

Norman Jordan African American Arts & Heritage Academy

Founded in 1984 by poet & playwright Norman Jordan

PO Box 369
Ansted, WV 25812
(216) 290-8564

The Norman Jordan African American Arts & Heritage Academy Newsletter

The 2022 Academy



“Unpack Your Heart; Live Your Dreams,” was the theme for this year’s academy session the week of July 11 -16. The week began with students checking in and room assignments followed by an Opening Ceremony in which students and parents were welcomed, a Libation Ceremony acknowledging ancestral significance and contributions was followed by a rendition of the song “Lift Every Voice and Sing,” then introductions of faculty, staff, and counselors and the establishment of Rules & Regulations for the week. Lunch in the university dining hall was next and preceded the beginning of the week’s agenda.

As was stated at the Showcase on the final day of the academy; we were especially blessed this year. In the effort to be realistic, we purposely limited the number of students to 30 students. Because of the economy we knew that it would be difficult for some parents to obtain the registration fee, which was \$300.00 to cover the cost of housing and meals for a week. We were blessed with several sponsors and donors such as yourselves, that helped with that, and we were able to offer quite a few full and partial scholarships.

We initiated a new Vision Board workshop this year in which students were required to think about their futures and how what they were learning during the academy week might fit into what they visualized. It was a “hands on” project that engaged students in research and artistic endeavors of designing a Vision Board according to principles of planning and goal setting activities. The project was conducted by Ms. Jacqueline Dooley, and greatly aided by the Southern Black Girls and Women’s Consortium for our female participants. Male participation was supported by the Greater Kanawha Valley Foundation and the West Virginia NASA Space program. Both genders were aided in all activities by other sponsors, such as you all.

Students filled all of our workshops; vocal music, instrumental music, theater, visual arts, and creative writing. What we decided to do with dance this year was an overall dance workshop that all students participated in. In Vocal Music, instructor Linda Ealy worked on several vocal techniques and songs, but for the Showcase, led students in a “Kum Ba Ya Trilogy” and other songs accompanied by music students. Instrumental Music led by instructors William and Edward Moon taught students on clarinet, violin, and keyboards in a variety of techniques and songs, and they were at times accompanied by vocal music students. Theater instructor Philip Washington directed students in theater exercises and rehearsals of excerpts from the screen play “Return of the Moth Man,” Scenes 1 & 3, which they performed for the Showcase. Visual artist, James Moon worked with students in the study of “doodling, seeing shapes, and Primary Colors,” which culminated in the creation of an African Medicine Wheel that his class was able to share on stage at the Showcase via video and student explanations. The Creative writing/Hip Hop workshop led by Lionel Jordan had a mixture of students who were drawn to either classical writing, such as essays and poetry and some who were more into rap and hip hop. They were engaged in various writing exercises and exposed to a variety of visiting writers. Their Showcase presentation highlighted some of their writing in “Expectation vs. Reality: the Life of a Camper.” The song “Camp Life” was created and performed by the Rappers. The Dance workshop led by dancer Laurie Goux featured dance techniques and an Afro/Caribbean dance style accompanied by music, which showed students that they could dance even if they didn’t think they could.

A special highlight of the week was visiting the statue of Kathrine Johnson and listening to Frederick Hightower, the person who sculpted the statue. You may remember that Katherine Johnson was the African American female mathematician who helped NASA with their space program when sending the first person to the moon. The statue is on the site of WVSU, the HBCU, where she attended college and where our academy session was held. It was wonderful to see the statue and meet the sculptor; and viewing the film *Hidden Figures* prepared students for the experience.

The academy is pleased to welcome two new instructors

Mr. Philip Washington is our new Theater Instructor. He has a Bachelor's Degree from West Virginia State University and a Master's degree in Jazz Studies from Marshall University. Theatrically, he has performed in over sixty plays and musicals with theater companies. He has also been in T.V productions., videos, and three local movies: River of Hope, Correct Change, and return of the Mothman." In addition, Philip is an active musician having played with Wynton Marsallis, Doc Severinson, The Drifters, The Sherelles, The Marvelettes, Bob Thompson, and more.

Mr. James Moon is our new Visual arts Instructor: In James's own words, he "sees all art as the essence of being human." He is a talented artist who resides in Nashville, Tennessee where he worked in the industrial packaging and music industries for more than 30 years. He holds a Bachelor's Degree in Arts Education from Tennessee State University. His art experience includes drawing, painting, and sculpture, using various media. He also attended schools in Bluefield, West Virginia prior to moving to Nashville.

Student Comments

As we planned for this year's academy, one of our goals was to create somewhat of a place of healing from some of the pandemic ills. The academy has always been a positive environment for growth, activity, and interaction between students, staff, faculty, guest artists and presenters. However we recognized, as so many have, that there was a special need this time after the pandemic. We truly wanted our students to feel revived and anxious to move forward in spite of past issues and challenges; a place of learning, sharing, and revitalization. On the final day of the weeklong experience student evaluations were taken and letters were written by students to the persons or organizations that they felt were responsible for their being able to attend the academy. **The following four examples express some of their feelings.**

1. "I will forever be grateful for the opportunity that was given me at this academy. My life is Completely changed from the people I have met, the guest speakers and musicians that have come in, and the knowledge of my heritage that has been shared. Everyone had a part in helping me become the person I am today. You have truly set the bar on what a summer academy should be. I hope coming down next year will be just as life changing, which I know it will. There is no amount of words I can say that could ever share the gratitude I feel in my heart, but to simply put, thank you for the opportunities you have given me."

2. "Thank you for your support. I appreciate what you have done for me. When I first came to camp I thought it would be bad, but it wasn't. I had so much fun. I was never an outgoing person, but this camp helped me discover what I want to do and who I want to be. I made 10

friends in total and we had a lot of fun together. So thank you for supporting me because without you I wouldn't have had such a fun week."

3. "Thank you so much for allowing me and paying for me to come to this camp. I learned about my culture and the arts. I was also able to meet other black performers and artists. It was a great experience overall. I honestly enjoyed myself. Once again, thank you so much."

4. "Thank you guys for making this possible. It was a very amazing opportunity and I had a great time. Without you guys I wouldn't have gotten the chance to be here and collaborate with other people who have similar interests. Thank you for everything."

Special Thanks to the following

Guest Artists and Presenters: the musical group **"Heavy Hitters,"** Song/Rap artists/ performer **Shalem,** Sculptor **Fredrick Hightower,** Dubois Museum Director, **Jean Evansmore,** NASA Presenter, **Kisstaman Epps,** Performer **Lieta Goins,** **Dr. Constinia Charbonette,** Dancer **Laurie Goux,** DJ **Strizzy.** Songwriter **Nadia Jordan,** Motivational Guest Speaker, **Gandhi Jordan.**

Ms. Jacqueline Dooley, after many years of service has resigned as Administrative Director, but remains available when needed. Thank you Jacque!!!!

Dr. Charles Byers for helping to facilitate our transition to WVSU. Thank You Dr. Byers!

WVSU Staff, Southern Black Girls & Women's Consortium, Greater Kanawha Valley Foundation, African American Heritage Family Tree Museum, WV NASA Space Program, Re-Connecting McDowell, WV American Water, Mt. Mariah Baptist Church, Dooley Law Firm-(Kathrine Dooley), Capitol Insurance Company, Safelight Auto-glass-(Jason McNulty), Progressive Insurance, the Kroger Company, Roanoke Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority.

Individual Donors Jennifer Boyd, Arthur Lee, Beverly & Walter Reiter, Sarah Hall, Diane Lewis, Sylvia Ridgeway, Delores Johnson, Jacqueline Hodge, Laurice Hampton, Charles & Janie Lane, Sylvia Grisby, Roy & Kathy Young, Jean Evansmore, M.P Moon, Linda Ealy, Edward Moon, Arma Hinchon, Brucella Jordan, Gina Talley, Jacqueline Dooley, Gandhi Jordan, Katherine Pannell, Eric Jordan, Sherie Horton, Lionel Jordan, Fredrica Dooley Brown, Joseph Bundy.

Our Mission

The mission of the Norman Jordan African American Arts & Heritage Academy is to address some of the educational and cultural disadvantages that affect our youth, particularly artistic development and cultural heritage. The organization consists of a group of talented and experienced artists who work together to share their expertise with teenagers as they evolve toward adulthood. We do this for the purpose of helping teenagers develop their natural talents, explore their artistic interests, and learn more about their cultural heritage and the history associated with those art forms. Instruction in the following artistic genres is available for students to choose from: Vocal Music, Instrumental Music, Theater, Dance, Creative Writing, Visual Arts, and Arts Technology. For one week, 35-40 selected teenagers between the ages of 12-18 will participate in classes, workshops, demonstrations, field trips, and performing opportunities that collectively present a unique blend of the arts and cultural enlightenment. The end result of these activities has proven to build self-esteem, self-identity, and produce more self-assured individuals.

The NJAAHA Team

Dr. Brucella Jordan, Executive Director
 Eric Jordan, Artistic Director
 Gary Brown – Dean of Students
 Joseph Bundy, Administrative/Artistic Associate
 Jacqueline Dooley, Consultant
 William Moon, Instrumental Music
 Edward Moon, Instrumental Music
 Linda Ealy, Vocal Music
 Lionel Jordan, Creative Writing
 James Moon, Visual Arts
 Philip Washington, Theater
 Crystina Ferguson, Dance
 Pam Davis-Head-Female Counselor
 Raymond Benson – Head Male Counselor
 Eric Jordan, Jr., Counselor
 Henriette Weaver, Counselor
 Nadia Jordan, Counselor
 Sally Benson, Counselor
 DJ Strizzy, Artists
 Fredrica Dooley-Brown, Mentor
 Sherie Horton, Mentor

Photo Collage of 2022 Academy

6



Photographers: Natasha Hairston Tyson and Eric Jordan

Our efforts are now going toward the 2023 Academy to be held July 10-15, 2023 at WVSU. Donations are still needed, appreciated, and are tax deductible, do to our 501c3 tax status.

I am pleased to donate:

\$50.00_____ \$100.00_____ \$250.00_____ \$500.00_____ \$1,000.00_____ Other_____

Name:_____ **Address:**_____

Send checks or money order to: Mrs. Linda Ealy, 1402 First Ave., Charleston, WV 25387

We appreciate your donation