danger of pesticide exposure" that came with picking cotton for a living in South Carolina.

"The story of my grandmother helps me to connect with them (Mexican farmworkers) and with my work. Because of that, I am more motivated to make my science mean something to real people. It means something to my grandmother and to those who came before her and to those who are currently picking cotton in a toxic environment." □

— B. Denise Hawkins



COMPUTER SCIENCE

Computing for Cures

Yaohang Li

Title: Associate professor, computer science, North Carolina A&T State University

Education: Ph.D. and M.S., computer science, Florida State University; B.S., computer science and engineering, South China University of Technology

Age: 35

Career mentor: Michael Mascagni, Florida State University

What advice would you give newly minted Ph.D.s? "Work hard but be sure to enjoy life too!"

When Dr. Yaohang Li's parents steered him as a teenager toward a computing career, it didn't douse any of his passion for laboratory sciences. In fact, it sparked a career in which he has merged the two.

His interdisciplinary research includes computational biology. Li, who has taught full-time since 2003, uses supercomputing to try impacting biological processes, which can result in breakthroughs in bio-energy development and the drug-design industry. The latter gives other scientists more tools to potentially fight disease.

Li has delved into protein-structure prediction and function, among other things. Proteins are essential, naturally occurring parts of all living organisms. But sometimes, humans can change

a protein's structure in ways that make it more likely to bond with new disease-fighting drugs, for instance.

Li inputs protein-sequence data into computers and simulates a series of physical and chemical conditions. He analyzes the resulting protein model in order to better understand the biological processes.

Ideally, his research can be used to develop new protein-modeling programs. Computational approaches can be more efficient and less expensive than biologists, chemists and others experimenting in lab settings, Li says. "Sometimes we can do in one day by computer what might require a couple of years in a lab. It feels good knowing I might make a contribution to human health."

Still, answers don't often come quickly by computer either. Because much remains unknown about the nanoscale interactions between proteins and other elements, even computational biology can sometimes require years of research in order to reach a set of conclusions, says Li.

A current project of Li's involves investigating computational approaches that can lead to the prediction of high-resolution protein structures with a level of accuracy and reliability not currently attainable. New protein modeling tools can eventually lead to the manufacturing of additional drugs to fight conditions as varied as Alzheimer's disease, cystic fibrosis and mad cow disease. Li has secured for this project a five-year, \$400,000 CAREER Award from the National Science Foundation.

He has been the principal or co-principal investigator on research grants totaling more than \$15.3 million.

Dr. Michael Mascagni, professor of computer science at Florida State University, praises Li for his "tremendous effort in looking for funding." The task has held an additional challenge because Li's English skills were limited until he honed them during graduate school. Formerly Li's dissertation adviser, Mascagni has since collaborated with his ex-student on journal articles, conference presentations and a book chapter.

"Too many academics chase their tails for funding," Mascagni says. "Yaohang has been diligent but savvy in what he sought. And he wisely deferred to people who have guided him in writing scientific English until he became fluent himself."

Li has taught courses such as Advanced Operating Systems, Database Design and Introduction to Grid Computing.

He also has conducted research at the Historically Black Colleges and Universities/Minority Education Institutions Faculty Summer Research Program at Oak Ridge National Laboratory, a multiprogram science and technology campus. There, his supercomputing projects have included statistical and mathematical work to try gleaning more knowledge of the biology behind ethanol production. Such knowledge can improve and make more efficient the production of ethanol, an alternative fuel.

Li, who idolized Albert Einstein as a child, chose an academic career rather than strictly conduct research because of the years-long incubation tied to the latter. "We need a new generation of computer scientists and biologists to carry on," he says, referring to his students.

In 2005, he was named North Carolina A&T's "Rookie of the Year" Young Researcher. That year, he also won the Ralph E. Powe award for junior faculty in computer science and math from Oak Ridge Associated Universities, a consortium of doctorate-granting institutions. □

— Lydia Lum

Representative Research

Luis Urrieta Jr.

Title: Associate professor of cultural studies in education and Mexican American studies, University of Texas at Austin

Education: Ph.D., culture, curriculum and change/concentration in anthropology, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill; M.A., educational foundations, California State University, Los Angeles; B.A. history and anthropology, University of California, Los Angeles

Age: 37

Career mentor: Kristine Gutiérrez, University of Colorado at Boulder

Advice for new faculty: "There has to be a balance between work and being healthy—socially, physically, emotionally. Especially because as Latinos a lot of times it is very alienating to work in certain university environments. And so if you don't have that balance you can get sick, literally."

Dr. Luis Urrieta Jr. draws distinct lines to separate his professional life from his personal life, but his work is, in fact, personal to him. He studies Chicano/a and Latino/a education, identity, agency and social movements and indigenous education, among other topics, because of his upbringing in Los Angeles, he says.

"Growing up in East L.A. and Pico Rivera, (Calif.)," says Urrieta, "and being of Mexican parents and having a lot of those contradictory experiences in school, you know, going through some of my own acculturation and assimilation processes, my own bilingualism, my own relearning of a lot of things, has just led me in a lot of directions in terms of identity."

Although Urrieta's parents kept him and his siblings out of trouble in a rough neighborhood and focused them on doing well in school, they had no knowledge of the college admissions process and could not offer him much academic guidance. It wasn't until a field trip with a ninth-grade Japanese-American teacher, Mrs. Tanigawa, that he visited the University of California, Los Angeles, campus and realized the possibilities in academia.

"I didn't know that people actually sat around under trees and read," says Urrieta, who had a proclivity for reading as a child.

Urrieta later enrolled at UCLA and earned a bachelor's with the highest departmental honors in anthropology. Then, at the urging of an African-American graduate student, Adande Washington, he decided to go for a master's degree. However, his plans to apply to graduate school took a detour when he was prompted by happenstance to open the letter of a recommender before sending out his application. The only professor who had given him an A+ in college wrote a terrible recommendation saying the only reason Urrieta had been let into the honors program was because of his mentor, Washington, and that he would be a liability for any graduate program.

With his hopes and self-confidence dashed, Urrieta took a hiatus from academe and went into teaching for four years. In retrospect he says he now realizes he could have continued with his plans to apply to graduate school by getting a recommendation from another professor. At the time, however, it had an impact on him.

"I was young, and I was very sensitive to what other people thought about me," he says.

It took positive reinforcement from his educational foundations professor, Dr. Bernardo Gallegos, in his teaching certificate



program to get him back on track. Urrieta then found the focus of his career after a conversation with Dr. Bryan Brayboy, an associate professor of policy leadership and curriculum at Arizona State University, at an American Educational Research Association meeting. While Urrieta had already been working as a professor, Brayboy, who is American Indian, encouraged him to work to represent his community.

"We have a very strong responsibility to tell other truths and to represent ourselves and the people whom we are committed to in different ways than we've been traditionally presented," says Urrieta.

His critiques of U.S. society and calls for change have fomented disagreement, but, he says, he strives to do his best because it is hard for critics to pick at his conclusions if the research is methodologically solid.

Brayboy says Urrieta's work is compelling because he's passionate about it.

Urrieta's career has taken him full circle: Back to his family's home state in Mexico, Michoacán, where he is serving as a Fulbright-García Robles Scholar and researching the causes of migration and postsecondary education models for indigenous people.

Academic work can be consuming, he says, but having a spouse who is not in his field and speaking only Spanish at home helps keep him grounded. "I want to continue to be able to see life the way that people that are not in the academy see life."

He tackles issues that matter to his community and the academy, Brayboy says. "He's maintained a real sense of humility and humanity, and I think that's rare." □

— María Eugenia Miranda

Matters of Culture and Community

David Treuer

Title: Associate professor of English, University of Minnesota

Education: Ph.D. and M.A., anthropology, University of Michigan;

B.A. Princeton University

Age: 39

Career mentor: Toni Morrison

Have you always wanted to be a writer? "If I wasn't allowed to be me, I would be the musician Prince."

"Be unafraid! Strike out in new directions for yourself. The real purpose of scholarship is to do new work that is far out and away from the pack." This is the advice David Treuer has for budding scholars.

Treuer's brash virtuosity has served him well. He has authored several successful novels, including *The Translation of Dr. Appelles* and *The Hiawatha*, and served on the editorial board of the newly released *A New Literary History of American Literature* edited by Dr. Werner Sollors and Greil Marcus. He is the recipient of several prestigious awards, including a Guggenheim Fellowship, McKnight Presidential Fellowship and Franklin Research Award from the American Philosophical Society.



Underpinning the fireworks of his career, however, is an abiding love for his culture, community and family. Primarily raised on the Leech Lake Reservation in Minnesota, he treasures his Ojibwe language and religion. "I am connected to Leech Lake by bonds of religion and kinship in ways I can't begin to tabulate," he says. This connection, he says, feeds him physically, spiritually and emotionally.

He recalls that the author Toni Morrison, his academic adviser at Princeton University, suggested he devote himself to something larger than his writing. He has taken her advice to heart. Passionate about Ojibwe language and cultural preservation, he is immersed in community activities that further this goal.

Surprisingly, Treuer did not always want to be a writer. As an undergraduate at Princeton, he was interested in classical music composition. Fortunately, he soon learned his talent did not lie in music.

"I'm so lucky I found this out at a young age rather than wasting my time pursuing something I could never attain," he says.

He still has an appreciation for music and the talent that produces it.

"I admire the musician Prince's virtuosity, his ability to do what he wants to do. I think that I approach this same thing with my writing," he observes.

Treuer pursued his graduate work in the field of anthropology because, he says, he enjoys a good fight. This refers to the typical Western perspective inherent in anthropology's study of native peoples. He developed an interest in the critiques of power that

inform anthropology and other disciplines as well as ways in which these power themes are woven into narratives. He developed an interest in the construction of the novel. "I fell in love with the process, the doing of writing," he says.

Sollors, a professor of English literature and African American studies at Harvard University, describes Treuer's writing as being in the style of William Faulkner and Toni Morrison. "He writes in a very good modern way but at the same time deals with crucial issues that face native people," says Sollors.

As one of only a few American Indian academics, Treuer often advises the new generation of American Indian students. In response to why so few Indians pursue a career in academia, he says Indians sometimes feel guilty about personal success and achievement. "So often, we (Indians) internalize what we have lost, our hard times and difficulties. There is so much more to us than what we have lost," he says. "My advice to young Indian students is to be unapologetic about their success. We tell our young people it is OK to fail. We need to also tell them it is OK to strive." □

— Mary Annette Pember

The Internationalist

Michael Dorsey

Title: Assistant professor, environmental studies program and director of the Climate Justice Research Project, Dartmouth College

Education: Ph.D., natural resources and environmental policy, University of Michigan School of Natural Resources; M.A., Anthropology, Johns Hopkins University; M.F.S., Yale University; B.S., natural resources and environmental policy, University of Michigan

Age: 38

Career mentor: Bunyan Bryant, University of Michigan

What advice do you have for new or budding faculty? "Stay focused. Use technology to manage information as quickly as you can. Raise outside funds for your research as soon as you can."

At a time when national governments are as focused on containing the threat from global climate change as they have ever been, the need for experts and advocates to bring attention to vulnerable populations in both developed and developing countries has never been greater. Count Dr. Michael K. Dorsey as a scholar whose experience as an advocate on behalf of poor and marginalized peoples is as formidable as the expertise he demonstrates while teaching and conducting research in his capacity as an assistant professor of environmental studies at Dartmouth College.

"The work that I'm trying to do is upholding the civic responsibilities that I think I have and that for me means trying to make space, as much as I can, for justice to prevail for as many people as possible," Dorsey says.

At Dartmouth, Dorsey manages a range of consulting and advisory posts that enable him to exert leadership on climate change and environmental justice issues on an international basis. He attended the U.N. Climate Change conference in Copenhagen, Denmark, last month where he advised several international organizations and national governments, most notably the Pacific Island countries represented by the Islands First organization, during climate-change policy negotiations.

Last year, the Ford Foundation announced a \$300,000 funding award to enable Dorsey to launch the Climate Justice Research Project at the Hanover, N.H.-based Ivy League college. The project is devoted to studying the racial and social inequities that result in addressing climate change and generating policy information on the effect of climate change on the livelihoods of low-income people in the U.S. and abroad.

"The Environmental Studies Program is delighted that the Ford Foundation has chosen to fund Professor Dorsey's research. We are glad to see he has received such recognition for his contributions in the field of global environmental justice and climate," said Dr. Andrew Friedland, professor and chair of Dartmouth's Environmental Studies Program, in a statement.

Accustomed to handling many tasks at a time, Dorsey has held a number of lecturer positions at foreign universities, including schools in Sweden, the Netherlands and South Africa. He holds the post of visiting scholar at the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies' Commission to Engage African Americans on Climate Change, one of the most visible campaigns to inform Black Americans about climate change.

Long before joining the Dartmouth College environmental studies department as a tenure-track faculty member in 2005, Dorsey had labored many years as a committed environmentalist. In 1992, while still an undergraduate at the University of Michigan, the Detroit-born scholar served as a member of the U.S. State Department delegation to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, commonly known as the 'Earth Summit,' in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

Over the years, Dorsey has played a critical role in co-founding as well as helping lead a number of environmental advocacy organizations. He is a founding member of the San Francisco-based Center for Environmental Health and the Washington-based Environmental Leadership Program. A member of the Sierra Club since his early teen years during the mid-1980s, Dorsey served six years, from 1997 to 2003, as a director on the club's national board. While conducting dissertation research as a Ph.D. student at the University of Michigan, Dorsey lived in Ecuador from 1999 to 2001 and was a co-principal investigator jointly with an ecological institute and an environmental advocacy group.

"I've known Michael to be a provocative, outside-the-box thinker on environmental issues. He challenged his fellow students as well as faculty to consider ideas that were not always the most conventional," says Dr. Gordon T. Geballe, associate dean for student and alumni affairs at the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies, where Dorsey earned his master's of forest science. "He was a memorable student here. And he is someone who is accessible as a valued adviser to our program and is available to our students when he visits." □

—Ronald Roach



Native American Law And Order

Angelique EagleWoman

Title: Associate professor of law and James E. Rogers Fellow in American Indian Law, University of Idaho College of Law.

Education: LLM, University of Tulsa College of Law; J.D., University of North Dakota School of Law; B.A., Stanford University

Age: 40

Career mentors: Judith Royster, University of Tulsa School of Law; Stacy Leeds, University of Kansas School of Law; Christine Zuni Cruz, University of New Mexico

Advice for new or budding faculty: "Get to know your colleagues and have a sense of what is the meaningful contribution that you want to make in your field. Look to your colleagues as support in bringing that contribution to life."

University of Idaho law professor Angelique EagleWoman first became interested in the law after her African-American uncle was assaulted by a group of deputies and subsequently awarded \$75,000 in punitive damages.

"I was 8 years old at the time, and watching the news coverage of the judgment in his favor," recalls EagleWoman, "I felt that justice had been served and that law was a powerful tool for righting wrongs."

Three decades later EagleWoman (Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate) is now the force behind the new Native American law program at the University of Idaho that will provide lawyers with comprehensive training to address a series of unmet legal needs in the tribal communities.

"Tribal governmental legal offices are often understaffed and relied upon to address diverse areas from water adjudication to protection of treaty hunting rights to strengthening the tribal offenses code to advising the tribal government on economic development plans," she says.

Those same offices are also expected to represent tribal members in such areas as family law, criminal defense and personal injury action.

But perhaps the greatest and most complex need has been trying to figure out what Washington wants. "The policies of the U.S. government have been called schizophrenic due to the swinging between opposite poles of supporting tribal government and seeking to terminate tribal government," says EagleWoman.

As a result EagleWoman has focused on efforts to bring more coherence to tribal policy, particularly as it pertains to economic development issues, and remains hopeful that

such efforts will eventually bring results. "I think that over time loosening the federal hand of government agency oversight on reservations will lead to freeing up tribal lawmakers to create sturdy corporations and economic ventures to benefit the same region they are located in," she says.

All of which means plenty of work for attorneys specializing in Native American law issues. "There are over 550 federally recognized tribes and over 260 state-recognized tribes. So that means there is a lot of work generated with, by and for those tribes," she says.

The core curriculum for the Native law program, open to upper-level students, includes the overview course — Native American Law — as well as seminars in Native American Natural Resources Law or Tribal Nation Economics and Law.

"The more lawyers we get that are competent in this field," says EagleWoman, who encourages the professional emphasis for Native American and non-Native American law students, "the better-served the tribes will be, as well as the governments and individuals that are acting with tribes."

EagleWoman proposed the idea for her program during an initial faculty interview with Idaho's College of Law. The response was almost immediate and positive, allowing her to launch the program a year later.

That she took such a bold step does not surprise Stacy Leeds, a professor of law and the director of the Tribal Law and Government Center at the University of Kansas. "Angelique is very much one of the rising stars in our field," says Leeds, who adds that "she has already stepped into a role as mentor to the next group of students coming up. And I think that's very impressive."

Before joining the faculty at the University of Idaho, EagleWoman worked as a trial attorney for the Sisseton-Wahpeton Sioux Tribe/Oyate, an associate attorney at a law firm representing tribal government clients and individual tribal members, and as a tribal public defender for the Ponca Nation of Oklahoma.

All the while EagleWoman, who this fall won the William F. and Joan L. Boyd Teaching award for excellence and innovation in teaching law, wanted to return to the classroom. "I thought that in teaching I would have a greater impact on maybe helping to shape the law as it develops and sending out practitioners into the world," she says.

She is now getting that chance in a big way as the director of IU's Native American Law program. "It just touches my heart. I am very thankful and honored to be in a place that allows me to do something like advance the field of Native American law."

— Garry Boulard



PHOTO COURTESY OF ANGELIQUE EAGLEWOMAN

Challenging Tradition

Madhavi Sunder

Title: Professor of law at University of California-Davis School of Law

Education: J.D., Stanford; B.A., social studies, Harvard

Age: 39

Career mentors: Martha Nussbaum, University of Chicago; Janet Halley, Harvard Law School; Margaret Jane Radin, University of Michigan

Advice for junior faculty: "I would advise junior scholars to find a faculty that will allow them to be courageous and to develop their own scholarly voice. Far too many junior faculty are told to play it safe and that they should hold off on ambitious projects until after tenure. I disagree."

As a young Indian-American growing up in mostly White southern New Jersey, Madhavi Sunder's most vital links to her cultural heritage included her uncles, aunts and cousins who emigrated from India to the United States. She heard stories of women in her extended family who did remarkable things — like her grandmother who became a professor of physics at one of India's elite universities and who had been a tennis champion and class president.

That early connection to her culture fostered a strong interest in culture and in women's issues that has persisted. It forms the core of her scholarship activities at the University of California-Davis, where she is a professor of law and where she teaches courses on intellectual property, international intellectual property and women's human rights.

Sunder combines a keen interest in women's rights with the impact of technology on intellectual property rights.

"My work really is about what culture is, how culture is changing in the 21st century in light of new technology and new social movements in how women, minorities and gays see themselves and demand to be heard," says Sunder, who is rapidly emerging as one of the nation's leading scholars in the legal regulation of culture, an area that largely focuses on copyright law, particularly as it relates to literature, music and film.

"My work challenges the traditional legal approach" to copyrights, she says. Sunder is a student and advocate of participatory culture, which is a growing desire on the part of many vulnerable populations like women, minorities and gays to remake the story lines and characters of popular books, films and folk stories in their own cultural images.

"In the past, a few cultural corporations would produce culture," she says. But thanks to the Internet and the proliferation of technology, people are empowered to tell their own stories.

The key legal hurdle to this movement, she says, is that, under copyright law, authors, musicians and filmmakers have the exclusive right to authorize remakes of their work. She argues that individuals who seek to remake iconic works of art that either marginalize women, gays, or people of color should be allowed to do so. She cites the novel *The Wind Done Gone*, Alice Randall's parody of *Gone With the Wind*, as an example of this kind of participatory culture. Randall's novel is written from the perspective of a slave.

Sunder's interest in culture and intellectual property blends



seamlessly with research on women's issues. She explores the chasm between legal freedom and cultural freedom, particularly in developing countries with strong social norms. Without freedom in both spheres, she says, women are not free at all.

"You can't assess how free women are without grasping cultural norms," she says. For example, she adds, in some societies "social norms would dictate that women shouldn't go out without a male guardian and that women belong in the home more even though there is no law against that."

Demands from groups for a legal right to discriminate under the guise of culture should be scrutinized, she says. "More often than not, such claims are highly contested within groups. In fact, the ideas of equality, freedom, participation and human rights are prevalent in nearly all the world's cultures today. These ideas are not just Western ideas or American ideas. ...I suggest that law ought to recognize pluralism within groups and side instead with a rule that would allow greater equality and freedom within a culture."

Sunder's work has received a great deal of recognition. In 2006, she was awarded the Carnegie Corporation Scholarship to support her efforts to write a book on women reformers in the Muslim world. Her articles have received honorable mention in the Association of American Law Schools Scholarly competition. She has been nominated three times for UC-Davis' distinguished teaching award.

"The fact that Professor Sunder has two distinct bodies of work — intellectual property and global feminism — is itself extremely attractive," says Martha Nussbaum, a law professor at the University of Chicago.

"Her knowledge of women's movements in a wide range of countries contributes to the originality and depth of her analysis of global culture. In the intellectual property field, what is distinctive about her work is its focus on the resourceful mixing of cultures, and the way in which borrowing and reinvention are part of artistic creativity in the global era. ... And all this she develops with flair, wit and compellingly eloquent writing." □

— Lekan Oguntoyinbo

Life in Absolute Values

Erika Tatiana Camacho

Title: Assistant professor in mathematical sciences & applied computing, Arizona State University at the West Campus

Education: Ph.D. and M.S., applied mathematics, Cornell University; B.A., mathematics, Wellesley College; B.A., economics, Wellesley College

Age: 34

Career mentors: Carlos Castillo-Chavez, Arizona State University; Ivellisse Rubio Canabal, Universidad de Puerto Rico-Rio Piedras

What advice would you give young faculty? "It is important not to forget where you came from; no one gets to where they are by themselves. Even if you are the brightest person on the planet, someone created the opportunities so the doors could open to you."



The Spanish word "ganás" cannot be defined by written words or loose paraphrases. It is more than "a wish to do something," as its English translation purports. In fact, "ganás" can only be interpreted through a life that embodies it.

As a high school student in East Los Angeles, Dr. Erika Tatiana Camacho didn't

know what ganas looked like. She aspired to only one thing: becoming a store cashier.

"That way I didn't have to clean houses and work so hard like my parents did," says Camacho, the youngest of four children who became angry watching her Mexican-born parents sacrifice well-being for menial wages.

Having immigrated to the United States as an 8-year-old, school wasn't easy for Camacho — especially the part about speaking English. For Camacho helping the family survive superseded personal ambitions. She says she watched her older siblings start and stop in school, and it was only a matter of time before she would suffer the same fate.

But things changed, she says, the year she arrived at Garfield High School and into Jaime Escalante's algebra class. Escalante, whom Academy Award nominee Edward James Olmos portrayed in the 1988 film, "Stand and Deliver," was known for raising the

achievement of his students, mostly Latino, and preparing them for college.

"He asked me what I wanted to be, and the first time I didn't want to respond because I didn't know being anything was a possibility," Camacho says. "He always said ganas is all you need, the desire and discipline to do it."

Camacho quickly went from expressing variables to finding integrals and found herself applying to college. Attending Wellesley College was a hard sell for her close-knit family even with a generous financial aid package. Nevertheless, Camacho pursued dual degrees in economics and mathematics, but the challenges only began for her.

"I didn't realize how poor we were until I wanted to go to college," Camacho says. "It was really hard. I lacked the preparation that other women had and was working four jobs to send money back home. There was a \$2,000 parental contribution that I paid for my parents."

At times, she says the obstacles became overwhelming, responsibilities conflicted with her schoolwork and she often felt isolated. She persevered because she saw education as her "way out of poverty. For other people college is about status, for me it was about survival. Not just my survival but also everyone who stayed behind in East L.A. I had to get educated to create opportunities for those people."

Camacho was inspired by her experience to explore the interdisciplinary connections between mathematical concepts and real-world application. She has won several grants supporting her graduate work from the Mellon, Ford and Sloan foundations. Journals like *The Mathematical Scientist* and *Mathematical Biosciences and Engineering* have published her research. She also worked as a research associate at the Los Alamos National Laboratory in the Center for Nonlinear Studies in New Mexico.

"She became, most likely, the first U.S.-raised Latina to earn a Ph.D. in mathematical physiology," says Dr. Carlos Castillo-Chavez, a mentor who is now Camacho's colleague at Arizona State University. "At ASU, she is playing a critical role in building applied mathematics at our west campus where they are building a top-notch computational program with emphasis on applications to biology."

During her tenure at Loyola Marymount University, Camacho co-founded and directed the Applied Mathematical Sciences Summer Institute, an undergraduate summer research program for under-represented minority students. They applied mathematical models to things like political affiliation, racial profiling and even college drinking habits.

At ASU, Camacho loves teaching her students with ganas, helping to open doors while continuing her research working with sociologists and biologists to find mathematical solutions to issues affecting communities of color. Her latest work looks at the math behind photoreceptors to cure degenerative eye diseases.

"I think I am able to connect with them [students] and serve as a role model for them," she says. "I am able to provide a more familiar environment to learn because I understand where they are coming from. I put things in a context they can understand."

For Camacho, ganas meant dedicating her intellect and energy to pursuing a collective goal for her family, her community and herself. That desire, she says, will hopefully enable Camacho to reach an ultimate goal: university presidency. □

— Arelis Hernandez

Free to Express and Contribute

Gonzalo E. Torres

Title: Assistant professor of neurobiology, University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine

Education: Ph.D., physiology and pharmacology, St. Louis University; M.S. and B.S., biochemistry, Catholic University of Valparaiso in Chile

Age: 42

Career mentors: Mark Voigt, St. Louis University; Marc Caron, Duke University; Susan Amara, University of Pittsburgh

What advice do you have for new or budding faculty? "Work hard, work hard and work hard. Don't give up. Don't get discouraged."

For Dr. Gonzalo E. Torres, scientific research — and academia in general — is about the freedom to break away from the herd. A Chilean-born neurobiologist, Torres was lauded in 2009 as a recipient of the Presidential Early Career Awards for Scientists and Engineers, the government's highest honor for young professionals early in their research careers.

Torres didn't garner that award, which includes a two-year extension on a grant from the National Institutes of Health and a reception at the White House, by blending in. His work on dopamine, a neurotransmitter in the brain, stands out for its potential to pave the way for treatments for conditions such as Parkinson's.

"There is a difference between the 'me too' science," Torres says, "and trying to develop new concepts and paradigms that change the way we think about biological systems."

Torres began his education in Chile, receiving bachelor's and master's degrees from Catholic University of Valparaiso. He came to the United States in 1993 to work at a laboratory and before the decade was out had earned his Ph.D. in physiology and pharmacology from St. Louis University in Missouri. Torres credits his postdoctoral adviser at Duke University, Dr. Marc Caron, as the mentor who pushed him to develop his own unique scientific ideas. "He gave me an opportunity to become independent as a scientist," Torres says.

By 2004, Torres had landed at the University of Pittsburgh's School of Medicine as an assistant professor of neurobiology, combining his loves of teaching, mentoring, developing programs and research into one rewarding career.

"Since the time I was in high school, I always wanted to be associated with a university," Torres says. "It's sort of this place where you can express yourself in a free way and contribute to society."

Torres' scientific contribution centers on understanding how the brain's neurons handle dopamine under normal conditions and disease-related conditions, specifically drug addiction. His hypothesis centers on how protein interactions regulate dopamine levels in the brain and whether disrupting those interactions could lead to the development of treatments for conditions such as Parkinson's.

"This work might have important implications in disorders that are related to dopamine dysfunction," Torres says, adding that he hopes to find clues about the role of dopamine in conditions including drug addiction, schizo-

phrenia and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.

Torres' work attracted the attention of the National Institute on Drug Abuse, an arm of the National Institutes of Health, when he applied for a research grant. Then, Dr. Jonathan D. Pollock, chief of the Genetics and Molecular Neurobiology Research Branch of the Division of Basic Neuroscience and Behavioral Research at the National Institute on Drug Abuse, nominated Torres for the Presidential Early Career Award. Pollock described Torres as "well regarded by his peers" and "highly productive," adding that his hypothesis is "very different than what anybody else has looked at before."

In addition to his own work, Torres has taken a keen interest in advocating for minority students in science on both national and local levels. Through affiliations with professional societies, including the Society for Neuroscience and the American Society for Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics, Torres has helped organize diversity committees that develop strategies for bringing more students of color into scientific Ph.D. programs.

He's also working, through his university, to identify students whom he can help with their science careers. "Minority students are under-represented in science," Torres says, "and historically have been at a disadvantage in terms of career opportunities." □

— Christina Hernandez



The Black Men's Ministry

Said Sewell III

Title: Associate professor of political science and executive director of the Academic Success Center, Fort Valley State University

Education: Ph.D., political science, Clark University; MPA, public administration, Texas Southern University; B.S., political science, Morehouse College

Age: 38

Career Mentors: F. Carl Walton, Lincoln University; Belle S. Wheelan, Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools; Larry Rivers, Fort Valley State College; and the late Michael Bailey, Clark University

Best piece of advice you were given? "Find a mentor. I have professional mentors and I have personal mentors. A mentor can help shape and guide your career."

Dr. Said Sewell's introduction to politics, a stint as a 16-year-old volunteer on Rev. Jesse Jackson's 1988 presidential campaign, proved indelible. Seeing political advisers and policymakers take on issues affecting young people made him realize the importance of Black political involvement.

Today, a political scientist at Fort Valley State University, Sewell teaches courses on American government and urban politics. His research on religion and politics, public administration and African-American studies has formed the core of his work in political scientist.

But he's better known for the work he's done as an administrator in helping Black men achieve success. He is founder and director of the Center for African American Males: Research, Success and Leadership, a nonprofit organization that supports and challenges Black men at postsecondary institutions through lecture series, tutoring and leadership development activities. Formerly housed at the University of West Georgia, where Sewell spent nine years as a tenured professor of political science and public administration, the center has received more than \$8 million in public and private grants and donations.

The Houston native says he didn't transition away from political science to help Black men. Described by colleagues as more of a "practical scholar" rather than a theorist, Sewell says that the public policies he studies have a direct impact on the success of Black men and that the educational outcomes of Black men influences those policies.

He seeks to reshape not only the conversation about Black men, but also the public policies that disproportionately affect them, such as criminal justice policies.

"Political science is a lot broader than what most people think," Sewell says. "It is the study of how resources are allocated. If we are going to be better political scientists, we have to make our community stronger. We just can't look at the presidency and Congress, but also how to improve the lives of Black people. We have to address the issues of

people because they are the ones to model good behavior after to rebuild community."

Improving Black males' higher educational attainment is an imperative, and much of Sewell's work in this area takes place outside of his political science classroom. Sewell works with students outside the classroom as executive director at Fort Valley State's Academic Success Center, which offers students various programs on time management, how to study and take tests and tutoring. Laying a basic foundation for students goes a long way toward their overall success.

Sewell has garnered numerous awards, including the University of Georgia's African-American Male Initiatives Best Practices Leadership award in 2007. He is working on two books: *Empowering Black Males Students to Greatness* and *Let Us Make Men: A Conversation with Black Men on Saving Black Boys*.

An ordained Baptist minister, Sewell sees his work as service to God. "A reason why I stay late working with students and try to help unselfishly ... is that I realize this is a calling and not just a job, somewhat of a ministry to help."

Dr. Belle S. Wheelan, president of the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools based in Decatur, Ga., mentored Sewell during his transition to a college administrator.

"He listens well. He is not afraid to get his hands dirty in helping others. He walks the walk and talks the talk," Wheelan says.

The Center for African American Males' Web site highlights a quote from 19th century educator Horace Mann: One should be afraid to die until they made a difference in the world."

After immediately reading that quote, Sewell says, "If I died today, I would be happy in the fact I made a difference to students, which had a rippling effect in their personal lives." □

— William J. Ford



PHOTO COURTESY OF SAID SEWELL III

Community Advocate

Stephanie Y. Evans

Title: Associate professor, African-American and women studies, University of Florida

Education: Ph.D. and M.A., Afro-American Studies, University of Massachusetts, Amherst; B.A., comparative humanities, California State University, Long Beach

Age: 40

Career mentor: John H. Bracey, University of Massachusetts, Amherst

What was the best advice you were given? "Do your work! When it comes to evaluation and tenure review, if you do your work, your 'enemies' can't hurt you; if you don't do your work, your 'friends' can't help you. Your portfolio should be so sound that it will not matter who is the department head, dean, or provost — the quality (and quantity) of your work should be undeniable."

Dr. Stephanie Evans, an associate professor of African-American and women's studies at the University of Florida, does not believe in scholarship for scholarship's sake. For her, it's scholarship for every one's sake.

"Community service is at the crux of what I do," says Evans. "I've been teaching a class called Mentoring At-Risk Youth and working with youth-education programs for nine years. I'm working on a college prep program for high school students called the Nia (Purpose) Project. I want to offer resources that help students get more information about college majors and tie them to an inspirational historical figure."

Author of the book *Black Women in the Ivory Tower*, Evans found the inspiration to pursue higher education as a career in scholars like Mary McLeod Bethune, Septima Clark and Anna Julia Cooper, all of whom were engaged in linking the university with the community. Their resilience to succeed against all odds and to help others is motivating, Evans says.

At the focal point of her research endeavors is linking history, cultural identity and community to the university paradigm.

"When you put cultural identity at the center of educational analysis, you understand the politics of social, cultural and community relationships," says Evans. "Because Black women, as a result of their race and gender, have experienced life in different ways, they have something insightful to say about some of the re-occurring problems in the African-American community whether that

be health or violence. Because of the history of race and gender in this country, Black women's experiences bring additional insight into the creation of these social issues and the solutions."

Evans, who holds a dual appointment in the University of Florida's Center for Women's Studies and Gender Research and the African-American studies program, knows firsthand how higher education can elude minority youth in communities where a town-gown connection does not exist. For a long time, the Ivory Tower evaded her.

As an adolescent, Evans didn't see herself in college. Not even a hefty scholarship from the University of Arizona after high school could convince her otherwise.

"I'd never been to a college classroom. I didn't know any college students," she says. "I had a scholarship but I didn't know what to do with it. Trying to fill out the FAFSA [federal financial aid application] was my breaking point."

A friend allowed Evans, who had been working as a hotel auditor, to share some of her poetry with her high school English class. Evans, so inspired by the ideas and dialogue generated by the students, developed a passion for teaching that couldn't be quelled.

Evans began her undergraduate education at age 25. She earned her master's and Ph.D. in African-American studies from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. "Black studies changed everything about my understanding of who I am, what life is and what I could be," Evans says. "Women's studies did the same thing."

Writing *Black Women in the Ivory Tower* and co-editing *African Americans and Community Engagement in Higher Education* helped Evans, undergraduate coordinator for the African-American studies program and program chair for the 2009 meeting of the Association for the Study of African American Life and History, understand where she as a Black woman academic fits into the higher education equation. "Black women's ideas help solve global problems, at least they solved mine," Evans says.

Evans insists her research on Black women provides a model of community university relationships. "Service learning, experiential education and community-based research are all movements of the '60s and '70s when people were questioning the goals of higher education," says Evans. "My work demonstrates that early on there was no separation between community and university. Black women had no question that the purpose of their education was to create more connection with the community."

As a teacher and adviser, Evans is popular and respected, particularly among first-generation college students, says Dr. Faye Harrison, director of the university's African-American studies program. "She represents what they can aspire to become; a disciplined professional who is painstaking in whatever she does." □

— Michelle J. Nealy

