

# CUNY-Haitian Studies Institute Conference at Brooklyn College



**Thursday and Friday,  
April 28–29, 2016**

## **CUNY Haitian Studies Institute (CUNY-HSI)**

The proposed CUNY Haitian Studies Institute (CUNY-HSI) will focus its activities on three major areas: (1) Research and dissemination of primary and secondary data that advance scholarship on Haiti and people of Haitian origin; (2) policy analyses that link scholarship to social actions impacting the lives of Haitian populations and other ethnic communities; and (3) outreach and collaborations (including technical assistance) that foster sustainable partnerships with individuals and various agencies serving Haitian communities at the local, national, and international levels. Additionally, CUNY-HSI will help to fulfill the intellectual mission and academic needs of a growing group of CUNY-based scholars, teaching faculty, and students desirous of expanding knowledge about the Haitian diaspora and Haiti as areas of legitimate research pathways. The Institute's research projects and outreach programs will help to enhance the university's strength in the area of Haitian Studies in general, while also drawing greater attention to people of Haitian origin in New York State and the United States as a specific focus for research.

## **Welcome Letter from the President**

I am pleased to welcome you to the CUNY-Haitian Studies Institute Conference at Brooklyn College. For more than a year, a dedicated group of faculty has worked diligently to develop a robust proposal for a CUNY-Haitian Studies Institute. The CUNY-HSI will be housed at Brooklyn College, and will be dedicated to international research, the dissemination of knowledge about Haiti and the Haitian diaspora, and the advancement of the field of Haitian studies. This conference provides a timely opportunity to discuss the state of the field and introduce the institute to the larger community of emerging scholars, educators, and institutions conducting research on, and engaged with, the broader Haitian community.

Sincerely,



Karen L. Gould, President  
Brooklyn College, The City University of New York

# Schedule of Events

All panels will be held in the Brooklyn College Student Center, 1 Campus Road, Brooklyn NY 11210.

## Thursday, April 28

**Penthouse, 7th Floor**  
**5 p.m.**

Cocktail Hour  
Jazz musical performance by Buyu Ambroise Trio

**Maroon/Gold Rooms, 6th Floor**  
**6:15 p.m.**

**Greetings** William A. Tramontano, provost and senior vice president, *Brooklyn College* and C. Reynold Verret, president, *Xavier University, Louisiana*

**Maroon/Gold Rooms, 6th Floor**  
**7 p.m.**

**Dinner service** catered by Nadège Fleurimond of Fleurimond Catering  
Musical performance by Raft Echo

## Friday, April 29

**Maroon/Gold Rooms, 6th Floor**  
**8 a.m.**  
Breakfast

### Concurrent Sessions

**Occidental room, 5th Floor**  
**9-10:30 a.m.**

Moderator: Francois Pierre-Louis, *Queens College*  
**Session (A) History/Politics & Economy**  
Millery Polyne, *New York University*  
Gerald Horne, *University of Houston*  
Erica James, *Massachusetts Institute of Technology*

**State Lounge, 5th floor**  
**9-10:30 a.m.**

Moderator: Nicolas Biais, *Brooklyn College*  
**Session (B) Science and Environment**  
Evens Emmanuel, *Université Quisqueya*  
Florence Sergile, *University of Florida*  
Roger Dorsinville, *City College of New York*

### Concurrent Sessions

**Occidental, 5th Floor**  
**10:45 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.**

Moderators: Regine Latortue, *Brooklyn College* and Frantz-Antoine Leconte, *Kingsborough College*  
**Session (A) Haiti as a Literary Trope**  
Thomas Spear, *Lehman College/CUNY Graduate Center*  
Patrick Sylvain, *Brown University*  
Natalie Léger, *Queens College*

**State Lounge, 5th Floor**  
**10:45 a.m. -12:15 p.m.**

Moderator: Margaret Alexandre, *York College*  
**Session (B) Health in Haiti & the Diaspora**  
Healing the mind & body  
Guelda Nicolas, *University of Miami*  
Dr. Fritz Francois, *NYU Langone Medical Center*  
Carol Royce, *Pace University*  
Dr. Lise Marie Déjean, *St. Antoine Hospital, Jeremie, Haiti*

**Maroon/Gold Rooms, 6th Floor**  
**12:30 - 1:45 p.m.**

**Lunch**  
Keynote Speakers  
Carole Boyce Davies, *Cornell University*  
Claudine Michel, *University of California, Santa Barbara*

### Concurrent Sessions

**State Lounge, 5th floor**  
**2:00 - 3:30 p.m.**

Moderator: Jean-Yves Plaisir, *Borough of Manhattan Community College*  
**Session (A) Education in Haiti & the U.S.**  
Michel Degraff, *MIT*  
Josette Bruffaerts-Thomas, *CEO, Haiti Futur*  
Berthe Faustin, *NYC P.S.189*

**Occidental, 5th floor**  
**2:00 - 3:30 p.m.**

Moderator: Carolle Charles, *Baruch College*  
**Session (B) Gender/Family/Sexuality**  
Dionne Stephens, *Florida International University*  
Marliene Bastien, *FANM*  
Dr. Lise Marie Déjean, *St. Antoine Hospital, Jérémie, Haiti*  
Carline Desire, *Association of Haitian Women*

**Penthouse, 7th floor**  
**3:40 - 5:00 p.m.**

Moderator: Jean F. Claude, *New York City College of Technology*  
**Community-based Organizations**  
**Diaspora Community**  
Régine Roumain, *Haiti*  
*Cultural Exchange*  
Jackson Rockingster, *HABNET*  
Samuel M. Pierre, *HAC*

# Biographies

## Marleine Bastien

Marleine Bastien, a licensed clinical social worker, is the executive director of FANM. She has championed the cause of women, children, and Haitian families through her dedicated advocacy in the areas of immigration and human rights, HIV/AIDS, breast cancer, and domestic violence. Among her numerous honors, she was named “Woman of the Year” by *Ms. magazine*.

## Josette Bruffaerts-Thomas

In 1994, Josette Bruffaerts-Thomas, a long-time entrepreneurial consultant, founded the NGO Haiti Futur. Haiti Futur supports education through multiple projects, including libraries and schools. In the last few years, Haiti Futur has become a leader in digital education in Haiti.

## Carole Boyce Davies

Carole Boyce Davies is professor of English and Africana studies at Cornell University. She is the current president of the Caribbean Studies Association. She is the author of numerous books, including *Black Women, Writing and Identity: Migrations of the Subject*.

## Michel DeGraff

Michel DeGraff is professor of linguistics and director of MIT-Haiti Initiative. He is known for his advocacy toward the recognition of Haitian Creole as a full fledged language. He recently produced an award-winning video, *Opening up Education in Haiti* for the teaching and Learning Video Showcase, organized by National Science Foundation.

## Lise Marie Déjean

Lise Marie Déjean is the medical director of the St. Antoine Hospital in Jérémie, Haiti. Dr. Déjean is actively involved on the ground in Haiti medically, as well as a strong advocate of women’s health and rights.

## Carline Desire

Carline Desire is the executive director of the Association of Haitian Women (AFAB), a grassroots organization based in Boston. Carline and the AFAB family use a human rights approach to empower Haitian women by advocating for better social policies on domestic and sexual violence, K–12 education, and immigration.

## Roger Dorsinville

Roger Dorsinville is the son of Roger Dorsinville, Sr., a prominent Haitian historian and novelist. Dorsinville is the department chair; professor co-chair; and computer engineering chair of electrical engineering at the Grove School of Engineering, The City College of New York. He is an active member of the Association of Haitian and American Engineers.

## Evens Emmanuel

Evens Emmanuel is professor and vice-director of research and innovation at Université Quisqueya in Haiti. Emmanuel’s area of research is the methodological approach of human health risk assessment, and ecological risk assessment of water and wastewater.

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### Berthe Faustin

Berthe Faustin is principal of P.S.189 in Brooklyn. She holds a bachelor's degree in psychology from City College of New York, a Master of Science in bilingual special education, and a master's degree in education, bilingual administration, and supervision from Bank Street College of Education.

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### Fritz Francois

Fritz Francois is an associate professor in the NYU Department of Medicine and chief medical officer and patient safety officer at NYU Langone Medical Center. His area of expertise is gastroenterology. He has published widely in medical journals, such as the *New England Journal of Medicine* and the *American Journal of Gastroenterology*.

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### Gerald Horne

Gerald Horne holds the John J. and Rebecca Moores Chair of History and African American Studies at the University of Houston. His research has addressed issues of racism in labor, politics, civil rights, international relations, and war. His most recent publication is *Race to Revolution: The U.S. and Cuba During Slavery and Jim Crow*.

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### Erica Caple James

Erica Caple James is a medical and psychiatric anthropologist and an associate professor of anthropology at Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Her work focuses on global health and security; violence and trauma; human rights and humanitarianism; race, gender, and culture; and religion. She is the author of *Democratic Insecurities: Violence, Trauma, and Intervention in Haiti*.

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### Natalie Léger

Natalie Léger is an assistant professor in the Department of English at Queens College. Her research interests include Caribbean literature, postcolonial literature and theory, literature of the black diaspora, Haitian literature and culture, black women writers, and feminist theory.

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### Claudine Michel

Claudine Michel is professor in the Department of Black Studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara. She is the author of *Offerings: Continuity and Transformation in Haitian Vodou*. Over the past 15 years, the thrust of her work has been to find ways of redressing misconceptions about Haiti, its history, and its people, and offering new bodies of knowledge on Haiti through scholarship and community involvement.

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### Guerda Nicolas

Guerda Nicolas is an associate professor and chairperson of the Educational and Psychological Studies Department, School of Education and Human Development, University of Miami. She is the author of *Parenting Practices Across The Globe and Social Ties, Social Support and Mental Health of Haitian Immigrants*.

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### Samuel M. Pierre

Samuel M. Pierre is the co-founder of the Haitian American Caucus and the current senior adviser to the president of H.A.C. The H.A.C. is a young and vibrant organization dedicated to the betterment of the local, regional, national, and international community of Haitian-Americans.

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### Millery Polyne

Millery Polyne is an associate dean for faculty and academic affairs at the Gallatin School of Individualized Study, New York University. He is the author of *From Douglass to Duvalier: U.S. African Americans, Haiti and Pan Americanism, 1870-1964*.

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### Jackson Rockingster

Jackson Rockingster is the president and CEO of the Haitian American Business Network (HABNET). Rockingster is a community activist, an educator, and financial professional.

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### Régine Roumain

Régine Roumain is the executive director of Haiti Cultural Exchange, a nonprofit organization established to develop, present, and promote the cultural expressions of the Haitian people.

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### Carol Roye

Carol Roye is the associate dean for faculty scholarship and a professor at the College of Health Professions at Pace University, Lienhard School of Nursing. Her area of expertise is adolescent reproductive health and HIV/AIDS prevention. She is the author of *A Woman's Right To Know, How Women's Health Became a Political Pawn—and the Surprising Alliances Working to Reclaim It*.

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### Florence Sergile

Florence Sergile is the faculty coordinator of Feed the Future West at the University of Florida. She is an agronomist and conservationist from Haiti with a 35-year career in agriculture and natural resource management.

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### Thomas Spear

Thomas Spear is professor of French at Lehman College. His research interests include contemporary French and Francophone literature, autobiography, and multimedia. He is the author of *Paroles et silences chez Marie-Célie Agnant; l'oubliée mémoire d'Haïti*.

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### Dionne Stephens

Dionne Stephens is an associate professor and director of the developmental science program in the Department of Psychology at Florida International University. Her research examines the influence of cultural beliefs and experiences on various sexual health outcomes.

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### Patrick Sylvain

Patrick Sylvain is a poet, writer, translator, and academic. He is a faculty member at Brown University's Center for Language Studies. Sylvain has taught as a lecturer at Harvard University, Rhode Island School of Design, and Tufts University.

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### C. Reynold Verret

C. Reynold Verret is president of Xavier University in Louisiana. Verret has served as provost and chief academic officer for Savannah State University, as well as provost at Wilkes University in Pennsylvania, and as dean of the Misher College of Arts and Sciences. He was also a professor of chemistry and biochemistry at the University of the Sciences in Philadelphia. As a scientist, Verret's research interests have included the cytotoxicity of immune cells, biosensors, and biomarkers. He has published in the fields of biological chemistry and immunology.



**CUNY-HSI Planning Committee**

**Margarett Alexandre, Nursing, York College**

**Nicolas Biais, Biology, Brooklyn College**

**Jean F. Claude, Hospitality Management, New York City College of Technology**

**Prudence Cumberbatch, Africana Studies, Brooklyn College**

**Carolle Charles, Sociology, Baruch College**

**Richard A. Greenwald, Dean, School of Humanities and Social Sciences,  
Brooklyn College**

**Frantz-Antoine Leconte, Foreign Languages,  
Kingsborough Community College**

**Francois Pierre-Louis, Political Science, Queens College**

**Jean-Yves Plaisir, Education, Borough of Manhattan Community College**

**Brooklyn  
College**

**CUNY**