Our Mission

The African American and African Studies Community Extension Center is the outreach component of The Ohio State University Department of African American and African Studies (AAAS). The primary goal of the Community Extension Center is to promote and coordinate research, teaching, and service projects that support Ohio State’s land-grant mission, as well as address the concerns of the city’s Diasporic communities by:

- Serving as liaison between The Ohio State University and Columbus’ urban communities.
- Fostering greater interaction between members of the community and university.
- Partnering with university, faculty, staff, and students to provide opportunities for learning, discovery, and engagement.

Special Events

African Affairs Symposium
This one-day colloquium, held annually during the fall, features a topic that is especially germane to the growing African community in the city of Columbus. The symposium is designed to bring together elements of the African and African American community in order to exchange ideas and form lasting educational and policy oriented partnerships.

Black Veteran's Day Salute
Each Veteran’s Day the Community Extension Center hosts a symposium that honors and examines the contributions of Black Ohioans who served in the U.S. military.

History of Black Columbus Conference
Each spring, this conference examines and celebrates the rich history of African Americans in Columbus. Our most recent conference focused on “The Health of the Black Family: Mind, Body, and Spirit.”

Lecture Series
This series features presentations from scholars and authors about topics that affect the community. Lectures are held throughout the academic year.

Summer Residential Program
This program is designed to provide high school juniors and seniors with an appreciation for and an understanding of African American culture and history as well as an opportunity to experience college life.

Staff

Judson L. Jeffries, PhD, Professor and Director
Alecia Shipe, Technology Program Coordinator
Sarah M. Twitty, Senior Program Coordinator and Fiscal Officer

AAAS Community Extension Center
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Our Facility
University and community groups also use the Community Extension Center to hold classes, meetings, and events. Features include:
- Located in the historic Bronzeville neighborhood on Mt. Vernon Ave.
- 10-minute drive from campus
- On the COTA busline
- Free parking
- Available weekdays, evenings, and weekends

Technology
The Community Extension Center’s state-of-the-art computer classroom is a teaching and training resource for individuals, classes, and groups. The classroom is equipped with workstations that contain Microsoft Office software and Internet access.

Research
Faculty and students conduct research projects at the Community Extension Center. Sample projects include:
- The birth of Black Studies at Ohio State
- The cartography of voting preferences in the Mt. Vernon Ave. area
- Healthcare accessibility for residents in the Columbus 43203 and 43205 zip codes
- News coverage of the 2006 Ohio Governor’s election

Education

College Credit Courses
Classes offered at the Community Extension Center provide an attractive alternative for students who may find it difficult to access campus due to work schedules and parking. Courses include:
- AAAS 495: Get Out the Vote! Service Learning in Urban Communities
- AAAS 717: African American Political Leadership
- AAAS 730: Black Political Movements and Organizations
- English 367.01: Language, Identity, and Culture in the U.S.
- Geography 580S: Elements of Cartography–Serving the Community with Cartography

Continuing Education
The Community Extension Center is an ideal place to hold special courses offered for enrichment, certification, or continuing education credit. Such courses have included:
- African History in America Part I 1500–1896, Part II 1896–Present
- Leadership Development: The Ray Miller Institute for Change and Leadership

Partnering with the Community Extension Center
University departments, faculty, staff, students, and organizations benefit from partnering with the Community Extension Center by using it as a resource to promote learning, discovery, and engagement initiatives. Partnerships include:
- Math Science Club with The Ohio State University’s Wexner Medical Center and COSI
- The Ray Miller Institute for Change and Leadership with the Center for Urban Progress
- Community Tour with Bronzeville Neighborhood Association (BNA)
- ReVITALizing Neighborhoods through V.I.T.A.: Volunteer Income Tax Assistance with OSU Extension
- Cartography project with the university’s Department of Geography