

# Syracuse Manuscript

SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY'S BLACK AND LATINO/A ALUMNI MAGAZINE



CELEBRATING  
**40**  
YEARS!

JOIN THE SUMA 40TH ANNIVERSARY  
GIVING CHALLENGE! [See page 10](#)



OTHC Scholar  
Fidel Rivera '24  
at the 2022  
Orange Central  
Multicultural  
Breakfast



# Syracuse Manuscript

**Rachel Vassel '91, G'21**

Associate Vice President  
Multicultural Advancement

**Angela Morales-Patterson**

Director of Operations and Partnerships  
Multicultural Advancement

**Janey Ozoria**

Director of Development  
Multicultural Advancement

**Miko Horn '95**

Director of Alumni Events  
Multicultural Advancement

**Maria J. Lopez '05, G'12**

Assistant Director of Scholarship Programs  
Multicultural Advancement

**Monique Frost**

Administrative Specialist  
Multicultural Advancement

---

**Angela Morales-Patterson**

Editor-in-Chief

**Renée Gearhart Levy**

Writer/Editor

**George S. Bain G'06**

Copy editor

**Joe Quinn**

Design

---

Office of Multicultural Advancement

**Syracuse University**  
200 Walnut Place  
Syracuse, NY 13244

p 315.443.4556

f 315.443.2874

[syracuse.edu/alumniofcolor](http://syracuse.edu/alumniofcolor)

[suma@syr.edu](mailto:suma@syr.edu)

Opinions expressed in *Syracuse Manuscript* are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the opinions of its editors or the policies of Syracuse University.

© 2022 Syracuse University Office of Multicultural Advancement. All rights reserved.



**On the Cover:** Student hosts Nyah Jones '23 and Jordan Pierre '23 with Syracuse Orange legends at the inaugural Orange Legends Golf Tournament in November

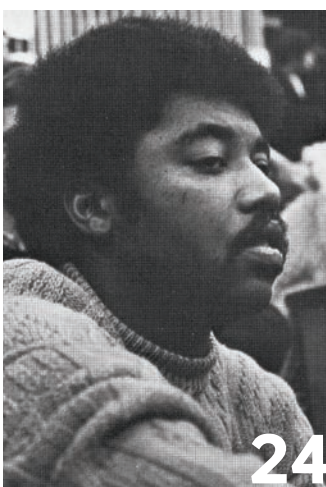
# CONTENTS



4



18



24



33



40

<b>Celebrating 40 Years: Checking In with the Class of 1982</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The 1982 Soccer Team Reflects on a Championship Season</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Student Spotlights</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Campus News</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Alumni Profiles</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Alumni News</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>History Lesson</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>In Memoriam</b>	<b>43</b>

# 40 Years of Impact



Due to a staffing issue, I was more involved in scholarship awards this fall than normal. Working through the scholarship process highlighted the very specific ways that your generosity is making an impact—making a Syracuse University education possible for so many students and changing their lives in the process. I'm grateful that we have the resources to reduce the financial burdens for so many.

Sometimes we are moving so fast that we don't see our collective impact. Our students now enjoy the benefit of 40 years of advocacy and support, which will provide opportunity for more than 150 OTHC Scholars and Leaders this year (up from 42 in 2016). This is our largest OTHC cohort yet.

I had the opportunity to share some of our department's successes during an industry conference this fall. Our peers in higher education often remark, "Wow, 40 years?" They are so impressed that our work began in the 1980s and continues today in bigger and more exciting ways: the Coming Back Together (CBT) reunions, trips to South Africa and the Caribbean, gatherings on Martha's Vineyard, and more recently, new events like the CBT Business Conference and the Orange Legends Charity Golf Tournament. So many institutions are just getting started and can't believe how far we've come. In moments like these, I am grateful for the tremendous community we have at SU.

Forty is a special number. We know that it takes a woman 40 weeks of pregnancy to bring a child to term. I truly believe that in our 40th year we are giving birth to something different, but still very much a labor of love. In addition to our plans to double the scholarship fund, we are working more

closely with the University's Career Services to support the goals and aspirations of multicultural students and alumni. We've dedicated this next phase of our history to drive alumni connectivity beyond the social, and into the professional realm. We have a new partnership with the Shaw Center to create pathways for OTHC Scholars to lend their talents to the City of Syracuse. We are seeking corporate and foundation partners to accelerate the work and support opportunities to send our students off campus to study abroad and enjoy semester programs and paid internships in cities across the United States.

According to *Reader's Digest*, 40 is the only number in English whose letters appear in alphabetical order. Similarly, the work we've done has been in order—engagement, giving, impact—and now it's time to build upon what's already in place. But we cannot do it without you.

If you've attended the triennial CBT reunion, participated in one of our many regional events, or even appreciated our efforts from afar, now is the time. Please help us continue moving forward by **making a donation of any size**. In our 40th year, we are asking all who appreciate our work to donate \$40, \$400 or \$4,000 by June 30, 2023, and then commit to giving whatever you can annually—time, talent or treasure—in support of our program. We want this year to be our best fundraising year ever, because we are birthing the next phase our work together, and I believe it is going to be a beautiful thing.

No amount is too small. Won't you join us?

With Orange Love,

**Rachel Vassel '91, G'21**

Associate Vice President

Office of Multicultural Advancement



# CELEBRATING 40 YEARS

The year 2022 marks 40 years of multicultural advancement at Syracuse University. As we reflect on our legacy of engaging Syracuse University's alumni of color and celebrate our role supporting underrepresented students, we share the spotlight with other Syracuse University entities celebrating 40-year anniversaries.



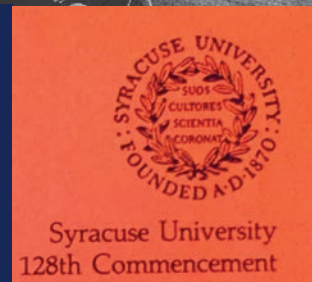


# CHECKING IN WITH THE CLASS OF 1982

In 1978, Syracuse University boasted the largest enrollment of incoming “minority” students in history. While their numbers may have been historic, they were still relatively small within the student body. Those students of color formed close relationships with each other, with Black and Latino/a faculty and with administrators and staff at the Office of Minority Affairs and HEOP, in many cases, forming lifelong bonds.

During their years at Syracuse, the Class of 1982 would witness the launch of both USA Today and BET. The Sugar Hill Gang released “Rappers Delight,” and Dr. Robert Jarvik '68, H'83 made world headlines when he implanted the first artificial heart, his own invention, in a human patient. Syracuse joined the newly created Big East Conference in 1979 and the Carrier Dome opened in 1981, welcoming the Rolling Stones. A fuzzy orange became the replacement mascot for the Saltine Warrior. In spring 1982, a few months before graduation, Robert Hill and Evelyn Walker began the Office of Program Development, now known as the Office of Multicultural Advancement.

We caught up with a few influential members of the Class of 1982 about their experiences and ongoing relationships with Syracuse University.





## MACK RICE '82



Mack Rice '82 came from Queens, New York, to double major in marketing and transportation and distribution management at the Whitman School of Management. Today, he is founder and managing partner of Northstar Risk Solutions Group LLC, a financial services practice in New Jersey.

A first-generation college student, Rice applied to colleges across the Northeast. During the spring of his senior year of high school,

he attended Syracuse University's Minority Spring Weekend. "Two busloads of us came up from New York and New Jersey," he says. "Back then there were probably 1,000 Black students on campus out of a population of about 16,000. But it was immediately apparent that we were going to be welcomed, we were going to be mentored, and there were support services in place. I knew I was going to be happy here."

Identified as a "gifted" student growing up, Rice had been bused to white schools since the first grade and was used to being one of few Black students in his classes. For him, having this cohort of Black and Latino/a students on campus to socialize with was comforting.

Along with Terry Macklin '82, Yvette Carter '82, Arnold Joseph '82 and Michael Peña '82, Rice started the Minority Management Society and became involved with the Student Afro-American Society (SAS), serving as controller as a junior and president as a senior. "Our budget funded *The Black Voice*, Creations Dance Troupe, the Black Celestial Choral Ensemble (BCCE), a theater company, a movie series and a lecture series," he says. "It was clear that we were not receiving the proportion

of student funding we should have and once I understood the process, our funding increased tenfold in one year."

SAS offices were located on the second floor of a house on Walnut Avenue, sharing it with La Casa Latino Americana, the Latino/a student organization, on the first floor. "That house was kind of a refuge. There was no student center, and we would all hang out there," says Rice, who is also a member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Inc.

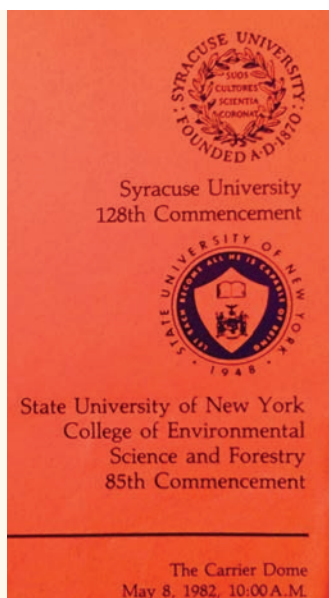
The Class of 1982 was the second class to have its Commencement at the former Carrier Dome; Ted Koppel '60 gave the Commencement address. "I also think we were one of the first classes to hold our own separate luncheon and graduation ceremony for Black students," he recalls.

Just a few months earlier, Robert Hill, Syracuse University's vice president and special assistant to the Chancellor for affirmative action, was tasked with starting the Office of Program Development to build relations with Black alumni and tapped Evelyn Walker, director of the Office of Minority Affairs, to join him.

"These were our mentors, people who had helped advise us through our undergraduate years," says Rice, who has served as a panelist or moderator at nearly every Coming Back Together (CBT) reunion. "So, whenever they asked for help with something, I would do it. I felt I owed them that much."

Nearly three decades later, Rice's son Tyler '13 was looking at colleges and had zero interest in Syracuse University. "Lonnie Morrison in admissions said to me, 'Put your son on the bus for the same weekend you did 30 years ago and see what happens,'" recalls Rice. "Tyler came back and said, 'I'm going to Syracuse.'"

Rice says there were notable differences in the student body during his son's time. "There was much more diversity, in particular, many more Asian and Indian students," he says. "Where I didn't really have any white friends as a student, my son had a much wider cohort. Most of my friends were first-generation students, but now many of us are sending our kids to Syracuse."





## DEBRA MERCADO '82



When Debra Mercado '82 thinks about her time at Syracuse University, two places stand out: the La Casa office on Walnut Avenue and Jabberwocky in the basement of Kimmel Hall.

Mercado came to Syracuse from Brooklyn, New York, to study psychology and telecommunications management. At the time, her father was one of the biggest managers and producers of Latin music artists in the world, and Latin music and culture

were integral to Mercado's life.

"I grew up with salsa and Latin music, but my college friends drew me into R&B," she says. "I was a big hustle queen. I used to do the hustle with a couple of guys from the city who could dance at the Jabberwocky parties."

With no Latina sororities on campus, Mercado threw her energies into La Casa, where she served as vice president. "That's where we went to stay connected to our roots, share stories as we developed our friendships into a united familia and remain connected to date via social media," she says.

After graduation, Mercado worked briefly as a sales manager for Miller Brewing Company. She helped secure Miller Brewing as an early sponsor for CBT and later helped with Latin musical entertainment.

For many years, Mercado ran the family's multimillion-dollar business, RMM Records, managing 40 international offices

and hundreds of employees, promoting concerts and touring worldwide with artists such as Celia Cruz, Tito Puente, Eddie Palmieri, Marc Anthony and La India. She hosted numerous interns from Syracuse University, whom she continues to mentor today.

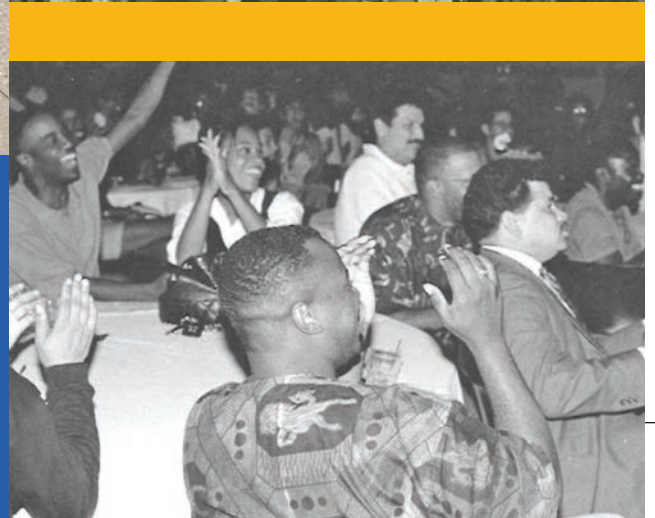
Her ongoing involvement in CBT was simple: "I always thought there should be more Latino/a involvement, and I wanted to be there for Latino/a students. As a first-generation college student, I want to help the next generations," says the mother of three college graduates.

It was also fun. Mercado participated in several CBT trips, including the inaugural cruise to the Bahamas. "We had the best time," she says.

Over the years, she served as a CBT panelist related to careers in the music and entertainment industry, and in 2008, served as CBT co-chair. "It was wonderful to make a speech and look out and see all these people that I had known over the years," says Mercado, who was honored with a Syracuse University Chancellor's Citation in 1998, along with classmate Rice.

Mercado credits Syracuse University for being progressive in its efforts toward multicultural advancement. "Robert Hill was an instrumental mentor to me who became a good friend. He's also a great salsa dancer," she says.

"Starting with his efforts, Syracuse's Black and Latino/a alumni became like an extended family. I haven't spoken to some of those folks in a minute, but if I picked up the phone it would be like no time had passed. That's a beautiful thing."







## ANTHONY FULTON '82



Anthony Fulton '82 came to Syracuse University from Mount Vernon, New York, in 1978 to take part in the HEOP summer program before fall semester. "Almost all of us came from the same kind of economic background in Black or Hispanic communities," he says. "We adopted each other and became our own community within a community. We lived together, ate together, studied together and made mistakes together."

And while Fulton loved his HEOP community, it wasn't his only outlet. After being the final cut as a walk-on in basketball tryouts, Fulton went out for cheerleading and was an Orange cheerleader for both football and basketball for three of his four years at Syracuse. "We traveled all over the country. It was very time-consuming," he says. "It also gave me an entirely different set of friends outside the Black community and opened my world."

In his sophomore year, his grades dropped. Fulton recalls hanging out at the HEOP office with friends one day when Horace Smith, director of HEOP, saw him and called him out. "He said, 'You're flunking, and I didn't bring you here for this,'" says Fulton. "I was so embarrassed, I went on to make the Dean's List the next four semesters."

Fulton joined Omega Psi Phi Fraternity Inc. and was the first neophyte (new initiate) to be elected president. By then a better time manager, he served as a student mentor through HEOP and the Office of Minority Affairs. "The people who worked in those offices were our advisors and almost our therapists," he says. "They understood our culture, our disadvantages, helped us cope and feel comfortable. They were our go-to for everything."

After graduating with a degree in speech communications, Fulton served on the advisory board that helped plan the first CBT reunion. He later moved to Atlanta, where he launched a successful marketing career. His company, ABF Beck Communications, became the first minority firm to get a contract with the Super Bowl and later, the Centennial Olympics in Atlanta. Fulton served as the spokesperson for the NFL minority Vendors Program, and ABF Beck was the partnering agency for the UPS identity concept, "What can Brown do for you?"

He's remained involved with Syracuse in numerous capacities. In addition to serving as a volunteer and supporter of the Office of Program Development, Fulton has hosted numerous CBT receptions at his home, served two terms on the Alumni Board of Directors, as vice president of the Atlanta Alumni Club, and serves on the Atlanta Regional Council.

He's also served as a recruitment consultant for both undergraduate and law students at Syracuse. "Some students can't handle the culture shock when they go to college," Fulton says. "I know when I direct students of color to Syracuse, they'll be in good hands."





## HERBERT QUIÑONES '82



Herbert Quiñones '82 calls himself a “Nuyorican.” That’s a first-generation Puerto Rican raised in New York,” he says.

As a sophomore transfer student, he was struggling to find a community when he saw a flier that La Casa was casting for the play *Short Eyes*, written by Latino playwright Miguel Piñero. “Coincidentally, I’d seen the film version in New York, so I went to the audition,” he says.

“There were not a lot of us urban Latinos on campus at that time,” says Quiñones.

“There were so few students, everyone who showed up was given a part.” The play was produced for Hispanic Heritage month, and around the same time, the Student Afro-American Society put on *For Colored Girls*. “So, we started working together as organizations to nurture more culture for students of color,” he says.

Further theater productions included *The Wiz*, the Langston Hughes play *Tambourines to Glory*, an Afro-centric production of *The Taming of the Shrew*, and *A Streetcar Named Desire* with an interracial cast. “Stanley was a man of color and Stella was a white woman,” says Quiñones, who says those productions led

to the formation of the Paul Robeson Performing Arts Company, which was supported in part by the Department of African American Studies.

As president of La Casa, Quiñones worked closely with Rice, president of SAS, in supporting fledgling cultural outlets for underrepresented students, such as the Creations Dance Troupe and BCCE. “I’m thrilled to know they still exist all these years later,” he says.

Always the class clown, Quiñones performed stand-up and sketch comedy on campus, and after earning his degree in political science, went back to New York City to take his shot at being an entertainer. “I tried acting but quickly learned that the film industry is a toxic environment,” he says. “Because I had a degree from Syracuse, I always had a job, and eventually realized stand-up was more of a vocation than a profession for me.”

Quiñones earned a master’s degree in education from New York University and worked for the New York Harm Reduction Educator’s program as a counselor and director of a media program that raised awareness of HIV and AIDS. Currently, he is a Narcan trainer for the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, helping to save lives. “No one needs to die from an accidental opioid-induced overdose,” he says.

Quiñones hasn’t been back to Syracuse in 35 years. “I got a great education and I’m still a huge sports fan,” he says. “My experience really focused on finding my own community and culture with other creatives of color.”



Quiñones, pictured front center



## MONIQUE FORTUNÉ '82



Monique Fortuné '82 remembers receiving a letter from the Syracuse University Office of Minority Affairs a few weeks before she arrived, welcoming her to campus as a first-year student.

“That office had a huge influence on students of color at that time. There weren’t a lot of us, and OMA made us feel greeted and protected,” says Fortuné, a broadcast journalism major.

Most central was Director Evelyn Walker. “When I was at some of my lowest points

during my time on campus—when I struggled academically, when my uncle died—she was somebody who comforted and supported me.”

Fortuné’s Syracuse experience centered around the S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications. She worked at WAER, which was then still a student-run station, and was mentored by Butch Charles '81, G'81. Fortuné began creating segments for the radio show *360 Ebony Degrees* and hosted a television show for Syracuse cable TV. She was active in the Black Communications Society, serving as vice president, and a member of the Creations Dance Troupe.

After earning her degree, Fortuné returned to New York City and worked in media for 15 years, in gospel radio at WWRL,

where she was a producer of the first McDonald’s Gospel Fest in 1985, and later at public radio station WFUV, where she served as development director.

She also became involved with the Syracuse Black alumni group in the metro New York City area, Friends of Syracuse, serving as vice president from 1987-89, as an alumni representative to the admissions office in the 1980s and '90s and served on the Newhouse Advisory Board.

Fortuné went on to earn master’s degrees at Fordham University (adult education), Teachers College Columbia University (communication and instructional design) and Union Theological Seminary (divinity) and is president of Fortuné & Associates, a consulting firm specializing in public speaking coaching and leadership and organizational communication strategies.

She says she’s forever grateful to Walker and to Robert Hill, both for their example and their role in launching multicultural advancement efforts at Syracuse. “To this day, I still look to Robert and Evelyn as important mentors for me in terms of how to carry myself as a responsible professional,” she says.

Fortuné is grateful for SU classmates who have now become cherished friends. She also wants to recognize Cheryl Chambers '82, who worked with Walker and Hill to execute the first CBT reunion. “Through Coming Back Together, they helped us all understand our collective and individual power as alumni,” she says. “As professionals in different walks of industry, we could be mentors. We could offer financial support for scholarships, and we had a presence that should be valued and respected.”





## KEITH BROWN '82



Like Rice, high school senior Keith Brown '82 attended Minority Spring Weekend at Syracuse in 1978. "That weekend sealed the deal," says the New Jersey native.

"There was a real feeling of camaraderie and a sense of belonging," he says. "I came from an experience of being the only African American in many of my high school classes, so being with this dynamic group of ambitious and like-minded Black peers was a really powerful experience."

It was during that weekend that Brown first saw the BCCE perform, and he joined as soon as he was a student on campus. "My grandmother was an organist at church, and I sang in the choir. For me, it just felt like family."

It was through friends he made in the gospel choir that Brown joined Alpha Phi Alpha Inc. as a sophomore. "The Black fraternities as a whole were a community, a large brotherhood and the hub of our social lives," he says. "There were regular parties, and the big one was the Greek Freak."

Brown recalls hanging out at Bird Library, in the lobby of Hinds Hall and Thursday night parties at the Jabberwocky. "Also, the Varsity for chicken wings and Zorba's for subs," he says. In addition to BCCE and his fraternity, Brown says the other major component of his college experience was the Office of Minority Affairs, where he served as a student advisor. "It was a tremendous support system," he says.

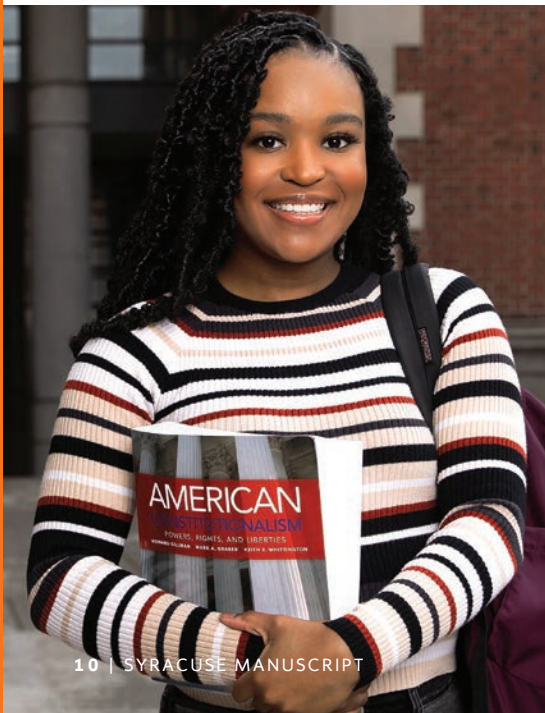
"This was totally self-imposed, but my Syracuse experience probably had more in common with somebody that went to an HBCU than a private, mainstream University," says Brown. "My whole experience was built around other Black students, that social life and support system."

It was at OMA that he met Professor K.C. Morrison and learned about Operation Crossroads Africa. Brown went on the summer program, a transformative experience that led to him joining the Peace Corps after graduation, spending two years in Cameroon.

An international relations major at Syracuse, Brown earned a master's in journalism at Columbia University and had a long career in media. He is now executive vice president at Firelight Films, a documentary film company.

Although he missed the first CBT because he was in Africa, he has been a regular participant since, serving on panels and workshops and enjoying the fellowship of alumni. "It's always like one big family reunion," says Brown, who serves on the Office of Multicultural Advancement Advisory Council and was awarded a Chancellor's Citation in 2011. "These events not only foster community but give us a purpose to raise money for scholarships and support current students in having the same kind of positive, rich experience that we did."

In between events, Brown says he's regularly in touch with many of his 1982 classmates "I'm godfather to their children. My daughter calls them all her aunts and uncles," he says. "I feel lucky to be part of such a close-knit group."



# CELEBRATING 40 YEARS

If you appreciate the work that the Office of Multicultural Advancement has done over the past 40 years, please help us continue by becoming an annual donor. Make your gift of \$40, \$400 or \$4,000 today!

To make a gift, visit [alumni-of-color.syr.edu/give-now](http://alumni-of-color.syr.edu/give-now)

# S

## CELEBRATING 40 YEARS

# THE 1982 SOCCER TEAM REFLECTS ON A CHAMPIONSHIP SEASON



The 1982 men's soccer team

For 40 years, the public narrative of Syracuse University's winning goal in the sixth overtime of the inaugural 1982 Big East men's soccer championship game said that Jim Powers '83 scored on a long outlet throw from goalie Joe Papaleo '82. "That's what the local newspaper reported," says Rob Lewis '84, "so that's what the general public thought happened."

But a team email thread leading up to a recent 40th reunion set the record straight. Steve Klaus '82 reminded everyone that he headed the Papaleo pass to Powers for the winning goal and is credited in the records for the assist on the historic goal.

"Forty years later, we've all had families and careers, and we're still talking about who got the assist," says Lewis, who helped spearhead the reunion weekend.

"I was talking to Coach [Ian] McIntyre about a potential recruit, and he asked if I thought the team would like to come back during our anniversary year," Lewis says. "I started making calls, and it just took off."

Twenty members of that 1982 team were on campus Sept. 10, recognized during halftime of the men's soccer game against Notre Dame for their pioneering role in Syracuse University sports history that set the standard for the men's soccer program. Also present were their head coach, Alden Shattuck, and assistant coaches Carlos Juarez and Neal Moore.

Shattuck was named head coach of Syracuse men's soccer in 1979, the same year the Big East Conference was formed. By all accounts, he took over a program with a lackluster history that had never qualified for a conference tournament.

Shattuck recruited a diverse roster of players, including international players from Jamaica, Yugoslavia, Italy and Haiti. They were a tight-knit group, many living together in apartments at Skytop and elsewhere. Lewis, Billy Dorante '82 and Berthold Reimers '82 were not only teammates on that championship team; they were also all members of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Inc. Other Black and/or Latino team members included Stuart Jones '82 and Homere Breton '84.

After losing the first match of the season 1-0 to Fairleigh Dickinson, the 1982 team went unbeaten for the next 14 games and remained undefeated on the road, the only squad to do so since the men's soccer program was reinstated in 1970.

The Big East held its first conference soccer tournament that year, and the championship match between Syracuse and Boston College became the longest in conference history, taking more than 160 minutes. After five periods of overtime in a scoreless match, Powers made that championship-winning goal in the sixth overtime, securing Syracuse's first-ever Big East title and capping off a 17-3-2 season, the best in Syracuse history.

At the time, automatic bids did not exist, and remarkably, Syracuse was not selected to the NCAA tournament. Despite that disappointment, the players, now in their early 60s, still look back on the 1982 season with a sense of pride and accomplishment.

The team won eight consecutive matches and had a 14-match unbeaten streak — both Syracuse records, until this year's team entered the NCAA tournament with a 14-2-4 record. Marcello Vitale '82 led the Orange in both goals and assists with 14 and 11, respectively. A skilled defensive unit led by future Orange head coach Dean Foti '82 only allowed 10 goals over the season. Papaleo boasted a save percentage of .940 during the



Bill Dorante '82, Berthold Reimers '82, Coach Ian McIntyre and Rob Lewis '84



Fraternity brothers and friends turned out for the reunion. From left to right, Donald E. Frost '05, Tysean Canada '23, Rob Lewis '84, Milton Johnson '83, Rachel Vassel '91, G'21, Fabryce Fetus '23, Charlie Lester '81 and Monique Frost



1982 team members today

season, which still stands as the fourth-best mark in NCAA history, and he became the first Syracuse goalie to receive All-America honors. He also received Big East All-Tournament Team recognition along with Foti, Klaus and Dorante, who was named the tournament's Most Outstanding Performer.

"This was a great group of guys who have all gone on to do amazing things in their lives, become very successful in their careers and stayed true to the people they were 40 years ago," says Dorante, who has had a career in the municipal finance industry and serves as assistant commissioner with the City of New York Department of Homeless Services, responsible for the Shelter and Support Services Budget Office.

"It was special to be acknowledged by the University as contributing something of value to its history, and we had an amazing time reconnecting," he says.

Reimers, general manager of WBAI radio in New York City, had not been back on campus in 40 years. Born in Haiti, he attended a French-speaking high school in Montreal and was recruited to Syracuse after he was scouted playing a pickup game while a counselor at a Pelé Soccer Camp. "It was as if we had never left," he says of the reunion. "Everyone still cracks the same jokes."

Reimers holds the distinction of scoring the first goal made by a soccer player in the Carrier Dome. "We beat Army 1-0," he says. "I think most of us remember just about every detail of every game," he says.

The biggest surprise for Reimers was not the new buildings on campus, but the presence of cheerleaders at the soccer game. "We didn't even have ball boys. We had our coaches' kids and our subs running after balls during the games," he says.

Lewis, who was also vice president of the Student Afro-American Society, is an Emmy and NAACP Image award winning producer and media executive who is currently a senior director at the *Wall Street Journal*. He has coached youth soccer on Long Island for decades with several teams winning the State Cup championship. His daughter Danielle '11 played club soccer at Syracuse and her sister, Kyra, was an All-Conference soccer and softball player at Spelman College.

"Coach Shattuck and Syracuse University changed my perspective on the possibilities of life through soccer," says Lewis. "When I coach young players, I want to pay it forward and create those opportunities that were created for me so many years ago."

Since the reunion, many of the team members have begun watching the current men's team's games together virtually. "We group chat the entire time and root on the team's efforts," says Lewis.

## David Barbier Jr.

**D**avid Barbier Jr. '23 considers himself a storyteller. He wants to use his Syracuse education in radio, television and film, and international relations to connect people across lines of difference as a writer, producer and actor of stories that shape culture and inspire.

Anyone who has met Barbier knows he accomplishes his goals. He has an innate ability to connect with others, allowing him to create opportunities that maximize his experiences.

Barbier, of Cuban and Haitian descent, grew up in Miami. As a high school student, he was president of the student body and the National Honor Society. As a sophomore, he was selected as a Nyah Fellow, a program that provides travel abroad experiences for underserved Miami students, and spent 12 days in Ghana. He became the first participant invited back to serve as a peer facilitator, traveling with the group to Bali the following summer. "Those experiences got me out of my bubble and ignited a curiosity about the wider world," he says.

Barbier was one of the first students from his high school selected as a Posse Scholar and was awarded a full-tuition college scholarship. He knew he wanted to combine his interest in the arts with his newfound passion for international relations. Syracuse University, with the S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications and the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, was a perfect match.

Barbier admits Syracuse was a bit of a culture shock, not the weather so much as the absence of the Latin culture he was accustomed to. He found that outlet through the Our Time Has Come Program, which connected him to other underrepresented students and a wide alumni network. "As much as the financial assistance is great, I am really in it for connecting with people and to learn from their experiences," he says.

In conjunction with the Office of Diversity and Inclusion, Barbier created a talk show, *Shades of 'Cuse*, which highlights notable Syracuse alumni from marginalized backgrounds. In 2020, he was tapped to conduct a virtual interview with actor and activist Wilmer Vilderama as part of the University Lecture series, and in 2022, interviewed Martin Luther King III during the University's annual MLK Day Celebration, co-chairing the event with the Hendricks Chapel Dean, the Rev. Brian Konkol.

A member of the Renée Crown University Honors Program, Barbier was one of five Posse Scholars nationwide selected for a 2021 Ubben Fellowship, which provided a summer internship to work with an industry leader and a \$10,000 stipend. He was matched with Josh Sapan, CEO of AMC Networks for what was supposed to be a six-week virtual experience.

Taking the initiative, Barbier asked if he might be able to visit the AMC offices and ultimately spent four weeks living and working in New York City, creating a television series for his project. "Sometimes you have to be willing to push boundaries to create the experience you want," he says.



A fan of anime growing up, Barbier studied Japanese for two years in preparation for a semester in Tokyo during his junior year, a component of his international relations major. When that program was canceled at the last minute, he switched his application to Seoul, South Korea, focusing his studies at Yonsei University on the export and popularity of Korean culture and products throughout the world. "It was a life-changing experience," he says. "I think the universe has a way of putting me exactly where I need to be. I just have to be open to it."

This semester, that's Los Angeles, where he's taking classes and interning at AMC Networks' sister channel, ALLBLK. "Los Angeles is where a lot of the industry is, so I'm trying it out to see if I like it," he says.

A 2022-23 Remembrance Scholar, Barbier says he is motivated to make the most out of every opportunity because he feels he is the culmination of his ancestors' un-lived dreams. "I approach everything I do with a good heart but am very intentional about trying to push myself in every aspect," he says. "I'm always hungry to do more."

## Ashley Bruce

**T**housands of Syracuse University students kicked off the school year at Juice Jam 2022, the daylong festival held at Skytop, featuring food, inflatables and musical artists T-Pain, Flo Milli, Yung Gravy and DoeChii.

The day went off without a hitch, thanks in large part to Ashley Bruce '23, vice president of University Union, who oversaw logistics both backstage and across the event space. The Queens, New York, native is on a mission to create memorable experiences for the Syracuse University student body. As vice president of University Union, Bruce provides leadership for major campus music events such as Juice Jam and Block Party, as well as yearlong activities, such as a weekly film series, comedians and speakers. It's preparation for her goal to work in the entertainment industry.

A marketing major at the Martin J. Whitman School of Management, Bruce has been involved with University Union—the University's official programming board—since her first year at Syracuse. After spending the Fall 2021 semester in London, she became co-director of collaborations spring semester, which involved proposing brand partnerships for events and negotiating contracts with vendors and sponsors. "University Union has been the perfect place for me to get real-world experience while also connecting with a lot of other students on campus that I normally would not see," she says.

But that's not all. Bruce has worked hard to secure internships and other experiences to bolster her career goal throughout her time at Syracuse. She apprenticed at the Well Dunn Mentorship program, an eight-week program that pairs college students with music industry professionals; pitched music to journalists and editors as an intern at FYI Brand Group; and served as a campus ambassador and public relations intern for the Culture Fusion Agency, which promotes songs and artists on college campuses.

Last summer, Bruce interned at Live Nation, which produces concerts and festivals, where she worked on a new team focused on Black, multicultural and inclusive audiences. "I saw the opportunity on LinkedIn, and I think the stars were aligned because Souïkee Van Orden '18, who posted the job, is an SU Newhouse grad and Shavonne Dargan '95, the manager I went on to work for, is an SU Whitman grad, both Black women," says Bruce. She spent the summer helping to generate ideas for the Dreamville and Broccoli City music festivals and worked with her manager to plan an event for Advertising week.

"The event is named the Connoisseurs of Culture and was an opportunity for marketers from major brands to immerse themselves into Live Nation brands and to tap into Black culture authentically," she says. "This was probably the most exciting



assignment I worked on during the summer, and it's amazing to see our hard work come to fruition."

The experience taught Bruce to be open to new opportunities. "I really wanted to intern at a record label, but nothing worked out. Live Nation is a concert promoter and not something I thought I would be interested in, but I found I love working in the live entertainment space," she says. "I'd love to go back."

Bruce has been an Our Time Has Come Scholar her entire time at Syracuse, having applied as an incoming student. "There were only four of us first-year students in the program," she says. "It's beautiful to see the growth and progression in the numbers of students who want to take advantage of this opportunity, to be leaders on campus, and potentially leaders in their field after they graduate. I've really appreciated having this space for students of color to be vulnerable in their trials and triumphs but also vigilant to stay on course to be successful."



# Andrea De Haro

**M**ost people associate the field of architecture with built structures, but Andrea De Haro '23 is a Syracuse University architecture student who has concentrated her work on animal resilience in the face of climate change.

“My projects tend to explore how to mitigate environmental issues through landscaped environments that allow for the coexistence of all living organisms,” says De Haro, who was born in Caracas, Venezuela, and raised in Miami. “Architecture has always been centered toward humans; through my work I aim to create awareness of the other living organisms that surround us and how we can incorporate them in our designs.”

In her final year, De Haro is pursuing her thesis, developing a project focusing on the environment and non-human organisms at an urban scale. “I’m interested in exploring design that creates a sense of harmony between all living organisms—flora, fauna and humans—instead of focusing on traditional Anthropocene centered design,” she says. “The idea is to reconsider the impact that architecture has on non-human organisms and engage in a new form of design that allows for the coexistence between all living organisms.”

The five-year architecture program is notoriously demanding, and De Haro also has part-time jobs at the King + King Architecture Library, architecture fabrication lab and as an undergraduate teaching assistant for the second-year architecture studio course. Still, she’s carved out time to volunteer at the Hendricks Chapel Food Pantry, to tutor in local schools and to serve as both a peer advisor and ambassador for the School of Architecture.

She’s also been an active member of the Our Time Has Come (OTHC) Program since her first year on campus, grateful for the financial assistance her scholarship provides. “Architecture majors end up spending a lot of money on materials for our projects. Having those funds has really helped with expenses not covered by my loans,” says De Haro, who is also a recipient of the 2018 Diversity Advancement Scholarship from the AIA



Architects Foundation, Two Ten Footwear Foundation Scholarship (2018-2022) and is a Phanstiel Scholar on campus.

De Haro also credits OTHC for connecting her to students outside her discipline and alumni within it. “I was introduced to former OTHC Scholar Lindsay Woodson '13, an urban planner who does environmental and resilience planning, for one of our leadership sessions and we engaged in conversation about her capstone architecture thesis project,” she says. “Having the leadership sessions and being able to make these connections is so helpful in the field of architecture and for networking with those in other disciplines. The opportunities and mentorship provided through OTHC have been fundamental to my time at Syracuse.”

## Tommy Romano

If you need recommendations for your playlist, just ask Tommy Romano '23. Or better yet, check out his TikTok page, *For Your Rotation*, where Romano curates his favorite artists, writers and producers for his nearly 94,000 followers.

He created the account during the pandemic with his friend Andy Torres-Lopez '21. "We've had a really good time with it and have been able to work with major labels and influencers in the music space on collaborations and giveaways," he says.

Or you could listen to his radio show on WERW, *For the Stans with Tommy Romano*, a weekly hour-long, playlist-themed show on the student-run radio station. Or watch the TV show of the same name, launched in October on the Orange Television Network.

Music is not just Romano's passion; he plans to make it his profession. The Buffalo, New York, native came to Syracuse to pursue a career in the music industry through the S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications' competitive Bandier Program, which prepares students for the business side of the recording and entertainment industries.

Romano has interned at BeatStars Publishing, where he updated data on publishing clients and researched up-and-coming producers, and at Universal Music Group in New York City, where he spent the summer working in the company's strategy and tactics department. "I worked with Universal's catalog of labels and artists to find ways to create social media moments, to make older artists go viral for a new generation," he says.

This fall, Romano is doing the SU in Los Angeles (SULA) semester, taking classes at night while interning by day. He's working in A&R (artists and repertoire) at 3:02 Music Group, a joint venture between Pulse Music Group and hit songwriter Starrah, where he's trying to discover new artists, writers and producers that the studio can potentially sign. At one time that meant going out to clubs to hear live music, but he says most of his discovery is done online.

"It's like trying to take the temperature of a city, music-wise," he says. "You have to be tapped into the live circuit in these cities and know who's bubbling. It's a skill that I've honed and refined through my TikTok, and this is the first time I'm using those skills professionally."

Romano says he plans to use his experiences in New York City and Los Angeles to weigh career options but anticipates applying for jobs on both coasts. He's looking forward to spending his final

semester back on the Syracuse campus, where he can resume his radio show and his role as a campus ambassador for Quayakí, an energy drink company, and attend Our Time Has Come (OTHC) programming.

Romano has been an OTHC Scholar since his sophomore year. "Being in the Bandier Program, many of my classes are with the same cohort of students, so it's really cool to be able to experience the Latino presence on campus through OTHC and to meet alumni in the SU network," he says. "It's added to an excellent experience at Syracuse University."



# Tysean Canada

**A**s a high school junior, 6-foot-5-inch Tysean Canada '23 led Syracuse's Nottingham High School varsity basketball team to its section championship game. The team's four-point loss was a heartbreaker, and for many students, would have spurred them to prioritize a different outcome the following year.

But Canada was not singly focused on basketball. He loved the sport, but he was also deeply committed to his academics, already a member of the National Society of Black Engineers and the Le Moyne College Science and Technology Entry Program. Balancing practice with honors classes was a struggle. As a senior, Canada chose to step away from basketball.

"I wanted to really focus on school and make sure I got into all the colleges I wanted to. I knew I had to separate myself and set myself up for the best future," he says.

As a senior computer engineering major, Canada knows that was the right decision. Through academics and extracurriculars, he's focused on his personal development to position himself for a career in product development.

"I want to use my leadership and communication skills to work with clients and sell different products, but also learn how to really innovate those products on a technical level," he says.

He's made the most out of his Syracuse University experience, serving as president of NSBE, vice president and president of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Inc., vice president of the National Panhellenic Council, a CSTEP ambassador, a College of Engineering and Computer Science ambassador and a member of the Black Celestial Choral Ensemble.

Last year, when Canada heard about the Our Time Has Come (OTHC) Leaders program, he was among the first to apply. "I wanted the opportunity to associate with this diverse group of students that all want the best for each other and are always striving for greatness," he says.

Canada is a perfect example of why the Leaders Program was created—to provide the leadership development, mentorship and fellowship component of the program to more students than the scholarship program can support. And this fall, Canada, who attends Syracuse on a Say Yes to Education Scholarship—full scholarships awarded to high-achieving graduates of Syracuse public high schools—was named an OTHC Scholar.



"I really appreciate the opportunity to connect with and learn from alumni," he says.

Canada already has plans to give back. He's working on starting a community nonprofit to expose underprivileged youth to STEM skills. Growing up, he became interested in computers through video gaming and sought resources to learn STEM skills on his own. He knows others might not be able to do that.

"I'd like to be able to offer classes and workshops that could lead to various certifications," Canada says. "I want to be in a position to share these resources with my community and, the wider my own network, the more opportunity for that to come to fruition."

## Dome Mural Honors Syracuse 8 Legacy

**O**n Sept. 4, 2022, Syracuse University unveiled a new mural in the JMA Wireless Dome, a graphic timeline visualizing the courage and commitment of the Syracuse 8. The mural is intended both to honor the men involved for their legacy of impact while providing a history lesson for future generations of Orange fans, says Salatha Willis, Ph.D., associate athletic director of diversity, culture and climate, who helped spearhead the project.

Their story in short: In 1970, a group of Syracuse University scholarship football team members, known today as the Syracuse 8, took a stand for equal treatment of student-athletes and a diverse coaching staff. When their calls for action went unheeded, they made the difficult decision to boycott the team. Their actions came at great personal cost, ending any chance of professional football careers and bringing backlash from fellow students, University administrators and community members.

The stand made by Greg Allen '73, Richard Bulls '73, John Godbolt '73, Dana Harrell '71, G'73, John Lobon '73, Clarence "Bucky" McGill '72, A. Alif Muhammad '71 (formerly Al

Newton), Duane Walker '80 and Ron Womack '71 ultimately led to changes within the Syracuse University Department of Athletics. After years of alienation, the men were honored by Syracuse University in 2006 and each was awarded the Chancellor's Medal in recognition of their fight for justice, the University's highest honor.

That history, complete with portraits and a timeline, is graphically portrayed over a lengthy wall on the lower concourse of the Dome, between gates E and F. The mural, unveiled before the Syracuse versus Louisville football game, was more than a year in the making and presented as a surprise to the Syracuse 8.

The six surviving players were invited to campus to be honored during halftime, something originally scheduled to happen last year during the Coming Back Together reunion but cancelled due to the pandemic.

"We wanted to make sure we were telling their story completely and accurately, and we wanted that assurance from somebody involved," says Willis, who reached out to Allen beforehand to review the content.

Womack, Muhammad, Harrell, Lobon, Allen and McGill in front of the mural that honors their experience



On the day of the unveiling, the players were brought to the JMA Dome for what they thought was a pre-game reception. They entered into a concourse lined with applauding students, administrators and family members and were led to a seating area facing a long, curtained wall.

“We are honored today by the Syracuse 8,” said Willis, one of several administrators to make remarks. “They were young men who risked public ridicule and risked their college and future professional career opportunities to demand a fair change—an equitable, respectful and dignified change for all student-athletes. Today the University honors these men who embody the essence of Orange.”

The curtain was pulled back to unveil the mural, an emotional moment for all in attendance.

“It was overwhelming,” recalls Lobon. “To see this mural, which we could have never imagined would occur, was not only confirmation of our actions but demonstration of the University’s respect. It gives me a real sense of pride to be enshrined in Syracuse history in this way.”

Even for Allen, the reality of seeing the mural was overpowering. “When we received the Chancellor’s Medal, I thought that was a peak experience in terms of recognition by Syracuse University, but this was really a mountaintop moment,” he says

“It was very emotional after all these years to come to a point where the University valued our efforts enough to make the legacy of the Syracuse 8 part of Syracuse University history by putting it on display.”

Allen says that through the years, the players had reconciled their feelings, choosing to reframe their “sacrifice” as a “gift” to Syracuse University, in that their actions caused the University to examine its practices and make changes. He views the mural as a gift in return from the University to them.

“Our boycott was misunderstood by many, and we endured the slings and arrows of criticism for years,” he says. “But to have this physical recognition that what we did was of benefit to the University and that our gift was valued, is huge for all of us.”

Top, left to right: Harrell, Muhammad and Womack; Allen and Herm Frazier; Lobon and Womack  
Bottom: Salatha Willis, Ph.D., makes introductory remarks; a view of the mural



## Scruggs to Lead Syracuse Board of Trustees



Jeffrey M. Scruggs has been unanimously elected chair of the Syracuse University Board of Trustees, making history as the first person of color to lead the University board. Scruggs, a highly engaged trustee and respected member of the global finance community, will succeed current chair Kathleen A. Walters '73, whose term concludes in May 2023.

"Jeff is the kind of trustee most valued by leadership," says Chancellor Kent Syverud. "He brings a wealth of professional leadership experience and business expertise and is committed to doing the hard work. He is passionate about equity and opportunity in higher education, and he believes deeply in accountability and delivering on the promises we make to our students, our faculty and our entire campus community."

Scruggs earned a bachelor's degree in economics from Harvard College and an MBA from the Harvard Business School. The Syracuse native has a deeply personal connection to Syracuse University. His father, the late Otey Scruggs, was on the faculty of the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs from 1969 until his retirement in 1995 and is considered a pioneer in the field of African American history.

"I am both honored and grateful to have been selected by my peers to serve as board chair," says Scruggs. "Having worked alongside these incredibly committed members of the board and closely with University leadership during challenging and unprecedented times over the last several years, I consider this appointment a privilege and a blessing. During the last several years, I have been impressed with the genuine passion and support demonstrated by my fellow trustees, Chancellor Kent Syverud and others in the Orange community. I take on this role knowing that I have exceptionally strong colleagues who are fiercely committed to advancing the vision and mission of Syracuse University."

Scruggs joined Goldman Sachs in 2008 as a managing director after more than 20 years in the financial sector, almost all as an investment banker with PaineWebber Incorporated and UBS Securities. He left UBS Securities after serving as managing director and director of the Public Finance Investment Banking Group. For the past 12 years, Scruggs has been the head or co-head of the Public Sector and Infrastructure Group within the Investment Banking Division at Goldman Sachs.

Scruggs was appointed to the Syracuse University Board of Trustees in 2018 and quickly became a leading voice on issues related to finance and diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility.

"Jeff's financial acumen is unmatched," says Walters. "But it is his generosity of spirit that has made him an outstanding trustee. He is committed to creating an extraordinary experience for each and every one of our students that honors the diversity of thoughts, perspectives and culture that each one brings to our community."

In April 2021, Scruggs was named to co-lead the Board's Advisory Committee on University Climate, Diversity, Equity,

Inclusion and Accessibility after serving as co-lead on the Board's Special Committee on University Climate, Diversity and Inclusion that was constituted in December 2019. In his work on the Board's Advisory Committee, Scruggs was charged with providing oversight of the University's efforts to foster a more diverse and inclusive culture and a welcoming and equitable campus environment and promised "to support the long-term work that will bring lasting and meaningful change to our community."

In 2021, Scruggs served on the search committee to select the University's new chief diversity and inclusion officer, and in 2022 also served on the search committee to select the new chief financial officer.

Presently, he serves as Finance Committee Chair. Scruggs is also a member of the Board's Executive Committee and the Free Speech Trustee Advisory Group. He also serves as an Advisory Board member to the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs.

Scruggs and his wife, Robbin E. Mitchell, have endowed a lecture series in the Department of History to honor Scruggs' father and created the Otey and Barbara Scruggs Maxwell School Scholarship, which provides merit scholarships to undergraduate students enrolled across the Maxwell School disciplines, with preference given to students who demonstrate exceptional academic achievement.

**"He is committed to creating an extraordinary experience for each and every one of our students that honors the diversity of thoughts, perspectives and culture that each one brings to our community."**

*Kathleen A. Walters '73  
Chair, Syracuse University Board of Trustees*

## New Members Elected to University's Board of Trustees



Raquel-Ann "Roxi" Nurse McNabb '98, G'99



Sandra Cordova Micek '91

In May, Syracuse University welcomed new diverse voices to its Board of Trustees with the election of Raquel-Ann "Roxi" Nurse McNabb '98, G'99 and Sandra Cordova Micek '91.

"The board welcomes these new members and is grateful for the passion and purpose they bring to their new role," says Board of Trustees Chair Kathleen A. Walters '73. "I am especially impressed with how they have each demonstrated their commitment to our shared values through their service-driven work and philanthropy. Each brings unique experiences and wisdom that will help guide us through the challenges facing higher education."

McNabb is a well-known public figure, philanthropist and advocate for making athletics accessible to all youth. She founded the Caris Sports Foundation in 2019 to give young athletes in Arizona the opportunity to participate in organized sports by removing financial obstacles and covering the costs associated with recreational and competitive sports, from equipment to registration fees. She is also the co-founder with her husband, Life Trustee Donovan McNabb '98, of the Donovan McNabb Fund, and a partner in their philanthropy.

McNabb is a 1998 graduate of Syracuse University, earning a B.S. in physical education from the School of Education with a minor in history. She was the point guard on the women's basketball team, was named Most Valuable Player twice and Athlete of the Year in 1997 and made the Big East academic all-star team three times.

In 1999, she earned an M.P.A. from the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs. She also earned a master of education in educational policy from the University of Pennsylvania in 2007. She serves as the nomination chair on the School of Education Board of Visitors.

Micek is president and CEO of WTTW|WFMT (Window to the World Communications Inc.). WTTW is Chicago's PBS station and WFMT is its classical music radio station. She has over 30 years of management experience in media and marketing.

Prior to WTTW|WFMT, Micek was the senior vice president of Global Brands at Hyatt where she oversaw marketing for 15 brands, and co-led the diversity resource group, Latinos at Hyatt. Micek has also held senior management roles at USA TODAY/Gannett, NBC Universal, Turner Broadcasting and Yahoo and was a management consultant in the media, entertainment and telecommunications strategy practice at Accenture in San Francisco and London. In her professional career, she has earned numerous awards, including a Silver Lion at the Cannes Lions International Festival of Creativity.

Micek earned a B.S. in television, radio and film from the S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications, and an MBA from the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania, where she was the Ford Motor Company Scholar.

Micek serves on the boards of PBS, Kartemquin Films, Ravinia Festival, the Chicago Community Trust and the Economic Club of Chicago. She was the McCormick Foundation Fellow in Leadership Greater Chicago's Daniel Burnham Program and is a member of The Commercial Club and the Association of Latino Professionals for America.

Her Syracuse University service includes serving as chair of the Newhouse School Advisory Board, and she created the Cordova Micek family scholarship to expand opportunities for Latinas to attend the University.

## Our Time Has Come Hits Record Participation

**T**hanks to the support of donors and corporate sponsors, the Our Time Has Come (OTHC) Program is supporting a record number of 120 OTHC Scholars and 34 OTHC Leaders for the Fall 2022 semester.

“Our ability to increase the number of scholarships we provide students and to increase programming for nonscholarship students is the direct result of increased funding from our supporters,” says Maria J. Lopez ’05, G’12, assistant director of scholarship programs in the Office of Multicultural Advancement. “We are hoping to increase that number to 200 participants by fall semester 2023.”

The OTHC Scholarship Program was established in 1987 to assist first-generation and underrepresented students through scholarship awards based on academic achievement and unmet financial need. To date, more than 1,500 scholarships have been awarded and the program boasts a 100% graduation rate. This year, OTHC Scholars receive an average scholarship of \$4,000 for the academic year.

The program also provides leadership development training, alumni networking opportunities, corporate immersions and mentorship from Syracuse University alumni and friends. In 2020, the OTHC Leaders program was created to offer this component of the program to students who do not qualify for scholarship support.

The Office of Multicultural Advancement is working to keep those numbers growing. “We hear repeatedly from participants and alumni about the impact that OTHC has had on their ability to earn a Syracuse University education and to launch their careers,” says Rachel Vassel ’91, G’21, associate vice president of multicultural advancement. “Despite amazing progress over the past three decades, strengthening the scholarship for future generations is more important than ever. I’m hoping that recognition of the 40th year of Syracuse University Multicultural Advancement provides a springboard to give back generously in supporting underrepresented students.”



## Villanueva Joins Syracuse as Vice President of Alumni Engagement



**L**auren R. Villanueva joined Syracuse University in July as vice president of alumni engagement.

Villanueva leads the Office of Alumni Engagement staff in providing opportunities for Syracuse University’s more than 260,000 alumni around the world to strengthen their bonds with one another and their lifelong connection to the University.

Villanueva works with the Syracuse University Alumni Association Board of Directors, alumni engagement staff and a network of volunteers to develop and implement strategies to highlight what it means to be forever Orange.

Villanueva came to Syracuse from Drexel University, where she worked since 2007, from 2017 serving as the assistant vice president and executive director of the Alumni Board of Governors.

With deep expertise in strategic planning, program development, board management and team leadership, Villanueva is poised to lead an already well-established alumni engagement team and position the University for success in the remaining phase of the Forever Orange Campaign. Her 15-year tenure at Drexel afforded her the opportunity to experience all facets of alumni engagement and to recognize how teams and events must evolve to meet the needs of a growing, global alumni base.

Villanueva holds both a bachelor’s degree in communications and a master’s in higher education administration and organizational management from Drexel, where she is a student in the Ed.D. program, pursuing a research interest in talent management within the advancement function. She has also served as an adjunct instructor for Drexel’s School of Education and College of Arts and Sciences.



## Haste-Jackson Named Associate Dean of Student Services at Falk College



**C**handice M. Haste-Jackson '96, G'13, associate teaching professor in the Department of Human Development and Family Science in the David B. Falk College of Sport and Human Dynamics, has been named associate dean of the Office of Student Services.

"Chandice has been part of the Falk College family for years as a professor, mentor, and leader," says Diane Lyden Murphy '67, G'76, G'78,

G'83, dean of Falk College. "She brings professional experience advising and teaching students, academic expertise in youth and human development, and a deep personal dedication to diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility. We are privileged to have her among our leadership as associate dean of Falk College Student Services, a dedicated team that provides essential resources for Falk students to support their academic success, personal development, and overall well-being."

In her new role since July, Haste-Jackson leads the Office of Student Services team that provides a range of services for students and works with committees across campus to represent

the interests of Falk students as the University strives to improve the student experience.

"Falk students are changemakers, making a difference in the lives of people across the lifespan, across systems and structures, and in unique, innovative and entrepreneurial ways," Haste-Jackson says. "Supporting the holistic development of these students is essential to their success as emerging professionals and global citizens, and I look forward to working with a talented team of professionals in delivering high-quality, unsurpassed services to our student body."

As an associate teaching professor, Haste-Jackson teaches courses on intimate relationships and gender roles, family development, development in immigrant and refugee families and selected topics in diversity, equity and inclusion. She previously coordinated the undergraduate internship program and supervised graduate students in their applied research internships. In addition, she coordinated the first-year Gateway course in Falk College, was chair of the Dean's Committee on Diversity and Inclusion and is a University Senator. In 2021, Haste-Jackson served as interim director of the University's first-year seminar course.

Haste-Jackson earned a Ph.D. in child and family studies from Syracuse University, an M.S. in behavioral sciences from Cameron University and a B.A. in cultural anthropology from Syracuse University.

## Frost Joins Office of Multicultural Advancement



**M**onique Frost has joined the Syracuse University Office of Multicultural Advancement as an administrative specialist. She comes from the Office of Alumni Engagement, where she worked since 2005, serving as administrative assistant to the vice president, working on special events and projects and as liaison to the National Alumni Board of Directors.

"I look forward to bringing my skills and experiences to further engage with and serve Syracuse University's diverse alumni," Frost says.

"Monique is a long-time Coming Back Together volunteer and brings a wealth of experience in engaging alumni and donors and managing large alumni events to our team," says Rachel Vassel '91, G'21. "Her addition provides the opportunity to strengthen our ties to the Office of Alumni Engagement."

Frost is married to Donald E. Frost '05, a member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Inc.

# Syracuse's Black History Maker

**T**he year 1968 was one of tumult and change in the United States, marked by the assassinations of Martin Luther King Jr. and Robert F. Kennedy, social unrest over civil rights and the Vietnam War, and passage of the landmark Civil Rights Act of 1968.



It was also the year that Charles “Chuck” Hicks ’69, G’73 became Syracuse University’s first Black Student Government Association (SGA) president, a historic victory for the Bogalusa, Louisiana, native who came north for college to escape retaliation for his family’s civil rights activism.

Hicks’ father, Robert Hicks, was founder of the Deacons for Defense and Justice, the first Black group in the civil rights movement to carry guns for protection, started after the assassination of Malcolm X in 1965. The group was instrumental in organizing a successful boycott of white businesses in Bogalusa as well as the longest march for civil rights, from Bogalusa to Baton Rouge, which took 10 days to walk the 106 miles.

Hicks, the oldest of five children, was a sophomore at Southern University and a student leader when he was asked to withdraw from school or face expulsion, because “the school didn’t want any trouble.”

Hicks and his family were devastated, but soon learned of a summer program at Brandeis University for talented Black students from the south that led to full scholarships at private colleges and universities in northern states. Hicks was accepted, and after the summer program, landed at Syracuse University, where he was required to enroll as a first-year student.

Hicks had grown up in a segregated environment in Bogalusa and never had white friends. But with only 50 or so Black students at Syracuse, he chose not to segregate himself. Outgoing by nature, Hicks immediately got involved on campus, serving on his residence hall board, his class council and also started a chapter of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee to partner with Black community groups on various activities.

“Most students were from Northeast states. Being Black and from the South, I was something of

*Hicks as a student*

a novelty,” says Hicks, who was rushed by numerous white fraternities. “People would sometimes say to me, ‘You’re not like the other Blacks we see or hear about,’” he recalls. “I had to tell them, ‘Yes, I am. We face the same struggles and problems.’”

As a junior, Hicks became the first Black president of University Union. “After that, everybody started asking me if I was going to run for student body president,” he says.

Hicks beat his opponent in that election, 1,585 to 998, and set out on an agenda that included loosening rules around student behavior. “Even though Syracuse was a liberal school, it was very restrictive from our perspective,” he says. “Students had a curfew. At the time, you could only stand in the dorm lobby to chat with female friends. That rule changed to allow coed visits, which meant you could go to someone’s room, but the door had to stay open. Then SGA advocated for coed dorms.”

Along with his leadership of the general student body, Hicks began working with other Black students to establish the Black Student Union on campus and organize a takeover of the administration building to demand an increase in Black students, Black professors and Black history courses. “The administration turned the electricity off on us, but they never let the city police in to clear us out,” he says.

Despite Hicks’ popularity on campus, he says he was viewed as an “agitator” in the wider Syracuse community. “If I drove off campus, I would get pulled over and arrested,” he says. “In my last two years, I must have been arrested 25-30 times. I would call Dr. Sawyer [Vice Chancellor Michael Sawyer], and he would call an attorney who would get the charges dismissed.”

But over time, things began to escalate. After graduating with a degree in political science, Hicks began graduate school in education administration and was living in an off-campus apartment with friends. “One day police rushed into the house and said they found marijuana that was mine,” says Hicks, who was jailed. David Ifshin ’70, who succeeded Hicks as SGA president, organized a protest, and 200 students marched on the jail demanding Hicks’ release. “That made me even more of a marked person. Dr. Sawyer suggested that Syracuse might not be the best place for me to stay to get my doctorate,” he says.

An arrangement was made for Hicks to double up on summer courses and take an oral history exam so that he could earn a master’s degree and leave. He subsequently earned a second master’s in library science from the University of Maryland and moved to Washington, D.C., where he had a 35-year career with the DC Public Library System, primarily in the Black History Section of the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Library.

Always a leader, Hicks served as president of the trade union for the DC Public Library, the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), and later as president of AFSCME District Council 20, the largest public sector union in the District of Columbia.

A well-known community organizer, Hicks is the founder and director of the D.C. Black History Celebration Committee, which celebrates Black history year-round, and was grand marshal of the 2021 Virtual D.C. MLK Parade. A speaker at the inaugural Million Man March, he is the founder of Bread for the Soul, the first and oldest Black AIDS organization in the city, and an active member of numerous organizations, including the NAACP, the Southern Poverty Law Center, the Martin Luther King Scholarship Committee, the D.C. Commission on Aging, the Waterside Tenants’ Council and Stand Up for Democracy in D.C. In 2019, he was elected to the Washington D.C. Hall of Fame and his name appears on the Hall of Fame Walkway. In 2021, he was selected to be in the Martin Luther King Jr. permanent exhibit as a Washington D.C. History Maker.

Hicks recalls his Syracuse University experience as an incredible journey, but not a totally happy time. “My experience as student government president was both the best and worst of times,” he says. There were a number of white students that were not pleased with me being the SGA president. “There were a number of more progressive African American students that felt I should focus solely on efforts to benefit Black students. And there were people who didn’t think that SGA should have been involved protesting the war in Vietnam. There were always adverse views on what I should focus on, but I addressed the pushback by saying that I was elected to be the student body president for everyone on campus.”

Civil rights activist Dorie Ladner with Hicks



Hicks with Ray Rafalik ’70 and Amy White ’69, both members of the student committee to select a new chancellor in 1968. Hicks was an ex-officio member of that committee as SGA president.



Lt. Gov. Billy Nungesser is joined by members of the Robert Hicks family for the dedication of the Louisiana Civil Rights Trail marker at the Hicks house in Bogalusa on Aug. 11, 2022. Hicks is at far right.



# Arriving at Justice

**T**he Hon. Stephanie A. Saunders '81 is living proof that it's never too late to shift gears, change your life and achieve new dreams. In May 2022, Saunders was appointed to the New York Court of Claims by New York Gov. Kathy Hochul '80. She made history as the second Black judge appointed to the New York Court of Claims in Western New York and the first Black Court of Claims judge assigned exclusively to hear cases against the State of New York in the Buffalo district.

Being named to the bench is an impressive legal achievement for anyone, even more so for someone who didn't go to law school until she was almost 40 years old. "Sometimes life has twists and turns that you can't predict," Saunders says. "My

maternal grandmother used to tell me, 'Nobody can take from you what you know, so always keep learning.'"

As a Syracuse University undergraduate, the Buffalo native majored in pre-law studies but, when she scored poorly on the LSAT, crossed law school off her list of career possibilities. She moved to Washington, D.C., where she spent seven years selling furniture to the government for various GSA contractors and working for George Mason University, before returning to Buffalo, where she got a job as a secretary for a law firm.

It was an attorney at her firm who encouraged her to consider law school. "I told

him, 'I don't even like lawyers. Why would I want to go to law school?'" Saunders recalls. "But he convinced me that the degree had a lot of versatility, and without ever having to practice law, could provide a great way to take care of my family. I decided to take his challenge."

Saunders began law school at the University at Buffalo in 1997. She made law review, serving as the notes and comments editor, and graduated in 2000. She returned to the firm where she'd worked as a secretary, but now as an attorney. Subsequently, she served as director of medical affairs for

Kaleida Health and as assistant legal counsel for the Buffalo Board of Education before being named principal law clerk to the Hon. E. Jeannette Ogden, a justice on the New York State Supreme Court.

"A law clerk has one job and that is to always make your judge look good," says Saunders. "Basically, you are the link between the judge and the litigants, handling pre-trial conferences, handling settlement conferences and working very closely with your judge at trial. And if you are so blessed to have somebody that trusts you, you are allowed to draft decisions."

After more than five years in the role, it was Justice Ogden, now thinking about retirement, who encouraged Saunders to apply for a position with the Court of Claims. She interviewed on March 4, 2020, the pandemic arrived, and she never heard a word until receiving a congratulatory email last spring announcing her appointment.

Confirmed on June 3, 2022, Saunders now hears claims cases brought against the state. "It's never the same week twice," she says. "We have inmate cases. We have people that are suing the state in their individual capacity. There's a real diversity. We have something on the calendar every day."

Saunders believes her training with the Supreme Court provided a strong foundation to be a fair and effective judge on the Court of Claims. "I am very cognizant of the fact that I need a strong team around me, and this is why I have selected people who will challenge me, including my law clerk, Kerisha Hawthorne-Greer, and administrative assistant, Carmella Green."

But ultimately, "the buck stops with me," says Saunders, who also serves as president of the Minority Bar Foundation, a nonprofit whose mission is to increase diversity in the legal profession. "I challenge myself to always remain objective, don't make presumptions, let the evidence come in and then make a wise and fair decision."

Saunders' advice to others? "Don't give up on yourself," she says. "Sometimes you think you're moving farther away from your goals but in truth you may just be building a stronger foundation to get where you really want to go."



# Black Business Advocate

**W**hen the \$18 billion John F. Kennedy International Airport redevelopment project was announced, Danielle Douglas '88, a local Queens, New York, resident, had one thought: “How can I help minority and women business owners take advantage of this opportunity?”

Douglas is a New York-based business advisor, coach and advocate whose boutique business advisory firm, Inspire Enterprise, focuses on building the capacity of minority and women business owners to sustain and grow their businesses.

Working in conjunction with Interise and the Rockaway Development Corporation, Douglas launched the Streetwise MBA Program, a seven-month capacity-building program for small business owners in Queens designed to prepare minority and women businesses in the community to take advantage of this opportunity.

Douglas had previously run similar programs for small business owners in the Bronx and Brooklyn. She's also a consultant on a disparity study for Nassau and Suffolk counties to determine whether local minority and women-owned businesses are getting their fair share of contracts. “Thirty percent of the contracts awarded should be going to minority and women business enterprises, but past studies have shown that, specifically for Black-owned businesses, it's less than 2%,” she says.

Douglas launched her business after a 20-year career in corporate America. She majored in psychology and marketing at Syracuse University. After graduation she began working in sales, first for Xerox, then for a couple of Xerox employees who left to start a Xerox distributorship. “That experience was my first exposure to building a business from the ground up and sparked my interest in running my own business someday,” she says.

Douglas then spent 12 years in pharmaceutical sales for Pfizer. What she really enjoyed was not the selling aspect of her job, but the strategy. Douglas realized her ability to look two, three or four steps ahead and see how something should play itself out was her superpower. “It sounds really simple, but I realized that not everybody can do that,” she says.

Ready to make a change, Douglas knew she wanted to somehow make an impact in people's lives in a way that empowered them to be a bigger version of themselves. She launched her business advisory firm with that goal in 2007.

Although her initial focus was on small business owners, Douglas started getting opportunities to work specifically with minority and women-owned businesses. “That's become my niche,” she says. “I also work with organizations that are looking to have minority and women business enterprises work on their projects.”

When Douglas' business ground to a halt during the pandemic shutdown, she created a new venture, the Black Business Owners

Forum, a virtual one-day event designed to build skills in areas such as marketing, finance and operations and prepare business owners for contract opportunities. The event has been held annually since 2020.

As an outgrowth of that initiative, Douglas founded a nonprofit organization, The Council for Black Business Enterprises, to bring together stakeholders to address the disparities experienced by Black businesses in the New York State and New York City contracting systems. “All of my ventures—whether for profit or nonprofit—have the common thread to assist minority/women business enterprises and/or specifically Black-owned businesses.”

One has led naturally to the next. “I'm very driven,” she says. “I always feel like I should be doing something on a bigger scale. But what I've proven to myself is that you don't have to be someone famous to have impact. I've empowered myself to make a difference and I'm doing it.”

And not just in business. Douglas has established an Our Time Has Come scholarship endowment at Syracuse University to support underrepresented students, which she funded through the gift of property to the University. The Jason Jones Jr. Scholarship Fund is named in memory of her cousin's son, who was murdered at age 17. “I created the endowment in honor of him so that other young people may have the opportunity to fulfill their dreams,” she says.

She's clearly living hers. “When you create opportunities that afford you a seat at the table, you're not just waiting for people to make decisions about and for you,” she says. “You're inserting yourself in that dialogue and helping to form your own destiny.”



# A Culture of Joy in Learning

**F**or Wanda Elizabeth Garraway '88, principal of Maurice Sendak Community School (P.S. 118), in Park Slope, Brooklyn, her greatest success is creating a school culture centered on kindness, inclusion, respect and joy. “We’re not ashamed of making up occasions for fun,” she says. “I invite kids to have lunch with the principal. Sometimes, if it’s a gloomy day, I’ll go on the loudspeaker and announce, ‘Hall party in 10 minutes.’ The kids and teachers dance and go a little wild for 10 minutes and then back to their lessons.”



Working with parents, colleagues in education, a vibrant staff and the Maurice Sendak Foundation, Garraway helped build the school from scratch in 2013. Within five years it was considered one of the most popular elementary schools in New York City, an achievement for any school administrator, but particularly one without a traditional background in education.

A first-generation college student, Garraway landed at Syracuse University, where she studied anthropology and Spanish and had several transformational experiences. She participated in an anthropological dig with Professor Doug Armstrong in Soledad, California, went on a mission trip to Honduras with the InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, studied abroad in Spain with Professor Hans Buechler and made lifelong friends through Delta Sigma Theta Sorority.

After briefly working as an admissions officer at City University of New York, Garraway moved to Spain, where she met and married her husband, Jose Caño. The two taught Spanish, English and French in Spain and France for more than seven years, moving to the United States after the birth of their daughter. Garraway was hired as a full-time substitute Spanish teacher and eventually held teaching positions at the elementary, middle school and high school levels and earned a master’s in education from the College of New Rochelle. She was recruited as assistant principal at P.S. 321, a position she held for eight years. When rezoning required the school to shrink, her principal championed Garraway to be the founding principal of the newly created P.S. 118.

“Having had so many different positions at different schools really helped inform how I wanted to be as an administrator,” Garraway says. “That said, you’re missing most of what you can

accomplish if you don’t include other people and this was really a community effort. Parents were fundraising before the school even opened. They are very involved.”

That engagement took a hit during the COVID-19 pandemic and Garraway says the school is in a bit of a rebuilding phase. “We lost 100 students due to families leaving the city,” she says.

Going into the school’s 10th year, Garraway is focusing on community outreach, hoping families will start returning to Park Slope and to a school that offers students an outstanding education as well as an array of culturally inclusive extracurriculars, including a chess team, step team, African drumming and Chinese dance.

But guiding her school is not the only way Garraway promotes education. The seasoned educator—she’s finishing up studies toward her doctorate in education at the University of Pennsylvania—donates her time helping advise New York City Black and Latino/a teenagers on matters related to college access, including high school course selection, college essays and the application process. “I can’t help every student in need, so I ask the students I work with to go on and help another student behind them.”

Garraway credits an educator for changing the trajectory of her own life. “My parents divorced when I was 12, and my father was not involved. My mother valued education but didn’t know the process. I had a middle school teacher, Joseph Habib, who stepped into my life. He had been to college, knew what it took to be successful and helped so many students like me who needed the social capital he had to offer.”

Not surprisingly, Garraway and her husband, a teacher at Brooklyn Technical High School, made education a priority for their own children. Their oldest daughter, Danielle, graduated from the University of Pennsylvania; their youngest son, Emmanuel, from Cornell University; and their middle son, Gabriel '20, earned his degree in theater from Syracuse University.

In appreciation for the opportunities Syracuse afforded her—and for graduating almost debt-free—Garraway has contributed to the Our Time Has Come Program through the Delta Sigma Theta Scholarship Fund. “I was fortunate to have a family that believed in education and mentors pushing for me,” she says. “So, when I volunteer with students or donate money, it’s all to support kids in need attain an education to lead successful lives.”

# Stellar Guide

**S**am Reynolds '89 understands skepticism surrounding astrology. He was a longtime skeptic himself. But after years of study and practice, Reynolds firmly believes that an informed astrology reading can help people understand their life circumstances and choices and help guide their priorities and intentions.

Astrologers believe that the alignment of the planets at the time and location of your birth—your birth chart—influences many aspects of our personalities and the way we interact and communicate with others. While that's an important factor in a person's life, free will is another.

"Sometimes life comes at us from so many directions that it's hard to know where to focus and when," says Reynolds, one of the nation's top Black astrologers. "My sessions help clients to prioritize and know when to direct their intentions for better results."

Reynolds says he combines "streetwise insights" with heavenly movements for smarter, healthier and more prosperous living. "I've been able to use astrology to pinpoint thorny issues and blind spots that clients have found hard to discuss or own," he says. "Many of my clients will take the information from our readings to their therapists."

Becoming a professional astrologer was an unlikely path. As a child, Reynolds was a fundamentalist Baptist who became a licensed minister at 12 years old and preached his first sermon at New Zion Missionary Baptist Church in Buffalo, New York. For Reynolds, by far the most devout member of his family, his reliance on faith was understandable. Born with spina bifida, he would undergo 25 surgeries by age 21.

Reynolds says he never questioned his beliefs until he began taking religion classes as an undergraduate at Syracuse University. "I had believed the Bible to be Jesus' literal words. Studying other faith traditions eventually led to so many questions I had to step away," he says.

At Syracuse, Reynolds majored in African American studies and public relations. He joined Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Inc. and served as vice president of the Student African American Society, where he was integrally involved in efforts that helped spur the University to increase support for the Department of African American Studies. "I remember an awkward moment in one of my public relations classes when the professor used the University's response to a student protest I had helped organize as one of our case studies," he recalls.

Reynolds was accepted into a doctoral program in African American studies at Temple University in Philadelphia, but it didn't take him long to realize he wasn't suited for a career in academia. He was at a crossroads. A good friend suggested he consult an astrologer.

Reynolds viewed astrology with disdain and agreed to go almost to prove his point that it was nonsense. What he didn't expect was

for the astrologer to pinpoint a specific time of trauma in Reynolds' family that he wouldn't have had other means to know about. The experience shook Reynolds, who spent the next 10 years studying astrology to attempt to figure out what he considered the astrologer's "trickery."

Instead, he became a believer. In 2002, Reynolds began practicing astrology professionally and 20 years later is nationally respected in the field. Certified through both the National Council for Geocosmic Research and the International Society for Astrological Research, Reynolds writes extensively (he's done horoscopes for *Ebony* and *New York* magazines and astrology.com), teaches private and group classes and gives readings through his website, [unlockastrology.com](http://unlockastrology.com), serves on the boards of the International Society for Astrological Research and the International Academy of Astrology and speaks at astrology conferences worldwide. He appeared on the "Astrology" episode of the Netflix series *Explained* and went head-to-head on astrology with Bill Nye on the first season of *Bill Nye Saves the World*.

As co-founder of the International Society of Black Astrologers, he's an advocate for diversity in the field. "Statistics show that Blacks as a group are among the greatest number of users of astrology, but we are hugely underrepresented as practitioners," says Reynolds.

Based in Santa Fe, New Mexico, since 2021, Reynolds says he's reconciled his spiritual life with his love for astrology. A practicing Muslim for more than a decade, Reynolds says he now realizes that his initial distaste for astrology was less about its incongruity with religion than his own lack of understanding. As his knowledge grew, "I learned so much more about myself, our world and people around me," he says. "I've come to grasp how the practical fuses with the spiritual, how the tedious also holds the transcendent."



# Legal Leader

Jason Foy '91 says it was his first constitutional law course at Syracuse University that sealed his destiny to becoming an attorney.

"I was always a decent student, but constitutional law was the first class that motivated me to study the materials at a level that had me prepared to share my thoughts during class," says Foy. "It was the first time I felt my academic studies were being pursued with a specific purpose toward post-college professional goals."

Already a member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Inc. and the Black Celestial Choral Ensemble, he joined the University Judicial Board, becoming chief justice as a senior. "Those were my seminal experiences as an undergraduate," he says. "My fraternity brothers were leaders on campus and in the community. I was inspired by their leadership to follow the same path."

Foy attended the University of Maryland School of Law intending to pursue a career as a sports and entertainment lawyer. He spent one summer working in the legal department at MTV, an opportunity provided by the late Tanya Heidelberg-Yopp '85, and another working for the New York Knicks.

Despite that preparation, he did not have a job lined up as graduation neared. A fraternity brother working for the Bronx District Attorney's Office suggested Foy interview at an upcoming job fair. Foy did and was hired.

"It was an area of law I never contemplated as a career, but I ended up loving it," Foy says. "In addition to advocating for the rule of law, crime victims and community safety, it was also rewarding to negotiate just resolutions of criminal cases in a manner that properly and fairly held defendants accountable for their actions in ways that might also preserve opportunities for future redemption."

Foy knew he did not want to be a career prosecutor. Instead, after five years developing a foundation for litigation work, he formed his own criminal defense firm, initially practicing on his own and later with his wife Karla Y. Foy (Harvard Law '92). In 2013, he co-founded Foy and Sepowitz in Bergen County, New Jersey, with partner James Sepowitz.

Foy represents clients accused of crimes at the state and federal levels in both New York and New Jersey, including allegations of murder, racketeering, aggravated assault, sex crimes, robbery, drug possession and sales, fraud and money laundering.

"I am acutely aware of the essential role criminal defense attorneys play in a complex criminal justice system," he says. "I have been blessed to make both a positive impact in the lives

of my clients and on the administration of justice in a system that has historically operated in a manner that has unfairly and adversely impacted the Black community and other people of color."

Foy has been named by Super Lawyers as a Super Lawyer for criminal defense from 2015 through 2022. Perhaps his biggest endorsement from his peers was his election as president of the Bergen County Bar Association in April, becoming the organization's first Black president in its 124-year history.

"I am planting seeds for long-term diversity and inclusion throughout the association's membership and leadership to create future opportunities for marginalized groups of attorneys to become leaders," he says. As bar association president, Foy has advocated for action by the New Jersey Senate and the governor to address the overwhelming number of judicial vacancies in Bergen County and throughout the state. In addition to the judicial vacancies, the pandemic has created tremendous case backlogs throughout the court system.

"The administration of justice cannot be adequately and consistently provided to the public if the high level of judicial vacancies persists," says Foy, who is optimistic that the governor and state senators will significantly address the high number of vacancies in Bergen County before the end of 2022.

Foy credits his Syracuse University experience for nurturing his leadership skills. "I went to college as a teenage boy and graduated as a man with focused ambition," he says. "My ability to achieve what I have accomplished to date is in part because of the people I met at Syracuse University, who inspired me to believe I could be successful at whatever I put my mind to."





# Diversifying Children's Literature, One Book at a Time

**R**aising two young children, Clothilde Ewing '00 was always mindful that the books in her home were reflective of both her family and her diverse Chicago community. So, in 2018, when she read a *New York Times* op-ed piece lamenting the lack of diversity in children's publishing, it struck a chord. She clipped the article and tacked it to her vision board.

"A lot of the books that feature Black characters are books that feature our history and our struggle, or they are about exceptional individuals. We have a lot of these books in our house, and I find them important to share and celebrate," says Ewing.

"At the same time, that is a lot for kids to carry. I'm not sure my kids are going to be the world's best scientists or professional athletes or future president, but I do hope they will be filled with joy."

What Ewing wanted for her daughter and son were books that featured Black kids who are imaginative and playful but where race is just a part of who they are, not the focal point of their experiences. As a former news and television producer, Ewing knew something about storytelling. She decided to try to write a children's book herself.

Ewing started keeping a notebook of funny things her kids said and did. She joined the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators, finding a group of other unpublished writers who critiqued each other's work. She secured an agent, who shopped around Ewing's first manuscript, *Stella Keeps the Sun Up*, the story of a young girl who schemes to keep the sun up in the sky so she never has to go to bed.

In a full-circle moment, the book was purchased by publisher Denene Millner, the author of the op-ed piece that sparked Ewing on her writing journey, at Simon & Schuster. "Her imprint, Denene Millner Books, is all about bringing more Black joy into the world and showcasing authors of color," says Ewing.

Named for her now 8-year-old daughter, Stella, the book was released in March 2022, and made an immediate impact, receiving press coverage in both *People* and *Entertainment Weekly* magazines. The publisher has committed to at least three other titles in the series—*Stella and the Mystery of the Missing Tooth* will be out in March 2023. "I need to get started on a Jackson series," Ewing says, referring to her 6-year-old son.

Ewing does her writing at night and on weekends. By day, she serves as vice president of strategic communications at The Chicago Community Trust, a role she's held since 2019, after stints working in communications for the 2012 Barack Obama re-election campaign, as a producer for *The Oprah Winfrey Show*, and for CBS News, both in Chicago and London. "I feel so passionately

about this that I am willing to burn the midnight oil for as long as it takes to bring more diversity onto our bookshelves and libraries," says Ewing.

She's an experienced time manager. As an undergraduate at Syracuse University, Ewing dual majored in broadcast journalism and political science with a minor in sociology. As a first-year student, she was a member of the club lacrosse team when Syracuse announced plans to launch a varsity women's lacrosse team the following year. Ewing met Coach Lisa Miller and ultimately was recruited to play goalie on that inaugural team. She still holds the University record for most saves in a game (25 in 1999). "With my double major, it was really the only extracurricular I had time for," she says.

Although Ewing says she never aspired to be an author, let alone a children's book author, she's relishing her new role and proud of what she's accomplished. "The feedback to *Stella* has been tremendous," she says. "I've been really touched by the response that I've gotten from parents of readers."

One of the best messages Ewing received was from a mom in Australia whose daughter dressed as Stella for Book Day at school. "As a Black parent who has seen my own daughter worry about her ability to be Fancy Nancy for Halloween, I love seeing children of different races and ethnicities embrace Stella so fully," says Ewing. "Nancy's a great character, but it's also important to have a character like Stella that kids of color can see themselves reflected in."



# Promoting Sustainability Through Fashion

**L**ike many first-generation college students, Caeresa Richardson '07 had the priority ingrained in her to get an education that would lead to a good job and economic stability. So, the Buffalo, New York, native did just that. She came to Syracuse University, studied mechanical engineering and was immediately hired after graduation into the Eaton Corporation Leadership Development Program.

"It was a wonderful opportunity to get frontline leader experience and build my career," says Richardson, who traveled the world managing large projects.

And while Richardson enjoyed her profession, she'd always had a passion for fashion and retail. "I used to dream about what I'd want

to do if I was in a position to retire early. I was interested in fashion, but I also wanted to do something with a bigger purpose, to contribute to our community in a conscious way that aligned with my values."

As an engineer, Richardson saw the damaging effects traditional manufacturing practices have on the environment, including extreme water usage, the dumping of untreated toxic waste waters and the shed of microfibers from synthetic fabrics into waterways. In many countries, clothing manufacturing is also rife with human rights issues such as long working hours, hazardous working conditions and child labor. "This awareness prompted my own lifestyle shift, but I struggled to find ethical brands that were also feminine and modern," she says.

Richardson saw an opportunity to bridge her two passions—engineering and fashion—to bring sustainable clothing to stylish, conscious shoppers. "I wanted to align purchasing power with my values and test out the hypothesis that other women were interested in that as well," she says.

In 2019, she and her husband, David Richardson '07 (a fellow engineer she met during SummerStart before their first year at Syracuse), decided she would take a year off from her job as manager of the outdoor lighting department at National Grid to invest in the idea to create a sustainable clothing retailer. The plan was to host a series of traveling pop-up shops in various locales, running from one to three months at a time. By early 2020, she had the year ahead booked. When the pandemic necessitated canceling those events, Richardson shifted to an e-commerce model, holding live shopping events on Facebook.

"It kind of exploded," she recalls. "People were really interested in the concept of sustainably and ethically created fashion, but they also wanted to touch and try on garments."

In August 2020, Richardson opened a brick-and-mortar store, Ecodessa, in downtown Syracuse. Her presence as a Black woman business owner made an immediate impact. She received the 2021 Heart of Downtown Award of Excellence from the Downtown Committee of Syracuse and the New York State Senate 2022 Empire Award, which recognizes businesses and institutions in New York state that have made significant contributions to their local community.

A member of the boards of the WISE Women's Business Center, the Gifford Foundation and the Central New York Community Foundation, Richardson secured a \$25,000 grant from the latter to create an incubator fund supporting other aspiring Black women business owners downtown.

"Having self-funded the launch of Ecodessa, I understand the challenge," she says. "I'm proud to be part of a renaissance of Black women business owners."

At the same time, Richardson has adjusted her own business model, closing her storefront to re-launch her business as it originally started, through pop-up events, e-commerce and a private shopping studio where customers can try on merchandise.

"My original location proved to be unsustainable expense-wise, so I am shifting my investment back to e-commerce while still maintaining a touch-and-feel experience for customers who want it," says Richardson, now also director of operations for Mid-State Spring.

A member of the Syracuse alumnae chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Inc., Richardson continues to use her experiences to pay it forward. She is hoping to build on her incubator program and offer a second round of funding. And she supports leadership development opportunities for professional women of color through You Can't Fail Inc., a nonprofit where she serves as founding president and board member.

"Community service is very important to me," says Richardson, co-chair of her AKA chapter's 50th anniversary luncheon. "I would love to see more people in entrepreneurial roles and participating in the tremendous growth that Syracuse is experiencing."



# Cohen Honors Mother's Memory Through OTHC Scholarship

**D**iane Hasbrouck Cohen's life was synonymous with Syracuse University. She grew up on East Fayette Street, in the shadow of "the University on the Hill," and met her husband, the late Vincent Cohen '57, L'60, when he was a student and basketball star at Syracuse. Two of their three children, Traci Cohen Dennis '90 and Vincent Cohen Jr. '92, L'95, would later also earn Syracuse University degrees.



But Cohen's own options had been limited. Although her father was a skilled welder, due to racism in the 1950s and '60s, he was denied promotions and raises. As a result, financial resources were very limited for their family of nine. Cohen was largely raised by her eldest sister after her mother passed away when she was 14. She attended Nottingham High School in Syracuse and the more affordable Central State University, an HBCU in Wilberforce, Ohio, before she married.

"Even though Syracuse University had practically been in my mom's backyard, there was no possibility for her to go there herself because of her family circumstances," says her son, Vincent Cohen Jr.

Hoping to help other talented students of limited means born and raised in the City of Syracuse, he has endowed a scholarship in memory of his mother, who died in December 2018.

As a life-long learner, Diane Cohen realized her passion for African studies and took frequent trips to the continent collecting unique and exquisite art on each trip. She eventually established her own company, *African Hands, LLC*, and sold and donated the art she collected. She served on the board of the Museum of African Art in Washington, D.C., where she resided until her death.

Cohen has donated \$100,000 to the Our Time Has Come (OTHC) Scholarship Program to create the Diane Hasbrouck Cohen Scholarship to support underrepresented students with need, with preference to students from the City of Syracuse. The scholarship follows the Vincent H. Cohen Sr. Scholarship, created by the Cohen

family in 2018. He also supports the OTHC program through the Omega Psi Phi Scholarship and supports the Syracuse University College of Law.

Like his father, Cohen earned his law degree from the Syracuse University College of Law and went on to make his own impact in the Washington, D.C., legal community. He spent five years as principal assistant U.S. attorney and served as U.S. attorney for the District of Columbia before joining the international law firm, Dechert LLP, as a partner in 2016. He was recently elected Global Managing Partner and is a part of a leadership team that directs the growth, management and strategy of the 1,000 lawyer international law firm.

Like his mother, Cohen's connections to Syracuse are strong. He was elected to the Syracuse University Board of Trustees in 2019 and was recently appointed to its executive committee. He sits on the Dean's Board of Advisors for the College of Law and also serves on the Multicultural Advancement Advisory Council.

"Having a diverse student body at Syracuse University continues to be a top priority for me," Cohen says. "The OTHC Program supports underrepresented students who might not otherwise have the means to achieve a Syracuse University education, thereby enriching the campus experience for all students. Maybe if the OTHC program was in place and scholarships like this were available, my mother could have attended the University that was right next door."



# SUMA Hosts 40th Celebration on Martha's Vineyard

**O**n Aug. 16, the Office of Multicultural Advancement (SUMA) paid tribute to its 40 years at Syracuse University with a celebratory luncheon by the ocean hosted by Bettye Foster Baker, wife of the late Lt. Col. (Ret.) William Baker G'64, and her daughter, Janet Baker G'91. More than 120 attendees enjoyed a delicious meal from Sarah Brown Catering, owned by Kenny Brown '89, and an afternoon filled with fun and fellowship, captured in photographs by Randi Baird '87.



From left: Alumni and friends pose with their 40th anniversary gift bags; attendees enjoyed a delicious catered lunch steps away from the historic Inkwell Beach; Dr. Bettye Baker and her daughter Janet Baker hosted the event at their home.

“This was the largest gathering we’ve ever hosted on Martha’s Vineyard,” says Rachel Vassel ’91, G’21, associate vice president of multicultural advancement. “The location of the Baker home adjacent to Inkwell Beach was a great place to enjoy the beauty of summer on Martha’s Vineyard, the warmth of our Orange community and the legacy of SUMA at Syracuse University. We are grateful to Dr. Baker for hosting us at her home for a third time.”

“It was a momentous walk down memory lane for all who attended,” says Miko Horn ’95, director of alumni events in the Office of Multicultural Advancement. Alumni representing numerous decades at Syracuse University shared heartfelt stories about their college experiences. Speakers included former Coming Back Together (CBT) Reunion co-chair Sylvia Mackey ’63, Syracuse 8 member Dana Harrell ’72, G’73, SUMA Advisory Council members Keith Brown ’82, Connie Orlando

’89, and Fatimah Moody ’90, also a former CBT co-chair, and Vassel. “Alumni not only shared what SU was like during their own eras, but how the creation of SUMA has continued to unite and connect them post-graduation through CBT, other events and through their support of current students with the Our Time Has Come (OTHC) program,” says Horn.

The luncheon was one in a series of events held in 2022 to commemorate SUMA’s 40-year anniversary and support the OTHC program. “If you appreciate what our office has been able to do over the past 40 years in support of alumni and students of color, we ask that you support the program with a gift of \$40, \$400 or \$4,000 this year,” says Vassel. “It’s important that we continue to demonstrate that diverse alumni are participating in the Forever Orange Campaign and continue to meet the needs of underrepresented students.”

# Orange Central Multicultural Breakfast Celebrates Alumni Award Winners

**A**lumni and students of color enjoyed the annual Multicultural Breakfast during Orange Central Weekend. In addition to a delicious breakfast, great conversation and inspirational stories from alumni and current Our Time Has Come Scholars and Leaders, attendees celebrated the achievements of Robb Armstrong '85, Jamal Salmon '12 and Melvin Stith G'73, G'78, who were honored the previous evening at the 2022 University Alumni Awards Ceremony.



Armstrong received the George Arents Award for Excellence in Visual Arts. The Arents Award is Syracuse University's highest alumni honor, presented annually to alumni who have made outstanding contributions to their chosen fields. A graduate of the College of Visual and Performing Arts,

Armstrong created the *Daily Orange* comic strip "Hector" as an undergraduate. In 1989, his comic strip "JumpStart" was syndicated in 40 newspapers nationwide. Today, that comic about a cop named Joe and his nurse wife Marcy, can be read daily in more than 400 newspapers. It is the most widely syndicated comic strip by a Black cartoonist in history and is currently being developed as a TV sitcom on CBS. Armstrong is author of *Fearless*, *A Cartoonist's Guide to Life* and *On A Roll*, a JumpStart treasury. He was bestowed an honorary doctorate from Holy Family University in 2012.



Salmon was honored with the Generation Orange Award, which recognizes graduates of the last 10 years for their continued commitment to Syracuse University. He is senior vice president of global data analytics at Paramount Pictures, responsible for infusing data into key decisions made across

the marketing and production departments—to inform media investment, creative direction, publicity and social media strategy. Salmon played a key role in the marketing tactics/strategies that launched numerous blockbusters, including *A Quiet Place*, *Sonic the Hedgehog*, *Mission: Impossible - Fallout* and *Top Gun: Maverick*. He is also a lecturer at UCLA's Anderson School of Management and is a founding member of Syracuse University's Multicultural Advancement Advisory Council.



Stith received the Military/Veteran Award, presented annually to Syracuse University U.S. military service members or veteran alumni who have distinguished themselves through exceptional meritorious service and achievement. Stith served in the U.S. Army Military Intelligence Command from 1968 to

1972, achieving the rank of captain. He then earned an MBA and Ph.D. in marketing from the Martin J. Whitman School of Management. He served on the faculties of the University of South Florida, Florida A&M University School of Business and Industry and Florida State University before serving as dean of the Whitman School in 2005. In 2018, Stith was appointed interim president of Norfolk State University. In 1990, he won Florida State University's Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Distinguished Service Award, and in 2018, he was inducted into the Florida State University College of Business Faculty Hall of Fame. Stith was named as a top influential black corporate director by *Savoy* magazine in 2016, 2017 and 2021.

Syracuse University leadership present to socialize with alumni and students at the breakfast included Candace Campbell Jackson, senior vice president and chief of staff to Chancellor Kent Syverud; Mary Grace Almandrez, vice president for diversity and inclusion; Craig Stone, associate vice president and chief of Campus Safety and Emergency Management Services; Tracy Barlok, special assistant to the Chancellor for advancement and external affairs; and Dwayne Murray, deputy director of the Office of Veteran and Military Affairs.

# Sherman Douglas '89 Hosts Inaugural Orange Legends Charity Golf Tournament

**A**lumni from across the country converged on South Florida for the inaugural Orange Legends Charity Golf Tournament held on Nov. 14, many for a weekend full of fun with their Orange family leading up to it.



From left: Student hosts Jordan Pierre and Nyah Jones; Sherman Douglas; Kellie Porter '99, Angela Alston-Roberts '90, Celeste Murphy '90 and Monica Houston '90 enjoyed a fun-filled day on the links.

The charity tournament was hosted by former Orange basketball great Sherman Douglas '89 to support the Our Time Has Come (OTHC) Orange Legends Scholarship, which was established in 2020 by Roland Williams '97, Juli and Jim Boenheim '66, G'73 and Douglas, as well as the Women's Basketball Head Coach's Fund in support of Coach Felisha Legette-Jack '89.

Participants included Orange legends from football, basketball and lacrosse, including Greg Allen '73 and John Lobon '73 of the Syracuse 8, Dale Shackelford '79, Angela Alston-Roberts '90, Lazarus Sims '96, John Wallace '96, Cory Bowen '00 and Rob Konrad '02, as well as Kevin Richardson H'20, a member of the Exonerated 5 and the first Syracuse University honorary undergraduate degree recipient.

For many alumni, the tournament provided an excuse for a holiday weekend escape in the sun. Activities kicked off on Friday evening with a welcome party at Matchbox Sawgrass Mills, located next door to the headquarters AC Hotel in Sunrise. Saturday activities included morning rooftop yoga, followed by a beach day in Fort Lauderdale and Syracuse football game watch party that night. On Sunday evening, alumni were treated to a special screening of *Black Panther: Wakanda Forever*, sponsored by Epiphany Blue, a special events company owned by Tamekia

Flowers-Ball '97, a member of the Multicultural Advancement Advisory Council.

On Monday, the Orange Legends Tournament was held at the Club at Weston Hills. As an alternative to the tournament, alumni were able to sign up for a golf clinic with a PGA pro, who taught the basics of the game. The event culminated with an awards ceremony and live auction conducted by Salatha Willis, associate athletics director for diversity, climate and culture, that included a pair of roundtrip JetBlue tickets, a golf foursome at the private courses at the Club at Weston Hills, and exclusive game-day experiences donated by Coaches Boenheim and Legette-Jack.

Participants received special thanks for their support from OTHC Scholars Jordan Pierre '23 and Nyah Jones '23, who served as student hosts throughout the weekend.

"We are thrilled that Sherman graciously offered to host this event and recruit fellow Orange Legends to participate," says Miko Horn '95, director of alumni events in the Office of Multicultural Advancement. "This inaugural tournament is part of our yearlong 40th anniversary celebration but we hope for it to become an annual event supporting the OTHC Program. Alumni who participated can't wait to do it again."

# Miss Jones Returns to New York Radio

New York-metro area radio listeners got a treat when Tarsha Jones '91 returned to the airwaves as morning host of WXBK Classic Hip Hop 94.7 The Block, becoming the only Black woman to lead a major morning show in the area.



“After stepping away from the industry to raise my two sons, I am beyond thrilled to be back home and leading morning drive at 94.7 The Block,” Jones says.

Known professionally as Miss Jones or Jonesy, she was the first Black female to be syndicated on morning radio in North America. She first gained a following on the No. 1 hip hop station Hot 97 in New York, and later on Philadelphia’s Power 99 and The Beat. At each affiliated station she achieved consistent No. 1 ratings resulting in record-breaking revenues.

Jones grew up in a rough section of Queens, New York. A talented vocalist, she attended the prestigious High School of Music and Art in Manhattan, then came to Syracuse University, following a path paved by her sisters, Audrey Jones '83, producer of *The View* on ABC, and Marcia Jones Delaney '84, owner of Watermark Services, an independent marketing consulting firm. She sang at many campus events during her undergraduate years, then returned to New York to pursue her music career. She toured with rapper Doug E. Fresh, and later went to work for Hot 97 FM with Ed Lover and Dr. Dre, and then on her own as “Miss Jones in the Morning.”

During the late 1990s and early 2000s, Jones developed a reputation for her hot takes on entertainment news and no-holds-barred interviews with hip-hop elite.

In 2007, Jones published *Have You Met Miss Jones? The Life and Loves of Radio’s Most Controversial Diva*, an autobiographical work telling the story of her difficult childhood and her struggles to succeed in the music business and on radio.

She returns to the airwaves after a 15-year hiatus. “Jonesy in the Morning” can be heard weekdays from 6 to 10 a.m. “I’m excited to be back,” Jones told the *Daily News*. “It feels like I am being thrown a party that I didn’t have to plan for myself. I can just literally step in a room and just be celebrated and embraced.”

Jones regularly returns to campus for Coming Back Together (CBT) reunions; she sang the national anthem at CBT 2021’s CBT Celebrity Basketball Game.

## Milestones



**Lia Miller '99, G'03** is a student at the U.S. Naval War College. A career U.S. foreign service officer, she looks forward to her next post as Consul General in Barcelona, Spain, beginning in summer 2024.



**Cha McCoy '07**, a master sommelier, opened The Communion Wine + Spirits in downtown Syracuse in October.



**Tamar Smithers '07** was named executive director of the Virginia African American Cultural Center. She previously served as director of education and public programs of the National Museum of African American Music in Nashville and as director of the Community Folk Art Center in Syracuse.

# Miss Pennsylvania Billie LaRae Owens Competes for Miss USA

If you watched the Miss USA pageant in early October, you might have seen a familiar face. Billie LaRae Owens '18 graced the stage, competing as Miss Pennsylvania.



If her face wasn't familiar to you, her name ought to be. Owens is the daughter of Nicole '94 and Billy Owens '92, a Syracuse All-American basketball star who went on to play 14 seasons in the NBA. Her brother Chaz Owens joined the Orange squad in 2020 but transferred to a junior college this summer.

"Growing up, Syracuse University was the only college

I ever heard about, so it's the only school I applied to," she says. "I was interested in broadcasting and was fortunate that it was home to the Newhouse School."

Owens wasn't accepted into the S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications until her sophomore year, an experience that provided a valuable lesson in perseverance. "I worked hard and was able to transfer in. It sounds cliché, but it taught me not to give up, a lesson I applied to pageantry."

Owens first competed for Miss Pennsylvania in 2019, placing as first runner-up. "Some people would be satisfied with that, but not me," she says. "I'm extremely competitive and think it's so important not to give up on your dreams. When you have a goal, see it through."

Owens began modeling at age 16 but never considered pageantry until after graduating from Syracuse with a degree in broadcast and digital journalism. She was working as a model when a friend suggested she consider pageants. Once she started, her competitive spirit took over.

"A lot of these girls start competing at a young age," she says. "I got in a little late, and it taught me that once I put my mind to something, I won't let anything stand in the way of my dreams."

Owens was crowned in April, her fourth go at the pageant. Although she did not place at the Miss USA competition, she has no regrets. "I wanted to go and make Pennsylvania proud, and I feel like I did that even without making it to finals night," she says. "I left with a great group of friends, and I know that if I'm stranded in any state in the country, I have someone to call to help me out."

In both the Miss Pennsylvania and Miss USA competitions, Owens ran on a platform of girls and women empowerment. In addition to working as a model, Owens serves as an official ambassador for HoopHers, an empowerment program for preteen girls run by Philadelphia Youth Basketball.

She's hoping to combine the exposure and networking gained from pageant competition with her Newhouse education to pursue a career as an entertainment correspondent. In the meantime, she plans to enjoy the remainder of her reign as Miss Pennsylvania and exploring more of her home state. "This has been a great experience, and I'm happy and proud to represent Pennsylvania," she says.

## Milestones



**Kim Barber G'07** began a new role as director of safety policies and programs at National Grid in Syracuse, where she has worked since 2010.



**Dexter McKinney Jr. '08, G'14** made his Broadway debut in the play *Skeleton Crew*, which was nominated for three Tony awards. He is currently performing in the world premiere of *The Sea Lady* at the Metropolitan Playhouse.



**Josh Aviv '14, G'17** had the honor of introducing President Joseph R. Biden Jr. L'68, H'09 at the signing ceremony for the CHIPS and Science Act on August 9 at the White House. Aviv is CEO of SparkCharge, the first company to create a mobile charging system and network.



# #mySULife Now Available at Syracuse University Bookstore

**W**hen Gina (Brown) Keller '89 launched her line of #mySULife slogan clothing last April, she hoped to sell out what she had produced and raise funds for the Our Time Has Come Scholarship fund. She never anticipated the line would be so popular it would wind up in the Syracuse University Bookstore.

Keller created #mySULife at the suggestion of a college friend, as an offshoot of #myBKlife, a brand started by Keller and her husband, Steve, as an homage to their hometown and the social media following they built chronicling their love story.

Keller held pop-up shops at several events at Lubin House, including the Office of Multicultural Advancement's inaugural business conference held in June, and a send-off for incoming students in August, the same month her line landed in the bookstore with its own display in time for Orange Central Weekend. "The hot item is the blue stadium jacket," she says. "And we added hats for winter."

A portion of all sales continue to support the Our Time Has Come program. "This is such a full circle moment for me," Keller says. "I was 16 when I landed on the steps of Syracuse University for Summer Institute. To now have collaborated with the University and have my own brand in the bookstore, is something I could have never imagined."



**Annie Blay '21** joined *Allure* magazine as associate beauty editor.



**Mariama Jalloh '22** joined NBC News in New York City as a digital news associate.

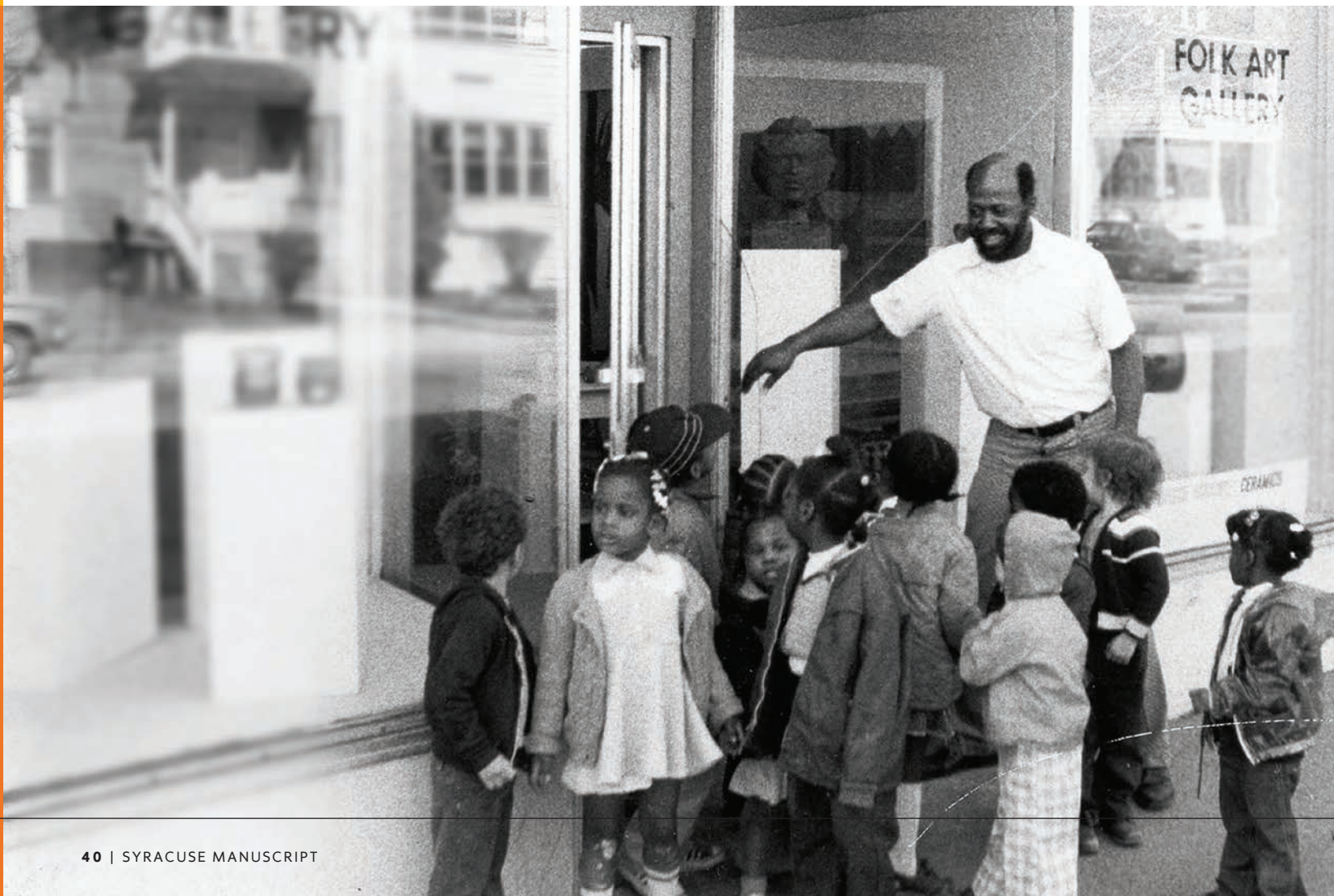


**Carmelo Anthony** NBA player and entrepreneur, has launched his own wine brand, VII(N) The Seventh Estate, to bring more diversity to the world of wine.

# Celebrating its 50th Year, the Community Folk Art Center Provides Community with Diverse Arts and Culture

Over the past year, Syracuse University's Community Folk Art Center (CFAC) has celebrated its 50-year anniversary, kicking off with an R&B dance party in April and its 50th annual teen art exhibition. The celebration culminated in October with the launch of a historical exhibit, a luncheon and art auction on Oct. 22 and a performance by the Ailey II-Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater at the Landmark Theatre on Oct. 26, which included recognition of individuals instrumental in CFAC history.

*CFAC founder Herb Williams with neighborhood children in the early 1970s*





Top, left to right: Tanisha Jackson; Frank Torres '76 and Larry Martin at the CBT 2014 alumni art show; Kheli Willets. Bottom: a children's art program; ceramacist David MacDonald; Carol Charles; a dance performance at CFAC.

“For a half century, CFAC has helped share, preserve and continue the histories and stories of the African diaspora through the arts,” says Tanisha M. Jackson, Ph.D., executive director and professor of African American studies. “We are proud of the community we serve, the setting for dialogue and interaction we provide and the incredible programs and artists we support.”

A unit of the Department of African American Studies in the College of Arts and Sciences, CFAC is an arts and cultural organization dedicated to the promotion and development of artists of the African diaspora and other underrepresented groups and to serving as a bridge between the University and the local Syracuse community. Throughout its five-decade history, the center has been instrumental in inspiring the career direction of Syracuse University students through artistic expression, helping propel the careers of emerging artists, exposing local school children to the arts and promoting dialogue.

That’s been its intent from the start.

In the early 1970s, Syracuse University was engaged in affirmative action initiatives to diversify its faculty and programs. One of those hires was Herbert T. Williams, a sculptor and art historian who joined the faculty in 1972 with a dual appointment between the School of Fine Art in the College of Visual and Performing Arts and the fledgling Afro-American studies program in the College of Arts and Sciences.

When Williams arrived, he was asked by Harry Morgan, program director, to create an institution or facility that would engage local Black community members to participate in the visual arts and cultural events. In fall 1972, Williams launched a course called Art of the Black World. Students enrolled that inaugural semester became involved with creating the entity,

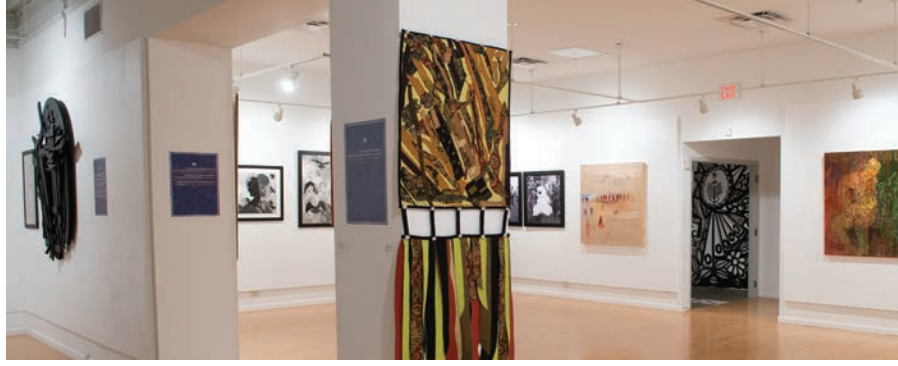
along with interested local community members.

The result was the Community Folk Art Gallery, which opened in January 1973 in a former bakery on South Salina Street on Syracuse’s predominantly Black South Side. The first exhibit featured the work of Harlem photographer James Van Der Zee and poet Quincy Troupe.

In addition to funding from the Afro-American studies program, the gallery received initial support from the New York State Council on the Arts, the Urban Crisis Fund and the City-County Youth Board. Williams’ goal for the gallery was to provide “a showcase for artists who, for ethnic or social reasons, have not had exhibition space available on a continuing basis,” he said at the time.

The development of the gallery was a grassroots effort. One of the first people Williams involved was ceramicist David MacDonald, who had joined the faculty of the College of Visual and Performing Arts in 1971. “As the only African American faculty member in the art school, he naturally gravitated to me,” recalls MacDonald, who spent 35 years as a CFAC board member, on and off, over the years. “Because I helped him hang Sheetrock, I’m referred to as one of the founders. Our mission was to provide the community some access to the resources of the campus and for the campus to gain some knowledge of the kinds of cultural things that were happening in the Black community. It’s quite significant that CFAC still continues 50 years later as an independent extension of an academic unit.”

Others integral to the start of the gallery included nationally acclaimed local artist Jack White, who then taught as an adjunct at Syracuse; undergraduate ceramics major Basheer Q. Alim '74 (at the time, Bobby Reeves); and graduate students George



Left to right: Jack White, a Syracuse artist in the 1970s who was instrumental in CFAC's founding; the main gallery at CFAC; Herb Williams

Campbell G'77, H'03, who went on to serve as president of The Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art from 2000 to 2011; and Mary Schmidt Campbell G'73, G'80, G'82, president of Spelman College from 2015 until June 2022.

Williams' students received partial credit for working on gallery programs, acting as guest curators, helping arrange and hang shows, running a Friday night film series and conducting arts workshops for local residents, who ranged from pre-schoolers to the elderly. One of its oldest community programs is an annual spring art competition for local high school students held in conjunction with The Links.

In 1976, a fire forced the gallery to close for several months. It reopened two blocks north, where Williams knocked down walls of three adjacent storefronts with the help of students and neighborhood young people. The new gallery contained three interconnected but separate spaces, two for exhibition and another that served as a workshop for art classes.

"This is a shared effort," said Williams in 1977. "Without SU's participation the gallery could not exist. But the community helps establish the programs and policies and benefits directly."

By 1983, the gallery had outgrown its space, and the University found a new location in the former Jewish Community Center building at 2223 E. Genesee St., which offered larger exhibition space and more classrooms for art courses. MacDonald recalls the move as somewhat controversial. "It was a larger space that was closer to campus and easier for students to get to, but the location was viewed by some as more affluent and less central to the Black community," he says.

The first exhibit in the new space was held in conjunction with Syracuse University's first Coming Back Together Reunion and featured Black alumni artists: Betty Blayton '59; Elton Fax '31; Joel Gains '77; Falstaff Harris, who attended Syracuse from 1921-23; Shurley Harris '47; James Herring 1917; and Michael Singletary '72. The gallery would remain in that location for 10 years; every subsequent CBT has included an alumni art exhibit as a way to drive alumni and student support for, and awareness of, the center.

In 1998, Williams recruited Carol Charles '84 to serve as his assistant director. Charles had taken Art of the Black World during her first year as a Syracuse undergraduate and used CFAC facilities in her involvement with the Paul Robeson Performing Arts Company and as a dancer. When Williams died in 1999, Charles became managing director.

"The beauty of CFAC is the immersion experience it offers 365 days per year, not just in February," she says. "The impact it's had over the last 50 years has been quite extraordinary and immeasurable."

Kheli Willets '92, G'94, G'02 joined CFAC as academic director in 2002. An undergraduate metalsmithing major, Willets became a work-study student at the gallery. It was her relationship with Williams that inspired her master's degree in museum studies and doctorate in art education.

In 2006, two milestones occurred. In applying for 501(c)(3) status for fundraising purposes, Willets discovered in paperwork that the organization had originally been founded as the Community Folk Arts Center, but somehow became referred to as a gallery.

"The moment I read the original documents, I began using center instead of gallery because I understood that the founding director had a vision of what a center for community folk could be, and I spent my career there working to make that happen," she says.

Now known as CFAC, the facility moved once again, to its current location across from Syracuse Stage, just down the hill from campus, becoming part of the University's Connective Corridor initiative and into the University's Coalition of Museums and Art Centers

Renovated specifically to serve as an arts space, the new facility features two galleries, one named after Williams, a dance studio, theater (originally home to the Paul Robeson Performing Arts Company), the David MacDonald Ceramics Studio, and classrooms that can accommodate up to 50 students for its after-school art and summer arts academies. It also serves as a bridge to the community as a special events space, particularly sought out by Black community organizations.

Charles left in 2008. Willets became executive director. In 2019, she was succeeded by Jackson, who had served as assistant director of the Frank W. Hale Jr. Black Cultural Center at Ohio State University. Only a year into her tenure, she successfully steered CFAC through the pandemic shutdown, putting exhibits online and hosting concerts and classes through livestreaming.

Today, the arts education center's robust public programming includes exhibitions, film screenings, gallery talks, workshops and courses in studio and performing arts, and after-school and summer art programs offered at no charge to local students in grades 4 through 12.

But Jackson says CFAC plays a greater role than just promoting the arts. "CFAC, in a very organic and genuine way, demonstrates the diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives of Syracuse University," she says. "We do it in practice and we do it in who we are and how we engage with those themes through exhibitions and programs. That's an extraordinary legacy."

# IN MEMORIAM



**Barbara Ann Nash Bailey '46**, of Timonium, Maryland, died July 7, 2022.

Born in Providence, Rhode Island, Bailey was educated in Providence public schools and held a bachelor's degree from Syracuse University and a master's degree from Rhode Island College.

Bailey was a dedicated music teacher in the Providence Public Schools District and retired in 1992. After retirement she lived in Tucson, Arizona, and Timonium. She was an active member of Edgewood United Methodist Church, serving as a soloist. She also was a life member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Inc. She enjoyed travels to Europe, attending Broadway plays, concerts, opera and reading. Most of all, she loved singing.

Bailey is survived by her husband, Franklin P. Bailey; her daughter, Barbara B. Hall; and other relatives.



**Cerri Annette Banks '00, G'04, G'06**, of Syracuse, died July 31, 2022.

Born in Catskill, Banks graduated from Monroe Community College. She went to Syracuse University, where she earned three degrees: a bachelor's degree in inclusive elementary and special education, a master's degree in cultural

foundations of education and a Ph.D. in cultural foundations of education. She credited her time as a Syracuse student for changing the trajectory of her life.

Banks worked in higher education at Hobart and William Smith Colleges, Mount Holyoke College and Skidmore College before returning to Syracuse University in 2021, where she was vice president of student success and deputy to the senior vice president. She was a member of the School of Education Board of Visitors since 2009, serving as chair for the last seven years. Banks was also a member of the three-person interim leadership team charged with advancing Syracuse University's diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility priorities and strategic planning efforts.

"Cerri Banks embodied the spirit and soul of Syracuse University," says the Rev. Brian Konkol, dean of Hendricks Chapel. "In addition to her brilliant intellect, courageous leadership and authentic advocacy, she was wonderfully kind, fully trustworthy and bursting with joy."

"Cerri's impact at Syracuse will be felt for years to come," adds Allen Groves, senior vice president and chief student experience officer. "Her professional life was defined by a commitment to students and to the field of education. Cerri will be greatly missed by her family, friends, colleagues and all who knew and loved her."

In honor of Banks' longtime commitment to the School of Education, her family donated her professional books to SOE faculty and graduate students. A book giveaway event in her memory was held Sept. 29.

Banks is survived by her father, Deryk N. Banks, and stepmother, Cynthia D. Banks; brothers Deryk Banks Jr., Andrell Lamar Banks, Jayln Banks and Shem Banks; sister Kendall Carter; uncle Arthur Banks and aunt Rae Banks; a host of nieces, nephews, cousins, godchildren and friends; and her beloved dog, Isabella.



**Tanaya Thomas-Edwards G'19**, of Atlanta, died Aug. 14, 2022, due to complications of COVID-19.

Born and raised in Syracuse, Thomas-Edwards served as program coordinator and assistant director of Syracuse University's Science and Technology Entry Program (STEP) from 2008 to 2019. She mentored hundreds of teenagers and young

adults throughout her career and will always be remembered for her generous, patient, welcoming and supportive spirit.

"Tanaya's passion for learning and creativity were woven throughout the program, especially the Saturday Learning Academy. She stopped at nothing to give the best to students," says Leonese Nelson G'95, director of STEP and CSTEP. "Her warmth and positivity were felt by all who met her. Her infectious laughter could fill any room, encourage STEP scholars to do their best, calm them when they were uneasy, lighten a tense moment, serve as reassurance for parents and brighten days in the office."

Thomas-Edwards moved to Atlanta in 2019 to pursue a Ph.D. in women and children's studies at Clark Atlanta University, where she continued to act as an advocate for women's empowerment, Black entrepreneurship and health and wellness initiatives within Black and Brown communities.

Thomas-Edwards is survived by her husband, Christopher Edwards; her children, Zora, Zion, Craelle, Nakya and Nadir; her niece, Tahira; and her nephew, Tahlil.

# IN MEMORIAM



**Barbara Ann Nash Bailey '46**, of Timonium, Maryland, died July 7, 2022.

Born in Providence, Rhode Island, Bailey was educated in Providence public schools and held a bachelor's degree from Syracuse University and a master's degree from Rhode Island College.

Bailey was a dedicated music teacher in the Providence Public Schools District and retired in 1992. After retirement she lived in Tucson, Arizona, and Timonium. She was an active member of Edgewood United Methodist Church, serving as a soloist. She also was a life member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Inc. She enjoyed travels to Europe, attending Broadway plays, concerts, opera and reading. Most of all, she loved singing.

Bailey is survived by her husband, Franklin P. Bailey; her daughter, Barbara B. Hall; and other relatives.



**Robert "Robbie" Robinson**, of Baltimore, died April 8, 2022.

Robinson was born in Jefferson, Alabama. He joined the United States Air Force after graduating high school. After the Air Force, he joined the Baltimore City Police Department and later became a Baltimore City Court Commissioner. He attended Baltimore City Community College,

where he received an associate degree; University of Baltimore for a bachelor's degree in law enforcement; and Coppin State University for a master's degree in correctional education-administration.

Robinson was the first Black assistant director of public safety at Georgetown University Law School, the first Black director of public safety at Goucher College in Baltimore, the first Black director of public safety at Youngstown State University, and the first Black director of public safety at Southern Methodist University before coming to Syracuse University as chief of public safety in 1993. Robinson left Syracuse in 2001 and ended his career as director of public safety at two historically Black institutions, Texas Southern University in Houston and the University of the District of Columbia in Washington, D.C.

Robinson is survived by his wife, Carol, two daughters, a son, three grandsons and extended family



**Carey Jenkins**, of Paterson, New Jersey, died Sept. 30, 2021.

Jenkins was the founder and president of the nonprofit organization Operation Link-Up, which helped students from inner-city New Jersey high schools attend colleges and universities. A major component of Operation Link-Up was its mentorship program in which each student selected was paired with a mentor.

Operation Link-Up was associated with Syracuse University for 25 years, graduating 136 students through the program.

Born in Mississippi, Jenkins was a graduate of California State University. He went to work for General Foods Corporation's sales division and was promoted to vice president of sales and marketing. Jenkins understood that he had achieved a successful career despite all odds against him and was deeply grateful for the mentorship he had once received as a young man.

In 1987, he created Operation Link-Up, which helped hundreds of students achieve college and professional degrees. Many of these students now have successful businesses, legal practices and careers. And for many of them, the cycle of poverty was broken as a result of attaining higher education.

In his memory, the Carey Jenkins Memorial Scholarship will be established to support high school students in Paterson, New Jersey, who demonstrate the value of hard work and have worked to achieve academic excellence.

Jenkins is survived by his wife, Caroline Jenkins; his two sons, John and Kevin; two grandchildren, Grace and Samuel; four siblings, Leroy, Maxine, Marie and Louise; and many mentees.



Olivia  
Stepter  
Newhouse School of Public  
Communications

Our  
Time  
Has  
Come

OTHC Scholars  
Cameron Joy Gray '22  
and Olivia Stepter '25  
at the 2022 OTHC  
Senior Celebration at  
the Chancellor's House



**Office of Multicultural Advancement**

200 Walnut Place  
Syracuse, NY 13244

NON PROFIT ORG  
US POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY  
SYRACUSE NY



# YEAR-END GIVING MATTERS!

Please support 40 years of Multicultural Advancement and Syracuse University's Forever Orange campaign. A gift at any level helps students achieve a Syracuse University education, providing a foundation for a successful career.

To make a gift, visit  
[alumni-of-color.syr.edu/give-now](https://alumni-of-color.syr.edu/give-now)



**Forever Orange**  
The Campaign for Syracuse University