

*Thea Bowman*  
**AHANA**  
*& Inter-*  
*cultural*  
*Center*  
*B.A.I.C*  
+



BOSTON COLLEGE

## To the Boston College Class of 2025:

On behalf of the Thea Bowman AHANA and Intercultural Center (BAIC), I warmly welcome our AHANA students to Boston College. My name is Fr. Michael Davidson, S.J., and I am the director of the BAIC.

The BAIC team is committed to ensuring that we have a welcoming and inclusive environment that supports the cultural, intellectual, spiritual, social, emotional, and overall development of each of our students. We are determined to acknowledge and embrace our students' uniqueness as we continue to weave the fabric of Boston College as the most impactful higher education institution in the United States of America. After all, the primary focus of our office is to serve you directly while enhancing the overall quality of the Boston College experience.

As we serve you—our illustrious group of AHANA students—we will put you and your future at the forefront of all our efforts. We will provide you with our human, intellectual, religious, and social capital in actualizing your holistic development. It is my hope that as the BAIC actively demonstrates our care for and commitment to you, you in return will experience significant growth and involvement in service, academics, leadership, and social justice. All of our services are rooted in promoting equity, building community, and supporting opportunity. This year, we will continue to focus on mentoring, encouraging student advocacy, and engaging in community and international outreach efforts. Our expectations for you are rooted in the Jesuit, Catholic intellectual tradition that promotes integration of students' intellectual, spiritual, social, and affective lives, inspiring them to reflect on who they are and how they want to engage the world.

Our students come from various backgrounds and have different lived experiences. We don't expect perfection from our students but we do expect all of them to be good and do good! We hope that your time at the Heights will allow you to let your light shine bright. Life may present many challenges, but we urge you to never give up persevering. We urge you to never give in to mediocrity. During difficult times, always remember your purpose at Boston College. We encourage you to be your authentic self, and always remember that you are loved. All forms and expressions of diversity will be celebrated at the BAIC.

Finally, it is my desire that our Center will reinforce your pursuit to be men and women of justice, love, and peace. We expect you to become scholars of competence, excellence, conscience, and compassion who will love and embrace all that is fully human. Remember always that in the BAIC the universal language is love.

Welcome! Bienvenidos! Akey! Bienvenue! Huānyíng

One Love,



Fr. Michael Davidson, S.J.



*I think the difference between me and some people is that I'm content to do my little bit. Sometimes people think they have to do big things in order to make change. But if each one would light a candle we'd have a tremendous light."*

—SR. THEA BOWMAN (1937–1990)

## Sister Thea Bowman

***Sister Thea Bowman was the first African American woman to receive an honorary Doctorate in Religion from Boston College.***

Sr. Thea Bowman, F.S.P.A., Ph.D., was born in the small rural town of Canton in central Mississippi. Her grandfather was a slave, her father was a physician, and her mother a teacher. In 1965, Sr. Bowman received a B.A. in English, Speech, and Drama from Viterbo College in La Crosse, Wisconsin. In 1969, she received an M.A. in English and in 1972, a Ph.D. in English Language, Literature, and Linguistics; both degrees from The Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C.

In her position as Consultant for Intercultural Awareness for the Diocese of Jackson, Mississippi, Sister Thea frequently worked with children to help them grow in awareness of their gifts and of their cultural heritage. Through song, dance, poetry, drama, and story, she communicated joy, freedom, and pride, using traditional Black teaching techniques that are holistic, participatory, and reality focused.

Sister Thea made more than 100 public appearances each year, giving lectures, recitals, short courses, workshops, and conference presentations, spreading the message that people are gifted, that Black is beautiful, and that cross-cultural collaboration enriches both education and living.

In Nigeria, Kenya, Canada, the Virgin Islands, Hawaii, New York to Florida, Mississippi to California, and Louisiana to Illinois, thousands of people worked with Sister Thea. She made doers of watchers, made people more aware of their own gifts and potential, and put races in touch with one another. Her ministry was a ministry of joy.

Sister Thea deservedly received an honorary Doctor of Religion from Boston College in 1989.



## Our Mission

The Thea Bowman AHANA and Intercultural Center supports the undergraduate community—with a particular focus on AHANA (people of African, Hispanic, Asian, and Native American descent), multicultural, multiracial, and OTE (Options Through Education) scholars—in navigating college life and fulfilling their potential.

We strive to promote a welcoming environment that fosters holistic development. The center seeks to form students of conscience, excellence, competence, and compassion who will make a difference in the world. Our work promotes equity, builds community, and supports opportunity while caring for our students.

## Our Vision

Our vision is to promote equity, build community, and support opportunity.

## The AHANA Concept

The term AHANA was coined in 1979 by two students, Alfred Feliciano and Valerie Lewis. These students, acting as ambassadors for fellow students, objected to the name “Office of Minority Student Programs” then used by the University, citing the definition of the word minority as “less than.” They proposed instead to use the term “AHANA”: which they felt celebrated the cultural differences present in our society. AHANA is an acronym used to describe individuals of African, Hispanic, Asian and Native American descent.

After receiving overwhelming approval from the University’s Board of Trustees, the Office of Minority Student Programs became the Office of AHANA Student Programs (OASP), now the Thea Bowman AHANA and Intercultural Center (BAIC). Today, the BAIC develops, implements, and contributes a variety of programs and services modeled on the Jesuit tradition of *cura personalis* (care of the whole person) that supports students’ social, cultural, and spiritual development.

## AHANA Defined

The following briefly describes the groups that are included in the acronym. Bear in mind, however, that the Thea Bowman AHANA and Intercultural Center welcomes all students to utilize the programs and services we offer.

- **AFRICAN:** Africans in America and all peoples of the African diaspora
- **HISPANIC:** Peoples of Latin American or Spanish descent
- **ASIAN:** A native or inhabitant of Asia or a person of Asian descent
- **NATIVE AMERICAN:** A member of any of Indigenous peoples of the Western Hemisphere. The ancestors of the Native Americans are generally considered by scientists to have entered the Americas from Asia by way of the Bering Strait sometime during the late glacial epoch.

*“We are More Than Just an Acronym.”*



*"The BAIC is a home away from home for me. The office has helped me foster a community at BC, kept me on track academically, and provided me with all the necessary resources I needed. It has also provided me many opportunities to branch out of my comfort zone and meet amazing people."*

—DARNELL FILS '24





## Promote Equity

Our work is rooted in the Catholic tradition of our University, specifically in the Catholic Social Teaching Principles, and reflects our commitment to addressing institutional racism and inequities for AHANA and high-need students. We provide advising and tuition remission programs to ensure all students have equal access to the full college experience.

### Highlighted Programs

#### **COLLEGE ADVISING**

Meet with a BAIC advisor to build a relationship and for assistance in navigating areas such as course selection, majors, graduation requirements, setting goals, time management, getting involved, and more!

#### **STUDY ABROAD/ON-CAMPUS SUMMER TUITION REMISSION**

To aid in the retention and graduation of undergraduate students by providing resources to those experiencing academic difficulty, giving them the opportunity to improve their status at Boston College and abroad.

### Additional Programs

- Nursing Outreach
- Laptop Loan
- Cultural Competency Conference
- Options Through Education (OTE)
- Sr. Thea Hospitality Closet





## Build Community

We believe that everyone should have a stake in ensuring that all individuals are empowered to reach their potential while participating fully in their communities. We seek to bring members of the BC community together through events, retreats, and mentoring opportunities.

### Highlighted Programs

#### **DR. BENJAMIN E. MAYS MENTORING PROGRAM**

Pairs undergraduate AHANA/multiracial/O TE students with a faculty or staff member in order to strive toward academic and personal success and assist in building a solid foundation while navigating college.

#### **BOWMAN ADVOCATES FOR INCLUSIVE CULTURE**

This yearlong leadership program seeks to develop sophomores through seniors who have a passion for engaging the BC community around issues of diversity, inclusion, and social justice.

#### **JAMAICA MAGIS SERVICE IMMERSION TRIP**

Selected Boston College students live and serve in solidarity with people in Jamaica who have faced social, political, and economic oppression.

### Additional Programs

- AHANA Summit
- AHANA Men's Leadership Program
- Sr. Thea Ladies: AHANA Female Leadership Program
- Racial Identity Development Experience (RIDE)
- Dialogues on Race
- Ethnic Heritage Months
- Taste of BAIC
- Football Tailgates
- Magis Civil Rights Immersion Trip
- AHANA Senior Toast

## Support Opportunity

The Thea Bowman AHANA and Intercultural Center seeks to form students of conscience, excellence, competence, and compassion who will make a difference in the world. We recognize AHANA students who have contributed to campus life through service, academic excellence, or leadership.

### Community Advocacy and Research Engagement

Through the program, students will conduct their own independent research, study under the supervision of a faculty advisor, and present their research to the greater BC community or conferences.

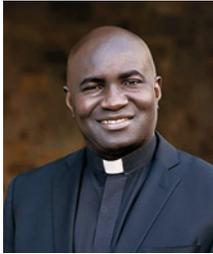
### Karen Campbell Severin Book Award

Aids undergraduate students by providing them with assistance to obtain their textbooks.

- Alfred Feliciano and Valerie Lewis Award
- Bowman Scholars
- Dr. Donald Brown OTE Scholars Book Award







**Michael Davidson, S.J.**  
*Director*  
 davidsmf@bc.edu



**Andy Petigny**  
*Associate Director*  
 petigny@bc.edu  
 Advises students with  
 last names N-P



**Joana Maynard**  
*Senior Assistant Director*  
 maynard@bc.edu  
 Advises students with  
 last names A-G



**Danielle Date**  
*Assistant Director*  
 date@bc.edu  
 Advises students with  
 last names Q-Z



**Tiffany Zheng**  
*Assistant Director*  
 zhengti@bc.edu  
 Advises students with  
 last names H-M



**Richard Mapeza**  
*Graduate Assistant*  
 mapeza@bc.edu

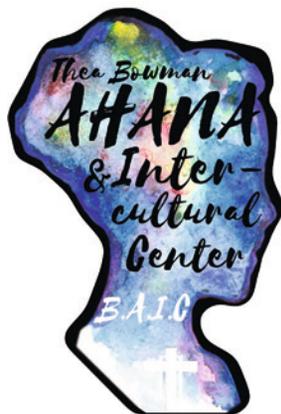


**Sara Sparks**  
*Graduate Assistant*  
 sara.sparks@bc.edu

We encourage our students to meet with their BAIC advisor at least three times a semester!

Our work is inspired by the life and philosophy of Thea Bowman, a Catholic nun of the Franciscan Sisters of the Perpetual Adoration, who “helped people everywhere she went to explore their identity and to find their deepest humanity.”

To find out more about our programs and services, please stop by the center and check out our website at [bc.edu/baic](http://bc.edu/baic)!



# BOSTON COLLEGE

## THEA BOWMAN AHANA AND INTERCULTURAL CENTER

Maloney Hall, Suite 455  
140 Commonwealth Avenue  
Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts 02467  
Phone: 617-552-3358  
bowmancenter@bc.edu  
bc.edu/baic

