

NORFOLK STATE UNIVERSITY

BEHOLD

VOLUME 8, ISSUE 2 • 2019

Kyle O'Quinn '16

NBA Professional Basketball Player



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Kyle O'Quinn
Photo courtesy of Getty Images/NBAE





NSU's New Residential Complex

Photo courtesy of S.B. Ballard Construction Company

From the desk of the Vice President for Operations and Chief Strategist for Institutional Effectiveness

It is with pleasure that I begin this column by extending my gratitude to the Norfolk State University community for welcoming me with loving arms. My experience has been amazing, and I look forward to the bright future that awaits us. I am honored to be a Spartan and privileged to work with incredible students, alumni, faculty and administrators in the furtherance of scholarship and excellence. I also want to take this time to personally thank Dr. Javaune Adams-Gaston for her leadership and for her confidence in me.



As I reflect on 2019, the first thought that comes to mind is change, and perhaps more appropriately, transformation. In this issue of BEHOLD, you will learn of the many transformative experiences of members of our community. These individuals have not only transformed themselves, but they have also transformed the environments around them. In doing so, they have left a legacy of accomplishment, dedication, leadership and sacrifice.

One transformer is Dr. Nishan Pressley, O.D., B.S. '16 (page 23). As a rising star in the field of optometry, Pressley's impact is noteworthy. Through her work with the Florida Eye Clinic in Orlando, she often sees nearly 20 patients in one day! While at NSU, Pressley earned a bachelor's degree in Biology. She later completed an accelerated three-year program at the Pennsylvania College of Optometry at Salus University. Pressley has another transformative goal—to see more African Americans become optometrists and ophthalmologists. Understanding that patients often feel comfortable with individuals who look like them, Pressley hopes to inspire others towards a path similar to her own.

A rising star advocating for NSU in the political realm is Makhaela French '20 (page 20). Named a 2019 HBCU Competitiveness Scholar by the White House Initiative on Historically Black Colleges and Universities, French also worked for the Congressional Black Caucus. Her experiences yielded progress for minority inclusion and small businesses. She attributes her successes to skills attained at NSU while being involved in the Student Government Association. We continue to look forward to Makhaela's journey as she continues to be an exemplary model of excellence for other NSU students.

We have our own legendary leader, Mr. Marty Miller, Director of Athletics. His 50-year career has brought him many successes, but he has also cultivated success for many of our students. Through Miller's 22-year tenure as head baseball coach, our baseball team captured 17 CIAA championships leading to NSU's reputation as a baseball powerhouse. His coaching and mentorship has led to the acclaimed successes of our baseball players. In fact, 22 of them became professional baseball players. In 2003, Miller took on another coaching assignment, but this time, he would be coaching the entire athletics division. Under his leadership, NSU teams and clubs have won numerous MEAC championships and NCAA tournaments—but the greatest wins that Mr. Miller would boast for his student-athletes are in the classroom as evidenced by continued increasing rates of retention and graduation.

These phenomenal leaders have distinguished themselves and the Spartan Community because of their excellence, persistence and adaptability. There are many more leaders featured in this issue of BEHOLD.

Wishing you all a wonderful and safe holiday season, and I look forward to when we meet again in 2020!

Justin L. Moses

JUSTIN L. MOSES, J.D., Ed.D.

BEHOLD

VOLUME 8, ISSUE 2 • 2019

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.

Javaune Adams-Gaston, Ph.D.
University President

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Norfolk State University RECEIVES REAFFIRMATION of its Accreditation

Norfolk State University President Javaune Adams-Gaston and Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs (I) Leroy Hamilton, Jr., are pleased to announce the University’s 10-year reaffirmation of accreditation from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC). The University received official notification of the highly anticipated SACSCOC decision on December 10, 2019.

To prepare for the reaffirmation of accreditation, the University conducted an intensive, two-year self-study of programs and services in all departments and units. It then submitted to SACSCOC a decennial report, which underwent a rigorous review by SACSCOC-appointed teams, one of which spent a week on the campus in March 2019.

Dr. Adams-Gaston expressed appreciation to the faculty, staff, students, and administrators who participated in presenting “a transparent, authentic, and compelling view of the University to SACSCOC

evaluators.” She commended Dr. Hamilton for having assembled an excellent team and for having successfully managed a process that assures public confidence in the quality, integrity, and stability of the University. In thanking Dr. Adams-Gaston for having created a supportive environment with all the resources necessary to compile the comprehensive report, Dr. Hamilton noted that “Dr. Adams-Gaston’s confidence in us and her sustained support ensured that we had every chance for a successful outcome.”

Reaffirmation of accreditation occurs every ten years to monitor an institution’s compliance with strict SACSCOC standards related to institutional effectiveness —particularly academic quality, administrative leadership, financial viability, and student support. Norfolk State University ranks among the premier institutions that have earned and maintained SACSCOC accreditation. **B**

For **MARTY**
MILLER *NSU has
been a
home run*

By MATT MICHALEC



*“My career has
far exceeded my
expectations.”*

—Marty Miller



People often ask Marty Miller why he has remained at Norfolk State so long. To the Spartans' Director of Athletics, whose professional career spans nearly 50 years, the answer is simple: He is still trying to repay a debt.

After a 30-plus year coaching career and now 15 years into his decorated tenure as AD, it's easy to forget how the love affair with NSU started for the Danville, Virginia, native. Recruited to play baseball by legendary coach and administrator Joseph Echols, Miller left the town he affectionately refers to as "The Big 'D'" in 1964.

"My father gave me \$20. I needed \$7 for the Greyhound bus, so that left me \$13 to go to college," said Miller, who initially received a combination of financial aid to attend NSU. "The University found a way to enroll me when I didn't have the money."

An aunt who lived nearby and the presence of Echols made Miller's transition smoother. Once baseball workouts began, Miller felt at home.

"I wanted to go home after two weeks, but I didn't have the money to buy a bus ticket back," Miller said with a laugh. "But NSU was the ideal fit. The people here felt a lot like family."

Miller flourished on and off the field. A two-time All-CIAA player, Miller became the University's first NCAA College Division (now known as Division II) All-American in baseball as a senior. He also found his place outside of baseball. A mathematics major, he served as an admissions office student ambassador and statistician for the football and basketball teams.

Miller was also a cadet commander in the ROTC program, and was commissioned a second lieutenant in the U.S. Army after graduating in 1969. After a year and a half on duty in Fort Bliss, Texas, Miller signed a baseball contract with the Minnesota Twins. He rubbed elbows with the likes of Rod Carew before his release in the spring of 1971.

Miller returned to Norfolk and was working for the Norfolk Redevelopment and Housing Authority when Director of Athletics Bill Archie had a conundrum. Spartan baseball coach Bob Andrews had resigned two weeks before the season was to start, leaving NSU without a coach.

"Archie asked if I would take over for two weeks while he found a coach," Miller said. "After two weeks, I noticed we still didn't have a coach, and Archie told me he stopped looking. I was his guy."

The Spartans struggled at first. But in 1974, Miller's second season, they won the CIAA title. The rest, as they say, is history.

"I didn't like coaching at first," Miller said. "I had a difficult time understanding why some players couldn't do things like I thought they should. But we started winning, and it created an excitement within me."

And win, they did. Miller's teams captured 17 CIAA

championships and made 12 postseason appearances.

For the first 22 years of his coaching tenure, he didn't have an assistant coach. That meant doing all the team laundry, cutting the grass and recruiting – often on his own dime. He did it all while working a second job on campus to supplement his coaching salary. At various times, he served as work-study coordinator, loan coordinator, assistant director of financial aid and then director.

Nonetheless, Miller turned NSU into a baseball juggernaut. Twenty-two of his players reached the professional ranks. Miller also had the opportunity to coach his son, Marty Eric, from 1991-96. Miller recalls those teams and players fondly.

"When Terry Bradshaw called me to tell me he had been called up to the major leagues, I realized how important my work here was," Miller said. "I was proud of the players because many were not heavily recruited, but they must have believed in me."

"I think his legacy will be all of the former players who went on to be successful men," said former player Claudell Clark, who later served as Miller's assistant and eventually took over as head coach when Miller stepped aside. "We were able to take his lessons on the field and translate them into being husbands, fathers and career men."

NSU played primarily at Barraud Park in Norfolk during his coaching days before the University opened an on-campus stadium in 1997 named – What else? – Marty L. Miller Field. The wins kept coming into the 21st century. Miller won his 700th game in 2003.

The following year, history repeated itself. A change had been made in the athletics department leadership, and then-NSU President Marie V. McDemmond asked Miller to take over as athletics director.

"It was one of the toughest decisions of my life ... I'd been on the baseball field since I was 5. But Dr. McDemmond said 'your school needs you,' and I didn't have any more reservations," Miller said. "I credit her for having the insight to see my abilities when I couldn't. It's been one of the best decisions I've made."

NSU has won 26 MEAC team championships and 10 conference all-sports awards during his tenure as AD, made countless facility upgrades and scored an historic 15-over-2 NCAA Basketball Tournament upset in 2012. But the statistic he's most proud of is the jump in the department's graduation success rate, which has risen from 40% to 61% on his watch.

Earlier this academic year, Miller became the first person to be inducted into the NSU Athletics Hall of Fame for a second time. A 2003 inductee for his playing exploits, Miller was honored again in September of 2019 for his coaching and administrative career. He has been inducted into seven halls of fame.

Not bad for that boy from the "Big D" with \$20 to his name.

"My career has far exceeded my expectations," Miller said. "I've always thought to myself, if I'm capable of improving the University, I owe it to NSU to be here." **B**

University Honored for Small Business Support

Norfolk State University has been honored by Virginia Governor Ralph Northam for its strong support of small-, women- and minority-owned (SWaM) businesses. The University's Office of Procurement Services received the Governor's SWaM Award for achieving the highest percentage of SWaM spending among large public higher education institutions for fiscal year 2019.

Ruby Spicer, Director of Procurement Services



Dr. Carray Banks Jr., associate professor of technology, has been named the **2019 National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division I Faculty Athletics Representative of the Year**. Banks is the first recipient of the award. Currently in his 12th year as Norfolk State's Faculty Athletics Representative (FAR), he represents the institution and its faculty in relationships with the NCAA and the Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference (MEAC) and is the faculty's voice and influence regarding intercollegiate athletics at Norfolk State.



Dr. Adrienne Washington, assistant professor of Interdisciplinary Studies, was quoted in a November *Virginian-Pilot* article that looked at the use of the N-word. The article centered on who can/cannot use the term, and its past and present-day meanings.



Sandra Olanitori, MS, RN '75,'79, faculty member in the Department of Nursing and Allied Health, was appointed by the **Suffolk City Council** to the **Human Services Advisory Board**. Her term began September 4, 2019 and will end June 30, 2021.



Dr. Stan Tickton, adjunct professor of Mass Communications & Journalism, attended the National Communication Association (NCA) national convention in Baltimore, MD where he received the **Mass Communications Division's 2019 Distinguished Service Award**. Tickton represents the NCA's 800-member Mass Communications Division (MCD) in the NCA Legislative Assembly, which is the major policy making body of the NCA. The award is in recognition for his many years of involvement both as an elected officer and as a volunteer in Division activities over the past 30 years. Tickton retired from NSU in 2016 after 42 years of full-time service.

New Center Advocates for Important Issues Affecting People of Color

By GAIL KENT



Norfolk State's new Center for African American Public Policy is giving people of color a "seat at the table" in advocating for fair laws and other policies and practices that affect them, says Dr. Soji Akomolafe, the Center's executive director and chair of the NSU political science department.

"When you're not at the table where decisions are made about public policy, you're most likely going to be on the menu," he says. "Only the person whose story is being told about an experience can understand it."

During the 2019 session, the Virginia General Assembly approved \$298,000 to establish the center within the College of Liberal Arts, thus creating the first and only public policy center at a Virginia public university solely dedicated to researching and providing information focused on people of color. State funding may be renewed annually, but the center will not rely solely on public dollars.

Private fundraising through grants and donations by businesses and individuals will also be sought. Funds for the combination center and think tank will support faculty and staff salaries, public forum events and research.

"We have some very big ideas that we have outlined in our strategic plan," Akomolafe says. Eventually, he anticipates that the center will have an annual budget of \$500,000 to \$1 million. Recruiting for research fellows from the University, the community and other universities will begin in the spring.

Akomolafe says the nonpartisan center will become the "go-to place," or repository, for information on how policy affects minorities. "When you turn on NPR, watch TV or read the *Virginian-Pilot*, you will know what our center says about a particular policy."

Some resources will be used to conduct public polling to determine how various issues affect individuals. The center will also take public stands and advocate for minority interests at the state and national levels.

Dr. Cassandra Newby-Alexander, dean of the College of Liberal Arts, worked to make the center a reality. "Since President Obama was elected, there has been a step-up in racist policy."

She says the concept of 'culture wars' is an old trope that comes up whenever people talk about inequality and changing the status quo related to laws, practices and policies. People call such changes a 'culture war' as though it is attacking someone's culture, she explains. Both Nixon and Trump rode into the presidency using these—that whites are under attack and they have to fight back in order to survive, she says.

"The issue is really fear, and it becomes a way to easily galvanize the white population to support these ideas because they're couching them as a threat to their families, their jobs, their economy and their very survival."

Some of the types of issues that the center will address include energy equity, food deserts and criminal justice. Since its inception, the center has already taken on two of these issues. In September, the center partnered with Restore Justice VA and the Humanization Project for a panel discussion on criminal justice that included the Commonwealth's directors of public safety and homeland security, department of corrections and juvenile justice, as well as the secretary of the commonwealth and the chairwoman of the Virginia parole board. A panel on energy equity, held in October, featured representatives from Dominion Energy, Virginia Gas, U.S. Department of Energy, Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development, the City of Hampton, Hampton Roads 200+ Men and the Elizabeth River Project.

Newby-Alexander says the center will examine the facts. "We want to start widening the voice and putting a balance to what's being discussed so that all people, regardless of their race or ethnicity, are being represented."

"What's been missing is a centralized voice that talks about these kinds of issues," Newby-Alexander says. "The center will elevate research with a focus on how these issues affect African Americans." **B**





Photos by Sam Hughes

Top: Cassandra Newby-Alexander, dean of the NSU College of Liberal Arts
Left: Journalist Juan Williams moderates panel with former Congressional Representative Mia Love and University of Richmond Professor Edward L. Ayers.
Right: Former Virginia Governor Bob McDonnell.

AN ANALYSIS

NORFOLK STATE PLAYS IMPORTANT ROLE *in 1619 Commemoration*

By REGINA LIGHTFOOT AND
SHARON RIDDICK HOGGARD (M.A. '04)

Norfolk State University positioned itself as the host of one of the most significant events marking the 400th commemoration of several actions that took place in 1619 in what is now the Commonwealth of Virginia. A two-and-a-half-day event in September, the 1619 Making of America Summit, brought to campus some of the nation's leading historians, scholars, filmmakers, artists and influencers. It occurred thanks to the involvement and leadership on and off campus of Norfolk State University faculty who played influential roles in the commemoration.

Dr. Cassandra Newby-Alexander, dean of the College of Liberal Arts, and Dr. William Alexander, professor of history and director of international programs, brought the proposal to the Commonwealth's commemoration commission to explore the 1619 topic in a multi-day summit on the Norfolk State University campus. Meanwhile, Dr. Colita Nichols Fairfax, professor of social work, co-chaired the city of Hampton's 1619 commemoration, a multi-pronged year-long program culminating in August with a three-day event marking the arrival of the first Africans to English North America.

The importance of the involvement of Norfolk State faculty in these two momentous events cannot be overstated. All eyes, national and international, were on the Hampton Roads region. Local, regional and national media outlets sought out both Dr. Fairfax and Dr. Newby-Alexander for their expertise on the subject.

C-SPAN picked up the story and covered the 1619 event at Fort Monroe in Hampton with a talk back by Dr. Newby-Alexander, and the 1619 subject was the topic of a podcast produced for the Roland Martin show titled *Were the first Africans who arrived in Virginia in 1619 indentured servants or were they enslaved?* Additionally, a film was produced about the 400-year journey by two of NSU's students, in partnership with Nate Parker's HBCU Storyteller Group, which participated in the summit.

Hosting the summit on campus provided an opportunity for the University to showcase our excellent and diverse faculty; our intercollegiate cooperation with institutions across the Commonwealth and the nation; our excellent facilities as well as the capabilities that these facilities provide; our talented student body; and our importance as part of the commemoration and the role we are able to play in future highly visible initiatives and partnerships.

Dr. Newby-Alexander noted that a goal of the summit was to include a diverse host of speakers and scholars to participate in an effort to achieve a balance of differing voices, different ideas and various perspectives. Panelists and speakers included director and producer Nate Parker; former Utah U. S. Congressional Representative Mia Love; Chief Lynette Allston, chief of the Nottoway Indian Tribe; Fox News Analyst Juan Williams; and former Virginia Governor Bob McDonnell.

Dr. Fairfax and the Hampton Commemoration Commission produced cultural and educational events and the acknowledgement of the importance and impact of the Africans who were brought to Point Comfort. Two events, which were part of the Commission's work—a K-12 teachers institute and the day of healing—may well have the most lasting and far-reaching effect. The Hampton Commission's K-12 teachers institute exposed educators to scholars who taught them about historical empathy and respect, Native American history, African history, Colonial Virginia laws and how to incorporate those aspects into their lesson plans. This will impact and imprint generations to come. The second event was the Healing Day held at sunrise on Buckroe Beach and included a spiritual cleansing and African naming ceremony.

Dr. Newby-Alexander and Dr. Fairfax each want the events and the commemorations to lead to something lasting and meaningful going forward. They have planted the seed, and we all must care for and nourish it. **B**

Articles about 1619 appeared all across the country in various media including:

USA Today – 1619
New York Times - 1619
The Washington Post – Before 1619
USA Today – Slavery's Explosive
Growth in Charts: How '20 and Odd'
Became Millions
The Atlantic – The Hopefulness and
Hopelessness of 1619

CBS News – 1619 Project Explores
Legacy of Slavery
Daily Press – 1619 Program for Educators
Ben Franklin World on 1619
– Episode #250
New Journal & Guide – Africans
in America
BET News – 1619 – 2019: From
Trauma to Triumph

NBC News – Angela Site
Uncovers Details
WHRO Another View – 400 Years Later
Christian Science Monitor –
Untangling Slavery's Roots
Essence Magazine – 1619



Norfolk State Historians Bring 1619: *Making of America Summit* to NSU

Sparks new discussion about the African American Experience

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

Find the word **mission** in the dictionary and you'll find a photo of Dr. Cassandra Newby-Alexander, dean of the College of Liberal Arts. She and her husband, professor of history Dr. William Alexander, worked diligently for nearly a decade to bring the 1619: Making of America Summit to Norfolk State University.

The summit was designated as a signature event of the Commonwealth of Virginia's 400th commemoration of events that took place in 1619 at Point Comfort, currently in the city of Hampton, Virginia.

When asked about the significance of developing and hosting the 1619: Making of America Summit, the dean said, "I want the African American narrative to be reflective of historical fact. Our narrative is wrong in many ways, so it is important that the body of knowledge continues to expand and connect our origins." According to the *New York Times* 1619 Project, Newby-Alexander's premise is spot on. The Times wrote of their 1619 series, "It aims to reframe the country's history – understanding 1619 as the true founding and placing the consequences of slavery and the contributions of black Americans at the very center of the story we tell ourselves about who we are."

Newby-Alexander was appointed to the 2019 Commemorative Commission and was asked to co-chair the Arrival of the First Africans Committee.

NSU President Javaune Adams-Gaston



Photo by Sam Hughes

“Since 2012, we’ve been hosting academic conferences around this theme. We began to find funding and/or partners for the project,” she acknowledged. The years of researching, organizing and planning came to fruition for two-and-a-half days in September. “Three hundred fifty people registered,” she said. “Throughout the day, we’d have 250 to 300 people coming and going for both day and evening events.” She added, “Excellent turn out for the first day’s event – the HBCU storytellers. We had a lot of community people coming out, a lot of students attending after classes, and had large numbers that came to the evening events.”

“The summit was the culmination of seven years of having conferences looking at this topic of what is the meaning of 1619. Who are we as Americans? Sixteen-nineteen was when founders of the Virginia colony decided that it would be a colony that would not only survive . . . but thrive. They created a limited legislative body that became the Virginia General Assembly and created the court system. We charged ourselves with finding new information about our real history,” Newby-Alexander affirmed. The dean pointed out that the idea behind the summit was to bring scholars together to talk about each of these issues. Four panels were developed and each group would address topics including:

- What are we trying to create in new representations of people of color?
- How are we trying to reframe the history of African Americans?
- How are we looking at our family roots here in America?
- How do we look at law and citizenship?
- What efforts are being made to reframe our narrative?

“These themes are the conclusion of how we were looking at 1619, and not just that year, but moving forward. Now let’s have a conversation from the experts who were involved in reframing and finding information about our real history and real family roots. Because some of the descendants of people who were brought here forcibly in 1619, their descendants were living as white people because they disappeared within white society through intermarriage. And so, are we who we think we are?”

Newby-Alexander explains further that the 1619 Summit begins the next phase of pushing to rewrite the narrative and to encourage other scholars to rewrite the stories that would be shared in public

schools. “Slavery dominated our law,” she added, “but there is not one course taught anywhere in the country on slavery and the law.” She notes that case law was evolving when it came to handling blacks and permanent servants who committed a crime. “In 1669, laws allowed for the casual killing of any slave who resisted. In 1672, any white person could kill any black person. These laws stripped blacks of their humanity. We must make sure that we stop glossing over these parts of our history,” she ended.

Summit organizers curated a diverse host of speakers and scholars to participate in an effort to achieve a balance of differing voices . . . different ideas and various perspectives. “We wanted to be inclusive of all these different voices – to ensure all these different voices were included and heard.”

When asked about the lasting impact of the **1619 The Making of America Summit**, Newby-Alexander thoughtfully reflected, smiled and expressed satisfaction. “We recorded it. My hope is that it will be used by educators as a way to start a conversation, or eventually looking back and seeing where these conversations and ideas originated. In going around the country and making presentations on the topic, I found that people just don’t know. People are telling me that they saw a broadcast or a presentation and that they learned a lot and loved it!” And, the learning continues to be the ultimate goal.

“It’s a different level of outreach. The creative work we’re doing is more focused. We want to create a holistic product so that students will see the field from a larger vantage point – learning to problem solve and work in teams.”

The dean disclosed that the level of outreach also includes:

- Highlighting the voice of African Americans and the African American experience through drama and the written word
- Creating a database of scholars and resources
- Publishing op-ed articles
- Creating documentaries, docudramas
- Creating new learning opportunities for students via internships

“We are preparing students for the future. The way we approach these topics are the way we imagine and reimagine ourselves,” Newby-Alexander concluded.

The beginnings of a contemporary African American historic narrative has begun – launched from Norfolk State University. **B**



Photo by Sam Hughes

Top: Award-winning filmmaker Nate Parker
Middle: Radio host Barbara Hamm Lee moderates panel with Va. Lt. Governor Justin Fairfax, William and Mary Professor Emerita Dr. Joanne M. Braxton, Afro-American Historical and Genealogical Society National Vice President for History Ric Murphy and NSU student Christina Rasberry
Bottom: NSU student presents her film as part of the HBCU Storytellers Project.



GEM OF THE OCEAN PERFORMANCE SHONE BRIGHTLY

As part of the 1619 Summit, the NSU Theatre Co. performed August Wilson's *Gem of the Ocean*.

Dr. Cassandra Newby-Alexander, College of Liberal Arts dean, who spearheaded the Summit, was particularly proud of the reviews she received from the sold-out performance. Her eyes lit up as she animatedly talked about the theatre company's production led by its director, Anthony Stockard, which was a big hit with summit participants. "The play featured a talk-back with Riley Temple, noted critic and expert on August Wilson." Temple knows the director of the *Gem of the Ocean* Broadway production and actress Phylicia Rashad (*The Cosby Show*), who had the role of Aunt Esther.

"Temple said he had seen good and bad productions of the play and the NSU theatre's interpretation was the best! And, he was including the Broadway production." Newby-Alexander continued to explain the critic's points, adding that Temple loved the ways in which the theatre company interpreted the different scenes. Temple also noted that when reading the play, Aunt Esther is not spelled in the way you normally would — E-S-T-H-E-R, but the two words joined together really spell the word ancestor. "Aunt Esther was the ancestor who would remind blacks where they came from and their origin stories. Aunt Esther was born in 1619," Newby-Alexander said. "That's why we wanted that particular play performed. By the end of the performance, it has a sad ending, and tears were just flowing. And to know that the actors were so young. Aunt Esther's character was 21 years old and the villain was 18. They were amazing! It was an excellent talk-back." — **Sharon Riddick Hoggard**

PROFESSOR'S SERVICE

Brings Recognition to Hampton's Role in Virginia and American History

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

The historical marker reads in part, *The first documented Africans in Virginia arrived here in Aug. 1619 on the White Lion, an English privateer based in the Netherlands. Colonial officials traded food for these "20 and odd" Africans, who had been captured from a Portuguese slave ship.* Many of us have some knowledge about the arrival of the first Africans in America. But, what many of us may not know is that their arrival took place at Point Comfort in Hampton and not Jamestown. An edited version of the historical marker was unveiled during a ceremony last August marking the true landing site of those Africans at Fort Monroe, according to an article in the Daily Press newspaper.

The history of the first Africans and the African American experience in the U.S. is filled with misinformation, distorted truths and omitted facts and details. Today, historians, including researchers at Norfolk State University, are digging up more documentation and rewriting the histories of the people who played a significant role in the building of America.

Dr. Colita N. Fairfax, senior faculty fellow in the Robert C. Nusbaum Honors College and professor in the Ethelyn R. Strong School of Social Work, is one of those historians and social scientists shining new light on Virginia and American history. Because of her research on the city of Hampton in 2005 and her subsequent book — *Hampton, Virginia* — Fairfax was asked to co-chair the Hampton Virginia 2019 Commemorative Commission. "The book chronicles the history of the black community in Hampton and is a singular book in this category about the beloved community. I also engage in other historical projects in the city, so I have become the community's historian-in-residence," Fairfax said. "I believe then-Mayor George Wallace and other council members felt I was a logical choice to co-lead the commission, which debuted in 2014." Lt. Col. Claude Vann III (ret.) served as co-chairman.

The Hampton Virginia 2019 Commemorative Commission was created to draft and implement a plan to commemorate the 1619 landing of Africans to English North America. The body was also charged with promoting those activities in an effort to engage citizens and bring awareness of the role the city of Hampton has played in the development of Virginia and the nation.

"Knowing that 1619 was a historic year, not only in the development of what would become America but in the history of the global human trafficking of kidnapped people . . . I immediately said yes to the task." Commissioners were chosen because of their expertise in particular fields including representatives from Hampton University, the Fort Monroe Authority, National Park Service,



Dr. Colita N. Fairfax, NSU professor of social work, co-chaired the Hampton Virginia 2019 Commemorative Commission.

Peninsula Town Center, Weyanoke Association, Hampton Public Schools, the Hampton Roads Branch of the Association for the Study of African-American Life and History, among other organizations. “It’s important to note that efforts to commemorate the Africans who landed at Point Comfort had been implemented by Project 1619 for many years,” Fairfax said. It was Project 1619 founder Calvin Pearson who pushed to replace the inaccurate historical marker. “This year, the city partnered with Project 1619, the state’s American Evolution commission, Fort Monroe Authority and the National Park Service. My commission was an expert volunteer group.” Fairfax noted that the assignment was challenging as she juggled a full teaching load in addition to her other personal and professional obligations. “But shepherding the task was important.”

The commission planned a series of events during the weekend of August 23-25 that included a live broadcast of commemoration events with the Governor, other dignitaries and national media personalities; panel discussions, cultural activities with youth performances and living history, and an uplifting concert with the artist COMMON.

One of the most interesting activities, and perhaps one that could have a long-lasting impact, is the Hampton Virginia 2019 Commemoration Commission’s creation of two K-12 teacher institutes throughout 2018 and 2019. Hampton Public Schools embraced the institute’s four-day history programs. “The teachers were exposed to scholars who taught them about historical empathy and respect, Native American history, African history, Colonial Virginia laws and the application of such content in lesson plans.” Using interactive media, the public school teachers were exposed to engaging content that was shared in the classrooms. “The reactions from our teachers were wonderful and some of them have infused the content into their lesson plans,” Dr. Fairfax said of the 55 teachers who participated over the two-year period. “I believe the institute changed their perspectives. Our K-12 institute in the state of Virginia is the first of its kind where public school teachers were trained in

this content,” Fairfax pointed out.

A unique commemoration event was the Healing Day 2019, which recognized the 400th Anniversary of the arrival of the first enslaved Africans in America with ceremonies steeped in African and American traditions. Bells around the nation rang for four minutes . . . one minute for every 100 years. Healing Day activities included a town hall meeting, a drumming performance by the Elegba Folklore Society, the bell ringing ceremony, a blessing of the land, a gospel concert and more. These activities were designed to integrate the history, culture and customs of the peoples who first inhabited the region.

Nearly three months after the 1619 commemorative weekend, Fairfax has had a little time to reflect on the process of organizing and executing such a huge effort. She indicated that she envisioned a commemoration that would rival the historic African American Family Reunion event held annually by the National Council of Negro Women in Washington, D.C. “I had hoped that the weekend would have provided the black community in particular with a sacred moment to learn, reflect and engage in tangible community development processes to advance the community forward. I wanted this weekend to be a jumpstart to a renaissance of thought and action,” she concluded. “So while the acknowledgement of state officials and other leaders was recognized and appreciated, I had hoped for other outcomes,” Fairfax lamented.

“I believe that our efforts are duly noted and for many of the attendees and participants the weekend was successful,” she said. “Yet, I stand by my earlier observations . . . that I had hoped for a more intense intervention with our community about the meaning of 1619 in the trajectory of our lived experiences.” **B**



SENTARA SCHOLARSHIP

Helps Nurses Obtain Bachelor's Degrees

By GAIL KENT

Corasha Dent, RN, '14, BSN '20, the second oldest of eight children, grew up helping to care for her younger siblings, including patching them up when they had accidents and providing breathing treatments for two siblings who had asthma.

"I felt responsible for them at a really young age," says the Gates County, NC, native. "After I got into high school, I told my mom that I wanted to be a nurse. I just had a calling to help people."

She obtained her associate degree in nursing from NSU in 2014. After initially working as a nursing care partner at Sentara Norfolk General Hospital when she was hired in 2017, she has gone on to work as a registered nurse after passing her boards in July 2018 and obtaining trauma nurse certification.

As a CAUTI (catheter-associated urinary tract infection) "champion" in the burn trauma unit, she is responsible for patients with Foley bladder catheters, ensuring that they do not acquire infections from the device. She also serves as an ambassador for new staff and a preceptor, or trainer, for new nurses.

But working 12-hour shifts isn't enough for Dent, so in the fall she became a full-time student pursuing a bachelor's degree in nursing. "I wanted to push myself and take advantage of the opportunity to grow," she says.

Helping her with that choice is a \$5,000 scholarship that covers tuition and books as the first recipient of the Sentara-NSU Nursing Scholarship. Dent learned about the program while on campus last summer participating in a theater production. A nursing professor told her about the scholarship available to Sentara nurses interested in obtaining their bachelor's degree.

"I was very excited and surprised when I got the call," she says.

Now Dent is both a full-time nurse and a full-time student, taking all her courses online. NSU offers a Bachelor of Science in Nursing through a traditional program for individuals who do not have a nursing degree, and an RN to BSN, which is a 100-percent online program – added in 2016 – for registered nurses seeking a bachelor's degree.

Dent says she studies on the weekends and after her workday ends at 7 p.m., working on school assignments until midnight. Ultimately, she plans to obtain her doctorate of nurse practitioner (DNP) degree.

Sentara established the \$30,000 scholarship program because it wants to reach a national and company goal of having 80 percent of its nurses bachelor's degree-prepared. "Research shows improved patient outcomes in hospitals with a higher percentage of BSN nurses," says Genemarie McGee, corporate vice president

and chief nursing officer for Sentara Healthcare. "I am proud our company is supporting the profession of nursing as we continue to raise the bar on education in response to evidence-based practice and research."

Lydia R. Figueroa, Ph.D., RN, coordinator of the University's online BSN degree in the Department of Nursing & Allied Health, says Dent was selected for the scholarship because "she's a good nurse with good reviews. She serves her community volunteering to help the elderly, she's trauma nurse certified and she's involved in research to help decrease urinary tract infections."

Figueroa says online students receive a combination of hands-on clinical experience guided by experienced nurse preceptors, who supervise students in the field, and unique, online "gamification" designed specifically for the program.

Figueroa says there are still five \$5,000-scholarships available for Sentara nurses seeking to attain their bachelor's degrees. One scholarship per semester will be awarded over the next two years.

Dr. Leroy Hamilton Jr., interim provost and vice president for academic affairs, says the Sentara scholarship is valuable for both students and the community. "We are delighted that Sentara recognizes the quality of Norfolk State's nursing program and has chosen to partner with us to help them meet their mission of improving health every day." **B**



KYLE O'QUINN STAYS TRUE TO NSU

By MATT MICHALEC

Kyle O'Quinn gained a legion of adoring Norfolk State fans over his star-studded four-year career in the Green & Gold. His jovial personality and immense talent on the basketball floor are still fresh in the minds of loyal Spartan fans who saw his rise from unknown basketball project to NBA veteran.

O'Quinn's experience on Park Avenue is the reason why, even eight years after his college career ended, the Spartan great remains one of the bigger advocates of the University to this day.

It's not uncommon for the eighth-year NBA big man to still field media questions about his magical run at NSU, the Spartans' historic 15-over-2 seed upset of Missouri in the 2012 NCAA men's basketball tournament, and being a rare NBA player from an HBCU.

"It's a little surprising given how long ago I graduated," said O'Quinn, who is in his first year playing for the Philadelphia 76ers. "But I guess when something of that magnitude hasn't been done, it's hard not to talk about it."

CONTINUED ON PG. 18







O'Quinn's story is familiar to Spartan diehards. A latecomer to the sport with intriguing size and athleticism as a 6-10 post player from Jamaica, Queens, New York, O'Quinn received only one scholarship offer to play basketball: that was from then-NSU assistant coach Robert Jones. Once he arrived on campus, O'Quinn blossomed. By his sophomore year, he was an All-MEAC second-team performer.

O'Quinn became the first two-time MEAC Defensive Player of the Year in league history, and doubled as the conference's Player of the Year as a senior – the first conference player to win both awards in one season. He capped the year by earning the MEAC Tournament's Most Outstanding Performer honors as Spartans won their first-ever

league title, then posted 26 points and 14 rebounds in the NCAA upset of Missouri.

That success catapulted O'Quinn into the forefront for NBA Draft scouts. He parlayed the Missouri win into a spot at the 2012 Portsmouth Invitational Tournament, one of the nation's premier pre-draft showcases for college seniors. He was MVP of the PIT, and was picked by the Orlando Magic in the second round of the NBA Draft that June.

O'Quinn remains the first MEAC player to be drafted by an NBA team since Florida A&M's Jerome James was a second-round pick of the Sacramento Kings in 1998. O'Quinn and Tennessee State alum Robert Covington of the Minnesota Timberwolves are the only HBCU products currently on NBA rosters. O'Quinn views that as a source of pride and

never hesitates to mention his NSU and HBCU roots in his many interviews with national media.

"The HBCU community is so well-connected. I have older alums, even their children and grandchildren, that still ask me about what we accomplished at NSU," said O'Quinn, who had his jersey retired and was inducted into the MEAC Hall of Fame in 2019. "That lets the youth know that it can be done, and it makes me feel good that it's something the alumni are still proud of and talk about."

As the HBCU flagbearer of sorts, O'Quinn is hoping to do his part to open doors for future generations of HBCU basketball players.

"My senior year, it was hard for guys to get an opportunity," O'Quinn said. "Everyone was

so excited when I got my first invite to an NBA workout because it was like pulling teeth to that point. But now you see (HBCU) guys going to NBA summer league, invited to training camp ... it's growing. Slowly, but surely."

Along with being an in-the-flesh example for HBCU players everywhere to aspire to, O'Quinn is also doing his part for the next generation of Spartans and the local Hampton Roads community. For the last four years, O'Quinn has conducted a summer camp at Echols Hall in conjunction with Jones, who is now in his seventh season as the Spartans' head coach. O'Quinn can be seen each June frolicking with elementary schoolers in the gym that was his playground from 2008-12. He provides a little basketball and life knowledge while flashing his trademark smile to brighten the days of the youngsters.

"It's something that's enjoyable for me as much as it is for them," O'Quinn said. "Just being back in town, eating at the same restaurants I used to go to, visiting the barbershop. I like to stay connected."

O'Quinn donates not just his time, but his money, as well. He annually donates \$25,000 to the men's basketball program. The funds go towards initiatives such as allowing current Spartans to attend summer school while working on their game during the offseason. The NBA Players Association, which heard of O'Quinn's generosity, has also matched that donation to the basketball program in recent years.

"Kyle will call me to check up on how we're doing and I do the same with him. He comes to some of our games when we're playing in the same city he's playing in," Jones said. "A lot of times, when players leave and go pro, if they didn't have a good experience, you never hear them talk about what college they came from. But by donating his time and money, he shows he had a good experience here athletically and socially."

O'Quinn has carved out a nice niche for himself in the NBA as a skilled, versatile big man and uplifting presence in the locker room no matter where he's been. This year, his NBA journey has taken him to the 76ers, who are expected to be among the favorites in the NBA's Eastern Conference.

But whether it's been in Orlando, New York, Indiana or Philadelphia, NSU is never far from O'Quinn's mind. The University will forever be a part of his story.

Said O'Quinn: "The money I donate is just a little 'thank you' and the time I spend when I come back is just part of my summer routine now. It's fun for me. Without NSU, I wouldn't be in the situation I'm in." **B**



Photo courtesy of Getty Images/NBAE



2019 HBCU Competitiveness Scholar

By DORIS SHADOUH



Makhaela French '20 is making major moves toward her dream of helping an underserved population

RISK TAKING IS A SKILL.

That skill is one that has landed Norfolk State student Makhaela French '20 several extraordinary opportunities including studying abroad at Mahidol University in Salaya, Thailand, winning NSU's Hodges Business Plan competition, working with the Congressional Black Caucus, and representing Norfolk State University at HBCU Week in Washington D.C.

French was named the 2019 HBCU Competitiveness Scholar by the White House Initiative on Historically Black Colleges and Universities.

The initiative shines a spotlight on those exceptional student leaders who can demonstrate that they can excel academically while also showing civic engagement and entrepreneurial talents. This program aims to further empower these students with the tools they will need to continue to excel and be competitive in the job market.

"I was honestly in shock," says French after learning she had been chosen for the honor. "I was interning with the Congressional Black Caucus at the time, and someone else in my cohort was waiting on their letter as well, so we were both waiting in anticipation."

After the U.S. Department of Education made the official announcement, the scholars were then invited to attend the 2019 HBCU Week Conference. They had the opportunity to work together in special workshops designed to help them sharpen their leadership skills and work on professional and workforce development.

"The HBCU Conference, to me, was the true epitome of black excellence. We were able to sit in on sessions ranging from African Americans and small businesses, we learned about how to be of service to our community, and about the impact that we as young people can have on the world," says French.

This wasn't something that was originally on her radar, but when the opportunity presented itself, French took a chance and applied. French offered a little advice to other students who may be apprehensive about going for their dreams.

"Never be afraid to apply! I get so many people asking me about opportunities

and then will end up not applying in fear of not being accepted. The worst thing you can do is miss a potential opportunity by being fearful of rejection. It's better to try and fail than to not try and never find out whether you could've gotten the opportunity. You'll always surprise yourself with what you can do once you put yourself out there," says French.

This isn't the first time she's grabbed a golden opportunity when it came her way. French also worked for the Congressional Black Caucus and served as an intern for Congresswoman Rashida Tlaib, who represents Michigan's 13th congressional district and made history when she became one of the first of two Muslim women elected to Congress.

She says her experience there was unforgettable.

"The workshops we attended really allowed us to build up not only our brands, but our networks. We were able to meet some of the pioneers of the CBCF including the late Rep. Elijah Cummings, Rep. Joyce Beatty, Rep. Steven Horsford, and Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee, just to name a few. A few of my highlights were being able to draft up an amendment to increase the budget in the Treasury for Minority Inclusion and small businesses, attend the H.R. 40 Reparations hearing, and being able to be the last cohort former Rep. Cummings spoke to before his passing. Being inspired by Rep. Cummings to be the change in the world really meant a lot to me," says French.

Although she has made some extraordinary connections with people in the political world and in business, French says her leadership skills were developed right here at NSU.

She served as the president of her class during her sophomore and junior years. She remembers working closely with other students to make sure their cabinet delivered on promises made to their student constituents.

French, who is originally from Las Vegas, says her bond with a special mentor has been one of her best moments. "Meeting my mentor, Alexandria Hood, is still one of my best moments as she's always pushed me to be excellent and she, along with her mother have been my family away from home."

Now she wishes to provide that kind of leadership to others in the community.

French is working on her nonprofit organization with another NSU student, Jasmine Steele Dickerson, and she has big plans to expand after graduation.

Her nonprofit organization is called The French Institute, and its goal is to help children swept up in the justice system attain the skills they need to create and run their own businesses. French also wishes to earn her law degree so that she is able to provide legal advice to those seeking help from her organization.

After getting experience working with the Congressional Black Caucus, meeting highly influential political figures, meeting other amazing scholars, and having the opportunity to shape the lives of so many, French says she has one takeaway from it all.

"My biggest takeaway was learning that everyone moves forward at their own pace," says French. "Being surrounded by professionals from many different backgrounds and various ages really showed me that it isn't something to be rushed and when it's your time, it will happen."

She has certainly found a steady pace toward success in life, and she has no plans to stop any time soon. **B**

Students Tapped as

Forbes

UNDER 30 Scholars

By SUSAN SMIGIELSKI ACKER



Joshua O'Bryant, Leah Smith, McKinley Lowery III, Maleik Watkins

Each year Forbes recognizes scholars from all over the globe to invite them to the Forbes Under 30 Summit to nurture them for future success. This year seven Norfolk State University students were chosen to attend the summit in Detroit last October.

The criteria for the six-year-old program includes a written statement about their leadership and innovation skills. While the program only accepts 1,000 students, it aims to accept an ethnically diverse group of students.

There are many speakers including tennis champion Serena Williams, co-founder and CEO of DraftKings Jason Robins, and NBA Champion and co-founder and partner of Thirty-Five Ventures Kevin Durant.

Junior sociology major Joshua O'Bryant applied because he wanted to associate with other goal-oriented people. He considered it an opportunity to enhance his undergraduate attributes.

In his research on the Forbes Under 30 Summit, O'Bryant found it to be innovative and motivating. He realized the odds of being accepted were slim, but his upbringing taught him to apply for every opportunity that would help him succeed.

McKinley Lowery III, an NSU Presidential Scholar, learned about the program while doing some research on LinkedIn. He noticed many of his connections had Forbes Under 30 Scholar in their résumé. Once he dug deeper he found out about the summit.

He was motivated to apply after seeing all that the program had to offer, from speakers to networking sessions to industry-based field trips and even a day of community service.

The sophomore wanted for a better understanding about business and becoming an entrepreneur and saw it as an opportunity to gain relationships with fellow attendees.

The business entrepreneurship major said the opportunity can be extended to anyone.

Maleik Watkins learned about the program from Lowery once he was accepted. He applied after seeing who some of the many speakers were.

He wanted to learn leadership and administrative skills. Watkins also hoped to learn how the different moguls began their businesses and who motivates them to keep going.

He said to get into the conference he received help from several Norfolk State alumni including Kelcey Newman '93 and '96, V. Scott Hamilton '95 and James Bradford '95.

Geo Mirador, a junior majoring in computer science, learned about the program through friends who attend the conference in previous years.

"I was honestly inspired and moved by their experiences that I made it a goal of mine to attend this year's conference and be named a Forbes Under 30 Scholar," Mirador said.

He was motivated to apply because he wanted to be around the future and current movers and shakers of the world. Plus, he felt the speakers would provide insight on a variety of topics.

At the conference, Mirador knew it would be an invaluable networking opportunity. He is a budding entrepreneur with a few ideas that he hoped to pitch to venture capitalists and investors.

Emanuel Perez, business management information systems major, saw Mirador posted on LinkedIn that he was accepted. Mirador sent him the information.

Being in the atmosphere of other high achieving individuals and being able to network motivated him to apply.

He wanted to learn from industry leaders who have the same business interests as he does, including cybersecurity. Perez said representing the Spartan family is important to him.

Leah Smith, a business finance major, learned about the program from a friend who attends Morgan State University.

She is glad for the opportunity to gain new connections, be inspired and regain her entrepreneurial spirit.

She looked forward to the speaker and business opportunities. Despite having financial challenges to get to the conference, she still attended. **B**

OPTOMETRIST FOCUSES

on Educating African Americans about Eye Care

By SUSAN SMIGIELSKI ACKER

Before a high school field trip, Nishan Pressley (B.S.'16) didn't know much about the field of optometry. "I had never even had an eye exam but thought it looked interesting," she said.

Pressley, who is now a doctor of optometry (O.D.), knew that she wanted a career in the science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) field. But the visit to the Penn State Health Eye Center brought her career goal into focus. "I asked the lead optometrist if I could shadow her, and she agreed. She (Dr. Tara O'Rourke) really took me under her wing."

Now that she is an established optometrist, Dr. Pressley's goal is to see more African Americans become optometrists and ophthalmologists, because she feels it will benefit the entire community.

The Norfolk State graduate believes, when it comes to health, people are more comfortable when they are examined by someone from their culture and who looks like them.

It is important for African Americans to have eye exams because they have a higher rate of developing glaucoma and other eye diseases, according to Dr. Pressley, who graduated summa cum laude from Norfolk State and graduated last May from an accelerated three-year program at the Pennsylvania College of Optometry at Salus University.

"I want to help our people understand that blindness is preventable. I think that having more black optometrists and ophthalmologists will help us," said Pressley.

She began working toward that goal through social media by sharing her journey to become an optometrist on Instagram (@eyesonnish) while still in optometry school.

Her practice at Florida Eye Clinic in Orlando is a high ocular disease eye care setting with a heavy focus on ocular manifestations of systemic disease. The practice provides direct care and co-management for a variety of ocular disease conditions such as managing dry eye syndrome, glaucoma, herpes simplex/zoster, chronic allergic conjunctivitis and corneal dystrophies.

Dr. Pressley, who has earned the Treatment and Management of Ocular Eye Disease certification and serves on the executive board of the National Optometric Board as its assistant secretary, sees about 15 to 20 patients a day, many of whom have a limited income.

A standout in high school, Pressley was one of just 20 high school students statewide to be recognized as Pennsylvania's Best and Brightest Class of 2012, according to The Patriot-News. Her plans, as stated in the



newspaper: "Attend Norfolk State University to major in biology and become an optometrist."

At Norfolk State, Pressley was part of the Dozoretz National Institute for Mathematics and Applied Sciences (DNIMAS) program, the most prestigious academic scholarship program at NSU. "From the first day I met her, she demonstrated that she was serious about her college pursuit," said Michael A. Parker, DNIMAS associate director. "Nishan was devoted to her dream and fit well in our DNIMAS system." She was also active in Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Inc., where she participated in its highly selective, three-part program that emphasizes career, leadership and brand development.

"Even more important than her abundant academic skills were her qualities of an effective leader," said Parker. "She was confident, mature, and believed in service before self."

She picked Norfolk State for several reasons, one being her parents are alumni. "That is where they met," she said. Her mother, Heather Pressley '92, is an information technology manager in Pennsylvania.

Pressley also wanted the experience of being at a historically black college and university. In her high school, as an African American, she was in the minority.

"There were times in high school where I was the only black student in a class. I wanted to be somewhere that I didn't feel like a unicorn," Dr. Pressley said.

"I love Norfolk State," she said. "Going to Norfolk State shaped me and made me who I am today – a confident person."

DNIMAS' Parker agrees. "Upon taking a look at what Nishan accomplished when she was here, I can only marvel at how well she balanced her time with academics and extracurricular activities. She was, and still is, the overall package." **B**



Governor's INITIATIVE Aims to Fill High-Tech Talent Gap



Norfolk State University has signed on to an initiative by Gov. Ralph Northam to help create a talent pool of high-tech graduates. Under the Tech Talent Investment Program, Norfolk State, along with 10 other universities, has agreed to produce 31,000 new computer science graduates over the next 20 years.

The initiative, announced in November, aims to create at least 25,000 new bachelor's and master's degrees in computer science and related fields during a 20-year period. The impetus for the program grew out of Virginia's proposal to Amazon, which will locate its second headquarters in Northern Virginia.

The Tech Talent Investment Program will benefit students and tech employers in every corner of the Commonwealth, according to a news release. "This initiative

is an investment in Virginians," said Northam. "Virginia's tech sector will continue booming only if we can train the workforce those jobs require. With today's announcement, we are educating a workforce that will fill jobs at hundreds of tech companies around the Commonwealth, including at Amazon, helping boost our economy and quality of life in every corner of Virginia," Northam said at the announcement news conference.

The boom in tech industries in recent years has increased demand for workers, and the Tech Talent program will help Virginia keep pace. Colleges and universities applied to the state for funding to expand their existing computer science degree programs. Subsequent agreements will be established with other institutions, including community colleges. **B**

DR. J Out and About

NSU President Dr. Javaune Adams-Gaston, “Dr. J,” who first arrived on campus June 24, has an exciting vision for the future of NSU. In an effort to share this vision, Dr. J hit the road and personally met with members of several alumni chapters, participated in numerous community activities and has invited the community to campus. Many have had the opportunity to meet her and hear her vision and priorities for the University. Below are a few highlights from her community outreach.



Check presentation from Greater Northern VA Chapter



ACCESS Luncheon with Emanuel Perez



NSUAA President and Past Presidents



Alumni in Charlotte, NC



NSUAA Richmond Chapter



NSUAA Raleigh/Durham Chapter



NSUAA Central VA Chapter



Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc.



Alumni from GRNOVA



Members of the Virginia Legislative Black Caucus



Greeting NSU Freshmen on Move-In Day



NSUAA D.C. Chapter



Spartan Cross Country Teams Sweep MEAC Titles

By Matt Michalec

The Norfolk State men's and women's cross country teams completed a sweep of their respective MEAC championship titles on Oct. 26, at Delaware State.

The women won their first MEAC title since 2009.

The men won their 13th MEAC championship of all-time – extending their own conference record – and second in the last three years.

The Spartans also boasted both individual cross country champions. Senior Martha Bissah became the first woman to ever win three straight MEAC individual titles, while sophomore Meshack Kipchirchir won NSU's first individual men's title since Josef Tessema in 2011.

Bissah was one of four Spartan women who finished in the top 15, earning All-MEAC honors. As a team, NSU tallied 47 points, 28 ahead of runner-up Maryland Eastern Shore.

Bissah finished the 5,000-meter course in 17 minutes, 44.4 seconds. She crossed the finish line 15 seconds ahead of runner-up Aurelia Jepkorir of Maryland-Eastern Shore. With the win, Bissah became just the second runner in conference history to win three MEAC women's cross country titles. Michelle Robinson of Delaware State accomplished the feat in 1987, '89 and '90.

Sophomore Fridah Koech picked up her second straight All-MEAC honor by finishing fourth in a 5K with a personal record of 18:34.37. Senior Caroline Samoei also earned her second career all-conference honor with a ninth-place finish in 19:11.6, just shy of her PR as well.

Freshman Kara Grant was the fourth All-MEAC Spartan, crossing the line 13th in a season-best 19:37.75. Senior Nelly Jerop also ran well finishing 24th overall in a season-best 20:33.75.

On the men's side, the Spartans compiled a meet-low 25 points as all five of their top finishers earned All-MEAC honors. North Carolina A&T was second with 40 points.

Kipchirchir finished the 8,000-meter course in 25 minutes, 3.44 seconds, leading a 1-2-3 sweep for NSU. Freshman Evans Cheruiyot was second in 25:09.81, and sophomore Lelei Too was third in a personal-best 25:24.5. All three Spartans were competing at their first MEAC cross country meet.

Senior Anteneh Girma took fifth place and earned his third career All-MEAC honor. He crossed the line in a season-best 25:48.48. Senior Festus Bett rounded out NSU's top five and garnered all-conference honors for the fourth straight year, placing 14th in 26:59.84.

Though they did not factor into the team score, sophomore Kamil Jihad (19th, 27:39.79) and freshman Je'Shawn Walker (22nd, 27:59.57) also finished among the top 25.

Head coach Kenneth Giles was named MEAC Most Outstanding Coach on both the men's and women's sides.

The NSU men went on to compete at the NCAA Southeast Regional in November. **B**



2020 WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

Date	Opponent	Location	Time
January			
Sat. 1/4	Bethune-Cookman *	Norfolk, Va.	4 p.m.
Mon. 1/6	at Coppin State*	Baltimore, Md.	5:30 p.m.
Sat. 1/11	at Howard *	Washington, D.C.	2 p.m.
Sat. 1/18	Maryland Eastern Shore *	Norfolk, Va.	4 p.m.
Sat. 1/25	South Carolina State *	Norfolk, Va.	4 p.m.
Mon. 1/27	Florida A&M *	Norfolk, Va.	4 p.m.
February			
Sat. 2/1	at North Carolina A&T *	Greensboro, N.C.	2 p.m.
Mon. 2/3	at North Carolina Central *	Durham, N.C.	4 p.m.
Sat. 2/8	Delaware State *	Norfolk, Va.	4 p.m.
Sat. 2/15	Morgan State *	Norfolk, Va.	4 p.m.
Mon. 2/17	Coppin State *	Norfolk, Va.	5:30 p.m.
Sat. 2/22	at Florida A&M *	Tallahassee, Fla.	2 p.m.
Mon. 2/24	at Bethune-Cookman *	Daytona Beach, Fla.	5:30 p.m.
Sat. 2/29	Howard *	Norfolk, Va.	4 p.m.
March			
Mon. 3/2	at Delaware State *	Dover, Del.	5:30 p.m.
Thurs. 3/5	at Morgan State *	Baltimore, Md.	5:30 p.m.
Mon. 3/10	MEAC Tournament #	Norfolk, Va.	TBD
Sat. 3/14			

All times Eastern/Home games in **bold** played at Joseph Echols Hall
 * MEAC Conference games
 # Scope Arena

2020 MEN'S BASKETBALL

Date	Opponent	Location	Time
January			
Sat. 1/4	Bethune-Cookman *	Norfolk, Va.	6:30 p.m.
Mon. 1/6	at Coppin State *	Baltimore, Md.	7:30 p.m.
Sat. 1/11	at Howard *	Washington, D.C.	4 p.m.
Sat. 1/18	Maryland Eastern Shore *	Norfolk, Va.	6:30 p.m.
Sat. 1/25	South Carolina State *	Norfolk, Va.	6:30 p.m.
Mon. 1/27	Florida A&M *	Norfolk, Va.	7 p.m.
February			
Sat. 2/1	at North Carolina A&T *	Greensboro, N.C.	4 p.m.
Mon. 2/3	at North Carolina Central*	Durham, N.C.	7 p.m.
Sat. 2/8	Delaware State *	Norfolk, Va.	6:30 p.m.
Sat. 2/15	Morgan State *	Norfolk, Va.	6:30 p.m.
Mon. 2/17	Coppin State *	Norfolk, Va.	8 p.m.
Sat. 2/22	at Florida A&M *	Tallahassee, Fla.	4 p.m.
Mon. 2/24	Bethune-Cookman *	Daytona Beach, Fla.	7:30 p.m.
Sat. 2/29	Howard*	Norfolk, Va.	6:30 p.m.
March			
Sat. 3/2	at Delaware State *	Dover, Del.	7:30 p.m.
Thurs. 3/5	Morgan State *	Baltimore, Md.	7:30 p.m.
Mon. 3/10 -	MEAC Tournament #	Norfolk, Va.	TBD
Sat. 3/14			

All times Eastern/Home games in **bold** played at Joseph Echols Hall
 % Fort Meyers Tip-Off Tournament
 & Boardwalk Battle
 * MEAC game
 # Scope Arena

Our Time. Our Future. Our Mission.

Norfolk State University Raises Over \$250,000 in Annual Giving Campaign

By Noelle N. Cook

In just 84 hours, the entire Norfolk State University campus community came together to make the future even brighter for our students. This year's campaign, "84 Hours of Giving," was created in honor of the University's founding 84 years ago. Despite the obstacles, our founders saw the future of NSU clearly and worked tirelessly to ensure all students had the opportunity to earn a quality education. It was our goal to continue their legacy for the next generation of Spartans.

The giving campaign started during Norfolk State University's Founders Week, September 17-20. It was vigorously promoted through various outreach methods, including personal appeals, radio ads, as well as paid and organic social media campaigns. If you follow NSU on social media, you may have noticed a little extra green and gold in your news feed this year. Our students wanted to tell their own stories about how past donations have impacted their lives, and NSU turned on the camera and let them shine. They shared powerful, heartfelt stories about how our generous donors have made the future possible for each one of them.

Each student offered a unique perspective that clearly resonated with audiences on social media. These videos generated more than 185,000 impressions; and reached over 120,000 people. The six videos were also played over 158,000 times.

We also used the power of the radio waves to reach loyal Norfolk State fans through WNSB HOT 91.1FM. Several special guests were on-air to discuss the importance of giving; exciting things happening at NSU; and the state of NSU Athletics. President Javaune Adams-Gaston also shared her plans for NSU.

WNSB averages 113,000 listeners each week. If you missed the interviews, you can listen to them on the university's YouTube page: <https://www.youtube.com/user/NSUMarketing/videos> 

**Together, we raised \$267,016 from 466 donors.
And, we sincerely Thank You!**



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Norfolk State University HOMECOMING 2019:



Legacy,
Innovation
and Tradition

Oct. 26-Nov. 3



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:

- President **Javaune Adams-Gaston, Ph.D.** and **Mr. Dmitri Gaston** as the grand marshals for the annual parade.
- Debut of **Lieutenant Funk** and **Sergeant Smooth** as junior commanders of the Spartan Legion Band during the halftime show.
- Dr. Andria Chapman-Taliaferro (B.S. '93) was crowned Ms. Alumni 2019-20.
- The Darien C. Grant Endowed Scholarship for **\$100,000** was announced along with the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., Delta Epsilon Chapter's, Spring 1994 presentation of **\$25,500** in honor of their 25th Anniversary.

- The Pepsi Tailgate Takeover featuring **Young Dolph, Terence J, Gia Peppers** and **DJ Millie**.
- The ESSENCE and Pepsi's "She Got Now" initiative made its final tour stop at Norfolk State University. This celebration of past, present and future women of Historically Black Colleges and Universities, honored two history-making women, **Sandrea Citizen** and **Brehanna Daniels**.
- Sold-out musical presentation by the NSU Theatre Company: **MOTOWN at 60: A Musical Tribute**.



AlumniNews





NSUAA Honors

On Thursday, October 31, the NSU Alumni Association, Inc., publicly recognized and honored members and chapters of the alumni association who have supported its mission and goals.

Alisia Smith-Rucker '94 received the NSUAA's Alumnus of the Year Award. Jennifer Baker '73, Tracy Broady '91, Andrea Crump '86, Nicole De Jesus '11, Dorian Livingston '84, Kenneth Pritchett '16 & '19, Elaine Smith '64, and Angela Washington '84 each received the Chapter Service Award.

The final recognition of the evening was the Chapter of the Year Award. This award went to two chapters 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 Central Virginia Alumni Chapter received the 2019 Chapter of the Year Award for the 35 and under membership category, while the Chesapeake Alumni Chapter received the award for 36+ membership category.





Psychology Suite Named In Honor Of NSU Alumnus James E. Savage, Jr.

Norfolk State University recently unveiled the Psychology Suite in honor of Alumnus Dr. James E. Savage, Jr.

Dr. Savage, earned a bachelor's degree in Psychology from the Norfolk Division of Virginia State College in 1968. He later earned his master's and doctoral degrees from Northwestern University in Evanston, IL.

Dr. Savage is a notable and licensed clinical psychologist with more than 48 years of experience. He has devoted his life and career to the betterment of individuals and families by providing counseling services at both the Institute of Life Enrichment and the Center for Life Enrichment. Through the decades, he has provided an African American mental health presence in the Baltimore, MD, and District of Columbia Metro areas. He is a past president of the National Association of Black Psychologists (ABPsi) and former elder of the Elder Association of Black Psychologists.

A lifetime member of the Norfolk State University Alumni Association, Dr. Savage is a loyal supporter of Norfolk State University. In 2018, he established the African American Psychology Hall of Fame Endowment and a Psychology Endowment to support faculty development and student scholarships. In recognition of his charitable contributions, Dr. Savage was inducted into the University's Lyman Beecher Brooks Society in 2019. **B**



With planned giving you can provide long-lasting support for Norfolk State University while enjoying financial benefits. Explore our planned giving website at norfolklegacy.org

A member of the University Advancement team is available to answer questions related to a planned gift by calling **(757) 823-8323** for a confidential appointment.



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Scan our QR Code to take our survey





The Fall 2019 Graduation Ceremony at Joseph G. Echols Memorial Hall

