



## **Diamond Hardiman, African American Studies and Political Science, Class of 2020**

On behalf of the African American Studies Program we send our sincere congratulations to Ms. Diamond Hardiman as our recipient of the 2020 Collins Award. Throughout her time at SLU, she has been exceptional inside and outside of the classroom. She has consistently been one of the highest performing students in African American Studies. Diamond has not only excelled in African American Studies and Political Science, she has been an exemplar of engagement beyond the university. Her on campus work includes the Political Round Table, the Black Student Alliance, and as a Martin Luther King Jr. Scholar. During her time as the Vice President of BSA, Diamond was able to spearhead the committee responsible for bringing Angela Davis to SLU as the keynote speaker for Black History Month. She was also a part of the summer Pre-Law Undergraduate Scholars program with SLU Law where she was recognized for her skills in negotiation, conflict resolution, and legal research and writing.

As a Junior, Diamond interned with the Metropolitan St. Louis Equal Housing and Opportunity Council serving as a Tenant Specialist, helping to empower and defend tenants against landlords. She was also able to serve as a Court Mediator that led mediations between landlords and tenants as a method to protect tenants from receiving evictions on their records. In the summer of 2019, Diamond applied for and was granted support through the College of Arts and Sciences Knoedler Student Research Fund the opportunity to travel to Jackson, Mississippi to serve as a Capital Post-Conviction Defense Team Intern. In Jackson, Diamond worked on the cases of clients sentenced to death by the state of Mississippi. This internship exposed Diamond to the technical aspects of legal work, and moreover allowed a direct understanding of how questions of restorative justice and transformation may be possible through the rule of law. In her Senior year, she interned with The Bail Project-STL, a cutting-edge, direct action organization working to bail people out of jails in St. Louis, and providing resources for recently released people.

In her free time, she spends a lot of time building community and enjoying the love and company of women all around St. Louis, women that she has come to know as her sisters. These relationships of love, joy, and support are important for her to cultivate and grow because as she states, adapting a quote from a St. Louis art installation, "I wholeheartedly embrace the motto that although 'It is dangerous to love against empire, we must be brave and love anyways. ***We are worthy of both joy and freedom.***'"

We are proud of all that Diamond has accomplished thus far. She has proven herself fully deserving of college wide and university recognition. And we are confident in the brilliant future ahead of her.



Christopher Tinson, Ph.D.,  
Director, African American Studies