



Washington Fisk Alumni Association

Fall 2019 Newsletter

Cultivating Scholars & Leaders One by One

Blockbuster Presentation

The May 26, 2019 performance of "Jubilee" served as a fundraiser celebrating Fisk University's famous and awe inspiring Jubilee Singers. The ensemble cast narrated their story from the beginning of the Jubilee Singers through thumbnail biographies by a balanced cast whose keen musicality rendered, as Fiskites remember and appreciate, the songs of our Jubilee Singers.

The after show itinerary included a monetary presentation for Fisk to Dr. Kevin D. Rome, Fisk President. Next, the Fiskite audience sang happy birthday to Dr. Rome, followed by a rendition of "The Gold and Blue." The activity concluded with a meet and greet with Jubilee playwright and director, Mr. Tazewell Thompson, and the cast of Jubilee.



Fisk Jubilee Singers® are on the move!

Fisk Jubilee Singers® sang Harry T. Burleigh Spirituals at the legendary Carnegie Hall's Zankel Hall on Saturday, March 2 at 7:30 p.m. The Harry T. Burleigh Society and the Fisk Jubilee Singers® joined in a historic performance celebrating of the concert spiritual tradition. Performing spirituals inspired by original Singer, composer Ella Sheppard, and spirituals arranged by Burleigh.

The performance featured the Fisk Jubilee Singers® performing in Victorian Dress, portraying the singers as depicted in the 1873 Havel portrait commissioned by Queen Victoria - and reminding audiences of the many parallels that exist between that era and today.





WFAA 2019-2020 Officers

Samuel L. Williams, Jr. '68
President

Will J. Carter '57
Vice-President, Membership

Vacant
Vice-President, Fundraising

Trevor A. Browne '87
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
and www.fisk.edu

Message from the President



Fisk Family,

student and mentor success.

The WFAA has had a great year supporting our beloved Fisk University. With

We are members of the DC Metro HBCU Alumni Alliance and supported it's 5K run and 2k walk on the campus of Howard University with 28 participants. This year this event will be moved to the Mall on the Capitol grounds looking to attract 3-5 thousand run/walkers. WFAA is one of the original alumni associations that are part of the Alliance.

that in mind, we have raised to date \$17,500 that has been presented to the University which has been used as unrestricted funds. We know there is more to come with our excellent programs and fundraising efforts that will help in University support.

Please come out and pay your dues and join us for all or some of the activities that we are part of. On behalf of the Officers and members of the WFAA, we look forward to seeing you in the future.

This year over two hundred plus attended the play "Jubilee" held at the Arena Stage in Washington D.C. Alumni support from near and far supported the event. Our President, Dr. Kevin Rome, was in town to enjoy the festivities and enjoyed mingling with the Fisk family.

Sincerely,
Samuel L. Williams, Jr. '68

Our group also supported student recruitment efforts for new students attending the University this fall and in the future. We have a mentoring committee that will pair you up with a student to share and gain information on careers, educational tidbits and resources for

A Message From President Kevin D. Rome: Another Year Has Come and Gone



Greetings,

There was a lot of fanfare this past weekend since the National Football League (NFL) Draft occurred in Nashville. The extensive celebration and talk of the NFL season made me think about the seasonality of higher education, and what part of the cycle Fisk University is in now. It is incredible to think an entire year has passed and we eagerly await our finale, Commencement. It is a bittersweet time as we celebrate the triumph of our students, while also reflecting what they brought to the campus for the last few years. I am truly excited to see what they will bring to the

rest of the world. As I reminisce over the month of April, there were a lot of activities to account for, so I have the good problem of trying to summarize them as efficiently as possible.

We held our annual Honor's Convocation on Thursday, April 4th in the Fisk Memorial Chapel. Our keynote address was delivered by Reverend Dr. Shively T. J. Smith '03. Rev. Smith spoke to our students about her path in the academy and how her Fisk University experiences prepared her to be a scholar. Furthermore, she provided

Continued on next page

vivid biblical references and related them to our students' real-world struggles and the broader sociopolitical context in the United States today. The oration left our students reflective and appreciative of the encouragement. The occasion was provided by Nicholas Whiteside, class of 2021 and English Speaking Union's Luard Morse Scholarship recipient. Rev. Smith was actually Fisk University's first Luard Morse Scholarship recipient which made the event full circle for her. We appreciate our alumni trailblazing for our students and being the shoulders our students stand upon.



Left to Right: Rev. Dr. Jason Curry, Chief of Staff Joseph Watkins, Provost Vann Newkirk, Rev. Dr. Shively Smith '03, sophomore Ti'Ara Clark, Dr. Katharine Burnett, Dr. Sajid Hussain, Dr. Patrick Fleming, and sophomore Nicholas Whiteside

I traveled to Birmingham on April 6 to attend the Birmingham Fisk Alumni Club's Scholarship Jazz Brunch. The theme of the event was A Golden Affair. The agenda centered around honoring and celebrating the Golden Fiskites in attendance. There were also several local prospective students present and we made sure they were embraced and educated on the outcomes and opportunities Fisk University provides. It is always great to see how our alumni coalesce to raise scholarships funds for our students.

We hosted our 90th Spring Arts Festival from April 7 through 14. The theme for this year's extravaganza was Remembering our Past. The week included the Color of Frequency three-part series with Franchelle Lucas, the Stagecrafters' presented The Colored



Museum by George C. Wolf, The Fisk for Fisk concert, student works of art, jazz at noon by the Fisk University Jazz Ensemble, and sessions with well-known names such as Rob Hardy, Bobby Jones, and Shannon Sanders. The Fisk community looks forward to this annual event because it brings so many elements of the Fisk experience together to showcase our internal talent while also providing students an opportunity to learn from successful artists. If you did not attend, you missed a treat, but we hope you can attend next year. I want to thank the committee and everyone who collaborated on the week as it was not only very enjoyable but extremely enriching to our campus environment.

This time of year is typically peak season for culminating year-end events. April 17 and 18 were very busy and exciting days for a number of reasons. On Wednesday, April 17th democratic presidential candidate Amy Klobuchar hosted a roundtable discussion on campus to discuss the state of Tennessee's infrastructure. We had some staff and students present along with members of the community and local officials. Later that same day, we met with Matthew Clemons, Director of Admissions at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government, to discuss how we can create a better pipeline of students pursuing graduate study or career advancing executive programs. I also had the opportunity to meet with William Weeden '84 who is the Executive Director of Nashville's newly established Community Oversight Board. The meeting served as an introduction and an invitation to collaborate. Finally, we hosted our Athletics department



Left to Right: Melissa Brown, creator of Retool Your School campaign; Chief of Staff Joseph Watkins, Laz Alonso, Ricky Smiley, Tierra Robinson, Fisk's communications and digital content coordinator; and Shannon Sharpe at the Winner's Ceremony.

banquet, our Employee Recognition Luncheon, and the Student Leadership Awards. I really enjoy seeing people so joyous and feeling appreciated because their diligent work throughout the year has not gone unnoticed.

I want to send a resounding thank you to all the students, alumni, faculty, staff, community members, and partners who helped us secure our \$50,000 award from the Home Depot Retool Your School campaign. We emerged as first in our cluster. Our collective efforts harnessed more votes than any other institution, regardless of size, which is a stupendous feat given there were institutions which have 10 times our student population.



We are happy to share Anisha Mittal, class of 2020 Biology major, has won a 2019 Goldwater Scholarship, Fisk University's first Goldwater win. The

Goldwater is widely considered the most prestigious award for undergraduate Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) students. We have some truly bright students who win many awards but I took a moment to highlight this scholarship because it is monumental for Fisk.

Continued on next page

Continued from page 3

I look forward to seeing many faces on campus during our Reunion Weekend, May 2-5, Baccalaureate, May 5, and Commencement, May 6. Please enjoy your time on campus and do not forget to give back to our beloved Fisk University.

We exist for our students and our community. We always have, and forever

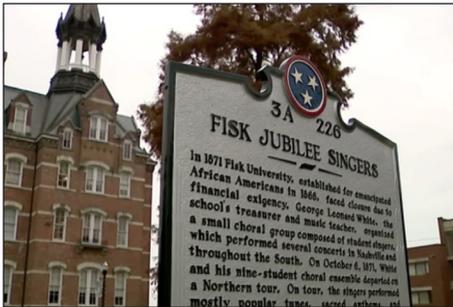
will, cultivate scholars and leaders.

Fisk today. Fisk tomorrow. Fisk Forever!

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



HCA Healthcare to give \$1M to Fisk University in partnership



NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) — HCA Healthcare is donating \$1 million to Fisk University in a partnership aimed at creating scholarships and internships.

A news release says Nashville-based HCA has committed the money over the next four years to fund the creation of the HCA Healthcare Scholars program at Fisk.

supports students at the historically black university in Nashville studying business, computer science, biology, psychology and other subjects.

Additionally, HCA will provide guest lecturers for students who may be considering a career in health care.

The program launched this summer and

Fisk University Works to Provide Enhanced Career Guidance for Students

New partnership with YouScience helps connect students with in-demand job opportunities

Fisk University today announced a new effort to help students better understand how their natural abilities align with today's workforce and plan proactive education pathways to pursue in-demand jobs.

The institution has partnered with Nashville-based edtech company YouScience to provide a cutting-edge aptitude assessment tool to students as part of their first-year seminar course. Beginning in the 2019-2020 academic year, all freshmen students will be required to utilize the YouScience program, which uses a series of scientifically-proven "brain games" to identify students' unique aptitudes and showcase how these innate talents "fit" with modern career pathways.

"Fisk is committed to preparing students for leadership roles and executive positions across the country, but there is a vast exposure gap when it comes

to understanding all the available opportunities," said Fisk University President Dr. Kevin D. Rome. "Through YouScience, young adults can gain new understanding of their abilities, talents, and gifts while also learning about careers that they may not previously have thought about. We're excited to provide YouScience to all first-year students as part of our commitment to maximizing the success of our graduates."

Unlike traditional interest-based career tools, YouScience is the only system that captures real measures of students' aptitudes and provides students with a highly-personalized overview of their best-fit careers, along with detailed information on average salary, regional and national job demand, and education requirements.

YouScience CEO Philip Hardin said, "We're thrilled to have the opportunity to partner with Fisk University. It's so

important college students have the information and resources necessary to make the right choices about their educational pathways. By providing YouScience to all incoming students, Fisk is helping more young adults better understand their best-fit careers, proactively plan their college learning experience, and lay the foundation for greater success after graduation."

"Our partnership with YouScience reinforces everything we have been doing here at Fisk for the past few years to help our students excel both academically and in life," Dr. Rome added. "This platform will not only allow students to identify their full range of talents, but also to appreciate all the possibilities for a fulfilling career."

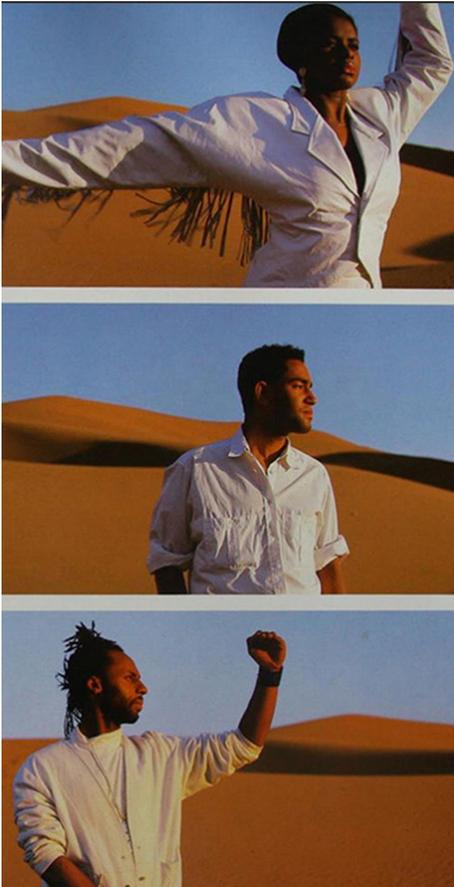
Continued on next page

About YouScience

Unlike traditional interest-based career aptitude programs, YouScience is the only system that combines a students' interests, abilities and personality traits with real-world career data. Through a series of fun and engaging "brain games," YouScience's innovative technology collects real measures of students' aptitudes and interests. YouScience then employs decades of rigorous scientific research, cutting-edge matching algorithms and the most reliable and comprehensive career data to identify the intersection of each students' talents, passions and opportunities. Learn more about YouScience at www.youscience.com.

Join the WFAA at the HBCU Alumni Black-Tie Gala

The Washington Fisk Alumni Association's (WFAA) goal as a committee is to promote this event by selling only 4 tickets each, to allow for the WFAA to take advantage of the revenue sharing. Folks like to dress-up, so invite Fiskites, family, and friends to the Gala. Our goal is to have at least a table for 10, which means 10 tickets will need to be purchased. For more information, contact Betty Seltzer, WFAA representative for the DC Metro HBCU Alumni Alliance, at 240-893-6864 or bseltzer@farmersagent.com.



3RD ANNUAL
HBCU ALUMNI BLACK-TIE GALA
FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 2019, 7-11PM
Featuring Loose Ends with Jane Eugene

Presented by Xfinity

Our honorees include:

 William E. Bennett, Ph.D. <i>Public Policy</i> Lincoln University	 Rosie Allen-Herring <i>Community Involvement</i> Howard University	 James L. McNeil <i>Business</i> Alabama State University
 Iris R. Wagstaff, Ph.D. <i>Education</i> North Carolina A&T State University	 Eunique Jones-Gibson <i>Media & Communications</i> Bowie State University	 Leah M. Williams <i>Young Alumni</i> Delaware State University

National Museum for Women in the Arts
1250 New York Ave. NW, Washington, DC
For more info. and tickets visit dchbcu.org.



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. ●

**WASHINGTON FISK ALUMNI ASSOCIATION
2019-2020 MEETING SCHEDULE**

Sam Williams '68, President

ALL MEETINGS 1st SUNDAY IN THE MONTH, (EXCEPT HOLIDAY SUNDAYS, SUPER BOWL SUNDAY, AND MONTH OF
MAY/COMMENCEMENT) AT 4PM

PLEASE RSVP ONE WEEK IN ADVANCE

September 8, 2019

Hostess: Alfreda Hunt Payne '70
2133 Hidden Valley Lane Silver Spring, MD 20904
RSVP: 301-325-4029

NO OCTOBER 2019 MEETING

In lieu of a meeting, all Fiskites are invited to a Fisk Jubilee Day Recognition Celebration at
All Nations Baptist Church October 6, 2019 **11AM service**

Rev. Dr. James Coleman, Pastor
2001 North Capitol St. NE Washington, DC 20002

November 3, 2019

Host: Kevin Alexander '83
Wellspring Manor & Spa
1131 Drumsheugh Lane Upper Marlboro, MD 20774
RSVP: 301-384-9621

December 1, 2019

Hosts/Hostesses: Cheryl '80 & Colvin Easton '80, Deborah Curry '80
Shelia Zeliner-Jenkins '80, Milton Sloan '80 & '82
3590 Stephies Court Alexandria, VA 22309
RSVP: 703-304-6275

January 5, 2020

Hostess: Maryann Rozzell '57 & Donna Burns '80
3422 Barkley Dr. Fairfax, VA 22031
RSVP: 703-280-1171

February 9, 2020

Hostesses/Hosts: Monica Rhea '78, Rhea Beckett '13, Maria Day-Marshall '78, Donna Brown Ball '78
Dorothy Wigglesworth '68, Milton Sloan '80 & '82, G. Vernon White '83
Location TBA
RSVP: 937-718-5409

March 4, 2020

Hosts/Hostesses: Will Carter '57, Dorothea '58 & Robert Hunter '56, Sheree McManus '77
Celestine Shird '82, Sylvia Syphax '66, Anthony Murphy '99, Ida Smith '57
Vicino Ristorante Italiano
959 Sligo Ave. Silver Spring, MD 20910
RSVP: 202-488-4724

April 5, 2020

Hostesses: Gloria Y. Elliott '72, Denise Wilson-Taylor '72, Stephanie Williams '72, Diane Fields Reed '72
Vicino Ristorante Italiano
959 Sligo Ave. Silver Spring, MD 20910
RSVP: 202-723-6155 or dwilsonataylor@aol.com

NO MAY MEETING
FISK COMMENCEMENT WEEKEND

June 2, 2020

Host: Sam Williams
9710 23rd Avenue Adelphi, MD 20783
RSVP: 301-996-0366