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University of Dayton. Black Action Through Unity

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DO YOU WANT DIVERSITY?
by Ebony L. Odoms

Do you as an African American student if you see more black faces on campus in the coming years? Evidently not! On March 21st, Diverse Student Populations in collaboration with the Admissions office held a meeting to address the needs for recruiting more minority students. The meeting was facilitated by the DSP staff; Tim Spragins, Kathleen Henderson, and Diana Castillo, along with three administrators from the admissions office; Chris Munoz, Myron Achbach, and Bob Durkle.

The meeting was primarily held to hear minority students input on the ideas they had to increase the recruitment of minorities on campus. Ironically only eight African American students and two Latin American students were in attendance for this meeting, not even one eighth of the minority student population on campus.

The students who were present had good ideas. Rashad Young, a native Daytonian and sophomore, business major, told the admissions that the prospective students should be “shown more things that would interest them.” Mr. Young went on to add that “if they want more African American students enrolled then they need to get more African American students to help them.”

Tiffany Wyatt, a sophomore, communicated major, reiterated Rashad’s point and added, “seeing black student’s on campus and interacting with them is what get’s the prospective students interested in this University. . . and if they want a more diversified population then this is what they need to do.”

Despite the measly populated meeting, the points that these students raised were put to use. The prospective students that have visited the campus since that meeting were met with a host of African American faces.

Hopefully in the future, more African American students will help in the recruitment of minority students before the well runs dry.

As the office of Diverse Student Populations reminds us “It takes a Village.”

IN CELEBRATION OF MY BLACK SISTERS
by Danielle Stinson

On Sunday, March 24 in celebration of Women’s “Herstory” Month, 19 young women of UD attended a women’s retreat at the Bergamo Christian Education Center. “In Celebration Of My Black Sisters” focused on “the relationships of black women, . . . at our campus, sister-to-sister, and with self.” The retreat’s purpose was to celebrate as well as empower black women as individuals and collectively.

As the ladies sat around the room in a circle ready to begin our first exercise, the retreat began with activity that helped us to be in contact with our emotions. Afterwards, all eyes were open wide and all minds in one direction.

This was due in part to one of the strongest, most inspirational female figures many of us had ever met. This dynamic woman was Ms. Alice Daniels. She began her session with a song entitled “Designer’s Original.” This song told how each of us is different and has something special to offer the world, which is unique to our personality and a gift from God. This was particularly fitting as the topic of discussion was “How To Live Each Day As If It Were Your Last On Earth.” Although many of us were reluctant to speak at first, each woman eventually expressed what she could leave to the world if her life was to suddenly come to an end. Ms. Daniels encouraged all of us to create “little, precious moments,” as those are the ones she remembers most since the loss of her son, Chris.

Next, it was time to “exhale”. We pampered ourselves with hand massages, and manicures. After healthy dinner, we celebrated the grace of our bodies in motion by learning easy, stress-relieving exercises which help to put the body and mind at ease, taught by Miss Stephanie Morgan. As a finale, we sistas honored our spirituality with a period of prayer and praise. Each woman created a collage describing herself and sharing it with the group. By the end of the day, not a soul was left unhealed as the sound of Whitney Houston and CeCe Winans’ “Count On Me” filled our ears and our hearts!

As a young sista struggling in a ’90s this is truly a memorable and worthwhile experience. It will never be forgotten. An extra special thank you goes out to three very important, beautiful “mother-sisters” on campus: Kathleen Henderson, Rev. Judi Wortham, and Verda George. These women are here for us anytime, but are sometimes taken for granted. I want to take the time now just to let them know how much we really appreciate them. Their presence at the retreat meant more than words can say. With them, Ms. Daniels, and Miss Morgan, we younger sistas were able to truly celebrate ourselves and the company of each other.
**HAITI: A RETURN TO MY ROOTS**

*by Donita Harger*

This past Spring Break I had the privilege to attend UD’s first *Spring Break Out* to Port-au-Prince, Haiti. For nine days, along with 10 other UD students, I was immersed in the poorest country in the western hemisphere. The purpose of our trip was to work directly with the poor while learning about the political, economic, and cultural aspects of a third world country.

After 10 students were selected in January, the learning process began. Our Sunday evenings were devoted to the discovery of information about Haiti. During these sessions, we would hear from speakers throughout the Dayton area that have recently traveled to Haiti. Each speaker touched upon a different aspect of Haiti - political, economic, and cultural etc. After many preparation sessions we thought we were finally prepared for our journey. But no one could have prepared us for what we were about to experience. No one could have explained to us how we would feel when we returned home. No one could describe the feeling I would feel being an African-American in Haiti.

While in Haiti, my life was restructured. I had a rude awakening as I began to accept and embrace my African roots. Haiti is the first all black republic. African slaves were annexed to Haiti by the Spanish and French. Once they were there the slaves began to revolt against the authority. The slaves rebelled and conquered the French and established their own constitution. Haiti welcomed any slave that wanted to be free, regardless of where they were being held captive. Each face I looked into I felt the power and energy of the slave revolt. I also felt the pain and suffering of each child I held. Due to outside influence and supposed “assistance” from the United States and other countries Haiti has become the poorest country in the western hemisphere. Over 90% of the population earns less than $150 per year. Over 70% of the Haitians are unemployed. Those Haitians fortunate enough to work usually earned about $3.00 per day. This is a country suffering from extreme poverty and under development.

While in Haiti I was a witness to this extreme poverty. Each morning I would wake up to the stale stench from the trash lined dirt roads. The streets of Haiti are filled with trash dumped by the United States. Little Haitian children laugh as they jump up and down in the garbage, they consider something to play in. I saw children searching through the trash in attempt to find something to satisfy the ever present hunger in their bloated bellies.

I was also a witness to the hunger and disease for this poverty stricken country. For three days I volunteered at a hospital for dying children. Most of the children in the hospital were suffering from malnutrition, dehydration, severe diarrhea, tuberculosis, or AIDS. I worked in a room occupied by 16 babies. The babies in the hospital had exceptionally thin arms and legs that resembled the pencils we write with. As I walked into the room, the children would gather up all the strength they could to raise their tiny arms out to be held. The room was filled with a constant moaning of pain. Each morning I would play peek-a-boo, or make funny faces, but nothing could make them forget the pain in their fragile bodies. Being at the hospital made the statistic’s I have heard before real. 27 percent of Haitian children die before age five. One Haitian child dies every five minutes. The infant mortality rate is 123 per 1,000 births.

It is almost impossible to describe what I experienced in Haiti. The Haitian people have been truly touched by the Spirit. In the midst of severe poverty, hunger, illiteracy, and unemployment are the most loving, kind, patient, and forgiving people I have ever met. The Haitians are very proud of who they are. They are proud of the culture from and what their ancestors did for them. They know that the situation their in now is only temporary. Their kingdom awaits them in heaven. I witnessed so much hope and courage in Haiti. A child had not eaten in a week but proclaimed that he was still strong and ready for all the battles that awaited him.

I arrived back to the United States with a new perspective on life. The people of Haiti gave me a new way of approaching life. They gave a lot to ponder. They made me realize that African-Americans have not taken the time to recognize, accept and get back to our roots. As Rev. Judi stated last month in her article, we have to return and reclaim. Living in Haiti for nine days has made me realize how much African-Americans have truly been Americanized. We claim to be African-Americans but are we really? How much do we know about our African or Haitian brothers and sisters? How much do we really know about our “Mother-land”? How much do we know about pain and suffering? How much do we know about our roots? Where do your roots begin?
Slavery had a calamitous impact on our cultural heritage and our interpersonal relationships. Over a period of four centuries, European traders captured more than one hundred thirty-three million Africans and exported them as human commodities to South America, the Caribbean, and the United States. The cries of women who begged to be taken into captivity in exchange for their children's freedom went unheeded. In the ultimate betrayal, some of our own African brothers and sisters negotiated with the white man to sell their own kind into slavery, a tragic reminder that divisions within our ranks imperil our survival.

When the slave ships docked, our ancestors were alone in an alien culture. In a stark symbol of their lost identity, they were stripped of their African surnames and arbitrarily assigned new ones at the whim of their owners. Is it any wonder, then today, that we are still struggling to understand our identity and to name ourselves!

Young males, the warriors and hunters of Africa, were the prize of the slave traders; on some plantations the men outnumbered the women nine to one. But once we hit the shores of the Americas, the very masculinity that made the men so prize worthy was stripped away. African men began to learn a lesson that still creates relationship conflicts: aggressive behavior is punished severely; to be docile is to survive. This message has been handed down from father and mother to son for generations and many of our brothers have grown up thinking that their survival depends on being submissive. Others have overcompensated to prove their masculinity by aggressive and hostile behavior toward society, toward African American women, and even toward each other.

The absence of respect for marriage and family during the years of slavery on the part of the slavemaster left deep scars. Marriage between slaves had no formal legal standing and families were torn apart at the will of the master. Owners were considered the head of every slave household and could withhold permission for a marriage or insist that one occur. Sexual abuse was commonplace—it was the owner's prerogative to demand favors at whim. In many cases, African American men today are still paying a psychological price for feelings of inadequacy generated by the inability to protect their families and provide economic stability and security.

The slave master's lash definitely left its mark in other ways as well. By wrenching husbands from wives and severing the connection between parents and their children, slavery fostered the rootlessness that still plagues us. By stripping our people of our cultural ties, it destroyed the foundation of our lives and prevented us from building a new one. Dr. Na'im Akbar says:

Slavery was "legally ended in excess of 100 years ago, but the Over 300 years experienced in its brutality and unnaturalness constituted a severe psychological and social shock to the minds of African-Americans. This shock was so destructive to natural life processes that the current generations of African-Americans, though we are 5-6 generations removed from the actual experience of slavery, still carry the scars of this experience in both our social and mental lives. Psychologists and sociologists have failed to attend the persistence of problems in our mental and social lives which clearly have their roots in slavery. Only the historian has given proper attention to the shattering realities of slavery, and has dealt with it only as descriptive of past events."

Thus, the need for an Afrocentric world view is established; not only to look at and understand our past, but to utilize that past as our key to the present and the future. According to Dr. Linda James Myers, we need to understand the difference between the reality of the slave holder and the reality of our ancestors. The reality of the slave holder leads us to destruction whereby the reality of our ancestors leads us to health and wholeness.

The real keys to eternal bliss come from the teachings of ancient Africans who know and lived a world view that brought about ultimate peace and happiness. Dr. Myers says that the optimal world view addresses two very basic concepts: (1) self-knowledge is the basis of all knowledge (epistemology); and (2) human and spiritual networks (ntuology) provide the process through which we will achieve our goals.

This is the 21st century. It's a time of triumph. Our challenge is to get out of the way. It is time to MASTER THE LESSONS. Once we know who we are, what we are and why we are here, we can truly become the expression of the divine.

I close with the farewell statement from Kwanzaa:

TAMSHI LA TUTAONANA
Strive for discipline, dedication and achievement in all you do.
Dare struggle and sacrifice and gain the strength that comes from this.
Build where you are and dare leave a legacy that will last as long as the sun shines and the water flows.
Practice daily UMOJA,
KUJICHAGULIA, UJIMA,
UJAMAA, NIA, KUUMBA and IMANI.
And may the wisdom of the ancestors always walk with us.
May the year’s end meet us laughing and stronger.
May our children honor us by following our example in love and struggle.
And at the end of next year, may we sit again together, in larger numbers, with greater achievement and closer to liberation and a higher level of human life.

HARAMBEE! HARAMBEE! HARAMBEE! HARAMBEE!

BUSTA RHYMES MAKES SOLO DEBUT
by Sean Thompson

One of the necessary things which is needed for a rap group or soloist to succeed is originality. The group or soloist has to have their own style and not sound like the next one or their career could be over before it starts. Busta Rhymes during his rap career has definitely fit the description of originality. His raspy voice and wild style has stood by itself for some time.

Even when Busta Rhymes dropped two albums with his group the Leaders of the New School many knew who Busta was and by no means did the group overshadow him. Now that the group has broken up, Busta has done what many say he should have done back in the day - go solo.

Busta’s solo debut The Coming is Busta taking us with him on a lyrical voyage as he attempts to rip the competition apart and represent the real hip hop.

Throughout the album Busta expresses in his way a respect and commitment to the hip hop culture. He successfully attempts to uplift the art form of rap, while at the same time letting people know he is not the one to mess with on the mic. Tracks like “Do My Thing” and “Everything Remains Raw” showcases Busta’s tight lyrical skill over hard thumping beats, but that uplifting feeling.

“Woo Hah! Got You All In Check” was the first single Busta put out from the album. The single has already gone gold and has practically become the anthem for the spring.

Though Busta is on point with his solo cuts, it is actually his collaborations with other artists which make the album complete. The “Ill Vibe” teams Busta up with his old buddy Q-Tip from A Tribe Called Quest. Both definitely maintain an ill vibe and flow like they have been together for years.

The “Flipmode Squad Meets the Def Squad” is a friendly lyrical battle between two dope crews. Busta and his Flipmode squad (Rampage and Lord Have Mercy) more than hold their own with the Def Squad’s Redman, Keith Murray and Jamal. You will have to judge for yourself on who is the better crew since they both represent to the fullest.

On “It’s A Party”, Busta and sweet singing R&B duo Zhane combine to form a jam that could possibly be a club favorite this summer. The song is done over a cool, laid back, smooth beat that anyone will feel regardless of their style.

The Coming contains all the elements which make Busta the gifted MC that he is. Busta’s off the wall style is complemented with his strong lyrics to form a hit album. The beats are varied so there are no two songs that sound the same. With such a solid debut, Busta appears headed for a successful solo career.

TOP 15 FLAVAS OF THE MONTH

submitted by Sean Thompson
in collaboration with Saturday Night Street Jams and the Flava Zone.

1. “Killing Me Softly” Fugees
2. “Woo Hah - Goy You All In Check” Busta Rhymes
3. “No One Else (Rmx)” Total w/ Da Brat, Lil Kim, & Foxy Brown
4. “Doin’ It” L.L. Cool J
5. “Renee (Rmx)” Lost Boys
6. “Motherless Child” Ghostface Killer
7. “Shadowboxing” Genius/GZA
8. “No Love w/o Hate” Sunz of Man
9. “Funkorama” Redman
10. “5 O’clock” Nonchalant
11. “Dead Presidents” Jay Z
12. “Must Stay Paid” Broadway
13. “Keep On Keeping On” MC Lyte w/ Xcape
14. “Real Live S***” Real Live
15. “Natural (Rmx)” Mic Geronimo
A SENIOR FAREWELL
by Kemi O’gunjimi

This is to the high school class of ’92, that entered into the University of Dayton on that faithful Saturday in August four years ago. . .
Remember when:
Only women lived in Marycrest Hall, and you had to escort your dad, brother, (or your man) to your room.
Stuart was all male, but you always found the dudes in Marycrest instead of Stuart.
All UD students had 2 ID’s. Your ID card with your picture and date of birth (I didn’t like that one), and your meal ticket. Of course you always knew the freshmen, we were the ones with the green meal ticket. Sophomores had the red ones, juniors had blue, and seniors had the white.

God, those were the days!
Well, CONGRATULATIONS to each and everyone of you who made it through the four or five years of UD! This is to the class of ’96 and ’97.

One last do you remember (black people): Do you remember when all we would all sit in Marycrest lobby and clown, then go over to the bowling alley and have some more fun? Marycrest lobby was just the place to be in those days.

When I came to UD that Saturday, the only person I knew was my roommate. Like many freshmen, I went to bed thinking I was never going to make it out of here alive. By the beginning of our second semester my fears were confirmed. Freshmen year we came back only to discover a real dose of college life; some of us did not make the grade. What a reality check!
When you’re accustomed to making at least 3.33 and over, then get a report card and see something, you realize you have to work hard to make it! Since then, we have been making the grade. Many were the nights that I would stay up all night, just to make sure I knew everything for a test. Before I knew it, I was taking caffeine pills to stay awake (thank God I did not form a habit).

As a graduating senior, I am very excited about graduating and moving on to the “Real World!” At the same time, I am very afraid. The University of Dayton is just a part of my many experiences in life, there is more to come (I pray) ! I am ready to go to grad school and be on my own. I am looking forward to having my own place, moving to a new city and meeting new people.

But there is a downside: I am going to miss my friends and family the most. It is not going to be the same. We will be spread throughout the country, maybe call each other every other week, and if we are lucky see each other once a year.
We are about to embark upon different journeys! Hopefully, with the help of Mr. Bell and Ms. E-Mail, we can reach out and touch.

On a serious note, it is going to be scary, because I don’t foresee the future. I don’t know what to expect, so I don’t know how to prepare. But I hope that the many lessons that I have learned at UD will be very useful in helping me through life.

One thing that I can take on this new journey, that will always be there is, GOD. If nothing else I have learned never to go on a new journey without Him. Like I said, I am excited and afraid, but the Almighty has already assured me that wherever I go, He will be there.
That is just enough peace of mind for me!

To everyone that is graduating: I can imagine that you share at least some of my anxiety and fears, maybe more. But I hope each of you is ready to embrace your new beginnings! Life is full of its twists and turns, but you must never quit.

To the ones remaining, trust me the years will fly, enjoy each and every moment! Always trust in God, He will get you through!
Welcome to the African American Showcase. This month two prominent African American Women; Lynn Whitfield and Martin Lawrence, will be featured in the Black Perspective.

This impeccably coiffed actress attended Howard University in Washington, D.C. where she studied Drama. Whitfield’s interests in acting began as early as the age of five. She would stay up and watch old movies.

Whitfield began her professional acting career as a member of New York City’s Negro Ensemble Company. She landed her first film role in the movie Doctor Detroit. Since then she has appeared in the television series Equal Justice and The Cosby Mysteries. Whitfield has appeared in the major motion pictures Silverado and The Sluggers Wife. She also had a part in the highly acclaimed Women of Brewster Place. At the age of 37, Whitfield won the part of a lifetime as Josephine Baker in the HBO two hour movie The Josephine Baker Story.

However, Whitfield’s good fortune quickly disappeared after her appearance as Josephine Baker. She became a victim of the Hollywood tradition of “type casting.” This did not stop Whitfield, she decided that if work did not find her she would find it. Through relocation and determination, Whitfield has managed to land several very important roles including her role in A Thin Line Between Love and Hate in which she is co-starring with Martin Lawrence.

Born in Frankfort, Kentucky, and graduated from Eleanor Roosevelt High School in Maryland. Martin considered himself the self designated jester of his high school. Martin began his comedic career telling jokes to his tired mother after work. He later became the kid on the fence telling jokes and making fun of people as they walked past.

After graduating from high school in 1984, Lawrence worked as a janitor and tried out his stand up routines around the Washington, D.C. club circuit. He then went to L.A. where he appeared on Star Search. After his initial disappointment, Lawrence landed a role on the syndicated television show What’s Happening Now? Spike Lee gave Lawrence his first role in a major motion picture (Do the Right Thing). This role led to appearances in both House Party movies and Boomerang. While working on other projects, Martin was also host of HBO’s Def Comedy Jam. He later left this position as host to star in his television series Martin. Martin Lawrence co-starred in Bad Boys with Will Smith and is currently in A Thin Line Between Love and Hate with Lynn Whitfield.

by Natanya Pritchett

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ARE YOU READY FOR THE NEXT COMEDIAN?

by Ebony L. Odoms

On Friday, April 12th, the Multicultural Awareness Committee headed up UD’s own “Def Comedy Jam”. With several months of preparation and last minute work, the committee was bound to make their last program for the year a success.

With the first step being a survey to find out what the people wanted, the search for comedians began. Looking all around the country for the funniest comics, they were gathered from both the east and west coast.

The night was hosted by the hilarious Monique and the D.J. was “Kid For Free!” Waiting for the next comedian to come out on the stage, the audience was ready for their funny bone to be tickled.

The show was ended with a snap contest which involves UD’s own LaShawn Pettus-Brown and Belvin Baldwin. To top it all off there was a party on KU’s terrace which was to last until 3:00a.m.

The Multicultural Awareness Committee has done a fabulous job this year doing what there title represents, with other events such as the “Candlelight Vigil”, and “Speak Out” a forum to address racial issues.

To everyone who helped make the Comedy Show a success: Thank You for your efforts and happy planning for next Year!

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CONGRATULATIONS!!!

To The New BATU Executive Board Members!

President: Donita Harger
Vice President: Harri Ramkishun
Secretary: Danielle Stinson
Treasurer: Nikeshea Spears
Historian: Becky Ford
Who is this future teacher of the Year?
Senior Star — Kemba Hubbard

Who is this former Resident Assistant and future teacher? Senior Star — Clio Syph

Who is this Women’s Basketball Team member?
Senior Star — Lisa Blackwell with Dad, David


Seniors Kemi O’gunjimi, Rhea Walker, and Delisha Stewart celebrate the last UD home game of their senior year. — March 1996

Salena Clay, Kemba Hubbard, and Melinda Riddick prepare for the Delta Ball — March 1994
Roomates Delisha Stewart and Genai Hill celebrate the Soul Food Dinner — December 1995

Lisa Blackwell and Clio Syph prepare for the Senior Dance — April 1996

Seniors N’Kechia Abney, Stephanie Morgan, and Delisha Stewart receive their kente cloth at the Senior Ball — April 1996

Seniors Kemba Hubbard and Joseph Salley head for the 70's party — March 1994