

## Vice President Statement

Walter C. Rucker

My goal as ASWAD's Vice President will be to continue the tradition of dedication to the association modeled by our first three VPs—with whom I have worked closely since April 2015. The VP has one, all-important, task in carrying forward ASWAD's mission and vision. Simply put, the VP serves as the liaison between the conference Program Committee (PC) and the Local Arrangements Committee (LAC) to insure a smooth rollout ahead of the biennial conferences. I have witnessed this, first hand, with the examples set by my predecessors. It would be an honor to follow their models of leadership and to continue serving ASWAD.

The ASWAD VP, as liaison between two vital committees, is essentially an administrator who helps insure successful conferences. As a full professor at Emory University, I have accumulated a significant amount of administrative experience over the past dozen years. Previously, I have served as associate department chair, a graduate program director, an undergraduate program director, a vice chair for graduate education, a founding director of a Ghana study abroad program at Ohio State, and a director of a Ghana study abroad program at Rutgers. As a lifetime ASWAD member, I have served in a range of capacities: as Treasurer (2015-present), member of the ASWAD Executive Board, member of the Sevilla conference Program Committee, member of the Technology Taskforce, and organizer of the ASWAD Board Retreat held at Emory in November 2018. As Treasurer, I marshalled the resources necessary to fund the Rosalyn Terborg-Penn Book Prize (for the best book in Africana women, gender, or sexuality studies) for the next decade. Notably, I was co-winner of the 2017 ASWAD Presidential Service Award. Prior to this recognition, I received the 2008 Ida B. Wells and Cheikh Anta Diop Award for Outstanding Leadership in Africana Studies from the National Council for Black Studies. In sum, my long dedication to administrative and academic service has been widely recognized and awarded.

Given the demands of the ASWAD Board, the best candidate for VP would someone who knows our new software platforms. In 2016, ASWAD began deploying a new, all-purpose membership system called MemberClicks. More than just a membership system, MemberClicks incorporates functionality for a range of member engagement activities, including creating committees and e-lists; facilitating discussion circles and polls; and developing a newsletter. By November 2019, I will be one of two people on the ASWAD Board who will have completed several one-hour training sessions and scores of hours of practical experience with MemberClicks. This is critical for the work ahead as we make preparations for ASWAD's next international conference in 2021.

Having attended every ASWAD conference since 2001, from New York to Sevilla (with the exception of Rio 2005), I am committed to the mission and vision of ASWAD. As an advisee of one of ASWAD's founders—Sterling Stuckey (1932-2018)—I am committed to making the difficult decisions that insure ASWAD's survival over all other considerations. As VP, I will provide dedicated service to help ASWAD achieve our collective goals.