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ASU Today

MAGAZINE



Proud to Serve

A Salute to
Detachment 019

25 Outstanding Alumni in
Government, Military and Law

ASU Today

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ASU ROTC DETACHMENT 019

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FROM THE EDITOR



During the month of December, our country honors its veterans with a national salute. It is only fitting that *ASU Today* take the opportunity to salute its ROTC program with a tribute to the program's history and accomplishments, its leaders, current cadets and the men and women who have graduated from its ranks. You'll find that the title *Proud to Serve* aptly describes those associated with Detachment 019.

As a Vietnam veteran, I know the meaning of the words *duty, honor and service*. Today, I am proud to be part of a university that helps to instill those same qualities in another generation of military men and women through its ROTC program. For 40 years, Alabama State University's Detachment 019 has prepared hundreds of cadets to become Air Force Officers, leaders who serve with distinction and honor. We hope you are inspired by the rich history of this dynamic program.

The ROTC profile serves as an appropriate lead-in to our 25th anniversary focus for this edition: military, government and law. You'll read about 25 alumni who have excelled as lawyers, judges, military leaders and government officials.

Three alumni who have taken leading roles in helping to shape Alabama's political and educational structures are featured in this edition. You will be inspired by the stories of Chairman Elton Dean, State Rep. Alvin Holmes (who is also a military veteran) and the late Henry Spears, an education icon.

The staff of *ASU Today* also wanted to introduce our alumni to some of our campus leaders. You will find that the tradition of leadership development continues at your ASU through students like Student Government Association President Stanley Giles and the newly crowned Miss ASU, Priyanka Banks.

We hope that this edition will help to increase your pride in your university, its vision and its accomplishments.

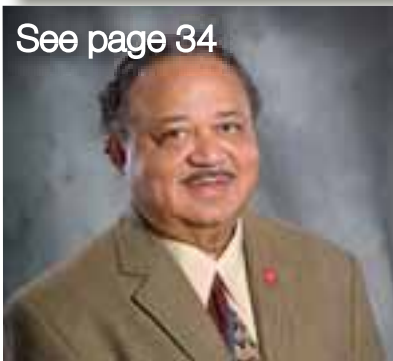
Sincerely,

John F. Knight Jr.
Editor

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Fall Convocation: A Vision of the Future

By Tom Ensey

Alabama State's transformation is no longer a vision, it is under way, university President Dr. William H. Harris told hundreds of faculty, students and guests at the September convocation, which kicked off the 2009 academic year.

About \$150 million in construction is either completed or ongoing at the university.

"That's a lot of change," he said, and there's more on the way.

The most visible manifestations of growth in the months and years ahead will be facilities and other physical changes to the campus. But equally dramatic progress is coming with expanded academic programs, opportunities and service for students and communication and involvement with the alumni as well as the many other constituencies of the university.

The president broke down the detailed, multi-year roadmap into words so simple they brought an appreciative laugh from the crowd.

"The 'Strategic Plan' is what you're gonna do," he said. "The 'Master Plan' is where you put stuff."

Currently, Hall Street is blocked off while a new gateway to the university is under construction. Harris promised the students the inconvenience will be temporary and worth it.

"When our old alumni come back for homecoming, at Hall Street they will come through an entranceway





that compares to those of ancient Rome in the days of the great emperors,” he said.

It’s all part of making the ASU campus stand out, giving it distinct character and an unmistakable presence. Another archway will go up at the Carter Hill Road entrance, adjacent to the new state forensics building, Harris promised.

“People are going to know they’re on the ASU campus,” he said. “And we want them to know that that state facility, though it is independent, is on our campus.”

In the next three to five years, a \$42 million football stadium that will seat more than 30,000, a cultural interpretation center, a parking deck on Hall Street and softball and baseball facilities are on the way.

“It is not just a plan; it is taking place,” he said. “We’re doing this for the people of Alabama State.”

He encouraged every member of the university community to get involved, especially the students. Harris said the changes that will transform ASU into a world-class university are only now beginning, and his generation will only begin the process. The students who are there now will be the ones to carry the vision into the future and see that it becomes reality.

“If you have ideas, bring ’em,” he told the students at the ASU Acadome. He said the administration is not only focused on the future, but also on the here-and-

now, and that means service to the student body.

“We are working on continuing improvement of daily operations,” he said. “If we’re not doing it, tell us.”

He quoted Abraham Lincoln, who said, “I will study and get ready, for some day, my time will come.”

“Your time is to come,” he told the students. “The only limit to what that will be is your imagination, and what you force us as your faculty and administration to do for you.”

Stanley Giles, president of the ASU student body, echoed the president’s charge to the students to demand excellence from themselves and their university.

“To do our part, we must work together to uphold the name of this university,” Giles said. “We need to go to class, learn all we can, and do all we can so that we can become productive citizens.”

Denika Whitt, a senior education major, said she is excited about the changes coming to ASU.

“I think it’s great that this process is taking place at our university, especially for the parking,” Whitt said.

Harris promised to continue changing the “tone and tenor” of the way the university operates. He said ASU is truly in the midst of a magnificent transformation.

For more on the Master Plan and Strategic Plan for Alabama State University, see the special November edition of ASU Today: “Vision 2020: The Transformation of Alabama State University.” ■



A portrait of Stanley Giles, a Black man with short hair and a mustache, wearing a grey suit jacket over a light-colored shirt. He is looking slightly to the right of the camera with a neutral expression. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

SGA President Stanley Giles:

Living the Dream

By Kenneth Mullinax

Going to college is a major accomplishment in the lives of many high school graduates, but it meant a great deal more to the family of Stanley Giles.

Stanley's attending a university and obtaining a degree were accomplishments akin to achieving the American Dream for the Giles family of Little Rock, Ark., because Stanley is the first man in his family to attend college.

"Getting admitted to Alabama State University is a dream come true for my family," said the senior marketing major, "and being elected as president of the student body has been a blessing to my family and a confirmation that hard work and determination are worth the effort."

Growing up in the capitol city of Arkansas, Giles was exposed at an early age to government and politics. Both made lasting impressions on his life.

"Being that close to the state Legislature and the

executive branch of the government was awe-inspiring," Giles said. "Seeing how many of them wanted to do their best to help overcome poverty, oppression and the many problems that plague our society made me also want to be part of the solution and not a mere bystander."

Politics didn't come until Giles came to ASU. His years at J.A. Fair High School were full of interaction with people who participated in sports. He lettered in both football and track – playing cornerback and safety on the football team and being an 800-meter and quarter-mile runner on the track team.

While he didn't attend Little Rock Central High School, which was made famous in the early days of the Civil Rights Movement, his mother did graduate from there.

"Growing up in Little Rock and with Mom graduating from the high school made famous for the Little Rock

Nine – who were the first African Americans who integrated the previously all-white high school in the state – ingrained the struggle of black people in America into my very being and soul,” Giles said.

He said since studying history in high school, Martin Luther King Jr. and other icons of the Civil Rights Movement have been his idols and are one of the reasons he pledged a certain fraternity at ASU.

“I joined Alpha Phi Alpha because it has great members at ASU, has a fine reputation and because Dr. King was also a member,” Giles said with a smile.

Giles, who always wanted to attend an HBCU in the Deep South, said he chose ASU because the university’s history in the fledgling civil and human rights movements touched a chord in his soul.

“Attending Alabama State, which is right in the middle of the cradle of the confederacy and the birthplace of the Civil Rights Movement, were important factors to me,” Giles said, “plus the great reputation ASU’s faculty and staff have in making you feel a part of a larger family away from home.”

The family of student counselor Dr. Herbert Thomas embraced Giles almost from the beginning.

“Stanley came to my office his freshman year, almost ready to give up,” Thomas said. “Like most freshmen, he was away from home for the first time and because of other situations, he thought he would have to go back home.”

Giles continued on page 9



Stanley Giles pictured with the members of his cabinet (from left) Christopher Stovall, treasurer; Amani Greer, vice president; and Jereme Simmons, secretary.



In step with Miss Banks

By May Donnell

Miss ASU Priyanka Banks danced her way into the hearts of the Hornets in April when she was awarded her title, and she has been stepping lively ever since.

The 22-year-old Atlanta native said her goal last spring was to meet and win the approval of every student she could find during a tough two weeks of campaigning for the job.

“You just never know what you can do until you go for it,” said Banks. “I saw this competition as an opportunity for me to grow as a person, and I just put my face out there and won.”

These days, the vivacious theatre arts major and gifted dancer finds herself hosting campus gatherings aimed at helping improve the lives of fellow undergraduates. She said she especially likes helping younger students find their ASU home away from home.



Miss ASU and her court (from left) Leamona Woodley, first attendant; Priyanka Banks (seated); and Akiesha Anderson, second attendant.

“We’ve put on fashion shows to help students know what to wear,” said Banks. “We do spiritual events and grooming seminars. I was surprised at how much the guys like them, too. They show up. It’s great.”

Possibly one of the biggest perks of the job of being Miss ASU is getting to live in the Miss ASU Room in McGinty Hall. Every Miss ASU has lived in this same coveted suite. Banks said living there makes her feel like she is part of something special.

“It’s like I’m part of the history of the campus or something,” she said.

Banks said the encouragement of her teachers, especially Dr. Tommie Tonea Stewart and Professor Brian Martin, has helped her tremendously. Dr. Stewart calls Banks a visionary student who is both scholarly and warm.

“I’ve worked with Priyanka a lot,” said Stewart. “She has a power and a depth to her that one immediately recognizes. She has what it takes to be Miss ASU and students saw that and voted for her.”

With her schedule so full (she’s a member of Delta Sigma Theta and Tau Beta Sigma National Honorary Band Sorority), the reigning Miss ASU said she doesn’t have time for many hobbies. The occasional movie is

about it. When she gets a few days, though, she goes home to Atlanta to visit her older sister and mother.

“We’re a small family, but we’re very close,” she said. “I go home whenever I have the time.”

Back in April, Banks competed against talented young ladies from across campus prior to the Miss ASU elections. She said that during competitions, she maintains a philosophy which helps her to remain confident.

“I think too many of the girls spend too much time worrying about their opponents. I just focus on myself, my talent and God,” she said.

The busy senior said she hasn’t ruled out acting as a profession, but for now is making plans for graduate school. She hopes to earn a Master of Fine Arts degree, possibly with a concentration in dance. She hinted that some day she might open her own theater company.

“I’ve had wonderful opportunities here at ASU,” said Banks. “Dr. (Tonea) Stewart and Professor Brian Martin are two of my favorite inspirations. They have helped me want to see just how far I can go.”

Stewart is equally impressed by Banks.

“I’m very proud of her,” Stewart said. “I think she’s going to make a real difference in the world.” ■

The Coronation of a Queen

Alabama State University's new queen was crowned during an evening of joy, music and dance. The ceremony opened with a dynamic performance by ASU's Eclectic Dance Company. With great precision and dazzling syncopation, the talented dancers set the tone for an evening of celebration of the Egyptian culture and the arts.

The evening's entertainment was perfectly suited for the reigning Miss ASU, Priyanka K. Banks. The senior theatre arts major wanted to emphasize the historical importance of the arts, a field that is her passion.

The crowd of more than 1,000 students, family members, friends and well-wishers was wowed by vocal performances from Aundreus Patterson, Chayning Jenkins, Joy Smith, Lauren Stovall, Brandon McCall and Charles Jones.

Video montages captured memorable moments from the lives of Miss Banks, her first attendant, Leamona Woodley, and second attendant, Akiesha Anderson.

The ceremony also included a parade of the university's queens representing campus and Greek organizations, resident halls and various classes.

Barbara Pringle, Miss ASU 2008-09, was a hit with the crowd as she gave her farewell tribute, which was filled with praise for those who had supported her throughout her reign.

With a stage set for an Egyptian queen, Banks made her entrance from the middle of a golden pyramid. She greeted her audience by blowing glittering kisses and flashing her trademark smile.

Later in the evening, Banks danced with her father, James, before taking her oath and being crowned by Miss Pringle and Dr. William H. Harris, ASU president.

The traditional waltz with the president came next. The evening ended with a gala reception for the queen and her court in the Acadome Banquet Room. ■



Giles continued from page 5

Thomas began to mentor Giles and invited the young student to his church, Word of Life International Ministries, where Thomas serves as senior pastor. Giles later joined the church family. He said Thomas continues to be a positive influence.

"He's someone that I can confide in," said Giles. "No matter what the situation, he always tells me what's right."

Giles' younger brother, Stephen, just started as a freshman at ASU this August, so now he has a real family member close to him right here in Montgomery.

"The Giles family legacy has just begun at Alabama State University and will continue to grow because once I am married and have children, there will be no other school but ASU for them," he said. ■



Stanley Giles strolls the campus with mentor Dr. Herbert Thomas.

Hornet Elevation Program

Stanley Giles comes to the office of SGA president prepared to try to make a difference for ASU students. He said he plans to implement an initiative he worked on with former SGA president Bryan Weaver.

The Hornet Elevation Program (HEP) is aimed at improving student retention.

"I've found students leave ASU for three reasons: financial problems, the lack of proper preparation to excel

academically at the collegiate level and a lack of pride in their institution," said Giles.

Giles said the HEP tackles all three of those problems. Financial and academic preparation concerns are addressed through a peer tutoring program, which has a proposed companion aspect of offering scholarships for tutors and the students who complete the tutorial program.

Giles hopes to strengthen school pride

by offering weekly classes on ASU's history.

"We want to offset negative publicity about our school," Giles said. "We feel that when students receive a more in-depth account of our school's history and understand our historical significance and contributions, then they will know that they are not attending an inferior university. ASU is in no way inferior in what it has to offer and we want the students to know that." ■

MR. CHAIRMAN

By Arnelle Adcock & Kenneth Mullinax



Team builder. Team player. Coach. Leader. These titles are used to describe ASU alumnus Elton N. Dean Sr. in his roles as “Mr. Chairman.”

When Dean recently was named chairman of the Montgomery County Commission, he was already chairman of the board of trustees at Alabama State University, Mt. Zion AME Church, the Central Alabama Amateur Baseball League and Southern League Dixie Youth Baseball. He’s also a board member for a number of other non-profit organizations.

Dean said when he was elected chairman of the County Commission, he knew he wanted to make sure of two things: “We will take care of all kids of all races and we will help our elderly feel safe, have hot meals, and have someone to call on.

“I am concerned with results, progress, professionalism and representing all of our citizens,” he said. “I want people to have opportunities to do what they do best.”

Dean and Montgomery Mayor Todd Strange served together on the county commission until Strange was elected mayor.

“Elton makes a commitment to people,” said Strange. “He believes in training and education and bringing the best principles of business to government.”

Dean describes himself as a team builder, something that he has tried to accomplish as a leader of several diverse groups.

“I believe in team building through inclusion,” he said. “I want others to have opportunities to share ideas and to speak.”

Judge Marvin Wiggins, who serves with Dean on the ASU Board of Trustees, likes that trait in Dean.

“Elton is a remarkable leader for ASU at a decisive time,” Wiggins said. “He takes advantage of what others have to offer and uses their skills for ASU. Our board is dynamic because Elton leads by example and is

Elton Dean seated in the chamber of the Montgomery County Commission.

a team player.

“Some people in leadership roles are intimidated by the ones they serve with and become controlling,” he added. “Elton is not that way. He loves ASU, believes in giving back and allows the other trustees to do the same. We are a better ASU because Elton allows us to use our expertise.”

“He knows how to put people together to make things happen” is how Claud Douglas describes Dean’s influence for the Boys and Girls Club of Central Alabama. “He leads in the board room, on the ball field and on the playground. He knows how to talk with the kids on the swings.

“He cares about all the kids in our community because he knows they are all at-risk in some way,” said Douglas, president of the non-profit organization.

“Life is teamwork and learning,” said Dean. “Even on the ball field, we coaches expect to see the players’ report cards. We expect them to make their grades if they are going to play baseball.”

Even though his youngest child is now 28 years old, the 60-year-old Dean still coaches baseball.

“Twelve years ago, we were afraid we would lose Dixie Youth Baseball on the west side of Montgomery,” he said. “My wife and I worked with others to build the league, not lose it. Sponsors help fund the league so that children’s home financial situations do not prohibit their participation.”

Reach out, see and touch people — those are Dean’s ideas of

leadership.

“I love being in the middle of people and taking on challenges,” he said. “I always want to make a negative a positive. Batteries are charging when the cables are on positive.”

When he was young and deciding what to do for a career, Dean



A committed supporter of ASU programs, Dean shares a moment with head basketball coach Lewis Jackson before the Hornets board a plane at Dannelly Field.

attended a Baptist junior college where he took courses in Bible curriculum and participated in daily chapel. He said those experiences strengthened him and helped prepare him for life.

He wants the same for the congregation of Mt. Zion AME Church, where he serves as chairman of the board and sings tenor in the choir.

“I want our young people to know how to depend on God,” he said. “I believe I’m protected — that God will take care of me. I pray every day that He will use me to speak for those who cannot speak for themselves and to help those

who need help. I ask Him to lead and guide me, to help me know what to say and how to say it to the right person.”

Dean’s leadership abilities have earned him plenty of praise from those working with him, but none of the accolades have changed his humble approach to his life’s goals.

“It is not about me or about how I feel,” said Dean of his accomplishments. “It is about doing the right things for the good of the people I serve.” ■

Editor’s note: Dean is a 1971 graduate of ASU with a Bachelor of Science in business/economics. He is married to the former Lillie Hardy. They have three grown children – Elton Jr., Dawneese Dean Bowen and William B. Dean. He is the owner of Dean Realty and 21st Century Hair Studio. He represents District 2 on the Montgomery County Commission.

Farewell to a Faithful Friend

By Lois G. Russell



Alabama State University and the education community recently lost a true champion. Henry A. Spears, an ardent supporter of ASU, died Oct. 20, 2009.

Spears' association with ASU began when he was a student at Alabama State Laboratory High School. After graduating in 1946, he went on to earn his Bachelor of Science and Master of Education degrees with honors from ASU. Spears began his career in education in the classroom, working as a math and science teacher in Montgomery from 1950 to 1955. He also was an assistant principal at a Montgomery high school.

Spears served 32 years on the Montgomery County Board of Education. He became the first black to chair the board, serving in that capacity from 1988 to 1992. Spears was admired and respected by his colleagues and the community that he served.

"Mr. Spears was the type of person who had so much care for all matters when it came to school board

business," said Beverly Ross, the current president of the Montgomery County School Board. "He knew what it took to be an advocate for the children in the public school system."

"He was a champion of education," said Virginia Harper, executive director of the ASU Foundation. Harper succeeded Spears in the position in 2008.

"He was a man of integrity," Harper said. "Under his administration (of the foundation), the investment of the Eminent Scholars' fund was built to always be able to fulfill its chair requirements. He was a true businessman."

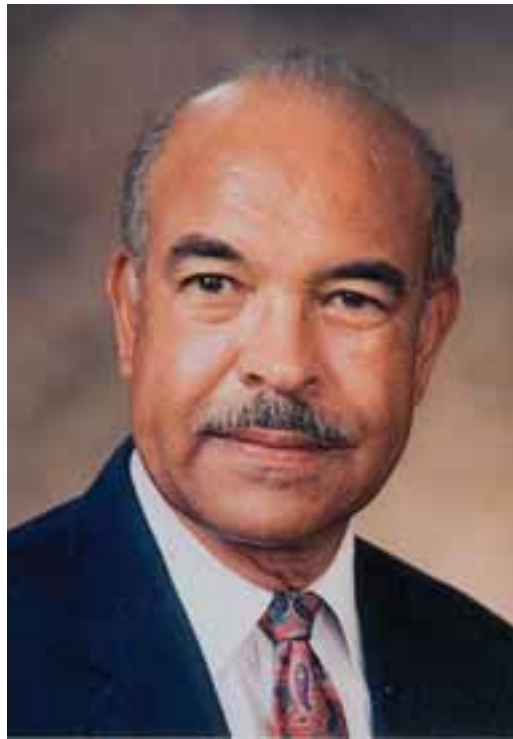
Tall and stately, Spears was known as a gentleman who treated others with his own style of grace.

In a telephone interview, Spears' widow, Kathleen, spoke quietly but proudly of her husband of 62 years.

"I don't mean to brag,"

she said, "but every woman ought to have a man — a husband and father — like him."

Ross described Spears as a "gentle giant," but he also



was a man who had a great passion for ensuring that a quality education was available to every young person.

“He was a no-nonsense person, but very diplomatic in his delivery when it came to school board matters,” said Ross. “I definitely did not want him to retire from the school board. After serving 32 years, the board members still wanted him on there because he was a valued member. All of the knowledge and expertise that he imbued in each of us will never be forgotten.”

Spears had an exemplary record of service to his community dating back to the time of the Civil Rights Movement when he served as director of the Branch YMCA and conducted the organization’s capital funds campaign in the black community. His efforts led to the construction of the capital city’s first YMCA for black youths.

Spears’ list of professional accomplishments is quite extensive. He received the Meritorious Achievement Award for his years of service to the Cleveland Avenue YMCA; he held leadership positions with the Council of Urban Boards of Education of the National School Boards Association; he served as the district director and board member of the Alabama Association of

School Boards (AASB); and he was a founding member of the Alabama Caucus of Black School Board Members.

As a member of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Spears served three terms as district representative. In 1992, he received the organization’s Grand Basileus Award for Leadership in Reclamation. Other

awards and honors. One of his proudest accomplishments was being an ASU Hornet.

Harper said Spears was known for his work with the ASU Alumni Association. She said he worked diligently to help build beneficial relationships between the university, its alumni, community leaders and other stakeholders.

“He was a proud ASU graduate,” said Harper. “Whenever I’m asked about an alumnus of distinction, he is the first person who comes to mind. For Mr. Spears, it was never about him; it was always about the university.”

Both Harper and Ross said Spears helped to pave the way for them to occupy their present positions.

“My heart hurts so badly because he was my inspiration, my hero. I’ll never forget the service that he provided to the school board and the children in the Montgomery Public Schools,” said Ross.

When asked how she would want others to remember her husband, Kathleen Spears offered these simple words: “He was educationally oriented and family oriented, and he was a devout Christian. That’s how I want him remembered.” ■

“He was educationally oriented and family oriented, and he was a devout Christian. That’s how I want him remembered.”

— Kathleen Spears

memberships include the Phi Delta Kappa Honorary Fraternity, Beta Kappa Chi Honor Science Society and Emancipation Proclamation Committee. He also was a 33 degree Mason and an Elk.

Spears earned numerous other

Proud to Serve

By Timothy C. Ervin

Andrew Lyons had his mind set on just one thing when he graduated from high school – playing football at Alabama State University. Midway through his first season as placekicker on the Hornets football team, he discovered that ASU had an Air Force ROTC program. Now the sophomore splits his time between playing football and readying himself for a career in the military.

Getting involved in ROTC was a logical choice for the Panama City, Fla., native.

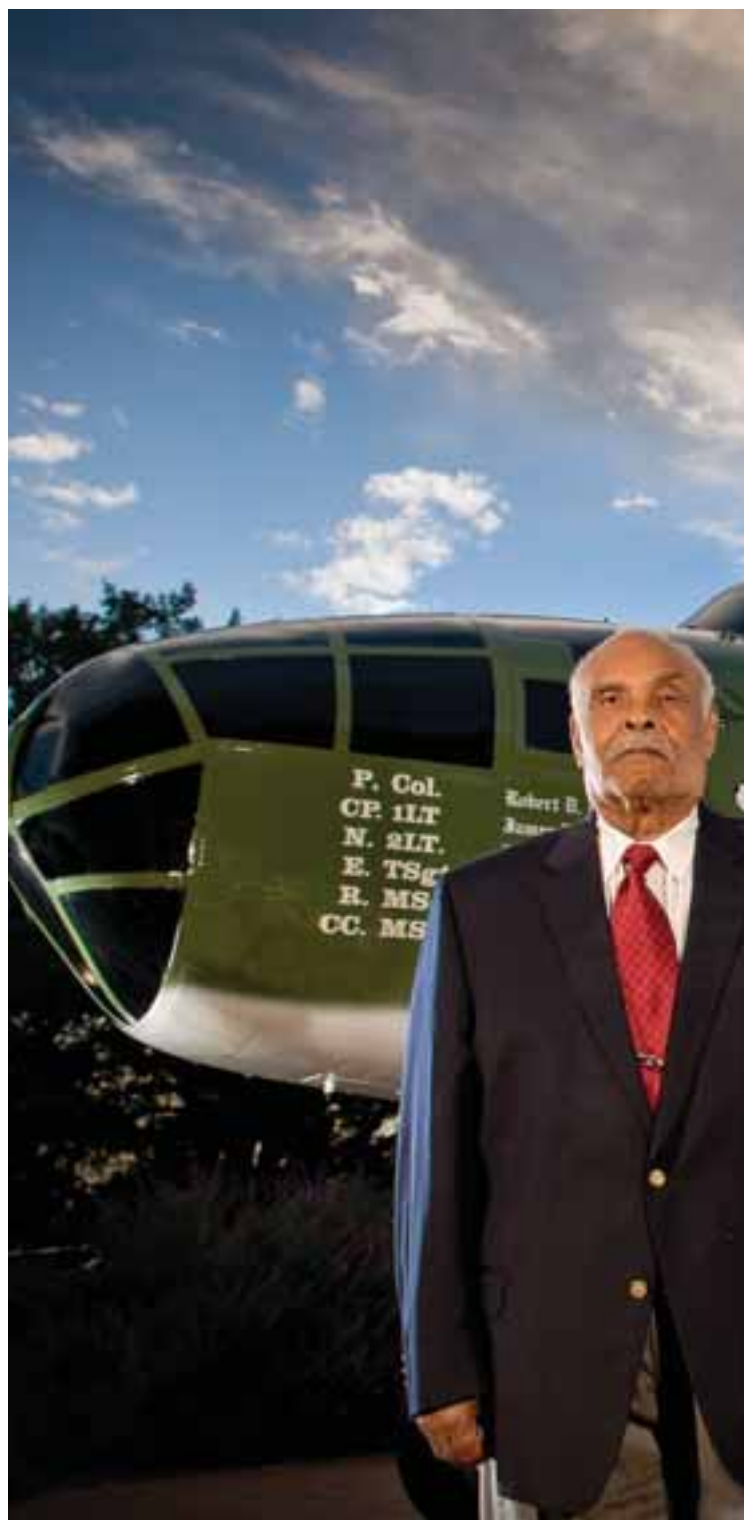
“My father was in the Air Force, and I’ve always liked the military,” Lyons said. “I grew up on Tyndall Air Force Base, and I always wanted to be a pilot.”

He is just one of a record number of ASU students involved in the university’s AFROTC program. In fact, recruitment numbers are at the highest level ever, said Lt. Col. Darold S. Boswell, commander.

This fall, the AFROTC program welcomed 57 new cadets and more than two dozen returning freshmen. That’s three times the number of recruits that signed up three years ago. Boswell attributes the growth to a

“I have initiated an aggressive recruiting program using my staff, our students and successful officers . . .”

—Lt. Col. Darold S. Boswell





ASU's first ROTC detachment commander Col. Clarence Holloway stands with current detachment commander Lt. Col. Darold S. Boswell at Maxwell Air Force Base.

number of factors.

“I have initiated an aggressive recruiting program using my staff, our students and successful officers from the Maxwell/Gunter Air Force Base community,” said the commander who took over the program in the spring of 2008. “I also think the economy may be bringing some people to our door, but we have to keep them once they come to the door.”

For others, the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have made a military career a less enticing option.

“The United States was in a relatively peaceful time period prior to Sept. 11, 2001,” Boswell said. “An individual could join the military and never really have to honor the ‘live free or die fighting’ commitment that we make when we join.

“That’s not the case now,” he said. “When you raise your right hand and swear to defend this nation against all enemies foreign and domestic, so help you God, there is a very high probability that you will go to war.”

Lyons didn’t worry about future military obligations when he joined the AFROTC, and he’s never regretted his decision.

“Since joining AFROTC, I have been given responsibilities that affect our entire detachment,” he said. “At this point, the pressure isn’t that big of a deal, although I am always learning how to improve my leadership.”

Boswell said the reasons students join the program are as unique as the cadets themselves.



Andrew Lyons, ROTC cadet

“Many join because of patriotism, and there are still people who want to support the flag and defend our country,” he said. “Others want to serve others, and there are some who want to carry on a family heritage.”

Established Amid Controversy

ASU has been training officers for the Air Force for almost 40 years. Detachment 019 was established in April 1971 during the heat of the anti-war demonstrations. Lt. Col. Clarence Holloway, a 29-year

veteran of the Air Force and a graduate of Tuskegee University, was commander of the first detachment.

The decision to start the AFROTC drew plenty of opposition, but Holloway soon learned the program had a strong supporter in Dr. Levi Watkins.

“Dr. Levi Watkins fought vigorously for ASU to get the program,” said Holloway. “We knew he was in our corner, and he gave us everything we needed to make the program a success.”

The AFROTC program, the only one of its kind in the Montgomery area, drew students from ASU, Auburn Montgomery, Faulkner University, Troy University in Montgomery and Huntingdon College.

In May 1974, Detachment 019 made history when it commissioned its first class of 13 second lieutenants. The class included Walter Burks, William Chaney, Willie Frank Collins, Reginald E. Early, John H. McKnight, Robert L. Moore, Kenneth L. Silas, James Stamps, Roderick M. Thornton, Jerry F.

chief of the Business Management Office, Disaster Operation Directorate, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security.

“I was thrown into a world where I had to compete daily with individuals with different backgrounds and racial identity from

organizations geared to help guide and coach junior officers,” Fountain said. “I made visits to Alabama State on several occasions to share my experiences and have made monetary donations from time to time for worthy causes.”

For Boswell, giving back was as easy as coming home. The Montgomery native said coming back to ASU as the commander of Detachment 019 has been one of the most rewarding and humbling experiences of his 20-year career.

“It has been an absolute joy training the next generation of Air Force officers,” he said. “I take that charge seriously and I do my best to ensure that only the best and the brightest are commissioned as officers for the Air Force. The security of our nation demands no less.”

As a cadet in Junior ROTC at Sidney Lanier High in Montgomery, Boswell said he fell in love with the structure offered by the program.

“I was also encouraged by the fact that you were rewarded based on your own individual merits,” he said. “Growing up in the South, there were always preset expectations and limitations on what young black men could and couldn’t do. I didn’t like that, and the military showed me that anyone could achieve greatness if he or she worked hard and persevered.”

His involvement with the AFROTC program at ASU made him a better student, said Boswell. After he returned from AFROTC field training, he began to emerge as a leader in all aspects of campus life. He also became more engaged in



As part of a leadership lab, senior cadet Javion Carter, right, inspects the uniform of general cadet Calvin Hawkins.

Underwood, Roger Varner, Lindsey T. Williams and Juanita Bell, Alabama’s first black female to be commissioned an AFROTC officer.

“We were breaking new ground,” said Lindsey Williams of that first class. “Most of us had no idea what it was like to be an Air Force officer. There was no history or experience to draw on.”

For Williams, the AFROTC program and the United States Air Force were major influences in his life. He had a job and a career the day he graduated from ASU. Currently, Williams is the deputy

all over the world,” Williams said. “I knew education was important, but in the Air Force, education and training are keys to your promotions and success.”

Carey Fountain, a 1978 graduate of ASU and the AFROTC program, became the chief acquisition officer with the Office of Acquisitions and Contract Management. While he was on active duty in the Air Force, he offered mentorship to recent ASU graduates and other young officers from Historically Black Colleges and Universities.

“I was active in various military

the classroom because the Air Force required that he complete his degree in four years.

“Many of my friends and acquaintances were on the indefinite graduation plan and the Air Force would have none of that,” Boswell said. “They provided me with monthly spending money and the best leadership training available anywhere and they wanted a return on their investment.”

Preparing Future Military Leaders

Even with success stories like those of Boswell and others who have completed the program, many students are unaware of the wide range of benefits offered by AFROTC programs.

Some of the benefits are the scholarship programs. The In-College Scholarship Program is awarded to freshmen and sophomores who pass the standardized Air Force Officer Qualifying Test (AFOQT) and meet other requirements, such as academic GPA and physical fitness. The HBCU Scholarship is awarded to students with at least a 2.5 GPA who have completed at least 12 semester hours of college work and passed the Air Force Officer Qualifying Test.

Accepting an officer’s commission is the final step in a four-year

training regimen that paves the way for a promising military career.

AFROTC cadets are required to attend physical fitness sessions, weekly leadership seminars and Air Force leadership classes. In addition, they must pass a four- to six-week field training encampment, which is the boot camp equivalent for officer candidates.

Olivia Ziglar, a cross-enrolling student from Huntingdon College, said the AFROTC program has helped her become more disciplined and respectful toward others.

“Discipline is essential in becoming a good leader,” Ziglar said. “We all work together to become the best officer candidates and individuals.”

Lt. Gwendolyn Parks, who cross-enrolled from Faulkner University and was commissioned in 2008, agrees with Ziglar. She said completing the program took determination and dedication.

“AFROTC taught me to be accountable for my actions,” said Parks, a finance officer at Maxwell AFB and a graduate school student. “I was a single parent when I joined the program, and it taught me to be responsible and provided opportunities for a better life.”

Cadets in the AFROTC program wear their uniforms each week when attending leadership labs. They also wear them anytime they have special events, such as reveille/retreat and when they are taking down or putting up the flags.

Volunteering is an important part of AFROTC. Cadets are involved

in the Honor Air Society program and help mentor and tutor high school students. They contribute to charitable organizations, and post colors at all university functions, organized ceremonies and during holidays.

All those responsibilities can prove daunting for cadets who must balance their AFROTC requirements with academics.

“It takes a special person,” said Capt. Ayanna Brown, unit admissions officer for ASU’s AFROTC. “Not only are they getting a bachelor’s degree, but they’re handling an additional 16 credit hours. They’re doing physical training and leadership labs in the afternoon on Wednesdays.”

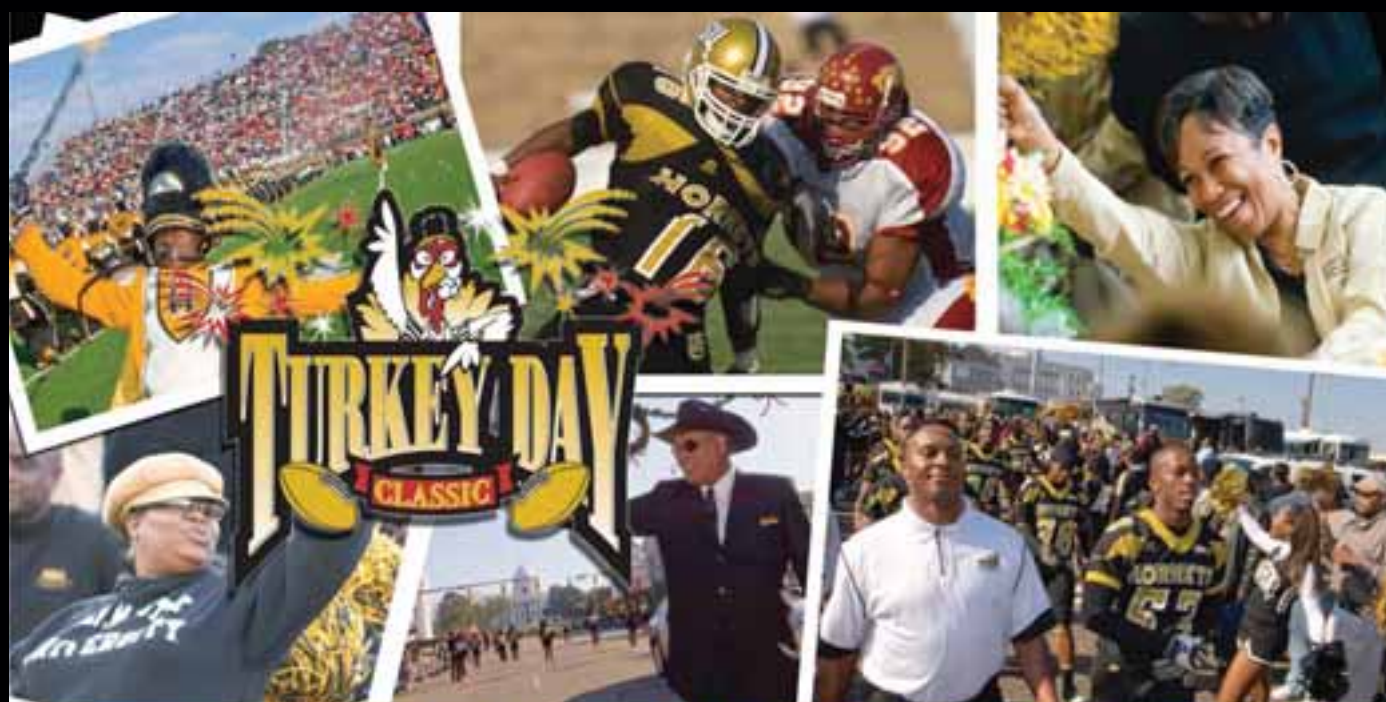
Those involved in the program believe that their military experience will improve and change their lives.

“It’s kind of interesting because you think about camaraderie and a band of brothers or sisters that you can rely on, and AFROTC has really become that for me,” Ziglar said.

Boswell said the program is both rewarding and a great way to prepare men and women for leadership roles in future careers.

“The more of a presence we have on campus the better,” he said of the AFROTC program, “so other students can appreciate what their fellow students have chosen to do in serving their country.”

“I’m proud to serve,” said Lyons. “I think this is probably the best decision I’ve made.” ■



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7-10 pm / Alumni Pep Rally & Block Party with Fireworks Spectacular

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8 am / Alumni Challenge Breakfast

10 am / Campus Homecoming Kick-Off

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8 pm / Homecoming Show: Charlie Wilson & The Legendary O'Jays

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9 am / Turkey Day Classic Parade

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ASU Today has much to celebrate this year. On Dec. 15, 1983, Alabama State University published the first issue of ASU Today, a three-page publication on 8.5-inch x 11-inch paper with no photographs. Twenty-five years later, ASU Today is still going strong. It has grown into the premiere communications tool of ASU's Office of Marketing and Communications. Now, it features about 40 pages of full-color photographs and text on glossy paper and is enjoyed in more than 30,000 households.

Throughout this 25th year, the staff of ASU Today has been celebrating the magazine's anniversary by highlighting 25 Outstanding Alumni in a series of special publications. We have received overwhelming response from the previous editions on alumni in the fields of education and medicine. This month's edition features outstanding alumni who serve or have served their country in the military, some who made their mark in governmental positions, and others who excel in the courtroom.

BROTHERS 'IN LAW'

By Timothy C. Ervin

One of the most significant modern civil rights movements in American history was influenced by two brothers.

Attorney Fred Gray Sr. and his older brother, Judge Thomas Gray, were both instrumental in the efforts to end racial segregation in the South.

Fred Gray represented Rosa Parks during the famous Montgomery Bus Boycott, a successful campaign that focused national attention on racial segregation and catapulted Martin Luther King Jr. into the national spotlight. Thomas served on the original board of the Montgomery Improvement Association, which was instrumental in guiding the Montgomery Bus Boycott that eventually led to the integration of public transportation in the city.

Finishing high school ahead of schedule in December 1947, Fred enrolled in the Alabama State College for Negroes. He graduated in 1951. Though intent on pursuing a law career, Fred realized that Alabama's law schools were closed to

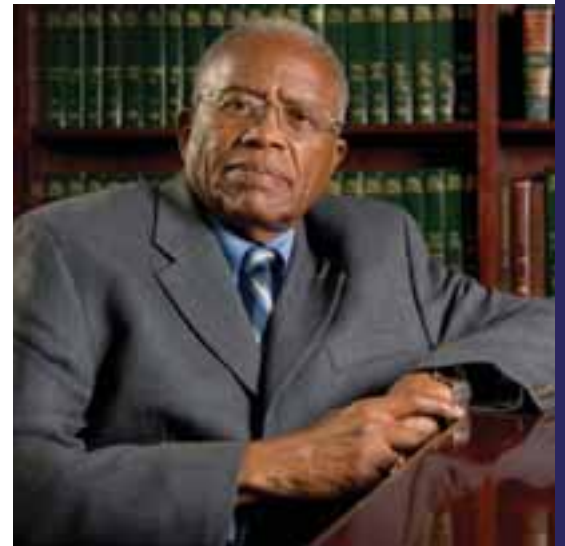


JUDGE THOMAS GRAY
(B.S. 1950)

blacks. He therefore applied to several northern law schools and accepted an offer to study at Western Reserve University (later Case Western Reserve University) in Cleveland.

Fred completed law school in 1954 and was admitted to practice in Ohio and Alabama that same year. In September 1954, he opened Gray, Langford, Sapp, McGowan, Gray and Nathanson, a private law practice in Montgomery — becoming one of two black attorneys then practicing in Montgomery.

He fought to gain full voting rights for blacks and to desegregate Alabama's public schools and housing projects. In 1970, Fred was elected to the Alabama Legislature as a representative from Tuskegee, where he had opened up an



ATTORNEY FRED GRAY
(B.S. 1951)

other law office. He became one of the first two black officials to serve in the Legislature since the beginning of the Reconstruction Era a century before. While serving until 1974, Fred took on one of the most complex cases of his career — a civil suit against the U.S. government brought by participants in a Public Health Service study of syphilis.

In July 2002, he was elected president of the Alabama State Bar Association, the most important professional

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SISTERS 'IN LAW'

By Timothy C. Ervin

Growing up in Birmingham, identical twins Shanta C. Owens and Shera C. Grant did everything together. After graduating from Ramsey High School, embarking on their childhood dreams of becoming lawyers would be no different.

With support from their mother, they attended Alabama State University, majoring in computer information systems.

"Before I left home for college, my mother instilled in my twin sister and me the importance of education first," Shanta said. "She made clear that we were there to first get an education, and everything else was secondary."

As ASU students, they were active members of the Golden Ambassadors, Phi Eta Sigma Honor Society and Delta Mu Delta Business Honor Society.

Shanta was handpicked by Dr. Percy Vaughn, dean of the College of Business Administration, to serve as chair of the Dean's Council of Students.

"ASU taught me so much," Shanta said. "At ASU, I learned to acknowledge the differences among people and various cultures. I learned to be proud of who I am. The College of Business Administration thoroughly prepared me for strategic thinking, public speaking and the challenges of life. I've taken those principles with me, and they are a part of the fabric of my life."

The twins excelled in their coursework at ASU. Both graduated summa cum laude in 1999 with Bachelor of Science degrees in computer information systems and set their sights on law school.

Both attended Louisiana State University School of Law and the Université D' Aix-Marseille III in Aix-en-Provence, France. They enrolled in dual-degree programs, and in 2002, both received their Juris Doctor and Bachelor of Civil Law degrees.

When they graduated from law school, the Owens sisters chose different locations to practice their professions.

Shanta returned home to Birmingham and began her legal career as a deputy district attorney with the Jefferson County district attorney's office, where she rose to the position of senior trial attorney.

She successfully prosecuted more than 100 felony jury trials in Jefferson County, including several capital murder trials, and witnessed first-hand how the drug epidemic was still an overwhelming problem in her community.



JUDGE SHANTA C. OWENS
(B.S. 1999)

In January 2008, Shanta decided it was time to do her part to take back the community. She resigned from her job as a prosecutor and announced her candidacy for the District Court, Place 2 seat. In November 2008, she defeated her Republican opponent – making her the youngest judge currently serving in the state of Alabama. Her responsibilities include handling all drug cases in the Birmingham Division of Jefferson County.

Shera's career began in Atlanta where she became an assistant city solicitor. She conducted bench trials and prosecuted numerous defendants accused of violating city ordinances. She also was the coordinator for the Young Adult Development Initiative, a program giving offenders between the ages of 17 and 25 an alternative

Continued on page 40

**"I'VE TAKEN THOSE
PRINCIPLES WITH ME,
AND THEY ARE A PART OF
THE FABRIC OF MY LIFE."**

–SHANTA OWENS



ATTORNEY SHERA C. GRANT
(B.S. 1999)

AT THE HELM OF MILITARY, GOVERNMENT AND LAW

JESSE WHITE
SECRETARY OF STATE, ILLINOIS
(B.S. 1957)

While he's the first black to serve as Illinois secretary of state, Jesse White is probably just as well known for founding the internationally known Jesse White Tumblers.

Founded in 1959, the Tumblers serve as a positive alternative for children residing in and around the Chicago area. Since its inception, more than 11,500 young men and women have performed with the team. White has spent 50 years working as a volunteer with the Tumblers, helping kids stay away from gangs, drugs, alcohol and smoking, and guiding at-risk youths to the path to success. In 2009, the team will make more than 1,500 performances throughout the nation.



“After I left Alabama State, I realized that everything I had, I received with the help of someone else,” White said. “The tumbling team is a way I can give back to the community.”

White, a Democrat, took office in January 1999 becoming Illinois' 37th secretary of state. He was re-elected

in 2002 by winning all 102 counties and garnering more than 2.3 million votes — the largest vote total by any candidate for Illinois statewide office in a quarter of a century. In 2006, White was re-elected to a third term.

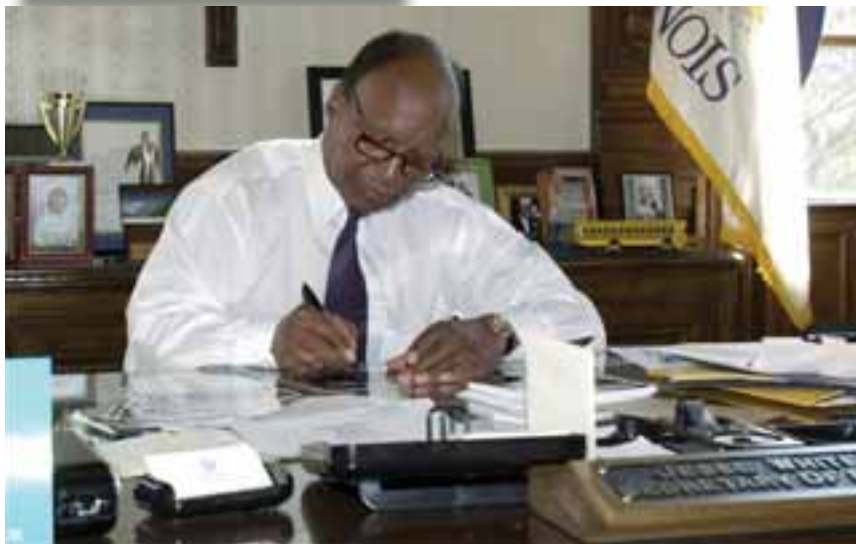
Before taking public office, White worked 33 years as a teacher and administrator at Chicago Public Schools, served in the Illinois General Assembly for 16 years and then as Cook County recorder of deeds from 1992 to 1998. This one-time paratrooper with the Army's 101st Airborne Division also played minor league baseball for the Chicago Cubs.

White earned his Bachelor of Science degree from Alabama State College in 1957, where he was a two-sport athlete earning all-conference honors in baseball and basketball. In 1995, White was inducted into the Southwestern Athletic Conference Hall of Fame. In 1999, he

was inducted into the ASU Sports Hall of Fame.

White said ASU helped him become successful in his personal, professional and political life.

“At Alabama State I had to work hard to obtain good grades so I could continue to play baseball and basketball,” White said. “This helped show me that if I worked hard, I could do almost anything.”





HON. DELORES J. THOMAS
NEW YORK SUPREME COURT
JUSTICE
(B.A. 1975)

New York Supreme Court Justice Delores J. Thomas is currently one of four judges in Kings County and the only judge of color to hear and deter-

mine cases pertaining to divorce and child custody.

Thomas has more than 30 years of experience in law. She began her legal career as a staff and management attorney in the Housing, Immigration and Unemployment Law Units with Brooklyn Legal Services (1978-94); and administrative law judge with the New York City Parking Violations Bureau (1987-94).

In March 1994, Thomas was appointed to serve as a judge in the civil court of the city of New York. Eight years later, she was elected to the civil court bench, the first black to be elected to a countywide judgeship in that area. In civil court, Thomas presided over bench and jury trials dealing with a wide range of legal matters originating in civil court and matters referred by the New York State Supreme Court.

Only four years after a successful run

for a local judgeship, Thomas ran for a statewide position. In November 2006, she was elected to the State Supreme Court.

Although her professional successes have come in New York, Thomas is proud of her Alabama roots. She also is proud to be an alumna of Alabama State University, where she received the Bachelor of Arts degree in political science in 1975. She earned her Juris Doctorate at the University of Georgia Law School in 1978.

Thomas said ASU gave her the discipline, organizational skills and confidence she needed to be successful in her career.

"I learned that my limits were those that I placed on myself and that if I believed it, I could achieve it," Thomas said. "My days there taught me strength of character and helped me harness my moral compass of right and wrong."

MAJOR GENERAL WILLIE A.
ALEXANDER
ALABAMA NATIONAL GUARD
(B.S. 1972)

Major General Willie A. Alexander became the first black in the history of the Alabama National Guard to be promoted to brigadier general (June 1995) and adjutant general (January 1999), and the first and only black to be promoted to major general (May 1999).

Alexander began his military career in 1959 as a military policeman at Fort Bragg, N.C. In 1966, he was assigned to Fort McClellan, Ala., where he served as training officer and then commander of the Leadership School.

He joined the National Guard in 1972 after graduating with a Bachelor of Science in business administration from ASU.

He has accumulated a jacket full of awards and decorations during his 50



years of military training, but Alexander's most notable achievements could be the pathways to leadership he has blazed for other black officers in the Alabama Army National Guard.

His awards and decorations include the Meritorious Service Medal with oak leaf cluster, Army Commendation

Medal with three oak leaf clusters, Army Achievement Medal with oak leaf cluster, Army Reserve Component Achievement Medal with silver and bronze oak leaf clusters, National Defense Service Medal with bronze service star, Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal and Armed Forces Reserve Medal.

He was awarded the President's Award (1972) by the School of Business and Economics, and won the ASU Distinguished Alumni Award (2000). He is a life member of the ASU National Alumni Association, a member of Ebenezer Baptist Church and current president of the Atlanta Metro Lions Club.

"The professors in the School of Business and Economics challenged me for the entire time I was a student at ASU," Alexander said. "My personal involvement in various campus organizations prepared me as a team player."



BRIG. GEN. EDWARD F. CROWELL
RETIRED AIR UNIVERSITY,
MAXWELL AIR FORCE BASE
(B.S. 1971)

Brig. Gen. Edward F. Crowell's commitment to Alabama State University has remained as rock solid as his unwavering dedication to the U.S. Air Force. In the 38 years since he received his

Bachelor of Science in business administration and economics, Crowell has always tried to be a good ambassador and recruiter for his alma mater.

"I have made financial contributions and participated in both on and off campus activities," said the retired mobilization assistant to the commander at Air University, Maxwell Air Force Base. "I continually serve as a mentor for the business students and others. I try daily to serve the university as a good role model."

Crowell entered the Air Force in 1974 following graduation from Officer Training School. He was assigned to the 908th Tactical Airlift Group and later the 908th Airlift Wing at Maxwell AFB, where he held a variety of positions in social actions, logistics and supply. He commanded mobility support and aerial port squadrons, served as director of Aerial Port Operations and inspector general.

As a civilian, he is a senior vice president for a computer manufacturer.

Crowell completed Squadron Officer School by correspondence (1983); Air Command and Staff College at Maxwell AFB (1993); Air War College (1995); and earned a Master of Business Administration from Troy State University (2001).

His military awards and decorations include the Legion of Merit Meritorious Service Medal with three oak leaf clusters, Air Force Commendation Medal, Air Force Achievement Medal and National Defense Service Medal with bronze star.

"ASU provided a fertile foundation, carefully placed, that has allowed for successful competition and steady growth," Crowell said of the impact the university had on his career. "The faculty was patient and instilled a great sense of confidence."

COL. RAYTHEON K. SCOTT
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
(B.S. 1982)

Col. Raytheon K. Scott has tackled some tall orders during his military career, but perhaps none more important than his responsibilities for the nation's nuclear deterrent objectives.

As commander of the 91st Maintenance Group at Minot Air Force Base, N.D., Scott oversaw the efforts of 450 civilian employees and military personnel responsible for the nation's 150 Minuteman III intercontinental ballistic missiles and 15 missile-alert facilities.

He was a perfect fit for the job, having honed his skills during two decades of work as a Titan intercontinental ballistic missile crew member, missile maintenance expert and squadron commander for the 30th Transportation Squadron at Vandenberg Air Force



Base, Calif., and chief of logistics for the Space and Missiles System Center, Peterson Air Force Base, Colo.

Today, as leader of the 704th Maintenance Group at the Air Force Materiel Command's Arnold Engineering Development Center, Arnold Air Force Base, Tenn., Scott is in charge of the maintenance and operation of the center's test infrastructure, industrial plant and

utility systems.

Scott's military awards and decorations include the Legion of Merit, Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Air Force Meritorious Service Medal with five oak leaf clusters, Air Force Commendation Medal with one oak leaf cluster, Air Force Achievement Medal with three oak leaf clusters, Combat Readiness Medal and Air Force Good Conduct Medal.

Scott received his commission through the Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps as a distinguished graduate in social work from ASU in 1982. In 1987, he finished Squadron Officers School in correspondence from Maxwell Air Force Base. He completed Air Command and Staff College in correspondence (1998) and Air War College in correspondence (2003).

NOTABLE ALUMNI IN MILITARY, GOVERNMENT AND LAW

HON. JOHNNY HARDWICK
CIRCUIT COURT JUDGE
(B.S. 1973)

Montgomery County Circuit Court Judge Johnny Hardwick is a veteran of the legal profession, having practiced law for more than three decades. Hardwick credits Alabama State University with giving him a solid foundation for his career.

“My education at ASU prepared me for life and the challenges we face each day,” said Hardwick.

Born and raised in Montgomery, Hardwick graduated with honors from ASU, earning a Bachelor of Science in history in 1973. He received his Juris Doctorate from Creighton University in Omaha, Neb.

Hardwick’s path to the bench has been an honorable but challenging one. Many of those challenges came as he fought for the rights of his clients in a broad variety of cases. In addition to private practice, Hardwick also has served as an assistant United States attorney, as a special deputy attorney general for the state of Alabama, and as municipal court judge for the city of Montgomery and the town of White Hall.

The talented lawyer’s career reached a new level when he was appointed to the circuit court for Montgomery County in 2001. Judge Hardwick was elected to a six-year term in 2002. Known for his integrity on the bench, Hardwick was able to garner 60 percent of the votes cast in his successful bid for re-election in 2008.

Judge Hardwick has maintained strong ties to ASU, having served as an assistant professor of management and



as ASU Dean of Student Affairs.

“ASU allowed me the opportunity to learn new matters, meet outstanding educators and experience world and national leaders,” Hardwick said.

Despite his busy schedule, Hardwick is a dedicated community servant. One of his proudest accomplishments is being chairman of the Community Care Network, an organization that provides

mobilized medical care to residents of the Black Belt.

Hardwick is a member of numerous organizations, including the Alabama Circuit Judges Association and the Judicial Council of the National Bar Association. He also is a lifetime member of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity Inc.

HON. DARRYL LOWE
DISTRICT COURT JUDGE
(B.S. 1981)

The Honorable Judge Darryl Lowe began a life of learning at ASU when he was only 4 years old. He was a kindergarten student at Alabama State University Laboratory High School. He later became a third-generation Hornet, graduating in 1981 with a degree in criminal justice and political science.

“My experience at Alabama State University furthered the teachings from family about responsibility, pride, achievement, dedication, accountability and charitable compassion for our world community,” said Lowe.

After graduating from ASU, Lowe followed in his father’s footsteps and went to law school. He received his Juris



Doctorate from Creighton University in Omaha, Neb. Among his many professional accomplishments, Lowe has worked as an attorney at both the Urban League of Nebraska and the Douglas County Attorney’s Office. He

was appointed to his current position as a judge in Douglas County in 1998.

Lowe is active in many professional and civic organizations, including the American Bar Association, the National Bar Association, the NAACP and the Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity. He also co-founded a youth association, which serves more than 300 young people in Omaha.

Lowe has referred many students to ASU. Several are presently attending the university; others have graduated in the past 25 years.

“I have also entrusted Alabama State University to educate my daughter, Karyn Lowe, a fourth-generation Alabama State University student,” said Lowe. “(She will be part of the) Class of 2012.”

EDDIE J. HARRIS
CALIFORNIA ATTORNEY
(B.S. 1961)

Attorney Eddie J. Harris is living his dream. Harris gained national attention when he worked with the late Johnnie Cochran as part of the “Dream Team” that defended O.J. Simpson. The ASU graduate conducted research and worked on motions during the trial. He also assisted Cochran in defending the late Michael Jackson in a civil case.

Harris said his classroom experiences at ASU honed the critical thinking skills that he put to work in both those legal cases.

“ASU taught me to be analytical and focus on the big picture,” said Harris. “(I also learned) to be patient and seize opportunities when they come your way.”

Harris earned his undergraduate degree from Alabama State University in

1961. He received a master’s in business administration and a Juris Doctorate from UCLA.

When the opportunity to go into private practice presented itself in 1997, Harris didn’t hesitate; he now owns a successful practice in California. One guiding principle has helped him in his career.

“Don’t be afraid to fail, as long as you learn from your failures; be tenacious, and at the same time, be fair and honest,” said Harris.

Harris’ career has taken him around the world. He has studied abroad in 10 countries. He also has won a number of accolades, including Lawyer of the Year from the law offices of Johnny Cochran, Presidential Citations from Alabama A&M University and the National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education. Harris also has an extensive background in community service.

An avid supporter of ASU, Harris has served in various positions with the National Alumni Association since 1965, including holding the office of president.

He said he gives back to his alma mater because in addition to receiving a world-class education at ASU, he also “learned to have a great love for family, friends and ASU.”





KENNETH THOMAS
MONTGOMERY ATTORNEY
(B.S. 1973/M.S. 1980)

Attorney Kenneth Thomas has been an Alabama State University Hornet practically all of his life. Thomas attended kindergarten at ASU's Laboratory High School.

"Having virtually been raised and ed-

ucated on the campus of Alabama State University, every day of my career as a lawyer has reflected in some manner my experiences at ASU," said Thomas.

Thomas graduated from Alabama State University in 1973 with a Bachelor of Science degree. He received his Juris Doctorate from Howard University School of Law in 1977. He later returned to his alma mater for a master's degree in science in 1980.

Thomas has had a distinguished career. After graduating from law school, he became the first black to serve as a law clerk to a justice of the Supreme Court of Alabama. He also presented oral arguments before the United States Supreme Court in its landmark Title IX decision in *Jackson v. Birmingham Board of Education* in 2005. Thomas has served as special assistant attorney general for the state of Alabama, legal counsel for the Birmingham Board of Education and deputy attorney general for the state of Alabama.

Thomas also is a founding partner of the law firm Thomas, Means, Gillis and Seay, P.C.

"From writing appellate briefs to making passionate oral arguments, ASU has been with me all the way," he said.

Thomas is a member of numerous professional associations, including the American Bar Association, the National Bar Association, the Alabama Lawyers Association and the Montgomery County Bar Association. In June of this year, he was honored by the Birmingham Chapter of the ASU National Alumni Association with its Outstanding Service Award.

ASU is never too far from Thomas' mind. He is ASU's university counsel and he consistently contributes to the ASU Trust for Educational Excellence.

"Hopefully, in some small way, what I do as a lawyer contributes to the well being of ASU and the community at large," said Thomas.

LARRY SHAW
NORTH CAROLINA STATE
SENATOR
(B.S. 1972/M.A. 1973)

Larry Shaw came to Alabama State University to be on the forefront of the fight against desegregation then shifted his efforts to the political stage. Shaw, a Democrat, has dedicated the past 15 years to public service, representing the citizens of North Carolina in both the House of Representatives and the Senate.

Shaw, who lives in Fayetteville, N.C., was elected to the House of Representatives in 1994 and to the Senate in 1997. His legislative appointments include a chairmanship of the Transportation Committee and a vice chairmanship of the Finance Committee. His leadership has helped secure \$900 million of high-



way expansion and outer-loop funds for the Fayetteville metropolitan area.

The longest-serving Muslim elected official in the United States, Shaw became involved in politics just a few short years after completing his academic work at Alabama State University in 1973. He received a Bachelor of

Science in health and recreation in 1972 and a Master of Arts in administration supervision one year later.

He honed his political skills as a member of the National Finance Committees for former President Jimmy Carter (1978-79), former Vice President Walter Mondale (1983) and former Vice President Al Gore (1987), and served on former President Bill Clinton's U.S. Small Business Commission. He also serves as chairman of the nation's leading Muslim civil rights advocacy group, the Washington-based Council on American-Islamic Relations.

During his 20-year tenure as chairman and CEO of Shaw Food Service Company, the company has seen its sales grow to \$20 million and its workforce increase to 1,200 employees.



ELANE DUNCAN
ENGINEER, NASA
(B.S. 1976)

Elaine Duncan, a lead flight systems engineer in the Marshall Space Flight Center's Mission Operations Laboratory in Huntsville, is one of the people working to send human explorers back to the moon and Mars and to "boldly

go where no one has gone before."

Duncan started her NASA career in 1980 as a flight systems and operation integration engineer at the Marshall Center. Since 2006, she has supported the design, development, testing and evaluation activities for the Orion Project Vehicle Operations Integration Office at NASA's Johnson Space Center in Houston.

A native of Montgomery, Duncan earned a bachelor's degree in mathematics from ASU in 1976 and a master's in systems engineering from Howard University in Washington in 1980.

She said her ASU experience prepared her for a successful career with NASA.

"The professors and courses offered in the undergraduate mathematics curriculum at ASU equipped students with

the skills, tools and confidence needed for professional and personal success," Duncan said. "Most notable are the core values of integrity, great work ethic, teamwork and excellence."

Duncan will have the opportunity to help young people benefit from her experience with her selection to participate in NASA's Administrator's Fellowship Program. The program supports the agency's educational outreach goals to promote higher education in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) fields at minority universities.

Duncan has received several honors during her career, including an award for Outstanding and Distinguished Job Performance in Support of NASA and Marshall Space Flight Center's Mission and Goals and two NASA Special Service Awards.

LT. COL. COLLIS H. IVERY III
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
(RET.)
(B.A. 1980)

Retired Lt. Col. Collis Ivery III has spent more than 20 years defending his country's freedom. He said the lessons learned at ASU gave him the tools he needed to succeed on the frontlines of life.

"Alabama State University prepared me academically and socially for the challenging military and educational environment I encountered once I left school," Ivery said.

Ivery comes from a long line of ASU graduates. Fourteen family members earned degrees at ASU, including his parents and his great aunt, Thelma Glass, whose name adorns one of the campus auditoriums.

Ivery's 22-year military career has taken him from the battlefield to the Pentagon and the headquarters of the U.S. Special Operations Command.

Ivery is fighting a new battle now as a mathematics teacher in Tampa, Fla., where he helps to ensure that children gain the skills they need to succeed. He said his military training made the move to a career in education an easy transition.

Ivery has won numerous awards and commendations, including three Defense Meritorious Service Medals, two Air Force Commendation Medals and the Outstanding Military Volunteer Medal. He has been named the Ida S. Baker Distinguished Educator of the Year twice by the Hillsborough Education Foundation.

In addition to teaching in the



classroom, Ivery mentors and tutors disadvantaged youths in the Tampa school system. Much of his community work is done through his fraternity, Kappa Alpha Psi.

**CAREY FOUNTAIN
CHIEF ACQUISITION
OFFICER, PEACE CORPS
(B.S. 1978)**

Carey Fountain serves as the chief acquisition officer within the Peace Corps' Office of Acquisitions and Contract Management, but his passion is being a mentor.

"I continue to mentor to young professionals that have decided to pursue contracting as a career."

Mentoring is a natural choice for Fountain, who has more than 30 years of procurement and acquisition management experience. He began his professional career in the U.S. Air Force where he served 20 years, retiring with the rank of lieutenant colonel after holding numerous acquisition positions.

Upon retirement in 1998, Fountain joined Equifax Inc. in Atlanta, where

he was later promoted to vice president of the Global Information Technology Purchasing Group. He began his federal career with the Department of Treasury, Financial Management Service (FMS), as chief procurement officer in 2002 and served in that capacity until he assumed his current position in 2005. Fountain is a member of the Senior Foreign Service and serves as the agency's senior procurement executive overseeing policies that govern the agency's \$150 million annual procurement spending.

Fountain earned a Bachelor of Science in business management from ASU and a Master of Science in procurement and acquisition management from Northrop University.

"During my years at Alabama State, I was actively involved in numerous extracurricular activities that helped me



develop leadership skills, learn how to juggle a demanding schedule and manage competing priorities," he said.

Fountain also is a graduate of the Air Force Squadron Officers School and Air Command and Staff College military leadership school.

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NEW TRENDSETTERS IN MILITARY, GOVERNMENT AND LAW

HON. CLAUDINE R. JAMES
ADMINISTRATIVE JUDGE, EEOC
(B.A. 1992)

Claudine R. James is a living and compelling testimony of faith, hard work, zeal and survival. At the age of 30, James was diagnosed with an aggressive form of breast cancer. Since the diagnosis, she has become an active and articulate advocate for breast cancer awareness and education.

Since 1999, James has served as an administrative judge with the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. She takes time from her busy schedule to speak to newly diagnosed breast cancer patients across the country. James also volunteers to accompany survivors to doctors' appointments and/or treatment, and makes hospital and hospice visits.

Prior to becoming a judge, James successfully engaged in a prolific and dynamic legal practice in Houston. She also is an adjunct professor at Houston Community College in the paralegal studies program.

James is licensed to practice law in the states of Alabama and Texas and the District of Columbia, before the United States Supreme Court and the Northern and Southern District Courts of Texas.

She is actively involved in a number of legal and professional organizations, including the Administrative Judges Association, Houston Bar Association, Houston Lawyers Association, Black Women Lawyers, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc., Sisters Network Inc., Young Survivors Coalition, M.D. Anderson Network Steering Committee Houston Chapter and the Consortium of Doctors, Ltd.

James graduated cum laude from ASU, receiving a Bachelor of Arts degree in political science with a minor in English writing. She said her experiences at the university provided a diverse perspective and sensitivity to various challenges faced by others from all walks of life.

"My membership in my sorority and numerous organizations provided opportunities for me to give back to the community and enhanced my leadership ability," James said. "These experiences increased my desire to become an attorney and help others, as well as becoming successful in my career."

James also earned a master's degree in public administration with a concentration in human resource management from Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge. James received her Juris Doctorate from Thurgood Marshall School of Law at Texas Southern University in Houston.



TIFFANY LEROY
SENIOR ATTORNEY,
CHICAGO TRANSIT
AUTHORITY
(B.A. 1993)

As a result of the nurturing educational environment at ASU, Tiffany LeRoy pursued her dream of becoming a lawyer.

“My experiences at ASU definitely shaped my perspectives during the pursuit of my law degree, the way I approached my career and life,” LeRoy said. “I saw my future in the professors who taught me and the students who matriculated before me and knew that success was a sure thing not just a possibility.”

Success did become a reality for LeRoy. After admission to the Illinois bar, she became a prosecutor

with the Cook County State Attorney’s Office. During her tenure as an assistant state’s attorney, she was an advocate for children in the Child Support Enforcement Division and later as a prosecutor in the Abuse and Neglect Division of the Juvenile Justice Bureau. She also served as a community prosecutor in the First Municipal Division.

In 2004, LeRoy became an associate attorney for the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA), where she handled both civil and criminal cases. In 2006, she was promoted to senior attorney and is now responsible for the management of all criminal and traffic offenses that occur on the Chicago Transit Authority’s system.

LeRoy graduated cum laude



from ASU with a bachelor’s degree in political science in 1993. She received a Juris Doctorate from Duquesne University in Pittsburgh and a Certificate of Mediation from Saint Xavier University.



CROMWELL HANDY
DIRECTOR, (RET.) RPE, IRS-
CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS
(B.S. 1980)

The Internal Revenue Service describes its special agents as the premier financial investigators in law enforcement, both nationally and internationally. ASU alumnus Cromwell Handy has the honor of

having served as director within the prestigious agency.

For Handy, his road to the IRS began at ASU, where he received his Bachelor of Science degree in accounting in 1980.

“The College of Business Administration is second to none,” Handy said. “I credit my career success directly to my experience at ASU.”

Handy’s career with the IRS began in 1980 when he worked as part of a student cooperative program. He remained with the agency for 29 years.

In January 2007, Handy was named director of Review and Program Evaluation (RPE) for the IRS in Washington, D.C. He was the first black to hold that position. While serving in that capacity, he was presented the Albert Galatin Award, the highest career service award given

by the U.S. Department of the Treasury. Handy retired in July 2007.

Handy’s career has been marked by numerous awards and accomplishments, including the city of Cincinnati, proclaiming Oct. 22, 2003, as “Cromwell A. Handy Day.”

In addition to his bachelor’s degree from ASU, Handy attended Jacksonville (Fla.) Center for Biblical Studies, an affiliate of Virginia Union Theological Seminary.

Handy, the current president of the ASU Alumni Association, Cincinnati Chapter, credits ASU with being an outstanding academic training ground.

Handy’s family is closely connected to ASU. His wife, Cynthia, and daughter, Candace, are ASU graduates; his daughter, Casey, is currently a junior at ASU.

ALAIN JEAN
GOVERNMENTAL
CONSULTANT
(B.A. 1998)

Alain Jean started his governmental career in Washington, D.C., as a legislative correspondent for Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi. Now a governmental relations consultant at Blosser & Sayfie, Jean has more than 10 years of experience with federal, state and local governments.

Before becoming a consultant, he was the governmental affairs coordinator for the Broward County (Fla.) Supervisor of Elections office. Jean also spent many years at the Broward County Sheriff's Office. During his tenure there, he served as director of governmental relations with 13 cities under the agency's jurisdiction, working with the Broward County Board



of Commissioners and lobbying at the state capitol, where he secured millions of dollars for the county's Child Protection Investigation Unit. Jean recently served as director of the Florida Caribbean Vote during President Obama's campaign.

Jean applauds ASU for helping him to succeed in his chosen profession.

"The professors in the history and political science department adequately prepared me for a future in government," he said. "The university was extremely nurturing and committed to preparing its students to succeed."

Throughout his career, Jean has received awards and honors, including being named one of *Ebony* magazine's 30 Leaders of the Future (2001). He received the President's Award from Kiwanis International, was named Democrat of the Year by the Broward Young Democrats and had a special day named in his honor by officials in Broward County. He also is a member of Phi Beta Sigma Inc., a volunteer for Kiwanis International, a board member of Broward Days Inc. and is on the Charter Revision Board for the city of Fort Lauderdale.



COL. ELIGAH HANKS JR.
CHIEF OF STAFF
(B.S. 1987)

After being commissioned through ASU's AFROTC program, Col. Eligah Hanks Jr. has had the opportunity to lead thousands of personnel and be responsible for billions of dollars worth of equipment in peacetime and combat environments.

As chief of staff for the Headquarters 754th Electronic Systems Group, 554th Electronic Systems Wing, Electronic Systems Center, Hanks leads day-to-day operations of military personnel, civilians and contractors supporting the operations and sustainment of worldwide Air Force combat support systems and local area network services.

Hanks entered the Air Force in 1987 after completing a four-year Reserve Officers' Training Corps program at ASU and graduating with a bachelor's degree in computer information systems. He received his master's in management from Bellevue University in Nebraska.

For the past 22 years, Hanks also has mentored commissioned officers of ASU's AFROTC during their time on active duty and assisted them in locating employment as government civilians or

contractors.

"ASU provided me with the perfect challenge to showcase my untapped reserve and build upon my educational foundation," Hanks said. "My instructors reinforced values given to me by my parents — responsibility, self-respect and respect for others. Though on a different scale, I frequently apply the things that I learned while a student at ASU to real-life situations with much success."

His honors include recognition as one of the Outstanding Young Men of America; winner of the Squadron Officer School, HQ 8th Air Force Roy Wilkens Community Service Award; a Meritorious Service Medal with four oak leaf clusters; Joint Service Commendation; and Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal.



AUDREY RAY CORDER
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
OFFICE OF FAMILY AND
CHILD WELL-BEING
(B.S. 1985)

ASU's family-friendly campus is something Audrey Corder will never forget. "ASU was more than a university, it was truly home away from home,"

said Corder.

Corder received her undergraduate degree in human service from Alabama State University in 1985. She earned a Master of Science in public service administration from Cumberland University in 2000.

Corder has 17 years of experience in child welfare. She currently oversees the education, interdependent living and medical and behavioral health units within the Tennessee Department of Children Services. She also has served as the executive director of the Metropolitan Davidson County Community Services Agency and executive director of Metro Nashville's Caring for Children program. She held both of those positions at the same time. Corder also instituted a monitoring process that was instrumental in the Department of Children Services of Tennessee receiving national accreditation for the first time in its history.

"I have always put my ASU aca-

demie experience against any other,"

Corder said. "I was academically prepared by some of the best professors and instructors anywhere."

Corder's work on behalf of children doesn't end when the workday is over. She is on the board of directors of the Metropolitan Nashville United Way and chairs the 211 Advisory Board of Tennessee, a statewide 24-hour referral line that helps families in crisis. She also is the first lady of Swift Tabernacle Baptist Church, where she serves as choir director, Sunday school teacher and management team member.

Corder said she has never forgotten the sense of family she felt at ASU. She mentors young ladies from disadvantaged homes, helps young people complete their college admission materials and donates to ASU's scholarship funds. ■

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ALVIN HOLMES THE DEAN OF THE HOUSE

By Arnelle Adcock

“Alvin Holmes talks loud to make his point,” Gwen Patton said, “but he genuinely is not a respecter of persons. He is a champion of all the people.”

Patton, founding archivist of Montgomery’s Trenholm State Technical College’s Civil Rights Archive, has worked alongside Holmes for more than 40 years as an activist on local and national issues.

“He sincerely cares about democracy,” she said. “He works for every American, not just black citizens.”

The Rev. Thomas Earl Jordan agreed. He is pastor of Montgomery’s Lilly Baptist Church, site of many of Holmes’ constituent “mass meetings.”

“Alvin is one of the few trusted politicians in the African-American community,” Jordan said. “He does what he says he will do. He is often misunderstood because he is vocal and aggressive, but behind that aggression is productivity.”

Jordan believes Holmes would not have been elected to serve more than 30 years in the Alabama Legislature if he had not been effective.

Holmes’ longtime political colleague, Rep. John F. Knight, applauded the veteran lawmaker for his undying support of ASU development and for his efforts on behalf of all of his constituents.

“Alvin’s dedication to ASU and the Montgomery region has been his life,” said Knight. “His leadership in advancing groundbreaking legislation enhanced the cultural, social, political and educa-



ALVIN HOLMES
STATE REPRESENTATIVE
(B.S. 1962/M.Ed. 1973)

tional environment of the state of Alabama.”

Working to help people is the legacy Holmes has established at ASU as well as in the Legislature.

Holmes retired as a teacher of world history at Alabama State at the end of spring semester, but that doesn’t mean he will stop working for his alma mater. He said as much in the retirement letter he wrote to the university’s administration.

“I offered my services in the future in community relations with a special emphasis on raising funds for ASU,” said Holmes, who has been the Democratic representa-

“When I was elected, the only blacks in the legislative halls were janitors and maids.”

—Alvin Holmes

tive for the 78th District (Montgomery) in the Legislature since 1974.

“I’ll raise money statewide and nationally. The school is doing a lot of construction now and I’ll do everything I can to raise money to help,” he said

Holmes began his career at ASU in 1965 working for then president Dr. Levi Watkins as an assistant registrar and fundraiser. He said he made multiple trips to Washington, D.C., to lobby congressional delegations and government officials on behalf of the two largest black state colleges in the state — ASU and Alabama A&M.

“Alabama State looked nothing like it does now,” he said. “Bibb Graves, Abercrombie and Jackson were the major buildings, and there wasn’t much else.”

“Most of the buildings and dorms constructed since then were built with federal funds,” he said.

Alabama was running a dual system of education during his early political career, Holmes said. The Legislature was giving more money to majority institutions than to black colleges and universities. He helped lead the fight against that discrimination — in Washington, D.C., and Montgomery.

Shortly after Holmes’ election to the House, he said ASU’s appropriation from the Legislature was so small, he went to then Gov. George C. Wallace to complain.

“I told him, ‘You promised if black people supported you, you’d help,’” he said. “‘How much do you want?’ he

asked. I told him \$5 million.”

“He said, ‘Five million?’”

“I got the \$5 million,” Holmes said. “Three million absolute and two million conditional.”

“When I called Dr. Watkins and told him, he laughed out loud. He thought I was kidding,” Holmes said.

Holmes has done more than raise funds for ASU. He was teaching history and also living it. Much of his legacy is tied to the history of local and national civil rights activities — the work of helping people.

His election to the Legislature in November 1974 was in the “heat of racism,” as he described the behavior of the Legislature.

“When I was elected, the only blacks in the legislative halls were janitors and maids,” he said. “No professionals were employed in the building.”

On his first day in the Legislature, he introduced Joint Resolution No. 74, which directed all state departments to employ blacks. He said that movement led to an increase in the number of black professionals hired.

“In fact, one woman who worked as a maid eventually became an executive assistant,” he said.

On his second day, Holmes introduced a resolution to remove the Confederate Flag from flying over the State Capitol. Tensions were already high and continued to escalate throughout the week.

At that time, he said, legislators

could wear pistols on the floor of the Legislature. Some legislators protested his resolution saying, “My foreparents fought under that flag.”

“Your foreparents fought under that flag,” Holmes responded, “to keep my foreparents in slavery.”

The third accomplishment Holmes points to is the reapportionment of districts. The redrawing of district lines in the House and Senate helped more black leaders get elected to state and municipal positions.

The longest-serving member of the Alabama House of Representatives, Holmes has earned the respect of his colleagues.

“His intellectual stature, coupled with his longevity and legislative experience, earned him the designation as ‘Dean of the House of Representatives,’” said Yvonne Kennedy, ASU alumna who represents House District 97, Mobile. “He is an astute and skillful legislator.”

With good reason, Holmes points to the Legislature’s establishing Martin Luther King Day as a state holiday and designating Interstate 85 through Montgomery as Martin Luther King Highway as his most memorable accomplishments.

During his early career with the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, Holmes worked as field staff with Hosea Williams. One of his activities was helping organize the march of Memphis, Tenn., garbage workers. With emotion in his voice, he recalled the day Dr. King

Continued on page 38



QUINTON ROSS

BREAKING NEW GROUND IN THE ALABAMA SENATE

By Gary Maitland

State Sen. Quinton Ross begins every day with the belief that he has a chance to make a difference in the lives of the citizens of Alabama. One of the best ways he can do that is to work tirelessly to improve the state's educational system.

As a young boy growing up in Pontiac, Mich., Ross was drawn to politics after he noticed the positive things government leaders were able to accomplish.

"Somewhere along my life's journey, I decided I wanted to help society in the same way those leaders helped the lives of those around me," he said.

Ross turned to a career in education after receiving his Bachelor of Science in political science from ASU in 1992. He made his mark in the classroom at McIntyre Junior High before becoming principal of Booker T. Washington Magnet High School in Montgomery. He currently serves as director of Adult Education at Trenholm State Technical College in Montgomery.

"There are few things as rewarding as working with students and seeing them grow and learn," said Ross. "It is simply amazing to see a child develop through education into a strong and productive member of society."

His tireless work for children has not gone unnoticed by his peers.

"He loves to promote education and help people in education," said Carmen Ruise, who is an assistant in the Adult Education Division at Trenholm State Technical College. "He helps students go beyond getting their GED so they know that when they leave here, they're not just lost."

Ross' sincerity and patience make him a favorite of the children with ECHO (Empowering Communities Helping Ourselves), said Aieda Harris, executive director of the non-profit.

"He's concerned about the youth of our community, which is very important to us," said Harris. "He's always very sincere and willing to be of assistance."

The list of Ross' accolades include a Teacher of the Year award; Educational Excellence Award from the Montgomery County Democratic Conference of Young Democrats (2000); Man of Distinction award by the Southern Leadership Conference (2001); King Spirit Award from the *Montgomery Advertiser* (2003); Daring to Make A Difference Community Spirit Award (2005); and a Power of One Award from the Alabama School Board Association (2009).

As he taught and led, Ross continued his own education. He earned a master's in secondary education from ASU in 1995 and received his administration certification in 1997. He's now working toward completion of his Doctorate in Education at ASU.

Ross stepped into the political arena in 2002 when he was elected to the Alabama State Senate. He represents District 26, which includes Montgomery County.

Melinda Williams, a member of U.S. Congressman Bobby Bright's staff, gives Ross high marks as both a politician and a citizen.

Continued on page 38

QUINTON T. ROSS JR.
STATE SENATOR
B.S. 1992/M.ED. 1995

ASU ALUMNI IN THE ALABAMA STATE LEGISLATURE



SENATOR
PRISCILLA DUNN (D)
19TH DISTRICT
(JEFFERSON)
B.S. 1966
M.A. 1972



SENATOR BOBBY
SINGLETON (D)
24TH DISTRICT
(BIBB, CHOCTAW,
GREENE, HALE,
MARENGO,
PERRY, SUMTER,
TUSCALOOSA)
B.S. 1984



REPRESENTATIVE
LOCY BAKER (D)
85TH DISTRICT
(HENRY AND
HOUSTON)
B.S. 1973
M.Ed. 1974



REPRESENTATIVE
JAMES BUSKEY (D)
99TH DISTRICT
(MOBILE)
B.S. 1959



REPRESENTATIVE
RANDY DAVIS (D)
96TH DISTRICT
(BALDWIN AND
MOBILE)
Ed.S. 1998



REPRESENTATIVE
THOMAS E. JACKSON
(D)
68TH DISTRICT
(CHOCTAW, CLARKE,
CONECUH, MARENGO,
MONROE)
M.S. 1977



REPRESENTATIVE
YVONNE KENNEDY
(D)
97TH DISTRICT
(MOBILE)
B.S. 1966



REPRESENTATIVE
JOHN F. KNIGHT JR.
(D)
77TH DISTRICT
(MONTGOMERY)
B.S. 1974



REPRESENTATIVE
THAD McCLAMMY
(D)
76TH DISTRICT
(MONTGOMERY)
B.A. 1966



REPRESENTATIVE
JAMES L. THOMAS (D)
69TH DISTRICT
(AUTAUGA, DALLAS,
LOWNDES AND
WILCOX)
B.S. 1965
M.Ed. 1975

Continued from page 35
ALVIN HOLMES'

was killed.

"I thought about the marches, the demonstrations, the jail terms and the bitterness toward Dr. King," Holmes said. "I never dreamed that a majority of the Legislature would vote for a state holiday in his memory."

Holmes' legislative legacy has grown to include working for the rights of "all the poor and those with no formal education."

"Funding for education — all education — is one of my primary activities," he said. "We must close the economic gap between the haves and the have-nots. Economic development and education are crucial for achieving those goals."

"Alvin sincerely cares about people," Patton said. "He believes that democracy should work for every American. He is a crusader for all people, not just blacks. He crusades for all who are scorned and left out of the American dream."

"When I came along in the Legislature, it was a full-time job fighting to make sure we got our fair share of the state funds," Holmes said. "That was my primary function. So I taught at night and on Saturdays."

Dr. Kennedy said that Holmes distinguished himself as a "caring and erudite professor."

"He earned the respect of both colleagues and students," Kennedy said.

Holmes gave himself grades for his work.

"I taught history 'real good,' to use a phrase my father used to use," he said. "And I fought for funding for Alabama State, and at that, I was excellent." ■

Continued from page 20
BROTHERS 'IN LAW'

organization for lawyers in the state. It was the first time in the association's history that a black had held its top post.

Fred has won several awards, including the National Bar Association Equal Justice Award (1977); the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Southern Christian Leadership Conference Drum Major's Award (1980); the President's Award, National Bar Association (1982); and the World Conference of Mayors Legal Award (1985).

Thomas Gray also had a compelling career in law.

He graduated from Alabama State in 1950 with a bachelor's degree in mathematics. After graduation, he taught math and physics at St. Jude Educational Institute in Montgomery and co-owned Dozier Radio Service, an appliance sales and service organization. In 1960, he was accepted to Cleveland State University, Cleveland Marshall School of Law.

While in law school, Thomas worked as a substitute teacher and as a clerk for the U.S. Post Office. He completed law school in 1963 and started a private law practice specializing in civil and criminal law. In 1967, he accepted a position as director of the Legal Aid Society of Cleveland.

Thomas practiced law in Cleveland for 28 years as general counsel of the Cuyahoga Metropolitan Housing Authority (1990-91); chief assistant general counsel of the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority (1976-88); director of Law in Urban Affairs (1969-76); and civil director of the Legal Aid Society of Cleveland (1969).

Thomas said his experiences at ASU

helped prepare him for a career in law.

"During my practice in Cleveland, I tried cases with and against graduates of noted universities," he said. "On occasion, I was chosen over them to direct legal projects, even served as general chief counsel of the Cuyahoga Metropolitan Housing Authority."

After relocating back to Montgomery, Thomas served as an administrative judge for seven years. In this position, he held hearings and issued decisions on appeals from determinations made under Titles II (retirement, survivors and disability insurance), and XVII (Medicare) of the Social Security Act. He also presided at hearings and issued decisions in matters remanded by the federal courts in conformity with the Administrative Procedure Act. He retired in 1998.

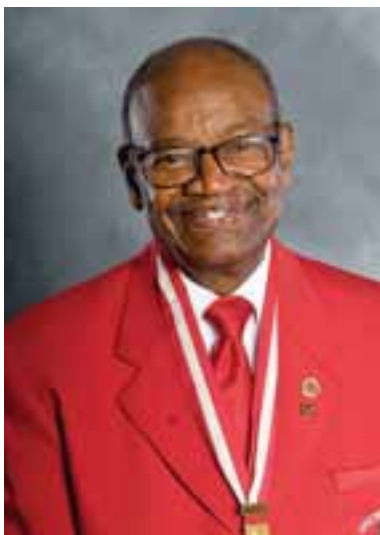
The one-time signalman with the U.S. Navy also served on the ASU Foundation Board of Trustees in 1967 and financially contributes annually to ASU. ■

Continued from page 36
QUINTON ROSS

"He really wants to make a difference," said Williams, who has known Ross for about 15 years. "When we have disagreed on issues, we always find a way later to laugh about the differences. He's a friend that I respect. Overall, he's just a good guy."

None of his success would have been possible without his experiences at ASU, said Ross.

"I tell all that I come in contact with that an ASU degree prepared me to stand toe to toe with graduates of Yale, Harvard and Brown," he said. "ASU has been integral in shaping who I am today." ■



Bryson Receives National Honor

By Tom Ensey

Dr. Ralph Bryson never thought he'd receive the highest honor his fraternity could bestow upon him when he started his service that has spanned seven decades.

Bryson, the head of the Department of Languages and Literature at ASU

who joined the faculty in 1953, is the 64th recipient of Kappa Alpha Psi's Laurel Wreath. He received the award before thousands attending the fraternity's Grand Chapter Meeting at the Marriott Wardman Park Hotel in Washington, D.C.

The award is given to fraternity members in recognition of the highest achievements in service to the organization and to human endeavors, national or international. Past honorees include Gen. David "Chappie" White, tennis legend Arthur Ashe, attorney Johnnie Cochran Jr., and baseball hall of famer Willie Mays.

Bryson said he was humbled by the honor.

"It means you have reached the epitome of achievement; there's nothing else you can do to go any higher," he said. "It makes me feel great. It's something I had never expected."

Bryson joined Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity when he was an

undergraduate student at the University of Cincinnati in December 1946.

He received his Ph.D. from Ohio State in 1953, joined the ASU faculty and was elected as the fraternity's Keeper of Records — equivalent to secretary — all in the same year. That same year, the Rev. Ralph Abernathy was elected Polemark, or president.

He has long been a writer and an editor for fraternity publications. Since 1969, Bryson has written a column called "Books and Such" for the quarterly Kappa Alpha Psi Journal. Along with co-author Everharding Pruitt, he wrote *History of the Southern Province* in 1999 and he updated the fifth edition of *The Story of Kappa Alpha Psi*.

Bryson previously won the fraternity's second-highest honor, the Elder W. Diggs Award, and has served as Grand Historian of the fraternity for 12 years. He will be a key officer helping lead the fraternity's centennial celebration in 2011. ■

Dr. Wallace Maryland: A Man on a Mission

By Tom Ensey

Dr. Wallace Maryland, who grew up in Montgomery and retired this year from Alabama State University after 47 years, had a goal when he started his career.

It was unusual for young black men to major in mathematics when Maryland attended ASU in the late 1950s. It was even more unusual for them to get a master's degree and a Ph.D. Maryland wanted to change that.

His mother was a maid, his father was a laborer. They stressed education, talking to their children about it all the time.

"They said if you expected to do anything, you had to get an education," he said.

Maryland thought that if he became a teacher, he could motivate more black students to major in math. He's accomplished that and more. In the last few years of his career,



Maryland said about 10 of his students have gone on to receive doctorates in math and many more have gone on to use mathematics degrees to get good jobs.

He helped establish dual-degree programs with other state universities that allowed Alabama State students to learn mathematics at ASU, and then get engineering degrees at UAB, Auburn or Alabama-Huntsville. He also helped establish programs to recruit gifted high school students to pursue degrees in math and science.

Back when he was getting started, teaching was about the only option available to minority students who chose math as a career. That's changed, Maryland said.

"You have more students with the desire to become more than a teacher," he said.

Maryland may be retired from his day job, but he is not finished with his life's mission. He's working at his church — Weeping Willow Baptist — to tutor children who are struggling in math and science courses.

He insists mathematics is not hard, despite what so many say about his beloved discipline.

"You just have to stay focused," he said. "I have learned that anybody can learn mathematics if you're not brain dead." ■

WALLACE & NAOMI
R. MARYLAND JR.
SCHOLARSHIP

Birmingham NAA Chapter Awards Vann Scholarships



The Birmingham Chapter of the Alabama State Alumni Association awarded \$1,000 scholarships to Tia Leigh Stoudmire, Tiffany McNeil and Bianca Walker at its annual Cleophus Vann Scholarship Gala. All three of the recipients are now freshmen at Alabama State University. Also honored were Dr. Ora M. Banks Parker, Larry Thornton and attorney Kenneth L. Thomas.

Continued from page 21 SISTERS 'IN LAW'

to prosecution.

In 2004, Shera was appointed assistant district attorney for DeKalb County, Ga. For the past five years, she has been assigned to the Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault Unit. She prosecutes major felony cases involving allegations of rape, murder, aggravated assault, kidnapping, false imprisonment and family violence battery. She works in the general felony trial division and in Superior Court. She also handles cases involving juveniles charged as adults.

When she's not in the courtroom,

Shera can be found in the classroom at Kennesaw State University where she is an adjunct professor. She also teaches online business law classes for the College of Business Administration at ASU.

"I am grateful to be given the opportunity to teach at my alma mater and help mold wonderful minds," she said. "The College of Business Administration (COBA) definitely prepared me for my career. COBA's environment promoted (the concept of) coaching (in addition to) teaching, which is vital in today's society." ■

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