Black Alumni Chronicle, Spring 1991

University of Dayton

Follow this and additional works at: https://ecommons.udayton.edu/blk_alum_chron

Recommended Citation
https://ecommons.udayton.edu/blk_alum_chron/17

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the Marketing and Communications at eCommons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Black Alumni Chronicle by an authorized administrator of eCommons. For more information, please contact frice1@udayton.edu, mschlangen1@udayton.edu.
UD basketball coach Jim O'Brien is looking for basketball players. He is also looking for leaders.

"When I got this job," he says, "I became committed to helping all student athletes here graduate as leaders. In particular I want to help Black athletes graduate as Black leaders."

Soon after taking the job, O'Brien visited Debra Moore, director of the office of minority student affairs. They talked about what had been done and what could be done in the future, so, O'Brien says, "Black basketball players could make use of all the resources available here to challenge them to greater leadership."

Among the results of the bridge built between the basketball program and the minority student affairs office is a weekend-long workshop at the beginning of the school year where the basketball players interact with a number of people—including Debra Moore—who will have an impact on their lives at the University.

In January, the team's Black basketball players had a "mentoring dinner" at which they met a number of Black leaders from the community as well as from UD. Such activities can breed relationships which may have lifelong benefits for the athletes. The minority affairs office is now planning a series of mentoring dinners for students throughout the University.

"I'm personally interested," O'Brien says, "in helping the University with its community relations with minorities in the Dayton area. I think my visibility in the community and especially in the Black community can be used in a positive way."

O'Brien sees the UD community as a recruiting plus: "When people visit, they sense they're going into an environment where they are going to grow. They sense a strong support system here, athletically, academically, and in minority affairs; people here will take time to give the support a young man needs to succeed."

O'Brien's interest in students extends beyond athletes. He and Sharon, his wife, have joined the University's major gift club, the President's Club. Their money will be used for an area identified by the minority student affairs office as a critical need—books. Students will be able to apply to the minority student affairs office for short-term loans to buy books. The students may either pay back the loans or, when finished with the books, donate them to other students.

Coach O'Brien's game plan for starter Alex Robertson and other team members is to build strong players and strong leaders.
"Living Dr. King's Dream" was the theme of two events planned by the minority student affairs office in recognition of the memory of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.

At the annual prayer breakfast Jan. 14, keynote speaker the Rev. Leonard Sweet sounded an alarm to "live at red alert."

Sweet, president of Dayton's United Theological Seminary, told the 200 members of the UD community who gathered in the Kennedy Union Ballroom that living at red alert means "seeing the danger signals that are all around us" as well as "calling people to public leadership that involves danger, suffering and going against the grain. It's living out of a 'cross' frame of reference."

A Methodist minister, Sweet criticized the "Sesame Street spirituality" and "search for a Jacuzzi Jesus" that he sees in modern society. He stressed that King believed in the socially disruptive power of the Gospel. "Martin Luther King Jr. had no tolerance for a decaffeinated Christianity, a religion that won't keep you awake at night."

Instead, "King kept central to his vision the cross. He began a red party for the world — red for atonement, red for the cost of discipleship." To follow in King's footsteps means taking up the cross, Sweet said. It "entails sacrifice, self-denial and living a life together that is willing to risk and willing even to die."

On Jan. 15, an evening program honoring Dr. King was held in Immaculate Conception Chapel.

The program featured a presentation by keynote speaker the Rev. William P. DeVeaux of Metropolitan A.M.E. Church in Washington, D.C., who brought a religious perspective to social and civil commentary. Also featured was a performance by the Gospel Chorus.

King's words "We must either learn to live together as brothers or we are all going to perish together as fools" appeared on signs carried by UD students at a protest rally held in Kennedy Union Plaza Jan. 14. Speakers at the rally included the Rev. Maurice McCracken, a long-time peace activist from Cincinnati, who noted, "How ironic and how wrong it is" to have chosen King's birthday as the deadline for Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait.

Freshman Lisa Richardson phoned her good-byes from Marycrest Hall Nov. 16 after being called to active duty as a parts specialist with the 705th transportation unit of the U.S. Army Reserves. Her unit left from Fort McCoy, Wis., over Christmas.

Want to write?

Lisa Richardson
280-72-0905
705 Transportation Unit
Operation Desert Storm
APO NY 09848

Lisa Richardson phoned her good-byes from Marycrest Hall Nov. 16 after being called to active duty as a parts specialist with the 705th transportation unit of the U.S. Army Reserves. Her unit left from Fort McCoy, Wis., over Christmas.

Freetown?

University of Dayton students may one day be able to add the capital of Sierra Leone to the sites available for study abroad opportunities — if a proposal to launch a project in the West African nation pans out.

"Africa is a frontier of challenges. If we want a more global education, students need to become aware of more than just Western civilization," says Julius Amin, UD assistant professor of history. A native of Cameroon, Amin was one of two UD representatives who went on a fact-finding mission to Sierra Leone in July.

Although rich in natural resources, Sierra Leone lags behind other African nations in development, Amin said. Contributing to Sierra Leone's "dubious reputation as one of the 10 poorest countries in the world" are its economic base and infrastructure and the business practices of Western corporations, Amin said.

For Tim Spraggins, assistant director of minority student affairs, the trip to Sierra Leone was an opportunity to explore another culture and to discover some of the elements of African culture that have been retained by African-Americans. From reverence for ancestors to marriage and divorce customs, Spraggins was intrigued by the similarities and differences.

Spraggins and Amin visited Njala University College, where electricity is available for only six hours a day and equipment, textbooks, library materials, paper and pens — virtually everything American students consider essential — are in short supply. Sierra Leoneans believe such obstacles are temporary, Amin said.

"Sierra Leone's is the story of a lot of developing countries. It's a story of hardship, a story of hope, a story of struggle."

Through immersion in such a culture, Spraggins believes, "students learn to appreciate the material things and the educational opportunities they have at home." Amin added, "Part of the educational process is knowing the world around you and being global in your thoughts. No longer does the ocean or the Soviet Iron Curtain split the world."

The concept of starting a project in Africa — one that would involve a broad population of UD students — began with Brother Paul Bredstege, S.M., director of UD's Interdepartmental Summer Study Abroad Program, Amin said. A University committee is now considering specific goals and objectives for such a program. "We wanted to investigate what might be possible. If it fails, we have that epitaph: 'We tried.'"
Sara Thurman

Major: 
Music Therapy

Hometown: 
Hillsboro, Ohio

Year: 
Junior

"It helps me through the week," junior Sara Thurman said of UD's Gospel Chorus.

When you see what kind of weeks she has, you'll see why she stays in the Gospel Chorus.

The music therapy major from Hillsboro, Ohio, ("one of those little dot-on-the-map towns," ) is vice president of UD's chapter of Zeta Phi Beta, a member of Black Greek Council and a member of the University Chorale. She plays the bassoon and sings mezzo-soprano for the Wind Ensemble and works with Adventures in Movement (AIM), a music therapy group.

Thurman's academic concentration is in classical voice, which means she studies operatic techniques. She recently sang in the short opera "Signor Deluso," which UD music students performed at Boll Theatre on campus.

Would she ever consider the opera as a career? 
"If the opportunity was there and the time was right, I would." But she plans to work in music therapy for premature infants, programming music for hospital nurseries.

"Music helps them to grow and helps regulate their heartbeats," Thurman explained.

She's already begun working with music therapy with clients at the Dayton Mental Health Center. AIM has her helping 2-year-olds with physical and mental disabilities do physical therapy to music.

"Music helps eliminate distractions and focuses their attention on their exercises," Thurman said.

"It's a natural instinct to respond to music."

Kristi Crabtree

Major: 
Communication

Hometown: 
Acton, Mass.

Year: 
Sophomore

If you don't like to sing, don't look bored on sophomore communication major Kristi Crabtree's campus tour. One nonchalant yawn and you might wind up shouting "why!" in response to Crabtree's rendition of "Why Do Fools Fall In Love?"

Crabtree's innovative ice-breaker resulted from her own experience with campus touring. "I remember visiting colleges, and I hated it when people were boring. I promised 'no matter what, my tours are not ever going to be boring,' and they're not."

Her tours even impress veteran campus-viewers. For the family of one prospective student, UD was their 11th college visitation. The mother "was just snapping out questions at me. She knew everything to ask." Crabtree fielded the questions, and after the tour, the mother hugged her saying, "you're the only tour guide that I've ever hugged." Since then, the family has called her four times, and the son wants to come to UD.

Crabtree, who wants to be a television news broadcaster, will get some experience this summer with an internship at WHIO-TV Channel 7.

Eventually, she wants her own interview show. "Everybody is like, 'oh, just like Oprah Winfrey?' and I'm like 'no, like the Kristi Crabtree Show.'"

Does she ever get embarrassed on TV? "Not at all," she said. "Get me in front of the TV any old day." Or a tour group — anywhere she can make people "get crazy like I am."
On Thursdays at 8 p.m., it's the television that draws many students together. But for members of the Christian Education Study Circle led by graduate assistant Keith Kitchen, it's the Book.

"The group comes together when the Cosby Show is at full force. That says to me they're very committed to study the Gospel," says Kitchen, whose role is to address the spiritual life of African-American students at the University of Dayton.

Keith Kitchen is preparing for ordination as a Baptist minister and expects to earn his master's of divinity degree in May 1992 from the United Theological Seminary in Dayton. He is taking some of his course work at UD while serving as a graduate assistant for the offices of minority student affairs and campus ministry.

UD's student body is predominantly Catholic, and "most of the African-American students at UD are Protestants," Kitchen said. "They want to develop their own theological understanding of the Protestant background and its implications in terms of their own faith journeys," said Kitchen, who uses "the latest techniques of Biblical scholarship" to help students understand the meaning of Scriptural texts and discover how the texts apply to their lives.

"The students have had a very positive reaction that there's someone on campus who comes from their own background and a theological framework they're comfortable with and that there's someone to confide in," Kitchen said.
A strong emphasis on community service among Black Greek organizations is one of the reasons Black students at the University of Dayton are choosing to make a lifelong commitment to Greek life.

"As a freshman, you quickly find out that most of the Black Greeks are the ones who are doing most of the positive things on campus," said Bradley Hamilton, president of Alpha Phi Alpha, the largest of the six Black Greek organizations on campus. "You just want to try to work your way up to emulate them."

Hamilton's fraternity is busy yearlong with community service projects like serving meals to the homeless, organizing campus-wide food drives for area shelters and tutoring preschoolers in west Dayton.

"One of our main aims is to uplift the Black community," Hamilton said. "We try to give back to the community we came from."

Camille Wilson, a member of Delta Sigma Theta sorority, said her group works not only with members of Dayton's Black community, but with UD's Black community as well.

One semester, for example, the sorority organized a rally encouraging students to get involved in local, state and national politics by addressing political issues which may affect Black students.

"We try to create an awareness of community through an Afro-centric perspective," said Wilson. "Greek life stresses the points of sisterhood and brotherhood and allows people to use their talents to express themselves."

Programming and rallies weren't Alpha Phi Alpha's focus back in 1947 when it became UD's first Black Greek organization, says Alpha's UD founder, Dr. Alvin Bridges. According to the 1948 UD graduate, forming a fraternity was an important way for Blacks to gather as a community.

"We were pioneers back then, although that was the structure of the whole country," Bridges said. "Back then, everything you did, you were the only African-American there."

Bridges, who operates his own medical clinic with two other physicians, still attends meetings with Alpha's Indianapolis chapter. He also has served on advisory committees and participated in chapter activities.

Camille Wilson thinks the "lifelong commitment" of Bridges and many others to the Black Greek cause is one motivation for getting involved in Greek life.

"Your commitment doesn't stop when you graduate," exclaimed Wilson. "Life doesn't stop when you graduate. An awareness of community service doesn't stop when you graduate."

"You don't stop striving for the betterment of all when you graduate."
February is a "cultural extravaganza" at UD. A listing of Black History Month events appears on the back cover.


Last fall, junior communication management major Veronica Morris told staff members in the office of minority student affairs that she wanted to get more involved in university activities.

They made her the first student co-chair of the Black History Month Planning Committee. Morris said she sees her appointment as a chance to break the boundaries of ignorance and miscommunication.

"I think that contrary to popular belief, the University of Dayton is a very conservative campus as far as multicultural programming goes," she says. "We're hoping to become more active in that. That's where we're hoping to take Black History Month."

Kathleen Henderson of the minority student affairs office agrees. She says Black History Month — referred to as February's "cultural extravaganza" by the committee — offers the UD community a chance to learn about and celebrate Black culture. "We show everyone the wealth of knowledge and expertise that as Blacks we bring to them," Henderson says. "That sharing makes the University a better place."

According to William C. Schuerman, vice president for student development and dean of students, the University created the Black History Month committee three years ago to involve the entire community in the celebration of Black culture at UD.

"I think this University has a commitment to make this an acceptable and a comfortable place for minority students," he says. "And you're not just making a special commitment. You're just always conscious."

Schuerman, co-chair of the committee, says that members want to "make sure that we have a constant representation of Black heritage" at the University. He says that the celebration of Black culture should occur not simply within one month, but daily.

The women's movement has traditionally concentrated on gender issues in matters of discrimination, and issues of race and class discrimination have not always been considered. "Women of Color Exploring Issues for the '90s" addresses specific issues that African-American women will face in the coming decade.

The course meets on Tuesdays, 5:30 - 7:45 p.m., in St. Joseph Hall 230. Visitors are welcome to attend upcoming sessions at no charge:

- Jan. 29 — "Ethical Issues from an African-American Perspective" with Prathia Hall-Wynn, a doctoral student at Princeton Seminary;
- Feb. 5 — "Policy Making and the Empowerment of Women" with attorney Lagretta Kennedy Bjorn and Marilyn Thomas, president of the Miami Valley Child Development Centers;
- Feb. 12 — "How New Technologies Will Affect Women" with Enid La Gesse of the Miami University School of Interdisciplinary Studies;
- Feb. 19 — "Where Racism and Sexism Meet" with Audrey Norman-Turner, director of Central State West;
- Feb. 26 — "Sister! Sister!" a one-woman production by Vinie Burrows at 8 p.m. in Kennedy Union Boll Theatre. Through poetry, prose and dramatization, Burrows documents the struggles of life depicted in the writings of Sojourner Truth, Winnie Mandela, Sean O'Casey and Studs Terkel, among others.

The recipient of numerous human rights awards, Burrows is the permanent representative to the United Nations for the Women's International Democratic Federation.

- March 5 — "Education and Equality" with Debra Moore, director of UD's minority student affairs office, and Amie Revere, associate professor of counselor education at UD.
Feb. 1  
Happy hour, 4-7 p.m., Kennedy Union Pub, with UD’s minority student affairs office as hosts and music by the Prince Davis Combo.

Feb. 1-14  
Art by Central State University students in the UD Kennedy Union Art Gallery. Hours: 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Thursday, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Friday and noon to 4 p.m. Saturday and Sunday.

Feb. 9  
Tour of the National Afro-American Museum and Culture Center in Wilberforce. Reservations: Kathleen Henderson, (513) 229-3634.

Feb. 12  
“Black Greek Forum” panel discussion, 7 p.m., Kettering Residence Hall multi-purpose room.

Feb. 15-March 2  
“Portrayal,” sculpture and paintings by artist Kor January, in the Kennedy Union Art Gallery.

Feb. 22  
Paul J.F. Lusaka, ambassador of the Republic of Zambia to the United States and former president of the UN General Assembly, will speak on

“International Human Rights: An African Perspective,” 8 p.m. in Kennedy Union.

Feb. 24  
Reception with artist Kor January, 2-4 p.m., Kennedy Union Art Gallery. The UD Gospel Chorus will perform at 3 p.m. in Boll Theatre.

Feb. 28  
“Meeting of the Minds” program, 7 p.m., Kennedy Union Boll Theatre.

March 2  
Career Day for students — with job fair, luncheon and speaker Westina Matthews of Merrill Lynch and Co. Companies that would like to send a representative to the job fair may call Kathleen Henderson at (513) 229-3634.

April 11  
UD Gospel Chorus spring concert, 8 p.m., Kennedy Union Boll Theatre.

April 12  
Recognition and awards dinner for students, their families and alumni, 5 p.m., Kennedy Union Ballroom. Reservations: Kathleen Henderson, (513) 229-3634.

First Class Mail  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Permit No. 71  
Dayton, Ohio