

KOLAWOLE HEYWARD-ROTIMI

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EDUCATION

Amherst College

Bachelor of Arts *cum laude*, Computer Science and English

2020

English Honors Thesis: "Technological Disruptions: The Interplay Between Virtual Spaces and Subjective Failure"

IFSA Intensive Program in Shanghai, China

2018

AWARDS

Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship (MMUF)

2018 - Present

Elizabeth Bruss Prize

2020

- The highest award given to an Amherst College English major, presented to the senior who, in the judgment of the department, best represents the qualities of breadth and imagination exemplified by Elizabeth Bruss

James Charlton Knox Prize

2019

- Traveled to Kenya, South Africa, Germany, and the UK to interview digital artists, collecting primary sources for senior thesis

Pitch Wars

2018

- Worked with a publishing industry professional to revise and develop my manuscript *The Lightning Speaks for Us*
- Currently represented by literary agent Matt Belford of the Tobias Agency

Frances-Chia Fellowship

2018

- Funds a summer experience in China or a Chinese-speaking country
- Used this funding to support my writing residency at the Red Gate Gallery in Beijing, China

RELEVANT EMPLOYMENT

University of Maryland College Park, Maryland Institute for Technology in the Humanities (MITH)

Faculty Assistant

August 2020 – Present

Performs administrative and research duties within MITH's African-American History, Culture, and Digital Humanities initiative, a Mellon-funded program that focuses on Black digital humanities. Currently working with five members of the AADHum Scholars program to develop interactive projects that explore the intersection between the Black experience and emerging tech.

Science-Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America (SFWA) Nebulas Conference 2020

Volunteer

May 2020

Managed the SFWA social media accounts, answered questions by attendees of the conference, and curated images from the conference to share on SFWA's official platforms.

RESIDENCIES, CONFERENCES AND PERFORMANCES

University of Maryland Environmental Humanities Working Group (EHWG)

2nd Group Meeting/Discussion

October 2020

Co-led a group discussion on the intersection of digital and environmental humanities, using Kate Crawford and Vladan Joler's paper "Anatomy of an AI System" as the primary reading.

Black Skeptics of Los Angeles

BSLA Youth Panel: Voting While Black, Secular and Gen Z

September 2020

Participated in a panel discussion on the upcoming American presidential election and its impact on secular Black youth.

FIYAH Magazine

FIYAH Virtual Reading

May 2020

Gave a reading of my unreleased short story "An Exploration of Nichole Otieno's Filmography (1232-1246)."

Yale University

Yale Writing and Research Symposium

Responded to Janis Jin '20's English and Ethnicity, Race & Migration senior thesis in front of a public audience.

February 2020

Connecticut College

MMUF Regional Conference 2019

Presented on my senior English critical thesis to the general public and peers from the Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship.

October 2019

Red Gate Gallery

Writer in Residence

Revised my manuscript *The Lightning Speaks for Us*, collaborated with international and local artists, and performed excerpts from my manuscript at the Red Gate Gallery in Beijing, which is the first private contemporary art gallery in China. I am the youngest writer-in-residence to attend their residency program.

January 2019

Amherst College

MMUF Summer Program Final Presentation

Presented my work on virtual failure to staff, faculty, and students of Amherst College. This presentation was based on my literary review, methodology summary, and detailed bibliography. All of these materials would serve as the foundation for my senior English critical thesis.

August 2018

PUBLICATIONS

The Lightning Speaks for Us – A 109,000-word dark fantasy novel represented by Matt Belford at the Tobias Agency, currently on submission to publishing imprints

2020

"Gloss" – adapted into podcast episode by Tales From a Black Universe
FIYAH Magazine

2019

"The Father"
Clarksword Magazine

2015

LANGUAGES

English– native language
Mandarin– conversational

MEMBERSHIPS

Telluride Association Member
PitchWars 2018 Mentee

PROGRAMMING LANGUAGES/PLATFORMS

Java, C++, Python, Twine, Scalar, and WordPress

OTHER EXPERIENCE

Amherst College Film Society Co-President; Charles Drew Memorial House Co-President; English Department Steering Committee Member; *Red Eye Black Tie* Event Partner; Pitch Wars 2018 Mentee; Amherst College Black Students Union (BSU) Black Men's Group Co-Chair and Alumni Liaison.