

THE BLACK ALLIANCE AT UC MERCED

COMPILED BY DR. MARIA MARTIN

The events spanning from 2020-2021 seem to have set fire to the nation and it was this same fire that forged the Black Alliance affinity group. In June of 2021, the group will have been in existence for only a year and a half but has made some significant strides. However, these accomplishments were hard fought for.

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CONTEXT AND CHALLENGES

In June of 2020 Dr. Maria Martin brought together dozens of Black staff, students, and faculty organically as a group of concerned and devastated individuals still processing the death of George Perry Floyd Jr. After our, initial meeting there was interest in keeping our newly forged group together. We wanted to make our unified voices heard on issues that affect the Black campus community at UC Merced.

Dr. Martin envisioned the group as a coalition of Black staff, students, faculty, and community members. The group then became the Black Alliance and sought to advocate for the Black campus and off campus community with a unified voice. She established the Accountability Unit which is a collective of representatives from each constituent group in the Alliance. They bring the concerns of the larger membership to meetings with the Chief Diversity Officer, Provost, and Chancellor.

Building infrastructure was a hardship due to challenges with capacity. The Alliance did not have the ability to pull from membership because we were very new and still needed to grow our numbers. As a result, Dr. Martin primarily planned, managed, and carried to fruition the events, meetings, and collaborations of the group in its first year of existence.

*"Plan your work, and
work your plan."*

-Darnell Martin

Work Done

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic in fall 2020 and spring 2021, general body meetings were held for the Alliance on zoom to keep people up to date on our program and advocacy.



THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

MERCED BLACK ALLIANCE

February Speaker Series Presents

SHARING OUR PERSPECTIVES: HISTORY, HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

This **February speaker series** will include three guests who will talk about issues related to historical environmental justice issues as well as current trends to reclaim agency and re-purpose land centering Black communities. The series feature the growth of Urban Farming, Afro-indigenous land rights activism and disposition, as well as environmental justice surrounding a community of Black Nova Scotians in Africville.



RAZING AFRICVILLE: THE LEGACY OF ENVIRONMENTAL RACISM IN HISTORIC AFRICAN NOVA SCOTIA COMMUNITY

Dr. Igrid Waldron
From School of Nursing, Faculty of Health, Dalhousie University in Nova Scotia
Feb 10, 2021 at 01:00-2:15 PM Pacific Time [US and Canada]

Registration Link: <https://calmerced.zoom.us/j/zoommeeting/register/52MdsgepCwv4Heg3dMR1y4Eg?d=Ge12wCwP>



DESIGN FOR THE LIVING: FOOD, FARMING AND CULTURAL ECOLOGY

Keesa V. Johnson
University of Michigan Integrative Design Program
Feb 17, 2021 at 12:00-1:15 PM Pacific Time [US and Canada]

Registration Link: <https://calmerced.zoom.us/j/zoommeeting/register/52wudg7TtG3tyd8mgayJyAFKpxz2p458>



BLACK INDIGENITY AND DISPOSSESSION: THE MEANING OF LAND, SOVEREIGNTY AND FREEDOM

Dr. Kyle Mays
UCLA
Feb 24, 2021 at 05:00-6:15 PM Pacific Time [US and Canada]

Registration Link: <https://calmerced.zoom.us/j/zoommeeting/register/52EMuypqdyH6L6KvU32wfnukxqjwH6>

HEALING CIRCLE
SPRING 2021 SESSIONS

Let's Talk Collective Survival

w/ Dr. Shelly-Ann Collins Rawle
from The Black Girl Doctor

Tuesday March 30th @ 2PM PT

Friday April 30th @ 2PM PT

Come to be seen, heard, and heal from racial trauma. We'll discuss the concept of collective survival as a strategy to navigate these trying times.

Register here: rebrand.ly/uhealing

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
MERCED

The
Black Girl
DOCTOR

With funding from the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, headed by Chief Diversity Officer Dania Matos, the Black Alliance was able to do nine events that created culturally relevant spaces, provided psychological services, established networks with community groups, and brought brilliant Black doctors, researchers, and fortune five hundred professionals to engage the broader campus at UCM.

ON THE FRONTLINES:
HEALTHCARE ADVOCACY
FOR THE BLACK COMMUNITY

APRIL 21
2021

The Black Alliance at UC Merced welcomes you to an event for the community with:



Dr. Foluso Fakorede

Physician, Entrepreneur & Advocate for Health Care Justice

*"Of all forms of inequality, injustice in health care
is the most shocking and inhumane."
Dr. Martin Luther King*

Wednesday, April 21, 2021 | 11:00am-12:15pm PST

Zoom Link:

<https://ucmerced.zoom.us/join/register/tZUodeyppjwG9e1dN5S6278O6kalfHDH49m>

Dr. Foluso Fakorede spent his formative years in Nigeria and immigrated to America as a young teenager. Dr. Fakorede specializes in preventive cardiovascular management, women's heart health, and peripheral atherosclerosis disease (PAD).

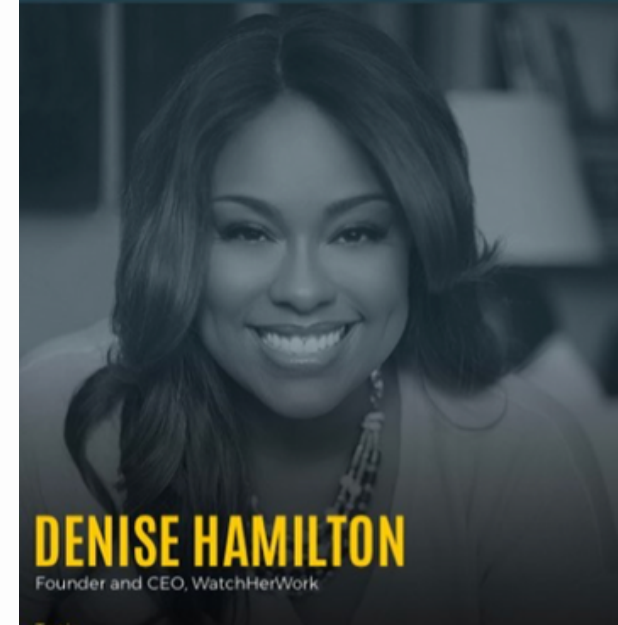
In 2015, Dr. Fakorede started Cardiovascular Solutions of Central Mississippi with a mission to educate and provide access to quality healthcare for all. He has become a national voice in the fight on the impact of health disparity in undeserved communities.

Dr. Fakorede has been at the helm of working with Congressional Lawmakers to establish the first ever bipartisan PAD caucus whose mission is to support legislative bills to stop the virulent practices of preventable amputations and to educate communities about legislative activities aimed to improve PAD research, education and treatment.

All of our events were well attended

This last year has shown us how broken our systems can be. It has taken a toll. Yet we are here - surviving. But how do we thrive? How do we excel? How do we find fulfillment and even happiness?

Join us as we share practical perspectives and tools for maintaining peace while searching for progress.



DENISE HAMILTON

Founder and CEO, WatchHerWork

Topic:

THRIVING IN A MISSHAPEN WORLD

MONDAY, APRIL 26, 2021 5:00 PM-6:15 PM PST

Registration Link:

<https://ucmerced.zoom.us/join/register/tZwpduluDooCtue94Siz3nhPTADPzsA6gt>

Bio:

Denise Hamilton is a nationally recognised Diversity & Inclusion leader, specializing in Ally training. Denise is Founder and CEO of WatchHerWork, a digital learning platform for professional women. Denise leverages her 25 years of executive experience with Fortune 500 organizations like AOL and CBRE to provide solutions that support the employees and the bottom line. The goal is to empower individuals and teams to mine and close the gender gap, understand differences, resolve conflict, and become better allies. Her clients include household names like Apple, ExxonMobil, Hines, Shell, the United Nations, and the WNBA. Denise has been featured on NPR, Forbes, FOX, Huffington Post, CBS, NBC and on many other outlets. She received her Master's in Communication and her BSW in Social Work from Abilene Christian University. She currently resides in Houston, Texas.



Our advocacy work:

We made collaborative connections with:

- the Valuing Black Lives Task Force (VBLTF) committees
- the Police Advisory Board
- the senate Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion committee
- the Police Advisory Board
- UCMPD Wellness Director
- Director of the new medical regional campus

Our relationship with the Senate DEI committee:

- stipulates the Black Alliance (and also the Staff and faculty of Color Association) will be included in their meetings
- and they will especially seek our feedback on issues related to institutionalizing inclusive practices.

During the spring semester 2021 the Black Alliance Bulletin was started to keep individuals informed on news, events, advocacy, and perspectives that affected the Black community on and off campus.

The Alliance pushed to make diversity work count more positively in tenure trajectories. As a result DEI is forming a committee to see how diversity work can be better valued in merit and promotion. In this way, we have been involved in formulating agendas and practices based on diversity and inclusion.

Our Community Work

The Black Alliance has worked hard to develop and maintain strong connections with Black community groups in Merced.

We have partnered with:

- Love, Faith, and Hope
- The Merced Parallel Black School Board
- The Restorative Justice League
- Harvest Park Education Center

We have supported:

- a community grant initiative for youth development through Senator Caballero's office
- and worked on youth mentoring opportunities with community orgs



The UC Merced Black Alliance is a new group of Black staff, faculty, students, and community members who have unified to voice the concerns of the Black community both on campus and off campus.

We are planning a virtual meet and greet that is all about the community members! We want you to meet and learn more about our Black Professors, Staff and Students as well as to meet you.

This will be a fun and friendly evening all about you!

Date: Monday, April 5th 2021

Time: 4:00pm-5:15pm

Registration Link:

<https://ucmerced.zoom.us/j/90812345678>



Impact and Outcomes

The Alliance has brought Black faculty, staff, student reps, and community reps together in unprecedented ways and this has caused each group to be energized and encouraged.

We have made an impact by:

- taking concerns of the Black community directly to administrative leaders in the campus
- providing mental and emotional support with healing circles
- engaging the intellectual community at UC Merced with speakers whose research and methods are culturally responsive
- supporting Black students
- forging community so that people don't feel alone
- bridging the gap to build trust between the campus and the Black community in Merced

The Alliance provides a place for people to network, receive support, and feel affirmed

Next Steps

We want to continue to focus on outreach and capacity with our programming so that we can build our membership.

The number of members is essential to our sustainability plan because we will draw some funds from dues in the near future. Growing our base of members will also increase our organizational capacity.

As a result, this coming year will center healing, wellness, and advocacy conversations for, collaborations with students and community members, and speaker events that provide supportive spaces for intellectual stimulation for our Black community on and off campus.

In addition, we are working on a mentoring initiative for Black youth in Merced which, overtime, can increase

Black youth trajectories to attend UCM. Several Black community orgs,

two school districts, the superintendent of schools, the vice principal of El Capitan High, and Merced College are all supporters of the mentoring proposal. We have won a grant to support the program and will work on the budget for the program next. Lastly, we will work on developing a service-learning course to institutionalize connections with the Black Merced community and the UCM campus.



**We are currently planning social events
and networking opportunities!!!**

STAY



TUNED

**Thank You for your continued
support and participation of the
Black Alliance at UCM**

