

The History of Ethos

"Ethos was conceived in the back of a taxi, December, 1966, by five Black Wellesley College students, returning from a conference of Afro-American students held at Columbia University. They realized that there were no existing organizations on our own campus that adequately represented the needs and obligations of the Black student on a white campus. Ethos, which is defined as "the pervasive characteristic that distinguishes a group of culture" was formed to meet those needs. Our objectives are manifold: to serve as a common and effective voice on matters that concern Black students on and off campus, to establish and maintain a meaningful relationship with the Black Community, to study our own history and traditions, and to prepare ourselves, as Black women, to approach the challenges of a crucial era."

- *Ethos Newsletter*, October 12, 1977

In 1968, Ethos was officially founded and the following became recognized by the Wellesley College Government. The five founders of Ethos are Nancy Gist, Janet Hill, Alvia Warlaw, Francile Wilson and Karen Williamson.

The Purpose of Ethos

The purpose of Ethos shall be to serve as a support group for women of African descent by enhancing the cultural, political, social and academic experience of those women on this campus. It shall also be to pool the resources of the Black community, both on and off-campus, and through unity aid one another in fighting racism and sexism, and promoting cultural and political awareness.

The Ethos Timeline:

December, 1966

After attending a conference on "*The Black Student on the White Campus*" at Columbia University, students return to Wellesley with the goal of establishing their own Black student organization.

April 27, 1967

Karen Williamson '69, President of the newly formed organization named Ethos, writes a letter to the Wellesley News introducing the group. She states the purpose Ethos is, "to represent the Negro students on campus in matters which concern and interest us."

April-May, 1968

In the midst of the recent assassination of **Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.** and campus protests nationwide, **Ethos** sends a letter to **President Adams** and the **Board of Trustees**. Among the list of demands were increased recruitment of Black students in the **Class of 1972**, an immediate increase in Black faculty, and the creation of an **African-American Studies** major. Ethos threatens to contact local media and to begin a hunger strike if these demands are not implemented.

September, 1970

Harambee House officially opens.

February 15, 1971

Harambee House holds its' first all-college open house.

March 16, 1972

Ethos member, **Adele Allen**, is elected President of Wellesley College Government.

September, 1972

Arline "Sandy" Tyler takes over as the first staff Director of Harambee House. Ms. Tyler serves for five years.

November 30, 1972

The Harambee House Library opens.

December, 1972

Wynne Holmes becomes Secretary at Harambee House.

March 7, 1973

Ethos students arrange a meeting at Harambee with **President Newell** to express support for the establishment of a **Black Studies Department**.

August, 1973

EBONY magazine prints an article on the graduating members of Ethos, "*Wellesley Class of '73*," that includes many pictures of the **Ethos Choir** and various students. **Rep. Shirley Chisholm** delivers a major address.

March 12, 1975

President Newell and **Dean Ilchman** agree that the establishment of a **Black Studies Department** should include two tenure lines.

March 20, 1975

Ethos member, **Paula Penn '76**, is elected the new College Government President.

October 8, 1975

The first issue of *Brown Sister*, the Ethos Black literary magazine, is published.

September, 1977

Rosa Hunt becomes Director of Harambee. **Wynne Holmes** becomes Assistant Director. Ms. Hunt serves for two years.

March 17, 1978

First Black Alumnae Weekend held with panel discussions, meetings dinners with students and a reception with the President.

December 21, 1979

Wynne Holmes becomes Director of Harambee House after serving as Acting Director since September. **Mrs. Trudy Taylor** becomes Secretary.

March 14, 1980

Black Quintessence celebration with **Rev. Benjamin Hooks** as the keynote speaker. The Black Student Musical Production "*I YAM*" is performed in Jewett.

March 5, 1981

Amalya Kears '59, receives Wellesley's Alumnae Achievement Award. Judge Kears is the first woman to serve in the U.S. Court of Appeals.

September, 1981

Gloria Hawkins becomes Secretary of Harambee House. Ms. Hawkins serves until December 19, 1985.

October 16, 1981

Black Alumnae Network Reunion on campus.

October 28, 1981

Ethos members attend Senate meetings of Oct. 19 and Oct. 26 to express solidarity during the Senate's controversy over the Ethos exception from the SOFC open membership regulations. Ethos granted an exemption to limit membership to "all students of African and African-American descent" with the understanding that all activities will be opened to the public.

September 30, 1982

Maya Angelou speaks to a packed house in the Chapel in an event sponsored by Harambee House..A reception is held afterward at the House.

December, 1982

The first annual **KWANZAA** celebration is held in Harambee House.

March 9, 1983

Julian Bond appears as the keynote speaker for Quintessence.

April 8, 1983

First Annual Fashion Show, to benefit the **Kathleen Daly Scholarship**.

October 22, 1983

Angela Davis speaks on her book, *Women, Race and Class*, at the Chapel. Sponsored by Harambee House, Black Studies and Women Studies departments.

November 2, 1983

Tania Maria, Brazilian-born Latin Jazz artist appears in Schneider Center, sponsored by Harambee House, Ethos, Schneider Board and the Spanish Department.

September 20, 1984

Harambee sponsors address by **Gwendolyn Brooks**, Pulitzer-prize winning poet.

November 28, 1984

Alvin Ailey Repertory Ensemble performs in Alumnae Hall, sponsored by Harambee and Lecture Policy Committee.

February 7-28, 1985

The first extensive celebration of Black History Month with keynote speech by **Dr. Alvin Poussaint**, **Rev. Michael Haynes** and a Jazz performance featuring **Diane Reeves**.

April 29, 1985

ICAN (InterCultural Awareness Now) Committee sponsors **Dr. Mel King**, founder of the Rainbow Coalition. ICAN was initiated in 1980 by Harambee House.

October 2, 1985

Ethos co-sponsors the **South African Action Series**, with films and lectures. The first is entitled, "*Generations of Resistance: The Historical Perspective*." **Ursula Hall '87** is at the forefront in the issue of Wellesley's divestment from South Africa.

November 26, 1985

Ministry to Black Women hosts **Garth and Karen Baker-Fletcher**, Ph.D. candidates at Harvard Divinity School.

February 2-29, 1986

Quintessence presents keynote lecture by **Dennis Brutus**, South African Activist and playwright. **Jennifer Lewis** performs her one-woman show, "*From Billie to Jennifer*."

February, 1986

Assistant Professor of History **Jacqueline Jones**' book, *Labor of Love, Labor of Sorrow: Black Women, Work and Family from Slavery to the Present*, was named among the **Best Books of 1985** by editors of *Library Journal Book Review*.

March 13, 1986

Ethos and the Black Studies Department sponsors the lecture "*Sixty Years in the Garvey Movement*" by the **Honorable Charles Brown**, President General of the **Universal Negro Improvement Association**.

May 7, 1986

Ursula Hall '87, is elected President of College Government.

February, 1987

Quintessence presents keynote address by, **Randall Robinson**, Director of **TransAfrica**, on "*Images of a Multiracial Society in South Africa and the US*." A lecture is given by **Mel and Joyce King** in Jewett, and the film, "*Portrait of Winnie Mandela*," is shown at Harambee.

September, 1987

Ethos and Harambee participate in the first **Minority Open Campus**.

September 18, 1988

Harambee House and the National Network, Inc. present "*Faith Journey: A Musical Memory of Martin*", featuring **The Believers**.

February, 1989

Quintessence presents keynote address by **Naomi Tutu-Seavers** on "*Women in the Struggle Against Apartheid*." There is also a tribute to Martin Luther King, Jr. by the **Rev. Derek Harkins** of the Abyssinian Baptist Church in New York, and a "*Black Women in the Workplace*" lecture with alumnae and the Center for Careers

February, 1990

Quintessence presents keynote address by the **Reverend Barbara Harris**, the "*Celebration of the Men and Women of the Diaspora*". **Ladysmith Black Mambazo** performs in Alumnae Hall.

February, 1991

Quintessence presents keynote address by **The Honorable A. Leon Higginbotham**, on "*The US and South Africa: Similarities and Differences*". A lecture by **Senator Craig Washington** from Houston, Texas and a performance of the play "*The Meeting*" round out the month.

April 10, 1991

Retirement dinner honors **Wynne Holmes** for 20 years of dedication and service to both Harambee House and Ethos.

February, 1992

Harambee House presents keynote speaker **Congresswoman Maxine Waters**. A hip-hop dance performance by **Project Concern** is held in Jewett, and a performance by **Ethos Choir with Onyx**, the Harvard University Singers, is held in the Chapel.

March 5-6, 1992

Alvia Wardlaw '69, founding member of Ethos and Adjunct Curator of African-American Art at the Dallas Museum of Art, returns to the campus for a lecture titled, "*Kindred Spirits: Continuities in African and African-American Art*", as well as a lecture at Harambee, "*The Beginning of Ethos, 1968*"

August, 1992

Linda Brothers becomes Director of Harambee House.

February, 1993

Harambee presents a poetry reading and conversation with Nobel Prize Laureate **Derek Walcott**. MLK Lecturer **Dr. Yosef Ben-Jochannan** delivers keynote address in the Chapel.

August, 1993

Major renovation of Harambee House, including the re-design of interior spaces and the purchase of a late 19th century Kente cloth.

February, 1994

Quintessence presents MLK Lecturer **U.S. Surgeon General Dr. M. Jocelyn Elders, M.D.**

October 19, 1994

Quintessence presents a lecture by **Eva Jefferson Paterson**, Executive Director of **The Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights**, titled "*Building Coalitions among Communities of Color.*"

February, 1995

Harambee presents **Ossie Davis**, actor and Civil Rights activist, as MLK Lecturer. Additional keynote address by **Linda Brown Smith** and **Cheryl Brown Henderson**, the sisters for whom the landmark Supreme Court ruling **Brown vs. Board of Education**, is named.

September, 1995

Linda Brothers becomes **Director of Affirmative Action/Equal Employment Opportunity Office**. **Marty Elmore** becomes Program Director of Harambee House.

February 25, 1996

Quintessence presents **Ntozake Shange**, international poet, novelist and playwright, as MLK Lecturer in Jewett.

April 27, 1996

Ethos Day 1996 Reunion is held in conjunction with the Annual Spring Fashion Show.

September, 1996

Marty Elmore becomes **Acting Director of Harambee House**.

October 3, 1996

Kwame Ture, formerly **Stokely Carmichael**, lectures on "*Black Power and Pan-African Struggle at the End of the 20th Century.*"

November, 1996

Ethos retreat, "*Loves Herself. Regardless*", focuses on raising self-esteem and creating bonds of sisterhood.

December, 1996

Annual **KWANZAA** celebration features **Kita Ne Mesa Dance Troupe** from Zaire.

February, 1997

Ethos organizes a week of response to an on-campus hate crime in Cazenove dorm. The week includes wearing black armbands in support of the victim, speakouts and a rally.

February 22, 1997

Quintessence presents **Lorene Cary**, author of *Black Ice*, as the MLK Lecturer.

April, 1997

Mijha Butcher '98 is elected President of Wellesley College Government.

August, 1997

Rachel Beverly becomes Director of Harambee House.

September 30, 1997

Filmmaker **Gloria Rolando** presents "*Eyes of the Rainbow*", a documentary on exiled Black Liberation Army-member **Assata Shakur**.

December 11, 1997

Ethos makes it to the Web. Web-designers **Natalie Douglas '00** and **Sherrie Green DS4**.

February 22, 1998

Quintessence presents **Susan Taylor**, author and Editor-in-Chief of ESSENCE magazine, as MLK Lecturer in Jewett.

April 24-26, 1998

Ethos Day 1998 is held to celebrate the 30th Anniversary of the founding of the organization. Events include panels, a memorial service, and an awards dinner honoring the founders of Ethos and **Wynne Holmes**.

October 1, 1998

Quintessence presents a lecture by **Ann Simmons**, Vice-President of Def Jam Records

February 11, 1999

Quintessence presents poet and author **Nikki Giovanni**, as the MLK Lecturer

March 1999

Womyn with Wings presented a theatrical presentation of women's issues

September 1999

Ethos Political Action Committee sponsored an open mic in celebration of **Mumia Abu-Jamal** Awareness Week

October 1999

Members of WASA and Ethos **protest at the South African Benefit Concert** due to them not being invited to perform

December 2, 1999

AIDS in Black and Latino Communities panel discussion co-sponsored by Ethos

January 15, 1999

Harambee House remembers and celebrates the life of **Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.** with guest speaker Dr. Viginus Thornton, Professor of History at Mass Bay Community College

February 10, 2000

Author, civil rights activist and poet **Askia Toure** speaks on The Black Arts Movement; sponsored by Nubian

February 13, 2000

Quintessence presents journalist and hip-hop feminist **Joan Morgan** as the MLK Lecturer

February 16, 2000

Members of Ethos are invited to meet **Lani Guinier**, 1999-2000 Wellesley College Wilson Lecturer and first Black female tenured professor at Harvard Law School

February 18, 2000

A reception is held in Harambee House for **Sister Souljah** after her lecture in Jewett Auditorium; sponsored by Nubian

February 25, 2000

Patricia Williams '73 and **Oliver Lake** present Commentary, Musings and Music a performance of political, social and legal commentary

February 29, 2000

Ethos, along with Wellesley Asian Alliance, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, Mezcla and Fusion sponsored **Sister, Can We Talk**, an informal student discussion on race relations at Wellesley College

March 2, 2000

Ethos presents **Expressions of..., a night of the arts** at the Davis Museum

March 3-5, 2000

A weekend of collaboration with Northeastern, Harvard, MIT and Tufts Black Women in honor of the **SHADES** (Scholars Helping to Achieve Diversity through Education and Sisterhood) initiative

April 7, 2000

Jazz Café with jazz flutist **Galen Abdur-Razzaq** held in Harambee House

April 2000

Ethos, WASA, WCD **protest the SOFC** (Student Organization Funding Committee) **decision** to not fund the three organizations for the next academic year at Senate

May 2000

Author, entrepreneur and graphic artist **Jarmarhl Crawford** performs at Harambee House

October 15-22, 2000

Ethos Political Action Committee, Nubian and Harambee House sponsor a **Political Consciousness and Activism Week**

October 2000

Kelly Brown '90 becomes first alumna to be hired as Director of Harambee House.

November 11, 2000

Ethos, WASA and WCD sponsor **Cultural Talks: "The Black Woman Cross-Culturally,"** moderated by Professor Filomina Steady

November 2000

Ethos and ASU present **Breaking the Molds...Building the Bonds**, a series dedicated to improving Afro-Asian relations

December 2000
Ethos presents "**An Evening of the Arts**" at Wellesley College

December 3, 2000
Ethos presents author of *Breath, Eyes, Memory*, **Edwidge Danticat**

February 2001
Quintessence presents entrepreneur, talk show host and rapper, **Queen Latifah** as the MLK Lecturer

February 24, 2001
Ethos, WCD and WASA present **One Nation Under Groove: A Celebration of Music and Dance in the African Diaspora**

February 26, 2001
Harambee House sponsors **The African American History Bowl** in Schneider Center

March 26, 2001
Nubian presents journalist and author **Farai Chideya**

April 2001
Ethos members take part in **SLAM!** and **WAAM:** movements to hire full-time advisors for the Latina and Asian communities of Wellesley College

April 6-8, 2001
Harambee House celebrates its 30th Anniversary

April 28, 2001
First year that Ethos Woman and GenerAsian co-sponsor **Un-Typed**, a collective spoken word event in honor of the two publications

October 2001
Harambee House host a reception following the MLK Lecture Committee address given by activist, author and scholar, **Angela Davis**

October 2001
Ethos joins forces with Boston area schools to revitalize the **Black Boston Student Network (BBSN)**

October 2001
Various articles are written to the **Wellesley News** questioning Ethos' closed membership and the issue of multiculturalism at Wellesley College

December 2001
Ethos and GenerAsian sponsor the **2nd Annual Un-Typed** collective

February 2002
Elizabeth Miranda '02 presents part of her thesis on Wellesley Alumnae of African Descent at Harambee House

February 2002
Quintessence presents founder of the Children Defense Fund, **Marlan Wright Edelman** as the MLK lecturer

February 2002
Harambee House sponsors a full day **Black Women's Retreat**

March 2002

Legal scholar **Patricia Williams '73** receives the Wellesley Alumnae Achievement Award

April 6, 2002

Ethos celebrates the **20th Anniversary of the Ethos Fashion Show**, held in honor of alumna Kathleen Daly

April 2002

Dana Weekes '03 elected College Government President; **Jenna Bond-Louden '04** elected College Government Multicultural Affairs Coordinator

April 2002

Ethos makes proclamation of 'proactiveness' during Ethos' **First Annual Day at Senate**

April 28, 2002

Ethos co-sponsors **Global Consciousness, Global Identity: A lecture with African American filmmaker, Reggae Life**