

— GWU TODAY & SGA PRESENT —

BULLDOG

MONTHLY

**CHECK IT
OUT**

A TIME OF
CELEBRATION:
BLACK HISTORY
MONTH

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THE ART OF
JOHN BIGGERS

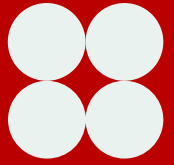
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VOLUME



A TIME OF CELEBRATION

GARDNER-WEBB OBSERVES BLACK HISTORY MONTH 2024

By Marianne Luedeman

Photography Courtesy of Gardner-Webb University

Gardner-Webb University celebrated Black History Month with a variety of events, offerings, and educational opportunities including a spirit week, art exhibit and a Diversity Dinner and Dialogue.

Black History Month, which was proposed by scholar Carter Woodson in 1926 and has been celebrated each February since the 1960s, is a time to honor and learn about Black History in the United States and beyond.

In its annual commemoration of the month, Gardner-Webb hosted a variety of events aimed at educating the student body on the African American experience and celebrating the rich history of African culture. Lawrence Brinson, Gardner-Webb's Director of Diversity and Inclusion, called the month "a time of celebration—celebrating African Americans, Black Americans, the journey, the resilience (of African Americans), and to think about the success and achievements of African Americans."

Gardner-Webb kicked off Black History Month with a Black History Spirit Week, aimed at celebrating a different aspect of the African American experience each day. Feb. 5 was Unity Day, Feb. 6 was Education and Achievement Day, Feb. 7 was Cultural Appreciation Day, Feb. 8 was Social Justice and Advocacy Day, and Feb. 9 was Legacy and Future Day.

Lauren Washington, Gardner-Webb's Assistant Director of Diversity and Inclusion, added that the week sought to educate about the whole of the African American experience and to fill in any gaps that may often be overlooked.

"For me, it's an opportunity to learn more. I want to make sure that we don't have gaps in our history and miss people who helped pave the way for us," said Washington.

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Learning about Black history is larger than just the African American community, this is something that everyone should invest in. ”

Gardner-Webb also celebrated Black History Month with an art exhibit commemorating the talents of late artist John Biggers. The exhibit highlighted Biggers' work depicting African American culture, heritage, and history, and was hosted by Gardner-Webb's Dover Memorial Library.

The exhibit embodied this year's Black History Month national theme—African Americans and the Arts. "To be able to highlight arts that depict different eras of Black history, such as the Harlem Renaissance or the Civil Rights Movement, is incredibly meaningful," added Brinson.

In addition to the Spirit Week and the art exhibit, Gardner-Webb also hosted a Diversity Dinner and Dialogue on Feb. 26. The night's theme was racial healing and sought to promote an intimate, candid discussion about race and racial trauma.

"We want to talk about true racial healing, reconciliation, and to have an honest conversation about trauma. This allows us to facilitate conversation around those who may have caused trauma and those who may have been on the receiving end of it," noted Brinson.

Gardner-Webb also revealed plans to host WaWa, a famous African American deaf artist and presenter, on a to-be-announced date (more details to come) for a conversation about his journey, history and culture. The month was brought to a close with a Gospel Choir concert on Feb. 29.

Beyond Black History Month, Brinson invites students to celebrate Black History all year long and to continue learning about Black History long after the month ends. "Learning about Black history is larger than just the African American community, this is something that everyone should invest in," he concluded.

For questions or comments about Gardner-Webb's Black History Month celebrations,

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GARDNER-WEBB COMMEMORATES BLACK HISTORY MONTH WITH ART EXHIBIT FEATURING JOHN BIGGERS' ICONIC WORKS

By Marianne Luedeman

In honor of Black History Month 2024, Gardner-Webb University is hosting an art exhibit commemorating the work of famed African American artist, muralist and educator John Biggers.

Originally opened on Feb. 1, the exhibit can be found on the first floor of Dover Memorial Library and will remain up for viewing until the end of February.

The exhibit features a collection of paintings, designs and sculptures created by the late artist, a Gastonia, N.C.. local who rose to prominence during the Harlem Renaissance and in the post-World War II era. Biggers' work features depictions of African American culture, heritage, and provides commentary on the African American experience.

Lawrence Brinson, Gardner-Webb's Director of Diversity and Inclusion, shared that Biggers' art was highlighted because of "his iconic work at HBCUs, his work in the African American community, and his work in North Carolina." Brinson added that "the way he shared all of these experiences through art is just fascinating" and shows the depth of the African American experience.

In selecting the Gardner-Webb events for Black History Month 2024, Brinson noted that having an art exhibit was of high importance due to the power that the visual arts have in conveying history, heritage and culture.

"You can learn a lot, you can see the captured memories of the artist, and you get to feel and see the experiences of what the artist went through and how they captured the experiences of others," said Brinson.

Brinson further added that he wants the student body to be able to see, relate to, and learn about the African American experience through Biggers' work. "We want to encourage students to read and participate in the arts. (We want to encourage them) to be able to look at a painting and feel a common, shared thread with the artist," said Brinson.

The exhibit notably features work depicting different aspects of the African American experience. Lauren Washington, the Assistant Director of Diversity and Inclusion, added that this is intentional.

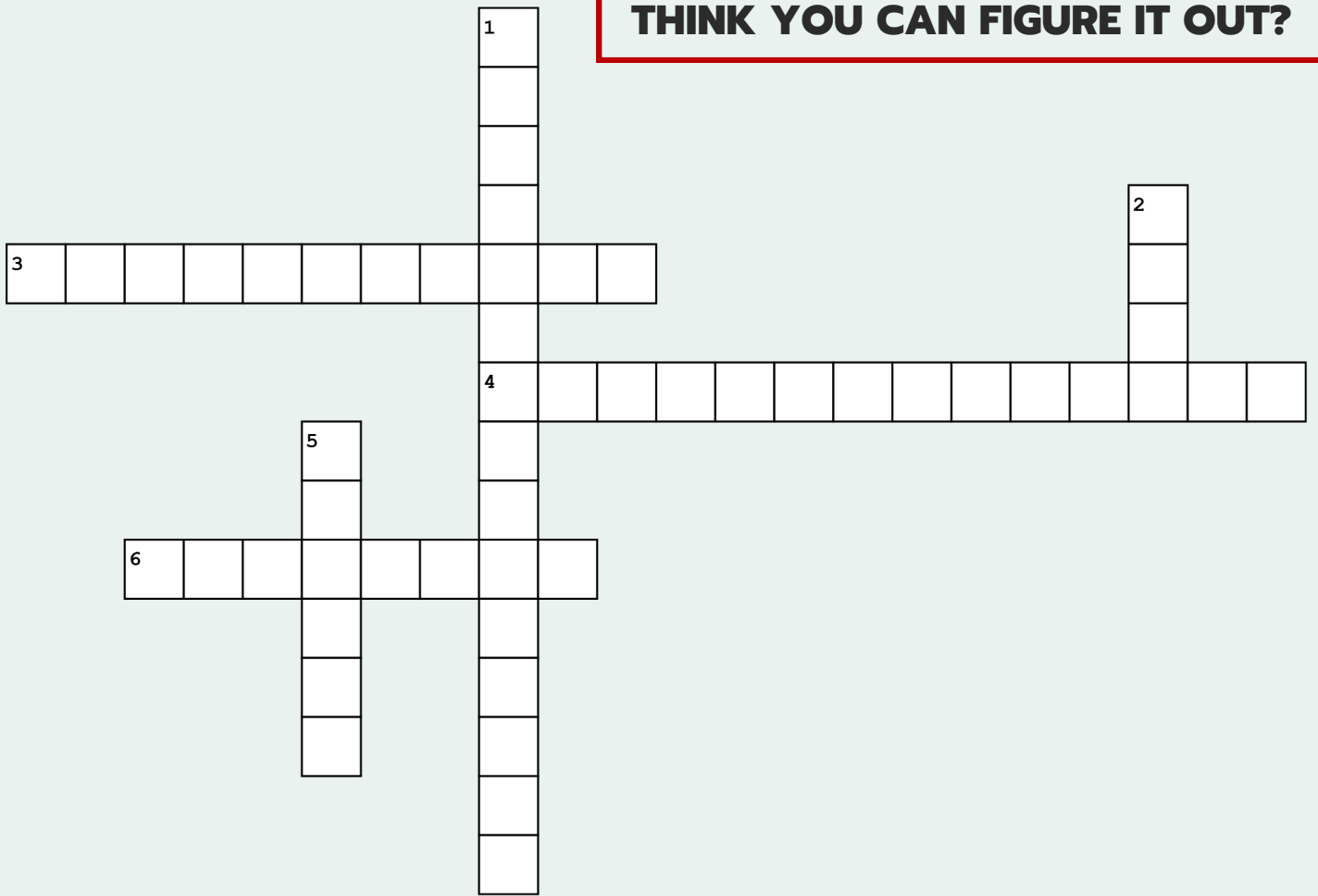
"(African American culture) is very unique, and everybody's experience is equally unique. Through African American artists, you can see the variation of our experiences expressed through the arts. It's enlightening to see, but most importantly, it's affirming," said Washington. Outside of the exhibit, Brinson and Washington want to encourage students to make their visit the first step in their Black History education, not the last.

"Keep learning, don't just stop learning after Black History Month. Dig deeper and learn about it, don't just think about it as a visit to see a few paintings, but rather one opportunity of many to continue your education," ended Brinson.



CROSSWORD

THINK YOU CAN FIGURE IT OUT?



DOWN:

- 1. GWU's Director of Diversity and Inclusion
- 2. The theme of Black History Month 2024 is "African Americans and the ____"
- 5. The ____ Renaissance

ACROSS:

- 3. The name of the artist featured in the GWU Library (during Black History Month 2024)
- 4. The father of Black History Month
- 6. Black History Month is held each year in _____

We'd Love to Hear From You!

INTERESTED IN JOINING?

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Feedback Survey



Staff Interest Form