



## Contact Us



**Department Head**  
Dr. Victor O. Okafor

**Email**  
vokafor@emich.edu

**Call**  
734.487.3460

**Visit our Website**  
<https://www.emich.edu/aaas/>  
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### **EMU graduates its first MA degree holder in Africology & African American Studies**

*Roughly two years ago, we informed you that after 28 years of running the first bachelor's degree program in African American Studies in the State of Michigan, we launched a Master of Arts in Africology and African American Studies, effective from fall 2018. That MA degree program launching was also a first in Michigan.*

*This time, we are back with an update. This past April, 2020, EMU awarded its first MA in Africology and African American Studies to Mr. Fred J. Daniels, who also happens to be the first student to be admitted to the program during its take-off semester of fall, 2018. In the write-up below, Mr. Daniels reflects on his experiences during his two-year*

*graduate educational journey through EMU's Department of Africology and African American Studies.*



*"As the first student to be enrolled and complete the curriculum for the Master of Arts degree in Africology and African American Studies, I am a proud beneficiary of the comprehensive plan of study, research strategies and opportunities for community engagement related to the African World experiences and culture, in conjunction with providing a student with the intellectual capacity to bring to the community, ideas and practices that enhance and improve conditions within the African and African American world at large.*

*I decided to return to school to finish my educational studies that were interrupted in the early 1970s, upon retiring from DTE Energy after 33 years of service. After earning an Associate of Arts from Wayne*

*Community College and a Bachelor of Arts from Wayne State University with a major in African American Studies, in 2018, I enrolled at Eastern Michigan University for the MA in AAAS.*

*It is worthy of note that my sister, Alfreda Daniels, who graduated from EMU with a Bachelor of Arts in 1976 and a Master of Arts in 1980, is a member of EMU's Women's Athletic Hall of Fame for her excellence in Track and Field. She was an early recipient of the Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972 which opened up opportunities for women and prohibited discrimination on the basis of sex in any educational program or activity that is federally-funded.*

*I am the proud father and stepfather of seven children, six of whom have achieved college degrees, with the youngest, Fred J. Daniels III, graduating with me in the spring of 2020 with a Bachelor of Arts from Wayne State University majoring in Psychology and a minor in Music.*

*I am proud to represent Eastern Michigan University and the Department of Africology and African American Studies as an example of a student who exemplifies benefits from the nurturing and empowering educational environment provided by the AAAS department."*

*The MA program is designed to prepare students from any cultural background for professional and academic careers in relevant areas through a combination of practical and theoretical training. The two-year graduate curriculum prepares students for administrative positions in industry, government, finance, social work, healthcare, and various community organizations. It also supports students who plan to engage in a life-long scholarly development of the discipline as teachers, professors, researchers, or creative artists. Students will be able to choose a complementary focus from among the participating disciplinary programs/departments based on their vocational orientation or undergraduate degrees.*

*The new academic program, which seeks to equip students with resources for understanding the implications of living in a multiracial, democratic and diverse world, was approved by the Eastern Michigan University Board of Regents on June 22, 2018. For more information, go to: [https://catalog.emich.edu/preview\\_program.php?catoid=26&poid=12411&returnto=5381](https://catalog.emich.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=26&poid=12411&returnto=5381).*

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### **AAAS launches the Robert L. Perry Endowed Scholarship in Africology and African American Studies**

*Effective from fall, 2020, AAAS will begin to make an annual award of a merit scholarship of four hundred US dollars (\$400.00) to a successful applicant who is pursuing a Major in Africology and African American Studies. This scholarship program was established in honor of Emeritus Professor Robert L. Perry who retired in 2013. The recipient must hold a minimum grade point average of 3.0 in his or her AAAS major. For more information about this scholarship, visit <https://www.emich.edu/aaas/internships-scholarships/robert-l-perry.php>. Join us in saying a big thank you to Emeritus Professor Robert Perry for his dedication and generous donations that made this endowed scholarship possible.*

***Book Scholarship News!***

*The department of Africology and African American Studies awards a book scholarship of \$100 to each qualified AAAS Major, Minor and Certificate student. This helps to reduce the cost of textbook purchasing for each recipient. The department awards this book scholarship from its Development Fund (R62095).*

***Please, Donate***

*You can support this initiative through a check returnable through the enclosed envelope or through EMU's online link for donations: <https://www.emich.edu/foundation/give/index.php?fund=00013>*



***Congrats to Professor Pressley-Sanon!***

*Please, join us in extending hearty congratulations to our own Associate Professor Toni Pressley-Sanon on her chapter contribution, "Techniques for truth-telling from Haitian Corner to I Am Not Your Negro" to a newly-published anthology, I Am Not Your Negro: A Docalogue. For more information about this book, visit <https://www.routledge.com/I-Am-Not-Your-Negro-A-Docalogue/Baron-Fuhs/p/book/9780367178949>*

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**Assistant Professor Peter Blackmer**

Effective from fall, 2020, Dr. Peter Blackmer has joined the AAAS faculty as a tenure-track Assistant Professor of Africology and African American Studies, following a nation-wide search that culminated in his hiring. He holds a Ph.D. in Afro American Studies, University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2018, an MA in Afro American Studies, University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2014, M.S.Ed. in Secondary Education/Special Education, Wagner College, 2011, and a B.A. in History, Wagner College, 2010. Peter Blackmer's research and teaching explore the ways in which Black-led grassroots organizing campaigns for self-determination in the 20th and 21st Century United States have shaped local and national politics through struggles for civil rights, human rights, and political power in American cities. For additional information, visit his profile: <https://www.emich.edu/aaas/faculty/p-blackmer.php>

### ***Meet other AAAS Faculty, Lecturers & Staff***

*Please, visit our website for information about the faculty, lecturers and staff of the Department of Africology and African American Studies: <https://www.emich.edu/aas/faculty.php>*

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*“The History of Black Business in America”*



***Anthony Brogdon, Author and film-maker***

*In observance of the Black History Month, on February 18, 2020, author and film-maker Anthony Brogdon presented a well-received lecture on “the History of Black Business in America.” Sponsored by the Department of Africology and African American Studies, the well-attended lecture, for which LBC credit was given, was rendered in Room 204 of Pray Harrold’s building.*

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***Emeritus Professor Ronald C. Woods***

*After 43 glorious and eventful years, Professor Ronald C. Woods retired from active duty effective from August 31, 2019. EMU's Board of Regents bid him goodbye with an emeritus professorship award. In salutation to Professor Woods, Ms. Bria Charise Erby, one of his former students painted and posted a Facebook portrait of him, as shown above. Ms. Erby noted that it was "such an honor to create this piece for Dr. Ronald C. Woods, one of my favorite professors and truly one of the best faculty members EMU has ever had. Congrats on 43 years!! I'll always remember to take copious notes everywhere I go! "Copious notes, Ms. Erby, copious notes."*

*In July, 2019, EMU's Board of Regents awarded an emeritus Professorship to Ronald C Woods. A former poverty law attorney, he served in his 43 years at EMU as a faculty member, and in various administrative roles including as the first Department Head in AAS and as Director of the Institute for the Study of Children Families and Communities. He also chaired the Academic Committee on Curriculum Diversity as well as having held leadership roles in several diversity and inclusion strategic planning initiatives. While at EMU, he was honored with the Ronald W. Collins Distinguished Faculty Award, the Martin Luther King, Jr. Humanitarian Award, and the John W. Porter Distinguished Alumni Award. Utilizing history, law, and Africology & African American studies as his disciplinary tools, his areas of emphasis include curriculum and program development, public policy, strategic planning, human and*

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*social capital development, and service on non-profit, educational and governmental bodies. His portfolio includes curriculum and diversity focused consultancies and presentations at the K-12, corporate and federal agency levels.*

*He served as co-chair of Eastern Michigan University President's Commission on Diversity and Inclusion, which is charged with the role of undertaking a campus climate study of diversity and inclusion, addressing a range of immediate issues on the EMU campus, and making recommendations for achieving a sustainable policy and practice of equity, diversity and inclusion at Eastern Michigan University.*

*Professor Woods still serves as Executive Director of Washtenaw County's My Brother's Keeper. Institutionally anchored by Washtenaw County, the Washtenaw Intermediate School District and Eastern Michigan University, WMBK is now engaged with initiatives involving early childhood development, youth empowerment, youth employment and enrichment, collegiate mentoring and career development, public health, and community safety and policing services. WMBK is aligned with the Michigan MBK Alliance and partners with the Michigan Community Services Commission. WMBK has established operational collaborative partnerships with Michigan Works, the Washtenaw Intermediate School District, and with several Washtenaw County government offices including the Office of Community and Economic Development, the Sheriff's Office and the Department of Public Health. The focus is primarily on youth violence reduction, education preparation and readiness, and work force development.*

#### ***His March 6, 2020 Retirement party***

*On March 6, an AAAS-sponsored retirement party was held to honor Professor Woods who is shown below greeting the guests and bidding farewell to Eastern Michigan University.*



**A State of Michigan Proclamation in Honor of Professor Woods**

Notably, Professor Woods' many fruitful years of educational contribution attracted the attention of the Governor of the State of Michigan, Gretchen Esther Whitmer who issued a proclamation, as displayed below, to mark his retirement.

