

NORFOLK STATE UNIVERSITY

# BEHOLD

VOLUME 7, ISSUE 2

Mona T. Gunn '74

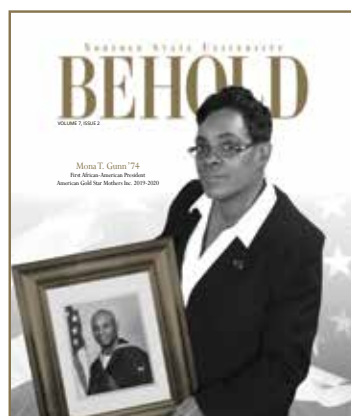
First African-American President  
American Gold Star Mothers Inc. 2019-2020



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Mona Gunn '74  
Photo by Lateef Gibson









# From the Desk of the Vice President for University Advancement

According to author B.J. Neblett, “We are the sum total of our experiences.” He says that experiences, whether good or bad, shape who we become across the seasons of our lives.

In this issue of **BEHOLD**, the experiences of the individuals featured in our articles are crucial to who they are, what they have become and what is important to them. Through their experiences, we are able to draw lessons from how each experience sparked an initiative, helped them learn new insights and skills or find a way to push beyond what they previously achieved.

So often, life presents harsh and difficult realities that can keep us down if we let them. Yet many have triumphed over events that could have crushed them. One such person is Mona Gunn ’74. She fought through the pain of a horrific tragedy that allowed her to encourage and lift up others (page 16). By opening her heart to those who also lost a child, she has been encouraged and uplifted. In June 2019, Gunn will make history as the national president of the Gold Star Mothers...the first African-American to do so.

We also highlight five Norfolk State students who embarked on summer internships. The experiences and lessons they learned will undoubtedly shape their careers and professional lives. Read about where they worked, what they learned and the advice that they are offering to others (page 10). Sometimes, we tackle experiences that challenge and seem to push us beyond our limits... only to discover that perseverance brings gratification, which can serve as an inspiration for others. That was the impetus that found Jermaine Jackson ’97 battling frigid temperatures and the threat of bears in the Tennessee wilderness (page 24). Jackson wanted to mitigate old stereotypes while also honoring his father who taught him to hunt, fish and live off the land.

Then there’s the desire to pass on traditions that have shaped us and nurtured us. That is the goal of the university-wide initiative launched by Dr. Carl W. Haywood ’71 (page 20). He fondly remembers what it was like to be a student at Norfolk State, the attention he received from his professors, the *Spartan Pride* that permeated the campus and the *Esprit de Corps* the University enjoyed with the community. Haywood wanted to instill those intangibles into a new generation of students, faculty, staff and community. Through his desire came the inspiration for the *NSU: Valuing People, Minds and Traditions* campaign. This new initiative, along with other events and activities, has helped create a new vibrancy and energy across campus and with our community partners.

As we look forward to 2019, it is my hope that the resilience of Mona Gunn, the determination of Jermaine Jackson, the desire of Carl Haywood and the lessons learned by our student interns will inspire you to reflect upon how your life experiences have shaped who you are and what you have achieved. From my own life, I found that each experience (whether good or challenging) has made my life more meaningful and better equipped me to serve others. I am confident this is true for you as well.

This has been an outstanding year for Norfolk State University. Happy Holidays and may 2019 be your best year yet!

Behold.



Deborah C. Fontaine



# NORFOLK STATE UNIVERSITY BEHOLD

VOLUME 7, ISSUE 2      A MAGAZINE WITH GLOBAL REACH

The word “**Behold**” is often used by those who love Norfolk State. It sums up the excellence of the University and pride felt for it. That is why when it came to naming the magazine featuring the accomplishments and progress taking place at Norfolk State, “**Behold**” easily came to mind.

Melvin T. Stith Sr., Ph.D.  
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# SEARCH FOR *New President Underway*



In July, the Board of Visitors began its search for the seventh President of Norfolk State University. The board in its announcement said that it is seeking a dynamic, entrepreneurial, innovative and creative leader with strong academic, administrative, development and business acumen. “The successful candidate will be a visionary, advancing the University’s reputation while increasing resources through private and public partnerships,” the announcement said.

“The next president will appreciate the distinctiveness of NSU’s mission as a historically black institution and be able to interpret that mission for the changing environment of higher education. He or she will also have a demonstrated track record of problem solving in a complex organization, with a deep commitment to shared governance and with integrity beyond reproach.”

To direct the search process, the Board of Visitors established a 21-member Presidential Search Committee representative of the University’s multiple stakeholders. It also retained Greenwood/Asher & Associates Inc., a search firm that has successfully completed more than 2,000 searches and consulting and training projects, to work with the committee. The committee is co-chaired by board members Deborah M. DiCrocce and Larry A. Griffith.

During the first months of the search process, a series of listening sessions were held to engage NSU’s external and internal constituencies. The sessions, held in July, August and September, allowed the general public, alumni, donors, the faith community, students, faculty, staff and administrators to share their ideas about what qualities and characteristics they would like to see in the University’s next president. That input informed the search process and helped the search committee develop the presidential profile.



PHOTOS BY DON SPENCER

Additionally, a Presidential Search website was developed and it allowed individuals to provide their feedback online and nominate individuals they felt would provide excellent leadership to Norfolk State.

The next phases of the search process include evaluation of candidates, including interviews; selection/appointment of the final candidate; and the announcement and introduction of the new president.

For updates and background information on the presidential search, go to [www.nsu.edu/presidentialsearch](http://www.nsu.edu/presidentialsearch) **B**





PHOTO COURTESY OF: THE BALM IN GILEAD, INC.

*Center for Excellence in*  
**MINORITY HEALTH DISPARITIES**  
**RECEIVES AWARD**  
*for Community Outreach* By SHARON RIDDICK HOGGARD (M.A.'04)

**A**ffordable health care remains in the forefront of political dialogue today, eight years after the Affordable Care Act was signed into law (August 23, 2010). In 2014, the bulk of the legislation went into effect and the health insurance exchanges opened, providing eligible consumers the opportunity to shop, compare and buy health insurance directly. Established in the midst of the debate about health and access to health care, Norfolk State University's Center for Excellence in Minority Health Disparities has been strategically working to promote health equity and eliminate health disparities for about three years. The Center's work in the Healthy Churches 2020 initiative is being recognized for its impact on the health of African-Americans.

Health disparities refer to the differences in health outcomes that are closely linked with social, economic and environmental disadvantages. Or, the differences between populations when it comes to access to and use of care and quality of care. According to Cigna Health and Life Insurance Company, African-Americans experience significant health disparities when compared to other populations including experiencing chronic conditions, having access to care, and getting preventive screenings. Here are a few health disparities that exist for African-Americans in comparison to Caucasians:

## HEALTH DISPARITIES

Higher rates of adult obesity (48 percent of adults)

80 percent more likely to be diagnosed with diabetes

2.4 times more likely to begin treatment for end-stage renal disease

1.7 times more likely to be hospitalized

Men are 30 percent and women 60 percent more likely to have hypertension

Less likely to keep their blood pressure under control

Women are 40 percent more likely to die of breast cancer

20 percent more likely to report psychological distress

50 percent less likely to receive counseling or mental health treatment

The NSU Center for Excellence in Minority Health Disparities' mission is to develop and provide research expertise, increase education and research opportunities for faculty and students, leadership and community support in reducing health disparities in critical areas that affect minority communities, notes Dr. Cynthia Burwell, who serves as the director for the Center. "We field calls from people in the community who have questions about health issues or scheduling a speaker for an event. We have an interdisciplinary steering committee that meets monthly to discuss ways the Center can increase its presence in the community as well as scheduling health-related events on campus for students, faculty and community," added Burwell.

The Balm in Gilead, a Richmond-based nonprofit, is recognizing NSU's Center for Excellence in Minority Health Disparities for engaging African-American church congregations in addressing health disparities. "The Balm in Gilead's mission is to prevent diseases and to improve the health status of individuals who are disproportionately affected by high rates of health disparities especially HIV, hepatitis C, cervical cancer and sexual violence," Burwell said. She further explained about the Balm in Gilead group. "During its annual Healthy Churches 2020 initiative, they recognize an organization that has done exceptional work in the community around the area of health disparities. The Center works with about 25 health ministry leaders, training them on pertinent health issues that they can then use to educate their congregants."

Based on the Center's research, the Healthy Churches project has had a significant impact on participants. Interviews were conducted with the health ministers in the participating churches and congregants were surveyed. "The most interesting thing I have found about the health ministry leaders, is that they are really interested in helping to educate the members of their congregations so that they can live healthy long lives. We found that all groups, except 18 through 44 year olds, had a significant before and after increase in their overall health status and satisfaction with their social activities and relationships," exclaimed Burwell. The Center's director also noted that the participants were quite receptive to the fact that NSU was willing to help them reach their goals in keeping their congregations healthy. Additional findings included:

***Increases in the quality and status of daily activities***  
***Decreases in emotional problems***  
***Decreases in fatigue and pain***

"The most significant improvement was an increase in knowledge of cardiovascular disease and heart healthy lifestyles. Participants shared that their participation in the Healthy Churches project allowed them to expand upon pre-existing programs within their faith-based organizations." Burwell proudly stated that one of the program's participants was able to access additional information about breast cancer to support initiatives already in place regarding the disease. "The results also indicated that the churches were not only interested in continuing the project, but expanding it beyond their health ministries and offering it to the full congregation."

Burwell said the Center for Excellence in Minority Health Disparities will continue its work with the Healthy Churches Coalition of Hampton Roads on a quarterly basis. "We'll be working closely with the Virginia Department of Health's Office of Health Equity to see how we can continue to expand our efforts to reduce health disparities in our area."

Health care organizations including the health insurance industry recognize the importance of addressing health disparities that are affecting the African-American population and other communities. It will take a concerted effort to close the gaps in access to quality health care and the disparity in health outcomes. It will take continued education, clinical intervention, diversity and inclusion activities, cultural competency training and resources as well as community outreach like that being done by NSU's Center for Excellence in Minority Health Disparities. **B**



# Working In and Out of the Classroom

The faculty at Norfolk State University work throughout the year conducting research, attending conferences, contributing articles to professional journals and continuing their studies in other countries — all in an effort to improve best practices in the classroom and to keep up with the latest trends in higher education.

Here is a brief compilation of faculty highlights and accomplishments:



The **C3 Cluster (Norfolk State, Morgan State and Tennessee State)** received an award during the closing ceremony of the UNCF Career Pathways Initiative for its forward-thinking collaboration. The initiative seeks to strengthen career outcomes and increase professional development for four-year HBCUs and PBIs.



**Dr. Cheryl Hinds**, computer science graduate coordinator for cybersecurity and associate professor of computer science, was awarded a new grant from the **Department of Defense** for **\$54.4K**.





**Dr. Harrison B. Wilson**, second President of Norfolk State University, received the **Trailblazer award** from Men of Hope Inc. for his contributions to the Hampton Roads community. Dr. Wilson led Norfolk State from **1975 to 1997**. It was under his leadership that Norfolk State received its designation as a university in 1979. He is pictured with his daughter **April Woodard**.



**The National Science Foundation (NSF)** has awarded new Partnerships for Research and Education in Materials (PREM) grants to support eight collaborations across the United States aimed at fostering cutting-edge materials research while increasing diversity. Each award is expected to total nearly \$4 million and will support a materials

research partnership between a minority-serving institution (MSI) and a large-scale research facility supported by NSF's Division of Materials Research (DMR). Norfolk State is expected to receive \$1,450,000. **Dr. Doyle Temple**, professor of physics and faculty member in the Center for Materials Research, is a co-principal investigator for The Fort Lewis College and Norfolk State University STROBE Science and Technology Center. The project will focus on advanced imaging and characterization of functional nanomaterials. The PREM framework elements of this project will provide undergraduate students access to research mentors, guided research experiences, professional development activities, a peer support network and leadership opportunities.



The **Howard Hughes Medical Institute** has awarded **Norfolk State University** a **\$1 million grant** as part of its **Inclusive Excellence initiative**. NSU is one of 33 colleges and universities selected nationwide for the 2018 grant. The Inclusive Excellence initiative aims to help institutions

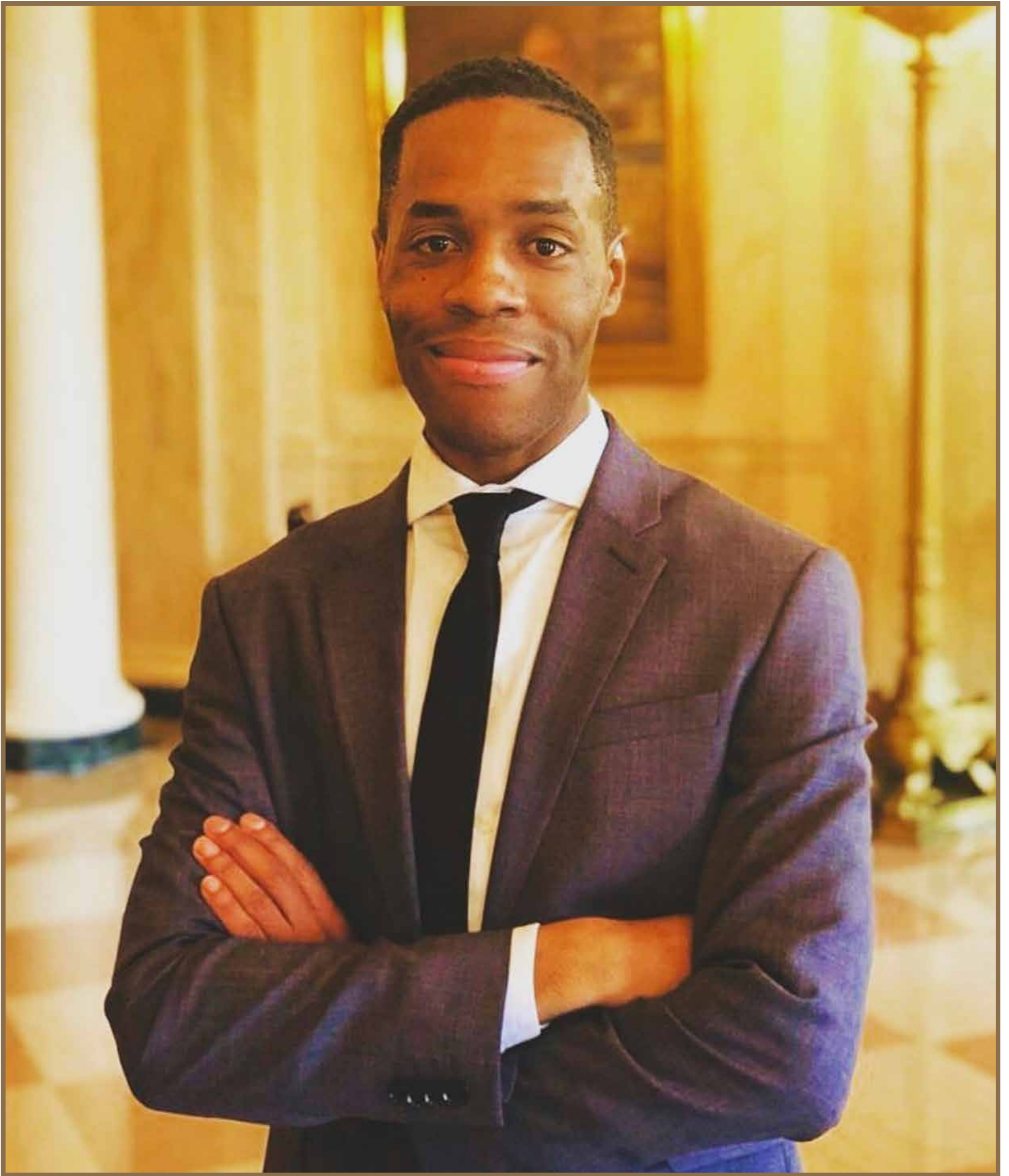
build their capacity to effectively engage all students in science throughout their undergraduate years, especially those who come to college via nontraditional pathways. As part of its grant, Norfolk State plans to create community-focused, collaborative course-based research experiences (C3URE) and integrate them throughout the four-year curriculum.

**Dr. Ashley Haines**, associate professor of biology, is the program director.



**Prof. Gregory Gardner**, a member of the music department, conducted a workshop on preparing high school students for college voice auditions for Norfolk Public Schools high school music educators. He also was the baritone soloist in Beethoven's Ode to Joy from Symphony No. 9 performed by the **Virginia Symphony**

**Orchestra** as part of its Community Play-In and Sing-Along at the Scope Arena presented by the City of Norfolk and the Virginia Symphony Orchestra.





# Stepping Outside COMFORT ZONE Leads To White House Internship

By CARMEN CASH (M.A. '19)  
*Communications and Marketing Intern*

**R**amal Johnson (M.A.'13) took a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity in January 2018. Johnson, a master of media and communications graduate, took a four-month internship in the Office of Presidential Correspondence as a White House intern. "I applied on a whim," says Johnson, "I didn't think I'd get it."

Yet, Johnson was not only accepted into the program, but was the only African-American among the roughly 90 interns who were selected. Over the course of the internship, Johnson realized that many of the individuals he worked with had never worked with African-Americans before, let alone a Democrat, and knew little about African-American culture.

"He is very open minded, and he can place himself in a position not to focus on one issue," says Pamela Rodgers, Johnson's mother. "He doesn't have tunnel vision. He can see a situation from all different sides and aspects."

As a White House intern, Johnson's main job was to serve as a liaison between President Donald J. Trump, and the American people, addressing concerns, and issues. However, he didn't learn about his assignment until he arrived at the White House the first day. "Everything is confidential, so they didn't tell us much. We didn't even know what department we were working in, or what we were doing."

Recently, Johnson was on campus as part of the Mass Communications and Journalism Department's News Engagement Day and spoke to students about his time as a White House intern and allowed them to ask him questions about his journey and experiences while stressing the importance of internships and extracurricular activities. He chuckled a little when speaking about how surprised the students were to find out that although he was not in support of President Trump, his White House colleagues are not, as Johnson stated, the "monsters" that they are portrayed to be in the media. "We disagree politically, but they aren't monsters."

He pointed out to students what he believes to be current issues in media, which include the depiction of minorities.

"A lot of times whenever a person of color, let's say an African-American, is depicted in the media, he or she is depicted stereotypically, and that's because a lot of the writers, producers, and directors have little to no contact with African-Americans so they rely on stereotypes to portray them because that's the only way they think of us," says Johnson.

"The excuse is well: we don't know any African-Americans who qualify to be writers or producers—which is not true."

Johnson believes that in order to control the narrative, African-Americans must create the narrative.

"We need to have more people of color behind the camera instead of in front of the camera, so we need to be the ones who are making the decisions."

In the meantime, Johnson stands in front of a class as a professor at Northern Virginia Community College. Johnson credits the lessons he learned during his time at Norfolk State University as the foundation for the expectations he sets for his students.

"I had professors who were very strict as far as guidelines are concerned," says Johnson. "In media, especially in journalism, there are standards you have to meet, and they held us to those standards," says Johnson as he reflects on his years as a Spartan.

From his experience as a White House intern, Johnson offers a piece of advice to students.

"Go outside your comfort zone. I applied to the White House thinking I was not going to get it at all. I kind of did it just to do it." **B**





**IMAJAÉ JOHNSON '18, JOURNALISM MAJOR, FROM VIRGINIA BEACH, VA.**

Johnson was immersed in the high-powered, high-luxury world of the Hamptons working for *Hamptons Magazine* in Southampton, New York. "Ever since I was a child, I've dreamt about being a part of the magazine in some way, shape, or form," Johnson. To make the internship a reality, it took moxie. There wasn't an announcement of the internship, or a posting on the website. "This internship was more of a 'who you know' situation, or you had to have been a resident of the area. So, I decided to go old school and send a copy of my résumé and a cover letter to the office, and a few months later, I was given an offer to be an intern."

She worked from May to August and arrived at the magazine during an important milestone. The publication was celebrating its 40th Anniversary. Johnson's duties included maintaining the magazine's website calendar and assisting at events and with photography. She also attended magazine photo shoots, parties and socials, meeting celebrities and socialites. "The internship taught me about business and life. Being an intern at a magazine can be fun and glamorous, but there will be criticism and you have to have tough skin."

The internship helped her see that the public relations and promotions field was the correct path for her career. She is grateful for the leadership skills she's learned at Norfolk State. "I took my Spartan Pride to Southampton, NY, and I represented Norfolk State University with class and excellence," Johnson says. "I want to thank Norfolk State for teaching me how to be a leader and how to effectively and diligently push myself to do better and go higher." Johnson would tell other NSU students to make the most of their internship. "Get involved in as much as you can, and show who you are in everything you do. People will respect you more and will gravitate toward you when you are genuine."

# NSU Interns Gain By GAIL KENT 'REAL-WORLD' EXPERIENCE Through Exciting Internships

Ask anyone who's traveled the road to career success and they'll recommend students working as many internships as possible before they start sending out résumés.

Students across the country, including those at NSU, find that internships help them apply classroom knowledge to the business environment, develop professional competencies, build résumés and establish valuable networks that often lead to job offers.

National studies show that internships pay off. The 2015 Endicott College Career Center Graduate Report revealed that 53 percent of graduates reported securing positions within the first year after graduation from former intern sites or internship site contacts, and 90 percent reported working within their respective fields of study. In Looksharp's 2016 State of Millennial Hiring Report, 81.1 percent of students reported that internships helped them shift their career directions by changing the focus of classes or majors.

Five NSU students held high-paced internships during summer 2018, and they unanimously say their experiences were valuable steps in their education and future career plans.



**EMANUEL PEREZ '20, COMPUTER SCIENCE MAJOR, EMPHASIS IN INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY, FROM VIRGINIA BEACH, VA.**

Perez completed his internship at the Port of Virginia in Norfolk where he worked with systems administration, network administrators and field technicians on a fiber optic network upgrade for his eight-week project.

He found the work even more advanced than the classes he has taken so far at NSU, so he says he will be ready for his senior year because of the applied skills he's already learned.

But the most important takeaway for him from his internship experience was time management. "I learned how to prioritize projects from my manager. He always said you can only concentrate on three things each day, and he emphasized the importance of scheduling and staying up-to-date."

The contacts Perez made at the Port of Virginia have proven invaluable. In fact, he continues to

follow up with a Norfolk State alumnus from the organization and does freelance work for his company from time to time.

Perez praised Career Services, particularly Alisha Bazemore, for critiquing his résumé, preparing him for his internship interview and assisting with key communication skills.

He recommends that all students seek out internships and to "get comfortable being uncomfortable. Internships are designed to challenge you to draw out your critical thinking skills, so I recommend everyone to step up to the plate when the opportunity presents itself."





**AGNER ANDREWS '19, ELECTRONICS TECHNOLOGY MAJOR, FROM PHILADELPHIA, PA.**

Andrews says her internship at the Naval Research Lab in Washington, D.C., will help her reach her ultimate goal of building her own affordable electronics brand or becoming the CEO of such a company.

While working at the lab during the two months, she researched the deterioration of metals. She used electrochemistry to test the pitting potential of steel, where the corrosion begins to occur on the surface.

Andrews, a transfer student, says the internship helped her build her professional profile. "I learned how to deal with people more on a professional level both in-person and via email. Just being able to interact with the engineers face-to-face was good."

She says working with mentors in the program built her leadership skills. "I learned what skills I need to improve on. To be the CEO of a company or to own a company, you have to have good leadership skills. I can honestly say that's something I lacked. The internship program tested our leadership skills, because the mentors assumed that we knew more than we did, so we had to look up some things and figure them out on our own."

Andrews says meeting interns from other schools and other majors was invaluable. "I was able to see how technology can be combined with chemistry and make a project. These students were very, very smart and had a great work ethic. I also enjoyed meeting the other mentors and research engineers because they gave helpful advice."

Norfolk State prepared her for the experience in several ways. "I'm not a big talker, so before I came here, I would just go to class and to my room. Norfolk State is big on preparing students for the world socially and academically, and I can say that my social skills have improved by going to events on campus." NSU also helped her improve her troubleshooting skills.

Andrews plans to move to the Washington, D.C., area following graduation and go to graduate school.



**ALLEYAH BABEL '20, COMPUTER SCIENCE MAJOR, MATHEMATICS MINOR WITH EMPHASIS IN CYBERSECURITY, FROM CHARLOTTE, N.C.**

Babel learned a lot about herself in her internship at the Naval Research Lab in Washington, D.C.

"Initially I was scared," she says. "I'm a computer science major but they put me in the chemistry division and I didn't see how I would fit, but I saw how my field can be very interdisciplinary. They were able to use me in the lab to help them with laser machinery. It wasn't my prominent skill set, but the internship helped me become sure of myself."

Her work consisted of using laser machinery and Labview, a graphical programming language, to create advanced technology for the lab.

Babel says the internship also taught her about the research process, which will be important when she eventually goes to graduate school after working for a while after graduation.

Academic development was just one aspect of the experience – professional development, teambuilding and networking were also stressed. There was also time for outside activities, such as touring the National Museum of African American History and Culture.

Babel and Andrews were two of more than 40 students selected to participate at the Naval Research Lab through an HBCU minority inclusion program. The two of them were treated to dinner by NSU alum through the Norfolk State Alumni Chapter in DC and were also invited to the chapter president's reception, which helped them feel more at home.

At the end of the summer, Babel was told she would have the opportunity to work under another division more in line with her interests if she reapplied and was selected for an internship for 2019.

She recommends that other students take advantage of internships. "Students get a lot of emails from the University, but if I hadn't read mine and taken that opportunity to go to the information session from Career Services, I wouldn't have gotten the opportunity that I did. Don't give up on any opportunity."



**JALEN MASK '18, SOCIOLOGY MAJOR, POLITICAL SCIENCE MINOR, FROM RICHMOND, VA.**

The numerous university board meetings Jalen Mask sat in on during his internship helped him get his feet wet for the day he plans to become a university administrator or president.

Mask spent his 10-week internship/fellowship in the Office of the Secretary of the Commonwealth of Virginia in Richmond. One of his main projects was modernizing the Virginia Bluebook, a document that lists of all the boards and commissions appointed by the governor, as well as all departments in the executive branch of state government. Mask put the Bluebook online in a searchable web format.

Another of his responsibilities was visiting inmates in state and juvenile facilities to educate them about restoration of voting rights. His third task was sitting in on the university board meetings.

"I just listened at the meetings for the most part because I was with Secretary (Atif) Qarni, the Secretary of Education of Virginia. But it was so fun."

Norfolk State not only prepared Mask for the fellowship opportunity academically, but supported him financially, he says. He hopes to pass along this experience to another NSU student annually and even increase the number of student representatives in state government fellowships.

Mask says the experience taught him a lot about being more professional. "I learned how to be a young professional – how to be on time every day and work late when necessary."

He also learned about the inner workings of government. "It was amazing to see firsthand how the Virginia state government works."

But the most important lessons were personal. As the only HBCU student out of seven interns, Mask says he learned "never to doubt myself or where I'm from, but to always look for how I push myself to be the determining factor for whatever I want to happen in my life." **B**

# WNSB RECEIVES NATIONAL RECOGNITION

*as Host of #ChangeMakers Town Hall, Looks to the Future*

By STAN DONALDSON '04

If you tune in to Norfolk State University's on-campus radio station, WNSB Hot 91.1, it wouldn't be easy to notice some of the big changes and innovations the station has experienced in the last few years just by listening. Some adjustments noticeable to the ear have been format and content related. Other shifts have been technical, and soon, geographical. But during the fall 2018 semester, the hard work of the WNSB leadership, staff and student interns was put on display for the university community to witness.

The station recently hosted #ChangeMakers, a nationally syndicated town hall meeting that was broadcast live, featuring a millennial discussion about race, politics and issues important to young and new voters — a demographic the station is working to grow. The session, held in front of an audience of students, administrators and faculty, featured keynote speaker Marc Lamont Hill, Ph.D., a political commentator and former CNN correspondent. The special program was held in J. Hugo Madison Hall, the station's original home, on Nov. 4, 2018, and was broadcast on HBCU public radio stations throughout the country.

The Madison Hall auditorium was filled with nearly 100 attendees made up of Norfolk State students, faculty and other invited guests. NSU Interim President Melvin T. Stith, Sr., Ph.D. (B.A. '68), and his wife, Patricia Lynch Stith, Ph.D. (B.A. '68), were in attendance at the community forum along with millions of listeners who tuned in to the program online and on stations in cities such as Las Vegas, Houston, Minneapolis, Atlanta and Elizabeth City, North Carolina.

WNSB General Manager Edith Thorpe described the special panel as a highlight moment in her three years since arriving to campus. Thorpe and the WNSB staff believe #ChangeMakers, along with other changes at the station, will position WNSB as one of the most innovative college radio stations in the country. The station reaches 103,900 listeners on a weekly basis, according to Nielson Market Research from October 2018.

In addition to the new content, the station was recently part of a group of public radio stations across the country awarded \$500,000, of a total \$1.3 million grant by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting to assist in restructuring their formats, to the new "Urban Alternative" radio format. WNSB currently offers rhythm and blues, hip-hop and gospel-centered programming with specialty programs in Caribbean and House music genres.

"The reason for the new format is to reach a segment of our community who don't traditionally listen to public radio," Thorpe said. "This is a win for Norfolk State because we can use the station to market NSU to prospective students, both traditional and nontraditional."

Currently, WNSB offers several original music programs hosted by staff and student interns. The station also produces two signature public affairs programs, *Hampton Roads Voices*, with host Benita Adams and *The Non-Profit Exchange*, with host C. Richard Gillcrese. The station also plans to hire a content director, community engagement staffer and three radio announcers.

WNSB Program Director Douglas Perry '95 said he is excited about the future of the station.

"From a statistical background, we are heading in the right direction," Perry said. "Once we have a full staff, we will be able to implement more positive changes that will allow WNSB to grow."

The campus radio station has also entered a partnership with the HBCU Network, a group of 14 public stations from across the country that will share live content from events or station programming. The programs will be available on traditional radio, satellite radio and on social media platforms such as Facebook Live.



Edith J. Thorpe, WNSB General Manager

## A ROBUST HISTORY

Founded in 1980, the station was the vision of Drs. Wilbert Edgerton, Georgia Ryder, Melvin Smith (all deceased) and Stanley Tickton, who still teaches on campus, and provided instructional programming. Through the years, WNSB developed more programming and introduced several music genres as a part of its broadcasts. Currently, it has three full-time staff, four part-time staffers and nearly 30 student interns with more staff to come, Thorpe said.

The general manager said her vision for the station is to build a larger pool of student interns and to help develop the next generation of media professionals.

NSU Student Marvin L. Fowlkes, a senior computer science major, said he has learned a lot about the radio industry from having worked at the station.

"Technology has advanced tremendously over the years and the days of using certain forms of technology to broadcast over a radio station are gone," Fowlkes said. "My experiences as a deejay, guest on *Hampton Roads Voices* and working and learning from the WNSB staff will assist me after graduation."

In addition to new content and technical changes, the station will move from its current location in Spartan Station back to its original home inside of J. Hugo Madison Hall. The move is expected to be completed in time for the spring 2019 semester. Through an additional grant, WNSB will also add more studios and offices to accommodate training and space for incoming staffers, Thorpe said.

"Returning to our original location not only is nostalgic, but brings us closer to the middle of campus and will provide easier access for faculty, guests and students," Thorpe said. **B**



**RIGHT:** Marvin Fowlkes (Scandalez) and Mike Ernest (Mike Love) were honored by Black Men Rock.

**BELOW:** WNSB was the broadcasting host station for Change Makers, a live national town hall meeting. Former CNN correspondent Dr. Marc Lamont Hill was the host.







# Virginia Sets the Stage *to* Make History Once Again

## The Campaign to Ratify the Equal Rights Amendment

By SHARON RIDDICK HOGGARD (M.A.'04)

Since its founding 400 years ago, Virginia has played an important part in the nation's history. Now it's poised to make history once more as the 38th and final state needed to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA). It has been nearly half a century since the U.S. Congress approved the amendment and sent it to the states for ratification.

Discrimination based on sex is not currently guaranteed in the U.S. Constitution. The ERA is an explicit prohibition against discrimination based on gender. Passage of the amendment would cover all 50 states under one law versus a mishmash of differing state laws, and would give discrimination victims a stronger legal stance when seeking redress.

In January 2019 when the Virginia General Assembly convenes, Senator Glen H. Sturtevant Jr. (R-Dist. 10) and Delegate Jennifer Carroll Foy (D-Dist. 2) are expected to introduce legislation to ratify the ERA.

"I think what women don't understand is that their rights, without the amendment, are not 100 percent guaranteed under the Constitution," says attorney and women's and children's advocate Patricia Cannon. "We expect the courts to





SENATOR JENNIFER MCCLELLAN



SENATOR GLEN H. STURTEVANT



DELEGATE JENNIFER CARROLL FOY

read into the equal protection clause no discrimination based on gender.” However, Cannon says that approach could result in the enacting of laws that impact a woman’s ability to be 100 percent completely free in making her own choices in life where the only hurdle is one based on her gender.

The ERA was originally drafted by suffragist Alice Paul and introduced in the U.S. Congress in 1923, just a few years after the 19th Amendment giving women the right to vote was ratified. Congress approved the amendment in 1972, and sent it to the states. A constitutional amendment requires ratification by 38 states. Yet, only 35 states approved the ERA before the original 1979 deadline, which was later extended to 1982. The amendment would not be taken up again until the Nevada legislature ratified it in 2017. Illinois followed in May 2018 and became the 37th state to ratify. Although ERA opponents say that the ratification deadline has expired, proponents are undaunted and argue that there are no legitimate legal grounds for setting time limits on its ratification.

“Now that only one more state is needed for ratification, momentum is building for Virginia to be the tipping point,” says Senator Jennifer McClellan (D-Dist.9), who is currently a co-sponsor of the legislation. “Since the 2016 election, there has been a heightened awareness of and involvement in the political and legislative process especially among women.”

Over the past two years, women have increasingly been letting their voices be heard from the record-breaking Women’s March in January 2017 to the #MeToo and #TimesUp social movements to the recent Supreme Court Justice confirmation hearings. During this year’s midterm election cycle, more women than ever ran for and won local, state and federal offices.

Even with this surge of women’s political awareness, ratification is still a huge undertaking. Many people, even women, do not appear very knowledgeable about the amendment. In a small, random survey among people aged 25 to 65, three-quarters of respondents were aware that the ERA was poised to become a part of the U.S. Constitution — if Virginia ratifies it. Unsurprisingly, the remaining percentage of respondents, were completely unaware that Congress had passed the ERA or that only one more state is needed for ratification.

ERA proponents launched an awareness and ratification campaign that kicked off in August — during Women’s Equality Day. “The VARatifyERA campaign is making a concerted effort to build a broad coalition of support across party, racial, gender and socio-economic lines to mobilize this heightened activism. The symbolism of having Virginia put the ERA over the top during the year it commemorates the 400th

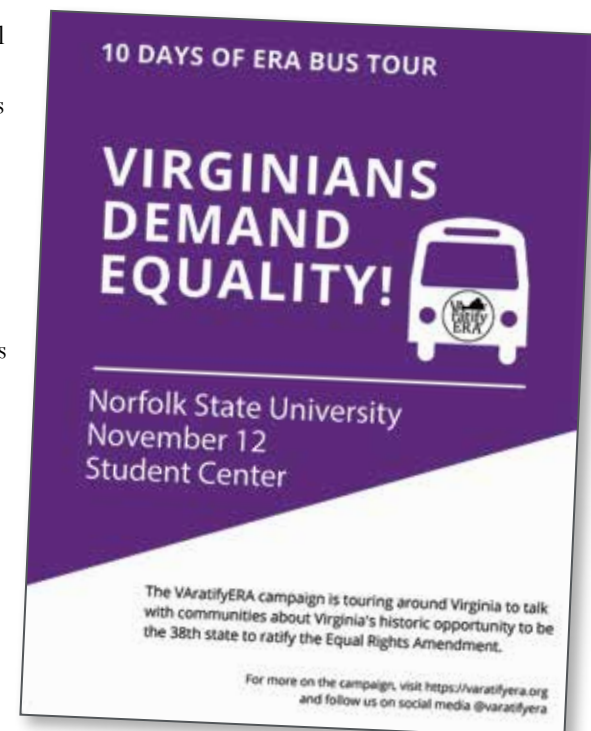
anniversary of the first women and Africans arriving at the Jamestown settlement and the first representative democracy in the New World gives added excitement to the movement,” says McClellan.

A 10-day ERA Bus Tour began November 9. “The tour’s goals are to educate Virginians about the absence of gender equality in the U.S. Constitution and highlight the unequivocal, bipartisan statewide support for ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment,” says Tammie Miller Jennings, coordinator for the VARatifyERA Bus Tour. The bus tour will travel 1,500 miles with events at more than 16 Virginia colleges and universities, including Norfolk State.

The NSU tour stop on Monday, Nov. 12 was hosted by Delta Sigma Theta Inc., Epsilon Theta Chapter, Norfolk State University. Chapter President Brandi Crawford thanked Foy for bringing awareness of the gender equality issue to the attention of Norfolk State students. “Women’s rights are human rights,” Crawford says. “The Epsilon Theta Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc. supports Virginians’ campaign for the ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment.”

Jennings, Virginia legislators and others wholeheartedly believe that it’s the right time to ratify the ERA. “All eyes are on Virginia to be the last, historic state to ratify the amendment during the next General Assembly session.” As 2019 will be the 400th year of the legislative session in Virginia, it’s perfect timing for ratification. We want Virginia to have this honor and we’re working hard to make that happen.”

***Yes, Virginia, the Equal Rights Amendment is alive. The time is now. B***





PHOTOGRAPH BY LATEEF GIBSON





BEHOLD

# Turning Grief Into Giving

MOTHERS OF THE FALLEN  
FIND PEACE AND HEALING  
THROUGH SERVICE.

*By* DORIS D. SHADOUH

CONTINUED ON PG. 18





Gunn stands outside her Virginia Beach home holding a Gold Star.

I DID WHAT I HAD TO  
DO TO GET THROUGH  
MY JOB, BUT IT NEVER  
LEAVES YOU. LOSING  
A CHILD PUTS A HOLE  
IN YOUR HEART.

—MONA T. GUNN

It's an organization that no mother ever wants to join. Unbearable pain, tragic loss and heartache are all experiences that Mona Gunn '74 and the other courageous women have had to endure, but it's not the grief that bonds them; it's the giving.

Gunn's grief, tragedy and resiliency have set the stage for her to make history as she prepares in 2019 to become the first African-American president of American Gold Star Mothers Inc. The organization focuses on giving back to the country after the loss of a son or daughter in the military.

For Gunn, it came the morning of October 12, 2000 after she received a phone call from her sister who saw something quite disturbing on the local news.

"She said 'There's been an attack,'" Gunn recalls from their conversation.

At the time, Gunn was in her second year as the principal of Fairlawn Elementary School in Norfolk.

She ran across the hall and turned on the television in the school's media center to find out what was happening. No mother could ever be prepared for what she saw.

"There his ship was with a big 40-foot hole, and it said four sailors were killed," says Gunn. "I kept saying he's okay, he's okay."

Signalman Seaman Cherone Louis Gunn, her 22-year-old son, had just recently joined the Navy. He was on his first Med cruise aboard the USS Cole when they were attacked in Yemen's Aden Harbor by two suicide bombers.

On that horrific day, 17 American sailors were killed and 39 others were injured in one of the deadliest attacks against a U.S. Naval vessel. Her son was among the fallen.



It's a day she will never forget.

"He was so excited to join the military and to follow his dad's footsteps," says Gunn whose late husband, Lou Gunn, proudly served 21 years in the Navy. He was also an NSU Alumnus '97 and '01.

Her son had only been in the Navy for nine months before his life was taken.

After suffering this earth-shattering loss, Gunn somehow mustered up the strength to return to work. It wasn't easy.

"I did what I had to do to get through my job, but it never leaves you. Losing a child puts a hole in your heart; a child whose life was cut way too short at age 22. It impacted my whole family," says Gunn.

She says she received an outpouring of support from the military as well as the community. But all of the comforting words and prayers could not fix her broken heart.

"I was presented with a Gold Star Lapel pin and it meant absolutely nothing to me within the two weeks of the loss of my child. I wanted my child back," admits Gunn. "I had no idea what Gold Star meant."

At that time, she had no idea that the Gold Star would mean another life change for her—one that would allow her the chance to heal and to lead.

Gunn said she first learned about the Gold Star Mothers organization when it was having an annual convention in 2004. She read the article about it and realized they had something in common.

"I said, 'wow, I'm a Gold Star Mom,'" says Gunn.

She bonded with the other mothers and joined the organization, but that was just the beginning. Not only did she become a member, she has been working to expand their presence in Virginia.

In 2009, she connected with Gold Star Mothers in the Tidewater area, and together they chartered their own chapter. Another chapter was started in Richmond two years afterward.

"We are moms on a mission. We're a powerful force," says Gunn.

And over the years, she has been quite a force locally and on the national level.

Gunn has traveled around the country with the organization to bond with other mothers, support veterans, active-duty members and their families.

The other Gold Star Mothers recognized her leadership abilities and elected her as their vice president. Next year, she will move into the top spot as the president. She will be the first African-American woman to hold that position.

On the local level, Gunn has been working on a special initiative to find Vietnam-era Veterans who served from 1955-1975. The Hampton Roads chapter has partnered with the Department of Defense's 50th Commemoration of the Vietnam War.

"We're being asked to properly thank those Vietnam Veterans because it was a very divisive war," says Gunn.

Now she is working to fix that one hero at a time.

Once she is installed as the group's new national president in June of 2019, she hopes to expand the organization even more to include other Gold Star Mothers who have not yet joined.

She has ambitions to include more members from other areas across the nation and more women of color.

Through every stage of her amazing journey, Gunn has never been one to shy away when called to lead; even in the face of one of the most horrific tragedies of her life, she has still found a way to lead others to a better future.

Now 18 years after her son's death, she continues to honor his legacy by improving the lives of others. **B**

See more MyNSU stories at <https://www.youtube.com/user/NSUMarketing>.



ABOVE LEFT: Gunn with Michelle Howard, the first woman U.S. Navy four-star admiral. RIGHT: Gunn and Becky Christmas, American Gold Star Mothers Inc. current president.



Gunn holding her son's flag posed next to his picture.

# NSU: VALUING PEOPLE, MINDS AND TRADITIONS



**NSU: Valuing People, Minds and Traditions**



**W**hen Carl W. Haywood (B.MUS. '71) became chief of staff to interim president Melvin T. Stith Sr., (B.A.'68) the two distinguished alumni reminisced about their Norfolk State days on campus. There was something that they felt—something 'intangible' about their student experience. Out of that conversation came a burning desire to strengthen and rekindle that feeling and those abstract qualities that made Norfolk State, Norfolk State — to somehow capture its essence.

"When I considered how pride, appreciation, respect, and unity are achieved, I recognized that they are intangibles that cannot be measured, but can be felt," says Dr. Haywood. "How we feel about something hinges on a culture of caring, sharing and receiving."

Subsequently, Haywood considered the intangibles, which to him, promote and enhance NSU. He distilled those qualities and characteristics into the following, which became the four pillars of the initiative:

**A Smile is Healthy for the Soul — Emphasizing Good Customer Service**

**Good Teaching Creates Good Students — Emphasizing Excellent Teaching**

**Spartan Nation: Forever United — Emphasizing Unity and NSU Family Connections**

## ***NSU in Your Community — Renewing Ties and Traditions with the Community***

"Ultimately, I subscribed that these tenets: good customer service, good teaching, unity and activism in the community would enhance the perception of NSU and the community's perception of us," Dr. Haywood says.

Subcommittees of dedicated faculty, staff, administrators and students organized around the themes and went to work. Last August, in a rousing introduction to the University community, the NSU band, choir, cheerleaders and NSU Theatre Co., brought the initiative to life under the theme, *NSU: Valuing People, Minds and Traditions*.

"I continue to receive positive feedback from the campus community regarding the wave of energy, enthusiasm, goodwill, and the positive working environment that has invaded the campus," Dr. Haywood says.

Now when you walk across campus at the end of each day, the sound of the Spartan Legion playing the *Alma Mater* fills the air — the work of Spartan Nation: Forever United subcommittee — and a smile comes across your face.

Indeed, a smile is healthy for the soul! **B**







**Here's what each subcommittee has accomplished as a part of NSU: Valuing People, Minds and Traditions.**

**A Smile Is Healthy for the Soul Subcommittee**

- Founders Day Celebration (Birthday Celebration)
- Smile Campaign Announcements and Quotes of the Day
- Seminars, Forums, and Fairs Sponsored by Human Resources

**Good Teaching Creates Good Students Subcommittee**

- Construction/Creation of the Writing Center in Lyman Beecher Brooks Library (opening January 2019)

**Spartan Nation: Forever United Subcommittee**

- Playing of the *Alma Mater* each day
- Spartan Spirit Days
- Pop-Up Visits by the Chief of Staff

**NSU in Your Community Subcommittee**

- Spartan Legion Family and Friends Day
- Founders Day Breakfast
- Inside View of NSU (Nearly 700 seniors visited the campus and learned of our programs and offerings)
- NSU Day of Service

# My NSU Story

By DORIS D. SHADOUH

For 83 years, Norfolk State University has built an incredible legacy that has transformed the lives of scholars for generations. The strength in our collective story comes from the amazing individual stories of every Spartan whose pathway to their passions started at NSU. Several students and alumni shared their personal trials and triumphs on camera through our new social media video series *My NSU Story*. Read their testimonials below.



## JENEE WILLIAMS | SOCIAL WORK AND POLITICAL SCIENCE

Jenee Williams knew when she first stepped onto the campus of Norfolk State University that this is where she wanted to be. It was that warm feeling of community, the incredibly rich culture combined with the beauty of a rapidly growing campus that attracted Williams to NSU.

Originally from California, Williams traveled over 2,000 miles across the country to pursue her dreams. She wanted to invest her

time in a field that allowed her to help people, so she decided to major in social work and political science.

Williams also wanted to be a part of an institution that had deep roots in African-American culture, which is why she preferred an HBCU.

Not only has Jenee excelled academically, she has also been working on leaving behind a legacy of her own. She started a group called West Coast Connect, which is designed to help other out-of-state students adjust to the campus much easier.

Williams, along with other members of the organization, is helping to tell the story of Norfolk State University to students all across the United States.



## MICHAEL LAMBERT '09 | COMPUTER SCIENCE

Anyone who meets Michael Lambert will quickly learn two important things about him: He has more energy than an average person and he has an undeniable passion for fitness and helping others.

He is the owner of The Fitness Junkie Gym in Norfolk, and he has successfully turned some of the most sedentary individuals into absolute fitness buffs. Some of them have even gone on to become personal trainers as well.

Although Lambert has always loved fitness, his journey at NSU was focused on technology. He studied computer science at Norfolk State University and he was also a football player.

Like many of our successful student athletes, Lambert learned how to manage his time well while juggling his academic and athletic responsibilities.

"If it wasn't for Norfolk State University, there wouldn't be a Fitness Junkie," says Lambert.

He credits the University for giving him the skills he needed to open and run a business. Although he worked as an IT Specialist for several years, he made the decision to give it all up to follow his dreams.

He is encouraging other students who have a dream to do the same—follow your passion and it will take you far.

## MONA J. '03 | CHEMISTRY, PRE-MED



Tamona "Mona J." Williams started out shaping young minds in the classroom and now she's on stage winning hearts.

For several years, she was a chemistry teacher at a high school in Portsmouth. She enjoyed helping students and she was even honored as teacher of the year during her tenure there.

But something was missing for her.

"Although I liked what I was doing, I didn't love it," says Williams. She wanted to do more

with her first love—music.

This award-winning educator is also a talented singer. She has performed at several venues in the Tidewater area and beyond. Her talent almost landed her a spot on the popular television show, *The Voice*.

She traveled all the way to Utah to audition for the judges and they were impressed. Williams was one of the few people who received a red card during the first round. She then moved on several more steps until the show ultimately decided to choose other participants. This was just the beginning for Williams.

She says this was not a disappointment to her; this was the ultimate motivation. This opportunity allowed her to see how capable she was to achieve anything she wanted to do in her life.

Williams now runs her own graphic and design business and she has helped other small business owners promote their products and services.

She says thanks to her time at Norfolk State University, she has the courage to pursue any dream. **B**

See more MyNSU stories at <https://www.youtube.com/user/NSUMarketing>.



# GIFT ANNUITY RATES ARE GOING UP

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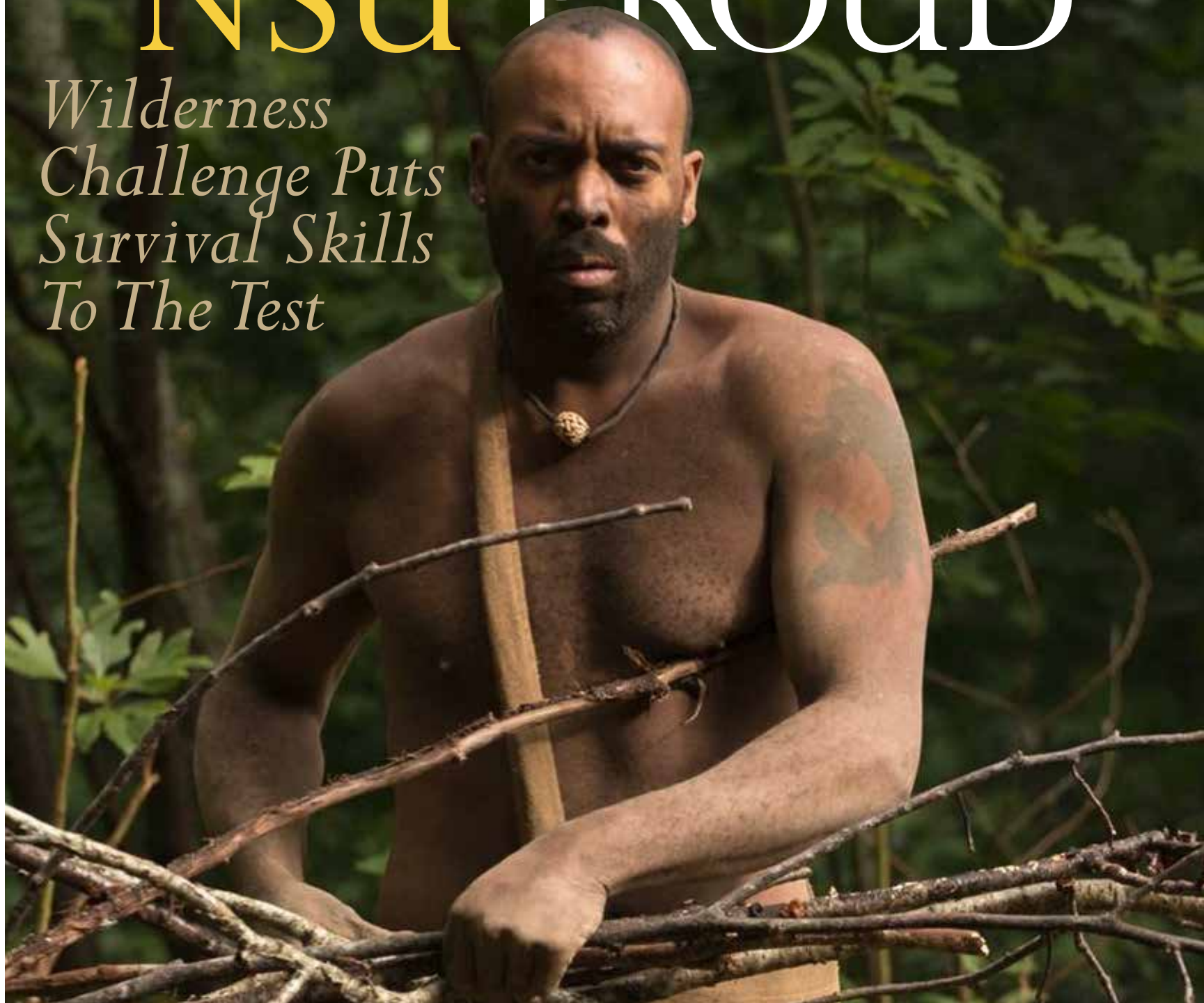
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# NAKED AND NSU PROUD

*Wilderness  
Challenge Puts  
Survival Skills  
To The Test*



**I**n 2017, Jermaine Jackson '97 found himself naked and shivering in the Great Smoky Mountains of Tennessee as rain fell on the foliage around him. Jackson, an avid outdoorsman, had signed up for a 21-day challenge of survival against the elements as part of the Discovery Channel program *Naked and Afraid*.

The popular reality show involves one man and one woman—who are paired and meet for the first time in the nude. They are required to survive in the wilderness only equipped with a few tools and have to gather their own food, build a shelter and sometimes make their own clothing.



Jackson and his partner, Teal Bulhuis, an Air Force master sergeant, appeared in Episode 9 of Season 9, which first aired May 6, 2018, with 1.6 million viewers. It's an experience that Jackson says, he will never forget. During their 21 days, they battled cold and rainy weather, ate mostly fruit and chestnuts and encountered at least one black bear.

"As soon as we got to Tennessee, it started raining," says Jackson. "The forest acted as a canopy so the temperature dropped to very cold conditions if you're not wearing clothing. Being naked in 40-degree weather is no joke, and we both ended up getting hypothermia. It was so cold, that we both ruptured our skin capillaries."

Why did Jackson want to appear on the show? One reason was to showcase his outdoor skills, but there was a reason that held a deeper meaning.

"I wanted to defy the stereotypes out there about black men and the outdoors," Jackson says. "If you watch television, you don't see us out there much camping, fishing ... living off of the land. I wanted to honor my father too, but to also prove to everyone out there that African-Americans can do it and excel at it."

Originally from Triangle, Virginia, Jackson grew up in a family home where the outdoors were always around him. When he was a child, it wasn't an unusual or gross sight when he would watch James Jackson, his late father, slaughter a deer, clean it and then put it inside the refrigerator.

James Jackson was also a member of the Seafarers Yacht Club, one of the oldest African-American yacht clubs in the United States, and taught Jermaine Jackson about aquatics and how to be comfortable on land and sea. His love for not only nature, but how to survive in it, continued as Jackson later moved to Stafford County, Virginia, and entered the Cub and Boy Scouts, later achieving the rank of Eagle Scout — the highest rank offered to a scout — when he was 17.

"My father always thought it was important for me to learn how to live off the land," says Jackson. "Academics were very important in our household, but my parents also wanted us to know how to fend for ourselves if we ever were in a jam."

## LOVE FOR NOFOLK STATE

When Jackson arrived at Norfolk State after high school, he was already familiar with the campus because he would visit his older sister, Janeen (Jackson) Clark '94, a former Miss NSU, when she was a student. An English education major, Jackson found a love for radio and joined WNSB Hot 91.1, the campus radio station, and eventually hosted a radio program. "I forget the name of the show, but I do remember that I would play obscure records that no one would expect on the station."

"The great thing about Norfolk State, and this still holds true today, is that it's a place where you can express who you are. Everybody has their own thing and that is okay, you're still a Spartan no matter what."

Today, Jackson works as a wound care specialist and executive sales representative at MiMedx, a biopharmaceutical company that develops regenerative tissues for individuals afflicted with ailments such as diabetes, cancer or joint issues, who are at risk of potentially losing limbs.

"I am very far removed from secondary education, but I have been very blessed," Jackson says. "I give the credit to Norfolk State because had I not went there, I would not have the opportunities I have right now."

## FROM THE WILDERNESS TO CELEBRITY LIFE

Since Jackson's appearance on *Naked and Afraid*, he has become a celebrity in his California town and become popular with the Norfolk State University community. "I get approached at the grocery store, when I pick the kids up from school, pretty much everywhere. I never expected this much attention."

As far as upcoming television appearances, Jackson remained mum, but he did say he is open to showcasing his outdoor talents to a mass audience. Jackson says eventually, he would like to organize survivalist camps for disadvantaged youth in California.

As the dog days of summer approached in August, Jackson mulled over two options about how he would spend his final summer vacation: meet up with other Norfolk State University alumni in Las Vegas for a weekend or go tuna fishing off the coast of Tijuana, Mexico. The decision was easy. He hitched up a boat to the back of his pick-up truck and headed south. **B**



I WANTED TO HONOR MY FATHER TOO, BUT TO ALSO PROVE TO EVERYONE OUT THERE THAT AFRICAN-AMERICANS CAN DO IT AND EXCEL AT IT.

— JERMAINE JACKSON







# Sibling Bond Goes a “LONG” WAY

## for Spartan Basketball Pair

By RICKY THOMAS JR.

**T**hroughout their lives, the Long siblings – Alex and Alexys – have been inseparable. They try to hang out every day and do as many things as possible together. But when it came to choosing colleges, the brother and sister faced the reality of being apart – or so they thought.

During Alexys’ senior year at Largo High School, located in Clinton, Maryland, Norfolk State offered her a basketball scholarship. She was shocked. Alexys did not expect to receive the offer because she admitted her purpose for playing at the time was solely for the fun of it.

“I wasn’t planning on playing in college, but I got the offer and so did Alex,” said Alexys, “and we kind of looked at each other like, ‘You gonna go? You gonna go?’”

Meanwhile, Alex, who didn’t begin playing organized basketball until his sophomore year of high school, was generating a recruiting buzz with his particular skill set. During his post-grad season at Mt. Zion Prep, he received multiple offers. Within a two-week span of his younger sister receiving her first offer from NSU, he received one as well.

“I’m not going to say her getting offered here too was everything, but I’m happy things shook out the way they did,” said Alex. “When I visited NSU, I liked it here and the vibe I got being here. But, with her coming, it was icing on the cake.”

The pair decided NSU was where they wanted to continue their journey and luckily, they got to do it together. Unlike Alex, Alexys really weighed her brother’s decision prior to making her own.

“I can’t speak for him, but my decision was based on his,” said Alexys. “My freshman year I was 17 and it was my first time being away from home. He was always here so it didn’t feel like I was far from home.”

Once arriving on campus and adjusting to college, the pair had the added responsibility of adjusting to college athletics. And like most young student-athletes, Alex quickly realized the intensity difference between high school and college.

“Honestly, if I came in with the right mental state, I might have done better early. I didn’t know what to expect and I thought it would be like high school,” said Alex. “I soon realized everybody was just as good and I couldn’t get away with (just) natural talent. It took a while to grasp that.”

Their own learning curves and talent already on the roster meant fewer minutes and less early production than each might have expected. In addition to basketball, they still had academics and the social aspect of college to master, so everything wasn’t perfect early on.

“We have always been close, but when one of us is down or struggling, we go to each other for stuff like that. Honestly, our relationship has helped us through a lot of the stuff we have gone through,” said Alex.

Trust is also a key component to the siblings’ relationship.

“I have no doubt he wants the best for me, so I don’t hesitate to tell him stuff or when I need someone to tell me it’s time to buckle down, he does that for me too,” said Alexys.

After playing minimal roles their first two seasons, the Long siblings saw their



numbers increase last year. Alexys averaged 10.3 points, mostly shooting from deep. Her 3-point shooting percentage was a conference-leading 43.1 percent, and she ranked fourth in threes per game, with 1.9. She also averaged 4.8 rebounds and 1.0 assist a game.

"My sister is easily one of the best shooters in the country," said Alex.

Alex's game is more reliant on playing good defense and offensive efficiency around the basket. He averaged 10.5 points and 5.8 rebounds per game last season. In conference play, his rebound average increased to 7.0, including a team-high 27 blocks on the year.

"Really, we're both versatile, but at the same time we have our distinguishing features like rebounding, passing and scoring in different ways," said Alex. "Both of our mid-range games are good. I'm better around the basket and she's better from 3, so I would say our games complement one another."

Although neither sibling compares their games to the other or necessarily sees many comparable traits, the pair often watches each other's practices, games, and film to give each other critique.

"I usually just tell him things about just shooting more because he's a better shooter than he thinks and I tell him more technical things about shooting," said Alexys. "After his games, I'll wait for him to come out the locker room, even though he takes the longest, and we'll talk more."

This makes for an easy way of adding to the time they spend together because finding time throughout their days as upperclassmen can be difficult.

"We try to hang out as much as we can, but right now our schedules aren't matching up. That's rare for us though, because we're usually together all the time at home, but I'm in my senior year and she's in an honors program so I'd

probably say we only hang out once a week right now," said Alex.

Alexys agreed with her brother's statement, but insinuated that all their busy schedules do is make finding time to spend together a more creative endeavor.

"As upperclassmen, it's not as often that we hang out, but in the past we would spend the night in the gym and eat pizza, play NBA 2k with his friends, and shoot all night because our workloads were light," said Alexys. "Now it's harder, so we create time to go eat or shoot when we can, and we do things like talk after each other's games."

Both players were picked to the preseason All-MEAC teams, Alex to the men's second team and Alexys to the women's third team. Individual accolades aside, the siblings are more focused than ever on leaving a mark on the NSU basketball program before their departure.

"Every team's goal is to win a championship, so I want to do everything in my power to help my team do that," said Alexys. "Whether I am asked to rebound more, score, assist, whatever I'm asked to do, I will do it and help lead by example."

As you could guess, Alex's answer is not too far off from his sister's.

"I want to play professionally, but first I want to help our team win a championship," said Alex. "I've learned so much about myself since being here. The coaches have helped me develop into becoming a better player so I want to show how good I can be this year."

This season marks their final opportunity to showcase what those late night shoot-arounds and determination displayed since arriving on campus have produced. Plus, being able to conclude their collegiate careers together just seems right. **B**

## 2019 WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

Date	Opponent	Location	Time
<b>January</b>			
<b>Sat. 1/5</b>	<b>Delaware State*</b>	<b>Norfolk, Va.</b>	<b>4 p.m.</b>
<b>Mon. 1/7</b>	<b>Florida A&amp;M*</b>	<b>Norfolk, Va.</b>	<b>5:30 p.m.</b>
Sat. 1/12	at Coppin State*	Baltimore, Md.	2 p.m.
<b>Mon. 1/14</b>	<b>Bethune-Cookman*</b>	<b>Norfolk, Va.</b>	<b>5:30 p.m.</b>
Sat. 1/19	at Savannah State*	Savannah, Ga.	4 p.m.
Mon. 1/21	at South Carolina State*	Orangeburg, S.C.	5:30 p.m.
<b>Sat. 1/26</b>	<b>Maryland Eastern Shore*</b>	<b>Norfolk, Va.</b>	<b>4 p.m.</b>
<b>February</b>			
Sat. 2/2	at Howard*	Washington, D.C.	2 p.m.
Sat. 2/9	at Bethune-Cookman*	Daytona Beach, Fla.	2 p.m.
Mon. 2/11	at Florida A&M*	Tallahassee, Fla.	5:30 p.m.
<b>Sat. 2/16</b>	<b>North Carolina Central*</b>	<b>Norfolk, Va.</b>	<b>4 p.m.</b>
<b>Mon. 2/18</b>	<b>North Carolina A&amp;T*</b>	<b>Norfolk, Va.</b>	<b>5:30 p.m.</b>
Sat. 2/23	at Morgan State*	Baltimore, Md.	TBA
<b>March</b>			
<b>Sat. 3/2</b>	<b>Coppin State</b>	<b>Norfolk, Va.</b>	<b>4 p.m.</b>
Mon. 3/4	at Delaware State*	Dover, Del.	5:30 p.m.
<b>Thurs. 3/7</b>	<b>Howard*</b>	<b>Norfolk, Va.</b>	<b>5:30 p.m.</b>
Mon. 3/11-	MEAC Tournament^	Norfolk, Va.	TBA
Thurs. 3/16			

All times Eastern/Home games in bold played at Joseph Echols Hall

! Christmas City Classic

\* MEAC Conference games

^ Tournament games played at Norfolk Scope Arena

## 2019 MEN'S BASKETBALL

Date	Opponent	Location	Time
<b>January</b>			
<b>Sat. 1/5</b>	<b>Delaware State *</b>	<b>Norfolk, Va.</b>	<b>6:30 p.m.</b>
<b>Mon. 1/7</b>	<b>Florida A&amp;M *</b>	<b>Norfolk, Va.</b>	<b>8 p.m.</b>
Sat. 1/12	at Coppin State *	Baltimore, Md.	4 p.m.
<b>Mon. 1/14</b>	<b>Bethune-Cookman *</b>	<b>Norfolk, Va.</b>	<b>8 p.m.</b>
Sat. 1/19	at Savannah State *	Savannah, Ga.	6 p.m.
Mon. 1/21	at South Carolina State *	Orangeburg, S.C.	TBA
<b>Sat. 1/26</b>	<b>Maryland Eastern Shore *</b>	<b>Norfolk, Va.</b>	<b>6:30 p.m.</b>
<b>February</b>			
Sat. 2/2	at Howard *	Washington, D.C.	4 p.m.
Sat. 2/9	at Bethune-Cookman *	Daytona Beach, Fla.	4 p.m.
Mon. 2/11	at Florida A&M *	Tallahassee, Fla.	7:30 p.m.
<b>Sat. 2/16</b>	<b>North Carolina Central *</b>	<b>Norfolk, Va.</b>	<b>6:30 p.m.</b>
<b>Mon. 2/18</b>	<b>North Carolina A&amp;T *</b>	<b>Norfolk, Va.</b>	<b>8 p.m.</b>
Sat. 2/23	at Morgan State *	Baltimore, Md.	4 p.m.
<b>March</b>			
<b>Sat. 3/2</b>	<b>Coppin State *</b>	<b>Norfolk, Va.</b>	<b>6:30 p.m.</b>
Mon. 3/4	at Delaware State *	Dover, Del.	7:30 p.m.
<b>Thurs. 3/7</b>	<b>Howard *</b>	<b>Norfolk, Va.</b>	<b>8 p.m.</b>
Mon. 3/11 -	MEAC Tournament #	Norfolk, Va.	TBD
Sat. 3/16			

All times Eastern/Home games in bold played at Joseph Echols Hall

% Basketball Hall of Fame Tip-Off Tournament

& Sun Bowl Invitational

\* MEAC game

# Scope Arena





NORFOLK STATE UNIVERSITY

HOMECOMING 2018

SPARTA FOREVER!



Alumni activities at the Norfolk Division of Virginia State College (VSC) began on November 28, 1949 when the Norfolk Division of Virginia State College Alumni Association was formally organized. At that time, one game during football season was designated as Homecoming. This family reunion has become a celebration that has fostered a long legacy of fellowship, entertainment and Spartan pride.

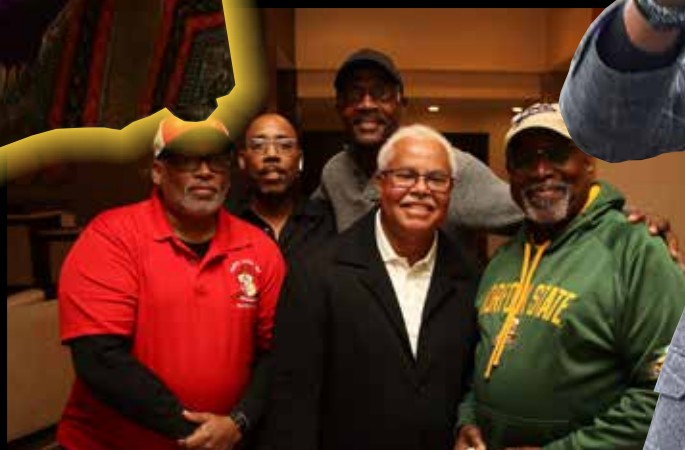
#### HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE:

- Seven School, College and Department-based alumni receptions.
- Sold-out musical presentation by the NSU Theatre Company: A musical tribute to Whitney and Aretha.
- Journey to Wakanda: Sparta Forever Alumni Celebration.
- Spartan SpiritFest: a Homecoming marketplace and festival.
- Steven Washington '86 was crowned as Mr. Alumni 2018-19.

*The Sparta Forever homecoming week ended with a sold-out benefit concert featuring renowned gospel artist Richard Smallwood, sponsored by the Department of Visual and Performing Arts.*









# NSU Alumni

## MOVERS AND SHAKERS



Space and Naval Warfare Systems Center Atlantic computer scientist **Brianeisha Eure '10** recently received the Department of the Navy (DON) Information Management/Information Technology Excellence Award. She was presented with the IT Rising Star of the Year award. As the award recipient, Eure was recognized for displaying visionary thinking, innovation and superior leadership skills in delivering IT to support the DON's mission. Eure earned her bachelor's and her master's degrees at Norfolk State.



**Bianca X. Lascano '13** graduated with a PharmD from Virginia Commonwealth University. She will be continuing her studies by completing a postgraduate community pharmacy residency with Samford University at the Christ Health Center in Birmingham, Alabama. Bianca states, "she could not have made it this far without her strong chemistry foundation she received from Norfolk State University."



**Stephanie (Fuller) Harry '90, '95** was selected as a 2018-2019 Albert Einstein Fellow by the Department of Energy. Harry, who teaches in the Hampton City School district, was among 14 educators chosen from across the country. The Albert Einstein Distinguished Educator Fellowship Program provides a unique opportunity for accomplished K-12 STEM educators to apply their extensive classroom knowledge and experiences at a federal agency or U.S. Congressional office in Washington, D.C., engaged in the national STEM education arena.



**Rev. Dr. Jonathan A. Mason Sr. (B.S. '95, H '15)** through his company, JAM Media Solutions, has purchased six radio stations in the Outer Banks. Mason began JAM after 20 years in media sales and management. Since his graduation from NSU, Mason has served as the 34th International President of Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity Inc., been presented with an NSU Distinguished Alumni Award and has served as the University's commencement speaker where he was conferred with the honorary doctorate of Humane Letters. Mason has established an endowment for NSU Mass Communications students, and he currently serves as pastor of Northeast Baptist Church.



**Tiffany Williams '04** was selected by Coastal Virginia Business Magazine with 20 other professionals as a Millennial on the Move. Williams appeared in its June/July 2018 issue. Additionally, she is president of the Junior League of Norfolk-Virginia Beach — the second African American to serve in that capacity since the organization was established in this area in 1925.



The Lawrenceville Town Council launched a program encouraging people who have ties to Brunswick County to display flags from educational institutions at Peebles Park. Norfolk State was recently recognized. Pictured left to right are **Councilman H. B. "Buck" Brockwell Jr., Rhonda R. Parham and Donnell C. Parham '80**, who are about to raise the Norfolk State University (home of the Spartans) flag.

—Photo by Sylvia Allen/Brunswick Times-Gazette





**Frankie Pollock Jr. '02** was named principal of Creekside High School in Fulton County, Georgia. A veteran educator, Pollock has served as Creekside High's assistant principal for two years. He began his career 17 years ago as a teacher in Norfolk and has worked in the school districts of New Hanover County, Wilmington, N.C.; Charlotte-Mecklenburg, Charlotte, NC; and Harrisburg Schools in Pennsylvania.



**Quinetta Wilmington '08**, aka "Quinny from Philly," has risen to lead dancer for Beyoncé. Wilmington, an NSU nursing graduate and student dancer, is currently performing in the Queen Bey and Jay-Z's On the Run II Tour.



**Interim President Dr. Melvin T. Stith Sr. (B.A. '68)** served as the keynote speaker Thursday, August 9, at the **National Naval Officers Association's** 46th Annual Leadership, Professional Development and Training Symposium held in Portsmouth. NNOA actively supports the U. S. Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration in the recruitment, development and retention of a diverse Officer Corps that is representative of the best our nation has to offer. Dr. Stith is pictured left with **Norfolk State alumni and current students**. From left to right are **ENS Erich Lauk '18, MIDN 3/C Courtney Gray, MIDN 3/C Tyana Freeman** and **MIDN 3/C Marlin Prince** (far right).



**Dr. Aurelia T. Williams (B.S. '94)**, director of the Cybersecurity Complex, was interviewed by the Thurgood Marshall College Fund about the science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) field. The article, HBCUs and PBIs Usher in a New Era of Cybersecurity, appears in TMCF's digital newsletter.

Blackboard selected **Shelley Scott-Johnson '14**, assistant director of programs in the Office of Extended Learning, to represent Norfolk State University for a case study focusing on our integration of Blackboard Collaborate across the University's academic and support units. This opportunity has established Norfolk State University as a trendsetter in the Blackboard Community.

**L TJG Danika Jones '15**, Division Officer, received the coveted Surface Warfare Officer pin onboard USS Fort McHenry. She was pinned by CDR Meger Chappell '97, Deputy Commander, LCSRON-2.

**Dr. George Parker III (B.S.'89, M.A. '00)** was selected as the new superintendent of Newport News Public Schools as of July 1, 2018. Dr. Parker previously served as the superintendent for Caroline County schools. He earned his bachelor's in computer science and his master's in educational leadership from Norfolk State.

# NSUAA HONORS



On Thursday, October 18, the NSU Alumni Association Inc. publicly recognized and honored members and chapters of the alumni association who have supported its mission and goals. Malinda G. Thompson '87 received the NSUAA's Alumnus of the Year Award. Padreus Pratter '06, Sante' Smith '91 and Millard "Pete" Stith, Sr. '71 each received the Chapter Service Award.

The final recognition of the evening was the Chapter of the Year Award. Two chapters received the award based on their total financial membership at the time of submission. The recipients have consistently supported the mission and goals of the alumni association and donated their time and treasure to Norfolk State University. The Alumni Cheerleader Chapter received the 2018 Chapter of the Year Award for the 35 and under membership category, while the Military Alumni Chapter received the award for the 36+ membership category.



# BATTLE OF THE STATES



Power  
of **ONE**  
WEEK

**838** GIFTS FROM  
734 DONORS

**52%**  
OF DONORS  
WERE WOMEN

**\$174**

WAS THE AVERAGE GIFT SIZE

RAISED DURING THE CHALLENGE

**\$194,379**

**25**

STATES INCLUDING  
THE DISTRICT OF  
COLUMBIA WERE  
REPRESENTED

**60%**

OF INDIVIDUAL DONORS WERE  
ALUMNI OF NORFOLK STATE

**142**

DONORS WERE FRIENDS  
OF NORFOLK STATE

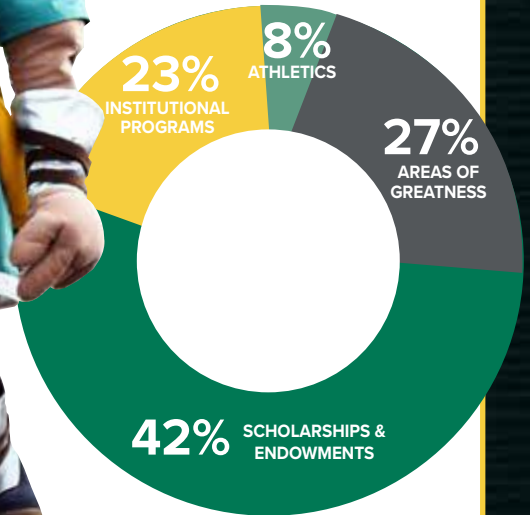
**\$79,116**

WAS GIVEN TO SUPPORT  
SCHOLARSHIPS AND ENDOWMENTS

**44** GIFTS OF MORE THAN **\$1,000**

**60%**

OF ALUMNI DONORS  
GRADUATED AFTER 1980



Members of the Divine Nine lines who crossed in 1983 held their 35th Anniversary during Homecoming 2018. Forty alumni representing the 1983 spring and fall lines of Alpha Phi Alpha, Alpha Kappa Alpha, Delta Sigma Theta, Kappa Alpha Psi and Omega Psi Phi were present. This group of dedicated alumni presented the University President with a check for \$10,500.





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The style, musicality and presence of the *Spartan Legion* is personified and set to electronic music in a video produced by the Grammy award-winning electronic music duo *Justice*. See the video at [www.nsu.edu](http://www.nsu.edu).