



Black Spartans (1907-1948)

Curators

Carli V. Lowe, University Archivist
Kate Steffens, Special Collections Librarian

Artist

Yeab Kebede ('22, Digital Media Arts)

Graphic Designer

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Exhibit Curators Statement

"Black Spartans (1907-1948)" represents ongoing research in SJSU Special Collections & Archives identifying documentation of Black experiences throughout SJSU history. This exhibit is the first of several installments.

Much of the information we have comes from the Spartan Daily student newspaper and the La Torre yearbooks. With too few exceptions, Black Spartans' stories are not told in their own words but from the perspectives of their majority white classmates. This is reflected in the language and focus of the articles. We invite you to read critically.

The Black Spartans featured in this exhibit pursued their educational goals while contending with institutionalized racism and other major crises of the 20th century: two World Wars, the influenza pandemic of 1918, and polio. Locally, "the deed to virtually every home in San Jose" included restrictions against Black and Asian residents known as "restrictive covenants" (Spartan Daily, February 16, 1948, page 2). On campus, blackface and minstrel shows were a regular part of student events.

"Black Spartans (1907-1948)" is an invitation to the community to join us in surfacing these stories, ensuring these histories are preserved and presented in a way that honors these students' lives. Contact us at special.collections@sjsu.edu to participate.

Carli V. Lowe - University Archivist
Kate Steffens - Special Collections Librarian

Artist Statement

The "Black Spartans (1907-1948)" exhibition is a homage to Black culture and history at San José State University and the Bay Area at large. Until recently, the significance of Black bodies in Bay Area history (as well as U.S. history) was overlooked. Unless it was associated with the struggles of civil rights leaders, athletes, or celebrity-personas, the story of a graduate from a state school wasn't valued because we weren't part of the mainstream culture. As a Black Spartan myself, I was deeply connected to these individuals that started out just like me. I saw a reflection of myself and my community throughout the process of making these mixed media portraits and came to realize how important it is to know your history because it becomes a catalyst for knowing who you are.

My work explores the intricacy of identity and the role culture, tradition, and history play. These portraits are embodiments of our Black Spartans, they are visual representations of the colorful and captivating lives they led. Through this work, I hope to influence other artists and individuals to take part in researching and finding out the infinite layers of what it means to be Black. Our history is beyond our struggle. We are the blueprint.

Yeab Kebede
'22 Digital Media Arts



Faricita Hall (Wyatt) attended San Jose State College from 1932-1935. She graduated in 1935 with an A.B. degree in Speech. Wyatt was also a member of many clubs, groups, and teams, including the San Jose Players acting club, the Debate Team, the Negro Verse Speaking Choir, the Asilomar Conference Planning Committee, as well as serving as secretary of the Cosmopolitan Club. During World War II Wyatt enlisted in the Women's Army Corps as a lieutenant. In 1958, she accepted a position as chief secretary to Democratic congressman Jeffrey Cohelan, and also worked with the NAACP, YWCA, and YMCA. Wyatt received her teaching certificate from U.C. Berkeley in 1962 and went on to teach at Skyline High School in Oakland. She was a painter and author, with two of her books of poetry being published in 1965 and 1974. Wyatt passed away in 1993. Her personal papers are available to view at the African American Museum & Library of Oakland.



Cosmopolitan Club

OFFICERS

FALL QUARTER		WINTER QUARTER	
President.....	Audrey Batchelor	President.....	Bill Chilcoat
Vice-President.....	Florencio Biniegla	Vice-President.....	Florencio Biniegla
Secretary.....	Fama Benito	Secretary.....	Faracita Hall
Treasurer.....	Karam S. Hindi	Treasurer.....	John Kitasaka
SPRING QUARTER			
President.....	Florencio Biniegla		
Vice-President.....	Evelyn Darling		
Secretary.....	Faracita Hall		
Treasurer.....	John Kitasaka		

AN ORGANIZATION devoting its time to the furtherance of good brotherhood between nations, and to make foreign students in this institution feel entirely at home, is a true description of the Cosmopolitan Club. This club is one of recent founding, but, in spite of its "youth", it has done much to carry out its ideals. Members of the organization are drawn from practically every nation of the globe, meeting regularly to discuss with a true brotherly spirit the problems of the world pertaining to their purpose.

An organization with altruistic ideals and sentiments, the Cosmopolitan Club is growing stronger both in membership and execution of purpose.

La Torre Yearbook

1932

Faricita Hall is pictured as the secretary of the San Jose State College Cosmopolitan Club.

MAN, WOMAN APPOINTED CHAIRMAN OF ASILOMAR CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

Winifred Butler and Larry Eagleson were appointed co-chairman of the Asilomar Conference planning committee at a meeting Friday noon in the "Y" room.

Loren Wann, president of the college Y.M.C.A., presided, and the following were appointed: Frances Gould and George Wightman, finance; Jean French and Lee Whittman, dinner; and Betty Foster and Lela O'Connell, publicity. Herbert Deble and Faricita Hall will also serve on the committee.

Spartan Daily

November 7, 1934

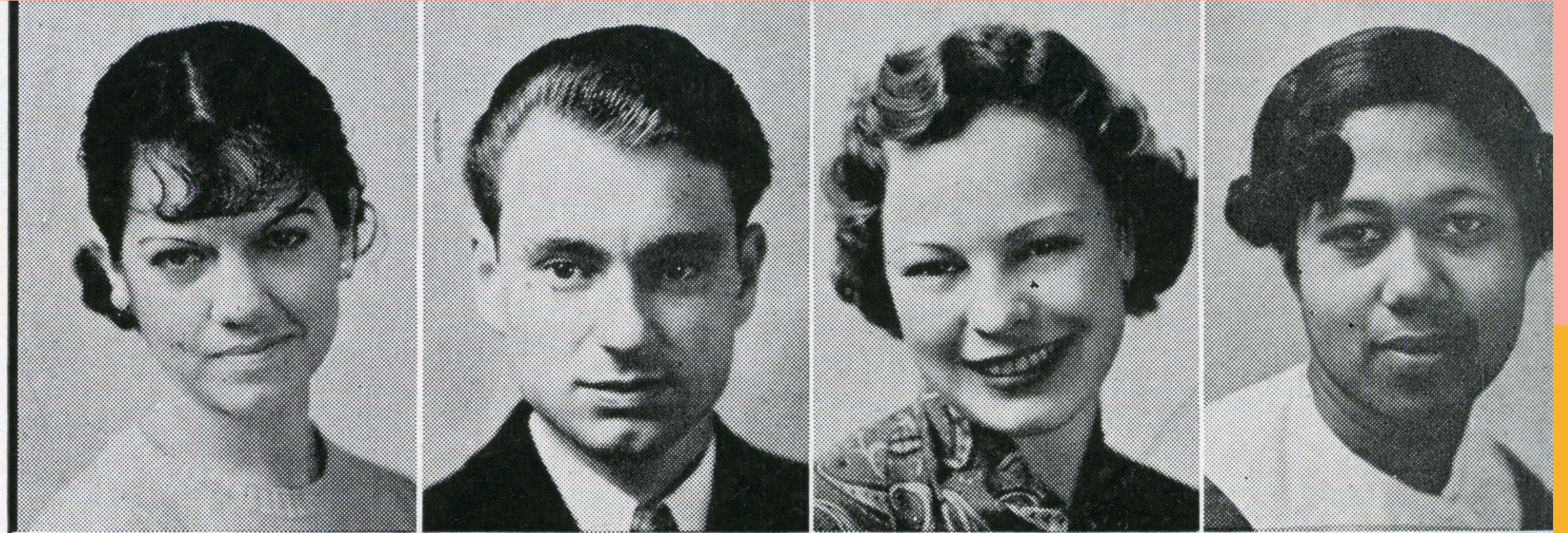
Faricita Hall is named as one of the students who will serve on the Asilomar Conference Committee.

Mae Wilburn

Dean Cowger

Jean Lattin

Faricita Hall



La Torre Yearbook

1935

Faricita Hall is pictured as a member of the San Jose State Players Club.

ASILOMAR VIEWS TOLD GUESTS AT TEA MEETING

Different phases of the recent Asilomar conference were explained by members of the San Jose delegation at a tea given for interested faculty members yesterday afternoon in Room 14.

Music furnished by a quartette led by Joel Carter, who also spoke on "The Changing Outlook". Winifred Butler gave her impressions of Muriel Lester, and Russell Rolly spoke on "Economic Implications".

Others who talked on the conference and their topics were: Frances Gould, "Evenings"; Mary Caswell, "Round-Table Discussions"; Annette Williams "Three Conference Leaders"; Helen Alhara, Faricita Hall, and Dorothy Maddison also talked.

Spartan Daily

January 14, 1935

Faricita Hall is named among the speakers reporting on the Asilomar conference at a tea given for faculty members.

State-Stanford Co-eds In Radio Debate Tonight

Future Of Civilization Will Be Topic For Discussion

Stanford University and San Jose State women will meet tonight at 9 o'clock over station KQW when they will debate the question: "Resolved, That we are justified in despairing over the future of civilization".

The debate will consist primarily of an examination of the forces existing today which are tending toward a destruction of civilization, such as wars and depressions. These forces will be weighed against the constructive forces being made today with the end in view of seeing just whether or not the net result is a tendence toward destruction of civilization.

Faricita Hall and Elizabeth Allampress will uphold the negative side of the question for San Jose. Miss Hall has had a great deal of experience in speaking and has debated many times here although this is her first inter-collegiate contest. Miss Allampress prominent in San Jose State dramatics, is also a veteran speaker and is noted for her clear, convincing arguments.

Miss Mae Wilburn, manager of the San Jose State women's teams has arranged the debate and will act as chairman.

Spartan Daily

March 7, 1935

Faricita Hall competes with San Jose State College against Stanford in a debate on the "Future of Civilization."

San Jose Lions Club To Hear Negro Verse Choir Today

Selections from Negro poets will be given by the Negro verse speaking choir today before the San Jose Lions Club.

The poetry will present a wide variety of attitudes and thought, and will include such poets as Lawrence Dunbar, Countee Cullen, and Langston Hughes.

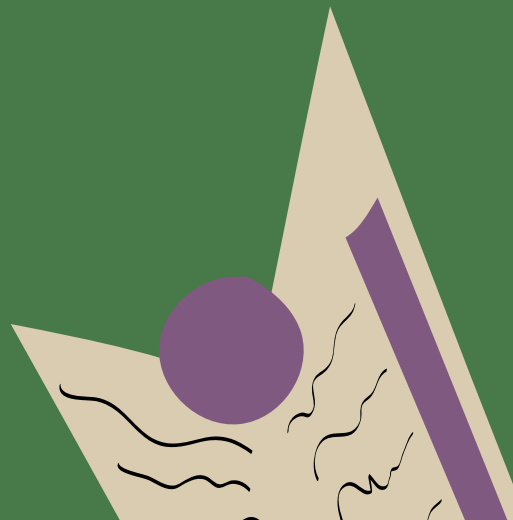
Great promise is shown by the Negro choir, according to Miss Elizabeth Jenks, director. It has been practicing every noon and once a week in the evening, and since its organization last quarter has shown a great deal of improvement.

Members of the choir are: Delores Rivers, Lavina Nichols, Delree Washington, Faricita Hall, and William Moulden.

Spartan Daily

March 13, 1935

Faricita Hall performs with the Negro Verse Speaking Choir, with fellow Black Spartans Delores Rivers, Lavina Nichols, Delree Washington, and William Moulden.



GRUBB, DOROTHY SARAH
General Elementary

HAGUE, GORDON CHIVELL
Physical Education Secondary

HALL, FARICITA
Speech



La Torre Yearbook

1935

Faricita Hall is pictured among the 1935 graduates, having earned a degree in Speech.



**Spartan Women In Various Branches
Of Armed Services Now Totals 192,
Says Dean Of Women Helen Dimmick**

A total of 192 Spartan women are now engaged in some branch of the armed forces, according to latest reports from Dean of Women Helen Dimmick, who is campus representative for all women's service branches.

Thirty-six of these women hold commissions as officers, Miss Dimmick stated.

The 46 former Spartan women who have enlisted in the Wacs are:

Jessie Alford, Mabel Berry, Florence Bevins, Elizabeth Stevens Cary, Mildred Chamberlain, Madeline Chapman, Dede Cook, Vivienne Dally, Joyce Dowhay, Mary Edwards, Marjorie Desmond Elder, Ethel Hall, Faricita Hall (lieutenant), Betty Henley (lieutenant), Doris Hoffman, Betty Holsonbake, Phyllis Jung, Esther Lactinola, Clare Binder Lewis, Henrietta McCaustland, Anne Armstrong McClellan, Lotus McMurtie, Mabel Duncan Mayes.

Jerry Mecabe, Anna Nixon, Nell O'Brdien, Marjorie Pascoe, Doris Poage, Bertha Potts, Dorothy Rayner, Frances Reynolds, Dorothy Rice, Corinne Rizzo, Jean Robertson, Minnie Ryley, Barbara Standring, Audrey Syverson, Grace Tanji, Maryjane Thompson, Betty Thompson, Gail Tucker (lieutenant—faculty), Irene Jo Turner (lieutenant), and Frances Wilson.

There are 15 State coeds in the Marines. They are:

Emmy Lou Road Anderson, Sara Jane Corwin, Virginia Dowd, Mildred Dumoulin, Elaine Grace Freeman, Edith Gandolfo (lieutenant), Esther Greenwood (lieutenant), Doris Henry, Evelyn Hiatt, Gwynedde James, Claire Heckmann Rauch (lieutenant), Dorothy Stuart, Barbara Turner, Eileen

Spartan Daily

February 10, 1944

Faricita Hall is listed among “46 former Spartan women who have enlisted” in the Women’s Army Corps (WACS).

Graduate Accepts Washington Job

Mrs. Faricita Wyatt, San Jose State College graduate, will serve in Washington, D.C., as chief secretary to the East Bay's newly elected Democratic congressman, Jeffery Cohelan.

Mrs. Wyatt, the former Faricita Hall, received an A.B. degree in speech from SJSC in 1935. She has been active in youth work for the National Assn. for the Advancement of Colored People in the East Bay and with the YWCA and YMCA.

The new U.S. representative was selected because of her longtime administrative abilities, and because as a Negro, she is well acquainted with minority race problems in his district.

In accepting the position, Mrs. Wyatt stated, "I'm glad that my being selected to the post will serve as an inspiration for young people of my race."

Spartan Daily

December 12, 1958

Faricita Hall Wyatt accepts a job to "serve in Washington D.C. as chief secretary" to Democratic congressman Jeffery Cohelan.

THE RIVER MUST FLOW

By
FARICITA WYATT

BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA
1965

*For June and Orlando
May your river
filled with happiness
continue to flow!
Love
Faricita*

SATISFIED

When I smiled in your face
And said, "Yes sir, I know my place,"
You thought I was satisfied,
So satisfied.

When you paid me next to nothing
For my sweat from running and jumping,
You thought I was satisfied,
So satisfied.

When you heard I'd been wading and sitting,
You didn't know I was ready for quitting,
Because I was satisfied,
So satisfied.

But when you see me singing and marching,
Watch out!
This time I'm working on scotching
That old myth about being satisfied,
So satisfied.

[22]

The River Must Flow

1965

Faricita Hall, now Wyatt, publishes the first of two books of poetry.

