



# Washington Fisk Alumni Association

## Fall 2018 Newsletter

*Cultivating Scholars & Leaders One by One*

## Dallas businessman Roland Parrish donates \$3M to Nashville's Fisk University (Nashville Business Journal)

**N**ashville's Fisk University has received a multimillion-dollar gift from a Dallas businessman and philanthropist.

According to a news release, Roland Parrish has donated \$3 million to the school. The donation will fund construction of the Roland G. Parrish Center for Career Planning and Development.

According to the release, it is among the



Dallas businessman Roland Parrish has donated \$3 million to Nashville's Fisk University. The donation will fund construction of the Roland G. Parrish Center for Career Planning and Development, seen here.

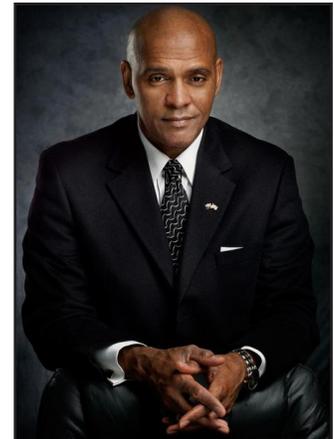
historically black college's biggest donations in its history.

"I believe in the Fisk future and the university's leadership. Fisk's extraordinary history is well documented. I am excited about its future and the impact this will have on students for generations to come," Parrish said in the release. "My hope is that this gift will inspire others to get even more engaged. The campus has been void of construction for a number of years. It takes something like this to remind people that Fisk is about succeeding, not surviving. The sky is the limit for Fisk."

Parrish is CEO of Parrish Restaurants Ltd., which owns 25 restaurants in and around Dallas. Parrish received his bachelor's and master's degrees from Purdue University's Krannert School of Business.

The new career center will include classrooms, conference rooms, and meeting and "innovation" spaces, according to the news release.

"Mr. Parrish embodies a truly altruistic



Roland Parrish

'doing well, doing good' vision, which is evidenced not only by his tremendous success with Parrish Restaurants Ltd., but also by his unparalleled belief and extension of community support, from Dallas to Uganda and now Nashville," Jens Frederiksen, Fisk's vice president of institutional advancement and strategic development, said in the release.

## WFAA Fundraiser a Success

**T**he Washington Fisk Alumni Association took over Wolf Trap! Our group of 45 Fisk family and friends enjoyed champagne, appetizers, great company, and the awesome music of Charlie Wilson and Sheila E. In addition to having fun, we raised \$1,350 for Fisk University.





## WFAA 2018-2019 Officers

**Samuel L. Williams, Jr. '68**  
President

**Will J. Carter '57**  
Vice-President, Membership

**Kerene N. Tayloe '02**  
Vice-President, Fundraising

**Vacant**  
Recording Secretary

**Alfreda H. Payne '70**  
Corresponding Secretary

**Raynese Scott Fikes '94**  
Treasurer

**Cheryl D. Eason '80**  
Financial Secretary

**Gloria Y. Johnson Elliott '72**  
Parliamentarian

Visit us online at  
[www.wfaaonline.org](http://www.wfaaonline.org)  
and [www.fisk.edu](http://www.fisk.edu)

### Dearly Departed

Mildred B. Collier-Wray '48

Ralph Reynaud '64

Thomas C. Rozzell '59

Barbara LaRouche Seymour '61

Brenda Barbour Tucker '63

# Message from the President



Dear Fisk Family,

It has been a great year for Fisk University raising over seven million dollars

and also for the Washington Fisk Alumni Association. As we prepare for two special events that are upcoming, we need your support.

First is the **Eastern Regional Conference and the Talented Tenth Gala**, which will be held **October 19-21, 2018** starting with a Golf Outing and ending with tickets for all registrants to the National Museum of African American History & Culture. Second is the Arena Stage production of the Play/Musical **"Jubilee"** on **Saturday, May 26, 2019**. You can obtain information for all of our activities by viewing [www.wfaaonline.org](http://www.wfaaonline.org).

Did you know that Fisk was the first Historically Black College or University to gain accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. Also it was the first Historically Black College or University to receive a prestigious Phi Beta Kappa chapter.

Just a note of some of the activities that your WFAA has participated in was the Champagne and Charlie Concert at Wolf Trap, the HBCU Alliance 5k Run and 2k Walk around Howard University, the Alvin Ailey Dance Ensemble at the Kennedy Center and the WIAC Annual MLK Awards Breakfast to name a few.

We also won two awards from the GAAFU at the Biennial Convention for the most money donated to the University and obtaining the largest dues paid membership of all clubs within the GAAFU.

As you probably know Fisk is the Tom Joyner Foundation School of the Month in August 2018 and you can continually give and encourage others to donate to that effort all year.

I am delighted to serve as your President of the WFAA and more importantly that I am now a "Golden Son of Fisk University" having graduated over 50 years ago. WOW!

Thanks,  
Sam '68

## A Message From President Kevin Rome: Summer Comes to an End



Greeting Fiskites,

The month of July seemed to have come and gone very quickly. Soon, we will be in full fall semester mode as student leaders began to arrive on July 30. We have done much planning and reorganizing this summer in preparation for our students. I look forward to welcoming all the students to campus in the next two weeks, whether they are first-time students or returners.

On July 10 Vice President Willie Jude and I traveled to Nassau, Bahamas for five days to help bolster our recruitment efforts in the country. Fisk University traditionally has very strong pipelines in the Bahamas. The purpose of the trip was to strengthen established relationships and to create additional partnerships. The trip included recruitment events, media appearances, visits to local high schools, a visit to the Bahamas Baptist Community College, and alumni gatherings. We also had the opportunity to meet with the Honorable Jeffrey L. Lloyd, Minister of Education, to discuss how to formalize a collaboration between Fisk University and the Bahamas. I want to thank Pastor Trajean Jadorette and his team for organizing a well-planned visit. I am confident our trip will lead more Bahamian students to choose Fisk University. We truly value the dynamic diversity our international students add

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to the campus culture and my goal is to increase our international student population.



**Pictured left to right: Pastor Trajean Jadorette; Honorable Jeffrey L. Lloyd, Minister of Education (Bahamas); President Kevin D. Rome, Sr. and Vice President Willie Jude.**

Recently, we transitioned enrollment management firms and we are now partnered with Education Advisory Board to amplify our recruitment efforts. On July 16, EAB arrived on campus to meet our Admissions and Information Technology Services teams for the first time. The conversation was very informative and exciting as we discussed the details of our partnership and recruitment strategy. I had the opportunity to work with this firm on a few campuses and have been impressed with their ability to generate results and outcomes aligned with my expectations and strategy. The goal is to grow Fisk University to at least 1,500 students in the near future. We must concurrently transform as an



**Pictured left to right: Sheila Smith, Joseph Watkins, Princilla Smart Morris, Ph.D., Latreace A. Wells, Shirley Rainey Brown, Ph.D., President Kevin D. Rome, Sr., Ph.D., Phyllis Freeman, Ph.D., and Rev. Jason Curry, Ph.D.**

institution as we transform our students.

The United Negro College Fund (UNCF)

Career Pathways Initiative (CPI) Third Annual Convention and Data Institute occurred in Fort Lauderdale, Florida from July 23 to July 25. A delegation of eight faculty and staff were present for the three-day convening. Fisk University received the \$1 million grant in 2016 and is one of the select recipients of the grant funded by the Eli Lilly Endowment, Inc. The grant aims to enhance career readiness for students through the coordination of a campus-wide strategy. The conference theme was "Purposeful Disruption" and it was very appropriate as we were inspired by best practices and innovation across the higher education spectrum. Collecting the right data and harnessing it is what will continue to help Fisk University make data informed decisions. I certainly applaud our fellow Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) faculty and staff for their contributions to the academy.

This summer Google hosted the Computer Science Summer Institute (CSSI) for HBCU students on our campus and Fisk was one of two sites chosen. The four-week program entailed exposing a group of 40 students admitted at various HBCUs to computer programming to ensure they are building confidence in their abilities while becoming familiar with the rigor of the major. The program was created to increase enrollment and retention of historically underrepresented students in computer science and to increase interest and access to Google's internships and job opportunities. On July 26, I had the opportunity to visit their classrooms, view individual project work, and speak to the group. At least two of the CSSI students will be attending Fisk University this fall. Our Google-in-Residence program has been a tremendous success and this year alone yielded nine internships at Google for our students. It is our charge to provide our students outcomes and opportunities, and Google is a great partner in that endeavor.

I was excited to attend the summer finale for the Verizon Innovative Learning for Minority Males Program (VIL MM) on Thursday, July 26. Mayor David Briley and local news stations were in attendance for the event. The VIL MM is a two-year

\$298,000 grant awarded in 2018 by The Verizon Foundation. The event was the culmination of a three-week summer program. The grant is aimed at increasing the access to digital communications to underserved middle school minority male populations through science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) enrichment and skills development. The program will continue throughout the school year through monthly after-school activities. Fisk University is ecstatic to be a recipient of the grant. I want to thank the Division



**President Kevin D. Rome, Sr. pictured with Mayor David Briley, Issac Thompson, Dr. Bryan Kent Wallace and male students in the VILMM Program (Photo by: Michael Hubbard)**

of Academic Affairs and Isaac Thompson for the instrumental work in writing and executing the grant.

We were pleased to welcome senior leadership from the Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC) to campus on Monday, July 30. On July 1, 2017 the state of Tennessee became the only state to have passed legislation aimed at specifically helping both public and private HBCUs increase their capacity by signing the HBCU Success legislation. We are thankful for the



**Dr. Kevin D. Rome, Sr. pictured with THEC and Fisk Senior Leadership Teams.**

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commitment to excellence and diversity the state of Tennessee has exhibited with the creation of this initiative. Our meeting was very encouraging as we discussed a myriad of ways to collaborate to accomplish mutual goals. We look forward to continued collaboration and outsized results from the HBCU Success initiative.

The Employee Engagement Committee

word of the month for August is empathy. We encourage everyone to not merely hear your colleagues, family, or friends, but to listen and attempt to understand their experience. People can sense authentic empathy and often the sincerity engenders a deeper connection. Empathy humanizes everyone irrespective of their individual differences and I believe we can all agree our world and nation could benefit from more empathy.

We exist for our students and our community. We always have, and forever will, cultivate scholars and leaders.

Fisk today. Fisk tomorrow. Fisk Forever!

All my best,  
President Kevin D. Rome, Sr.

## Fiskites participate in the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual DC Metro HBCU Alumni Alliance Community Day & 5K Run/Walk on the campus of Howard University



## Become a GAAFU Life Member

Please consider becoming a life member of the General Alumni Association of Fisk University, Inc. (GAAFU). You will receive a handsome plaque at the annual reunion weekend Gala Banquet following your payment in full, or if you cannot attend, the plaque will be mailed to you. The cost of life membership is \$750, which may be paid in full or in installments. Five installments of \$150 each, or two installments of \$375 each are the installment choices to select from. In order to receive the plaque at the Gala Banquet full payment should be made by the middle of April, prior to the Banquet. Benefits accruing to being a life member include a 20% discount on purchases in the University bookstore and discounts on items sold by the GAAFU. ●



# FISK

UNIVERSITY

*Save the Date*  
**October 19-21, 2018**

**Eastern Regional Weekend and  
Talented Tenth Gala  
& Awards Ceremony**

**Hilton Crystal City | Arlington, VA**

To reserve your hotel room now, please contact 703-418-6800.

**FRIDAY, OCTOBER 19**

**2nd Annual Eastern Regional Golf Outing**

*12PM (Registration & Practice)*

*1PM (Shot gun start)*

*National Golf Club*

*300 St. Andrews Drive*

*Fort Washington, MD 20744*

**Pre Show Mixer (includes hors d'oeuvres/buffet)**

**HBCU Standup Comedy Show**

*7PM - 12AM*

*Hilton Crystal City*

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 20**

**Eastern Regional Meeting**

*8:30AM - 9AM Continental Breakfast*

*9AM - 5PM Meetings/Lunch*

*Hilton Crystal City*

**Talented Tenth Gala & Awards Ceremony**

*7PM - 12AM*

*Hilton Crystal City*

**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 21**

*Church Service &*

*Trip to the National Museum of African American History and Culture*

[wfaaonline.org](http://wfaaonline.org)