



**DAY 1 AGENDA PROGRAM (CLOSED TO PUBLIC) MONDAY, APRIL 6, 2026 | 1:00–5:00 PM
COMMUNITY COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH AMONG AFRICAN POPULATIONS: CIS IN PRACTICE**

LOCATION: ROOM 612, CARL R. WOESE INSTITUTE FOR GENOMIC BIOLOGY (IGB) (1206 W. GREGORY DR., CHAMPAIGN)

Co-sponsored by the Center for Indigenous Science (CIS), Carl R. Woese Institute for Genomic Biology (IGB), and the Center for African Studies-University of Illinois Urbana–Champaign

Moderator Ripan S. Malhi, PhD- Professor Department of Anthropology & Director of Center for Indigenous Science

Time: 1:00 PM – 5:00 PM | Format: In-person (Informal- selected sessions closed and not recorded)

1:00 – 1:15 PM | Welcome and Opening Remarks- Moderator Ripan S Malhi – Professor, Department of Anthropology

1:15 – 2:15 PM | CIS Scholars Roundtable: Introductions and Experiences in African Fieldwork

Introduction- LaKisha David, PhD – Assistant Professor, Department of Anthropology

Closed session bringing together CIS-affiliated scholars and invited campus researchers to reflect on fieldwork experiences, ethics, positionality, and long-term relationship building in African research contexts.

2:15 – 3:00 PM | Light lunch provided (snacks and beverages)

3:00 – 5:00 PM | Planned/Ongoing Works Presentations

Prince Sedem Semanshia, Doctoral student in Biological Anthropology

Title: Mapping Genetic Relatedness and Recent Shared Ancestry in Communities of Southern Ghana Using Identity by Descent (IBD)

McKenzie Macon, Doctoral student in Biological Anthropology

Title: Refashioning Genetic Technologies: Reimagining Pathways for the Ethical Use of Genomics through Community Engagement

2:15 – 3:00 PM | Break

3:00 – 5:00 PM |

Oluwakemi Adeyemi, JSD Candidate, College of Law

Title: Benin Bronzes: The Scope of Cultural Nationalism and Internationalism in the Context of African Americans' Claim

Alida de Flamingh, PhD, Postdoctoral Researcher at the Carl R. Woese Institute for Genomic Biology, University of Illinois at Urbana–Champaign

Title: Exploring 10,000 years of human-elephant coexistence and cave culture in the Mt. Elgon cave system in Kenya.

Feedback giving sessions, discussion after each presentation

Q & A Session



DAY 2 AGENDA PROGRAM, TUESDAY, APRIL 7, 2026 | 9:00 AM–1:00 PM
COMMUNITY COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH AMONG AFRICAN POPULATIONS: CIS IN PRACTICE

LOCATION: ROOM 612, CARL R. WOESE INSTITUTE FOR GENOMIC BIOLOGY (IGB) (1206 W. GREGORY DR., CHAMPAIGN)

Moderator: Jenny Davis PhD, Associate Professor of Department Anthropology and American Indian Studies. Director for American Indian Studies

Time: 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM | Format: In-person. Recorded Live Talks

9:10 – 10:40 AM |

Taiye Winful, PhD – Assistant Professor, Department of Anthropology
University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

Title: Utilizing Stress Narratives to Examine the Etiology of Inflammatory Responses: A Biocultural Study of Embodiment and Salivary C-Reactive Protein in Nigeria

Anne Namatsi Lutomia, PhD – Postdoctoral Research Associate, Center for Indigenous Science
University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

Title: Attaining SDG5: Bridging the Gender Digital Divide Using Analog and Digital Technologies in Rural Kenya

Esther Ndumi Ngumbi, PhD – Assistant Professor, Department of Entomology and African American Studies
University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

Title: Co-Creating Knowledge and addressing pressing challenges in Agriculture on the Kenyan Coast: Reflections from Partnering with Farmers

10:40 – 10:45 PM | Break

10:45 – 11:45 AM |

LaKisha David, PhD – Assistant Professor, Department of Anthropology
University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

Title: Community-Collaborative Genetic Genealogy: Reconstructing Extended Families between Kassena Communities in Ghana and the African Diaspora

Carter Clinton, PhD – Assistant Professor, Department of Biological Sciences
North Carolina State University

Title: Sacred Ground, Shared Futures: Community Stewardship and the Hillsborough Legacy Project
Questions and answer session after the talks.

Q & A Session

11:45 – 12:00 PM | Break

12:00 – 12:55 PM | Keynote Address

Speaker: Dr. Ambroise Wonkam, MD, PhD, DMSc – Medicine Henry J. Knott Genetic Medicine Professor & Director,
McKusick-Nathans Institute & Department of Medicine at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine

Title: Harnessing African Genomic Variation to Understand Human Evolution and Improve Health Globally

Q & A Session

12:55 – 1:00 PM | Closing Remarks: Ripan S Malhi, PhD – Professor, Department of Anthropology & Director of Center for Indigenous Science, [University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign](#)