

ETHOS 50TH ANNIVERSARY GIFT FUND

— STEWARDSHIP REPORT —



Stewardship Report for the Ethos 50th Anniversary Gift Fund

In 1968, Ethos was founded to support and help build community for Wellesley's students of African descent. The Ethos 50th Anniversary Gift Fund advances the original purpose and goals for which Ethos was founded. This report serves as an overview of how the Ethos 50th Anniversary Gift Fund was used in fiscal year 2020. This year, Wellesley planned a significantly expanded use of the fund, but due to the pandemic, some efforts had to be postponed.

Harambee Singers Gospel Choir

In 2019, the Harambee Singers Gospel Choir was reintroduced to the Wellesley community. Led by Linda Brown-San Martin '70, the choir provided a moving and spirit-filled concert on December 9, 2019. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic, the spring performance was canceled.

Black Solidarity Conference

at Yale University

January 30–February 2, 2020

Students of African descent were excited to have the Black Solidarity Conference presented as an option this year, so much so that 36 students applied. In total, 22 students attended the conference, including four members of the Harambee House Presidents' Council.

Conference topics included:

- Intergenerational Spirituality
- Black Artists
- Black Stories
- Incarceration and Justice Reform
- Building Black Business
- Making the Most of Your College Years
- Feminism and Political Mobilization
- Blackness in Media and Culture
- Being Black in STEM

Below are reflections from students who attended the conference:

“It was very inspiring to speak with older students that have already determined the best ways to succeed as students of color at predominantly white institutions regardless of major or aspiration. With the knowledge I have gained from Wellesley students on how to thrive at Wellesley specifically in addition to the advice I learned at the conference, I feel well-equipped to succeed at Wellesley and beyond.”





“I really enjoyed the panels, in particular the Blackness in Media panel, which gave me the opportunity to hear from professionals in fields I am interested in working in. I was able to hear from Jamie Broadnax, the founder of Black Girl Nerds, speak about her experiences navigating corporate America and how her work in media has given a greater voice to a marginalized community. It’s simply inspiring to hear from and see people who look like you making strides in industry that is many times designed for us to fail.”

“This trip truly made me realize how important the Black community is to my Wellesley experience and how important Black solidarity is at this institution. Overall, I am excited to funnel my newfound inspiration into my relationships, the Wellesley community, my studies, and my future. I am extremely grateful to have had this opportunity and I hope that others will be able to have this opportunity in the future.”

“The Black Solidarity Conference was my first time having crucial discussions that affected me and my community without the room being predominantly white or other groups of color. These conversations gave me and my peers space to just debrief and unravel not only how each of these topics were reflected at Wellesley, but in our families and in ourselves.”

“This conference was particularly meaningful for me to attend because it allowed me to have so many conversations I didn’t realize I had been desiring to have. I was able to discuss topics such as dating as a Black woman, the impact of media on the storytelling of the Black narrative, and my own experience navigating Wellesley College as an African American. The conference provided me with a medium where I was able to express internal conversations that had not yet been fully vocalized, and allowed me to listen to perspectives of others. I witnessed this among the group from Wellesley who attended as well.”

It is clear from these reflections that our students found the conference inspirational and enlightening. Students networked and made connections across many interests, enabling them to envision how they will build upon their Wellesley experience as they head toward the bright futures they have before them. The attendees are so very grateful to the alumnae of African descent who made their participation possible. The Ethos 50th Anniversary Gift Fund covered the cost of registration, transportation, lodging, and meals.

The Harambee Community Enhancement Grants Initiative

The purpose of the Harambee Community Enhancement Grants Initiative is to build community, encourage engagement, and enhance the quality of life for students of African descent at Wellesley College. Activities that address gaps in the current offerings at the College are to be given priority.

Wellesley for Caribbean Development (WCD) Annual Expo

WCD makes Caribbean culture accessible to Wellesley students by providing an authentic Caribbean experience at its annual Expo. This year's interactive experience fostered learning about the Caribbean in an enjoyable, positive, and meaningful way. The event strengthened bonds within WCD while simultaneously inviting the wider Wellesley community to share in Caribbean culture.

African Cooking Nights

This cooking club was to be an opportunity for students of African descent to gather together once a month to cook cuisines from different African countries. Although approved for funding, these events were postponed due to COVID-19.

Biomedical Science Careers Student Conference

Two students registered to attend the Biomedical Science Careers Student Conference sponsored by Harvard Medical School. This conference was canceled due to COVID-19.

National Society of Black Engineers

The Ethos 50th Anniversary Gift Fund supported the reactivation of Wellesley's chapter of the National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE), which has been inactive for at least 10 years. In recent years, Wellesley students have had associate memberships through the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) NSBE chapter. While our students paid dues to the MIT chapter, they were not afforded the same resources and opportunities as MIT members. MIT's chapter has events that are not open to associate members, and our students have been unable to attend the annual NSBE convention. Through the Ethos 50th Anniversary Gift Fund, we were able to register five students to attend this year's convention. Unfortunately, the San Antonio convention was postponed due to the pandemic, and it is now unclear whether our students will be able to attend when it is rescheduled this summer.

Thank You

We are grateful for the support of the more than 250 alumnae who came together to create the Ethos 50th Anniversary Gift Fund. Your collective vision and generosity create opportunities for Wellesley students to engage, support each other, learn from each other, and become the impressive future Wellesley alums and luminaries you've inspired them to be. Thank you!