Winter 1997

Black Alumni Chronicle, Winter 1996-97

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/4

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.
A decade toward the dream

Memories of the beginnings are unclear. One year, a record snow kept the speaker out of town. And, it's always early in the morning.

But the University of Dayton's Martin Luther King prayer breakfast has become a solid tradition.

In 1988 a handful of people gathered for what has become a major campus event. There had been evening speakers before then, but on that day in '88 there was a breakfast — and there's been one every year since.

In 1994, snow kept the Rev. Dr. Calvin Butts, pastor of New York's Abyssinian Baptist Church, from joining the UD community assembled in Kennedy Union. So they ate and prayed without him, and he came in '95.

When Father Paul Marshall, S.M., spoke in 1988, 75 people listened. (The 1969 UD grad, now a board of trustees member, is profiled on Page 3 of this issue.) The University's president, Brother Raymond L. Fitz, S.M., says, "I've been giving short pep talks each year at the breakfast, encouraging those there to make the following year's attendance larger. At the breakfast in January 1996, the ballroom was overflowing."

That well over 400 people now attend the breakfast can be partly attributed to the urging of colleagues and partly to a line of brilliant speakers: Father Marshall, Father George Clements, the Rev. Dr. Samuel D. Proctor, the Rev. Dr. Leonard Sweet, Father Michael Pfleger, the Rev. Dr. Walter Earl Fluker, the Rev. Butts and Greer Gordon.

According to Brother Fitz, "Through the Vision 2005 process, we have committed ourselves to be a more diverse community.

"We have a long way to go to be where we want to be, but a lot of people — like those who each year walk to Kennedy Union early on a cold January morning — are taking the steps to get us there."

---

Biblical scholar speaks

He holds a Ph.D. and reads nine languages. He's been a professor and a pastor. But he's also been on Phil Donahue and consulted on the film Solomon and Sheba.

For the Rev. Cain Hope Felder, the connection between the scholarly and the popular flows from his area of scholarship, the Bible.

His book, Troubling Biblical Waters: Race, Class and Family, received critical acclaim and popular attention. Felder is professor of New Testament language and literature and editor of The Journal of Religious Thought at the School of Divinity, Howard University. A Howard graduate, he holds a Ph.D. from Columbia.

The Rev. Cain Hope Felder, Howard University professor, is UD's 1997 Martin Luther King prayer breakfast speaker.

---

Deborah A. Bush
The Color of Leadership

A leadership conference for students of area colleges and universities, organized by students of the University of Dayton.
Feb. 28-March 1
For more information, call (937)229-3634.

Star takes timeout to serve

Junior Michele Carter was going to be a star this volleyball season. UD is touting its sports programs as being "on the rise." And few, if any, have been rising as fast as volleyball. Carter has played a central role and was looking forward to a stellar season.

But then, in the first week of pre-season, she tore her ACL (anterior cruciate ligament). On Sept. 5, surgery addressed the tear and removed cartilage. The starter became a spectator.

She became a "redshirt," that is, she can sit out a season and take five years to use her four years of athletic eligibility. "I had the option," the mechanical engineering major said, "of taking a five-year master's program or extending my undergraduate program. I decided on the latter, to spread my wings. With a lighter load, I can get more involved." She now plans to graduate in December 1998.

Her involvement has included help with the office of African-American student services, the National Society of Black Engineers and the student athlete advisory board. She served as a member of the steering committee for UD's National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) certification process.

The committee, chaired by William Schuerman, vice president for student development, included administrators, faculty members and community leaders as well as students. A four-member NCAA peer review team, headed by the Rev. Donald Harrington, C.M., president of St. John's University, visited campus in November.

Carter believes the visit "went very well. They were impressed with us and how we ran the certification process." The University will receive notification in the spring of its certification status.

With Rashad Young, also a junior, Carter is planning a student leadership conference, "The Color of Leadership," to be held at UD, Feb. 28-March 1.

They invited Patricia Russell McCloud, "a dynamic speaker with positive values," to be the luncheon speaker on Saturday. McCloud will address "Leadership in the 21st Century." Other features planned for the conference include professionally run workshops, student-led discussions, a career fair and networking with local professionals.

As active as she's been, Carter has found it "extremely hard to sit and watch" the volleyball team play to a 26-8 season. But, she claims, "I learned a lot sitting on the sidelines. It makes you grow as a player and a person."
In 1988, Father Paul Marshall, S.M., spoke to 75 people at the University of Dayton. By 1996, UD’s prayer breakfast, traditionally held the Tuesday following Martin Luther King Day, attracted more than 400 people, crowding the limits of the ballroom in John F. Kennedy Memorial Union.

“In 1988, I was proud UD was doing something like that,” Marshall, now a trustee of the University, said. “Part of the reason I was happy was that this was recognition in a white community of a black American who was a true humanitar­ian.

“UD recognized that he was more than someone for the black community.”

The University’s strategic plan, Vision 2005, calls for UD to be a community embracing diversity. Marshall sees this as “a worthy goal for the board” and asks “What does diversity mean?”

He sees it as “living out the dream” in a country where we cannot have barriers blocking access to that dream. “There is a lot of talk of a world community,” he observed. “Can it exist here in a small way? I’m glad there’s that vision on the board, and we’re trying to put together a program.”

His part in that effort he sees as coming from a two-part background: “I’m a Marianist. I’m an African-American.”

The Marianist tradition brings dedication to the whole person, to integrating the head and the heart. As an African-American alumnus, Marshall said, he saw “some possibilities and opportunities there.”

But the Dayton-African-American experience, he observed, is a separation from UD. “The greatest challenge to becoming inclusive is the challenge of including African-Americans.”

Marshall has experience meeting challenges and turning visions into reality. Pastor of St. Aloysius Parish in Cleveland, Marshall has led an African-American parish that, he said, “lived through a struggle for existence and is not just surviving but thriving” — in terms of education, worship and service.

The parish supports two schools with a combined enrollment of 500. Marshall sees the parish being “an inviting community” offering “the whole range of African-American styles” of worship. The parish is also heavily involved in social service.

St. Aloysius’ collaboration with other institutions is one reason it has not just survived. Within the parish boundary is a St. Martin de Porres Center. “We work with them,” said Marshall. “We don’t duplicate.” For example, the St. Martin de Porres Center has, according to Marshall, “large, effective senior citizen services.”

St. Aloysius, however, has scouting and other youth activities for the entire community. The parish also has youth ministries that are connected with suburban churches. The urban-suburban partnership is the outgrowth of a vision that Marshall and a number of others had years ago. “This is not,” he said, “the traditional stance of each parish make it on its own.”

“The nature of parish life,” Marshall said, is changing dramatically. People are investigating, looking for faith to be alive. People are searching.”

Marshall, who next fall will be studying for a doctorate at Catholic Theological Union in Chicago, sees Catholic institutions — universities and parishes alike — needing more than an attitude of “We have the truth. You just attend to it.”

What parishes and universities both need, he said, is “interaction — to help people grow and come to terms with faith.”

• • • • •
At a Kwanzaa dinner on Dec. 11, first-year students Bola Okunade (left) and Kenneth McDowell light candles.

Right, Kathleen Henderson addresses the diners. Henderson recently accepted the position of director, African-American Student Services. Having received both bachelor's (1986) and master's (1993) degrees from UD, Henderson had been assistant director of the office. Previously, she was program coordinator in the Minority Student Affairs Office.

—Photos by Larry Burgess

Making music and speeches

■ Feb. 26 — Black Faculty Showcase with solo performances as well as the Ellington Duo (Donna Cox and Willie Morris). Sears Recital Hall. For more information: (937) 229-3634.

■ March 4 — Distinguished Speakers Series: Walter E. Williams, newspaper columnist, author of six books and substitute host for Rush Limbaugh. Kennedy Union Ballroom, 8 p.m., free.