

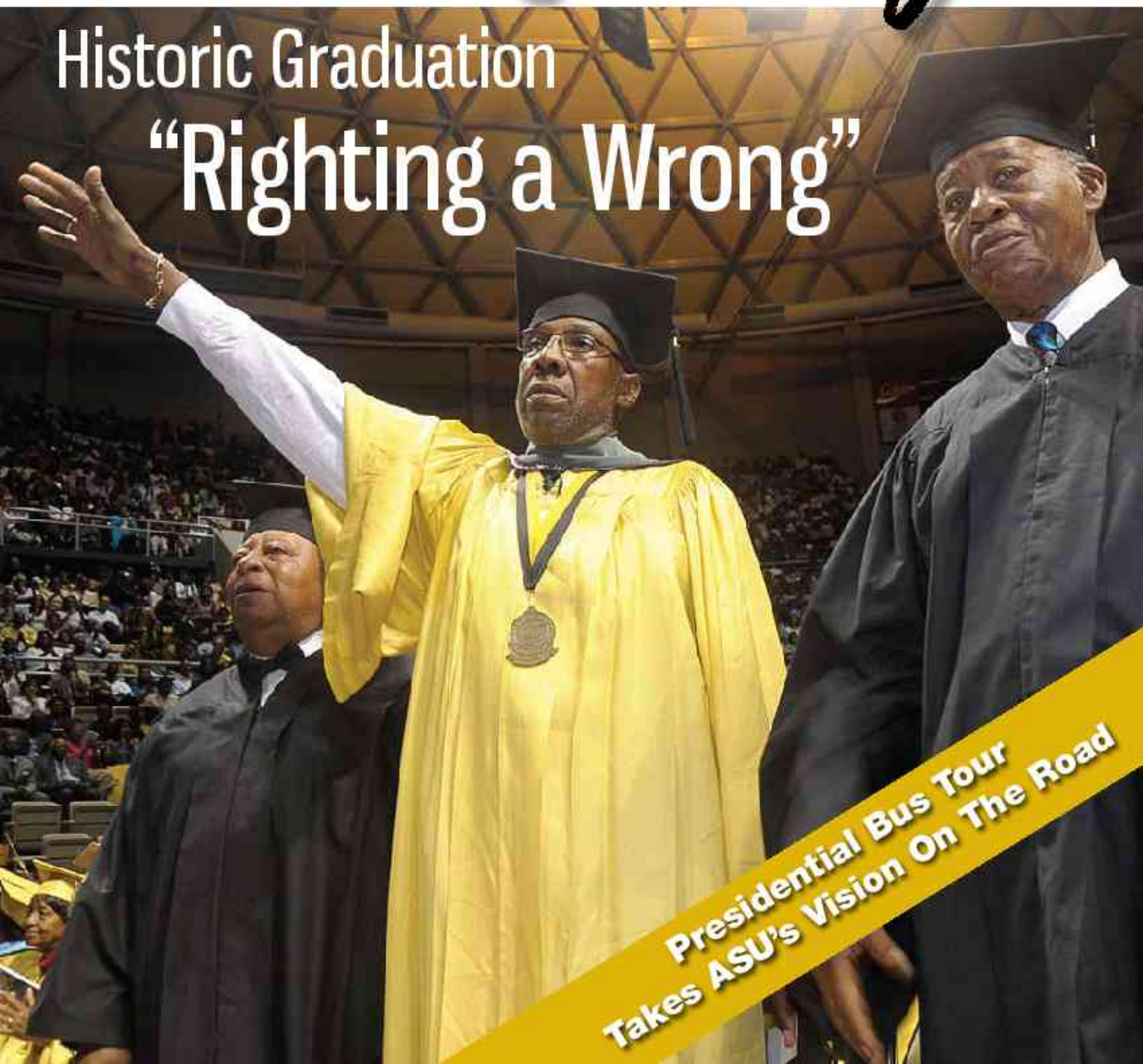
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MAGAZINE



Historic Graduation "Righting a Wrong"



Presidential Bus Tour
Takes ASU's Vision On The Road



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ON THE COVER: ST. JOHN DIXON, JAMES McFADDEN
AND JOSEPH PETERSON, STUDENTS EXPELLED FOR
PARTICIPATING IN THE HISTORIC 1960 SIT-IN MOVEMENT,
WAVE TO THE CROWD AFTER RECEIVING HONORARY
DIPLOMAS DURING THE 281ST COMMENCEMENT EXERCISES
AT ALABAMA STATE UNIVERSITY.



I want to thank those of you who have taken the time to send e-mails or make phone calls regarding the recent editions of *ASU Today Magazine* and the University's newly renovated website. While most of you send your congratulatory comments to me, I must give much of the credit to the Publications Department staff, which is part of the Division of Marketing and Communications.

Our goal is to keep our alumni and stakeholders informed about all of the wonderful and exciting changes that are occurring on our campus and to celebrate the accomplishments of our faculty, staff and students – past and present.

Your faith in our efforts has been supported by recent honors given to both our magazine and the website. We already knew that both were great products, but it's really encouraging to have our work recognized by more objective judges. (Read more about the awards on page 37.)

Speaking of awards, I'd like to congratulate ASU's football program for receiving the Most Improved Academic Progress Rate (APR) Award from the Football Championship Subdivision Athletics Directors Association (FCS ADA) at the annual National Association of Collegiate Directors of Athletics (NACDA) Convention in Anaheim, Calif., last month.

ASU earned the SWAC's most improved recognition for the 2008-09 academic year. The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) member colleges and universities adopted the comprehensive academic reform package as a means of encouraging the academic successes of student athletes.

As you can see, your University is working hard to make you proud. We'll continue to keep you informed about your alma mater, and in return, we want to continue to hear from you.

We want to hear more from you about the magazine, our website and other University efforts. Or just let us know what's on your mind about your alma mater.

We're also interested in knowing what's going on with you, our alumni. As you mark milestones in your lives – promotions, retirements, awards/honors, etc. – don't forget to share them with us. Who knows, your story could make the next edition.

We'll look for your comments and information at asutoday@alasu.edu.

Again, thank you for your continued support.

Sincerely,

John F. Knight Jr.



Athletic APR Award



President William H. Harris



In the National Spotlight: President Harris appears on CNN with James McFadden and Joseph Peterson on May 14, 2010.

On Feb. 25, 2010, I was part of a special gathering to honor the noble act of a group of Alabama State College (now Alabama State University) students 50 years earlier. The National Center for the Study of Civil Rights and African-American Culture had organized a day of activities to commemorate the anniversary of the Student Sit-in Movement.

Alabama State University's pivotal role in the Civil Rights Movement is well-documented. When the bus boycott began, Alabama State College students were galvanized and spent many long days and nights helping organizers spread the word about the boycott. Our students worked side by side with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and the Rev. Ralph D. Abernathy in the fight for freedom.

For years we have heard the stories about the students' role in the bus boycott; but our students didn't stop fighting once the buses started rolling again. Racism did not end in Montgomery once the boycott ended and segregation remained the way of life. Our students still could not drink out of certain water fountains and they couldn't walk safely in certain neighborhoods. They also could not eat at the lunch counter inside the Montgomery County Courthouse.

On Feb. 25, 1960, dozens of Alabama State College students decided to stand up against segregation by staging a sit-in at the courthouse. Police were called and the students were forced to leave the cafeteria. The sit-in sparked punitive reactions from state government officials.

Twenty students were suspended, and on orders from the governor at the time and the all-white State Board of Education, ASC's president Harper Councill Trenholm expelled nine students.

Lawsuits were filed, protests continued and eventually, the cafeteria was integrated. But eight of the nine students were not allowed to graduate from ASC.

As I stood at the commemorative ceremony in February, watching the emotions play across the faces of these brave men and women who are now in the golden season of their lives, I realized that the opportunity existed for the University to write a new history.

As ASU president, I was able to reinstate the nine expelled students. I then turned to the Board of Trustees to vote to confer honorary degrees on them. The board agreed and on May, 8, 2010, I was proud to watch as the three men who were able to return for the commencement ceremony walked across the stage to receive their just rewards.

As you read more of this story in the coming pages, understand that while we could not change what happened to those students 50 years ago, we were able to honor the sacrifices they made and bring national attention to the suffering they endured when they decided to "take a seat" against segregation. ■



The Student Sit-In Movement

ASU Students Make History

*Time Life Pictures/
Getty Images March 1, 1960*



On Feb. 25, 1960, Alabama State College (ASC) students staged a sit-in challenging segregated dining facilities at the Montgomery County Courthouse. They were inspired by four North Carolina A&T students who on Feb. 1, 1960, sat in at a white-only Woolworth restaurant in Greensboro, N.C. ASC students were the first college students in the Deep South to participate in the modern sit-in campaign. The more than two dozen sit-in students

Battle lines were clearly drawn between ASC student protestors and Montgomery segregationists. Whites were instructed to fire their black workers and staunch segregationists demanded the college be closed. Violence against blacks increased to the point that Martin Luther King Jr. appealed to President Dwight Eisenhower to intervene in what the minister described as "a reign of terror..." that had "...broken out in Montgomery." King

37 students as well as professor Olean Underwood were arrested. Undaunted, students insisted that they would persist until "we gain our rights as guaranteed us by the Federal Constitution and Bill of Rights."

On Wednesday, March 2, the all-white State Board of Education, unanimously accepted Gov. Patterson's resolution ordering the expulsion of the individuals that state officials identified as sit-in leaders. In the face of expulsions, ASC students

"... PERSIST UNTIL WE GAIN OUR RIGHTS AS GUARANTEED US BY THE FEDERAL CONSTITUTION AND BILL OF RIGHTS."

set in motion a series of events that had far-reaching implications. From their protests emerged a wave of demonstrations that rocked the seat of state government. When whites reacted violently, it galvanized local black support. Despite community support, Gov. John Patterson purged activist faculty, the University expelled students and college President Harper Councill Trenholm was forced to resign.

told the president that city officials, backed by the police, "launched an incredible assault" on black citizens and the "students of Alabama State College." The Rev. Ralph David Abernathy responded to the violence by threatening a boycott of downtown merchants.

Emboldened by support from black organizations, ASC students intensified their protests. In one episode near the ASC campus,

turned to attorneys Fred Gray, 1951 ASC graduate, Charles Langford and Solomon Seay Jr. and the court system. In the 1961 landmark *St. John Dixon v. State of Alabama Board of Education*, the federal court ended the practice that allowed colleges and universities to act in loco parentis, or in place of the parent, to discipline or expel students without regard for student rights. Even today, the

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ASU CELEBRATES 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF 1960 STUDENT SIT-IN CAMPAIGN

Feb. 25, 2010, was a day of celebration at Alabama State University. More than 500 ASU students, area high school students, community representatives and University officials gathered to honor those who took part in the historic Student Sit-In Movement.

The University's celebration was sponsored by the National Center for the Study of Civil Rights and African-American Culture.

"It's really part of the National Center's mission to research, celebrate and shed light on the various aspects of the Modern Civil Rights Movement and to highlight the University's participation," said Dr. Howard Robinson, National Center historian. "We're coming up on half a century since some of these events occurred, and it's just time to reflect on their impact."

Many of the former students who took part in the Montgomery Sit-In Movement returned for the commemoration. The National Center awarded them for their efforts in fighting against racial injustices. The event also drew some of the national leaders of the Civil Rights Movement, including the Rev. Richard Boone and the Rev. C.T. Vivian.

Vivian said the nine ASC students who were expelled from school because they participated in the sit-ins deserve to be honored.

"Those that fight for you should be honored, not punished," he said. "This was about more than a name or two. They were symbols. The great things done in this country were done by the people's movement — not politicians."

Robinson said the event was especially impactful for the students who attended.

"When people all over the world talk about the Modern Civil Rights Movement as a distant event, these students will be able to talk about it in the first person. They touched C.T. Vivian and sang with Richard Boone. They listened to the legal strategy of attorney Fred Gray. So, now, in a sense, they are ambassadors. They understand the Movement in such a way that they are now able to communicate it to other people." ■

Top: LAMP students listen to a speaker during the one-day "Student Sit-In Movement" conference. Center: The Rev. Richard Boone leads the conference crowd through some inspirational civil rights songs. Above: The Rev. C.T. Vivian, civil rights activist, addresses the conference participants. Right: The original sit-in participants were awarded medallions at the conference. They are, front row, from left, Aner Ruth Young, Eleanor Moody Shepherd and William Renfro; and back row, from left, Joseph Peterson, Timothy Ervin (who accepted the award for his late father, Thomas C. Ervin), Saint John Dixon, Joe Reed, James McFadden and Cornelius Benson.



TAKING A SEAT AGAINST SEGREGATION

By Tina Joly

St. John Dixon, James McFadden, Joseph Peterson. One by one their names were called. Each man stood up and amid thunderous applause, walked on stage during Alabama State University's 281st Commencement Exercises on May 8, 2010. They each received an ASU diploma, just like the other 483 students who were graduating. But unlike the other graduates, they had to wait 50 years to stand up and receive the honor because they were expelled from Alabama State College (now Alabama State University) for trying to "take a seat" against segregation.

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

On Feb. 25, 1960, the three fraternity brothers (Phi Beta Sigma) joined more than two dozen Alabama State College students and marched to the Montgomery County Courthouse. The students had decided to sit-in to protest the segregated dining facilities at the courthouse. They barely got into the cafeteria when armed policemen forced them to leave.

"As soon as we got in there, we grabbed our trays and tried to get served. The people in the cafeteria starting running out saying 'the N_____ are here, the N_____ are here.' Within minutes you had more than a dozen policemen shoving us out of there," Dixon said.

"After they pushed us outside, they lined us up and took our pictures. The pictures were sent to the governor and were on the desk of

Continued on page 6

St. John Dixon, James McFadden and Joseph Peterson visit the Montgomery County Courthouse, site of the 1960 sit-in.





Above and top right, John Jones Collection, ASU Archives. Bottom left: Jack Rabin Collection on Civil Rights and Southern Activists, Penn State University.



the school's president by the time we got back to campus," said Peterson.

"My thought was that we had to do this because it was necessary. Even though the North Carolina students had protested, the powers that be thought that Alabama was safe (from protests). They felt that the Alabama State College students didn't have the courage or character to protest," said McFadden. "Their attitude gave me more motivation to do whatever we could to make the sit-in happen."

White Montgomery residents demanded that the state-funded college be shut down.

The all-white State Board of Education accepted a resolution by then-Gov. John Patterson to expel the leaders of the Sit-In Movement and ASC's then-President Harper Council Trenholm complied. Nine students were kicked out of school.

"Dr. Trenholm told me he had to expel me because I was not obeying the rules and regulations of the state of Alabama and he had no alternative but to comply with the decision made by the governor and the State Board of Education. I was very upset. I thought the school was expelling me for participating in the sit-in when the school had taught me about peaceful protests," said Dixon. "I found out later that Dr. Trenholm had to expel us because he was told that if he didn't, the school would lose its state funding."

After being expelled from Alabama State College, Dixon stayed in Montgomery for a short time and participated in protests to integrate Montgomery's movie theater. During this period, he was awarded a scholarship to San Jose State College from the Congress of Racial Equality. He now lives in

San Francisco.

McFadden continued to work in the Montgomery Student Sit-in Movement for a few months after being expelled. He then moved to Philadelphia where he continued his work as a student activist in the Civil Rights Movement. He continues to reside in Philadelphia.

Peterson also stayed in Montgomery after the expulsion and volunteered with the Montgomery Improvement Association. After a short time, Peterson moved to New York where he worked with the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) in Harlem. After an intensive letter writing campaign, he was accepted into New York University. He now lives in Birmingham.

The three men returned to Montgomery in February for an ASU conference celebrating the 50th anniversary of their historic decision to stage the sit-in at the courthouse.

It was during the conference that ASU President William Harris announced his intentions to recommend to the Board of Trustees that all nine of the students expelled for participating in the sit-in receive honorary degrees during the University's spring commencement exercises.

"It occurred to me that this is an historic moment. It was a thing that was not right when it happened. It showed interference with operations of the University ... more important than that, it showed a denial of the

rights of people to participate in American society. We want to recognize the fact that it happened and try as best we can to undo what was clearly to me an injustice," said Harris. "We can't change it, but we can do everything we can to say it was not right and recognize the sacrifices of the people involved."

HISTORICAL MEMORIES

Dixon, McFadden and Peterson came back to Montgomery in May for the University's commencement. While they were here, they visited the Montgomery County Courthouse.

While driving to the courthouse to meet with McFadden and Peterson, Dixon discussed how excited he was about finally receiving his degree. All of a sudden he stopped talking, looked at the courthouse building and became choked up with tears.

"I haven't been in the building since the sit-in. This is where it all started," said Dixon.

What was the segregated courthouse cafeteria is now a locker room. While the building has changed, the memories of the day the three men tried to sit at the lunch counter have not.



L-R: Joseph Peterson, James McFadden and St. John Dixon sit at a table in the Montgomery County Courthouse, the site where they challenged segregation in the '60s.

When the trio walked into the site of the old cafeteria, they stopped and looked around. Peterson pointed to the spot where the lunch counter stood in 1960. Overcome with emotion, Dixon sat down at a table and let out a long sigh.

"Nobody's going to run me out today. I longed for the day I could sit here and not be thrown out. I never thought this day would ever take place," said Dixon.

After a few moments, all three men sat around a table and talked about how they found the courage to challenge segregation.

"We grew up in circumstances that led us to participate in the sit-in. Emmett Till (civil rights activist) was assassinated near my hometown; so, I always believed that if there was injustice, I had a responsibility to do something about it," said McFadden.

"I had been a soldier in the U.S. Army. I had seen different parts of the world and knew that change was possible," said Peterson.

"I was always willing to take on a problem and the segregated cafeteria at the courthouse was a problem," said Dixon. "I was afraid on that day. I knew the policemen had the guns and the license to kill. But I also knew we had to do what we did."

As they reflected on that day 50 years ago and what happened after

Continued on page 29

STUDENTS EXPELLED FOR SIT-IN PARTICIPATION

ELROY EMORY

ST. JOHN DIXON

EDWARD E. JONES

BERNARD LEE

JAMES MCFADDEN

JOSEPH PETERSON

LEON RICE

HOWARD SHIPMAN

MARZETTE WATTS

CLASS OF 1960: ICONS OF FREEDOM

By Lois Russell and Tina Joly

They call themselves the "Icons of Freedom," an appropriate name for the class of 1960. Members of that class came back to their alma mater to celebrate their golden anniversary during commencement week.

Many of the Icons remember being in Montgomery at the start of the Civil Rights Movement. Some shared their memories of taking part in the student sit-ins and other events that helped to launch the movement.

Esther (Jones) Thomas recalled attending the first meeting to organize the Montgomery Bus Boycott. She said during the meeting, the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. asked if anyone in the audience could play the piano.

"I told him that I could since I played for my church," said Thomas. "He asked me to play 'Leaning on the Everlasting Arms,' and I did. So, I was a part of the history of the bus boycott movement."

"It was a life-changing experience for me at ASU, being trained and developed here," said James McFadden. "If it had not been for ASU, many of us would not have had the experiences that we did. We've witnessed many things in our lives, including the election of Barack



Obama who has challenged us to do better and be better. Now, we need to pass our life experiences on to others."

Mayola (Tunstall) Ellis was Miss ASU 1960. She was excited to leave Mobile and go to college in Montgomery.

"I was going to a new place and getting away on my own. There

Janet (Harris) Sutton helped to organize the reunion. An active alumna, Sutton said the reunion was a special event for her.

"My fondest memory of ASU was that I had the chance to make so many friends," said Sutton. "I am still close to many of those people today."

The returning class members enjoyed a full slate of activities

Their agenda also included a tour of the campus so that the Golden Hornets could see just how much their beloved campus has changed.

"It was a college when I came and now it's a university," said James Mack. "It's a first-class university."

"It's exciting and invigorating to be back. The growth is very rapid and there are so many changes on

"...We were a witness to history"

— Jacqueline Williams

were so many things going on in Montgomery at the time and it was exciting to be a part of all the changes," said Ellis.

Jacqueline Williams was the valedictorian of the class of 1960.

"Most of us would not have been able to get a college education if it had not been for ASU. We had so many forward thinking people who wanted to do well and we were a witness to history," said Williams.

during their 50-year reunion. Many of the events were held in some of ASU's newest facilities. The Fred Shuttlesworth Dining Hall was the site of an early morning breakfast where participants shared memories of having their meals in a much different setting.

After a quick bus trip to Ralph David Abernathy Hall, the group held a candle lighting service in memory of 42 classmates who are now deceased.

campus," said Dr. Tyna Davis.

The weekend ended with members of the class of 1960 receiving Golden Diplomas during ASU's 281st Commencement Exercises. ■



Graduates Challenged to Become Leaders

By Timothy C. Ervin

"No matter who you are, there is always somebody looking for a reason to hold you back. You have to remember that you are an ASU graduate; and they may hold you for a moment, but they will not stop you from progressing forward." — Dr. Belle Wheelan



Dr. Belle Wheelan addresses the class of 2010.



Alabama State University's commencement speaker Dr. Belle Wheelan, president of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACS-COC), challenged nearly 500 graduates at the University's 281st Commencement Exercises to seek lives of leadership.

Before a packed audience of more than 7,000 attendees in the Dunn-Oliver Acadome on May 8, Wheelan encouraged the graduates to prepare themselves for the future.

"We need each and every one of you to be productive because we need to ensure that the doors that have been opened for you stay open," she said as she began her address.

Wheelan, who is the first African-American and the first woman to serve as president of SACS-COC, has a career in higher education that spans more than 30 years. She spoke from her own life experiences,

encouraging the graduates to follow some key lessons she learned throughout her life.

"First, take care of yourself," she said. "You only have one body. Believe me, it is never too late to get things back in order. Secondly, continue to ask questions. Learning is designed to be a lifelong phenomenon. The best way to learn is to ask questions. Third, learn to laugh a lot. We take life too seriously. Next, learn to pay yourself first," she said. "Every paycheck you make, you should set aside some of it for yourself and an emergency."

Wheelan continued, urging the future leaders to give back, show kindness, remain humble and to stay focused on success.

Following Wheelan's address, President Harris conferred a total of 483 degrees (338 undergraduate and 145 graduate degrees) on students in the University's six colleges. ■

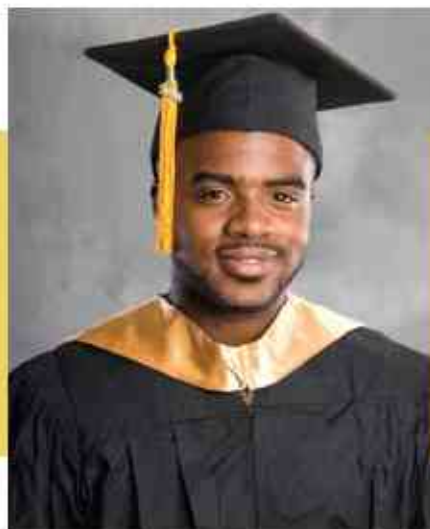


1. Dr. Steven Chesbro and Dr. Valda Montgomery prepare to hood DPT graduate Kristen Cunningham. 2. An excited graduate waves to family and friends. 3. President Harris speaks during the 281st Commencement Exercises. 4. A graduate jazzes up the top of her graduation cap with the words "I Did It." 5. Dr. Ronald Marcy, Dr. Cheryl Washington and Dr. Michael Sibley are new graduates in the Doctor of Educational Leadership, Policy and Law program. 6. Kristen Daniel and Raphael Denbow, who earned their doctorates in physical therapy, snap a quick photo of themselves prior to Commencement Exercises.

2010 Graduate Spotlight

Graduate Named to Fellowship

By Timothy C. Ervin



Melvin Bridges Jr., who graduated with a bachelor's degree in math and computer science, is just beginning his journey. He has been named a Woodrow Wilson Indiana Teaching Fellow. The program will award Bridges a \$30,000 stipend to enroll in a master's degree program that provides intensive clinical preparation for teaching math and science in urban and rural high schools that most need strong teachers. In return, he will commit to teach for three years in high-need Indiana schools.

Bridges also is a Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU-UP) STEM Scholar, a member of the Alpha Chi National Honor Society, a former ASU Golden Ambassador and a student ambassador for the Thurgood Marshall College Fund. He will do his master's degree work in education at the University of

Indianapolis.

A Wisconsin native, Bridges is one of 80 Wilson Fellows who will enter innovative teacher preparation programs at four selected Indiana universities — Ball State University, Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis, Purdue University, and the University of Indianapolis — and then teach in the state's high-need urban and rural schools.

Bridges said he is ready for the journey ahead.

"I learned so much about myself and the HBCU experience," he said. "My journey was challenging, yet full of joy. I know the road ahead will be more challenging but because of ASU, I'm equipped for it."

Miss International

When St. Lucia native Veronique N. LaMontagne arrived at ASU, she didn't let the cultural differences bother her. She became actively involved in student life.

While earning a bachelor's degree in biology/pre-health, she was president of the International Student Association, winner of the Miss International pageant and was a STEM — Biological Science Honor Student. She also was a four-year member of the ASU women's soccer team.

"ASU has prepared me well," LaMontagne said. "I was introduced to a variety of subjects in my career field."



Law School Bound

Le'Ronda Jean Gates said one of her fondest memories of ASU was witnessing the transformation of the campus while experiencing a transformation herself.

For the last two years, Gates has interned at the Southern Poverty Law Center, staying focused on one goal after graduation – attending the Thomas M. Cooley Law School in Lansing Mich.



"Being at ASU taught me the importance of organization and, above all, patience," Gates said.

Gates, a native of Forest Park, Ga., graduated with a bachelor's degree in political science.



First Male to Graduate

Transferring to ASU from a community college can be a little intimidating, but not for Adrian Rashad Daniels. When the Brantley, Ala., native arrived at ASU, he represented all the males in his family. He knew when he walked across the stage with a bachelor's degree in biology he would be the first male in his family to earn a degree.

"When I transferred from Lurleen B. Wallace Community College on an academic scholarship, I really didn't know anybody (at ASU)," he said. "But I wasn't going to let that stop me."

While a student, Daniels joined the Golden Ambassadors and earned the title of Chief Ambassador. Because of his love for his alma mater, Daniels said he plans to return to ASU to earn a terminal degree in his field. ■

First PT Graduate from Sweden

After Nil Pontus Neglen graduated from Ole Miss, he had plans to enroll at Southern University for graduate school. But he had a change of heart after hearing about Alabama State University's physical therapy program from one of his co-workers. And now he's made history, well sort of.

Neglen, a native of Sweden, is the first person from his country to earn a Doctor of Physical Therapy from ASU. He said he plans to use the knowledge and degree he received from ASU to further his career.





Lights, Camera, ASU!

By Timothy C. Ervin

More than 20 years ago, Dr. Tommie "Tonea" Stewart walked through Alabama State University's newly built Tullibody Fine Arts Center in utter amazement. She had never seen or heard of another facility like it at any of the Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU). Whether it was the dance studio that brought tears to her eyes or the 350-seat Lelia Barlow Theatre that made her jump in circles the first time she stood on it ... she knew ASU was her calling.



During her visit to campus, Stewart was offered a position to head the department of Theatre Arts. In accepting that offer, Stewart knew she faced a daunting task to revitalize the department, especially since it was targeted for elimination by the University's administration and the Alabama Commission on Higher Education.

Under Stewart's guidance, the program has grown exponentially since 1990 and is widely recognized as a program that helps cultivate the talent and foster the hopes of many successful alumni. Her efforts to revive the program were recognized this year when the Theatre Arts program was awarded full accreditation by the National Association of Schools of Theatre (NAST). Of the 86 applications submitted by major colleges and universities this year, ASU is one of only eight that received NAST accreditation. The commission voted to approve the Theatre Arts Department for a five-year accreditation, making ASU one of five HBCUs in the country with an accredited theater program.

"Our graduates laid the foundation for this accreditation," Stewart said. "From the curriculum to the number of graduating students, NAST said it was a pleasure to review a department that had so much going for it."

Act I: Humble Beginnings

Theatre Arts was first introduced to ASU in the early 1920s as a drama class, a required course for freshmen. In 1925, the late Lelia Barlow, a 32-year English professor and department head, organized the college's first theater group called the "College Dramatics" club. Barlow's productions were mostly oral interpretations and poetry rather than plays. After her retirement in 1958, Juanita Oubre joined the faculty and introduced drama as we know it today. Classical plays were performed by students interested in the arts.

Upon Oubre's departure in 1965, Bertram Martin joined the faculty and continued her

work. Martin gave students the opportunity to perform musicals, modern drama and the classics. Under Martin's leadership, Theatre Arts developed as a concentration for English majors and later as a major in the fall of 1984. Martin also was the catalyst for a new home for the arts. The \$3.3 million Tullibody Fine Arts building, which now houses the College of Visual and Performing Arts, was dedicated on Nov. 23, 1984. The building was one of the first of its kind at a HBCU. The Theatre Arts department is built around a 350-seat theater (named in honor of Lelia Barlow), a dance studio, ticket booths, scene shops, a black box, dressing rooms, costume rooms, a 50-seat lecture room and faculty offices.

While the facility was complete, the program, staff, funding and student interest in the program were inadequate. The new program was in danger. The state of Alabama and ASU officials were in the process of deleting Theatre Arts from the ASU curriculum.

Enter Dr. Tommie Stewart, best known for her role as Aunt Etta on the television series *In the Heat of the Night*. Stewart and actor James Earl Jones were in Montgomery to film *Saturday Night with Connie Chung* when she bumped into Dr. Ralph Bryson, a longtime ASU professor.

"Dr. Bryson was on the set of the special, playing an extra. He told me that he had read about me and heard about me," Stewart said. "After filming ended, he waited around for me. He told me about ASU and the new Tullibody Fine Arts Center. When we arrived on campus, Dr. Bryson called Bertram Martin and asked him to give me a tour of the facility."

When Stewart walked into the theater facility and saw a dance studio, she was moved to tears.

Continued on page 16



"I just had not seen a HBCU with a dance studio with mirrored walls," she said. "I had not seen a beautiful facility like that at another HBCU. When I saw that I said, 'Oh my God!' And Dr. Bryson just stood back and folded his arms and smiled. I said, 'Dr. Bryson, I love this facility.'"

After contemplating many offers from other colleges and universities, Stewart knew ASU was the place for her. When she arrived at ASU in 1990, she hit the ground running. There was much to do. She had to get students acquainted with the building and the program.

"At that time, the program had one student, one major," she said. "The building was being used as storage. It had outdated equipment and the office had one telephone, one fax machine, no secretary. I felt like with such a beautiful facility that it was, it could become what it was meant to be. Bertram Martin worked very hard to get the new facility, and Michael Howley (an ASU Theatre Arts professor) was working to try to maintain the program."

To attract students to the new program, Stewart started a "picketing" campaign.

"I put on a sandwich board like you do when you are picketing," Stewart said. "I literally made a sign, got a couple of students to help me and we went out on the campus and walked all around picketing for players. I kept that up for about 10 years at the beginning of every school year."

The campaign was a big success, helping the determined Stewart to assemble her first cast of ASU stars and her first ASU production, *The Amen Corner* by James Baldwin.

"It was something about that show that allowed you to connect with your cast in an unexplainable way," she said. "The foundation of the relationship with my students started with that cast. From that group, we've had a long line of outstanding students to come through."

Former students Rodney Wilkerson and Kamilah Long agree that Stewart and Theatre Arts changed their lives.

"Before theater I wasn't dedicated to anything else," Long said. "Theater has taken

me everywhere I ever wanted to go. Theater became my family outside of my immediate family."

Wilkerson agrees.

"Had it not been for Dr. Stewart and my experience in the ASU Theatre Department, I wouldn't have known anything," he said. "She prepared us for everything — contracts, auditions, image, meditations, faith, failures, performances, etc. There is nothing I can think of that she didn't get us ready for. I absolutely loved my experience."

Act II: The Rebirth □

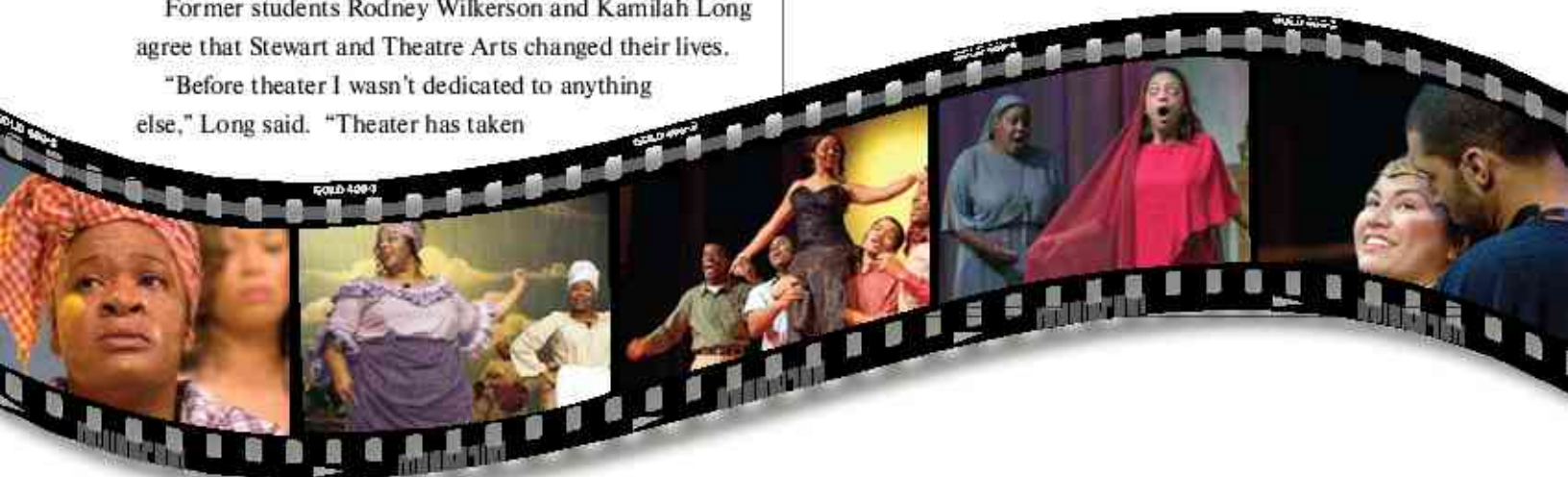
During the last 20 years, the Theatre Arts Department has flourished under Stewart's direction. Applications for the program increased to include hundreds of students from around the country. Upon completion of the four-year program, graduates are qualified theater practitioners in the areas of acting, audience development, dance, directing, dramaturgy, costume construction, ad design, set construction and design, lighting and sound design, theatrical makeup application, theater history and theater management.

The department produces a wide range of productions each year, including period pieces, classics, musicals and contemporary offerings. Other events include a one-act play festival, a dance concert and a fashion show. The department also participates in many activities in and outside of the theater.

Within the department, students may join organizations such as The Dramatics Guild, The Elite Modeling Company, The Eclectic Dance Company and The Touring Company.

Since 1991, the department has offered several theater camps each summer for the community. The camps are Theatre Artist Performance School (TAPS) for ages 6-12,

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ASU Grads Find Success in Entertainment

By May Donnell

Jeffrey Bernard Calloway 🌸 Actor 🌸 (97)



The neon lights are shining bright for ASU alumnus Jeff Calloway. Calloway has a major role in the hit Broadway play *Memphis*, which recently won four Tony Awards, including Best Musical. The play had already won the Outer Critics Circle Award for outstanding new Broadway musical.

Calloway's role in *Memphis* marks his Broadway debut. The play is a rhythm 'n' blues musical set in the '50s. Calloway is one of the stars of the show. His character Delray is a nightclub owner.

Despite his recent successes in entertainment, the 1997 Theatre Arts graduate did not come to the University with plans to become an actor. During most of his college career, Calloway found success making crowd-pleasing plays on the football field as a starting fullback for legendary Coach Houston Markham.

Calloway's career was destined for the gridiron until his junior year.

"I came back to campus following surgery — this was 1996 — and they'd changed the offense and tried to get me involved playing tight end," said Calloway. "I didn't like it and I'm sure my coaches were not happy with me."

Calloway said he didn't know that despite the position change, pro scouts were interested in him; so, he made the decision to leave the team his senior year and pursue acting.

He found his first taste of success as an actor when he joined the cast of ASU's performance of *Gospel at Colonus*.

"I started thinking, 'Wow, I can do this. I can make a living at this.'"

Calloway credits Dr. Tonia Stewart, now dean of ASU's College of Visual and Performing Arts, with helping him grow into the professional he is today.

"Discipline, patience, knowledge of the craft ... integrity and a strong drive to accept only the best out of myself" are attributes he credits to Stewart's influence.

In addition to earning his M.F.A. in acting from Brandeis University in 2000, Calloway has appeared in numerous regional theater productions and television shows, including *Law and Order* and the soap opera *All My Children*, and has been the voice talent in commercials for Miller Genuine Draft,

Tropicana Twister Soda and K-Mart. He also made his movie debut in *The Taking of Pelham 1 2 3*, starring Denzel Washington.

"If someone had told me back then that I had a chance to play pro ball, it might have turned out differently," Calloway said. "But I'm right where I'm supposed to be and I am fortunate that things worked out as they did. I can thank my ASU family for that."



Tangi Miller 🌸 Actress 🌸 (93)

Tangi Miller has been called one of the sexiest stars on television. *Ebony Magazine* said the former ASU public relations major-turned-movie star is one of the "most beautiful people of the millennium."

She got her start at Good Ole 'Bama State, where she realized that acting was her true calling.

Miller found her first taste of fame

Continued on page 18

Miller continued from page 17

in 1998, playing the sexy Elena Tyler on the hit *WB* series *Felicity*. The role earned the Miami native her first NAACP Image Award nomination for best actress.

She moved to the big screen and found herself right at home starring with Tyler Perry in *Madea's Family Reunion*.

Miller went on to play lead roles in independent feature films, such as *The Other Brother*, starring opposite Mekhi Phifer; *Too Legit: The MC Hammer Story*; and *Love & Other 4 Letter Words*, which Miller wrote, produced and starred in.

Her new film, which she also produced, is *My Girlfriend's Back*, starring Miller opposite Malik Yoba and ASU alumnus Doug Williams. Release is scheduled for later this year.

Born and raised in south Florida, where she still makes her home, Miller is the eldest of six children, none of whom were allowed to watch television.

Even though Miller began acting in stage productions while in high school, she never planned to be an actress. She majored in public relations, but spent most of her free time in theater productions at ASU and the Alabama Shakespeare Festival.

After graduation, Miller earned an M.F.A. degree from the University of California, Irvine and studied at the Royal National Theatre in London.

Along with acting, Miller has a passion for African-Caribbean dance and producing films. She currently has four films in production.



Clarence Carter Musician (60)

Most people know Clarence Carter's music, but not everyone knows he graduated with a degree in music from Alabama State University (then Alabama State College) in 1960. The Montgomery native, who was born blind, had to talk his way into ASU after attending the Alabama School for the Blind in Talladega, where he was enrolled at the age of 6.

"Getting into college was not an easy task because it was hard trying to convince the officials in Alabama to pay for a black to go to college," said Carter. "It was more difficult persuading college presidents that blind students could perform in college."

Perform he did. In 1968, he made a name for himself with the hit single "Slip Away."

But Carter's fame came after years of struggle. "I had a hard time learning how to play the guitar," Carter said. "I had no one to teach me ... and I did so by listening to other people play and copying what I heard."

Carter first performed as part of a duo with school friend Calvin Scott. The pair signed a contract with Duke Records and released "two songs you probably never heard of."

"I think the funniest thing about the experience with Duke Records happened the day we received our first royalty check," Carter said. "It amounted to 25 cents."

Carter's biggest hit to date came with the 1970's release of "Patches" on the Atlantic Record label. A few years later, Carter's star began to fade.

"After 1975, the music field was not so kind to me. The disco era came along and almost sent me to bankruptcy."

Carter didn't stay down long. In 1985, he signed with Ichiban Records, which introduced Carter's music to a whole new generation with the release of "Dr. C.C." and his megahit "Strokin'."

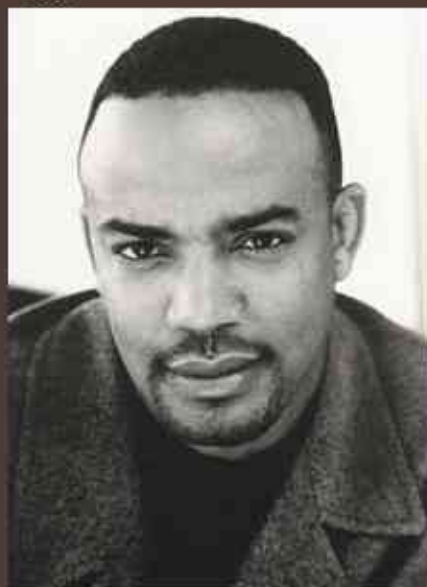
Carter, now 74, continues to record and perform for audiences around the world. His latest album, "Live with the Dr.," has just been released.

"During my career, I have been awarded five gold records and one platinum album," said Carter. "That's why I say I have been blessed and well rewarded."



"It was more difficult persuading college presidents that blind students could perform in college." — Clarence Carter

Doug Williams ❸ Actor/Comedian ❸ (95)



ASU alumnus Doug Williams is living a hilarious life, but that was not always the case.

"I was kind of funny back then," said comedian Williams when asked about his days as a Hornet. "But not nearly as funny as I am now."

Williams said his transition from student to comedian started at ASU.

"I was in communications, majoring in print journalism at school," Williams said. "Walter Davis and Floyd Robinson (ASU staff members) would take us out and let us shoot (videotape) different things around town."

The experience proved pivotal in Williams' decision to pursue acting and comedy professionally.

"Man, it lit a fire under me and

motivated me," Williams says. "It showed me that maybe I could make a living at this."

Williams, who made his debut as a stand-up comedian in 1990 at a comedy club in Huntsville, began participating in two-minute plays at ASU's Barlow Theatre. In January of 1995, he earned his degree and headed West to seek his fortune.

Williams wasted no time turning his charm into fame. Just two months after arriving in Los Angeles, he was co-starring with Eddie Murphy in the box office hit *The Nutty Professor*. The role showcased his offbeat style of comedy and opened a lot of doors for the Montgomery native.

After his work with Murphy on the big screen, Williams became an instant favorite on *BET's Comic View Club*. From there, he began making appearances on *Comedy Central*, including stand-up bits on *The Keenan Ivory Wayans Show*, *Friday Night, Late Night* and *It's Showtime at the Apollo*.

Still in demand, the comedian can be seen with Mo'Nique in *The Big Black Comedy Show* and has recently completed shooting *My Girlfriend's Back*, starring Malik Yoba and ASU alumna Tangi Miller.

Williams is the host of a new hit stand-up comedy show on Starz called *Martin Lawrence Presents 1st Amendment Stand-Up*.

Darryl D. Lassiter ❸ Creative Dynamo ❸ (86)



The late soul legend James Brown may have been referred to as "the hardest working man in show business" but alumnus Darryl D. Lassiter could be a close second.

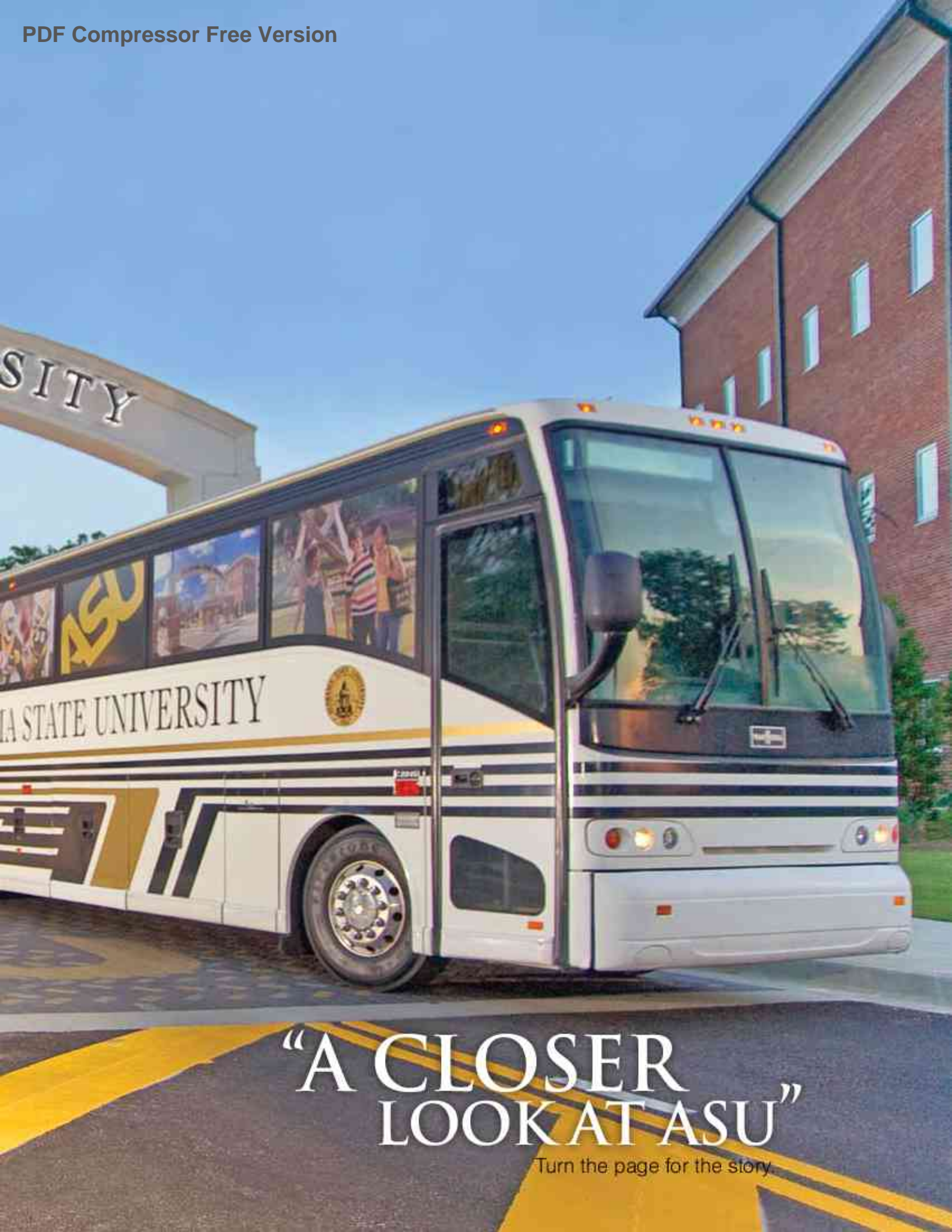
Lassiter is a successful writer, producer, director and musician. He has made five feature films, 15 television specials, 11 short films, 70 music videos and 16 television commercials.

And those are just the highlights.

Lassiter, who grew up in New York City and Bessemer, Ala., also has worked as an editor, writer and photographer for various publications and produced three albums of music, including the soundtrack to the movie he wrote, produced and directed about his days at ASU, *Pay the Price!* His work in television began in 1991, when he interned on the set of the CBS hit *In the Heat of the Night*. He's also spent time as a radio announcer and program director, getting his start at

Continued on page 34





“A CLOSER LOOK AT ASU”

Turn the page for the story.

"TAKE A CLOSER LOOK AT ASU"

Bus Tour takes ASU's Vision on the Road

By Tina Joly



President Harris discusses ASU's Transformation Plan during the final event of the President's Bus Tour held at the University's Tullibody Fine Arts building.

President Harris and a team of ASU faculty, staff and students traveled around the state of Alabama sharing details about the many exciting transformations taking place on campus.

The "Take a Closer Look at ASU" Bus Tour kicked off on April 19 in Huntsville. Harris and ASU Vice President for Marketing and Communications, Danielle Kennedy-Lamar, appeared on the WHNT-TV's morning news show.

"We are taking to the road ... across the entire state of Alabama to explain to its residents the numerous great and positive things that are occurring at Alabama State University," Harris said.

Representatives from all of ASU's undergraduate and graduate programs, current students and admissions recruiters met with students at Huntsville's J.O. Johnson High School and John Sparkman High School. They were enthusiastically received by the students, despite being right in the middle of Alabama A&M territory.

While part of the team visited local schools, others hosted a luncheon with corporate and government leaders. Later, the entire team continued the information sharing initiative during a reception for local alumni and friends.

Day two of the tour took the president and the ASU ambassadors to Birmingham, where students at Carver High School pulled out all the stops.

The ASU Transformation Tour team was greeted by Carver's marching band with more than 500 Carver students turning out to meet them.

Harris and his group of ASU representatives from admissions and recruitment and the SGA President Stanley Giles talked with the students. Later, ASU's Theatre Department performed for the group.

"The students we met were very excited after our performance. Many of them told us they want to enroll at ASU just for theater. We tell them that it's good to come here to perform in plays, but also come and get a great education," said Brandon McCall, an ASU junior majoring in theater.

The team stopped in Dothan on the third day of the tour. ASU alumnus William Cooper (1963) said he was impressed with what he saw from the Transformation Team. "I think this tour is the best thing that could have happened," he said.

Daisy Baxter-Bass, a 1966 ASU graduate, was thrilled about the positive things happening at ASU.

"It's exciting from where we came from to where we are now," Baxter-Bass said. "The transformation of ASU is amazing."

Catrina Waters, project coordinator for ASU's Maternal and Child Health Pipeline Training Program, said the President's Transformation Tour has been amazing.

"The opportunity to engage prospective students about Alabama State University and (tell them about) the opportunities (that are) available has been awesome," said Waters.

Day four of the Transformation Tour was in the Gulf Coast region. Harris appeared on WALA Fox-10's morning news show. He also met with the editorial board of the *Mobile Press-Register* and corporate and governmental leaders.

ASU's roving ambassadors visited students at Mobile



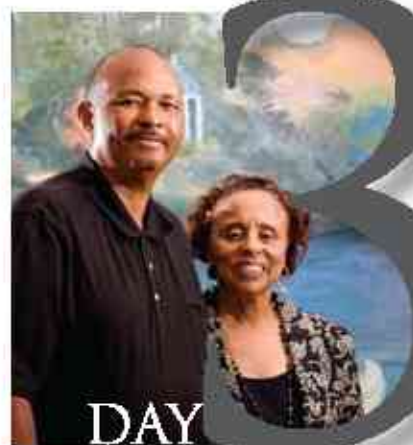
President Harris and Vice President for Marketing and Communications, Danielle Kennedy-Lamar, appear on WHNT-TV in Huntsville.



ASU Ambassadors register reception guests during the "Take a Closer Look at ASU" Bus Tour.



Scholarship winners take a photo with President Harris during the alumni reception at the Harbert Center in Birmingham.



Herman and Alice Jackson, class of 1972, attend the alumni reception in Dothan.



President Harris speaks with Philomenia Klopner and her daughter Irene Klopner as the president's bus tour host an alumni reception at the Riverview Plaza hotel in Mobile.



Provost Karyn Scissum Gunn reads to students at Maryvale Elementary School in Mobile.



ASU theater arts students wowed enthusiastic crowds during presidential tour performances across the state.

County's Vigor High School and Blount High School and told them about the value of obtaining a degree from Alabama State University.

The evening ended with an alumni and scholars' reception where the group met Irene Klopner, who is graduating from Faulkner State Community College. Klopner was awarded a transfer scholarship to ASU.

"I am so excited about coming to Alabama State University ... I had some hard days, but it was all worth it," said Klopner.

ASU alums who attended the reception saw the Transformation Tour as a great recruitment tool that will benefit the University.

"I am very impressed with what I saw and heard here tonight," said ASU alumnus Clarence Irby (class of 1972) of Mobile. "I also think it's great that the team visited Vigor High School and was able to recruit some students for ASU."

George M. Jackson Sr., a 1954 ASU graduate, agreed. "I think this was a very good thing," said Jackson. "This is an eye-opener for the community and I think ASU will reap great benefits from this tour."

Before returning to Montgomery, the team stopped at Maryville Elementary School to read to students. While there, Provost Karyn

Continued on page 24

Scissum Gunn promised that the University would "adopt" the school and partner with its students.

The "Take a Closer Look at ASU" tour culminated in Montgomery. During the last leg of the trip, Harris was interviewed on WSAF-TV's *Eleven Alive* television show.

Harris also met with the editorial board at the *Montgomery Advertiser* and later met with corporate and governmental leaders during a luncheon at the Capitol City Club.

The ASU ambassadors spent the day at BTW Magnet School and Carver High School where they talked with students about the exciting transformations taking place at ASU in areas such as teaching and research.

Carver Guidance Counselor Pamela Williams (B.A. 2002, M.A. 2007) said this is the first time a university has cared enough to bring so many representatives to talk to Carver students.

"I think this is a wonderful opportunity for our students, they have never experienced anything like this before. I graduated from ASU, and as an alumna I'm proud that my University took the time to do something like this for the students at Carver," Williams said.

The final event on the tour was a reception for alumni, friends and supporters held in the Tullibody Fine Arts



Left: Former SGA President Stanley Giles chats with ASU's first lady Wanda Harris during the bus tour reception at the University's Tullibody Fine Arts building. Right: Scholarship winner Aundrea Chapman is greeted by President Harris.

Center.

Harris addressed the group then presented the "Transformation Vision 2020" videotape, which outlines the complete transformation the University will undergo by the end of 2020.

ASU's new gateways are part of the Transformation Vision.

"When you see the new gateways you know that ASU is here," said Brenda Andrews, who graduated from ASU in 1983. "Our campus wasn't that visible before ... now you can see it from the interstate and you know that Alabama State University is right over there, and that's wonderful."

Jacinta Berry graduated from ASU in 1980 with a degree in business accounting management.

"Everyone seemed to be really interested in all the new things going on here. It is so exciting to see the transformation coming to fruition. I'm hearing from students who are just as excited about the changes. I'm proud to be an Alabama State University alumna," said Berry. ■



The Carver High School Marching Band in Birmingham greets the Alabama State University tour team.

In the next edition
of *ASU Today*:

HIGHLIGHTS
FROM THE

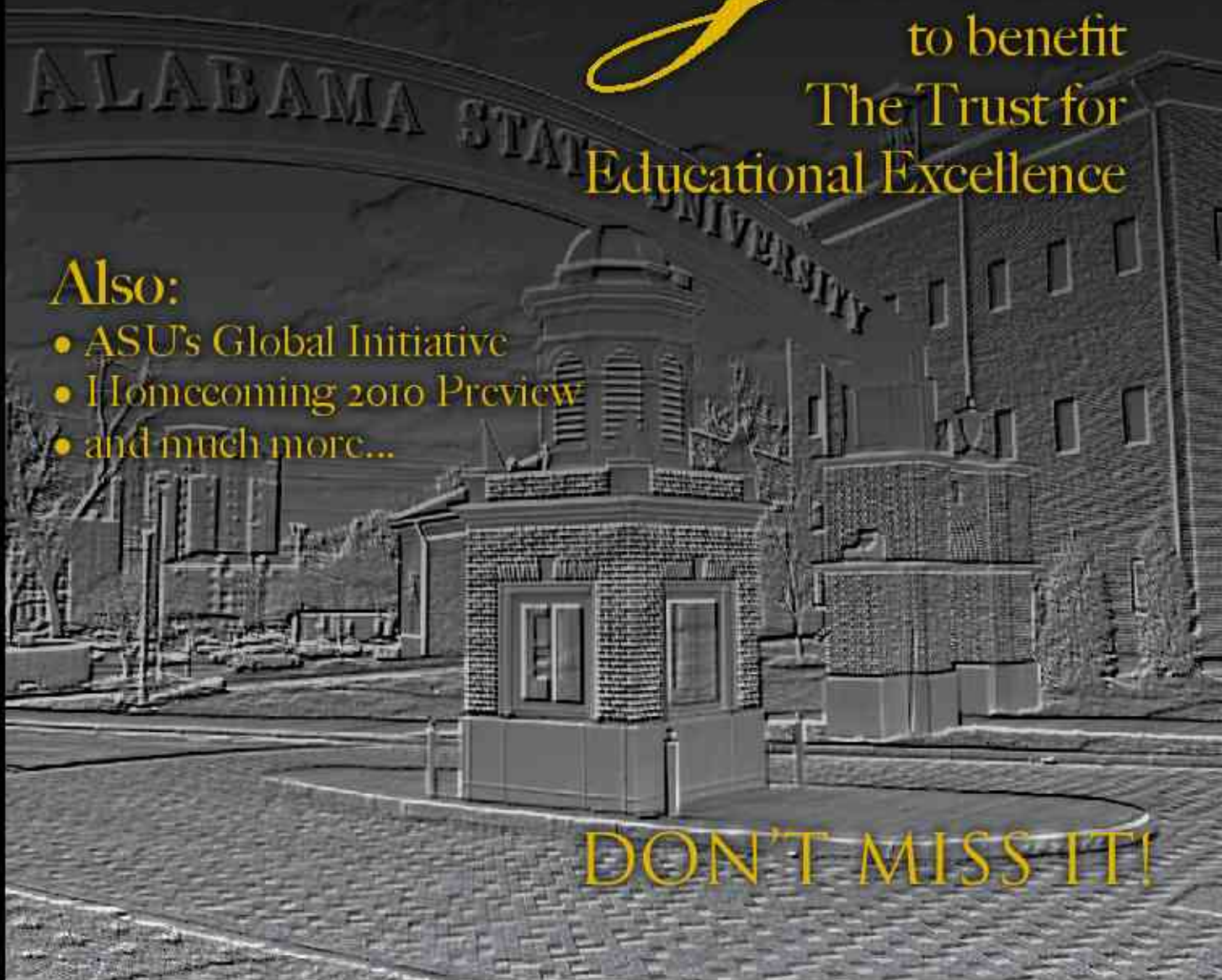
President's Gala

to benefit
The Trust for
Educational Excellence

Also:

- ASU's Global Initiative
- Homecoming 2010 Preview
- and much more...

DON'T MISS IT!



CONSTRUCTION

By Tom Ensey



Our readers will probably recall that in November's special edition of *ASU Today*, we promised to keep you informed on all of the changes that are part of the University's transformation. Right now, several projects are underway at various locations across campus. Here's a quick look at some of them:



The Levi Watkins Learning Center

A substantial addition to and a total renovation of the existing library; making it comparable to other major facilities of its kind. The cost is about \$20 million. Size: Addition of 60,500 square feet to the existing 87,000-square-foot building. Projected completion date: July 2011.

NOW and on the WAY



New Dormitory

Construction on a suite-style dormitory is well under way. The dormitory will be housed in two new buildings and will accommodate 500 students. Each building will have computer labs, group study rooms, common areas and laundry facilities. Cost: \$15 million. Size: 80,000 square feet each. Completion date: Summer 2011.

The Football Complex

A 28,000-square-foot facility that will house coaches' offices, team rooms, a locker room, the training room and an academic lab. A unique feature will be a balcony that overlooks the football field. Cost: \$6 million. Completion date: February 2011. *This complex is not to be confused with the on-campus stadium, which is still on the horizon.*



"The University is taking a first-class approach to these facilities. We are using the most qualified consultants, engineers, architects and program managers and many of our projects are coming in under budget ... We have a team of professionals in place to do this right, because it represents the future of ASU."

*—KIPPY TATE, Vice President of
Buildings and Grounds*



Baseball/Intramural Field

For those who have wondered what will go on the Carter Hill Road sites that have been cleared — that's going to be the baseball field that also will feature an intramural soccer/football field. The baseball park will include the field, a press box, bathrooms, dugouts, concession stand, parking, lighting and seating. Cost: \$3.9 million. Completion date: November 2010. ■

ERP Implementation Right on Time

By Tom Ensey



Terence Thomas, left, and Larry Cobb Sr.

The implementation of a massive information software system that will unify all of Alabama State University's business resources is a little better than halfway finished. The ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning) system will benefit all members of the University, especially students. The campuswide system will enable individuals with the University to access information such as payroll, financial and human resources. Students will be able to access financial aid, billing,

transcripts, housing and other records. Several components of the system are being used by the ASU staff now.

The plan from the beginning was to get the student services elements up and running first. "It's the biggest and most important element of the system," said Terence Thomas, president of Diversified Technology out of Atlanta and the project manager for the ERP at ASU.

The admissions module went online last February, along with the financial aid package, which enables prospective students to apply for admission, grants, scholarships, loans and awards.

The student recruitment module went into operation in April. This module allows the University to target, track and communicate with prospective students.

Student records, which went live in May, include grants, enrollment and transcripts, among other things. In June, the student advisement module went online, allowing advisers to communicate with students, ensure students are taking the right classes, track how they doing academically and track whether students are

making satisfactory progress toward their degrees.

Danielle Kennedy-Lamar, ASU vice president for Marketing and Communications, is spearheading the University's effort in implementing the ERP system.

She said the project, which is scheduled to be completed next spring, is right on schedule.

Thomas agreed. "Because the student portion was so big, about twice as big as the other elements, we feel like we're making great progress."

Other Elements

● **Business Module:** On Oct. 1 the business module goes live. That will include purchasing, accounts payable, and all nonstudent receivables (i.e., rental of the ASU's Dunn-Oliver Acadome).

● **E-Procurement:** Thomas said e-procurement will allow people with proper authorization to purchase supplies directly online, which will speed up the ordering process.

● **Asset Management:** This module is the financial part of the ERP system. It will keep track of all of the University's property, such as computers and test tubes.

● **Human Capital Management:** This module is slated to go live January 2011. It will keep track of any information, except payroll, pertaining to an ASU employee.

"The program will put everything together in one logical database," Thomas said. "It reduces the data required, improves the data integrity

Continued on page 33

STUDENT SIT-IN

continued from page 3

decision resonates as the leading case on due process rights for students in public higher education.

In their protests, ASC students became part of a wave of youth unrest throughout the region. Other rulings followed the *St. John Dixon* decision and students faced tough penalties.

Twenty students were placed on probation and nine were expelled from school. Six months after students began the Sit-In Movement, restaurants and lunch counters in 26 southern cities ended their segregationist policies; but in Montgomery, white businesses continued to discriminate against African-Americans. ASC students remained undaunted. They had courageously challenged segregation at its core, and they had joined a swelling movement that sought to overturn racial inequities. ■



Excerpts from research by Dr. Howard Robinson, ASU archivist and National Center historian

TAKING A SEAT

continued from page 7

they left the courthouse, all three men said they would do it again if they had to.

"There's no doubt in my mind that it was worth it. Every bit of it was worth it," said Dixon.

"Absolutely. We took steps to change humanity and change the world," said McFadden.

"There was so much racism in Montgomery at the time and we had to take a stand. Even though we were expelled, I believe we did the right thing," said Peterson.

A HISTORICAL DAY

On the morning of the graduation, the three were excited about finally getting their degrees.

"I would have crawled to get here. I don't think there will ever be anything like this. I am so proud of my University," said Dixon.

"I feel really good and I want young people to know that regardless of what happens, you should always fight injustice," said McFadden.

"I never expected this to happen. I had no idea our actions would have this kind of impact. I spent all of my life telling my children and

grandchildren what I had done and now they get to see me walk across that stage," said Peterson.

The three men then proudly marched into ASU's Dunn-Oliver Acadome to receive their degrees. President Harris acknowledged the significance of their actions 50 years before.

"We don't know how your life was changed by what happened 50 years ago, but we do know how our lives were changed by what you did," said Harris.

"St. John Dixon. James McFadden. Joseph Peterson. By the authority vested in me by the Board of Trustees of Alabama State University, I confer upon you the Bachelor of Liberal Arts honoris causa degree with all the rights, privileges, honors and responsibilities ... I now invite you to move forward and receive your diploma," said Harris.

One by one, each man rose, then walked across the stage and received his diploma. Fifty years after trying to take a seat against segregation, St. John Dixon, James McFadden and Joseph Peterson now stand proudly as alumni of Alabama State University. ■



New Trustees Members on Board with Transformation Plan



By Hazel Scott



Alfreda Warner Green
By Eric Schultz



Kathy E. Sawyer
By David Campbell

Alfreda Warner Green of Huntsville and Kathy Elmore Sawyer of Montgomery have a common tie, their love for Alabama State University.

These two dedicated alumnae were recently nominated by Gov. Bob Riley and confirmed by the Alabama State Senate as members of the Alabama State University Board of Trustees. Their appointments are effective through 2020.

Green replaces Trustee Debbie W. Redmond-Hyder and Sawyer replaces Trustee Alfred Seawright.

ASU Board of Trustees chair, Elton N. Dean Sr., said the new Trustees will add a welcome dimension to the current all-male board.

"Green and Sawyer are two very qualified females from different walks of life. They add diversity to the board and extra knowledge," Dean said. "Sawyer worked in two governors' cabinets - Gov. Don Siegelman and Gov.

Bob Riley. She is capable of dealing with people and is a team player.

"Green brings a wealth of knowledge to the board. She currently works at Redstone Arsenal in Huntsville. She is known as a team player and a morale builder. She is a pleasure to work with. Their attributes are an advantage to the board," Dean said.

Green and Sawyer indeed bring an abundance of skills and experience to ASU's Board of Trustees.

Early in Green's career, she served as a middle and high school teacher in both Texas and Alabama; she worked in several high level positions with the Aviation and Missile Command at Redstone Arsenal in Huntsville; and worked with the Department of the Army in Washington, D.C. She currently works as director of logistics with the Joint Attack Munitions System Program Office in Huntsville.

Green is very involved in her community and with ASU, serving as president of a local nonprofit organization, whose mission is to provide support to local charities, especially children and senior citizens, and as a member of Blacks in Government. Green also is a member of the ASU Rocket City Alumni Chapter in Huntsville, where she was its parliamentarian.

Sawyer has worked extensively in the field of health care in such positions as interim director of the Department on Disability Services in Washington, D.C.; director of Advocacy Services and as a regional coordinator with the Alabama Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation. From 1999 until 2005, Sawyer was the commissioner of the Alabama Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation in the cabinet of then Gov. Don Siegelman. Gov. Bob Riley reappointed her to the position as part of his new administration on Dec. 31, 2002. She is now an independent consultant in the fields of health, mental health, human service and in various

governmental areas.

Sawyer is very involved in her community and serves on many boards, which includes the Montgomery AIDS Outreach; Mental Health Advisory Committee, Envision, and the Alabama Department of Human Resources. Her many honors include being the recipient of the 2004 *Montgomery Advertiser* Citizen of the Year Award and the 2008 Leadership Award by the Leading Edge Institute in Birmingham.

Sawyer and Green hope their decisions as Trustees will impact every aspect of ASU and help shape the place that generations of students, faculty and staff have come to regard as home.

"I see my role (as a Trustee) as one who provides oversight of ASU," said Green, who earned her bachelor's degree in education in 1980 from Alabama State University and a master's of business management/science degree from Florida Institute of Technology in 1997. "In this capacity, I will assist in ensuring that the health and welfare of the University are maintained and executed in accordance with adopted rules and regulations."

"Also, my hope is to provide guidance regarding campus-curricular development, management of funds, property, facilities, etc., (that are) necessary to ensure high-quality, student-focused educational programs," Green added.

Sawyer attended ASU for two years, but later transferred to the University of Alabama because ASU didn't offer courses in social work at that time. At the University of Alabama, she received a Bachelor of Science in social welfare (1975) and a Master of Social Work (1976). She hopes to advance the interests of the University through promoting continued cultural, educational and relationship-building opportunities.

"I view my role as working with the Trustees to ensure that the University has the needed infrastructure and

resources to provide students a quality academic program," Sawyer said.

Both new board members agree that regular and meaningful communication and an amicable working relationship with other Trustees are important tools in meeting challenges facing any university.

When asked about the biggest challenges facing ASU, both Sawyer and Green agree the University is tackling its demands, especially with its Vision 2020 plan.

"I'm impressed with the University's vision for the redesign and the refurbishing of the physical plant. But

most importantly, I'm impressed with the focus on excellence in education," Sawyer said. "To me ... there should always be a balance, that's why excellence in education is a central part of the University's vision. This focus clearly indicates ASU never lost sight of what the University is."

Sawyer said the transformation process have created new programs and research initiatives, and that it shows a "vibrant and changing University that embraces the best aspects of its noble traditions while transitioning into a truly transformed - and transformational - place of learning and discovery."

Green reiterated that the University is doing a great job in handling its challenges. She said the University's transformation plan will shape ASU for decades.

"I strongly believe that the strategic plans being incorporated to transform the University will improve many of the current processes and result in increased student and faculty satisfaction," Green said. "Ensuring a successful transformation will be a team effort and I am proud to be a member of the team. Collectively, members of the board, executive members, faculty, staff and students must be committed and execute assigned responsibilities. Together, we can achieve excellence that will permeate throughout the world." ■



**I strongly believe
that the strategic
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— Alfreda W. Green

Lights, Camera, ASU

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Teaching Through Theatre (3-T) for ages 12-17, and Adult Repertory Performing Arts Camp (ARPAC) for adults 18 and over. All of the camps are designed to teach the participants about the world of theater while building self-esteem and character. Camp participants attend classes, workshops and training sessions, which culminate in an inventive, original final production.

"We continue to get bigger," Stewart said, "but because of my many students that come back to help, our quality of work still remains strong. It makes me very proud to see them. They can be very strong role models for our children just by coming back and showing them that they are successful."

Lindsey McWhorter, Miss ASU 2004-2005, said coming back to teach in the TAPS program is an honor.

"I like working with children," said McWhorter, who recently completed graduate school at Brandeis University in Boston. "One day I plan to open a performing arts school for underprivileged children."

Stewart's professional successes as an actress have helped her to be an example to her students. She has appeared in numerous TV shows and movies, including *The Wronged Man* (2010); *Love ... & Other 4 Letter Words* (2007); *The Rosa Parks Story* (2002); *A Time to Kill* (1996); *Living*

Large (1991); *Mississippi Burning* (1988); *Don't Look Back: The Story of Leroy 'Satchel' Paige* (1981); *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* (1979); and *Nightmare in Badham County* (1976).

She believes that students trust her



Bonita Hamilton-Caesar

teaching because she is a practitioner of what she teaches.

"I've gone as far as anyone can go and still I humble myself enough to go and audition and pray that I get a part. Then, I come right back here and tell them what I've gone through. I tell them about my failures. I tell them about my successes. I tell them about what it's like in this industry. I tell them about what they don't want to do. I teach that. I live that. They observe that. And I think that validates what we're doing in our department."

Act III: Stars are Born

Through the years, Department of Theatre alumni have made an impressive mark on the entertainment industry. Some have had breakthrough roles as leading actors in movies and television, and some have had memorable performances on Broadway.

Alums such as Jeff Bernard Calloway (*Memphis*), Timothy Ware Jr. (*Mamma Mia*, *Beehive*), Felecia Boswell (*Hercules*, *Voyage of a Ghost Ship*, *Aida*), Timothy Parham (*Streamers*, *The Wiz*, *The Diary of Blackmen*), Donei Hall (*Festival of the Lion King*, *In the Blood*), Akia Fleming (*Beehive: A 60's Musical*, *Urinetown*, *The Crucible*), Travis Ray (*The House of Sham*), and Bonita Hamilton-Caesar (*The Lion King*) have made careers lighting up the big stage with magical performances across the United States.

Hamilton-Caesar is currently on Broadway appearing in *The Lion King*. She attributes her success to the education she received at ASU.

"Dr. Stewart told me to always be ready for whatever opportunities may come," Hamilton-Caesar said. "Long rehearsal nights prepared me for the rigorous demands of working an eight-show week in a Broadway company. I learned how to take direction and enhance my talents under her tutelage. People often say, 'You're so lucky to be on Broadway.' However, honing my craft on the Alabama State University stages made me realize that there's truth in the phrase, 'There is

no such thing as luck.' Luck is where preparedness meets opportunity."

Some, like Samuel Smith (*Cadillac Records*, *Sopranos*, *Law & Order: CI*), Charlie Hudson III (*The Rosa Parks Story*, *Waterfront*), Nyoka Boswell (*I Didn't Know I was Pregnant*, *True Riches*, *Pledg'N*), Pacey Walker (*How You Look to Me*), Christina Browder (*The Stranger*, *Cold Feet*, *Match.com commercials*), and Teria Birlon (*Life*, *Young and the Restless*, *Heartland*) have found success in television and film.

"Dr. Stewart always pushed us to go out and make things happen for ourselves and never take 'no' for an answer," Birlon said.

Lindsey McWhorter, Rama C. Marshall, Cecil E. Washington, Yohance Miles, Anthony Stockard, Montroville Williams and Dr. Wendy Coleman, and many others continued their development on stage and received scholarships for graduate school at major institutions such as Brandies University, Brown University, Pennsylvania State University, Florida State University, Ohio State University, Louisiana State University, and the University of California at Los Angeles.

Others like Laiona Michelle (The D.R.E.A.M. Studios), Elizabeth Johnson (Elizané Productions, LLC), Thomas Stewart (StewPro Entertainment), Christi Strickland (Plays On The Go Touring Company), Shanessa Sweeney (Very NESSAsary Productions), Venicia Vaden (Godsfavor Enterprises), Kamilah Long (New Village Productions, The Pee Wee Group), and Dr. Denise

Davis-Cotton (Detroit School for the Fine and Performing Arts) caught the entrepreneurial bug and used their talents to start theater training schools, repertory theaters and production companies.

"Our alumni are our ambassadors," Stewart says. "The next generation of theater performers are watching them, asking 'Where did they go to school?' When we made the choice to come to ASU, we made God's choice. He has truly blessed my students." ■

ERP

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and offers more ease of use to faculty and staff."

The ERP system also will allow students to add and drop classes, pay tuition, and to complete their student housing online.

"It will take stress off all departments," Thomas said.

Kennedy-Lamar said staff members have immersed themselves into tackling the implementation while still continuing the day-to-day work of the University. "It is because of their hard work that this implementation is going so well," she said.

Larry Cobb Sr., director of Information Systems and Technology, directs about 20 of more than 100 on-campus personnel who are involved with the hands-on implementation.

"I'm going to have to give a thumbs up to my folks," he said. "They have stepped up and accepted this challenge. Maintaining two sites, bringing the new one up and still running this institution — it's amazing

how high their morale is right now."

The implementation involves not just changing the programming, but the networking as well, said Cobb, a longtime ASU staff member. He said the implementation also changed the software and the hardware that runs it.

"It involves a complete thought-process change," he said.

Cobb gave a nod to the administration for how smoothly the process has gone and for the enthusiasm of the people doing the work.

"The leadership ... is having meetings, talking to the people doing the work, and ... asking what they can do to help," he said. "That's why the morale is so high — the staff knows the leadership is completely behind them." ■

Entertainment

continued from page 19
WVAS radio in 1985.

Lassiter also has won a slew of industry awards, including "Best Family Drama" at the Millennial New York International Film Festival and the coveted Stellar Award for "Video of the Year" in 2004. The mayor of Bessemer named a day after him. The National Black College Alumni Distinction Hall of Fame has already honored Lassiter with a Lifetime Achievement Award.

Anyone who knew Lassiter as a student could probably have seen this coming. During his days on campus,

he played first chair in every band at ASU, including the marching, jazz, symphonic, brass ensemble and trumpet quartet. During this time, he laid the groundwork for *Pay the Price!*, a movie about the sacrifices one makes to be part of a black college marching band. The film, released in 1999, earned Lassiter an award for videography.

When he wasn't honing his many artistic skills, student Lassiter found time for intramural softball and football (he was voted MVP in both sports).

Lassiter lives in Atlanta where he's working on a new film, *Revenge*,

which is produced by the company he founded, DDL Entertainment. He serves as the film's writer, director and producer.

The versatile Lassiter attributes much of his success to a bit of wisdom relayed to him by an eighth-grade teacher: "A reading person is a knowing person. A knowing person is a reading person."

"I read something every day, even if it's nothing but a magazine or a newspaper article," said Lassiter. "I read nearly 25 film books to help me produce my first movie."



Jamarr Woodruff ❸ Professional Clown ❸ (02)

Had you walked across the ASU campus during the undergraduate days of Jamarr Woodruff, chances are you caught some of his act. The Atlanta native customarily juggled between classes. So much so, he earned the nickname "Juggleman."

In his senior year of high school, Woodruff noticed an audition poster

for Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus on his guidance counselor's door. Seeing that one poster set the stage for his future.

"I knew coming out of high school I was going to be a clown, but I didn't make it into (RBBC) clown college," said Woodruff. "So I figured, 'Well, I'm a black man in need of a degree.' I entered ASU with a master plan to get more training and someday go back to Ringling and become a clown."

During basketball season, Woodruff juggled during halftime. He earned money clowning around at children's birthday parties and was hired to be the official clown at a local restaurant.

Under the exacting tutelage of Dr. Tonea Stewart, he enhanced his performance skills on stage in productions of *The Soul of Nat Turner*, *The Crucible* and *The Drums*

of *Sweetwater*.

After graduating cum laude in 2002, Woodruff studied at the acclaimed Dell'Arte International School of Physical Theatre and later at the Clown Conservatory at the San Francisco Circus Center.

In 2005, he went back to Ringling Bros. and was hired as a clown. His hip-hop clown persona "JMan" entertained audiences across the country. Today, Woodruff is the artistic director of the nonprofit Prescott Circus Theatre in West Oakland, Calif. He plans to have his own children's television show one day.

Woodruff says he looks to his hero Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. for daily inspiration. Both were born and raised in Atlanta and both attended Booker T. Washington High School.

"We both believe in dreams," he said.

Christie Strickland Founder, Touring Company (03)

Christie Strickland has turned her ASU degree into an opportunity to inspire the next generation.

Strickland is the founder and artistic director of the Birmingham-based Plays On The Go Touring Company (PGTC).

The four-member company presents children's plays to elementary schools in rural areas. The company also produces programs, and sponsors acting classes, theater workshops and drama residencies for students in grades 3-8.

Other PGTC endeavors include presenting educational and community outreach programs to



help teachers, counselors, parents and community organizations provide a fun academic experience for students of all ages.

"The mission of the company is to get students involved in acting, singing, dancing and writing as a way of creatively expressing themselves," she said. "We want to help develop articulate youth who

are able to communicate effectively."

Strickland performs frequently for more than 20 schools in 11 counties in Alabama. Through the statewide Rural School Touring Program, schools can book performances for an Alabama group or artist. Incorporated into the performances are study guides and other curriculum-related materials.



Kyle Montgomery Sports caster (06)

Kyle Montgomery is NBA material. Maybe not playing material, but certainly play-calling material. But

don't tell Montgomery that.

"I should be playing in the NBA right now," said the ever-confident sportscaster who got his big break as a student intern with the local NBC affiliate, WSFA-TV. Following graduation, Montgomery landed a job with WSFA's sister station, WDAM in Hattiesburg, Miss. Eight months later, WSFA called him with a job offer. He was the first African-America male sports anchor in the station's history.

Today, the Kansas City, Kan., native is the signature anchor for

NBA Digital, part of the Turner Sports lineup. He also is the host for NBA.com and the broadband channel TNT Overtime, and he contributes to special programming for NBA TV as well.

"My love for sports began at age 5 (when I was) playing T-ball for my Dad," said Montgomery. "I played football, baseball and basketball all the way through high school."

It may appear his playing days are behind him now, but you never know with Montgomery. ■

ASU Expands Global Reach in Sciences, Business and Research

By Tom Ensey

President Harris is fond of saying the University's biggest asset is the students it produces. A recent development in the Life Science Department will mean that ASU will continue to produce students whose knowledge and skills impact the globe.

Harris, Dr. Shree Singh and a delegation of ASU representatives recently traveled to India to sign a Memorandum of Understanding between several educational entities and Jubilant, a pharmaceutical company that manufactures generic drugs in India and the U.S.

The agreement will enable students in India to attend a university there, and then spend their final two years at ASU to finish their degrees.

The signing concluded about a year and a half of work.

"I think ASU is now a major player in education all over the world,"

Singh said. "We will be one of the few institutions to have an arrangement in India."

India is growing fast, Singh said, and is quickly becoming a major world player in research, industry and education.

ASU's relationship with other nations doesn't end there. The University also has cultivated relationships with Turkey, China and Argentina.

"People in India like to have a U.S.-based education," Singh said. "With that in mind, we went to work on possible collaborations."

Some of the research conducted at ASU could be used in the development of drugs manufactured by Jubilant.

The agreement with the University in India includes an exchange of faculty as well as students, Singh said.



Dr. Harris presents an honorary plaque to Harish Bakru of Sindhu College during the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between India and ASU.

About 30 students will participate in the exchange initially. "I feel this brings ASU closer to the global market," he said. "We can introduce our students to people all over the world. Our students will be exposed to educational opportunities in other countries." ■

OT Program Reaccredited

By Tina Joly

ASU's College of Health Sciences' Occupational Therapy Program received a seven-year reaccreditation from the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE). The OT Program received the maximum time for reaccreditation.

The College of Health Sciences offers four-year undergraduate

degree programs as well as highly regarded graduate and professional degree programs, including a Master of Science degree in Occupational Therapy. The OT program is now accredited to 2017.

The College of Health Sciences is headed by Dr. Steven Chesbro, interim associate dean and chair of the Department of Physical Therapy.

"The ACOTE reaccreditation is important because only students who graduate from an accredited OT program are allowed to receive an Occupational Therapist license," said Chesbro. "The reaccreditation also shows how hard our faculty and staff worked to ensure that accreditation standards were met." ■

Award-winning Season: A Celebration of Excellence

By Tina Joly and staff contributors

It has been a season of awards for various departments within the University.

WVAS-FM, the "Voice of Alabama State University," received top honors from the Alabama Broadcasters Association during the fourth annual "Best in Broadcasting" Awards, also known as the ABBY's.

The radio station won a record-setting seven awards, the most awards won by a single competing station.

Station manager Candy Capel attributed the wins to a dedicated staff.

"It means that the staff's hard work paid off," said Capel. "They put in long hours and long days working on and off the air, doing work in the community."



WVAS-FM 2010 ABBY Awards

- Judges Merit Award for Medium Market Promotion—*Vintage Gospel*
- Medium Market Web Site—*wvasfm.org*
- Medium Market Sportscaster—*Rachine Francis*
- Medium Market Reporter—*Melanie Hogan*

- Medium Market Talk Show—*90.7 Perspectives*
- Medium Market Regularly Scheduled Newscast—*WVAS-FM News*
- Medium Market Service Project—*Charity Bowling*



The Division of Marketing and Communications was honored in April with three awards from the Public Relations Council of Alabama (PRCA).

Award categories:

- Award of Excellence for Publications (external magazine)—*ASU Today Magazine*, "The 25th Anniversary Series" and the "Transformation: Vision 2020" edition
- Award of Excellence Web Site Development—University website
- Certificate of Merit/Special PR Program— the Vision 2020 Campaign



Alabama State University photographer David Campbell was

recently recognized for his work by the University Photographers Association of America at the organization's annual symposium at Ferris State University in Big Rapids, Mich. Campbell, along with ASU's Division of Marketing and Communications, received several awards for the use of photography in news, advertising campaigns and publication covers.

"It was an honor to receive these awards, and a great experience to spend a week with other university photographers," Campbell said. "I gained a lot of experience that will help me become a bigger asset for Alabama State University."

The UPAA is an international organization of college and university photographers concerned with the application and practice of photography as it relates to the higher education setting. The organization is committed to photographic excellence through continuing education and networking with professional colleagues.

UPAA Awards:

- Third Place - Use of Photography in an Advertising Campaign – Division of Marketing and Communications
- Honorable Mention - Print - News Photography Category – David Campbell
- Honorable Mention - Publication Covers – Division of Marketing and Communications

ASU competed with colleges and universities from the United States, Australia, Canada and Israel. ■

**Dr. Frank G. Pogue**

On June 25, the Board of Supervisors for the University of Louisiana System unanimously voted to appoint Dr. Frank G. Pogue Grambling State University's eighth president. Pogue, an Alabama State University alumnus, has served the last six months as Grambling's interim president. Previously, he served 11 years (1996-2007) as the first African-American president of Edinboro University and had a successful tenure (2008-2009) as interim president of Chicago State University. In 2009 he was named one of Alabama State University's 25 Outstanding Alumni in Education by *ASU Today Magazine*. His academic credentials include a doctorate in sociology from the University of Pittsburgh, a master's degree from Atlanta University and a bachelor's degree from Alabama State University in 1961.

**Christina Browder**

(2006) is currently featured on television in a national Match.com commercial. She received her MFA in acting from Regent University in 2009.

Kelly Diggs-Andrews (1995) was named a Washington University 2010 Edward A. Bouchet Honor Society Fellow during the annual Bouchet Conference on Diversity in Graduate Education on March 27 at Yale University. Diggs-Andrews, a doctoral student in the Molecular Cell Biology Program in the Division of Biology and Biomedical Sciences at Washington University Saint Louis (WUSTL), also is a Chancellor's Graduate Fellow at Washington University.

Victor Revill (2007) recently graduated from the University of Louisville's juris doctorate program. He graduated from Alabama State University with honors in political science. While at Alabama State, Revill served as vice president and president of the Student Government Association. He also was a member of the football team and earned the highest GPA of all male athletes from 2002 to 2004.

Antonio "Bam" Richards (2001) has been appointed the head football coach and athletic director at Autaugaaville High School. Richards' appointment will take effect in the 2010-2011 school year. As a football player at ASU, he earned four letters as an offensive lineman.

**Monita K. Bell**

(2006) has published a book that explores the messages, nuances and politics surrounding black hair. The book examines the poetry of several female writers in the Black Power Movement, whose works explore the messages associated with "nappy" hair. *Getting Hair Fixed* is available for purchase at www.Amazon.com.

**D.M. Sanders**

(1987) has released her second children's book, titled *Fin the Godsend*. The book tells the story of an ailing young girl who befriends a stray cat.

The book is available online at Authorhouse.com, Amazon.com, Booksamillion.com and Barnesandnoble.com.

Montgomery County Circuit Court Judge Johnny Hardwick (1973)

was recently honored for his 32-years of experience when he received the 2010 Pittman Award

during an award ceremony at the Ahmanson Law Center in Omaha, Neb. The ceremony celebrates distinguished African-American graduates of Creighton University School of Law. ■

ASU Today wants to help keep our readers informed about significant events in the lives of our alumni. Please send information about new jobs, promotions, retirements, awards or honors, and deaths to be included in the magazine. Entries must include brief information, as well as the graduation date and degree received by the person to be highlighted. E-mail news items to asutoday@alasu.edu, or fax them to 334-229-5203, or mail them to *ASU Today Magazine*, Council Hall #312, P.O. Box 271, Montgomery, AL 36101-0271.

Please note that your submission may be shortened or edited to conform to space constraints and writing guidelines. Photographs may be submitted with the entry, but the pictures must be consistent with printing standards in order to be used. Poor quality images will NOT be used. E-mail your photos to asuphoto@gmail.com, or mail them to the address above. *ASU Today* assumes no responsibility for photographs that are submitted.



Hornet in the Fast Lane

ASU Grad Keeps Motorsports Moving

May Donnell and Tina Joly



Paula Marie Orange found her dream job by keeping her eyes wide open. The former Alabama State University communications major ('07) works for media giant ESPN.

Orange said some people can't understand how a serious-minded young black woman ended up in a beer-soaked, white male dominated Motorsports job. But to her it's simple.

"It's basically a public relations job," said Orange, 36, who grew up in Tuskegee and worked for a time in the music industry before returning to ASU in 2005 to complete her degree. "After coming on board and actually witnessing my first race, I realized how huge Motorsports is."

Orange is responsible for the logistics, coordination and execution of ESPN's on-air Motorsports events in the United States and Canada,

(which include NASCAR, The Indy 500 and NHRA Drag Racing). She spends her days shuffling people, trucks and equipment around the nation on a regular basis. That's no small task considering ESPN covers more than 40 races every year and that it takes around 200 people and 13 trucks and all their gear to create what viewers see on television.

She now attends more than 30 races each year and says she has no problem fitting in.

"It's like a big family," Orange said. "Contrary to stereotypical belief, there are many African-Americans in the stands. True, Confederate flags are waving and people are cooking out and drinking beer, but never have I been disrespected, looked down upon or criticized while at a track."

Orange also points out that there are other African-Americans working

behind the scenes at Motorsports.

"Sure, we are few in number, but our impact on the sport is changing things."

Even though she's working for a global sports network, Orange admits she's no athlete. She said she was too short for high school hoops and she put away her last uniform (cheerleading) back in middle school.

"I used to watch the occasional game with friends," she said. "But you wouldn't have called me a big sports fan. Now you would. It's got a lot to do with living in this sports environment."

On any given day, Orange might run into sports anchors like Marcellus Wiley and Stuart Scott having a bite in the cafeteria. Out on the NASCAR circuit, she regularly works with racing's Brad Daugherty, whom she describes as "a really nice guy," Tim Brewer and other NASCAR notables.

Then there are all those famous musicians, athletes and actors who frequent the ESPN studios.

"We try not to make a big deal out of it," she said. "We don't want anyone to feel uncomfortable."

Orange credits her work ethics and drive to her parents. Her mother, Dr. AnnMarie Depas-Orange, is the chair of Advancement Studies in University College at ASU. Her father, Walter "Clyde" Orange, is the lead singer and a founding member of the legendary R&B group The Commodores. He

Continued on page 40

Motorsports continued from page 39

also attended ASU.

Orange's big break came when a teacher told her about an essay contest being sponsored by ESPN as a way to promote the MEAC-SWAC Challenge, a football game then being played at Birmingham's Legion Field. He thought she might be interested.

"I entered the contest," said Orange, "and at some point later they called from ESPN and told me I'd won."

She and her mother drove to the game in Birmingham to accept a \$5,000 scholarship check. Neither realized until later that Orange's winnings included an internship, too.

"We couldn't believe it," Orange said.

That first internship led to a second which led to a job in ESPN's human resources division in Bristol, Conn.

"I'm a people person and a confirmed networker," Orange said. "I attended a National Association of Black Journalists (NABJ) conference in Atlanta once and it confirmed for me the importance of reaching out to people and staying in touch with them."

Orange returned to the South to finish her degree. She graduated from ASU in July 2007 and used her contacts and what she'd learned during her internships to apply for work at ESPN.

It took five months. The rest, to Orange at least, is sports history.

Despite her busy schedule, Orange continues to maintain ties to ASU. She recently came back to campus and spoke with current communications majors about crossing the finish line to success.

"I think there are so many students out there who believe jobs at the major networks are unattainable," said Orange. "They're not."

So the next time you turn on an ESPN Motorsports event, think of ASU's Paula Marie Orange. She's behind the scenes at every race, because she had the drive to get there. ■

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

Recording Industry Students Land Major Internships

By Crystal Kimble, Student Writer

While some Alabama State University students tough it out in summer school, many plan to stay busy pursuing summer internships to gain skills and knowledge in their chosen professions.

Dominique Lee, a senior communications major, is one of 16 students enrolled in ASU's recording industry (music business) concentration that has landed a summer internship with a major company in the music industry.

"These internships are very valuable and essential for our future careers because the field we are looking to go into is so competitive," said Lee, who will be interning at Atlantic Records.

In addition to Lee, students Clifford Frazier, Andre Johnson, Te Smith, Ryan Torregano, Victor Rocker, Mallory Wakefield, Rahonni Jackson, Knikar Marvrey, Kelsey Salary, Omega George, Desmond Bolton, Chenoal Waller, Dionne Walters, Chenele Barber, Crystelee Lewis, Sabrina Edwards and Toya Williams will gain significant experience with ASCAP, SESAC, Universal Publishing, Doppler Studios, Titanium Studios, Block Entertainment, Cox Radio, Clear Channel Radio, CBS, Murray Broadcasting and Access Internet Radio.

Dr. William Ashbourne, assistant



professor of music industry and the program's adviser, said the internship program continues to grow.

"We have gone from five students interning last summer to nearly 20 students this summer," said Ashbourne. "With the type of internships that they have landed, all of them will have a greater chance of actually working in the music industry after they leave ASU." ■

NOMINATIONS ARE NOW BEING ACCEPTED

SPIRIT OF MARION AWARD

The Spirit of Marion Award recognizes individuals or organizations whose professional efforts have created innovation, positive change or notable advancement in an industry, environment or concept. Like the Marion Nine, nominees must demonstrate great vision, honorable citizenship and success in the face of challenge.



THE PERSON NOMINATED FOR THIS AWARD MUST MEET THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:

- BE AN ASU GRADUATE, FACULTY OR STAFF MEMBER, OR ORGANIZATION WHOSE LEADER IS AN ASU GRADUATE, FACULTY OR STAFF MEMBER;
- HAVE A RECORD OF NOTEWORTHY COMMUNITY OUTREACH EFFORTS; AND,
- DEMONSTRATE A POSITIVE IMPACT ON THE COMMUNITY.



L-R: Dr. John F. Knight, President Harris and Joseph Caver, the 2010 winner.

Nominations for the Spirit of Marion Award must be made to the following e-mail address by Oct. 29, 2010: spirit.marion@alasu.edu.

SPIRIT OF TULLIBODY AWARD

The Spirit of Tullibody Award is given in honor of the University's longest-serving president, William Burns Paterson. Award winners exemplify the brave and forward-thinking spirit that characterized Paterson's tenure. The award recognizes alumni who have made significant professional and civic contributions in their communities.



THE PERSON NOMINATED FOR THIS AWARD MUST MEET THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:

- BE AN ASU GRADUATE;
- HOLD OR BE RETIRED FROM A PROFESSIONAL POSITION;
- BE AN ACTIVE ALUMNUS WHO HAS MADE SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTIONS;
- HAVE A BACKGROUND OF NOTABLE PROFESSIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS; AND,
- HAVE MADE GREAT CIVIC CONTRIBUTIONS TO THEIR COMMUNITY.



L-R: President Harris, Bennie Grenshaw, 2010 winner, and Dr. John F. Knight. Not pictured is Bennie Grenshaw's husband, Danny Grenshaw, also a 2010 winner.

Nominations for the Spirit of Tullibody Award must be made to the following e-mail address by Oct. 29, 2010: spirit.tullibody@alasu.edu.



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Members of the C.F. Vigor High School Band in Prichard, Ala., greet the Presidential Tour Team on day four of the "Take a Closer Look at ASU" swing across the state.