Kareem Abdul-Jabbar and Anthony L. Powell Join Schomburg Center for Opening of The Buffalo Soldiers

The Schomburg Center launched its most recent exhibition, The Buffalo Soldiers: The African-American Soldier in the U.S. Army, to a record crowd on Friday, November 14, with special guests Kareem Abdul-Jabbar and Anthony L. Powell. The exhibition, which explores the victories and challenges of historic black regiments in the late 1800s and early 1900s, features more than 200 documents, photographs, and artifacts from the collections of Abdul-Jabbar and Powell and includes illustrations by Avel de Knight.

Kareem Abdul-Jabbar’s collection, assembled over almost a decade, contains photographs, documents, and artifacts from the era, and represents his life-long commitment to African-American history. Abdul-Jabbar’s interest in Buffalo Soldiers developed while writing Black Profiles in Courage, his significant volume documenting the achievements of African Americans in history. Highlights from his collection include 9th and 10th Cavalry flags, a 9th Cavalry campaign hat, and a field kit containing personal items such as a Bible, a family photo in a compass case, a pen, and other objects that belonged to Lt. George Washington Smith. The exhibition also features important documents, including the U.S. Congressional legislation creating the Buffalo Soldiers units in August 1866, a 9th Cavalry muster roll signed by Col. Edward Hatch in 1873, and a 10th Cavalry pay roster, signed by Col. Ben-

Clockwise, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar and Anthony L. Powell discuss The Buffalo Soldiers; Troop C, 9th U.S. Cavalry, Tampa, Florida, 1898, from the collection of Anthony L. Powell; some of the more than 500 people who attended the exhibition opening on November 14.
Amer ican men are at war. So are African Americans. This has been the case since the American Revolution. Every time that America has needed people to depend on and advance its interests, African Americans have been there—as soldiers and as patriotic citizens. When America’s cause has been just, no citizens have been more loyal patriots than African Americans. When the cause has been unclear or clearly unjust, African Americans have felt it their patriotic duty to question America’s mission and at times protest American participation in seemingly unjust wars.

In the past, African Americans have celebrated the courage, commitment, and valor of their “sable heroes.” We are familiar with some of those heroes—the 55th Massachusetts Regiment during the Civil War, the Harlem Hellfighters in World War I, and the Tuskegee Airmen in World War II, to mention just a few. And, of course, there are the Buffalo Soldiers. No group of brave, heroic African-American military men lived more contradictory lives in the American military than the Buffalo Soldiers. Participants in America’s expansionist wars in the American West, Cuba, and the Philippines, they were nevertheless the very symbol of black man-

Speakers, artists, performers, and spiritual leaders were joined by broad cross-sections of the African-American community and government officials to pay homage to the ancestors during the five-day Rites of Ancestral Return commemorative ceremony.

- Howard Dodson, Schomburg Chief

hood in African America and bridges to a better life for African Americans in the segregationist era.

Based on the collections of Kareem Abdul-Jabbar and Anthony L. Powell, with illustrations by Avel de Knight, The Buffalo Soldiers: The African-American Soldier in the U.S. Army offers African Americans inside and outside the American military an opportunity to ponder the present moment against the backdrop of some of the most contradictory periods and experiences in African-American military history. The exhibit is on view at the Center through February 29, 2004, and should not be missed.

Those of you who didn’t participate in the Rites of Ancestral Return ceremonies from September 31 through October 4 missed some of the most moving, significant, and memorable historical experiences in African-American history. The opportunity to participate in and witness the reburial of 419 eighteenth-century enslaved African ancestral remains was unprecedented. Tens of thousands of people did participate—in Washington, Baltimore, Wilmington, Philadelphia, Newark, and, of course, New York City. The commemorative events were dignified and respectful—celebrations of the triumphs of the ancestors over slavery and its adversities.

Speakers, artists, performers, and spiritual leaders were joined by broad cross-sections of the African-American community and government officials to pay homage to the ancestors from New York’s African Burial Ground as well as the pioneer colonial African popu-

lations of their cities. Joining spiritual and religious leaders from a diversity of African and African diasporan religious traditions in the final tribute were Maya Angelou, Avery Brooks, Delroy Lindo, Cicely Tyson, Phyllicia Rashad, Brian Stokes Mitchell, the Alvin Ailey Dancers, the Boys and Girls Choirs of Harlem, members of the African and Caribbean diplomatic corps, and thousands of celebrants from throughout New York, the United States, Africa, and the African Diaspora. The African Burial Ground Memorial Site in Lower Manhattan has been designated a national landmark and is destined to become an international monument to enslaved African ancestors everywhere. The site is now open to the public. Start planning your annual pilgrimage and send your family and friends.

Sankofa, an African Adinkra symbol, is the unofficial logo of the African Burial Ground Project. It means, roughly, “return to the past to make the future.” The Schomburg Center has taken this slogan to heart as it works to make resources available to a wider public. The Schomburg Center’s Web site is the most heavily used Web site in The New York Public Library’s online environment. In addition to information about the Center’s collections, services, and programs, users from around the world are able to view online exhibitions on African diasporan themes and access full text, electronic versions of select collection materials. Lest We Forget: The Triumph Over Slavery, an online version of the Center’s 75th Anniversary Exhibition (and an electronic companion to the book Jubilee: The Emergence of African-American Culture) is slated for release in early 2004. So are the first four chapters of a unique thirteen chapter online survey of African America. Entitled In Motion: The African-American Migration Experience, this twenty-first century look at the past promises to present startlingly new facts and perspectives on the evolution of the African-American experience. Each chapter will feature some 100 captioned images, a narrative text, and a selection of historic documents and texts that are used to tell the story of African Americans’ voluntary and involuntary migrations to, within, and out of the United States over the last nearly 500 years. Look for it on our Web site (www.schomburgcenter.org) beginning in February 2004, Black History Month. In Motion was funded by the Congressional Black Caucus through the Institute for Museum and Library Services.

Let me close by again thanking each and every one of you for your ongoing support. Without it, none of this would be possible. A special word of thanks to everyone who contributed in whatever way they could to help us give the ancestors the dignified and respectful reburial they deserved. If you haven’t got a copy yet, be sure to look for Jubilee in your local bookstore. It was selected by Publishers Weekly as one of its top eight illustrated books of 2003 and by Black Issues Book Review as its most remarkable illustrated book of 2003. Look for Standing in the Need of Prayer too. A new Schomburg Center publication, it is a perfect holiday or Black History Month gift.
In this poem, the acclaimed poet of the Harlem Renaissance of the 1920s, Countee Cullen, poses the question of the meaning of Africa for the descendants of the African Diaspora. Inevitably, this discussion also involves the meaning of history, memory, and as the poem’s title indicates, the heritage of African-American communities. My work as a literary scholar attempts to illuminate the complex relationships between African-American, Afro-Caribbean, and African writers as they engage in dialogues about the place of Africa in their respective imaginations. As Cullen’s poem suggests, these dialogues have to confront the displacement wrought by slavery and the Middle Passage. They also provide a unique opportunity to explore the tensions between understandings of race, nationalism, and diaspora in twentieth-century literature.

Although there is a great interest in the concept of diaspora in the academic community, partly popularized by Paul Gilroy’s notion of a black Atlantic, the place of Africa within these discussions receives little attention. Even as scholars take a broader perspective and investigate cross-cultural influences across national boundaries, too often they neglect the rich and conflicted strands of discourse about Africa that have been central to discussions of black identity since the mid-nineteenth century. My project looks at literary representations of Africa by western writers as well as responses by African writers to analyze the place of Africa within the new black Atlantic. Literature has a special place in these discussions, functioning as a site where social conflicts can be debated and resolved. Nineteenth-century racism contended that Africa and its descendants had no culture. In response writers and artists sought to prove the opposite with the belief that such an act of cultural vindication was not only necessary for debates over culture but crucially tied to the destiny of the race. As Arthur Schomburg put it in his contribution to the signature 1925 anthology, *The New Negro*, “the American Negro must remake his past in order to make his future.”

In this spirit, I turn to the late nineteenth century to explore the fiction of racial uplift in relation to projects of emigration to Africa. I begin with the contention that back-to-Africa movements of the nineteenth century inaugurate a racial logic that ties the destinies of African Americans to the fate of Africa. Each chapter of my book project analyzes subsequent formulations of black identity that negotiate this implicit logic. Such writers as Pauline Hopkins, Sutton Griggs, W. E. B. Du Bois, and Richard Wright offer compelling and deeply ambivalent meditations on Africa and its place within their anti-racist work in the United States. In response, such African writers as J. E. Casely Hayford, Attah Ahuma, Kwame Nkrumah, Peter Abrahams, and Ama Ata Aidoo create their own understanding of African pasts and presents, weaving a rich conversational thread about the meaning of nationalism and diaspora in global black cultures.

As a Scholar-in-Residence at the Schomburg Center, I have a unique opportunity to make progress on my book, using the vast resources of the library. The program’s seminars and colloquia enable animated conversations across such varied disciplines as history, music, sociology, law, literature, and philosophy. In order to trace links between various black intellectuals, I turn to the library’s holdings of their papers: correspondence, book reviews, editorials, and more. I also turn to the actual records of the African repatriation societies, such as the American Colonization Society and Marcus Garvey’s United Negro Improvement Association. These records comprise an unexamined resource for ethnographic, evangelical, and commercial discourse on Africa. Analyzing reports of annual meetings, letters from repatriated slaves, reports on the state of affairs in Liberia, and speeches by emigrationist advocates such as Edward Blyden in *The African Repository* helps me to combine the methods of historical inquiry and literary analysis. The Center’s holdings of rare, out-of-print texts have been immeasurably beneficial in expanding my understanding of black nationalist fiction. Reading such fiction in relation to white supremacist tracts (that are also thankfully out of print), I attempt to revive the history of antagonism to white supremacy, and draw attention to the search for alternatives, many of which are too easily dismissed as separatism, without an adequate consideration of the complex structures of feeling that make up such so-called separatist impulses.

Yogita Goyal is an Assistant Professor of English at UCLA. She recently completed her dissertation at Brown University, titled “Diasporic Nationalisms, Nationalist Diasporas: Theorizing Race in the Black Atlantic.” She is a Schomburg Center Scholar-in-Residence for 2003-2004.
African Americans have fought in all of America’s wars from the Revolutionary War to the war in Iraq. But it was not until after the Civil War, in which more than 200,000 African Americans served, that black soldiers were included in the regular peacetime army of the United States.

So impressed were American military commanders by the bravery and valor of the Union’s black soldiers that in July of 1866 the first black post-Civil War regiments came into existence by an Act of Congress, approved by President Andrew Johnson. By April 1867, six regiments of African-American soldiers were recruited into the regular peacetime army. Many were veteran United States Colored Troops from the Civil War and newly freed slaves who wanted to serve their country. Organized as the 9th and 10th U.S. cavalries and the 38th through 41st infantries, each regiment consisted of approximately 1,000 men. In 1869 the infantry regiments were consolidated into two, the 24th and 25th. All four regiments—two of cavalry and two of infantry—were sent to the Western Frontier to fight in the Indian wars.

In the winter of 1867–68, the newly formed 9th and 10th U.S. cavalries were engaged in General Philip Sheridan’s campaign against the Comanche, Kiowa, and Cheyenne peoples in Texas and the western Oklahoma territory. In the cold, harsh winters, the black soldiers wore coats made of buffalo hides. With the appearance of the coats and their own tightly curled hair, the Native Americans called them the Buffalo Soldiers. According to legend, the fighting spirit of the black soldiers reminded the Native American of the bison, and the soldiers accepted the name as a term of honor and respect. Years later, when a design for the regimental coat of arms was being prepared, the buffalo was adopted as a crest, and “Ready and Forward” became its motto.

Their duties were not limited to fighting. Known historically too as “guardian angels,” the Buffalo Soldiers protected frontier towns and farms, wagon trains, stagecoaches, and pony express riders. Guarding railroad work crews and cattle herds, the black troops also built and repaired frontier forts and outposts. Stringing hundreds of miles of telegraph lines, they explored and mapped vast areas of the southwest and helped develop the early national parks. In garrison, the Buffalo Soldiers drilled, stood guard, and maintained horses, weapons, and equipment. Serving fifty-nine forts of the Old West, the black regiments developed into four of the most distinguished fighting units in the Army during the remainder of the nineteenth century. Though completely overlooked in
Hollywood’s glorification of the cavalry-to-the-rescue, black soldiers made up over 40 percent of the cavalry engaged in the Indian wars, fighting in 85 percent of the Indian battles. In addition, the units were engaged in military campaigns in Cuba and the Philippines during the Spanish-American War (1898).

In 1903, the Buffalo Soldiers served as a presidential escort during President Roosevelt’s visit to San Francisco—the first time black soldiers were assigned to protect an American president. The Buffalo Soldiers also patrolled and helped develop the Yosemite, Sequoia, and Kings Canyon National Parks. In 1916, when Pancho Villa crossed the border and invaded Mexico, the 24th and 25th infantries and the 10th Cavalry were sent to the border to assist Brig. Gen. John J. Pershing in his pursuit of the Mexican general. Between 1866 and 1912, twenty-three black soldiers won the Medal of Honor, the nation’s highest military award.

jamin Grierson in 1872. Complementing a nineteenth-century Buffalo Soldiers saddle are authentic period uniforms.

Powell’s collection includes sixty-five photographs, primarily from the personal albums and collections of Powell’s grandfather, First Sergeant Samuel N. Waller, an African-American soldier and photographer who served almost forty years in the U.S. Army. Waller photographed black soldiers at the turn of the century, and the images are moving portraits of the significant service and sacrifices of black soldiers on the Western Frontier.

The Avel de Knight illustrations in The Buffalo Soldiers, produced between 1969 and 1974, include twenty-two pen, ink, and ink-wash drawings, based on the book Army Life in a Black Regiment, written in 1870 by New England abolitionist Thomas Wentworth Higginson. The book is an account of Higginson’s seventeen-month experience as the white commander of the Union’s first regiment of emancipated slaves during the Civil War. De Knight’s goal was to express the essence of the book as defined in its closing words: “Till the blacks were armed, there was no guarantee of their freedom. It was their demeanor under arms that shame the nation into recognizing them as men.”

Buffalo Soldiers: The African-American Soldier in the U.S. Army is on view through February 29, 2004. Exhibition hours are Tuesday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Sunday, 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. An exhibition preview appears at left.
Coretta Scott King celebrated the publication of Standing in the Need of Prayer: A Celebration of Black Prayer at a Center book signing in October. King wrote the foreword to the volume, which was published last year by the Schomburg Center and Free Press.

Contributors Howard Dodson, Chester Higgins, Jr., Robert A. Sengstacke, Gilberto Wilson, and Bob Gore signed copies of Standing in the Need of Prayer.

President Abdoulaye Wade of Senegal addresses The New York Conference on the Contribution of Diasporan Intellectuals to the African Union and the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD), with translation by Djibril Diallo, Director of Communications, UNDP.

Consul General of Angola, New York, Dr. Julia Machado (right) chats with guests at the African Union reception. The Consulate held its 2003 Angola National Day Celebration at the Schomburg Center in November.

Sir Rex Nettleford, Vice Chancellor of the University of the West Indies, with Amadou Bocoum, Consul General of Senegal, New York, and Senegal’s Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr. Cheikh Tidiane Gadio, at the African Union Conference reception in September.

The Honorable Percy Sutton and Congressman Charles Rangel. Sutton was honored with a James Weldon Johnson Medal for Humanitarian Achievement at the thirteenth annual James Weldon Johnson Award Ceremony.

South African President Tabo Mbeki with Dumile Feni’s daughter, Marriam Morris, at a Schomburg Center reception honoring History, a sculpture by Feni. History was on view at the Center through December before traveling to South Africa for its permanent unveiling at the Constitutional Court in Johannesburg.
New York City welcomed the ancestors with an arrival ceremony at Wall Street on October 3, 2003. Here, the pouring of libation by Dr. Kofi Asare Opoku.

Ancestors in 419 hand-carved caskets traveled up Broadway by horse-drawn carriages from Wall Street to the African Burial Ground Memorial site in Lower Manhattan. The ancestors were reinterred after a twenty-two-hour vigil and all-day memorial.

After a grand procession up Broadway, four coffins were transported by flower car, with police escort, on a six-hour, eighty-four-mile, five-borough tour for tributes at the Sandy Ground Historical Society in Staten Island (below right); the Weeksville Society in Brooklyn (not shown); Christ Church in the Bronx; and Martin’s Field (a New York City park and site of a nineteenth-century “colored cemetery” for African Americans and Native Americans). After the tour, the coffins joined the 415 caskets in Lower Manhattan (above right) and were buried at the African Burial Ground Memorial Site on Saturday, October 4, 2003.

Rites of Ancestral Return: Commemorating the Colonial African Heritage, September 30 – October 4, 2003

In September and October, the Schomburg Center and the U.S. General Services Administration organized a six-day ceremony honoring ancestors of the African Burial Ground in Lower Manhattan. Events celebrating the ancestors took place in Washington, D.C., Baltimore, Maryland, Wilmington, Delaware, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Newark and Jersey City, New Jersey, and New York City.
African Americans, more than any other populations in the Americas, have been shaped by migrations. Their culture and history are the products of black peoples’ various movements, coerced and voluntary, which started in the Western Hemisphere 500 years ago. Theirs is the story of men and women forced out of Africa; of enslaved people moved from the coastal southeast to the Deep South; of fugitives walking to freedom across the country and beyond; of colonists leaving their land to settle on foreign shores; of southerners migrating west and north; and of immigrants arriving from the Caribbean, South America, and Africa.

Although the Atlantic slave trade has created an enduring image of black people as transported commodities, and is usually considered the single element in the construction of the African Diaspora, it is centuries of additional migrations that have given shape to the nation we know today, a nation different from that forged solely by the dreadful transportation of Africans against their will. And it is this vast array of migrations that truly defines the African-American experience. Always on the move, resourceful, and creative, men and women of African origin have been risk-takers in an exploitative and hostile environment. Their survival skills, efficient networks, and dynamic culture have enabled them to thrive and spread, and to be at the very core of the settling and development of the Americas. Their migrations have changed not only their world and the fabric of the African diaspora but also their nation and the Western Hemisphere.

Between 1492 and 1776, an estimated 6.5 million people migrated to the Americas. More than five out of six were Africans. The major colonial labor force, they laid the economic and cultural foundations of the continents. Their migrations continued during and after slavery. In the United States alone, 6.5 million African Americans left the South for northern and western cities between 1916 and 1970. With this internal Great Migration, the most massive in the history of the country, African Americans stopped being a southern, rural community to become a national, urban population.

The men and women of the Great Migration not only transformed the cities they settled in, but their neighborhoods became primary destinations for black people arriving from the Caribbean, Africa, and South America. These immigrants often retained their national and ethnic identities and brought new resources into the African-American community. With each wave of migration, changes in the demographic, cultural, religious, economic, and political life of the recipient communities occurred, and the nation’s development has been inextricably linked with these movements.

At the same time, from the earliest days, thousands of African Americans have left their country when it became apparent that they would not find at home the freedom and equality they aspired to. Their quest for liberty and better opportunities took them to Canada, Mexico, the Caribbean, and Africa. African-American out-migration has now become insignificant, but black popular culture, created out of the diverse influences brought about by centuries of movement, resonates throughout the world in an unprecedented cultural migration.

Today’s 35 million African Americans are heirs to all the migrations that have formed, modeled, and transformed their communi-
ty, the country, and the African diaspora. They are the offspring of diverse African ethnicities who also include, in their genetic makeup, Europeans, Native Americans, and Asians. They represent the most diverse population in the nation—a population that has embraced its varied heritage built by millions of men and women constantly on the move, looking for better opportunities, starting over, paving the way, and making sacrifices for future generations.

IN MOTION

The African-American migration experience revolves around three dominant migration patterns that span four centuries.

The first concerns migration to the United States. It was launched by the Atlantic slave trade that deported an estimated 12 million men, women, and children—about 450,000 arrived in North America—and continued through the centuries with the voluntary migration of people from the Caribbean, South America, and Africa.

The second pattern that profoundly shaped the cultural, social, and political life of this country is the migration of people from the Caribbean, South America, and Africa. Some, like the fugitive slaves and the men and women who left the South to go west and north during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, moved by choice. But others, victims of the domestic slave trade of the 1800s, were forcibly removed from their birthplace and separated from their loved ones to settle the Deep South. Since the 1970s, a new phenomenon has emerged, with increasing numbers of people migrating from the North and West to the South, in a sort of reverse migration.

The third trend is the out-migration of African Americans in search of freedom, or opportunities they thought they could not find in their own country. They were fugitives escaping to Canada, Mexico, and the Caribbean and free people settling in Haiti, Mexico, Sierra Leone, and Liberia.

These movements, which transformed the black community and the nation, always overlapped, and a southern city in, say, 1850 could be the center of several migration experiences. A particular neighborhood might be home to men and women born in Africa; American-born fugitives from the rural plantations passing for free or planning their escape to Canada; Haitian immigrants having fled the Revolution; people from the southeast sold “down the river” to the Deep South; free men and women preparing their emigration to Mexico, Liberia, Haiti, or the northern states.

Today, a typical northern or western city will count descendants of fugitive slaves and free people; the offspring of black men and women from all over the world who migrated in the nineteenth century; southern migrants who arrived from Alabama, Mississippi, the Carolinas, Georgia, Florida, or Louisiana during the Great Migration (1916-1930) or the Second Great Migration (1940-1970); Caribbeans from English-, French-, and Spanish-speaking nations who made their way in the early 1900s or after the Immigration Act of 1965; Africans from every part of the continent who immigrated in the past twenty years; and elderly folks and young professionals planning their return or their move South.

Then and now, the interaction between peoples of varied origins, cultures, languages, religions, and migratory experience has produced a unique population whose faces, music, food, institutions, styles, clothes, literature, crafts, and sense of identity all reflect the fertile diversity brought about by centuries of African-American migrations.

In Motion: The African-American Migration Experience is made possible by the support of the Congressional Black Caucus through a grant administered by the Institute of Museum and Library Services.
Standing in the Need of Prayer
A Celebration of Black Prayer
Foreword by Coretta Scott King
The Free Press, $27.50, 224 pp.

From the darkest days on slave ships to the most defiant moments of the Civil Rights Movement, prayer, more than any aspect of religion, has embodied the most intense expression of traditional African and African-American spirituality. In this one-of-a-kind volume, striking photographs and inspiring prayers drawn primarily from the unparalleled collections of the Schomburg Center span the broad spectrum of religious traditions during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Reflecting themes relevant to the black experience—including struggle, triumph, worship, family, and community—Standing in the Need of Prayer features examples from diverse religious traditions, including Islam, Christianity, Yoruba, and Vodou. The book also includes prayers from some of history’s most powerful voices, among them W.E.B. Du Bois, James Baldwin, and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Jubilee: The Emergence of African-American Culture
Howard Dodson, Amiri Baraka, John Hope Franklin, Gail Buckley, Henry Louis Gates, Jr., Annette Gordon-Reed, and Gayraud S. Wilmore
National Geographic, $35, 224 pp.

This illustrated history documents the courageous and innovative ways that enslaved Africans developed their own unique culture in the midst of slavery and examines how that culture developed and flourished through the years after emancipation to the turn of the century.

EXHIBITIONS

Invoking the Spirit: Worship Traditions in the African World
Through February 29, 2004

The product of more than twenty-five years of travel and research by New York Times photographer Chester Higgins, Jr., this photographic essay explores worship practices across ethnic, national, cultural, and religious boundaries throughout the African world and documents the vitality and diversity of the global African religious experience. The images featured in the exhibition also serve as the central theme of Higgins’s book, Feeling the Spirit: Searching the World for the People of Africa. Culled from his archive of almost a million photographs documenting the global African experience, the photographs in Invoking the Spirit explore the myriad ways in which African peoples venerate their sacred deities, invoking their presence and spirit in their life worlds. Documented here are the sacred places African peoples—in Africa and the Americas—create and/or consecrate; the diverse spiritual leaders who are involved in the conduct of worship activities; the universal use of prayer as a formal means of communicating with God and the spirits; the rites, rituals, and ceremonies Africans use to pay tribute to God and invoke His/Her presence; and the roles of music and dance in religious services, ceremonies, and rituals.

The Buffalo Soldiers: The African-American Soldier in the U.S. Army
November 6, 2003 – February 29, 2004


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The Schomburg Center is a member of the Harlem Strategic Cultural Collaborative (HSCC).

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One hundred fifty Junior Scholars sat in rapt attention with open journals and pens in hand as Living Legend Kareem Abdul-Jabbar engaged in frank and instructive dialogue on subjects ranging from his Buffalo Soldiers collection, currently on exhibit at the Schomburg, to his illustrious college and professional basketball career.

The Junior Scholars learned more about the Buffalo Soldiers through thought-provoking discussions with the grandson of a Buffalo Soldier, historian Anthony Powell, also a collector and contributor to the Buffalo Soldiers exhibition.

The exchanges were an early sign that the program, which began year three on October 25, was off to a great start. This year students are required to complete an individual portfolio of fiction and nonfiction writing, family genealogy, reviews, and artwork, and to work closely with Jubilee: The Emergence of African-American Culture, a publication based on the Center’s Lest We Forget exhibition.

As part of its mission to provide young people with diverse experiences, the program has also implemented an early morning yoga class and a business team. The business team initiative allows Junior Scholars to spend extra hours to organize Educats, a program devised to reinforce positive behavior. Twenty-five students arrive at the Center early to participate in these programs.

The Junior Scholars are gaining new skills and learning to articulate ideas, analyses, and dreams for their communities. We look forward to their in-depth scrutiny of the Jim Crow and Civil Rights eras in the coming months.

Visit www.juniorscholars.org and keep abreast of our progress! For more information, contact Carlyle G. Leach, Director of the Junior Scholars Program, at (212) 491-2051, cleach@nypl.org, or Deirdre L. Hollman, Associate Director, at (212) 491-2234, dhollman@nypl.org.

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Dr. Maya Angelou

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