

***Intelligence Community  
Center for Academic Excellence***



PRESS RELEASE

Norfolk State University's Intelligence Community Center for Academic Excellence (IC-CAE) held a two day symposium (April 9 -10, 2008) to discuss the Role of Intelligence and Islamic Studies Programs for the Twenty-First Century Workforce in America at the L. Douglas Wilder Performing Arts Center on the campus of Norfolk State University (NSU). With the current state of world affairs, this symposium was designed to discuss critical issues, which are germane to America's understanding of both the language and culture of Islam and how they relate to intelligence studies and intelligence gathering.

The symposium was opened on Wednesday, April 9, 2008 by Mr. Robert Crouch, Assistant to Governor Tim Kaine and Chair of the Norfolk State University IC-CAE. A diverse audience of academia (both higher education and K-12); business (private and corporate); and, religious and community leaders attended the opening keynote address. Dr. Carolyn Meyer, President of NSU, welcomed the participants and gave remarks about the symposiums topics. Dr. Meyers remarked on the importance of higher education and the international focus that makes "Virginia's higher education one of the finest in the nation." She concluded that "this symposium is preparing leaders for America's Global Markets."

The opening keynote address was given by The Right Honourable Baroness Cox of Queensbury, who served as the Deputy Speaker of the House of Lords in England from 1985-2005. She was introduced by Dr. Woodrow Whitlow, Vice Chair of the NSU IC-CAE National Advisory Board. Baroness Cox provided a PowerPoint presentation entitled, "Bridges not walls: Reconciliation through Realism." The talk focused on humanitarian efforts in Nigeria, Sudan and Indonesia. The aim of her lecture was to encourage dialogue and understanding between Islam and Western societies. Following her lecture, Baroness Cox fielded questions from the audience.



There was discussion on the need to separate "Islamic societies and militant Islam." K-12 students from Maury High School and Booker T. High School (Norfolk, VA) asked how and what they could do to help with the humanitarian efforts in the countries that were discussed in Baroness Cox's presentation. An afternoon presentation was given by Ambassador Kenneth C. Brill (Director of the National Counterproliferation Center). Ambassador Brill was introduced by Vice Admiral Lowell Jacoby, a member of the NSU IC-CAE national advisory board. Although he mentioned WMD's (i.e., weapon of mass destruction), the major portion of his presentation was on the national effort to include broad participation from non-traditional areas of studies as important in shaping the role of educational programs. Ambassador Brill answered questions and the audience members made comments on the importance of including degrees such as cultural anthropology.

Following Ambassador Brill's presentation Baroness Cox and her co-author Professor John Marks autographed copies of their book, *Islam, Islamism the West: The Divide between Ideological Islam and Liberal Democracy*.

***Preparing Leaders for America's Global Market***

In addition, Dr. James Piscatori (Fellow of Wadham College and the Oxford Centre for Islamic studies) autographed copies of his book *Muslim politics*. A reception and student poster session ran concurrently (Conference Room A of the L. Douglas Wilder Performing Arts Center) while the autographing session occurred in the atrium. Dr. Clarence Lee from Howard University chaperoned ten students from Howard University who gave poster presentations during the reception.



The symposium reconvened at 6 pm in the Scott Dozier Dining Hall on the campus of Norfolk State University. An audience of 160 participants including college students from Norfolk State and Howard University attended a formal dinner provided by Thompson Hospitality. The elegant three course meal was topped-off with a wonderful thought provoking presentation by BGen James Poss (ACC Director of Intelligence). His presentation was humorous but thought provoking regarding world issues. It led to discussions on the role of universities in helping the military to professionalize its personnel. BGen Poss' Powerpoint presentation showed how intelligence is important in every aspect of daily life. Responses were provided by Lt. Col Weldon Harris (NSU ROTC Commanding Officer); Lt. Col. Rebecca Keller (USAF) and Captain Eric Olson (USN). An audience member from the United States Marine Corp, Captain Paul J. Croom, provided additional comments that demonstrated the relevance of intelligence to every branch of the armed forces.

Day two of the symposium began with a lecture on Muslim Politics by Dr. Piscatori. This session was moderated by Prof. Mohammed Ezroua (Professor and Vice Dean, Faculty of Letters and Humanities, Mohammed V University in Rabat, Morocco). The breakout sessions were organized as multiple streams in the morning. Originally, these sessions were to run concurrently in multiple places on the campus of NSU; however, all streams occurred simultaneously in the large dining hall of Scott Dozier. This was a very attractive feature of the second day workshops because it allowed participants to move between various working groups. Summary reports were prepared for the five sessions. The discussions centered on various aspects of the intelligence: military, government; corporate and university; culture and language. The afternoon of the second day concluded with a student forum moderated by Dr. Arlene Maclin Professor of Engineering and Director of the Center for Academic Excellence. Tracey Mamma, Samelia Okpodu, Cheree Armstrong, and Dwayne Littlejohn, all Engineering Majors at Norfolk State, made presentations on their individual experiences as IC-Student Scholars. They each participated in a 2007 summer culture immersion program in Rabat, Morocco. A recruiting fair was held after the student symposium. It was opened to the public and included recruiters from the federal government intelligence agencies, national organization and local businesses. This two-day symposium was part of activities supported by the NSU Intelligence Community Center for Academic Excellence. The NSU IC-CAE provides an undergraduate certificate program in National Security. The program requires 18 credit hours. The requisite credits may be earned as part of a student's academic program of study, or as a stand-alone certificate program. At the core of the National Security Certificate (NSC) offered through Norfolk State is the study of strategic languages and cultures. This symposium provided an opportunity for the larger community to shape the discussion of the role of intelligence and Islamic studies programs for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century American workforce.



Camellia Moses Okpodu, Ph.D. IC-Scholar (Faculty Representative) [cmokpodu@nsu.edu](mailto:cmokpodu@nsu.edu)  
Cecelia West, MSW (Executive Program Coordinator NSU IC-CAE) [cwest@nsu.edu](mailto:cwest@nsu.edu)