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Education majors present at NAAAS conference

The research of two early childhood education majors earned them a trip to the National Association of African-American Studies annual conference held Feb. 9-14 in Baton Rouge, La. Japhia McKibben and Ashley Powell, both seniors, presented at the conference along with Dr. Patricia Jenkins, assistant professor in Teacher Education, and Dr. Kimberly Fields, Special Education coordinator and professor in Teacher Education.

Their presentation, "It Takes a Village to Raise a Child: Learning Communities as a Model for Teaching African-American Students," was centered on learning communities as a method to teach early childhood and special education pre-service teachers to work collaboratively in their efforts to teach young students to read.

"This experience has enhanced our professional development by exposing us to a vast array of culture diversities," McKibben remarked.

Powell and McKibben shared their experiences in the classroom as well as in the public school settings. Specifically, they provided details of professional development activities, guest lectures and strategy development. A visual presentation of their classroom simulations on onsets and rimes was shown.

Jacquelyn Gaiters-Jordan, an English faculty member and Teacher Education adviser at Pikes Peak Community College, spoke highly of what the students did at the conference. "Ashley and Japhia represented the College of Education and Albany State University magnificently," she said. "They were articulate and professional during the presentation and interacted competently with the professionals at the conference. Their behavior was commendable and they definitely will be welcomed additions to the ranks of educators in the very near future."

Networking was another aspect that made the conference advantageous for the students. "We had a chance to interact with international professionals and were offered employment opportunities overseas," Powell said.

Powell and McKibben will present again at the ASU undergraduate symposium on March 28.



Photo caption: ASU student presenters Japhia McKibben (second from left) and Ashely Powell (third from left) are joined by Dr. Patricia Jenkins (left), assistant professor of Teacher Education, and Dr. Kimberly Fields (right), coordinator of Special Education.