

Amaya K. Parks

Department of Sociology | Washington University – St. Louis | amyap@wustl.edu

EDUCATION

Doctor of Philosophy in Sociology

In Progress

Washington University – St. Louis, MO

Office of Public Scholarship Graduate Affiliate, Center for the Study of Race, Ethnicity & Equity Graduate Affiliate

Bachelor of Arts in Sociology, minor in Public Health

May 2023

Spelman College – Atlanta, GA

Dean's List, Alpha Kappa Delta Sociological Honor Society, Summa Cum Laude

Thesis: It's Not Just Hair: Examining Agency and Othering of Black Women Through Hair Stories

RESEARCH & TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Associate/Scholar

June 2024 – April 2025

Institute for Recruitment of Teachers, Phillips Academy

- Selected alongside ~130 scholars for commitment to addressing social justice and educational inequities through research agenda.
- Completed a 10-month program that prepared students for graduate school, including workshops, webinars, and mentoring.
- Engaged in professional and academic skill development via workshops, webinars, and one-on-one.

Undergraduate Research Assistant

June 2022 – August 2022

Summer Training Academy for Research Success, University of California, San Diego

- Conducted hands-on research with Dr. Mary Blair-Loy and Dr. Richard N. Pitt on topics related to religion, higher education, and gender.
- Participated in graduate school preparation workshops and seminars focused on academic writing, developing personal statements, and securing funding for graduate studies.
- Presented research at the UCSD Summer Research Conference to discuss research methodologies, refine communication skills, and receive feedback on analysis.

Senior Tutor

July 2020 – May 2022

Vertical Thinking Team Company

- Delivered interactive sessions that encouraged student participation and fostered a supportive classroom environment for grade school scholars at KIPP Metro-Atlanta Schools.
- Maintained open and proactive communication with parents and guardians to discuss students' achievements and areas for improvement.

- Coordinated with program leadership and tracked lesson schedules, ensuring alignment with organizational goals and timelines.

Undergraduate Teacher's Assistant

October 2020 – August 2021

Spelman College

- Tutored over 40 students and facilitated comprehension of foundational concepts in environmental science, including ecosystem dynamics, sustainability practices, and environmental policy.
- Supported student success through individual and small group tutoring and engagement with lecture materials.
- Collaborated with professor on student progress and maintained detailed records of student participation, attendance, and performance to identify areas needing improvement.

RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS

"Book Awards: Understanding Academic Prizes in the Social Sciences & Humanities"

Presenter at UNCF/Mellon-Mays Summer Institute, Emory University, Atlanta, GA, June 2025.

"UNCF/Mellon-Mays Fellows Graduate Tracking: Where are they now?"

Presenter at UNCF/Mellon-Mays Advisory Board Retreat with Dr. Cynthia Neal-Spence, Lake Oconee, GA, February 2024.

"It's Not Just Hair: Examining Agency & Othering of Black Women through Hair Stories"

Presenter at Spelman College Research Day, Atlanta, GA, April 2023.

"STEM Faculty Perspectives on Diversity and Inclusion"

Presenter at UCSD Summer Research Conference, San Diego, CA, July 2022.

"An Initial Examination of Carbon Neutrality Stances at Select Georgia Colleges & Universities"

Virtual Presenter at Spelman College Research Day, Atlanta, GA, April 2021.

UNIVERSITY SERVICE

Major Meet-Up Guide

August 2022 – May 2023

Spelman College Student Success Program

- Served as a peer guide in the Spelman College Student Success Program, offering weekly academic support and mentorship to sophomore-level students in Sociology.

- Facilitated course-specific assistance and study sessions tailored to the academic needs of students within the major, promoting academic success and skill development.
- Provided mentorship by sharing insights on course selection, study strategies, and navigating the academic and professional pathways within the chosen field of study.

Community Service Director & President

August 2021 – May 2023

Grl-Pwr, Inc., Spelman College Chapter

- Led and coordinated community service initiatives, fostering partnerships with local elementary and middle schools to increase students' social and emotional wellness.
- Organized and facilitated biweekly executive board and general body meetings, overseeing event planning, fundraising, and volunteer initiatives to support the organization's mission of empowering young girls.
- Provided mentorship and guidance to executive board members and general body members, fostering leadership development and promoting collaborative teamwork within the chapter.

Study Group Lead

August 2021 – May 2023

Spelman College Student Success Program

- Managed a case load of 20 first year students to provide mentorship and guidance on academic, social, and personal challenges to support student retention and success.
- Facilitated weekly sessions assist students in exploring academic majors and career pathways, helping them plan course schedules that aligned with their long-term goals.
- Delivered workshops on study strategies, time management, and professional development to enhance academic and personal skills.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Programs Assistant

January 2024 – May 2025

UNCF/Mellon-Mays Programs

- Provide administrative support and assist in coordinating events, academic seminars, and conferences to prepare students for careers in academia.
- Enhance program visibility through website updates to highlight student and alumni achievements.
- Prepare reports summarizing alumni feedback, program achievements, and areas for growth to assist with strategic planning and funding proposals.

Administrative Consultant

July 2023 – September 2023

CJAM Consulting

- Provided administrative support by organizing and maintaining project files and documentation using platforms such as Dropbox, Google Drive, and Monday.com to ensure seamless access and collaboration across teams.

- Attended and contributed to weekly team meetings to provide updates on assigned client projects and stay informed on new developments, priorities, and deadlines.
- Prepared comprehensive reports and presentations based on research findings to offer actionable recommendations to support client needs and project planning.

HBCU Fellow

August 2021 – August 2022

RISE Free Organization

- Increased youth voter turnout on college campuses by organizing and hosting monthly events focused on voter education, registration drives, and civic engagement initiatives.
 - Recruited and managed a team of 10 ambassadors through targeted social media outreach campaigns aimed at engaging student leaders and influencers across campus.
 - Coordinated and led weekly meetings to track the progress of ambassadors in meeting outreach goals, ensuring accountability and providing support to maximize campus impact.
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INVITED TALKS & WORKSHOPS

Contested & Removed Confederate Monuments (In-progress)

Co-Presenter with David Cunningham, *Race, Space, & Place Workshop*, Washington University in St. Louis, November 2025

“Conversations: Empowering Voices at the Intersection at the Intersection of Race, Class, and Gender”

Table Facilitator, *YWCA of Greater Atlanta*, October 2024

UNCF/Mellon Programs Pre-Conference Luncheon and Workshop

Co-Panelist with Leislle Godo-Solo and Kourtney Payne, Institute for the Recruitment of Teachers, *UNCF/Mellon Programs Conference*, October 2024

AWARDS & HONORS

Arts & Sciences CREATES

August 2025

Admitted into a cross-departmental learning cohort that increased research collaboration opportunities and provided a platform to share scholarly work with new audiences.

National Society of Leadership and Success

April 2021

Selected for membership in the largest leadership honor society in the United States, which recognizes students for their academic achievements and leadership potential.

Forte Women of Color Leadership Conference Participant

May 2020

Chosen to be in the Inaugural class of Forté Women from Spelman College and attended an

exclusive event aimed at empowering and supporting women of color in their academic and professional journeys.

Beta Club Service Award Recipient

May 2018

Recognized for outstanding community service and leadership through the Beta Club, a national academic and service organization.

GRANTS, FELLOWSHIPS, & SCHOLARSHIPS

NAASC/Donald Stewart Scholarship (\$6,500.00)

August 2022

Awarded by the National Alumnae Association of Spelman College (NAASC) to support and recognize students for their dedication to upholding the values of academic excellence and social responsibility that align with the mission of Spelman College.

Trevor and Bertha Arnett Scholarship (\$5,160.00)

August 2021

An endowed scholarship awarded to students based on academic performance, financial need, and area of study.

Path Forward II Scholarship (\$3,000)

February 2020

Awarded by Spelman College to help bridge financial gaps and enable low-income students to focus on their studies and achieve their academic and career goals.