On November 6-10, 2019, I attended the American Studies Association (ASA) Conference in Honolulu, Hawaii. This year's conference, "Build as We Fight," is not only reflective of my research interests as an interdisciplinary scholar-artist but also my contribution to the Department of Performing Arts. Annually, researchers, teachers, students, writers, activists, curators, community organizers, and activists from around the world convene to study U.S. culture and history in a global context through an interdisciplinary lens.

As a first-time attendee, I made numerous connections with other researchers and scholars. This year's conference has allowed me to present new research/ideas, which I hope to expand into a full-length book project, as well as engage in discussions around new trends in the field of theatre and performance studies.

On Friday, November 8, 2019, at 8 am, I participated in the panel titled "Okkuuurr: Still Woke and Still Engaged in Black Rebellion and Intersectional Solidarities," alongside Drs. Sharrell Lucket (University of Cincinnati), Jonathan Lassiter (Muhlenberg College), and Professor Kashi Johnson (Lehigh University). Our panel considered the notion of Black rebellion and how the multiple identities in which we bring forth, beyond race, are frequently overlooked in times of struggle. Panelists, spanning fields of performance, English, and psychology, discussed approaches in which we use to reassure intersectionality of all our identities (i.e., gay, fat, woman, man, etc.) through our pedagogy, performance, scholarship, and research. After our session, we engaged in a robust conversation with attendees from across multiple fields of study.

Overall, attending the American Studies Association has helped me expand my scholarship beyond theatre and performance and center it as a cultural conversation. Most notably, attending this conference has afforded me to meet many scholars and future collaborators while also initiating discussions with the Literary Studies Acquisition Editor from The Ohio State University Press to further develop the panel presentation into a book-length project. For this reason, I am beyond grateful for the support of the Office of Equity and Diversity and the Minority Retention Funds for making this possible.

Report Respectfully Submitted by:

DeRon S. Williams, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Theatre/Directing, Dramaturgy, & Cultural Performance
Department of Performing Arts
Eastern Connecticut State University
Office: (860) 465-5122 | Email: williamsdero@easternct.edu