The Sankofa is an Adinkra symbol from West Africa (specifically Ghana, Côte d’Ivoire) representing wisdom. It affirms the necessity of learning from the past to build for the future. Its literal meaning is to “Go Back to Fetch It.” The Mary Lou Williams Center for Black Culture has chosen to be guided by the spirit of the Sankofa in order to remind us to learn from the past to build a brighter future for all we encounter and have the opportunity to serve.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Our Namesake</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our Director’s Message</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our Purpose</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our Center</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our Work</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our Year in Review</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our Vision</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Greetings from the Mary Lou Williams Center for Black Culture. It has been just a little over four years since I began my tenure as the director and I am awed by all that we have accomplished in such a short time. We have transformed our facility into a warm and inviting space...it is a place in which the campus community can take great pride. We continue to build networks with Black faculty and staff around campus, which is the touchstone for developing resources for our students that include The Black Book: A Guide to Black Life at Duke, the Africana Mentoring Program, and so much more! And yet, there is still more we can do to build a stronger sense of community that not only embraces the diversity of Duke’s Black community, but also intentionally creates community with staff, faculty, undergraduate, graduate and professional students within the greater Duke and Durham communities.

Moreover, we seek to develop our students’ leadership skills and preparedness for an increasingly complex, global society. This includes developing programs and services that challenge them to study abroad, become involved in research and thoughtfully explore not only the dynamics of race in America, but their place within that struggle. We are called to do more to honor the cultural and artistic roots of the Mary Lou Williams Center by securing the resources necessary to reignite the Artist in Residence program. Finally, we dare to dream and are engaged in building a dynamic team of professionals that will continue the critical work already begun. We are creating a center that dances between the notes of jazz and justice. We, like our namesake, are composing a song for future generations.

When I was selected to direct the Mary Lou Williams Center for Black Culture, I stated that it was my quest to make it the preeminent center for Black culture in the country. With your support, I am resloved that this vision can be a reality.

Face The Sun,

Chandra Y. Guinn
Director
Mary Lou Williams Center for Black Culture
Established in 1983, the Duke University Center for Black Culture was named in honor of the great artist—Mary Lou Williams (1910–1981). A renowned pianist, composer, teacher and humanitarian, Mary Lou Williams performed with numerous jazz legends and was among the first jazz artists to perform at Carnegie Hall and St. Patrick’s Cathedral in New York City. Williams taught at Duke University as an Artist-in-Residence from 1977 until her death. She is remembered by artists such as Duke Ellington, Thelonious Monk and Bud Powell as one whose musical and spiritual contributions were singular and profound.
The Mary Lou Williams Center for Black Culture is critically concerned with issues of race and the impact of social difference at the individual, interpersonal and institutional levels. Through lectures, performances, exhibits, and informal gatherings, the Mary Lou Williams Center strives to foster an appreciation for and increase knowledge of the peoples, histories, and cultures of the African diaspora and its many contributions to the world. The Mary Lou Williams Center also provides programs and services that contribute to the successful academic and personal development of not only Black students, but all students at Duke University. Ultimately, the Mary Lou Williams Center seeks to be a hub of information, activity, and community for our constituency at Duke University. We welcome anyone, who wants to engage with and be empowered by a greater understanding of the Black experience, to consider the Mary Lou Williams Center as a home away from home.
Located on West Campus in the West Union Building on the second floor, the Mary Lou Williams Center for Black Culture is comprised of an inviting living room, a main office which houses our multimedia lending library, a conference room, the Julian Abele Hall, comprised of a multipurpose room with a kitchen and media center with a large projection screen, and the director’s office. The Mary Lou Williams Center was relocated and newly renovated in 2003. It is a beautiful facility with oak paneled walls, grand windows, an exquisite baby grand piano, and an ever expanding collection of photography and art on the walls that serves to visually represent Black culture at Duke University and beyond. The Mary Lou Williams Center is a great space for studying, hosting an event, or just hanging out with friends.
The regular activities of the Mary Lou Williams Center are designed to creatively, critically, and supportively foster individual and collective consciousness about the Black experience. The following are the signature programs and services of the Mary Lou Williams Center for Black Culture.
Speaking of Hope

This annual dialogue will be inaugurated in the next academic year. The name of the dialogue is inspired by the indomitable spirit of legendary scholar Dr. John Hope Franklin, James B. Duke Professor Emeritus of History. The lecture will highlight and celebrate the academic excellence and persistent hope found in the Black experience.

Jazz Programming

Our jazz programming includes the Jazz Matters talk, the Measure of Grace annual jazz concert, and Jazz at the Mary Lou, a Wednesday night jam session that transforms the Mary Lou Williams Center into a sophisticated jazz club. The house band, headed by Jazz Studies Director John Brown, warms things up and keeps them moving. Amateur and professional artists are always invited to join in on the fun.

A Healthy Black Self
Exercising Consciousness

The 2009–2010 programming theme reflects our continued commitment to strengthening the Black community at Duke by considering the relationship between wholistic health and Black identity. Our theme is fully embodied in our Brother–to–Brother and Sister–to–Sister Conversations. Differently, our Art & Soul gatherings, A Sunday Kind of Love on Friday social, and A Day Without Art–World AIDS Day events speak to other target areas that we seek to address during the academic year.
The Mary Lou Williams Center offers support to graduate/professional and undergraduate Black affinity organizations including:

- BSA
- Duke Africa
- SOCA
- AMP
- DUBPHO
- NSBE
- AACUC
- NAACP
- FIN
- The Girls’ Club
- Black Male Outreach
- Reginaldo Howard Scholars
- Dance Black
- IMPACT
- Karamu
- UP
- Bouchet Society
- Hurston–James Society
- SNMA
- ΔΣΘ
- ΚΑΨ
- ΩΨΦ
- ΣΓΡ
- ΖΦΒ
- BGPSA
- BLMBAO
- BLSA
- BSU
- NPHC
- ΑΦΑ
- ΑΚΑ
- ΦΒΣ

Our Diversity is Our Strength

Our lending library has over 1,000 titles of culturally relevant materials available for checkout that include books, DVDs and music. Some of the subject areas represented in our collection include:

- African Studies
- African American Studies
- Autobiography/Biography
- Economics
- Education
- History
- Literature
- Love/Relationships
- Music
- Philosophy
- Psychology
- Politics/Government
- Race Relations
- Religion
- Sexuality
- Sociology
- Wmn’s Studies
- Jazz & Art
- Reference
Our Year in Review

The Mary Lou Williams Center's celebrated its 25th anniversary by hosting a variety of events throughout the 2008–2009 academic year. In the fall, Dr. Tammy Kernodle, biographer for Mary Lou Williams, discussed the intimate details of Mary Lou Williams' life and jazz career. Students, alumni, and friends of the center listened to smooth jazz sounds during “Round Midnight”. The center hosted a gala celebration and a jazz brunch featuring Dr. Kernodle with the Deanna Witkowski trio. In the spring, Geri Allen and Patricia Barber captivated an audience during the anniversary concert which featured Mary Lou Williams’ Zodiac Suite. The concert was a collaborative effort of the center and Duke Performances. Nationally known historians, Drs. Vincent and Rachel Harding, were the discussants for the inaugural Speaking of Hope dialogue.

The Mary Lou Williams Center participated in over 40 one time or regular events such as intimate dinner discussions with Cory Booker, Soledad O'Brien, Harold Ford, Jr. and Michael Steele. The center also hosted artist talks featuring Beverly McIver, Barklay Hendricks and Leroy Campbell. As a highlight of the year, throngs of students gathered to participate in “Election Affection,” a series of discussions prior to the closing of the election polls, and to witness the results of the historic 2008 election.

Collaborative relationships are continuing to be cultivated with the Black Faculty Caucus, Office of Institutional Equity, Duke University Black Alumni Connection (DUBAC), the Black Graduate and Professional Students Association (BGPSA), the Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life, the Duke University Union and Reginaldo Howard Scholarship Program.

Additional artwork, by Leroy Campbell, celebrating Black life, continues to transform the MLWC into a warm and welcoming area that mimics the comforts of home.
Our vision for the Mary Lou Williams Center for Black Culture is simple – to make it the preeminent, University-based center for Black culture in the country. It is our strong belief that the Black community at Duke deserves nothing less. It is true that over the center’s more than 25 year history at Duke, there has been undeniable improvement in campus conditions for Black students. Yet, as we move through this millennium and look towards the future, there is an urgent need to continue to expand our programs and services so that they may better meet the needs and interests of an ever changing student body, to better prepare Black students to address the topics and technology of our increasingly global society, and to better embrace the rich diversity found in the African diaspora at Duke.
Over the years, monetary and non-monetary gifts (artwork, books, fabric), have come to the Mary Lou Williams Center from generous faculty, staff, alumni and student groups. This tradition of giving has made it possible to build upon and extend the work of the Mary Lou Williams Center in important ways. As we commit ourselves to building the preeminent center for Black culture in the country, we have identified a need for programs and services that provide or facilitate academic and intellectual enrichment, artistic and cultural engagement, and student advocacy and activism.
Individuals or groups interested in supporting the work of the Mary Lou Williams Center for Black Culture are invited to contact our director.

Academic and Intellectual Enrichment
Speaking of Hope Annual Dialogue
Undergraduate Pre-Professional Development Program
Graduate Fellows Program

Artistic and Cultural Engagement
Artist in Residence Program
A Measure of Grace Annual Women in Jazz Concert
The Legacy Project

Student Advocacy and Activism
Africana Mentoring Program (AMP)
Leadership Development Initiative (LDI)
Travel Learn Initiative (TLI)
The Boa Me Na Me Mmoa Wo Adinkra symbol, is usually translated from the Akan language of Ghana and Côte d’Ivoire West Africa, to mean “help me help you.” The meaning of this symbol seemed an appropriate complement to the message of this brochure.