

SYDNEY JAEI WILSON

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EDUCATION

B.A.	Dec. 2024	Spelman College, Comparative Women's Studies Focus in Activism
Diploma	May 2021	Colonial Forge High School

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Black Feminist Bookstores; Black Feminist Theory; Third Spaces; Public and Oral History; Scholar-Activism at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Gender, Sexuality and Social Relationships

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

2023-Present	UNCF Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship
2024	Justice for Black Girls Black Girlhood Studies Fellowship
June 2024	<u>Religion and/as BIG Data: Mothers of The Movement</u> - Research Assistant

FELLOWSHIPS

2023-Present	The Social Justice Fellowship Program at Spelman College
2023-2024	Georgia Women's Policy Institute Fellowship - YWCA of Greater Atlanta

HONORS & AWARDS

2023	The Audre Lorde Feminist Scholar Activism Award
2023	Outstanding Undergraduate Award Presented by The Eta Sigma Chapter of Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority Inc.
2024	Triota National Women's and Gender Studies Honor Society

FUNDING

July 2024	<u>UNCF Innovate for Impact Pitch Competition</u> - Third Place Winner ➤ <u>Awarded \$7,500</u> for developing and presenting a pitch deck for a mobile Black Feminist Bookstore and Library to stakeholders at the UNCF Headquarters in Washington, D.C.
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PUBLICATIONS

- Marq Riggins, and Sydney Jael Wilson. "Joe Biden Attending Morehouse College's Commencement is an Insult to The Black Radical Tradition." *Mondoweiss*, 17 May 2024.
- Marq Riggins, and Sydney Jael Wilson. " Biden at Morehouse isn't an opportunity. It's a death sentence." *Scalawag*, 25 September 2024.

MEDIA APPEARANCES

- “Sen. Nan Orrock Applauds Work to End State Sales Tax on Menstrual Products”- *Senate Press*. 22 January 2024.
<https://senatepress.net/sen-nan-orrock-applauds-work-to-end-state-sales-tax-on-menstrual-products.html>
- “Actually, HBCUs Have a Lot to Say About Gaza”- *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, 20 May 2024.
<https://www.chronicle.com/article/actually-hbcus-have-a-lot-to-say-about-gaza>
- “UNCF’s Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship Hosts Pitching Competition for HBCU Student Entrepreneurs” - *UNCF*, 15 August 2024.
<https://uncf.org/news/uncfs-center-for-innovation-and-entrepreneurship-hosts-pitching-competition-for-hbcu-student-entrepreneurs>
- “At HBCUs, Some Queer Students Say They Have a Choice: Come Out or Join Divine 9 Greek Life” - *Teen Vogue*, 20 February 2025. <https://www.teenvogue.com/story/hbcu-greek-life-lgbtq-acceptance>

PRESENTATIONS

- 2023 “A Call to Action to Improve Sexual Education in Georgia Public Schools”
- Presented a policy proposal addressing the inadequacies in Georgia's sex education standards, with a focus on disparities affecting Black youth. Advocated for a comprehensive sex education curriculum incorporating consent, healthy relationships, and STD prevention, based on the Integrated Community Care Model and existing legislative frameworks. Delivered to a panel of judges and peers, winning selection as the policy focus for the duration of the semester.
- 2024 Pedagogy Power Hour - “Bleach Blonde Bad Built Butch Bodies”
- Taught a 50-minute lecture connecting pop culture to censorship in public schools and existing scholarship on The Feminist Bookstore Movement through a Black Feminist Lens.
- Aug 2024 Mellon Mays Summer Symposium - “Ain’t I A Reader: An Analysis of Knowledge Dissemination in The Black Community”
- Presented the history of legislation limiting the African American community’s access to education and findings of historical and contemporary Black feminist interventions.
- Nov 2024 Mellon Mays Southeastern Regional Conference - “Beyond the Page: Black Feminist Bookstores as Physical and Metaphorical Spaces of Liberation”
- Presented findings from a 19-month ethnographic study on the evolution, challenges, and transformative impact of Black feminist bookstores. Analyzed these spaces as sites of cultural preservation, political activism, and community self-actualization, advocating for greater investment in their sustainability. Discussed the history of Black feminist literary

movements, consciousness-raising practices, and the disruptive role of Black feminist geographies in resisting dominant power structures.

INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE

- 2022-2023 The Blue Record – Spelman College’s Official Podcast Co-Host and Researcher
Episodes (available on Spotify)
- *So You Think Feminism is Inclusive?*
 - *Rapper’s Delight: A Look into Hip Hop Culture and Its History at Spelman*
 - *Self Love: Black Hair as Resistance*
 - *The Reality of Being Queer/Trans at Spelman w/ Lakia of Black Feminist Rants*
- 2023 UNCF Mellon Mays Summer Research Intensive at Emory University
- 2023 The Human Rights Campaign HBCU LGBTQ+ Summit Student Coordinator
- 2024 UCLA Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship Writing and Research Training Program

LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

- 2021-2022 Public Relations Chair of Spelman’s LGBTQ+ Organization, Afrekete
- 2022-2023 Vice President of Spelman’s LGBTQ+ Organization, Afrekete
- 2022-2023 Secretary of Morehouse’s LGBTQ+ Organization, Adodi
- 2023-2024 Vice President of Morehouse’s LGBTQ+ Organization, Adodi
- 2023 Founder of The Visionaries – A Student Activist Collective
- 2023-2024 Executive Board Member of The Epsilon Eta Chapter of Sigma Gamma Rho
Sorority Inc.

EXTRACURRICULARS

- 2022 Member of The Toni Cade Bambara Scholar-Activist-Writers Collective
- 2022 Member of Students for Justice in Palestine

INVITED TALKS

- 2023 “Black History Month: Celebrating Atlanta’s LGBTQ+ History.” City of Atlanta
Division of LGBTQ+ Affairs. AUC Robert E. Woodruff Library. Atlanta, GA.
- 2023 “Spelman Student Panel.” UNCF Pacific Northwest Portfolio Project HBCU College Tour.
Atlanta Marriott Marquis. Atlanta, GA.
- 2023 “Crumbs & Chats: A Conversation on Consent, Relationships, and Boundaries.” Chi Chapter of
Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity Inc.. Mays Hall at Morehouse College. Atlanta, GA.

May. 2025

- 2023 “Lunch & Learn: How to Start an LGBTQ+ Club/Different Methods of Campus Activism.” HBCU Leadership Summit - The 20th Year: Continuing The Legacy of HBCU Queer Activism. Human Rights Campaign Headquarters. Washington, D.C..
- 2023 “Spelhouse Homecoming: Survival 101.” Morehouse Residential Housing Association. Sales Hall at Morehouse College. Atlanta, GA.
- 2023 “Student Activism at HBCUs Panel.” Project STAND Archiving Black Joy and Trauma Residency Program. AUC Robert W. Woodruff Library. Atlanta, Georgia.
- 2024 “YWCA of Greater Atlanta Georgia Women’s Policy Institute Information Session Panel with Current Fellows.” Spelman College Social Justice Program. Laura Spelman Multipurpose Room. Atlanta, Georgia.
- Dec 2024 “Georgia Women’s Policy Institute Alumni Panel.” YWCA of Greater Atlanta 2024 Georgia Women’s Policy Institute Training Session. YWCA of Greater Atlanta Headquarters. Atlanta, GA.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- 2022 Student Attendee, 19th National HBCU Leadership Summit, Human Rights Campaign Headquarters, Washington, D.C.
- 2023 Student Attendee, National Students for Justice in Palestine Conference, UCLA, Los Angeles, CA.
- 2023 Student Attendee, MMUF Southeast Regional Undergraduate Conference, Duke University, Durham, NC.
- 2023 Organizing Committee Student Representative, 20th National HBCU Leadership Summit, Human Rights Campaign Headquarters, Washington, D.C.
- 2024 Participant, Doctoral Preview Day, Brown University, Providence, RI.
- 2024 Participant, Building Bridges Career Exploration Program, St. George’s School, Moses Brown School, Concord Academy, and Dana Hall School, New England.
- 2024 Presenter, MMUF Southeast Regional Undergraduate Conference, Rice University, Houston, TX.
- 2024 Attendee, National Women's Studies Association Annual Conference, Huntington Place Convention Center, Detroit, MI.

SKILLS & INTERESTS

Research & Analysis: Qualitative Research, Quantitative Research, Ethnography, Oral History, Archival Research, Text Analysis (R Studio)

Technical Skills: Microsoft Office Suite, Google Suite, Canva, Zotero

Communication: Academic Writing, Public Speaking, Community Engagement, Workshop Facilitation