

SYRACUSE. Manuscript

SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY'S AFRICAN AMERICAN AND LATINO ALUMNI MAGAZINE





CBT

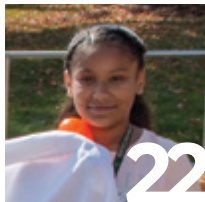
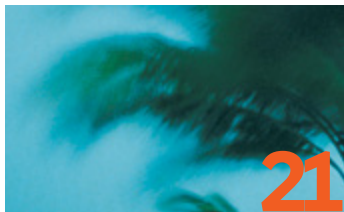
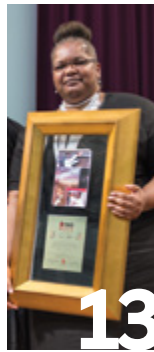
COMING BACK
TOGETHER

ON THE COVER:

Left to right, from top: Cheryl Wills '89 and Taye Diggs '93; Lazarus Sims '96; Lt. Col. Pia W. Rogers '98, G'01, L'01 and Dr. Akima H. Rogers '94; Amber Hunter '19, Nerys Castillo-Santana '19, and Nordia Mullings '19; Demaris Mercado '92; Dr. Ruth Chen and Chancellor Kent Syverud; Carmelo Anthony; Darlene Harris '84 and Debbie Harris '84 with Soledad O'Brien

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CELEBRATE INSPIRE EMPOWER! CBT2017



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FROM THE 'CUSE

Going The Distance

Can you believe that we're saying goodbye to 2017? Looking back, we should all be proud of what we've accomplished together. As the African proverb states, "If you want to go quickly, go alone. If you want to go far, go together." I am thrilled to know that the black and Latino alumni and students of Syracuse University will go far.

CBT 2017 is a wonderful example of this. It took all of us working together to enjoy such a historic reunion. Without your support and enthusiasm, we wouldn't have been able to more than double attendance and raise more than \$1 million in gifts and pledges or secure much-needed CBT event sponsors (Wegmans, Muscle Milk, Summit Federal Credit Union).

This issue of *Syracuse Manuscript* celebrates our time together on campus and the many alumni who played a part. Activities such as the CBT Celebrity Classic Basketball Game, Chancellor's CBT 5K Run/Walk/Roll, CBT Job Fair, CBT Worship Service, the unveiling of the NALFO plaques at the Orange Grove, and the Hispanic/Latino Heritage Month events that took place during the reunion would not have happened without your involvement. We look forward to continued partnership with you.

Despite our success this year, our students constantly remind us that there is always more work to do. The ladies of Delta Sigma Theta understand this. Despite being our largest fundraising group in 2017, members of DST are continuing their efforts to reach \$1 million by 2022. We are grateful for their dedication and commitment, and for all of the donors who give to the Our Time Has Come Scholarship Fund. If you haven't yet made your tax-deductible gift, please do so by December 31, and you'll be eligible for a matching gift from Invest Syracuse (as Chancellor Kent Syverud announced during the CBT gala). No amount is too small in our effort to double OTHC Scholarship awards in the coming years.

Finally, we look forward to connecting with you during the regional holiday events that we have planned in the remaining weeks of 2017, as well as new opportunities to connect in 2018. Program Development will bring several regional events to you in the spring, and we look forward to seeing you at CBT Martha's Vineyard the week of August 12 (check our website for details).

Let's keep on celebrating, inspiring, and empowering one another. The best is yet to come!!

With Orange Love,

Rachel Vassel '91

Assistant Vice President, Office of Program Development ✪

CELEBRATE INSPIRE EMPOWER! CBT 2017



Student co-chairs Malcolm-Ali Davis '18 and Leslie Sanchez '18



Kirssy González '09 and Marissa Willingham, program associate for budgets and operations, Office of Multicultural Affairs.



Participants in the CBT Celebrity Classic

Coming Back Together 2017 breaks the mold, setting new benchmarks for attendance and fundraising.

When Gwynne Wilcox '74 got involved planning the first Coming Back Together (CBT) reunion in the early 1980s, the goal was simple: "We wanted to reconnect black and Hispanic alumni with the University, with each other, and with black and Hispanic students," she says.

And while the continued development of the triennial reunion was more than that small group anticipated, she says she never imagined the outpouring of support and participation for CBT 2017.

"To say it surpassed every expectation is an understatement," says Wilcox, who co-chaired the event with Jesse Mejia '97.

More than 800 alumni and guests returned to campus for CBT—almost tripling the attendance of the 2014 reunion—for a weekend of professional development, social activities, student mentoring, and to help raise funds for the Our Time Has Come (OTHC) Scholarship Fund for black and Latino students, activities made all the more enjoyable by a weekend of sunny, 75-degree weather.

"CBT 2017 was just amazing," adds Mejia. "It was wonderful to see alumni representing so many decades, many of whom had never attended a CBT before. It felt so phenomenal to have folks I had never met tell me what a great time they were having."

"I was so impressed by how giving alumni were to volunteer to speak and share and to mentor our students. The energy created surpassed anything we expected."
—Jesse Mejia '97



Arley Pressley '98 hosted the Thursday night after party.

While each CBT attempts to build on past successes, this reunion was particularly pivotal because of the change in leadership in the Office of Program Development. Although Rachel Vassel '91 had taken the helm only 10 months earlier, she made a concerted attempt to refresh CBT based on alumni feedback and then involved alumni in the process.

Vassel engaged co-chairs Wilcox and Mejia in a road show of alumni events across the country—in New York City, Syracuse, Washington, D.C., Atlanta, and Los Angeles—designed both to ignite excitement for the event and to tap alumni interests.

They came away with ideas for new events and an engaged alumni body. “By April, we already had 400 registrants, surpassing CBT 2014 attendance,” says Vassel. “From there, the excitement just continued, because the more you hear about your friends coming back, the more you want to be there.”

And they weren't disappointed. From the opening reception at the Chancellor's House to the Sunday worship service at Hendricks Chapel there was no shortage of opportunities for alumni to reconnect with each other and to engage with current students.

CBT got a jumpstart on Thursday, with the first CBT career fair, held at the Sheraton Syracuse University Hotel. The event, created at alumni request, attracted 32 employers from a range of industries and was attended by both students and alumni.

That evening, the University Lecture featured journalist Soledad O'Brien, who had met with students earlier in the day in classes at the S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications. After her lecture, O'Brien—by all accounts extremely gracious and generous with her time—made a surprise appearance across town at Henninger High School at the Celebrity Basketball Classic, where squads of SU legends battled it out on the court (see page 12).

Friday started early with the Chancellor's 5K Walk, Run, and Roll. Although many alumni had been socializing into the wee hours, there was a good turnout for the inaugural event, a

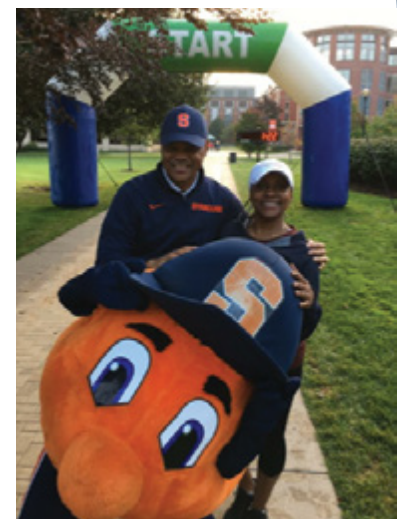


Dorinda Bagwell '89, Derrick Coleman '90, Rachel Vassel '91, and Billy Owens '92

fundraiser for the OTHC Scholarship Fund, organized by Aaron Ganaway '89 and Gina Brown Keller '89 and co-sponsored by Wegmans and Summit Federal Credit Union. More than 80 alumni, employees, and community members took part in the race, all welcomed by Otto and Olympic sprinter Herm Frazier, senior deputy athletics director at SU, who served as race starter. “The surprise was how many of my fellow alumni were able to get up early after a jam-packed late night and make the run a success,” says Keller.

Friday's focus was on networking and professional development, including an alumni/student networking breakfast, and several industry and professional development panels where alumni from across the country shared their professional expertise. That evening, Chancellor Kent Syverud and his wife, Dr. Ruth Chen, hosted alumni at a reception at their home. Later, alumni chose from a variety of social events, including a reception at La Casita (see page 26); a concert by Grammy winner LaLah Hathaway, where the auditorium glittered with the LCD rings worn by alumnae guests; the CBT Comedy Hour featuring Dominican comedian Ruperto Vanderpool; and after parties designed to appeal to alumni of various ages.

After a few hours of sleep, the fun continued Saturday. Dave Bing '66, who chaired the inaugural campaign to launch the OTHC Scholarship, held a private breakfast with current OTHC Scholars. On the Orange Grove, an unveiling ceremony was held to reveal a new bench featuring plaques commemorating SU's nine Latino sororities and fraternities, a particularly meaningful event for alumni members of those groups, many whom attended specifically for this unveiling. Alumni flocked to the soul food pre-



Herm Frazier and Gina Brown Keller '89

“CBT 2017 was one of the best I have attended. So many of my fellow alumni were included in the planning and activity process, and it showed.” —Gina Brown Keller '89



Zulay Olivo '06 and Anthony Otero '96 at the 5K



Taye Diggs '93

game tailgate—enjoying favorites such brisket, Sal’s wings (an alumni favorite), and potato salad—before heading to the football game in the Dome, the ongoing alumni art show at the Community Folk Art Center, or the alumni book signing at the Schine Student Center.

Actor Taye Diggs '93 was among those participating, promoting his second children’s book, *Mixed Me!*, about a day in the life of a mixed-race child. Diggs gave a multimedia presentation along with illustrator and longtime collaborator Shane Evans '94, then signed books afterward.

Having more than 800 registrants (with more showing up on site that weekend) did present challenges, most notably with the weekend’s signature event, the CBT gala Saturday night. With more than double the anticipated attendance, there were simply too many people for the ballroom to hold.

“Fortunately, the Syracuse Marriott was very accommodating, and we were able to add a second ballroom, broadcasting the presentations via closed circuit TV,” says Vassel.

While two ballrooms may have provided twice the fun, Vassel acknowledges that “the whole point of coming back together is to be all together, and it’s definitely our goal to have everyone in one space in 2020.”

Logistics aside, it was a stellar evening. For the first time, the gala featured a silent auction as an additional fundraiser for the OTHC Scholarship Fund. Alumni enjoyed bidding against each other for a variety of popular items, including tickets to the 2018 BET Awards Ceremony and hotel stay donated by Connie Orlando '89; a week at a Martha’s Vineyard vacation home donated by Lynn Boles '71 and her husband, James Walsh; a ceramic plate from acclaimed ceramicist David



Alumni with Otto at the 5K run



Syracuse City School District Superintendent Jaime Alicea G'88 with colleagues at the CBT Celebrity Classic basketball game



Zhamyr "Sammy" Cueva '93 with his family cutting the ribbon at the unveiling of the NALFO plaques



CBT Career Fair

McDonald '71, SU emeritus professor of studio arts; and pavers on the Orange Grove donated by the SU Office of Alumni Engagement.

Chancellor Syverud won over alumni with heartfelt remarks about his commitment to campus diversity and inclusion, highlighting university initiatives (see page 24) and underscoring support for students with DACA status. He then presented five alumni—Colline Hernandez-Ayala '89, Michael Blackshear '91, Zhamyr Cueva '93, Orlando, and Gwynne Wilcox '74—with Chancellor's Citations for Distinguished Achievement. NBA star Carmelo Anthony, who attended SU during 2002-03 and played for the 2003 NCAA champion basketball team, was awarded the Chancellor's Medal for Philanthropy.

"This is such a special honor to come back to campus and receive the Chancellor's Medal. The University has meant so much to me and will always remain an important part of my life," says Anthony, who was introduced at the gala by Syracuse University men's basketball head coach Jim Boeheim. Anthony also acknowledged SU legends Bing, Floyd Little '67, H'16, and

Derrick Coleman '15, among others, saying they paved the way for his own presence at SU.

"By all accounts, he was thrilled being back on campus," says Vassel. "I was told he wore his Chancellor's Medal all the way home on the airplane."

A major focus for the evening was support for the OTHC Scholarship Fund, emphasized in Bing's keynote address, in the presence of this year's 45 OTHC Scholars, and in the ceremonial presentation of gifts to the fund made by individuals and groups. Hitting another milestone, Vassel announced an astounding \$1 million raised for the fund since the start of 2017 (see page 14).

"It's a really nice statement for the alumni to raise money and announce their gift at the gala to show students that when you become alumni, it's your role to give back to the University," says Vassel. "It's your time to give back."

It was a message well received. "Thank you for giving back so that we can move forward," say student CBT co-chairs Malcolm-Ali Davis '18 and Leslie Sanchez '18. "This entire weekend and its lasting memories were truly made possible by the power of



Students at the Orange Grove during CBT



David Trotman-Wilkins '75, Valencia Yearwood '85, Angela Y. Robinson '78, and Charles "Rahmat" Woods '72



Malcom Ali Davis '18, Sarah Valenzuela '16, and Anthony Herbert Jr. '15



Delta Sigma Theta alumnae

collective giving, which shows that the more we all participate in the process of giving, the greater our impact will be and the more lives we can change."

Alumni concluded the weekend by "having church" at Hendricks Chapel, a worship service organized by alumni members of the Black Celestial Choral Ensemble (see page 13), Laurie Kingsberry '82, and the Rev. Seretta McKnight '82.

No one left untouched by his or her weekend experience. "I always knew that CBT was a special and unique reunion for black and Latino alumni, but this CBT highlighted for me the depth of the passion and commitment of our alumni of color to CBT and SU," says Wilcox. "We can bottle that passion and commitment to do even more for students, each other, and SU in three years."

The bar is set high for 2020. Says Vassel, "Please plan to make your reservations early."

Wilcox agrees with Mejia that CBT far exceeded expectations. "I truly believe we made a larger impact upon the broader SU community this time around," Wilcox says. ☼

Join us in appreciation of our CBT 2017 Corporate Sponsors, all of whom were instrumental in bringing first-time-ever events to CBT 2017!

- Wegmans Foods, our longtime partner and OTHC donor, for its generous in-kind and financial support... Chancellor's CBT 5K, CBT Celebrity Classic Basketball Game, and Our Time Has Come Scholarship Fund
- Summit Federal Credit Union, Lead Sponsor of Chancellor's CBT 5K
- Muscle Milk, supporting sponsor of CBT's Mind Body, and Soul events, and Chancellor's CBT 5K





CHANCELLOR'S CITATION RECIPIENTS



Colline Hernandez-Ayala '89

Designing for Social Equity

When Colline Hernandez-Ayala '89 graduated from the Syracuse University School of Architecture in 1989, she was the only black female student in her class. In her first job, at a large architecture firm of more than 400 employees, there were fewer than 10 employees of color. Today, Hernandez-Ayala is a partner at GTM Architects in Bethesda, Maryland, one of few women of color at that level, and she takes her position as a role model seriously.

"We lack diversity in our profession. That's a well-known fact," she says. "Those of us working in the field have to take an active role in cultivating the next generation of architects and designers of color."

That's why Hernandez-Ayala, along with three other SU alumni, started the Black and Latino Endowment for Architecture at Syracuse University, through the OTHC Scholarship Fund. "It's a way to help support and mentor students and hopefully push the needle to diversify the field," she says.

At Syracuse, Hernandez-Ayala was mentored by architecture professor Kermit Lee '57, SU's first black architecture graduate. "The program was very challenging," she recalls. "There were many times I wasn't certain I could complete it." Being one of a few students of color in the architecture program at that time, she sought refuge in her sorority, Delta Sigma Theta, and the Student African-American Society.

Hernandez-Ayala joined GTM Architects in 2004 and leads the multi/family mixed-use studio, specializing in the planning and design of large-scale urban development projects. These are commonly apartments with retail spaces—restaurants, grocery stores, and shops—on the lower floors.

"Mixed-use residential projects are often catalysts for change in underserved urban neighborhoods that may not have seen any new investment in decades, bringing much needed housing retail and recreation space to a community," she says.

That's important to her. "I've always wanted my work to have a larger purpose and to work on design projects that positively affected people's lives," says Hernandez-Ayala.

The design of adequate housing options in urban areas is central to that discussion. "Working in this specialty allows me to contribute ideas toward addressing this important social issue," she says. "Our design team is challenged to not only develop sustainable design solutions that reflect the way people desire to live in cities today, but to also use design as a vehicle to foster social sustainability within diverse communities."

Hernandez-Ayala considers the Chancellor's Citation a great honor. "I am very humbled and thankful to be recognized for the work that I do every day that I love to do," she says. ☼





Michael Blackshear '91

Corporate Mentor

Michael Blackshear '91 came to Syracuse University to run track for a Division I Big East university. When shin splints ended his running career in his sophomore year, he doubled down his focus on academics, transferring from the College of Human Development to major in finance in the College of Business Administration. "I met a diverse group of classmates that challenged my way of thinking and established long-lasting relationships that still exist today," he says.

Blackshear has forged an impressive career in the risk management and insurance industry. Since 2013, he has served as North America chief compliance officer for Chubb, one of the largest property and casualty insurance companies in the world.

At Chubb, Blackshear is responsible for providing leadership and management within the Office of General Counsel, for developing and for maintaining an effective compliance program in North America designed to establish compliance standards and to monitor, detect, and prevent compliance deficiencies. Before joining Chubb, Blackshear held leadership and management roles for Marsh and McLennan Companies, KPMG, and Price WaterhouseCoopers.

Blackshear credits his business education at Syracuse for laying the technical foundation for his career. He also attributes his Syracuse experience with developing his emotional intelligence. "It is my emotional intelligence that has guided my thinking and behavior and allowed me to manage and adjust emotions to adapt to environments and achieve my goals," he says.

As a black man in corporate America, Blackshear is committed to pushing diversity of thought. "We live in a diverse world, so it's my belief that as an organization we should reflect that diverse world," he says.

He runs a mentoring program at Chubb, helping to develop young talent in the company, and serves on the Management Department Advisory Board at SU's Whitman School of Management.

A member of Omega Psi Phi, he and a fraternity brother have spearheaded the Omega Fund to raise \$50,000 for the OTHC Scholarship Fund. He has attended nearly every CBT reunion since he graduated, serving this year as the Whitman School CBT chair.

As much as he enjoys reconnecting with old friends, Blackshear stresses the important mentoring opportunities the reunion provides for current students. "CBT is about building our future generation and future leaders," he says. "If someone can learn from my life lesson, then that's my obligation and duty."

He is particularly gratified to be recognized with the Chancellor's Citation.

"It's always been my motto to uplift as I climb," says Blackshear. "I'm passionate about what I do, but to be acknowledged that I've done something and to hopefully inspire another, that's just icing on the cake." ❖



Zhamyr "Sammy" Cueva '93

Entrepreneur Extraordinaire

Sammy Cueva '93 oversees the Fraud Detection Division of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (the largest transportation network in North America, covering 5,000 square miles in New York City, Long Island, southeastern New York state, and Connecticut). But he is also a highly successful entrepreneur who got his start at Syracuse University.

When Cueva arrived at SU from Harlem, where he was born and raised, he quickly discovered there was no Latin fraternity. Undaunted, he gathered five friends to found Lambda Upsilon Lambda. Not only does that fraternity still exist, there are now nine Latino fraternities and sororities at SU.

In an attempt to raise funds for the fraternity, Cueva approached Marshall Street bar owners to let his organization rent their spaces on off nights to sponsor parties, bringing in DJs from New York City. "Those events were so successful that when I graduated, I was able to do the same thing in New York City," he says, forming the event promotion company, Soulatino. He and his business partner now own three restaurants in the city—Blend LIC, Blend on the Water, and Blend Astoria—and he's also co-owner of a branding and custom solutions company, ColorWerx.

Cueva's success lies in focusing on quality. He says he can't control any discrimination he may face as a minority, so he focuses on what he can control: his product. "When you come to my events or you come to my restaurant, people don't care that I'm Latin. What they care about is the

“It was wonderful to share the unveiling with so many people. What made the day special was seeing the many young Latin students take part of this occasion and feel proud that their organization was being represented on campus.”

—Sammy Cueva '93

presentation, and if you have something good, they're going to buy it,” he says. Cueva was named event promoter of the year by LatinMix in 2009, and Open Table lists Blend on the Water as one of the top 100 restaurants in the United States.

“Syracuse gave me the tools to grow and succeed,” says Cueva, who feels indebted to give back. He's a contributor to the Latino Alumni Network of Syracuse University (LANSU) Fund, and this year donated a bench featuring plaques commemorating the nine Latino fraternities and sororities in the Orange Grove on campus.

Every year, he donates turkeys during the holidays to families in underprivileged neighborhoods near where he grew up. “Thanksgiving was the one time my parents were together with me and my siblings, and it gave us an opportunity to share and learn more about each other,” he says. “Family is an important part of what has made me successful. My parents didn't even finish high school but they knew education was the key to success, and all three of us kids went to college.”

Cueva came to SU through the HEOP program. “I didn't really have the grades or the financial means to attend, but they took a chance on me,” he says. “They expected me to set goals and accomplish those goals.”

Receiving the Chancellor's Citation award was a great honor for Cueva and his family. “My success is my family's success. I was not alone in obtaining my achievements, so it was great to receive the award with them present,” he says.

He says he realized his story made an impact to students who saw someone who grew up in an inner-city environment just like themselves being honored by the same university they attend. “I am hoping it shines a different outlook on their future and provides hope and goals to accomplish after they receive their SU degree,” he says. ✦



Constance “Connie” Orlando '89

Entertainment Executive

“My Syracuse experience showed me that I could do anything. I could set any goal and accomplish it,” says Connie Orlando '89.

She's done just that. Orlando is executive vice president and head of programming for Black Entertainment Television (BET). She leads original programming, music programming, specials, and the BET News teams responsible for creating, developing, and producing content across the network.

“BET is an iconic brand that celebrates the influence and power of black culture through its content,” says Orlando. “I am inspired every day to come to work because I get to tell our stories. It's my dream job.”

But it wasn't her original path. As the first in her family to attend college, Orlando says her dad wanted her to be a doctor, lawyer, or accountant. “I'm great at numbers, so accounting was the easy choice,” says Orlando, who ultimately graduated with a degree in finance and got a job in banking after college.

On the weekends, she began helping one of her Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority sisters, who had a growing career producing music videos. A new passion was lit. “I went from PA to production coordinator to manager to producer in an entirely new career direction,” she says.

In 1995, Orlando launched her own full-service production company, CMO Productions, where she struck a deal with Jay-Z to produce the first of its kind, direct-to-video movie soundtrack, *The Streets Is Watching*. She also served as executive producer for Big Dog Films, working with acclaimed director Hype Williams.

Orlando joined BET in 2007 as vice president of original programming and later was promoted to senior vice president of specials, music programming, and news. She was named to her current position earlier this year.

“I would encourage students to get out of their comfort zone, engage in new activities, and explore everything,” she says. “Rarely does life unfold the way we think, and it is important to be open.”

A recipient of six NAACP awards and a 2016 Network Journal 25 Influential Black Women in Business honoree, Orlando has launched the Connie Orlando Endowment for black women with television majors. “It feels good to know there's a little seed I've planted that's going to help somebody blossom in their career and their life,” she says.

Giving back is a responsibility she takes seriously. “I do believe that a true measure of a person's character is not what they have accomplished for themselves but is truly seen in how they have helped others,” she says.

Nonetheless, she was honored to have her accomplishments recognized by a Chancellor's Citation. "I feel so blessed to be receiving this award," she says. "Syracuse started me on my career and life trajectory. To come back and be recognized for the impact I've had in my professional career, I'm over the moon." ❖



Gwynne Wilcox '74

The Worker's Advocate

As a first-year student at Syracuse University, Gwynne Wilcox '74 vividly remembers the first football game that year, when the black football players boycotted over unequal treatment and black students rallied on their behalf in protest.

"That became a galvanizing opportunity because the upperclassmen wanted to make sure that we understood what was happening and that it was important for us to participate," says Wilcox.

It was just the beginning of her strong sense of social and racial justice. Wilcox is nationally known for her work as a labor lawyer, advocating for unions and workers. A partner in the New York City law firm Levy Ratner, Wilcox serves as associate general counsel of 1199SEIU, a 300,000-plus member health care union. She spends much of her practice representing 1199 and other unions before administrative agencies and in arbitration, collective bargaining, and litigation. She also serves as a labor representative to the New York City Office of Collective Bargaining.

"I recognized that if I could represent indigent people, I could really make a difference in their lives," says Wilcox, whose successes have included increasing minimum wage and benefits for home care workers and fast food workers.

At Syracuse, the black and Latino students of Wilcox's era had formed a tight, nurturing community. After graduating, many stayed connected through the New York City alumni club, Friends of Syracuse. Wilcox was part of the group that organized the first CBT reunion back in 1983.

"When we started, the thought was we wanted to still connect with the University and the students," she says. "We have this expanding community of alums who all share this special bond. There are stories we can share and learn from each other."

Equally important, she says, is the opportunity to support those in generations to come.

"In addition to offering financial support, it's important for alumni to make connections and open doors for students," Wilcox says. "We definitely stand on the shoulders of people who fought for the opportunities so that we could be on college campuses. We now have the responsibility to continue to create opportunities for others."

Wilcox has served on numerous boards and committees, including the Workers Defense League and the Peggy Browning Fund, which honored her in 2009 for her lifetime achievements on behalf of working people.

She is equally delighted to receive the Chancellor's Citation. "It casts a light on work that often goes unnoticed—providing better wages and benefits for employees so they can provide for themselves and their families," she says. "I'm very glad to accept this citation on behalf of the people and unions I represent." ❖

"I always knew that CBT was a special and unique reunion for black and Latino alumni, but this CBT highlighted for me the depth of the passion and commitment of our alumni of color to CBT and SU. We can bottle that passion and commitment to do even more for CBT, each other, the students, and SU next time." —Gwynne Wilcox '74



Alumni athletes from multiple sports took part in making the CBT Celebrity Classic a success.

The CBT Celebrity Classic pitted Coach Derrick Coleman '15 against Coach Billy Owens '92 to raise funds for the OTHC Scholarship Fund. Held at Henninger High School, the game was also a community event, allowing local fans to see and meet their favorite players.

“SU is a big sports school and we have so many talented alumni. We thought this would be a great way to engage our athletic alumni and build some excitement for CBT in a new, innovative way,” says organizer Miko Horn '95, founder and CEO of Epic Sports and Events and a board member of the SU Alumni Club of Atlanta.

Horn got the ball rolling by reaching out to Owens, Coleman, and Lazarus Sims '96.

It wasn't a hard sell. “To be honest, everyone was in from the beginning,” says Horn. “And once you get the big names, it's easy to get support.”

Sims, now director of parks and recreation in Syracuse and a graduate of Henninger High School, suggested the community location. More than 20 athletes participated, either as players and coaches, referees, commentators, scoring, or fan engagement, including John Wallace '96, Lawrence Moten '95, Gene Waldron '84, Ryan Blackwell '00, James Southerland '13,

Eric Devendorf '09, Brittney Sykes '17, and Mookie Jones '12.

Horn also engaged students from SU's David B. Falk College of Sport and Human Dynamics to perform game operations, providing a hands-on learning and networking opportunity.

You couldn't ask for a better event to launch an exciting CBT weekend. Coleman's White team scored a 105-90 win over Owens's Blue team. Sykes, who had recently finished her rookie season with the WNBA Atlanta Dream, led the team's victory

with 34 points. A consummate competitor, Coleman had promised a win before the game, “even if I have to pay the refs,” he quipped.

The enthusiastic crowd included a mix of alumni, members of the local community, and current students, including a few members of the 2017-18 men's basketball team who came out to see SU legends in action. After the game, fans mingled with the former Syracuse players, took pictures, and got autographs. And some of the players did the same, taking photos with each other and of players from different eras.

Despite the great time they had, the athletes were focused on their goal to raise money for scholarships and their desire to give back.

“It's a very good cause for Latino and African American students who might not have the funds,” says Moten.

Owens has a daughter who is a current student. “I know how much it costs to go to Syracuse, so the money is going toward something that is great.”

“This celebrity game is our effort to support an endowment for black and Latino students at Syracuse University,” adds Coleman. “We're raising money for tuition, books, and housing for students.”

Coleman's involvement with CBT didn't end at the basketball game. The next day, he joined an athletic roundtable that included SU legends Dave Bing '66 and Floyd Little '67, H'16, along with former SU women's player Felisha Legette-Jack '89, offering their experiences and advice to current student athletes.

Says Horn of the inaugural event, “We're all looking forward to doing it again in 2020.”

“It's always exciting to be around my teammates. Every time that we get together, we just enjoy each other. So to be able to put an event on like today, and to go out and raise money for other kids, it's just the icing on the cake.”

—Derrick Coleman '15



CBT Worship Service Celebrates 40 Years of BCCE at SU



Rev. Dr. Seretta McKnight '81, Barry Wells, and Laurie Kingsberry '82

As a first-year student in 1977, Seretta McKnight '81 organized six other students to start a gospel choir on campus. At the time, she was looking to fill a spiritual and musical void in her own life. But that group, the Black Celestial Choral Ensemble, took on a life of its own. At CBT, BCCE celebrated its 40th anniversary on campus.

It was only fitting that McKnight, now the Rev. Dr. McKnight, was tapped to help organize the celebration, the annual worship service that concludes CBT weekend. And what a service it was, including praise from the Rev. Dr. Charles A. Houston '90 and a sermon from Bishop Norman H. Lyons Jr. '81, who served as the first music director of BCCE.

Of course music was central to the program, including the current BCCE; its alumni group, TAG-BCCE; and guest performer Kurt Carr, a Grammy-nominated Gospel Music Hall of Fame inductee.

"He came in on Saturday and we all had a massive rehearsal," says McKnight.

While Sunday worship is a staple of CBT, this service was particularly well attended, which McKnight attributes to a combination of Lyons and Carr, as well as the troubling times in which we live. "Culturally, we know the worship experience, the church, has been center to social justice and humanitarian issues, the connector of the dots," she says.

It was also the first opportunity for many alumni to meet the new dean of Hendricks Chapel, the Rev. Dr. Brian Konkol, who

surprised everyone with the announcement of a new University operating budget to support BCCE.

Nobody was more thrilled than McKnight and fellow BCCE performer Laurie Kingsberry '82, who together launched the Legacy Lives fundraising campaign in 2015 to support BCCE in perpetuity. The group has raised more than \$21,600 thus far, money that can now be devoted to scholarships.

"Glory be to God for that," says McKnight. "After 40 years, we finally have an operating budget provided by the University, which is instrumental for being able to plan tours."

To culminate the Legacy Lives campaign, TAG-BCCE is organizing a worship experience in Atlanta next year to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the assassination of Martin Luther King. Raising money for scholarships is important, but equally so is the worship experience, McKnight says.

"The world just seems to be a little upside down right now," she says. "As faith-based entities, it's important to provide the type of standard that will help us recognize and respect each other's humanity." ✦

"Every CBT I get the exact same feeling: I feel loved. I feel such warmth, and it takes me back to a remarkable four years of my life. So every time I come, I get a little piece of that joy back. Then I take it with me."

—Deirdre Poe Sanders '85

More Than \$1 Million Raised for OTHC Scholarships in 2017

Nowhere was the momentum generated by CBT 2017 more acutely felt than in the fundraising for the Our Time Has Come Scholarship Fund, which was placed front and center of priorities in the planning and theme of the event. In less than nine months—from the start of 2017 until CBT weekend—an astounding \$1 million was raised to support scholarships for African American and Latino students at Syracuse University.

“It’s wonderful for folks to come back and rekindle college friendships and their connection to Syracuse University,” says Rachel Vassel ’91, assistant vice president for program development. “But most of us alumni arrived here with some help, and it’s now our turn to pay it forward to help the next generation at SU. One million dollars will increase the size and number of OTHC scholarships for the many African American and Latino students with a financial need.”

Many of the events held during CBT weekend were fundraisers for OTHC, including the gala and silent auction, Celebrity Basketball Classic, the Chancellor’s 5K Walk, Run, and Roll, and the CBT pop-up shop. Items will continue to be available through December 31, 2017, at programdevelopment.syr.edu.

At Saturday night’s gala, alumni were primed by the message of keynote speaker Dave Bing ’66, H’06, who chaired the inaugural campaign for the OTHC Scholarship Fund when it was launched in 1987.

“Education is very expensive. A Syracuse education is very, very expensive,” says Bing, whose varied successes include professional basketball, business, politics, and philanthropy. “Without financial support, it’s very difficult to increase our population of black and brown students here. We must commit to improve the lives and the opportunities for those who come after us.”

With the presentation of gifts by alumni groups and individuals, the spirit of philanthropy was thick in the air when Vassel put out the call that hitting a million dollars was within reach with a few more donations.

Not to be outdone by the large checks he saw presented, SU men’s basketball coach Jim Boeheim spontaneously added a \$10,000 personal gift from him and wife Juli to the \$10,000 awarded by the Jim and Julie Boehim Foundation, for a total of \$20,000.

Actor Taye Diggs ’93 came forward to generously donate an additional auction item—a backstage pass to the set of *Empire* and lunch with him. The furious bidding that followed helped reach the goal.

“Our alumni happily raised another \$40,000 on the spot,

allowing us to hit the \$1 million mark,” says Vassel. “It was a wonderful moment, showing that if we have a goal to help students, together we can do it. Afterward, many of the donors took pictures with their checks to mark that historic moment.”

But that wasn’t the end of it. On October 17, SU held its first-ever day of giving, calling on alumni, parents, students, faculty, staff, and friends of Syracuse University to make gifts during SU’s 24 hours of giving. The Black and Hispanic Undergraduate Endowed Scholarship Fund received \$9,000 from 135 donors, with an additional matching prize of \$5,000 from SU Life Trustee Daniel A. D’Aniello ’68 and his wife, Gayle.

And SU’s Invest Syracuse fundraising campaign, announced in October, includes a \$250,000 matching gift for the Our Time Has Come-Invest Syracuse Scholarship. “It is our hope that we will add \$500,000 to the Scholarship Fund to help talented black and Latino students attend and graduate from Syracuse University,” says Chancellor Kent Syverud.

The Our Time Has Come Scholarship Fund was created in 1987 to support black and Latino students at Syracuse University. To date, more than 1,300 scholarships have been awarded. For the 2017-18 academic year, 54 scholarships were awarded to 45 recipients. It is those students who were most touched by the tremendous fundraising effort on their behalf.

Gerald Brown ’18 was notified of her OTHC Scholarship the week before CBT. “It’s been an uphill battle financially my whole time here,” says Brown, from Chicago. “I didn’t have any money for my books or my supplies as a sculptor. It was a beautiful moment when I was awarded the scholarship because now I can get the materials I need for my senior thesis. Plus, to join a legacy of incredible individuals who have been part of this program is really inspiring.”

“Our Time Has Come has helped me and my three older siblings graduate from Syracuse University,” adds Malcolm-Ali Davis ’18, who served as student co-chair for CBT. “I know I wouldn’t be here if it wasn’t for the generous giving of alumni, from the smallest donation of \$5 on up. It has provided for all of us, so thank you.”

“This scholarship . . . has allowed me to connect with other students like myself as well as alumni. The family and network is one that I will cherish for life. Thank you for your generous contribution, which made my scholarship possible.” —Ensonn Morris Jr. ’18

DST Sets Its Own \$1 Million Goal

Some of the most significant fundraising for OTHC—the most money raised by an individual group—has been conducted by the alumnae of Delta Sigma Theta.

In 2011, the DST alumnae became the first African American Greek organization at SU to create an endowment fund, setting a goal of raising \$100,000 by CBT 2014. “It was a smarter investment vehicle than making an annual gift each year and then starting over from scratch the next year,” says Gisele Marcus ’89, executive vice president of strategic initiatives and operations for the St. Louis Regional Chamber. “We wanted to leave a legacy.”

That initial goal was not only met, but exceeded. At CBT 2014, the student and alumnae body of DST voted to establish an endowment of \$1 million by 2023 to mark the 50th anniversary of the chapter.

While it sounds like a daunting amount, Marcus says the goal is quite reasonable. “We have approximately 400 Deltas who pledged at Syracuse University. If each gave \$20 a month for 10 years, our 10-year target of \$1 million would be met,” she explains. “Thus, our annual target is \$100,000 each year of the campaign.”

The reality is not always quite so simple. The group has been assisted in hitting its target for the last two CBT reunions by sisters Darlene Harris ’84 and Debbie Harris ’84, who established matching gift challenges to spur their sorors. In August 2014, when the group had raised \$70,000 of its \$100,000 goal with six weeks until reunion, the Harris twins challenged their sisters to raise \$40,000, matching it with their own \$40,000 to bring the total that year to \$150,000.

This year, the Harris twins matched every \$2,500 raised with \$500 of their own.

They have contributed 15 percent of the \$1 million goal to date. “Their gift of giving has been encouraging inspiration to all Deltas of Syracuse University,” says Marcus. At CBT, the Deltas announced cumulative giving of \$335,000 in hand, hoping to hit \$400,000 by year-end.

CBT 2020 will mark the seventh year of the endowment, with a



Gisele Marcus '89

goal of \$700,000. To enhance giving and stay on track, the group is developing a three-year fundraising strategic plan. “We want to build a plan that is clear, relevant to our members’ expectations and the goals we plan to meet,” says Marcus. ☪

Our Time Has Come Leadership Program Launched

The Our Time Has Come Scholarship program provides much needed scholarship support to help deserving African American and Latino students meet the financial costs of their Syracuse University education.

Now, the Office of Program Development is expanding the program to provide a leadership development and training program to give students an extra edge as they graduate and enter the working world.

“This is a new component of what we do for our scholars,” says Angela-Morales Patterson, assistant director of alumni and donor engagement. “Our goal is to provide monthly training sessions that will help students be more marketable and more successful in the workplace when they leave Syracuse.”

The program launched in November with students completing an Individual Leadership Assessment. The December session will feature Don Vassel '89 speaking on “Impacting Underserved

Communities” and María Melendéz '89 presenting on “Keys to Success for First-Generation College Students.” Vassel is CEO of the 100 Black Men of Atlanta and Melendéz is a partner in the law firm Sidley Austin LLP.

“Our scholars are already very successful students,” says Rachel Vassel '91, assistant vice president for program development. “They have an average 3.6 GPA and are active in the campus community. This is about getting them ready to lead in the workplace, teaching them the basics of how to network, and to provide information about different industries and career choices.” ✦



OTHC Scholars: Tatiana Hernández-Mitchell '20, Maia Wilson '19, Stacy Fernández '19, Blair McQueen '20, Izmailia Sougoufara '18, Abigail Covington '19, Leslie Sánchez '18, Marcus Lane Jr. '19, and Malcolm-Ali Davis '18

“Your generous contribution to my education has made it possible for me to continue pursuing my dream of becoming an engineer and hopefully a pilot one day. I am very thankful for your help in relieving the [financial] stresses that come with being a college student.” —Angel Guerrero '18

Our Time Has Come

Scholarship Program

LIST OF DONORS

Gifts received for Our Time Has Come from
March 16 - November 20, 2017

Giving Level of \$10,000 or more

Black-Hispanic Undergraduate Endowed Scholarship

Mr. James Arthur Boeheim Jr. '66, G'73 and
Mrs. Juli Greene Boeheim G'97

Delta Beta Executive Alumni Foundation Fund

Mr. Anthony Morgan '81

Delta Sigma Theta Endowed Scholarship

Ms. Darlene Harris '84
Ms. Deborah Harris '84

Homer L Harrison Endowed Scholarship

Anonymous

Gisele A. Marcus Endowed Scholarship

Ms. Gisele A. Marcus '89

Orange Grove Alumni Association

Mr. Zhamyr R. Cueva '93

Giving Level of \$5,000 - \$9,999

African American Accounting Alumni Endowed Scholarship

Dr. Charles A. Houston Jr. '90 and
Mrs. Monica Edwards Houston '90

Allman-Manning Memorial Scholarship

Mrs. Rosalyn Y. Allman-Manning '75

Black-Hispanic Undergraduate Endowed Scholarship

Mr. Peter G. Henriques '80

Class of '74 Endowed Scholarship Fund

Ms. Gwynne A. Wilcox '74

Delta Sigma Theta Endowed Scholarship

Ms. Gisele A. Marcus '89
Mr. Keith A. Moody '89 and Ms. Fatimah
Muhammad-Moody '90

Hispanic/Black Undergraduate Scholarship Gift Fund

Wegmans Food Markets Inc.

Kappa Chapter Omega Psi Phi Endowed Scholarship Fund

Mr. Michael E. Blackshear '91

Latino Alumni Network of SU (LANSU) Endowed Scholarship

Ms. Bethaida C. Gonzalez G'04

Program Development Gifts

Ms. Darlene Harris '84 and Ms. Deborah Harris '84

Giving Level of \$ 1,000-\$ 4,999

Alpha Kappa Alpha Iota Upsilon Chapter

Dr. Curtis Cheeks Jr. and Ms. Hope Whyllie- Cheeks '83
Ms. Rachel A. Williams '04

Alpha Kappa Alpha Iota Upsilon Legacy Graduate Scholarship

Mr. Spencer Bellamy and Mrs. Jasmine Bellamy '92
Mr. Charlie E. Lester '81 and Dr. Sharon A.
Brangman '77

Alpha Phi Alpha Delta Zeta Scholarship

Dr. Phillip D. Dunigan '76
Lt. Col. Victor Holman '82 and Mrs. Dakota Holman '83
Mrs. Rebecca I. Johnson '82 and Lt. Col. Milton W.
Johnson, USAF Ret. '83
Dr. Ricardo Kimbers
Ms. Valencia D. Yearwood '85 and Mr. Marvin K.
Pettus '84

Black-Hispanic Undergraduate Endowed Scholarship

Mrs. Susan Carter-Chavers '74
Mr. M. Dolan Evanovich
Friends of Program Development
Mr. Archie L. Gilchrist '75
GiveSmart US Inc. (auction)
Mrs. Lynette G. Hall '89
Ms. Janice V. Long '87
Ms. Kisha L. Miller, Esq. '93
Mr. Frank W. Minor III '77 and Mrs. Sarah L. Minor '77
Mr. Freddy Morales '97
Mr. Harry Thomas Stewart Jr. and Ms. Phaedra Rice
Stewart '91
Mr. Matthew J. Ter Molen
Ticket Sales for Celebrity Basketball Game
Mrs. Cheryl D. Wills-Singleton '89

Class of '74 Endowed Scholarship Fund

Mr. Leonard R. Garner Jr. '74 and Mrs. Robin Garner
Mr. Charles B. Johnson '77 and Dr. Cheryl H.
Johnson '74
Levy Ratner P.C. in honor of Gwynne Wilcox '74

Delta Beta Executive Alumni Foundation Fund

Delta Beta Executive Alumni Foundation
Mr. Michael Pitts

Delta Sigma Theta Endowed Scholarship

Mr. Milton Britton Jr. and Mrs. Lori J. Smith-Britton '92
Dr. Alicia M. Carroll '88
Miss Dianna G. Crawford '87
Mr. Joe L. Edwards '84 and Dr. Dielka Thompson
Edwards '79
Ms. Lynne T. Gainey '81
Ms. Pia F. Gero '86 in memory of Ms. Thelma M.
Johnson-Jones '85
Mrs. Kimberly Pendergrast Harris '88
Mr. Haywood E. McDuffie and Ms. Sharon R.
Barner '79 in memory of Ms. Gail A. Campbell
Woolley '79
Ms. Shawn R. Outler '89
Mrs. Heather Keets Wright '92

Gisele A. Marcus Endowed Scholarship

Mrs. Beverly A. Marcus

Helena Mitchell Scholarship Fund

Mr. Anthony Bennia '73, G'75 and Ms. Cherie Lindsay
Bennia
Dr. Helena Mitchell G'78, G'87

Hispanic/Black Undergraduate Scholarship Gift Fund

Mr. Mark A. Jackson Sr. and Ms. Candace Campbell
Jackson

Kappa Chapter Omega Psi Phi Endowed Scholarship Fund

Mr. Vincent H. Cohen Jr. '92
Mr. Derrick A. Hostler '85
Mr. Hope B. Merritt III '96

Latino Alumni Network of SU (LANSU) Endowed Scholarship

Mr. Zhamyr R. Cueva '93

Maxmillian Osiris Radford Finley Scholarship

Jose Cruz '74

NALFO Endowed Scholarship Fund

Mr. Jesse A. Mejia '97

Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity Theta Xi Chapter Endowed Scholarship

Mr. Richard K. Appiah '96 and Ms. Marsha Appiah '00

Syracuse 8 Scholarship Endowed Fund

Syracuse 8 LLC

The Alumni Group of the Black Celestial Choral Ensemble Living Legacy Fund

Mrs. Evelyn H. Carter '90
Lt. Col. Victor Holman '82 and Mrs. Dakota Holman '83
Ms. Seretta C. McKnight '80

Giving Level of \$500-\$999

Alpha Kappa Alpha Iota Upsilon Chapter

Mr. Charlie E. Lester '81 and Dr. Sharon A.
Brangman '77
Mr. Don C. Vassel '89 and Mrs. Rachel Elizabeth
Vassel '91
Miss Sonia L. Walker '83

Alpha Phi Alpha Delta Zeta Scholarship

Mr. Geoffrey A. Johnson '78, G'83 and Mrs. Avon
Marie Hart-Johnson
Mr. Rufus E. Jones '75 and Mrs. Laraine Bennett
Jones '75
Mr. Leonard Robbins '95 and Mrs. Celia M.
King-Robbins '82
Mr. Robert W. Shapiro '74 and Mrs. Peggy Y.
Shapiro '73

Black-Hispanic Undergraduate Endowed Scholarship

CBT Thursday Night After Party Ticket Sales
Ms. Lynne Davis '91
Mr. Charles B. Johnson '77 and Dr. Cheryl H.
Johnson '74

Ms. Alfreida Kenny '72
Ms. Delita M. Marsland
Dr. John Sheridan McAleer '01
Ms. Jamielle V. McCullough '95
Mr. Injil Muhammad '86 and Mrs. Michele S. Muhammad '87
Ms. Clarybel Peguero '97
Mr. Charles W. Stevens '77 and Dr. Jennifer Greene Stevens
Mr. Rey P. Sully G'10 and Mrs. Jennifer A. Sully G'10
Ms. Rachel A. Williams '04

Brown and Holman Scholarship Fund

Mr. Keith M. Brown '82 and Mrs. Maria M. Perez-Brown
Lt. Col. Victor Holman '82 and Mrs. Dakota Holman '83

Delta Beta Executive Alumni Foundation Fund

Mr. John G. Clemons Jr. '76, G'14 and Ms. Corine Clemons
Mr. Richard A. Dillon '88
Mr. A. Maurice Etheredge '85
Mr. Marquise Alexander Francis '13
Mr. Trevor L. McKenzie '86

Delta Sigma Theta Endowed Scholarship

Mrs. Rosalyn Y. Allman-Manning '75
Mr. Sean Bergan and Ms. Nkenge A. Bergan '95 in honor of Melanie Hudson '95
Ms. Ravonda M. Blount-Oden '87
Ms. Shanique W. Bonelli-Moore '02
Dr. Lisa D. Brabham '87
Mrs. Barbara Holston Brady '79
Mrs. Erica D. Branch-Ridley '87
Mrs. Carolyn Cooper Cole '87
Mr. Colin A. Danville '80 and Dr. Jenice L. View '80
Mrs. Doris M. Davis '90
Ms. Kimberly R. Edwards '98
Mrs. Naima Lockhart Gibson '95
Ms. Delana A. Glenn '79
Ms. Dawn M. Hobdy '89
Ms. Reba Y. Hodge '02, G'17
Mr. Carl T. Jenkins '88 and Mrs. Tonya M. Couch-Jenkins '88
Mrs. Patricia Jenkins Hurlock '85
Mr. Todd Van Lattimore and Mrs. Lisa Glymph Lattimore '91
Ms. Lia N. Miller-Spicer '99, G'03
Ms. Stephanie Navarrete '14
Mrs. Doris M. Parris '85
Ms. Shamara T. Ray '93
Ms. Deborah Rhem-Jackson '79
Mrs. Meka S. Sales '94
Miss Milan Camille Sledge '15
Ms. Gwendolyn M. Sparks '85
Ms. Michelle Waites, Esq. '84 and April Holder
Ms. NaTasha Janiece Webb-Prather '11
Mr. Timothy Williams and Ms. Elaine R. Williams '80 in memory of Gail A. Campbell Woolley '79
Mrs. Deborah Williams-Lofton '83
Mrs. Heather K. Wright '90

Engineering Undergraduate Black or Hispanic Endowed Scholarship

Mr. Brian K. Jones '88 and Mrs. Terri Lynne Jones
Mr. Charles J. Willis Jr. '90

Helena Mitchell Scholarship Fund

Mr. William C. Lindsey Jr. and Dr. Helena Mitchell G'78, G'87

Kappa Chapter Omega Psi Phi Endowed Scholarship Fund

Mr. Winfred S. Battle '81 in honor of Eugene F. Howard '79
Dr. Michael D. Bell '79 in honor of Eugene F. Howard '79

Mr. Don C. Vassel '89 and Mrs. Rachel Elizabeth Vassel '91

Major Grant Williams Memorial Scholarship

Mr. Anthony M. Callisto '15 in memory of Major Grant Williams
Mrs. Maxine A. Williams '77, '79, G'81, G'98

Syracuse 8 Scholarship Endowed Fund

Mr. Dana J. Harrell '71, G'73

The Alumni Group of the Black Celestial Choral Ensemble Living Legacy Fund

Friends of the Black Celestial Choral Ensemble
Mrs. Sonya D. Grant '94
Mr. Todd Jenkins and Ms. Venida C. Rodman Jenkins '94 in memory of Mr. Ervin C. Allgood '82
Chancellor Kent D. Syverud and Dr. Ruth Chen

Giving Level of \$100-\$499

African American Accounting Alumni Endowed Scholarship

Ms. Cassandra Belton '90

A&S Undergraduate Black or Hispanic Endowed

Mrs. Vena Ruby Crichlow-Scales '86

Alpha Kappa Alpha Iota Upsilon Chapter

Miss Kimberly P. Armstrong '77
Ms. Nadine N. Burns-Lyons '76
Mrs. Patricia Byrd-Harmon '82
Miss Angela L. Clark '91
Ms. Tisha E. Davis '83 in memory of Dorothy Goodwin G'61
Mr. Marvyn L. Gaynor Jr. and Ms. Donine M. Carrington '91
Mr. William Glenn Robinson and Ms. Deirdre Gall Robinson '82
Mrs. Sonya D. Grant '94
Ms. Brenda J. Johnson '79
Ms. Michelle S. Lee '90
Dr. Charmon D. Parker-Williams '78
Mr. Raymond C. Pierce '80 and Mrs. Diane Hewlett Pierce '82
Ms. Alpha Reynolds-Lewis '02
Mr. Kym Sessoms and Ms. Donna Card Sessoms '89
Mrs. LaVerne H. Stevens '80
Mr. Jonathan Williams '80 and Mrs. Michele W. Williams '82

Alpha Kappa Alpha Iota Upsilon Legacy Graduate Scholarship

Ms. Mychal S. Boyd '99
Mrs. Candice Kelly Casey '94
Mr. Martin J. Davis '05 and Mrs. Michelle C. Walker-Davis '83, G'85
Miss DeChane L. Dorsey, Esq. '91
Mr. Aljia Dumas Jr. G'76 and Ms. Lawana V. Weldon-Dumas '78
Mr. Michael K. Fauntroy and Ms. Lisa A. Williams-Fauntroy '91
Miss Lisa A. Hoston '86
Ms. Jamielle V. McCullough '95
Mr. Stephen Stevens and Mrs. LaVerne H. Stevens '80

Allman-Manning Memorial Scholarship

Mr. Steven F. Landau '72 and Mrs. Jill K. Landau '72
Mr. and Mrs. Willie Manning
Ms. Janice Y. Slater

Alpha Phi Alpha Delta Zeta Scholarship

Mr. Michael W. Blow '80
Mr. Cordell Ennis '07, G'11
Mr. Jaimee L. Friend '82 and Mrs. Alicia H. Friend '82
Mr. Steven D. King '88
Mr. LaQuawn Loving '09

Mr. Paul A. Murdock '85 and Mrs. Michele S. Murdock '85
Mr. Jake Tanksley '85 and Ms. Crystal J. Tanksley '06

Black-Hispanic Undergraduate Endowed Scholarship

Mrs. Lolet J. Ahyee '96, G'08
Mr. Howard J. Baldinger '86 and Mrs. Jennifer Baldinger
Mr. Jack E. Baldinger '21
Teiahsha Bankhead, Ph.D. '91
Mrs. Bernadette Headley Biggs '85
Ms. Mariama S. Boney '96, G'98 in memory of Robert L. Boney
Mr. Dwayne L. Joseph '94 and Mrs. Lamindy C. Brandon-Joseph '94
Ms. Carla D. Brown '87
Mr. Michael P. Burke '93
Chancellor's CBT 5K Run
Mr. Robert J. Chappell '90, L'95 and Ms. Nicole K. Chappell '90, L'92, L'93
Mr. Kyle A. Coleman '10
Dr. Llewellyn J. Cornelius '82 and Ms. Lydia Cornelius
Dr. Sabrina N. Crouch '92
Miss Paula J. Davis '76
Ms. Emmelie Y. De La Cruz '12
Mr. Wesley C. Dias '74
Mrs. Brianna M. Downing '99
Mr. Calvin D. Evans '65
Miss Jacquelyn M. French '84
Mr. Michael Gaspard
Mr. Archie L. Gilchrist '75, G'76
Ms. Bethaida C. Gonzalez G'04
Ms. Darice S. Gonzalez '80
Ms. Tanya Forrest Hall '93
Ms. Judith C. Hanson '95
Miss Kasandra L. Harley '91, G'93
Miss Mellanee R. Harvin '86
Mr. Jerome W. Hill '09
Mr. David Hollenback and Professor Sharon R. Hollenback
Mr. Jason A. Jackson '05
Mr. Mark Jackson
Mr. Mark A. Jackson Sr. and Ms. Candace Campbell Jackson
Mr. Michael C. James '94 and Ms. Carla Miller-James
Mr. Brian K. Jones '88 and Mrs. Terri Lynne Jones
Ms. Lauren A. Kochian '99, G'01
Ms. Patricia Leon-Guerrero '04
Mr. Antoni E. Lucas '03
Mr. Oliver J. Mack Sr. '92 and Mrs. Sandra Calfee Mack '89
Mr. David C. McMenamin '05
Ms. Kimberly Y. Melgar '08
Dr. Jeffrey Lyle Meyer and Dr. Madonna Harrington Meyer
Mr. David C. Miller '95
Mr. Anwar K. Nasir '06
Ms. Nicole Osborne '14
Mr. Massimo Pianiri and Ms. Maria Arteaga
Ms. Kellie E. Porter '99
Mrs. Shamiaka T. Preston '97
Mr. Adrian J. Prieto
Professor LaVonda N. Reed
Mr. William Reidy and Mrs. Cheryl Yvette Reidy '83
Miss Candice M. Richardson '90, G'91
Mr. Dana Robin and Mrs. Lucy Robin
Ms. Tavia S. Robinson '88
Dr. Akima H. Rogers '92 and Lt. Col. Pia W. Rogers '98, G'01, L'01
Mr. Fred Sanders and Ms. Deirdre L. Poe-Sanders '85
Mr. Gerald M. Shealey '80 and Mrs. Alesia H. Shealey
Ms. Leah Smith Sheppard '88
Ms. Natacha Simon-Christie '98
Ms. Camille V. Simpson '95
Mrs. Kathy Hopkins Smith, EdD '67

Mr. Trevor T. Tamsen '04 and Ms. Cecilia M. Tamsen '04
Ms. Kymberly D. Terry '88, G'88
Mr. David E. Trotman-Wilkins '75 and Ms. Della Trotman-Wilkins
Ms. Kisha B. Turpin '97
Mr. Don C. Vassel '89 and Mrs. Rachel Elizabeth Vassel '91
Mr. Mario Villacourt '83
Mrs. Allison J. Walsh '92
Miss Vanessa E. Watson '82
Mr. Barry Wells and Mrs. Claudette P. McGowan-Wells G'82

Class of '74 Endowed Scholarship Fund

Mrs. Brenda L. Dillon Cavette '99
Mrs. Diane R. Chesley '74
Mr. Joseph H. Cruz '74 and Ms. Francine Gennuso
Mr. Donald R. Lockett G'74
Mr. Stephen A. Moses '78

Delta Beta Executive Alumni Foundation Fund

Mr. Robert Gregg
Mr. Walter A. Marable III in memory of Wayne Brown '78 and Maxmillian O. Finley '98 and in honor of Phil F. Romain '85

Delta Sigma Theta Endowed Scholarship

Ms. Yolanda Roset Arrington '00
Ms. Danielle Beidleman
Ms. Nyasha Boldon '11, G'14
Mrs. Sandi R. Boyd '02
Ms. Jennifer Nicole Britton '13
Mr. Monte J. Cole '01 and Ms. Tanesha A. Cameron-Cole '03, G'09
Miss Candice L. Carnage '90
Ms. Francis C. Carrero '10
Miss Candace S. Carter '99
Ms. Sadie Davis '75
Mrs. Cheryl A. Dixon-Hills '75
Miss Danielle T. Douglas '88
Ms. Ebony A. Dowtin '95
Ms. Tamara D. Dukes '93, G'94
Mrs. Deborah W. Foster '75
Miss Connie M. Grant '87
Ms. Hope Gupple '84
Miss Stacey M. Hamilton '89
Dr. Debra Bright Harris '91
Ms. Kimberly N. Harris '09
Miss Nkenge A. Hewitt '92
Mrs. Vikki A. Ismael '90
Ms. Jacqueline Patricia Jackson '89
Mrs. Tawanda W. Johnson '91
Mr. Rufus Jones '75 and Mrs. Laraine Bennett Jones '75
Ms. Laurie Kingsberry '82
Ms. Roshone Ault Lee '99
Ms. Helena M. Lyttle '90
Ms. Brooke K. McKie '95
Mr. Henry H. Melchor and Mrs. Jacqueline Yolanda Robinson-Melchor '78
Ms. Dawne R. Morgan '78
Miss Devika A. Parikh '88
Ms. Rasheda A. Persinger-Adams '03
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SU Responds to Students Impacted By Natural Disasters

The first three months of this academic year witnessed a string of destructive natural disasters: Hurricane Harvey brought unprecedented flooding to the Gulf Coast of Texas and Louisiana; an earthquake rocked Central Mexico; Hurricanes Irma, Jose, and Maria ravaged the Eastern Caribbean, Puerto Rico, and Southern Florida; followed by devastating wildfires in Northern California and the Mount Agung volcanic eruption in Bali. Although Syracuse is safely removed from these areas, students who call those locales home are part of the university community.

In the aftermath of each of these events, various units within the division of Enrollment and the Student Experience and throughout the university have reached out to students from the affected areas to offer an array of campus support, ranging from counseling services to academic resources to financial assistance. “It’s been an ongoing, campus-wide effort,” says Ryan Williams, senior associate vice president for enrollment. “We want to make sure students whose families have been impacted by these disasters are aware of the campus resources available to support them through this difficult time.”

One of those is OTHC Scholar Cynthia González ’18, an information studies major from Puerto Rico. After Hurricane Maria, González says she was unable to reach her family for 15 days, causing great emotional stress. And for the next two months, her family and friends struggled with scarcity

of bottled water, gas, and food.

Although being so far and so disconnected was difficult, González credits her “Syracuse family” for providing support. “Angela Morales-Patterson from Program Development personally called on various occasions to offer her aid, and the Office of the Registrar, where I work as a work-study student was another source of support,” she says. “The response from the SU community has been tremendous and I am grateful that people here were so caring, and empathetic.”

In addition to supporting current Syracuse University students impacted by disasters, Williams says the University is working hard to assist and accommodate prospective students impacted,

particularly those in Puerto Rico and the Eastern Caribbean, where power and Internet access is still severely limited.

“There are many issues that make it difficult for students in the impacted areas to meet college application deadlines,” says Williams. “Parents may not be working so there are financial constraints. Schools are closed so students can’t get transcripts and recommendations sent out. And they may not have the Internet access required to submit their application online.”

Williams says admissions staff will be reaching out to prospective students they are aware of from the impacted areas, offering assistance ranging from fee waivers to deadline extensions. In addition, the Office of Admissions is sending staff to Puerto Rico in December to help students complete their admission and financial aid applications.

“We have a long history recruiting from Puerto Rico and we don’t want to lose talented students because of circumstances beyond their control,” Williams says.

Hendricks Chapel has served as a resource for both those who need support and those who are looking to offer help. Nearly 200 students applied to participate in a hurricane relief trip to Puerto Rico in December co-sponsored by the chapel and the SU Student Association. Twenty-three students, led by Baptist Chaplain Devon Bartholomew and assistant Muslim Chaplain Ibrahim Malik, will work on relief efforts in the greater San Juan area.

Other activities on campus have included a collection of items at the Community Folk Art Center for Dominica; a candlelight vigil sponsored by the University’s chapter of the Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers; a collection for relief efforts at the Syracuse vs. Wake Forest football game; and a poetry reading and gathering hosted by Deborah Orieta ’20. ☘

“The response from the SU community has been tremendous, and I am grateful that people here were so supportive, caring, and empathetic.”

—Cynthia González ’18

SU Celebrates Latino/Hispanic Heritage Month



Latino/Hispanic Heritage parade



Students from McKinley- Brighton Elementary School who participated in the parade

The Office of Program Development partnered with Syracuse University's Office of Multicultural Affairs to host Latino/Hispanic Heritage Month (LHHM) from September 15 to October 15. The 12th annual program featured musical performances, traditional cuisine samplings, dance parties, and speakers, providing the campus and local community with many opportunities to learn about and experience the richness of Latino American cultures.

The celebration begins each year on September 15, the anniversary of independence for Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua. As serendipity would have it, this year the LHHM kick-off weekend coincided with CBT. Alumni on campus for CBT weekend were invited to join with students from SU and the Syracuse City School District in a parade down the Einhorn Family Walk, many of them carrying flags representing the countries of their cultural heritage.

"Our alumni really enjoyed the parade and their presence made this annual kick-off event extra special," says Angela Morales-Patterson, assistant director of alumni and donor engagement in the Office of Program Development and co-chair of LHHM with Marisa Willingham in the Office of Multicultural Affairs. "The timing of this could not have been better. This was a great chance for our diverse alumni returning to campus for reunion to see the spirit of our Latino and Hispanic students and to share a common experience with them that we hope lasts well past this one weekend."

That evening, it was a packed crowd for the opening reception of the La Casita Cultural Center exhibit *Fusión Caribe: The History of Our Music*, highlighting the musical heritage of Latin music and its fusion of Spanish, African, and Taíno roots. "While this is always a popular event, the reception was particularly well attended by alumni, who enjoyed the tapas and dancing," says Morales-Patterson.

The next day, alumni and students gathered on the Orange

Grove for the bench with plaques commemorating the University's nine Latino fraternity and sorority chapters, an effort spearheaded and funded by Zhamyr "Sammy" Cuevo '93. "Latino students have made many contributions to SU over the years, and I wanted to see our presence recognized on campus," he says. "It was particularly meaningful that this unveiling coincided with both LHHM and CBT."

The month of LHHM events, coordinated by the Office of Multicultural Affairs, included numerous lectures, film screenings, dance events, and a blood drive. The signature event, *Festa Latina*, was a celebration featuring Latino cuisine, live entertainment, performances by Tali and DJ Mega Jay, and awards presentations. Luís Columna, exercise science professor in the School of Education, was honored with the Trailblazer Award in recognition of his tireless commitment to the values of Syracuse University and his continued support of Latino students and alumni. José Pérez L'07 received the Distinguished Alumni Excellence Award for his exemplary leadership, selfless acts, and dedication to the University's Latino community.

This year's LHHM commemorative speaker was Edgardo Miranda-Rodriguez, the writer and creator of the critically acclaimed, bestselling graphic novel *La Borinqueña*, which combines comics with social justice. The graphic novel follows an undergraduate student on a study abroad program in Puerto Rico who turns into a superhero to help the environment and her people. ☘

"One of the personal highlights of CBT weekend was hearing Chancellor Syverud voice support for DACA. That was meaningful to me." —Jesse Mejia '97



Anthony Reflects on SU Experience

NBA star Carmelo Anthony returned to Syracuse University in September for CBT weekend. During his visit, he took time to reflect on his SU experience.

“Just being here for that [year] I was here, it changed my life,” says Anthony, who attended SU during 2002-03 and played for the 2003 NCAA men’s basketball championship team. “It gave me an opportunity to succeed—not only from a

basketball standpoint, but also from an educational standpoint and a socializing standpoint, just meeting new people, being fresh on a college campus.”

Anthony was honored at the Saturday night CBT gala with the Chancellor’s Medal for Philanthropy. Through the Carmelo Anthony Foundation, he supports education, recreation, and community programs and initiatives for those in need.

It got started when his former Coach Jim Boeheim asked Anthony to help support a basketball court he was building in Syracuse through the Boeheim Foundation. “Once I came and saw it, I was like, ‘This is something I want to be a part of.’” He also realized he wanted to pursue his own philanthropy.

To date, Anthony has funded construction of 14 courts in New York and Puerto Rico. He has donated more than \$15 million to schools in Baltimore, his hometown; provided food and water to Flint, Michigan; and recently spearheaded a fundraiser for Puerto Rico relief with a \$50,000 donation.

Anthony ties it back to the expanded worldview he received at Syracuse. “My message to the kids is that you have to go to college and have that experience. It’s not so much about going through English and Math 101, it’s about learning from experience and getting better from those experiences,” he says. ☘

Brian Konkol Installed as Dean of Hendricks Chapel

The University community celebrated the installation of the Rev. Brian E. Konkol as the seventh dean of Hendricks Chapel with a community tailgate on the Shaw Quad, followed by a formal installation ceremony at Hendricks November 7.

Konkol, who joined Syracuse University in July, was selected after a national search. “Brian has an impressive depth of experience in spiritual leadership and campus outreach that will generate wider community engagement with the chapel, its facilities, and services,” says Chancellor Kent Syverud of the appointment. “This is a pivotal year for Hendricks Chapel, which will expand its role as the spiritual center of a global university where all viewpoints are explored and respected, and where diverse constituencies can come together and find common ground.”

Konkol came to Syracuse from Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter, Minnesota, where he served as chaplain of the college since 2013, was a faculty member of the Peace, Justice, and Conflict Studies program, and served as the faculty liaison to the men’s basketball team. An ordained minister of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), he previously served as co-pastor of Lake Edge Lutheran Church in Madison, Wisconsin, with responsibilities surrounding multicultural engagement and public advocacy. From 2008 to 2012, he served in South Africa as country coordinator of the Young Adults in Global Mission program of the ELCA.

Since joining Syracuse, Konkol has worked to strengthen the role of the chapel as the spiritual heart of campus and a model

for diversity and inclusion of philosophies and religions. He has also spearheaded efforts surrounding hurricane outreach relief and was appointed to the University-wide Council on Diversity and Inclusion.

His impact has been immediate. “I am so excited about the direction Hendricks Chapel is taking under the leadership of Dean Konkol,” says the Rev. Serretta C. McKnight ’80, founder of SU’s Black Celestial Choral Ensemble. “I believe he truly embraces the spirit of God in terms of application, inclusion, and outreach. He just has a good heart.”

Konkol says he hopes that Hendricks Chapel can provide both “safe and brave spaces” that are a sanctuary from the chaos of the world. “The fact is that we have a diverse community, and we must not run and hide from our differences,” he says. “What binds us together is by no means total agreement, but we are all joined through our very real need for each other. So instead of extremism or relativism, we are trying to practice and promote pluralism.” ☘



Diversity and Inclusion Remain Priority for SU

Chancellor Kent Syverud had an important message for alumni attending CBT: The diversity of the campus community and inclusion of all communities are an institutional priority. Many alumni had approached him at the 2014 event with concern that the University's commitment to diversity was waning. His answer: not on my watch.

It wasn't rhetoric. In fall 2015, Syverud created the Chancellor's Workgroup on Diversity and Inclusion, a committee that developed a list of short-term recommendations to create a more inclusive, accessible, and respectful campus community. One of those was to form a permanent committee. The University-wide Council on Diversity and Inclusion was created, co-chaired by Diane R. Wiener, director of the Disability Cultural Center, and Barry L. Wells, special assistant to the Chancellor. Their work is ongoing and has yielded some important results:

- The University will add a chief diversity officer, a position that will report directly to the Chancellor.
- Diversity of the student body has increased and with stronger academic qualifications. The total number of incoming African American and Latino first-year students is up 10 percent from 2016, increasing from 518 in fall 2016 to 571 in fall 2017. Students of color—which include African American, Latino, Asian American, Native American and students who identify as two or more races—now account for 26 percent of total undergraduate student population, a two percent increase from last year. In addition, 20 percent of incoming students are first-generation college students, a number far greater than peer institutions.
- Hiring a diverse faculty and staff is also a priority to ensure diverse voices at all levels of the University. One quarter of new faculty hires this year identify as people of color.
- The University is working hard to increase scholarship opportunities for talented students in need. Recent successes include a \$4 million grant from the National Science Foundation to attract and retain students of color in STEM fields; federal funding to increase graduate student diversity in chemistry; and \$20 million in regional access scholarships to provide underserved students in central New York access to a Syracuse University education.
- SU has a sustained commitment to community partnerships that provide experiential learning for students in urban neighborhoods and serve as a matchmaker to help community-based organizations access University resources and intellectual capital. Prime examples include the La Casita Cultural Center and the Lerner Center for Public Health Promotion.
- SU signed a new five-year contract with the Posse Foundation Scholarship program to bring multicultural “posses” of academically talented students from Miami to Syracuse University.

More detailed information about these initiatives and many others can be found at the Diversity and Inclusion website, diversity.syr.edu.



STUDENT spotlight:



Knight Wins NCAA Cross Country Championship

Senior Justyn Knight won the first individual men's cross country national championship in Syracuse University history.

Running in Louisville, Kentucky, on November 18, the Toronto native grabbed the top spot with a time of 29 minutes, 0.11 seconds over 10 kilometers in the 79th annual men's race.

"It's a feeling like no other," says Knight, who finished 143rd at the event as a first-year student and took the runner-up spot in 2016. "There was no real strategy. I just knew I had to go out there and put myself in a good position to win."

Knight, considered the greatest runner in SU history, won all three NCAA cross country races he competed in earlier in the season: the Nuttycombe Wisconsin Invitational, the Atlantic Coast Conference Championship, and the NCAA Northeast Regional competition. He won bronze in the 5,000 meters at the NCAA outdoor championships last spring and finished in ninth place in the 5,000-meter final at the 2017 World Track and Field Championship in London in August.

Knight says it was his college career goal to win a national title. "From the day I was first recruited here, Coach (Chris) Fox told me we were going to go for a team title, and we're definitely gunning for the individual title," he says. "I've come really close too many times, so it's just really heartwarming to win one for Syracuse." 🍁

"I was [in] second or third place. When I got to the straightaway, I just had an out-of-body experience and said, 'You know Justyn, you're going to look back at this, and if you don't go right now, you're going to regret it for the rest of your life.' So I did just that."

—Justyn Knight '18



La Casita Exhibit Celebrates Caribbean Music

The exhibit *Fusión Caribe: The History of Our Music* opened at La Casita Cultural Center September 15 to commemorate Latin/Hispanic Heritage Month 2017.

The exhibit includes historic photos and video depicting the history of Latin music from its Caribbean roots to the artists that propelled it around the globe.

“The opening reception is an annual event that integrates very active participation of the local Latino community with the University community,” says Tere Paniagua, executive director of La Casita. “And of course, this year it coincided with CBT, so we had tremendous alumni attendance.”

Some 400 people attended the opening reception, which showcased live music and dance, as well as classic recordings of son montuno, guaracha, guaguancó, cha cha chá, mambo, bolero, merengue, bomba and plena, reguetón, and salsa. Guests enjoyed Caribbean tapas and live performances by Charlie Izzo and his salsa orchestra, El Rumbón; Sammy Avila and his Trío Los Amigos; and Roberto Pérez from La Familia de la Salsa.

“Music is universal and who doesn’t love salsa,” says Paniagua of the event’s appeal. “Shuttle buses from campus made it very easy for students and alumni to attend.”

Fusión Caribe is this year’s theme at La Casita’s annual Balcón Criollo exhibit. “Balcón is the word for ‘porch’, and *Criollo* for Creole,” explains Paniagua. “There is a traditional porch structure installed in the gallery space. The whole idea is that the balcón





Alumni, students, and community members enjoyed music, dancing, and tapas at the opening reception for *Fusión Caribe*.

is representative of what the show aims to do, which is bring communities together. The balcón is that part of our home where we sit outside and connect with our neighbors, our community.”

As such, the concept of the show is to develop research and a collection that documents the history, culture, and family traditions of the local community. “All of the pieces in the exhibition come from the families we work with, our volunteers, our neighbors, members of our local and campus communities,” she says.

In particular, much of this exhibit comes from the collection of Sydney Hutchinson, SU professor of music history and cultures and an expert in music and dance of the Caribbean, who helped curate the show. Demaris Mercado '92 contributed a collection of historical photos, documents, and memorabilia of the legendary

RM Records, founded by her father, the late Ralph Mercado. “Surely a family that plays an important role in the history of salsa music,” says Paniagua.

“We have a large Caribbean community in Syracuse, so focusing on the Caribbean roots of Latin music was a logical start,” says Paniagua. The exhibit serves as a launching point for a variety of programming that will happen through next spring. “We will continue to explore the theme throughout the year.” ❖

“The appeal of this exhibit exceeded our expectations. Music truly is universal and who doesn’t love salsa? We ordered food for 200, but more than double that attended.” —Tere Paniagua



Digital Pioneer Mary Spio '98 Honored with Arents Award

As a child growing up in Ghana, Mary Spio '98 sought refuge in watching television. "I was about eight when the government was overtaken by military rogues," she recalls. "The impact that television had was profound. It was a window that opened my aperture of thought. I knew everything I was seeing had been created by someone, so I set out to create my own imagination."

And she always wondered what it would be like to be *inside* the television.

Today, Spio is CEO and president of CEEK VR, a company that develops virtual reality content, experiences, and technologies for a range of uses, including entertainment, education, medicine, and retail. CEEK has developed a virtual reality headset, compatible with smart phones, that allows users to experience movies, games, and large venue concerts with features like mobile VR interaction, configurable avatars, and voice and text messaging—to essentially go from watching a video to being live inside it.

"What fascinates me about virtual reality is the ability to put you in a totally different place, in a totally different world, inside the content," she says.

Virtual reality is just the latest frontier for Spio, who was part of a three-person team at Boeing Company that developed the digital cinema technology to distribute movies over satellite. She is listed as sole inventor on three of the graphical patents. Her method for high-rate data transmission makes it possible to distribute multiple versions of the same film—in different languages and with different ratings—at the same time to theaters around the world, setting the industry standard.

Spio was born in Syracuse while her father was a student at Syracuse University. The family returned to Ghana when he finished his degree. At age 16, she returned to the United States. After graduating from high school, she joined the Air Force, working as a satellite communications technician. When she received a scholarship as Outstanding Airman, she applied to one school: Syracuse University.

At SU's College of Engineering and Computer Science, Spio majored in electrical engineering. She was the only female and graduated at the top of her class. After earning a master's in electrical engineering and computer science from Georgia Institute of Technology, she forged a career that has taken her from deep space engineering to entertainment. "My career is one big evolution,

and it's evolved as media has evolved," she says. "Wherever I go is where media is going. I just try to stay ahead of it."

Spio was honored for her innovation in technology with a 2017 Arents Award, SU's highest honor given to alumni, awarded during Orange Central weekend in October. While on campus, Spio met with current students, including OTHC Scholars, and served as the guest of honor at the Multicultural Breakfast for students and alumni. The event was sponsored by the Office of Program Development as a new addition to Orange Central weekend.

She shared the story of getting a call from the White House, which she first thought was a prank. It was an offer to represent the United States across the world speaking about innovation and entrepreneurship. "No matter where I went, people asked the same question: 'How do you come up with these technologies?'"

Spio, who received the Yueh-Ying Hu Memorial Award from the College of Engineering and Computer Science for academic excellence and the Boeing Outstanding Achievement in Electrical Engineering Award, says she's always looking at what she can contribute that can add value to what she's doing. "A lot of times that contribution comes from something that other people aren't seeing that you see very clearly," says Spio, who is also driven by a sense of service. "When I was young, my father told me that you are ultimately defined by the problems that you solve and the problems that you create. I've chosen some really good problems to solve and have been blessed to be in the right places solving the right problems." ❖





Lawrence K. Jackson '13 Live from Times Square

In October, MTV re-launched its iconic afternoon show *Total Request Live*, an hour of music videos, live performances, and interviews filmed before a studio audience overlooking Times Square. Among the cast of five hosts: entertainment journalist Lawrence K. Jackson '13.



“This was the dream,” says Jackson of the career he wanted while a broadcast journalism major at Syracuse University’s S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications. “I’m doing exactly what I hoped for.”

Jackson joined Viacom—MTV’s parent company—from Revolt TV, started by Sean “P. Diddy” Combs. He joined that startup network four years ago, landing an audition after tweeting a highlight reel of his work in response to a casting call for photo extras. Joining the company in its infancy, he welcomed the opportunity to pitch and produce segments, experience he’s found invaluable in his current position at MTV.

Highlights included an hour-long special with NBA star Kevin Durant filmed at his home in Oklahoma that was picked up by ESPN; snagging a red-carpet interview with Oprah at the premiere of *Selma*; and interviewing presidential candidate Donald Trump on a red carpet the night he secured enough primary votes to clinch the Republican nomination. “I asked him why a young black millennial would ever vote for Trump,” Jackson recalls.

The *TRL* reboot is MTV’s attempt to expand its brand among the millennial generation that grew up streaming music on smart phones and documenting daily life on social media. The show has been updated accordingly. Several of the hosts are social media stars and content from the show is posted to YouTube, Instagram, and Twitter as it’s happening.

Jackson prides himself on landing the gig based on his personality and skillset as an interviewer, although he is keen on expanding his social media presence.

He credits the Newhouse School for teaching him many of the professional skills he uses today. Alongside Jackson’s involvement with the student chapter of the National Association of Black Journalists, which provided him with a network of mentors and peers, he hosted a radio show on WERW.

“I called it *Rebellion Radio*,” says Jackson, explaining that he was “rebellious” against the assumption that he’d be playing only one genre of music. “I played everything,” he says. “It was a good preparation for what I’m doing now.”

Jackson completed his SU education with the assistance of an Our Time Has Come Scholarship. “When I received the letter, it was especially meaningful receiving the Angela Y. Robinson Scholarship, because I knew exactly who she was,” says Jackson. “I used to study the alumni plaques on the Newhouse Wall of Fame and she was one of the few black faces.”

Jackson hopes someday to be on that wall himself and have the ability to pay it forward with a Lawrence K. Jackson Scholarship.

Currently, he’s enthusiastic to be a face that young people watching MTV can relate to. “I get to just be me,” he says. “Sometimes we talk music. Sometimes we talk politics. Sometimes it’s pop culture.”

You can catch him weekdays on *TRL* or on a campus near you. In 2018, Jackson will hit the road speaking to students across the country, hopefully including a stop on the Hill. ☘

Donine M. Carrington '91 Takes Bench, Makes History

When Donine M. Carrington '91 was sworn in as an associate judge on October 13, she made history as the first female African American to serve as an associate judge in Charles County (Maryland) Circuit Court history.

"I am humbled," Carrington says of her new role. "My appointment sends a message to our community that we all can achieve the American dream."

Carrington was the first in her family to go to college, earning a degree from Syracuse University's S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications and then her law degree from Yeshiva University.

Before her investiture to the court, Carrington served as chief of the Special Victims and Family Violence Unit in the State's Attorney's Office for Prince George's County, Maryland. In that role, she prosecuted domestic violence, sexual assault, child abuse, homicide, and felony cases involving special victims and family violence. Carrington joined the State's Attorney's Office in 2003 and taught as an adjunct faculty member at Bowie State University for more than 10 years.

Carrington says becoming a judge realized a goal she set for herself in high school. "My path has been long, yet I knew that

it was an enormous honor that would only be attained after a commitment to excellence and hard work," she says.

For Carrington, that meant accepting cases and tackling responsibilities so that she would be prepared and qualified when the opportunity arose. While she had planned to apply for a judgeship at age 50, the opportunity arrived earlier because she was ready. "I am honored to represent the State of Maryland and mete out justice equitably and fairly and to all who appear before me," she says.

Outside of the courtroom, Carrington is the mother of two, a proud member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., and president of the Southern Maryland Women's Bar Association. ♣



Orange Holiday



SU alumni came together in Atlanta for a holiday party. It was co-sponsored by the Office of Program Development and the SU Alumni Club of Atlanta. Holiday gatherings were also held in New York City and Washington, D.C.

CBT on the Vineyard

Long before President Barack Obama took his family to Martha's Vineyard on summer vacation during his presidency, the island has been a vacation destination for East Coast African American families, dating back to the 1920s. In August 2018, that will include an official contingent of Syracuse University alumni.

CBT: Martha's Vineyard is planned for the week of August 12, 2018. "Many of our alumni already vacation there, and many others are interested in the experience," says Rachel Vassel '91, assistant vice president for program development. "There's so much going on on the Vineyard, it makes perfect sense for SU Program Development to have a presence as well."

CBT Martha's Vineyard will be a prime time for alumni to reconnect, have fun, and hear the latest news about the ongoing mission of the Our Time Has Come Scholarship Fund.

Special CBT Martha's Vineyard Event Package! Week of August 12, 2018

Join us for three events at various locations on the island
Early Bird package special: All three events for only \$175 (a \$275 value) until January 14, 2018. Package price increases to \$225 on January 15 and \$275 on February 19.

Events Include:

Opening Reception and Clambake with Special Guest

Hosted by Karin "Karina" Wilkinson G'88

Sunday, August 12, 2018 | 6 p.m.

\$110 per adult (early bird rate is \$85)

Pool Party

Hosted by Keith Brown '82

Monday, August 13, 2018 | 2-5 p.m.

\$90 per adult (early bird rate is \$65)

Martha's Vineyard Heritage Bike Tour and Brunch at Lola's Restaurant

Tuesday, August 14, 2018 | 9 a.m.

\$75 per adult (early bird rate is \$50)

This reunion will sell out, so register today.

programdevelopment.syr.edu/events/

Be sure to complete every step of the form by clicking the next buttons at the bottom of each page. You will receive a confirmation email once your registration is completed. If you do not receive this email, your registration was not successfully submitted. ☎

IN MEMORIAM

Bernadette Whitley-Penceal '66

Bernadette Whitley-Penceal '66, of New York City, died March 14. A retired educator, Penceal served as professor of English composition and literature at New York University, where she also mentored HEOP students, and as an adjunct English professor at Green Haven Correctional Facility, a maximum-security facility for men. She and her husband, Samuel Penceal '66, were founders of the David Dinkins Tennis Club, which provided tennis equipment and instruction to children in Harlem, as well as a book-sharing program.



"Teaching reading and writing to children, encouraging literacy, was her life's work," says her husband.

Bernadette and Sam met as SU undergraduates and celebrated both their 50th college reunion and 50th anniversary last year.

Penceal is survived by her husband, Sam, and siblings Jean Mayfield, Emma Tucker, and Bobby Whitley.

Milagros Escalera '76

Milagros Maria Escalera '76, of Syracuse, died September 1. Born in New York City, she attended high school in Brooklyn. After earning a bachelor's degree from Syracuse University, she earned a master's from SUNY Oswego. Escalera retired in 2014, after a 28-year-career in the Syracuse City School District, much of that time spent as principal of Delaware Academy.



"Millie was a very gentle soul and had an amazing touch when it came to working with children and families of difficult circumstances," says Bea González, SU vice president for community engagement, who came to know Escalera when González served on the Syracuse City Board of Education and later served with her on the Spanish Action League board and other community projects. "She was an unassuming leader. And she had the biggest, broadest smile. No matter how bad you were feeling, if she smiled at you, you felt better."

Escalera was predeceased by her father, Vicente Escalera. Survivors include her mother, Francisca Escalera; sisters Nitza Milagros Escalera G'76 and Frances (Mario) Quintanilla; brother Modesto "Papo" Acevedo; three nieces, Marielena, Marcela, and Francisca; and many dear friends whom she considered family.

Joycelyn A. (Marshall) Gregory G'76

Joycelyn A. (Marshall) Gregory G'76, of Washington D.C., died May 12, 2016, after battling cancer for more than 14 years. She completed her primary education in District of Columbia public schools, attending McKinley Technical High School and graduating from Eastern Senior High School in 1968. She began her undergraduate study at Morgan State College before transferring to D.C. Teachers College and receiving her bachelor's degree in elementary education in 1972. She earned a master's degree in education from Syracuse University in 1976, graduating with honors as an Urban Teacher Preparation Program (UTPP)-elementary education major. Joycelyn's education served her well, as she passionately taught grades three through six throughout Charles and Prince George's counties in Maryland, as well as in Syracuse, Quantico, Virginia, and Washington, D.C., for more than 35 years.



Joycelyn was a faithful member of Ebenezer African Methodist Episcopal Church in Fort Washington, Maryland, since 1987. She is survived by her former husband, Byron C. Marshall '97, their son, Rasheed B. Marshall, MBA '97, and her daughter-in-law, Dr. LaTisha (Lord) Marshall '98.

Walter Reyes '04

Walter Reyes '04, of Campbell, Ohio, died unexpectedly on November 26 after complaining of stomach pain for several days. Reyes was a former Syracuse football running back who played for the Orange from 2001-04. He was a first-team All-Big East selection his senior season, ending his career as No. 2 on Syracuse football's all-time rushing list with 3,424 yards. He was signed by the Tennessee Titans as an undrafted free agent in 2005, playing two preseason games.



Former teammate Damien Rhodes '05 called Reyes a "big brother" figure, saying Reyes "took me in as a freshman and helped me become a better player and better person."

Reyes is survived by his wife, Yolanda, and four stepchildren. ☩

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Ronald Taylor '15, G'16,
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Gerald Brown '18, and
Matt Ter Molen, SU senior vice
president, chief advancement
officer