

BLACK COLLEGE TODAY

For Today's Black College Students

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January/February

2021

HOWARD UNIVERSITY GRAD
V.P. KAMALA HARRIS "WE ARE ALL SPEAKING:"

2020-2021 BLACK COLLEGE QUEENS

MISS TALLADEGA PATRIA GATSON IS
ELECTED MISS NBCA

ALASKA STATE TROOPERS: HONORABLE
EXAMPLE TO FOLLOW

MORGAN'S S.C.O.M.
NAMED A FINALIST BY PRWEEK

DECISIONS...VACCINES & VOTING

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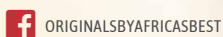
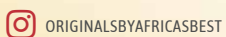
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COLLEGE AND PROFESSIONAL SPORTS CANNOT BEAT COVID-19

By Dr. James B. Ewers Jr.

Athletes are accustomed to winning and losing. Their minds are wired to compete. They are motivated and driven to win and to do their best.

I was a college student-athlete and know first-hand the single focus that I had to have in order to win tennis matches.

Sports is a multi-billion dollar industry. As fans in the stands, we put sporting events on our calendars. They become a priority and must-see events. Sometimes, we cancel other activities because we want to watch the big game on television.

How many times have you heard a friend say not to call because they will be watching a sporting event on television, or be there in person? We have a fascination with sports in America.

Sports figures are heroes in the eyes of many people. If you are in the public square, you talk about your favorite player or team. Some of us can get really hyped when talking about our teams in my opinion.

Thankfully, I have stopped that practice. Years ago, I realized those athletes were not paying any of my bills so my headache over a loss did not last too long.

Sports has come up against an opponent they cannot beat and that is COVID-19. It has been around for many months now and has caused distress and loss of life. Currently, there are over 270,000 people who have lost their lives due to this sickness.

Before the Coronavirus, I had never heard the word bubble associated with athletics. Soon after COVID-19 hit, professional sports like basketball and hockey started to play in bubbles. These bubbles were limited to players, coaches and other personnel.

The pro basketball bubble was in Orlando Florida at Disney World. The pro hockey bubbles were in Edmonton and Toronto, Canada.

Interestingly, these arrangements worked out for these two sports. Professional sports like baseball and football that did not create bubbles have not been so fortunate. In my opinion, the main reason for their misfortune is they travel to different locations and have fans in the stands. However, some will take a different view about this situation.

COVID-19 created cancelled games because many of the teams tested positive. The Miami Marlins baseball team readily comes to mind as several of their games were cancelled. Despite this, they did make the playoffs.

This virus has made professional sports take a time out. No longer is it business as usual.

College football has also had to cancel or suspend their operations. Going back, some football programs just cancelled their seasons. The Ivy league said no to playing football this season. The CIAA, MEAC, SWAC and SIAC, conferences made up of Historically Black Colleges and Universities said no to football, too.

If you are an HBCU student-athlete, I know you want to play your chosen sport. You are competitive and you want to show your talents. That is understandable. However, be mindful that your conference officials made the best long-term decision. Stay patient and remain focused. Your time will come.

This was not an easy decision for them to make. Officials said in their press releases they were putting the health and welfare of their student-athletes first and they meant it.

On the other side of the field, you had the Big Ten Conference, the Southeastern Conference and the Atlantic Coast Conference. They decided to play football this season.

The Big Ten Conference at the beginning said they would not play however they changed their mind. Christine Brennan, sports journalist for the USA Today said the Big Ten caved into the pressure.

Conferences that decided to play have had numerous COVID-19 cases. In fact, at least 30 games had to be cancelled or postponed. During the season, Dan Mullen, coach at the University of Florida and Nick Saban, coach of the University of Alabama tested positive. Other coaches and personnel have also fallen victim to the Coronavirus. Numerous games have been postponed until later dates because players have tested positive.

While some may disagree, money has been a factor in to play or not to play. Is this putting these student-athletes at risk?

Regardless, the mantra is play on!

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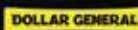
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Pretend

By Dana Rettig

Let's pretend that we've never met.

That way I can suppress the hurt and pain.

Let's pretend we've never kissed.

That way I can forget the lies you've told over again.

Let's pretend that we've never affirmed those three words.

For your actions have said otherwise.

Let's pretend that I've never dedicated a love poem on your behalf.

Since you've left me to clean up the mess you've formulated.

I regret the day I've put my trust in you.

What a huge error that I've foolishly created!

Let's pretend that I've never confessed my feelings to you.

You've never cared about me, so I shouldn't be surprised.

Let's pretend that I've never told you how much I adore your brown eyes.

My time will soon come to pass.

You will see me everywhere you turn.

Time to allow the past to finally burn.

I've spent nine years trying to put the pieces together, yet you ripped it apart.

I don't smile anymore; instead I walk with a frown and a shattered heart.

Let's pretend all is well- I'll go my way, and you can go yours.

For this will be the last time that I pick my heart off the floor.

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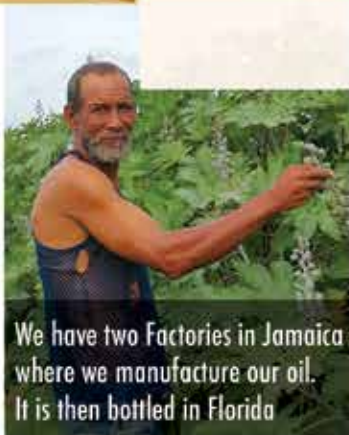


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“WE ARE ALL SPEAKING:

What Kamala Harris’ Vice-Presidency Means to Me”

by Jordyn Allen

Howard University Chairwoman,
Howard University Student Association Senate
Marketing Major, Political Science Minor



When Vice President-elect Kamala Harris said “Mr. Vice-President, I am speaking”, she was not just speaking for herself. She was speaking for the millions of black women across the nation who are overlooked and overstepped despite being overqualified to assume the highest leadership roles. When it was officially announced that Kamala Harris would be the first female Vice- President of the United States of America, a message was sent to little black girls across this nation that they each have a voice and their voice deserves to be heard. She unapologetically told this nation that black women are coming to the table and will be heard.

We are often told at a young age that “the sky is the limit”; but, as I learned in my applied calculus class at Howard University, the limit merely does not exist. However, before attending Howard I believed there was a limit. I believed there was an unconscious psychological consensus regarding when the appropriate moment was for a woman, at that a black woman, to occupy the White House. This placed a limit on what I, a black woman, believed I could become.

When I applied to Howard University, I wrote my admissions essay on why the results of the 2016 election were predictable and appropriate based on the history of America. Hillary Clinton did not lose the election to Donald

Trump because of her qualifications or lack of prior leadership experience. Hillary Clinton lost because America was not ready to refer to the President of the United States of America as “Madam President.” It was all about timing. America had just welcomed the first African American President of the United States and now, immediately thereafter, we were asking for the first female President. Time should not have been a barrier of progress, but it was. What is so impactful about Vice-President Elect Kamala Harris’ victory is not only did she overcome the barrier of “the right time” but, she overcame the order we have followed in allowing minority groups a seat at the table. In my college admission essay, I explained that, “History has laid a precedent in which the order of equality and accessibility follows white men, black men, white women, black women. Therefore, Hillary, or a white female President was technically next to the oval office”. Kamala Harris is the first female Vice-President of the United States. She destroyed and overcame the order of societal succession. A woman of color will go down in history as the first woman to hold the second most powerful office in the world.

Needless to say, Kamala Harris broke the systematic cycle of white women always proceeding minority women when attaining access and opportunity in the country; and although Kamala’s

Vice Presidency is a win for all women, it means so much more to black women. As a black woman and student leader attending the illustrious Howard University, I am constantly reminded, as the Vice President-elect was, that if I want to change the world, I am more than capable of doing so regardless of my race or gender. Kamala Harris is a living testimony that we no longer have to wait in line for others to come before us. We can stand up and demand our voices be heard. Black women have always been pushed to the back of the line. They have always been last to the table. But, for the first time in history we will go down as first—that is the impact of Kamala D. Harris.

One of the greatest lessons I have learned as an underclassmen student leader at Howard University is the only barriers that exist are the ones we create for ourselves. So, when asked “What type of impact Kamala Harris will have by becoming the first female and first woman of color to become the Vice President of the United States?” my answer is simple: Vice President-elect Kamala D. Harris’ has disrupted and redefined the patterns of history that this nation has unconsciously affirmed since its endowment. We no longer have to stand in line and wait for the right time to be the change we want to see in the world. We are qualified. We are here. And we are speaking.



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MORGAN'S SCOM NAMED A FINALIST FOR PRWEEK'S OUTSTANDING EDUCATION PROGRAM



Morgan State University's School of Global Journalism and Communication's Department of Strategic Communication (SCOM) has been named by PRWeek as one of five national finalists for Outstanding Education Program.

The prestigious industry honor recognizes the achievements of university programs in public relations and communication. PRWeek is the leading periodical of the public relations industry. A nod from the publication, even as a finalist, is considered a national mark of excellence for any academic program.

"This is a reflection of the excellent work in SCOM," said DeWayne Wickham, dean of The School of Global Journalism and Communication. "It speaks well of the accomplishments of our talented students, and the department's faculty and staff who work extremely hard for student success."

A nationally distinguished panel of judges comprised of executives from agency, corporate, nonprofit, education, and government sectors evaluate programs based on career preparation, curriculum innovation, quality, accomplishments of faculty, and demonstrated impact on the industry. This is SCOM's first entry in the annual contest.

"When you look at what our students are doing in their internships, in the student-run PR agency, and in the jobs and graduate schools they are entering after graduation, it is a testimony to both their talent and their preparation," said David Marshall, SCOM professor and chair. "I'm



grateful not just to our dedicated faculty and staff, but also to our industry partners who have invested in our program by providing our majors with some great experiential pre-professional opportunities."

There were several innovative curriculum initiatives that caught the judges' attention. Students in all required SCOM classes must earn an embedded industry certificate as a condition of completing classes. All SCOM majors must produce an ePortfolio of polished work-ready materials each semester to pass any class.

The winner in the Outstanding Education Program category will be announced on March 18, 2021 at the PRWeek Awards Gala.

The other education finalists are: DePaul University, NYU School of Professional Studies, University of Alabama, and The University of Florida.

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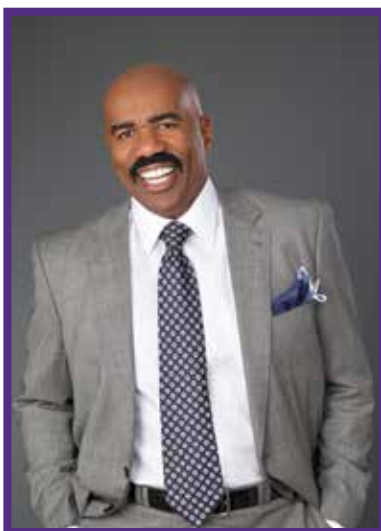
As we embark on a new year, I want to remind you of the power you have within you to achieve great things. We are capable of accomplishing our dreams if we believe in them and take action. It is not just about believing we can do something, but it is about going out and doing the work to make that dream come true. In celebration of Black History month, we will share the stories of perseverance and triumph of Madame C. J. Walker and Steve Harvey.

Madam C. J. Walker, the first female millionaire

Madame C. J. Walker is recorded as the first self-made millionaire in the United States of America. C.J. Walker was known for her hair care work as she sold millions of dollars in hair care products. Walker reminds up that despite our gender and race you can accomplish your goals if you are persistent and have a plan.

Madame Walker was not an overnight success, she had her struggles, but as she honed in on her business focus, she was able to build a lucrative business.

Steve Harvey- Comedian



We all are familiar with the comedy of Steve Harvey. You cannot turn on a game show without seeing Mr. Harvey. He was not always successful he was in fact homeless and living in car before he became a big success. In the 80's Harvey noticed that he was able to make people laugh. He dreamed of being a successful comedian. He quit his job and lived out of his car. I am not advocating for living in your car, but I am impressed with Harvey's pursuit of his dream.

He launched his career and became a King of Comedy and is now worth over 200 million dollars.

From C.J. Walker and Steve Harvey, we can see how important it is to believe in your dreams and pursue them. Their stories show us that we can reach our goals if we do not give up and work hard.

What is your big dream or goal? Remember that you can accomplish it with hard work and persistence.

Let's go out there and pursue our dreams in 2021.



Dr. Felicia Durden is an accomplished Educator with over sixteen years experience in Education. She holds her Doctorate of Education degree in Educational Leadership, Master's Degree in Curriculum & Instruction

and a Bachelor of Arts Degree in English Literature. Dr. Durden has taught grades K-12, served as an Assistant Director of Reading and Writing and currently serves as Principal in a large Urban School District in Arizona. She has taught English Composition at the College level as an adjunct instructor for over 10 years. Dr. Durden has a passion for assisting student growth in reading and writing.

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So many firsts...

First, I want to say *"Happy New Year"* to every college student! As we all know, 2020 was a year of a lot of *firsts* for most people. College experiences took on drastic changes and you were forced to pivot in ways that you never imagined, from sheltering in place, as classes stopped and started and stopped and started. Many of you quickly adjusted to taking all of your classes online or at least the ones being offered online, while others made tough decisions about going back to campus once the doors reopened. For college seniors, I know the anticipation of whether you would experience any form of a traditional graduation caused anxiety as universities and colleges across the globe figured out ways to allow students to walk across the stage while social distancing and wearing masks.

Should I?

The end of the year finally approached and with it came the availability of Covid vaccines. More decisions to make, right? I'm sure you've wondered: *Do I take the vaccine when offered to me, or do I wait to take it later? Do I want to take it at all?* If you are unsure of your decision about taking the vaccine, I would like to encourage you to do your own in-depth research about each vaccine being offered, talk to medical providers, and read important vaccine information issued by the Centers for Disease Control (cdc.gov). Staying informed is key to helping you make the right decision.

Staying healthy and safe are of the utmost importance for you and your family.

Close attention..

And..if learning how to push forward to accomplish your college dreams in the midst of Covid-19 wasn't enough, you were also asked to pay close attention to the U.S. presidential elections, learn more about voting processes than most adults had ever thought they needed to know in past election years, AND you had make sound, informed decisions about who you were voting for as President of your country. I know *whoa!*...a whole lot of *firsts* happened for you—but you've shown your resilience and continued to handle it all and that speaks volumes about your character and will to persevere.

Yes you can

As college students, you will not only be able to teach and mentor students coming up behind you about the ins and outs of college academics, but you will also have lots of life's wisdom to share with them as well which will help them achieve their goals of pursuing an awesome college education and future careers.

Hats off to you at this start of 2021!

Stay safe...stay encouraged!

Until the Next Time...CKB



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[Microsoft STEM Scholarship Program-careers.microsoft.com/students/scholarships](http://MicrosoftSTEMScholarshipProgram-careers.microsoft.com/students/scholarships)

[Gates Millennium Scholarship-gmsp.org](http://GatesMillenniumScholarship-gmsp.org)

[Tom Joyner Foundation "Full Ride Scholarship: Tomjoynerfoundation.org](http://TomJoynerFoundation-FullRideScholarship-Tomjoynerfoundation.org)

[National Black Law Student Association\(NBLSA\) Nblsa.org/education-career/scholarship-opportunities](http://NationalBlackLawStudentAssociation(NBLSA)-Nblsa.org/education-career/scholarship-opportunities)

[100 Black Men of America Future Leadership Program 100blackmen.org/education.aspx](http://100BlackMenofAmericaFutureLeadershipProgram-100blackmen.org/education.aspx)

[Latinos in Technology Scholarship siliconvf.org/scholarships/latinos-technology-scholarship](http://LatinosinTechnologyScholarship-siliconvf.org/scholarships/latinos-technology-scholarship)

[Google Scholarships-googlescholarships.com](http://GoogleScholarships-googlescholarships.com)

[Dell Scholar Program-dellscholars.org](http://DellScholarProgram-dellscholars.org)

[Xerox Minority Technical Scholarship-Xerox.com](http://XeroxMinorityTechnicalScholarship-Xerox.com)

[Princeton Prize in Race Relations:-princeton.edu/pprize](http://PrincetonPrizeinRaceRelations-princeton.edu/pprize)

[Minority Undergraduate Fellows Program-Napa.org](http://MinorityUndergraduateFellowsProgram-Napa.org)

[McDonald House Charities Scholarships-RMHC rmhc.org/rmhc-us-scholarships](http://McDonaldHouseCharitiesScholarships-RMHC-rmhc.org/rmhc-us-scholarships)

[Google Lime Scholarship Program: google.com/edu/scholarships/the-google-lime-scholarship](http://GoogleLimeScholarshipProgram-google.com/edu/scholarships/the-google-lime-scholarship)

[GEICO Achievement Award Program:careers.geico.com/careers/students-and-grads/achievement-awards](http://GEICOAchievementAwardProgram-careers.geico.com/careers/students-and-grads/achievement-awards)

[American Chemical Society Scholarships-acsc.org](http://AmericanChemicalSocietyScholarships-acsc.org)

[National Association of Black Engineers-nsbe.org](http://NationalAssociationofBlackEngineers-nsbe.org)

[Student Inventors Scholarship-invent.org](http://StudentInventorsScholarship-invent.org)

[Ambassadorial Scholarships-rotary.org](http://AmbassadorialScholarships-rotary.org)

[American Legion Scholarships-legion.org](http://AmericanLegionScholarships-legion.org)

[AAU Youth Excel Program Scholarship-aausports.org](http://AAUYouthExcelProgramScholarship-aausports.org)

[The Sammy Award for Athletes sponsored by Got Milk? Sammyapplication.org](http://TheSammyAwardforAthletes-sponsored-by-GotMilk?Sammyapplication.org)

[Regions Riding Forward Black History Month Scholarship Essay Contestregions.com/ridingforward](http://RegionsRidingForwardBlackHistoryMonthScholarshipEssayContestregions.com/ridingforward)

[Lowe's Scholarship Program-careers.lowes.com](http://Lowe'sScholarshipProgram-careers.lowes.com)

[ACT High School Poster Concept Contest-actstudent.org](http://ACTHighSchoolPosterConceptContest-actstudent.org)

[NAACP Scholarship-NAACP.org](http://NAACP-Scholarship-NAACP.org)

[The Foundation for Excellence in Education Arts for Life-excelined.org](http://TheFoundationforExcellenceinEducationArtsforLife-excelined.org)

[Buick Achievers Scholarship-buickachievers.com](http://BuickAchieversScholarship-buickachievers.com)

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Major: Chemistry
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Major: Nursing
BOWIE STATE UNIVERSITY



RACHEL EZEAMAKA
Major: Biology
CHEYNEY UNIVERSITY OF PA



KEARRA CROWNER
Major: Psychology
CLAFLIN UNIVERSITY



TERIN TYSON
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AMIYA CROCKROM
Major: Mass Media Arts
CLARK ATLANTA UNIVERSITY



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Major: General Education
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Major: Mass Communications
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KAYLAN TANNER
Urban Studies & Public Policy
DILLARD UNIVERSITY



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EDWARD WATERS COLLEGE



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DABRIA BULLOCK
Major: Criminal Justice
FAYETTEVILLE STATE UNIVERSITY



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HONORABLE EXAMPLE TO FOLLOW

BY LIEUTENANT FREDDIE WELLS

ALASKA STATE TROOPERS GUARDIANS OF THE 49TH

The Alaska Territorial Legislature established the Alaska Highway Patrol in 1941, which later evolved into the Territorial Police in 1953, and finally, the Alaska State Troopers in 1967.

In 1966, Retired Alaska State Trooper Reverend Dr. Edward Rhodes, became the first African American to serve as an Alaska State Trooper. He served until 1982, in various assignments as a sergeant, warrants officer, lieutenant and in multiple locations within the state. He continued his law enforcement career and served as the Chief of Police for the Anchorage Police Department for six years. Dr. Rhodes attended the FBI Academy in 1980 and continued his education to earn a doctorate in Biblical Education and Theology. Dr. Rhodes continues to communicate with fellow Alaska State Troopers today, by sharing an encouraging word or joining a brief conversation about the current event affecting the communities within the regions troopers serve. Reverend Dr. Rhodes served as Pastor of the Mt. Zion Missionary Baptist Church in Georgia for over twenty-three years and has since retired. His exemplary services continue as he reaches the hearts of people all ages and backgrounds. Alaska State Troopers recognize today that we stand upon Dr. Rhodes's shoulders and the fact that he paved the way for many members to get where they are today. Reverend Dr. Rhodes' loyalty, integrity and



Retired Alaska State Trooper Reverend Dr. Edward Rhodes, with Safety Bear

community" or "to serve and protect our citizens." Purposeful work draws people to engage. During the uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic, brave young men and women continue to answer the call, to help and serve as Alaska State Troopers. Our job is unique, challenging and downright stressful at times, but the opportunity to save a child, help in the community, rescue a lost person, stop an abuser or simply bring resolution to a difficult circumstance is very rewarding.

Alaska State Troopers are a group of courageous individuals, working together as a team, to keep Alaskans safe. If you would like to provide exceptional public safety and want to belong to participate in a higher cause, consider becoming part of our team. You don't have to have law enforcement experience to join. We will train you and provide all the necessary tools to handle the mission.

We are accepting applications for the 2021 Alaska State Trooper hiring cycles. The process is competitive and requires total honesty, attention to detail and your best effort through-

out each stage of the process. If you make it all the way through the lengthy hiring process, you'll be offered a position and will then report to the Alaska Law Enforcement Training (ALET) Academy. Academy training is 18 weeks. DPS then moves you to your first duty post; Fairbanks, Palmer or Soldotna, Alaska for field training. Field training is approximately four months long, after which you'll be out in Alaska, doing the job of an Alaska State Trooper. Once you hit your one-year mark, you'll be off probation and given a significant raise. Our agency is a full-service police force, with many specialty units. Troopers can progress into other fields of interest after only a few years of patrol enforcement.

The Alaska Department of Public Safety operates outside the standard methods to engage with our communities to gain innovative ways to enhance public safety. We foster a spirited atmosphere that promotes growth and advancements. Please join our team as we provide the best public safety service to the members of our community. The Department of Public Safety Recruitment Unit can be reached by email at dps.recruit@alaska.gov or by phone at (907) 269-5976. Discover more information about our teams on our website at www.AlaskaStateTrooper.com.



Inv. Malik Jones, Sgt. Jeremy Rupe, Inv. Albert Bell

courage during his service as an Alaska State Trooper opened doors for me and many others.

Each generation fosters individuals who are attracted to join our organization because it aligns with their values. Numerous candidate's answer to the question, "Why Alaska State Troopers?" it's often "to help in the com-



Alaska State Troopers Lieutenant Freddie Wells
Photos by Justin Freeman

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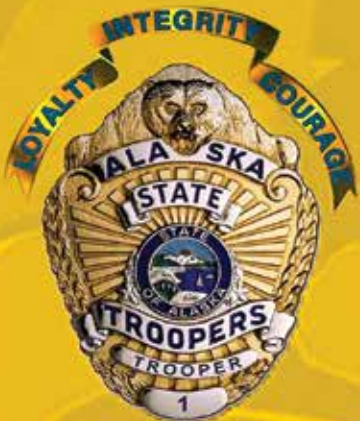


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Returning Back to Our Roots: **QUEEN NANNY** of The Maroons



“We are royalty by our roots.”

JESSICA MILLER

Queen Nanny is someone that truly inspired me by her drive and ambition to bring freedom and peace within the community. When I first discovered her, I was completely shocked to hear that she was a female warrior and leader. In society, it's taught that males should be the provider and protector while females stay at home and nurture. The story about Queen Nanny opened my eyes and helped me realize to never underestimate my powers and abilities. That anything is truly possible if only you believe. She is my hero, my ancestor, and I am her.

Queen Nanny, or as she is also known, Nanny of the Maroons, is Jamaica's only recognised National (s)Hero, and she is perhaps most visible on the country's \$500 note. She lived in Jamaica in the early 18th century, and was a member of a community of resisters, the Windward/Eastern Maroons, who had escaped the brutality of enslavement on

British owned sugarcane plantations. In escaping slavery, Maroons were a major threat to the island's colonial power structures. Capture would result in severe punishment, and almost certain death. This was the world in which Queen Nanny lived. Jamaican oral histories describe Queen Nanny as a woman who used a range of intellectual and physical means to stave off, and attack the enemy. She is reputed to have been an expert military strategist, causing much confusion amongst the 'redcoats', who were often surprised when the trees came alive and they found themselves under attack from her warriors. Much of the success of the Windward Maroons during the First Maroon War has been attributed to her leadership. It is said that Queen Nanny was not only a warrior, she was also a wise woman who encouraged her community to remember those customs and traditions that had travelled across the Atlantic in the bellies of slave ships.

Even though some may not believe that the facts remain that she is one of the greatest Female Warriors who sacrificed for us all to live a peaceful life. Therefore, she is truly the Queen of Jamaica and should be included in history for people, all over, to know about her. Her life and accomplishments have been recognized by the Government of Jamaica which honored her as one of seven National Heroes awarded the title of Right Excellent. Queen Nanny is the first and only woman Heroine! A portrait based on her description is on the Jamaican \$500 note. Every January 6, in honor of the birthday of Nanny's brother, Captain Cudjoe, a Maroon festival is celebrated in the mountainous Accompong Town, complete with cultural rituals, reenactments of camouflaged resistance, savory food, and handmade crafts.

Sources

<https://jamaicans.com/queennanny/>



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ANOTHER CROWN FOR MISS TALLADEGA COLLEGE

Miss NBCA Hall of Fame 2020-2021

Miss Talladega College 2020-2021 Patria Gatson is the newly elected Miss National Black College Alumni Hall of Fame 2020-2021. Although her royal duties have doubled now that she has two crowns, Patria juggles her responsibilities with grace and ease.

The dynamic biology pre-med major, who is a member of Talladega College's prestigious Presidential Honor Society and numerous campus clubs, has held a plethora of leadership positions on and off campus. Miss Junior and Miss Presidential Honor Society are but two of the titles she has previously held. Patria was also a member of the team that won first place in the Alabama Business Pitch Competition hosted by the Alabama Governor's Office of Minority Affairs.

Although Patria began honing her leadership skills prior to college, and was even named prom queen in high school, she credits Talladega for helping her understand exactly how much she is capable of achieving.

"Talladega College gave me the reassurance that I am capable of accomplishing

whatever I want to accomplish. I feel that I can reach my goals and fulfill my dreams because my HBCU told me that I can," said Patria. "I always take a heavy course load, and I understand the importance of balancing my studies, homework, and meetings. I take at least 18 credits every semester and I am involved in many clubs and organizations."

Prior to becoming Miss Talladega College, Patria was not very social media savvy. Winning her crown in the midst of a deadly pandemic forced her to quickly learn how to communicate with, inspire and uplift Talladega's student body via social media and virtual events.

"The pandemic changed everyone's plans. It left many people feeling isolated and almost hopeless. Almost everything had to be canceled. We couldn't - and still cannot - gather the way we used to gather. These changes can cause uncertainty and, when you don't know what to expect, doubt can creep in."

"Through my platform, Aspire to Inspire, I've tried to inspire and encourage people to be hopeful and aim high despite the current situation. Inspiration is important because before you can do something, you have to believe you can do it," Patria said. "I've had to work hard to reach people on social media, but the effort is paying off. Sometimes people I don't even know thank me for inspiring them. It's very fulfilling to know that I'm making a difference."

The skills Patria learned as Miss Talladega College have helped prepare her for her role as Miss National Black College Alumni Hall of Fame. Since gaining the national title, she has been featured on television and radio and sought after for interviews. She talks passionately about mental health, creativity, and success.

Talladega College President Dr. Billy C. Hawkins stated, "Patria has always shown outstanding leadership skills on

and off campus. I am impressed by her ability to inspire students at Talladega and throughout the nation during this unprecedented season. She and her advisor, Mr. Anthony Jones, have managed to produce the virtual versions of practically every Miss Talladega activity that couldn't be held in-person due to the pandemic. Through social media, radio and TV, Patria continues to demonstrate excellence and creativity in everything she does."

"COVID-19 forced colleges to find creative ways to maintain their cherished traditions. Our Miss Talladega College 2020-2021 Coronation was held outdoors, and Patria arrived in a horse-drawn carriage wearing a face shield," he said. "Many people thought the outdoor event was among our most beautiful coronations ever and said the horse-drawn carriage added an extra-special touch. Some suggested that we hold future coronation ceremonies outside. In the midst of the pandemic, measures initially taken as health and safety precautions may actually inspire many colleges to form new traditions."

Patria feels that being an HBCU queen during the pandemic has forced her to think outside the box. Instead of using the pandemic as an excuse to do less, she has opted to make the most of her reign by instilling hope in students and anyone else who hears her uplifting messages. Standing on the shoulders of the many trailblazing queens who came before her, she is motivating thousands to reach their full potential.

Mr. Jones, who has served as the Miss Talladega College advisor for over 20 years, said, "Patria is a sheer inspiration to work with. She rises to every occasion and never ceases to shine. As a queen, she is always ready to represent and she represents so well."

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TWO TUSKEGEE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS BENEFIT FROM MCDONALD'S BLACK & POSITIVELY GOLDEN SCHOLARSHIP



Kynidi Luster and Eryn Lyke Luster and Lyke



A pair of Tuskegee University students were among the recipients of the McDonald's Black & Positively Golden Scholarship. The scholarship is part of the latest news from McDonald's to help students attending HBCUs continue their education this fall, despite impacts of COVID-19. Facilitated by the Thurgood Marshall College Fund (TMCFF), each of the 34 students were awarded \$15,000 to be distributed for the 2020-2021 academic year.

Freshman food and nutritional science student Kynidi Luster is among the scholarship winners. Luster hopes to obtain her bachelor's degree and then attend medical school to pursue her lifelong dream of becoming a pediatrician.

"This scholarship has allowed me to cancel my student loans in order to stay debt free, especially during my first year of college, said Luster. "This has given me more momentum and it has encouraged me to keep applying for scholarships and excelling in my schoolwork in order to stay debt free throughout my undergraduate education."

The Birmingham, Alabama native says before deciding on a college she has always been reminded of the nostalgic feelings of Tuskegee University. "Whenever I would attend to homecomings, open houses or even just moving my sister into her dorm, I never felt out of place."

Luster says so it is no surprise that Mother Tuskegee chose her, and she wants to make her experience worthwhile.

"I felt the love of Mother Tuskegee before being accepted as a student and I knew without a doubt Tuskegee was the place for me." "I have learned how to become one step ahead in everything and I've been taught the value of being patient and the importance of time."

She says the partnership with McDonald's truly exemplifies the company's commitment to investing in HBCUs and supporting their students.

"To know that you have support from a group of people that you have never met, but somehow, they seem like family, is so amazing. It encourages me to keep pushing towards my dreams on the hard days, when I feel like I'm not making any progress. I have truly been blessed to have this opportunity and it is one that I will remember for a lifetime."

In addition, Erin Lyke was the second recipient from Tuskegee University to be awarded. Lyke a native of Chicago, Illinois is majoring in accounting. She says after

TWO TUSKEGEE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS BENEFIT FROM MCDONALD'S BLACK & POSITIVELY GOLDEN SCHOLARSHIP

graduation, she hopes to go back into her community to teach financial literacy as a wealth management associate at BMO Harris Bank in Chicago.

“Financial literacy is something that has been swept under the rug for generations. People would rather buy a pair of \$300 shoes than invest \$300 in the stock market.” “I want to dedicate myself to breaking the generation curses of poverty in my community, and this includes me and starting with my own finances,” explained Lyke.

“Growing up, I’ve personally felt the pains of student loan debt from my mother and I’ve always known that isn’t the path I wanted to take,” she recalled. “I didn’t have the same advantages as other students when it came to applying for loans, so my GPA is what I’ve always heavily depended on.” “At an early age, my mother instilled in me a love of learning and the importance of hard work and dedication. She taught me that you can take away all material things, but an

education is forever. This is a life changing award that not only benefits me now, but also in the future.”

Lyke explained that for her attending an HBCU was a way for her to connect with her roots. “I went to a predominately white high school and became a reflection of what I saw,” she explained. “Whether I hated the texture of my hair or the complexion of my skin, Tuskegee has taught me to embrace it because within it is excellence. I’ve brought that same confidence to the workplace during internships and I’ve always received compliments on how well I carry myself.”

Lyke says HBCUs prepare you for the real world and instill in you the power of perseverance and patience.

“Tuskegee has also taught me to bring my authentic self in anything, being here is like a safe haven.”



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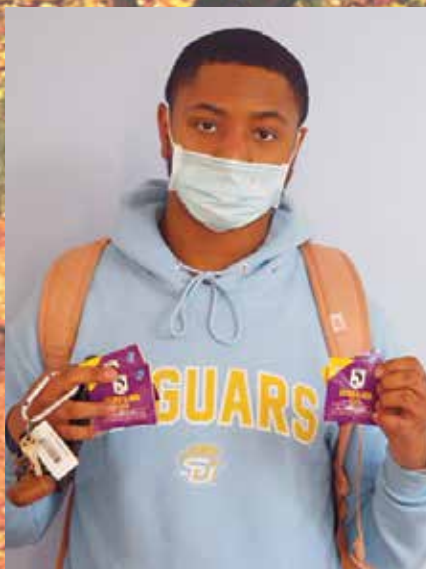
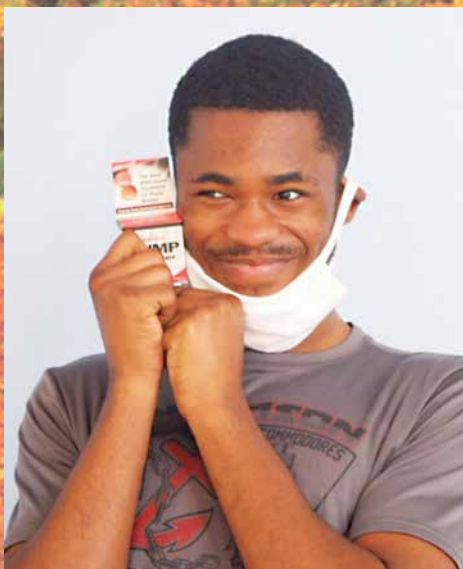
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Lilly Endowment Invests \$1M in Philander Smith College to Strengthen Ministries in Black and Small Churches

Philander Smith College is excited to be the recipient of funds totaling \$1,049,130 to help establish the Strengthening Ministries in Black and Small Churches in Central Arkansas program. It is part of Lilly Endowment Inc.'s Thriving in Ministry, an initiative that supports a variety of religious organizations across the nation as they create or strengthen programs that help pastors build relationships with experienced clergy who can serve as mentors and guide them through key leadership challenges in congregational ministry.

Earlier in the year the College received a \$50,000 award from Lilly Endowment to support the development of the Thriving In Ministry grant submission. That planning grant, combined with the full grant award of \$999,130, represents a total \$1,049,130 investment in PSC's effort to strengthen the pastors serving small churches in Arkansas and nearby states.

Thriving in Ministry seeks to help pastors develop meaningful relationships with wise colleagues who can help guide them through key leadership challenges, especially during transitions in their ministerial careers. The initiative builds upon recent studies that have examined the importance of colleagues and mentors who help pastors face and overcome common professional challenges. These studies include research from the Endowment-funded Flourishing in Ministry project.

"Philander Smith College has a legacy of developing clergy who have become leaders and mentors to generations of ministers and pastors," said PSC President Dr. Roderick L. Smothers, Sr. "Our alumni have broken barriers, published extensively in the field of religious studies, and blazed spiritual trails for a new cohort of preachers and scholars. Funding from Lilly Endowment will help us to continue building upon this sacred foundation," he continued.

"Leading a congregation today is multi-faceted and exceptionally demanding," said Christopher Coble, Lilly Endowment's vice president for Religion. "When pastors have opportunities to build meaningful relationships with experienced colleagues, they are able to negotiate the challenges of ministry and their leadership thrives. Promising efforts in this initiative including the Philander Smith College program, will help pastors develop these kinds of relationships, especially when they are in the midst of significant professional transitions." The grant period at Philander Smith College will run from December 2020 through December 2025.

ABOUT LILLY ENDOWMENT: Lilly Endowment, Inc. is an Indianapolis-based private philanthropic foundation created in 1937 by three members of the Lilly family – J.K. Lilly Sr. and sons Eli and J.K. Jr. – through gifts of stock in their pharmaceutical business, Eli Lilly & Company through gifts of stock in their pharmaceutical business, Eli Lilly & Company. While those gifts remain the financial bedrock of the Endowment, the Endowment is a separate entity from the company, with a distinct governing board, staff and location. In keeping with the founders' wishes, the Endowment supports the causes of community development, education and religion. The Endowment maintains a special commitment to its hometown, Indianapolis, and home state Indiana. Its grant-making in religion focuses on supporting efforts to strengthen the leadership and vitality of Christian congregations throughout the country and to increase the public's understanding of the role of religion in public life.

Founded in 1877, Philander Smith College is one of the oldest private, historically Black institutions of higher learning in Arkansas. A four-year liberal arts college, the institution is affiliated with the United Methodist Church and is the only United Negro College Fund member school in the state. The College is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of NCA.



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BEN'S ORIGINAL™ INTRODUCES NEW SCHOLARSHIP TO HELP PEOPLE FROM UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES PURSUE FOOD INDUSTRY CAREERS

**- First Phase of the 'Seat at the Table Fund' to
Launch in U.S. in Partnership with the National Urban League
and UNCF to Support Black Students -**

Today, Mars Food's Ben's Original™ brand launched a new scholarship fund – the Seat at the Table Fund – to give people from underserved communities around the world interested in careers in the food industry the educational and mentorship opportunities they deserve so their ideas and voices can be heard and appreciated by all.

The first phase of the Ben's Original's Seat at the Table Fund will launch in the U.S., where the brand partnered with National Urban League to create a scholarship to support Black students interested in food industry careers. The scholarship will cover education-related expenses for students towards the completion of either a food science or culinary arts certificate, Associate or Bachelor's degree. The National Urban League will support scholarship recipients to help them successfully complete their education and prepare for and secure a rewarding career. UNCF (United Negro College Fund) will manage and administer the fund on behalf of Ben's Original.

“The U.S.-based scholarship is our premiere program of many more we plan to establish in countries around the world and is one of the first steps we're taking to deliver on our brand's new purpose to create opportunities that offer everyone a seat at the table,” said Fiona Dawson, Global President Mars Food. “The support of National Urban League has been invaluable in developing this scholarship, and we're excited about the possibilities to create more equitable opportunities for people who will positively influence the future of the entire food industry around the world.”

In the U.S., the Ben's Original's Seat at the Table Fund scholarship is open to high school seniors, high school graduates already enrolled in accredited Associate and/or Bachelor's degree programs and adults looking to change their careers or further their culinary careers. In total, Ben's Original has allocated \$2 million over the next five years to the U.S. version of the scholarship.

“Empowering people to create a more inclusive future is a foundational element of National Urban League's mission,” said Marc Morial, President and CEO, National Urban League. “We're proud to partner with Ben's Original to help create these opportunities for those who truly deserve it, as well as support recipients in building successful careers in the food industry through the Seat at the Table Fund.”

“The Ben's Original brand's Seat at the Table Fund is a great example of how major brands and successful advocacy organizations like National Urban League can powerfully create more equal access to education that prepares minorities for rich intellectual lives and competitive and fulfilling careers,” said Dr. Michael L. Lomax, President and CEO of UNCF, the largest minority education organization in the U.S.

The application process for the Ben's Original's Seat at the Table Fund will be announced and will open in early 2021. Interested applicants may register at UNCF.org/SeatAtTheTable for more information and to be notified when applications are being accepted.



DONOR ANNOUNCES LANDMARK \$50 MILLION GIFT TO PRAIRIE VIEW A&M UNIVERSITY

The transformative gift will be used to strengthen academic programs and improve student success.

Writer and philanthropist MacKenzie Scott has given \$50 million to Prairie View A&M University to be used at the discretion of the President to support the needs of the University.

Ruth J. Simmons, President of Prairie View, commented, "This is a historic gift for Prairie View, coming at a time when the University had already decided and begun to invest heavily in key areas to strengthen its academic programs and improve student success. The timing of this gift could, therefore, not be better."

University administrators chose to designate \$10 million of the total to create the Panther Success Grant Program, an effort to assist juniors and seniors with unpaid balances created by the financial challenges posed by Covid-19. Those funds remain designated for financial aid and will continue to be disbursed to students over the next several years, supplementing other forms of financial aid.

The University plans to allocate remaining funds to the university endowment to support high-priority academic needs, including endowed faculty positions, faculty recruitment and faculty development, improvements in academic areas, undergraduate scholarships, and graduate fellowships. With this substantial addition of funds, the University's \$95-million endowment will increase nearly 40% to almost \$130 million, making it one of the largest endowments at a Historically Black College or University.

While many at the University, including the President, were surprised by the source and amount of the gift, Simmons had been in communication with the donor about a matter not involving Prairie View. Over the course of those communications, the donor had given no hint that she was considering a gift to Prairie View until an unexpected telephone call from an assistant revealed this intention.

"I was stunned and, for a time, speechless," said Simmons. "At first I thought I had surely misheard the amount, and I asked them to repeat it; they clarified that it would be '\$50 (five-zero) million.'"

The Scott donation is the largest gift in the PVAMU's 144-year history and follows several high-profile gifts in recent months.



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WHAT'S HOT ON THE NET!

WELCOME BACK TO BCT'S WHAT'S HOT ON THE NET! WE'RE GIVING YOU THE LATEST NEWS ON CELBRITIES ACROSS THE WORLD! SO LET'S GET INTO IT!!!

Shout out to Michael B. Jordan!!! Michael recently announced the creation of the Hoops Dreams Classic for HBCU basketball teams. Starting in December 2021, the Hoops Dreams Classic will feature four men's and women's HBCU Division I basketball teams. The tournament will take place in New Jersey. Along with basketball games, the Hoops Dreams Classic will also consist of a battle of the bands, a college fair, a career fair and many other events. It's going to be an incredible event! We're always glad to see the light shine on HBCUs!!!

A big thank you to Tyrese Gibson who recently gave up three of his hotel rooms to a homeless family while filming *Dangerous* in Canada. You love to see it! Truly an act of kindness and generosity on Tyrese's part!

NFL star wide receiver for the Pittsburgh Steelers JuJu Smith-Schuster continued the acts of kindness for the holiday season. JuJu recently paid for

\$12,500 worth of merchandise that was on layaway at a Burlington Coat Factory in Compton, CA! Thank you to JuJu for spreading the holiday love!

Major League Baseball (MLB) has taken a major step forward. MLB recently recognized the relevance and stature of the Negro Leagues by officially elevating the Negro Leagues to Major League status. Now, all stats, records, and events that occurred during Negro League games will be considered MLB stats! More people will now recognize some of the great Negro League players and learn about the history of the game!

After years of speculation, we are almost here! *Coming 2 America* will be released on March 5th, 2021! The photos and trailer have us ready to watch now! We can't wait! All the original actors and actresses are in the sequel along with one of Eddie Murphy's real-life daughters, Bella.

We will see if it lives up to the original which is a classic!

Nyla Lewis could barely contain her excitement! We would have reacted the same way! The 19-year-old is an aspiring rapper who recently won a one-on-one mentoring session with Big Sean as part of McDonald's Black and Positively Golden Mentors Program. Nyla, who is also from Detroit, received a new laptop and a mentoring session with marketing execs from Roc Nation. Shout out to Big Sean for showing some hometown love!

As far as new music goes, we're listening to the following new releases.

Chance the Rapper & Jeremih - Merry Christmas Lil Mama

Jack Harlow - That's What They All Say

Justin Rarri - Youngest In Kharge

Megan Thee Stallion - Good News

THAT'S IT FOR THIS EDITION OF WHAT'S HOT ON THE NET. BE ON THE LOOKOUT FOR THE LATEST CELEBRITY NEWS IN THE NEXT EDITION OF BCT!!!

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