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PHENOMENAL WOMEN

COMPILED BY MELODY GREENE, JANA HOBSON AND TIERRA MCCLAIN

INTRO BY MELODY GREENE, C'2020

FIERCE AND FABULOUS SPELMAN ALUMNAE

Spelman women are leaders, women of influence, innovators and problem solvers. They see where modifications need to be made, and they create solutions. The following pages feature 40 alumnae under 40 who have effectively made changes in their fields and communities on a local or global scale.

The featured women are from varied professions and have been selected for their contributions to science, technology, business, the arts, public policy, education, and for ultimately changing the world.

We would like to thank those chosen. We know there are countless other Spelman women who are fierce and fabulous. We look forward to highlighting your accomplishments in a future issue.

Melody Greene, C'2020, is a junior English major from Atlanta and an aspiring broadcast journalist.

“We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, therefore, is not an act, but a habit.” – Aristotle

1. AMANDA AIKEN, C'2007

Senior Chief and Portfolio Officer, Orleans Parish School Board; Founder and President of A. Leigh Solutions

In this role, Aiken manages the portfolio division that determines needs for new schools in the city, works with new school development, provides support to schools, holds schools accountable through the equity and accountability office, and addresses unmet citywide needs such as juvenile justice, career and technical education, mental health, and early childhood education. Her service to children has been honored by the Institute of Women and Ethnic Studies; Crescent City Chapter of The Links Inc.; Millennials Award in Education (New Orleans); Urban League of Greater New Orleans; and The NOLA Black Professionals.



2. ARYEN MOORE ALSTON, C'2005

Self-Taught Chef, Owner of Sweet Potato Baby, Producer, and Host of "This Hour is Cooking"



Not only a self-taught chef, Alston is also the proud owner of Sweet Potato Baby, a catering and baked-goods business. The proud Spelman alumna starred on the season premiere of the "Food Network Star," where she had the opportunity to showcase her culinary skills. Alston is one of the original members of SpelBots, the College's robotics team.

3. MONIQUE ANTHONY, C'2003

Director, Office of Minority Health and Disparities Elimination, Tennessee Department of Health

As director, Anthony facilitates and advocates for the development of policies, programs, and services that appropriately respond to population health disparity issues across Tennessee, specifically those of racial and ethnic minority populations. Anthony has committed her profession to refining population health and improving the structure of communities and focusing on decreasing health disparities upon populations.



4. DEAWEH BENSON, C'2012

Research Associate, American Institutes for Research

At AIR, some of Benson's responsibilities include assisting in the design and planning of qualitative and quantitative data collection instruments including interview protocols, focus group protocols and surveys.



Also, she supports the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation Institutional Partnerships Initiative Evaluation. She also manages a literacy center where she directs and coaches volunteers for tutoring programs. In addition to her bachelor's in psychology from Spelman, Benson has a master's from Harvard University in international education policy.

5. MEA BOYKINS, C'2011

CEO, Global Management & Marketing LLC, Founder and President of Student Emergency Assistance Scholarship Fund

As chief executive officer of GM Squared, Boykins specializes in creating global ventures and events that support social and economic benefits. Whether creative or strategic consultation, she provides expertise in marketing and brand development. In 2009, she founded the Student Emergency Assistance Scholarship. This fund was for Spelman College juniors and seniors who exhausted all financial resources. Boykins' work has been recognized in media outlets like *Black Enterprise*, *Black Celebrity Giving*, HBCU Buzz, Hello Beautiful, Gambit, and more both nationally and internationally.



6. KRISTEN HODGE CLARK, C'2004

Vice President for Best Practice and Innovation, Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges

In this capacity, Hodge-Clark spearheads the association's strategic research agenda on a range of issues including reputational risks for universities, governing board structure and culture, and freedom of speech issues on college campuses. She is an expert on higher education governance, minority serving institutions, and issues of campus climate. Hodge-Clark received a bachelor's from Spelman in English and her doctorate in American studies: urban education/higher education from the University of Maryland.



7. INDIA L. COLLIER, C'2010

Orthodontic Specialist

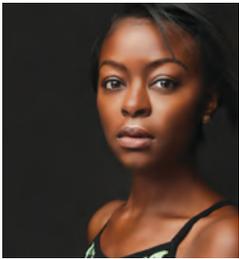
A board certified orthodontist in her residency at Augusta University, formerly the Medical College of Georgia, Collier was a biology major while attending Spelman and received her doctor of medicine from Augusta with highest honors. A member of several dental organizations, including the American Dental Association and American Association of Orthodontists, she founded and served as the president of the Augusta University Chapter of Operation Smile. There, she was able to help raise funds for five children to have cleft lip and/or cleft palate surgeries. Collier plans to open her own orthodontic practice in Atlanta.



8. DANIELLE DEADWYLER, C'2004

Professional Actress and Producer

A congregation of artistic personas and firebrand talent, Deadwyler's sophisticated spunk and ingenuity is reflected on stages, screens and pages. Her artistry is rooted in theater, dance, and creative writing. As a professional actor, Deadwyler has performed in productions with Kenny Leon's True Colors Theatre and the Tony Award-winning Alliance Theatre. She has guest-starred in BET's "Being Mary Jane," starring Gabrielle Union, as well as joining the cast of Tyler Perry's and OWN Network's "The Haves and the Have Nots." Also, she has starred in "Atlanta" (FX), "Hap & Leonard" (Sundance TV) and "MacGyver" (CBS), among others.



9. LYNNETTE D. ESPY WILLIAMS, C'2003

Partner and Chief Diversity Officer, Cozen O'Connor

As partner and chief diversity office at Cozen O'Connor, a top-100 U.S. law firm of over 700 attorneys, Espy-Williams has experience litigating a variety of civil and commercial matters. She has been actively involved with LEAD Atlanta, the Georgia Association of Black Women Attorneys and is the former president of the Gate City Bar Association, the oldest African-American bar association in Georgia. She has been recognized as one of Atlanta's Power 30 Under 30, Atlanta Business League's "Atlanta's Top 100 Black Women of Influence," and IMPACT, and the National Bar Association's "Nation's Best Advocates: 40 Lawyers Under 40."



10. ASHLEY FARMER, C'2006

Assistant Professor, Departments of History and African and African Diasport Studies, University of Texas at Austin

A historian of Black women's history, intellectual history, and radical politics, Farmer is currently an assistant professor in the departments of history and African and African Diaspora Studies at the University of Texas at Austin. Her book, "Remaking Black Power: How Black Women Transformed an Era," examines Black women's political, social, and cultural engagement with Black power ideals and organizations.



11. JESSICA SCOTT FELDER, C'2005

Assistant Professor of Studio Art, Wofford College

As an assistant professor of studio art, Felder instructs in drawing, design, figure drawing, painting, printmaking and senior capstone in the Department of Art and Art History at Wofford College. She was the 2017 featured visiting artist at Ithaca College in New York, where she presented her artistic research on "Black Matter," an installation based on black hole physics, American folklore, Afrofuturism and imagination. Her drawings have been featured in nationally and internationally recognized spaces such as the A.I.R. Gallery in New York and the Telfair Museum in Savannah, Georgia.



12. ALEXA A. HARRIS, C'2007

Communications Consultant

With a myriad of experiences in academic, corporate, and creative industries, Harris assists clients as a strategic adviser and coach. She also facilitates workshops on change management, cross-cultural communication, digital storytelling, intergenerational issues in the workplace, Clifton StrengthsFinder, leadership, public speaking, and other professional development topics. She has served as a producer and coordinator for commercials, films and TV shows. In addition to her degree in comparative women's studies from Spelman, she has a master's in documentary film and history from the S.I. Newhouse School of Communication at Syracuse University and a doctorate in intercultural communication and rhetoric from Howard University.



13. BRIANNA HOLLAND, C'2012

Population Health Program Manager, Wake Forest Baptist Health; Vice President, Zaria's Milk

As a member of one of the leading academic medical centers in the country, Holland facilitates the onboarding of systemwide programs to ensure value-based care, patient satisfaction, and provider support. She is a certified health education specialist, and she specializes in research integration, programming, developing, implementing, and evaluating health promotion programs and interventions. In addition, Holland works with startup Zaria's Milk, a company that specializes in homemade lactation cookies and treats to help breastfeeding moms increase and maintain their milk supply.



14. MAKEBA DIXON HILL, C'2003

Curator of Education, Spelman College Museum of Fine Art

In her position, Dixon Hill serves at the only museum in the nation emphasizing art by and about women of the African Diaspora. Her areas of expertise include arts advocacy strategy, interdisciplinary arts programming, artist workforce development, creative placemaking, and African Diasporic art and culture. She received a bachelor's in English and art history from Spelman and a master's in arts administration and policy from the Art Institute of Chicago.



15. LA'SHANDA HOLMES, C'2006

External Affairs Division Chief, U.S. Coast Guard

A lieutenant commander in the U.S. Coast Guard, Holmes is the Coast Guard's first African-American female helicopter pilot. Currently, she is an aircraft commander at U.S. Coast Guard Air Station Miami where she is responsible for a crew of four and a \$9 million aircraft tasked to respond to all search and rescue emergencies, drug and migrant interdictions, and marine environmental protection. In 2015, she competed with over 1,000 applicants for one of the most prestigious fellowships in the country – The White House Fellows Program – and was subsequently appointed by President Barack Obama to be one of 16 White House Fellows.



16. BRITTANY INGE, C'2011

Actress and Director

A multitasking artist, Inge has performed in productions at Kenny Leon's True Colors Theatre Co., Horizon Theatre Co., Actor's Express, Independent Artists' Playhouse, Vernal & Sere Theatre Co. and Dominion Entertainment. She refuses to choose between stage and screen. Her recent screen work includes roles on "Atlanta," "Love Is __," "The Resident," "Dynasty," "Survivor's Remorse," "The Haves and The Have Nots," and the upcoming film: "The Hate U Give." Inge is also the creator of The (Non)Starving Artists LLC, which encourages artists of every kind to be the lead in their own journeys.



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UNDER
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17. KRISTEN JARVIS WEST, C'2003

Head of Executive Operations, Airbnb

As head of executive operations, a newly created role, Jarvis West will build out and manage the Airbnb team and advise the CEO on a range of strategic matters. She previously worked as deputy senior adviser and director of external relations for former first lady Michelle Obama under the Obama administration. Prior to that, she served as assistant to the chief of staff under then-Sen. Barack Obama.



18. JANINA JEFF, C'2007

Senior Bioinformatics Scientist at Illumina; Co-Host of In Those Genes Podcast

A human geneticist and the first African-American to graduate with a doctorate in human genetics from Vanderbilt University, Jeff is a STEAM-activist, educator, motivational speaker, and now a podcaster. She recently was selected as one of three winners (out of 18,000) from Spotify's Sound-Up Bootcamp for her podcast "In Those Genes," which is a hip-hop-inspired podcast that uses genetics to uncover the lost identities of people from the African Diaspora.



19. DEANNA JENKINS, C'2007

Business Process Analyst, AmeriHealth Caritas

Jenkins is responsible for supporting enterprise-wide business process improvement initiatives as an internal consultant, addressing operational concerns and making recommendations to streamline processes. She also serves on the boards of many nonprofits in the Philadelphia area, and in 2016 she was honored with Billy Penn's Who's Next in Health Award for her civic engagement and healthcare leadership.



20. KIMBERLY NICHOLE JOHNSON, C'2005

Singer, Songwriter

Exploding on the national scene on season 8 of "The Voice," Johnson garnered superlative praise from the likes of Pharrell Williams, Christina Aguilera, Lionel Richie, Mark Ronson and Reba McEntire, with her show-stopping performances, stylish presence and vocal power. Fans clamored for her iconic rock covers and led her to the iTunes' Top 20 three weeks in a row and even landed on the Billboard 100 Charts. Her original music has been featured on MTV, VH1, BET, LOGO, Lifetime and Showtime.



21. DANICA KEY, C'2003

Vice President, McGuireWoods Consulting

As vice president of state government relations at McGuireWoods Consulting, Key specializes in providing strategic advice to help clients meet their corporate and public affairs objectives. She also serves as a chair of the National Black Caucus of State Legislators Corporate Roundtable Gaming, Sports and Entertainment Policy Committee, and the United Methodist Children's Home.



22. TENDAYI KUUMBA, C'2010

International Dancer, Singer, Songwriter, Touring Company Member of Urban Bush Women

A singer, songwriter, dancer, and touring company member of Urban Bush Women, Kuumba has worked with many artists in music and dance throughout her career including Moving in the Spirit and the Czech Center of New York. She has received accolades for her recent song, "Incog-negro" and is currently a singer/dancer on the American Utopia Tour of Talking Heads.



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UNDER
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23. ENIOLA MAFE, C'2007

Strategist, Partnerships and Development Leader, Foundation for Partnership Initiatives

Mafe is featured in *OkayAfrica's* 100 Women 2018 List. The London native with Nigerian roots spent three years as the program manager at the Niger Delta Partnership Initiative Foundation in Washington, D.C., before moving into her current role as Partnerships & Business Development manager for the Foundation for Partnership Initiatives in the Niger Delta, which is based in Abuja, Nigeria. In this capacity, Mafe spearheads the program's advocacy and outreach activities, helping the foundation find new ways to invest in socio-economic development programs in the Niger Delta region.



24. CRYSTAL A MAXWELL, C'2003

Medical Director, Family Physician, Medical Provider, Sandhills Medical Foundation

A physician who received her bachelor's degree from Spelman in biology and her medical doctorate from the University of Tennessee, Maxwell is responsible for managing patients' chronic problems such as diabetes, hypertension and emphysema, and acute problems such as respiratory and gastrointestinal infections. She is also responsible for the management of the clinical aspects of all seven Sandhills Medical Foundation locations.



25. TAYLOR MORTON, C'2015

Environmental Activist

The backbone of Morton's work is WE ACT for Environmental Justice in Harlem, where she was formerly the environmental health fellow and now serves as an environmental consultant/contractor. Her work on curriculum development and facilitation has involved numerous high-level partners, including Harvard University T.H. Chan School of Public Health's Climate Change and Health Youth Program, and Columbia University Center for Children's Environmental Health. Morton was awarded the 30 Under 30 in Environmental Education from the North American Association of Environmental Education in 2018 and is currently a fellow in the University of Pennsylvania's Independent School Teaching Residency program.



26. BRITTANY MOSBY, C'2007

Director, HBCU Success, Tennessee Higher Education Commission

As director of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) Success at the Tennessee Higher Education Commission, Mosby develops policy, programming, and partnerships that foster student success, facilitates institutions' abilities to fulfill their missions, and furthers the state's higher education attainment goals. Mosby is passionate about preserving the legacy and promoting the enduring sustainability of the unparalleled HBCU experience.



27. ASHA JENNINGS PALMER, C'2004

Compliance Counsel, Mubadala Investment Co.

Located in the United Arab Emirates, Mudadala is a pioneering global investor. In her role, Jennings Palmer leads and oversees two of Mubadala's largest platforms, as well as implements the company's corporate compliance strategic projects. She currently sits on New York University's Abu Dhabi Advisory Board, Legal Studies Program and NYU's Abu Dhabi Alumni Board.



28. MACI PETERSON PHILITAS, C'2008

Co-Founder and CEO, On Second Thought

A messaging app with patented technology that allows the user to take back text messages, OST has raised over \$1 million, expanded to 190 countries under Philitas' leadership. She has been acknowledged on many lists including: BBC 100 Women, *Inc. Magazine's* 30 Under 30, and *Washington Business Journal's* 40 Under 40. She has also been profiled by NPR, *The Washington Post*, BuzzFeed, *Black Enterprise*, Fox and others.



29. HOPE POLLONAI, C'2009

Historic Preservation Designer, Lord Aeck Sargent

Specializing in historic preservation, Pollonai links the past with the future to create uniquely rich communities and buildings that preserve historic fabric and create productive environments for future generations. Her current “patient” is the A.G. Gaston Motel in Birmingham, Alabama. Her diverse creative background evolved from the world of luxury interior design into the world of “forensic architecture.”



30. BRITTANY RHODES, C'2006

Director of Community Engagement, Belle Isle Conservancy

Always about her Detroit community, Rhodes is passionate about her city’s revitalization, having been a Detroit Revitalization Fellow at Wayne State University from 2015 to 2017. As the director of community engagement for Belle Isle Conservancy, whose mission is to protect and restore the landscape of Belle Isle Park, a 982-acre island park in Detroit, Rhodes is responsible for increasing and strengthening Belle Isle’s perception in the community by serving as a connector between Belle Isle Park and the public.



31. JERIKA RICHARDSON, C'2004

Senior Adviser, Secretary to the Board, NYC Civilian Complaint Review Board

Named a New York City “40 Under 40 Rising Star” by *City & State New York* magazine in 2015, Richardson is a former law and justice reporter for ABC News and special adviser to New York Mayor Bill de Blasio. Richardson has used her career to propel changes toward criminal justice and policing reform. Richardson obtained her J.D. from University of Michigan Law School and her bachelor’s in English from Spelman.



32. CANDICE CANNON RUDD, C'2011

Associate Attorney, Anderson, Rasor & Partners, LLP

Rudd concentrates her legal practice in the area of civil litigation defense. Under this broad umbrella, she primarily handles medical malpractice litigation, hospital liability defense, toxic tort, and commercial litigation. Also, Rudd is experienced with employment law, civil rights issues, municipal defense, products liability, premises liability, and real estate law.



33. STEPHANIE ST. LOUIS STONE, C'2002

Chief Compliance Office, Orlando Housing Authority

Before becoming CCO for the Orlando Housing Authority, St. Louis Stone represented clients in housing-related matters for Community Legal Services of Mid-Florida. She also served as an overseeing member on the Unlicensed Practice of Law Circuit Committees of the Florida Bar. St. Louis Stone holds her bachelor’s in physics from Spelman and her juris doctor from Boston College Law School.



34. SARAH ST. LOUIS, C'2003

Urogynecologist and President, Central Florida Medical Society

An experienced surgeon, St. Louis just opened her own private practice in Orlando, Florida, where she specializes in robotic surgery, female pelvic reconstructive vaginal surgery and urogynecology. She also serves as the president to the Central Florida Medical Society, as well as an associate physician for Best Doctors Inc. After earning her bachelor’s in chemistry from Spelman, St. Louis received her Doctor of Medicine from Howard University College of Medicine in 2008 and then completed her internship in general surgery at the State University of New York, Upstate Medical University.



35. KAMRON TAYLOR, C'2015

Community Producer, USA TODAY NETWORK

Having worked as a freelance editor for CNN, multimedia reporter for Cox Media Group Ohio, and a partnership program manager for its parent company, Cox Media Group, Taylor currently produces content and articles for USA TODAY NETWORK's site. She is experienced in pitching and writing stories, managing and expanding media accounts, and identifying strategic partnerships for her various companies.



36. NAKAIYA TURK, C'2012

YouTube Talk Show Host

"Kandid Kaiya," a Youtube talk show with over 2,500 subscribers hosted by Turk, is a platform that offers advice and encouragement to young Black women on their path to success. In 2017, Turk was recognized on HBCU Buzz's 30 Under 30 list, and this year, the Spelman College Alumnae Association awarded her the 2018 Young Alumna of the Year award.



37. JOLAWN VICTOR, C'2004

Director, Product Management, Intuit

A Spelman-Georgia Tech dual-degree engineering student in physics and electrical engineering, all while simultaneously working as a product engineer for General Mills, Victor received her M.B.A. at the NYU Stern School of Business. She served as the director of marketing for PepsiCo before joining Intuit as director of product management where she leads the U.S. online professional tax business. Victor also serves as an advisory council member to the Harvard Business Review, and is currently a nominee for the 2018 Ad Color in Tech award.



38. OULÈYE NDOYE WARNOCK, C'2007

Senior Human Trafficking Fellow, City of Atlanta

Warnock has worked to protect communities vulnerable to labor and sex trafficking in Africa, the Middle East, Asia and Europe, and now serves as the senior human trafficking fellow for the city of Atlanta. Previously, Warnock worked for The World Bank, Women's Health Education and Prevention Strategies Alliance in rural Senegal, as a Henry Luce fellow in Northern Thailand, and an IIPP fellow at the African Refugee Development Center in Tel Aviv.



39. DIONDRIA WHITEHEAD, C'2015

Program Manager, Waymo

This Spelman alumna has been turning the dream of self-driving cars into a reality. Whitehead, who earned her bachelor's in theoretical and mathematical physics at Spelman, currently works as an associate program manager at Waymo, which originated as Google's self-driving car project before becoming its own subsidiary. Whitehead is based in Phoenix where the company is trial-running an autonomous ride-sharing business.



40. HOPE WISEMAN C'2014

Founder of Mary and Main

Wiseman is the founder of Mary and Main, a dispensary set to open up in Prince George's County, Maryland. She is the youngest dispensary owner in the U.S. Wiseman started the business with her mother, Octavia Simkins-Wiseman, and co-founders, Larry Bryant and Dexter Parker. With a background in finance and banking, Wiseman launched Mary and Main – formerly Compassionate Herbal Alternative – to create opportunities for minorities who have been disproportionately affected by the war on drugs.



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Sabbaticals Yield Wide-Ranging Benefits to Faculty and the College

BY CONNIE GREEN FREIGHTMAN

In spring 2018, Mark E. Lee, Ph.D., associate professor of biology and a Spelman College board member, took his first sabbatical at Michigan State University.

The six-month leave afforded him time to continue his research on the evolutionary relationships between viral and host interactions in humans and primates and to publish an article on the relevance of historically Black colleges and universities in diversifying the STEM workforce.

In the fall, he opted to take an extended, unpaid leave to complete his research and publish recent findings. The experience has been rewarding personally and professionally.

“The time away has given me the ability to focus on reading and thinking broadly about my work and how to adapt it to my research with Spelman students,” said Lee, who has been a Spelman faculty member for 16 years. “I will return to Spelman with renewed enthusiasm for research and teaching.”

Sabbaticals, a long-standing tradition in higher education, provide time away for research, study, creative activities, and other scholarly pursuits that benefit the institution.

A 2007 study by the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges found that sabbaticals are among the important ways an institution can enhance teaching and research effectiveness, realize institutional goals, and increase productivity, job satisfaction and retention.

In addition to offering a respite from the daily grind to relax, reflect, and rejuvenate creative juices, sabbaticals provide opportunities for faculty members to sharpen professional skills, to stay current in their disciplines, and bring relevance to the classroom.

“The benefits of faculty sabbaticals to the intellectual life of the College cannot be overstated,” said Sharon L. Davies, J.D., provost and vice president for academic affairs at Spelman. “The focused reflection that occurs during sabbaticals has resulted in hundreds of research projects, publications, and new approaches to teaching – each contributing to a vibrant intellectual climate at Spelman, which contributes to an out-

standing educational experience for our students.”

At Spelman, tenured faculty members are eligible to apply for an initial sabbatical leave in or after their seventh year of service. They can take one semester off at full salary or one year off at one-half salary.

From academic year 2013-2014 to 2017-2018, 25 Spelman faculty members took sabbaticals. Five more are scheduled for leave during the 2018-2019 academic year.

Leyte Winfield, Ph.D., associate professor of chemistry and biochemistry, completed her first sabbatical in July – a yearlong experience as the inaugural visiting associate professor in the University of Michigan College of Pharmacy’s Sabbatical Connections Program.

**“FACULTY NEED TIME AND SUPPORT TO RECHARGE AND EXPLORE NEW POSSIBILITIES THAT WILL ENRICH THEIR RESEARCH AND PRODUCTIVITY. IT’S ALSO AN OPPORTUNITY TO RESTORE WORK-LIFE HARMONY.”
— LEYTE WINFIELD**

While at Michigan, she collaborated with scientists to advance her lab-based research on new biological targets associated with cancer development and participated in conversations on campus to promote diversity in STEM.

Her sabbatical experience will contribute to ongoing efforts to revamp Spelman’s organic chemistry lab-learning experiences, as well as increase opportunities for Spelman students at the University of Michigan.

“Sabbaticals are granted for professional growth and exploration, and I had an opportunity to do both,” said Winfield, who is in her 15th year at Spelman. “Faculty need time and support to recharge and explore new possibilities that will enrich their research and productivity. It’s also an opportunity to restore work-life harmony.”

Patricia Ventura, Ph.D., associate professor of English, took her first sabbatical in fall 2015 and found it to be a transformative experience for teaching and learning.

The time away allowed her to do more reading on critical race theory for her second book, which will focus on popular culture in the Obama era. She also finished an article that examined the television show “Scandal” in relation to social death, a philosophical concept centered on the ways people are denied their full humanity.

**“PERSONALLY, THE SABBATICAL WAS A WONDERFUL EXPERIENCE FOR ME AND MY FAMILY. PROFESSIONALLY, I HAD A CHANCE TO DEVELOP A NEW RESEARCH AREA THAT I COULD BRING BACK TO SPELMAN.”
—MICHAEL G. MCGINNIS**



Mark E. Lee



Leyte Winfield



Patricia Ventura



Michael G. McGinnis

In addition, she developed a teaching assignment on social death for which students created entries to mark the locations of U.S. lynching sites for a history website and mapping mobile app. The assignment was designed to memorialize the victims while helping students to understand the real-world relevance of the concept.

“I can’t say enough about the significance of sabbaticals for faculty,” said Ventura, a Spelman faculty member since 2005. “When we are teaching, it becomes quite difficult to take on new research topics and learn new ideas. Having time to acquire and explore new intellectual interests is vital to keeping our research timely and relevant, which we can direct toward keeping our teaching relevant.”

Michael G. McGinnis, Ph.D., associate professor of biology, has taken two sabbaticals during his 26 years at Spelman.

His first sabbatical occurred in spring 2000 at the University of Aberdeen in Scotland, where he used calcium-ratio imaging to research the role of intracellular calcium in the electrical response of avian neural crest cells in vitro. After returning to Spelman, he built a similar imaging station that students used for their research projects.

In spring 2015, he spent six months studying weakly electric fish that are native to South America at the Instituto de Investigaciones Biológicas Clemente Estable in Montevideo, Uruguay.

That research led to the Electric Fish Project, an initiative in which he and an interdisciplinary team of Spelman colleagues created visual light sculptures that changed colors based on electrical signals coming from the fish. The project was exhibited the following year at the XII International Congress of Neuroethology in Montevideo.

“Personally, the sabbatical was a wonderful experience for me and my family,” McGinnis said. “Professionally, I had a chance to develop a new research area that I could bring back to Spelman. Although I had become more of an administrator and teacher than a scholar over the last 10 years at Spelman, I discovered in Uruguay that I had relevant skills and knowledge to contribute in a world-class research group.”

Connie Green Freightman is an Atlanta-based freelance writer and editor.

‘A Choice to Change the World’ Begins with

BY ADRIENNE S. HARRIS

At Spelman College, “A Choice to Change the World,” is no mere motto. It is a way of life that inextricably links the institution’s commitment to developing students to its commitment to serving the community.

response; people felt so good about it,” said Smith. “Our students developed a passion for serving where they go to school, where they grocery shop, where they catch MARTA. They found themselves at home in the Westside. They real-

their years at Spelman,” said Jilo Tisdale, director of the Bonner Office. “In fact, most students continue community service after they meet the graduation requirement.”

Some even make a career of it. Jasmine



By design, Spelman’s emphasis on affecting positive change globally begins by giving students opportunities to make a difference locally — right in their own backyard, the 1.7-mile radius of the campus that comprises Atlanta’s Westside.

“At first, we focused on the Westside because it made sense for the College to concentrate our community service efforts where we could best measure our impact,” said Jane Smith, Ed.D., C’68, vice president for College Relations and executive director for the Center for Leadership and Civic Engagement.

“But then, we had such a positive

ized: This is my place, too.”

To graduate, Spelman students are required to perform 24 hours of community service within their first two years at the College. The Bonner Office of Civic Engagement helps students fulfill that requirement by introducing them to community partners who have identified various service needs and matching them with those opportunities. The office also provides students with the training, guidance, and support needed to carry out their assignments.

“Our hope is that students develop a love for service that sticks throughout



Payne, C’2015, was actively involved in community service as a student. Now, she is an advocacy and education specialist at the Atlanta Community Food Bank, one of the Bonner Office’s community partners.

Payne’s duties include leading workshops to encourage people to get engaged in the mission to end hunger. Her audiences include Spelman students who volunteer regularly to sort salvage goods and distribute food at a local food pantry.

“Spelman informed my passion for service,” said Payne. “It was a process of self-discovery and learning how to

Serving in the College's Own Back Yard

empathize with others. I take that message to Spelman students every chance I get.”

During the 2017-2018 academic year, the Bonner Office launched two new service initiatives: SpelREADS, a literacy program that helps elementary- and

growth and what we're delivering to the community,” said Tisdale. “We want to be responsive to authentic community needs, accountable for what we promise, and ensure consistent quality. Our focus will be to deepen our work in these areas,

up in the Oakland City neighborhood in Atlanta's Westside and volunteers with the “Be Connected” mentoring program at Booker T. Washington High School, her alma mater.

“It's critical that Spelman gets involved



middle-school children in the Washington High School cluster improve their reading skills, and Sisters of the Soil, an urban agriculture program that empowers women and girls to take control of their food choices.

Eighty Spelman students participated in these signature programs, which were designed to help students gain skills and confidence as leaders who serve and — at the same time — have a direct impact on issues Westside residents said are particularly important to them: education and health.

“We equally value our students’

so we can fully realize what these programs are intended to do.”

In addition to connecting students with opportunities to serve as teaching assistants or office staff at local schools, or work in community gardens, the Bonner Office supports faculty who include service learning in their courses. The office also manages the College's Bonner Scholars Program, in which students who are awarded full-tuition scholarships devote 140 hours per semester to community service.

Jocelyn Reynolds, C'2021, is one of Spelman's 80 Bonner Scholars. She grew

in the community — especially as mentors,” she said. “I've been in those students' shoes. I know what it's like. It was hard growing up in that low-income environment.

“But in high school, I had a mentor from Spelman who changed me for the better and made me look at college differently,” said Reynolds, who is majoring in computer science and minoring in management organization. “Now I'm here, and I want to have a positive impact. I believe a main purpose in life is to give back. You do community service so someone can be better than you.”

DR. CAMPBELL AUTHORS BEARDEN BIOGRAPHY THAT EXPLORES ICONIC ARTIST'S LIFE

BY LARRY CALHOUN

For renowned 20th-century artist Romare Bearden, life was as large as the public murals and collages that became his signature. A new book by Spelman President Mary Schmidt Campbell, Ph.D., offers an immersive and illuminating account of his odyssey, rooted in Bearden's constant creative tension between art and race.

"An American Odyssey: The Life and Work of Romare Bearden" captures one of the most important artists of the 20th century and his use of visual culture to explore Black identity in America, a central theme to his life and work. Campbell, who pursued art history in graduate school and presented an early overview of Bearden's career as her dissertation, goes far beyond that to re-introduce and celebrate this art icon in "An American Odyssey."

Bearden (1911-1988) started as a cartoonist during his college years at NYU, but in the late 1930s turned to painting and joined a community of artists supported by the Works Progress Administration. As his reputation grew, Bearden perfected his skills, studying the European masters while analyzing and breaking down their techniques to find new applications. During the 1950s, he mostly painted abstractions, wholly detached from race.

Bearden was heavily influenced by the civil rights movement. By the time of the March on Washington in 1963, he was experimenting with "Projections," a series of major collages in Black life. In them, he tried to present a full spectrum of the Black experience – the America he knew – from the grind of daily life to broader visions and aspirations. Bearden became a founding member of the Spiral, a Harlem-based art group formed to examine the responsibility of the African-American artist in the struggle for civil rights.

"This book was a labor of love that was more than 10 years in the making," said Campbell, who first met Bearden as a graduate student. "Although Romare Bearden and I were never close friends, his impact on my career, as would be the case with countless artists, scholars and curators, was inestimable."

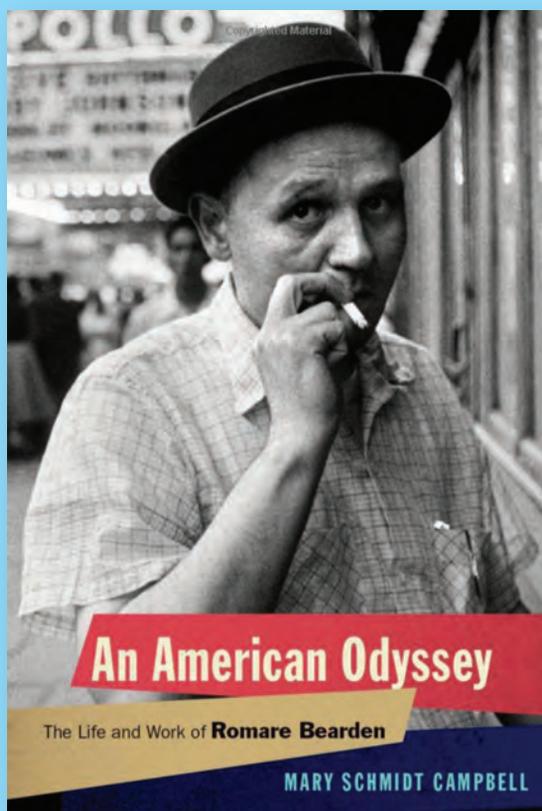
It was in the '70s when Campbell was assigned to give a graduate lecture on some aspect of American art history typically not covered in history books. "I chose to lecture on Black artists, and my thesis adviser suggested I investigate the work of Romare Bearden," said Campbell. "I traveled to New York to see a retrospective of his work at the Studio Museum."

While Campbell and her husband pounded the city streets, visiting every museum of modern art or American art, eager to see more of the pioneering artist's work, there were no examples of Bearden's artwork.

"So, I called him from a street pay phone with a public phone book, and much to my surprise, he invited me to visit him and his wife, Nanette, in their Chinatown loft," said Campbell, whose dogged determination landed her into what is now a

400-page biography told in the most compelling and artful way.

What does Campbell want readers to take away from this new work? "I want them to be excited about Bearden's artwork and want to see more," she explained. "I want them to understand how Black citizens have subversively co-opted the stereotypes and caricatures that were intended to debase us to create expansive visual representations of our life and culture. I want us to be alert to the potency of visual culture and its capacity to define and shape how we see and know the world around us."



COMPILED BY LORRAINE ROBERTSON

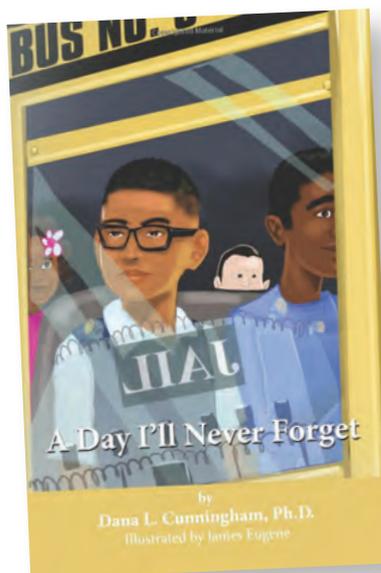
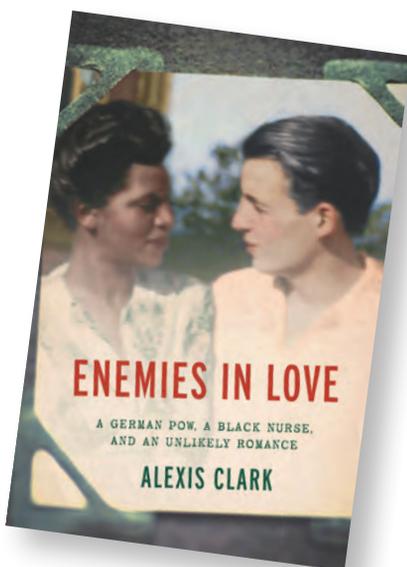
Alexis Clark, C'98, released the book, *Enemies in Love: A German POW, a Black Nurse, and an Unlikely Romance* (The New Press) May 15, 2018. This is a love story like no other: Elinor Powell was an African-American nurse in the U.S. military during World War II; Frederick Albert was a soldier in Hitler's army, captured by the Allies and shipped to a prisoner-of-war camp in the Arizona desert. Like most other Black nurses, Elinor pulled a second-class assignment, in a dusty, sunbaked — and segregated — Western town. The army figured the risk of fraternization between Black nurses and White German POWs was almost nil. Brought together by unlikely circumstances in a racist world, Elinor and Frederick should have been bitter enemies; but instead, at the height of World War II, they fell in love. Their dramatic story was unearthed by journalist Alexis Clark, who through years of interviews and historical research has pieced together an astounding narrative of race and true love in the cauldron of war. Based on a *New York Times* story

by Clark that drew national attention, *Enemies in Love* paints a tableau of dreams deferred and of love struggling to survive, 25 years before the Supreme Court's Loving decision legalizing mixed-race marriage — revealing the surprising possibilities for human connection in one of history's most violent conflicts.

Dana L. Cunningham, C'98, published the children's book, *A Day I'll Never Forget*, (CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform) March 16, 2016. The book is centered around Javon, a boy whose world is turned upside down when his father suddenly goes to jail. He is devastated and has no idea what he will do without his father. However, Javon eventually discovers that although he is separated from his father, he can maintain his relationship with him. This is a touching story that would benefit children, counselors, teachers, family members, and any adult who works with children who have been affected by the

incarceration of a loved one. The narrative and accompanying discussion questions provide an opportunity for adults to help children process their feelings about incarceration. The story is ideal for children ages 10 and younger.

Gwendolyn Rodgers, C'2008, released her sci-fi novel, *Hostages of the Sphere*, independently Aug. 4, 2018. The story is set in 2124, when the Earth is no more, and people are forced to find new planets on which to live. It starts on Bethiter, a mysterious and water-rich planet. For 23 years, everyone has tried to continue life as usual; although, babies keep dying a week after birth. Once a vain-glorious scientist discovers a heinous way to save some of the babies, the community turns to an exiled leader for help. At first, the leader wants nothing to do with the matter until he learns that his past actions have placed innocent lives in death's bosom. Escape to another world as we follow Grate Watters' adventure full of thrills, obstacles, secrets and more.





alumnae NOTES

1947

Miriam Jellins

Personal: Celebrated her 91st birthday with friends and family in Houston April 30, 2018.

1978

Millicent P. Eubanks

Professional: Named first vice president – Investment Officer by Wells Fargo.

1984

Dominique Simpson Milton

Professional: New president of the Carolinas-Virginia Minority Supplier Development Council. Milton provides access and support for minority business owners in the region.

1986

Kathaleena Edward Monds

Professional: Recently named founding director of the newly established Center for Educational Opportunity at Albany State University in Albany, Georgia. Monds will lead the academic initiative designed to work with researchers on issues pertinent to K-12 teachers, students and families.

1988

Linda Hart Patton

Professional: Promoted to associate director in the Office of Alumnae Engagement at Spelman College.

1998

Tiffany Momon

Professional: Became principal of Cascade Elementary School in Southwest Atlanta.

2000

Christine White

Professional: Retired from the practice of law in April 2018 to serve as deputy director for Georgia Alliance for Progress, a network of progressive donors that fund civic engagement, social impact, and progressive political initiatives in the state of Georgia. In this role she is leading the first research effort in the state to focus on the philanthropic patterns and priorities of high-net-worth donors of color.

2001

Deanna Shoyaye

Professional: Named 2018 Professional of the Year at Stonewall Tell Elementary School in College Park, Georgia.

2002

Alyson Shumpert Dorsey

Professional: Promoted to senior alumnae programs manager in the Office of Alumnae Engagement at Spelman College.

Calissia Tasby

Professional: Licensed as a minister by Bishop Sherman S. Watkins, Bishop T.D. Jakes, and Bishop Glen A. Staples at the 2018 Higher Ground Always Abounding Assemblies National Holy Convocation in Columbus, Ohio. She will serve as a licensed minister at the Potter's House Dallas Campus under the leadership of Bishop T.D. Jakes in Columbus Ohio.

2003

Ashley Clark

Professional: Hired as Knowledge and Grants manager by The Libra Foundation. In her position, she manages the operations of the foundation with a focus on refining the foundation's processes to be as clear, respectful, and streamlined as possible for Libra's grantee partners.

DaNita Brady McClain

Professional: Charter member of Spelman Speakers, Toastmasters International, received Toastmasters Advance Communicator Bronze certification, April 2018

take NOTES

Thea Stevens

Professional: Promoted to Infant Toddler South supervisor for the Infant Toddler Unit of Bright From the Start.

2004

Jennifer Okhiria

Professional: Achieved board certification and is a diplomat of the American Board of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery.

Carla Williams Richardson

Married: Emarae C. Williams, Feb. 24, 2018, in Detroit.

2007

Jaira J. Harrington

Professional: Earned the prestigious William J. Fulbright Postdoctoral U.S. Scholar Award to teach internationally and continue her research on the union politics of domestic work for 2017-2018 throughout Brazil.

2008

Laticcia Brown

Professional: Named Teacher of Distinction at the Kindezi School West in Atlanta.

2009

Tenaea Thomas

Birth: Daughter Tru Zabria Thomas, March 11, 2018, Baltimore, Maryland.

2010

Eriqah R Vincent

Professional: Started Logistics by E.Ré, an event planning and logistics consulting business specializing in planning events for small community and empowerment nonprofit organizations. In February 2018, Vincent started a new position with the Partnership for Southern Equity as the manager of the Just Energy Portfolio.

Breana Wofford

Professional: Received the Georgia Charter Schools Association Teacher of the year award on March 7, 2018.

2011

Brittaney Bethea

Professional: Named director of Marketing and Communications for Research and Community Engagement at Morehouse School of Medicine.

Rita Gibson, C'73, is the recipient of the YMCA of Metro Atlanta's 2018 Volunteer of the Year award for her service to the Villages at Carver Family YMCA. She was honored at the recent Celebration of Community Champions event. Gibson was instrumental in helping to open the Carver Y and has served as a member of the advisory board since the opening 11 years ago. She has served as the branch's board chairperson and is a member of the executive committee. Gibson's leadership of the branch's "Why It Matters" fundraising campaign led to the purchase of lights for the Villages at Carver Family YMCA baseball field.

On July 24, 2018, the board of directors of Coca-Cola Bottling Company United Inc., elected **Helen Smith Price, C'79**, to join its board of directors. Price, a 24-year veteran of The Coca-Cola Co., is vice president of Global Community Affairs for The Coca-Cola Co., and president of The Coca-Cola Foundation. She also serves on several other boards including the Spelman College board of trustees.

Avis Bishop-Thompson, C'83, was assigned to the Superior Court, Family Division, Bergen County in New Jersey. Bishop-Thompson is the fourth African-American Bergen County Judge of New Jersey Courts. The Superior Court judge is the second African-American woman to earn this distinction.

Miquel Antoine, C'85, a scientist at the Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory in Laurel, Maryland, was awarded the 2018 Women of Color in STEM Award, which is given to an individual who inspires others by demonstrating leadership and success in science, technology, engineering and math careers.

In September 2017, **Lisa Gregory, C'89**, was appointed by Washington, D.C., Mayor Muriel Bowser and confirmed by the D.C. City Council to serve as commissioner on the D.C. Rental Housing Commission.



The National Women's History Museum has named **Beverly Guy-Sheftall, Ph.D., C'66**, to its board of directors. The announcement was made June 5, 2018. As a member of the board, Guy-Sheftall, the Anna Julia Cooper Professor of Women's Studies and founding director of the Spelman College Women's Research and Resource Center, will lend her voice and expertise to the mission and purpose of NWHM by sharing the triumphs of the women who shaped American history. The appointment came just a few days prior to Guy-Sheftall being honored by the American Association of Access, Equity and Diversity. During their annual meeting in Atlanta, June 7, 2018, she received the Arthur A. Fletcher Lifetime Achievement Award for her lifetime commitment to promoting and advocating for diversity and equity.

Renée McDonald Hutchins, C'90, is tackling the issue of racial profiling within America's criminal justice system by adding her voice to an anthology of essays on the topic. *Policing the Black Man: Arrest, Prosecution, and Imprisonment* explores the policing of Black men in American history and its implications through struggles such as poverty, violence and Black incarceration.



Rosalyn Kimberly Grigsby, C'94, received the WNBA Chicago Sky's 2018 #RedefinePossible Women's Leadership Academy Award, July 7, 2018, at Wintrust Arena during a home game. The award is presented by Aon in recognition of



women who serve as an inspiration to others by making a positive impact in the community and redefining possibilities for those around them.

take NOTES

Zoe Cadore

Professional: Promoted to policy adviser by the American Petroleum Institute, the largest U.S. trade association for the oil and natural gas industry.

Jennifer “Jaki” Johnson

Education: Received her master’s degree from Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism in New York City May 16, 2018.

Samantha Akwei

Professional: Named the new Diversity and Pipeline Programs director at the Bar Association of San Francisco June 19, 2018.

2012

Danielle King

Education: Earned her Ph.D. from Michigan State University, May 4, 2018, and became assistant professor at Rice University July 12, 2018.

2013

Kailyn -Marie Bostic

Education: Graduated May 12, 2018, from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock with her bachelor’s in biology. She also graduated May 19, 2018 from the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences College of Public Health with a Master of Public Health with an epidemiology concentration.

Arielle J. Peterson

Education: Received her master’s in education administration from Caldwell University May 20, 2018.

2015

Camille M. Henderson-Edwards

Education: Obtained a Master of Divinity as a Robert W. Woodruff Fellow from Candler School of Theology Emory University May 14, 2018.

2016

Ashley Hamilton, C’2016

Education: was selected to receive a fellowship under USAID’s Donald M. Payne Fellowship Program in 2018. Hamilton is pursuing her master’s in global human development at Georgetown University this fall and is looking forward to the opportunity to build a career with USAID, helping to address pressing global development challenges.



On Feb. 10, 2018, **Sheila L Chamberlain, C’81**, was honored by local television station, *Channel 4 CBS Miami* with the piece, “Black History Month: Honoring First African American Female Combat Intelligence Pilot.” She was also featured June 20, 2018, in the *Miami Herald* article, “Aviation pioneers honored for achieving their dreams.” The article previewed the South Florida Chapter of the National Alumnae Association of Spelman College’s annual alumnae association scholarship fundraiser “All That Jazz.” The event, held June 24, 2018, honored alumnae and community leaders in aviation and aeronautics career fields that have not traditionally been available to Black people or women.

In addition to Chamberlain, two other alumnae were honored, Lt. Commander **La’Shanda Holmes, C’2007**, the first Black woman U.S. Coast Guard helicopter pilot and a former White House fellow; and **Erika Marshall, C’2001**, program director and general manager of Persistent Surveillance Systems, Navigation, Surveillance & Unmanned Systems and C6ISR - Rotary & Mission Systems (RMS) at Lockheed Martin Corp. where she is the first woman, first Black and youngest general manager for Lockheed Martin’s Palm Beach operations.



Janet Webster Jones, C’58, was featured in the Aug. 9, 2017, issue of the *Detroit Metro Times* for her Detroit-based bookstore, Source Booksellers. The article, “The Bibliophile: Janet Webster Jones, Source Booksellers Owner,” highlights Jones’ commitment to serving and educating Detroiters through her life’s work and her independently owned bookstore.



Consuella Askew, C’89, is one of the 17 library leaders selected to participate in the 2018 Library Senior Fellows program at UCLA. Askew, director of the John Cotton Dana Library, Rutgers University Libraries at Rutgers University–Newark, joined an international cohort of fellows for a three-week residential program.

Elizabeth Espy, C'91, was recently honored as a Woman of Excellence by the *Atlanta Tribune* and *Atlanta Daily World*. The annual ceremony recognizing Atlanta's most accomplished and influential African-American women, took place March 29, 2018, at the Fairmont in Atlanta and also included an honorary award given to **Bernice A. King, C'85**.

Tiffini Eugene Jones, C'93, was recently selected to be in the third cohort of all-female scientists participating in the Australia-based Homeward Bound 2019 program, a yearlong scientific and leadership initiative for women in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math and Medicine). The 80 scientists will study climate change science with scientific innovators and leaders. HB19 culminates in a three-week expedition to Antarctica, which will be the largest, all-female expedition to the continent.

Kettisha Jones, C'95, was featured on the front page of the April 17, 2018, edition of the *Austin American- Statesman* for her effort to diversify the teacher workforce. Her district has entered a partnership with Teach for America to recruit diverse teachers for hard-to-fill positions. The story, "Austin, Pflugerville ISDs look to Teach for America to boost diversity," was picked up by several publications, including the *Washington Times*.

J. Celeste Walley-Jean, C'95, became the dean for the School of Graduate Studies at Clayton State University Aug. 1, 2018. As dean, she is responsible for the sustainability and growth of the school's graduate education programs. The appointment, announced June 13, makes Walley-Jean the first African-American woman dean in Clayton State's history.

Tori Soudan, C'96, was featured in the "Style: Designer to Watch," section of the March 2018 issue of *Essence* magazine in "Tori Soudan: This Baltimore-Based Designer's Shoes Are Crafted In the Same Designer Factory as Manolo Blahnik's, and Her Pieces Are Just as Stunning."

Managing Partner for The Embry Law Firm, **Bethaney Embry Jones, C'2004**, was selected for the 2018 Georgia Legal Awards, the "On the Rise" award, by the *Daily Report powered by Law.com*. The Georgia Legal Awards is an annual recognition of professional excellence in the legal community.



Stacey Abrams, C'95, won Georgia's Democratic primary in the gubernatorial race May 22, 2018, becoming the state's first woman nominee for governor from either major party. Since her history-making win, Abrams has made numerous local, national and global media appearances and has been featured in a variety of online and print publications most notably gracing the cover of *Time's The South Issue* in August.

On July 20, 2018, **Victoria S. Darrisaw, C'90**, was appointed chief judge of the Dougherty



County State Court by Georgia Gov. Nathan Deal. She previously served as magistrate judge of Dougherty County and as assistant district attorney of the Dougherty Judicial Circuit.

The American Psychological Association tapped **Danielle Dickens, C'2009**, assistant professor of psychology at Spelman, to take part in their "I am Psyched!" national tour. She participated in a panel discussion during the tour's stop at the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues Conference June 29, 2018, where she discussed opportunities available to women of color in the psychology field and shared her professional experiences.



Nicole Venable, C'91, was honored as 2018 Lobbyist of the Year by the Washington Government Relations Group. Venable is a principal at the Bockorny Group, a bipartisan lobbying firm in Washington, D.C. She is a seasoned "Politico" with more than 20 years working in Washington on Capitol Hill, the White House and federal consulting.



The Whitney Museum in New York appointed Performance Studies doctoral student **Adrienne Edwards, C'96**, as its Engell Speyer Family Curator and Curator of Performance. The article, "Adrienne Edwards Named Curator of Performance at Whitney Museum" highlighting the announcement ran Feb. 22, 2018, on *ArtNews.com*. Edwards began her role at the Whitney in May 2018.

Latosha Tyler, C'2010, was featured in the article, "Like mother, like daughter: Peace Corps inspired this family to give back," posted on the *PeaceCorps.gov*, May 11, 2018. The article highlights Tyler's involvement in the Peace Corps and her mother Christine Tyler's creation of The Rise Foundation, an organization dedicated to preparing single-parent households in Chicago for college. Tyler recently completed 27 months as a health education facilitator for the Peace Corps in Ghana, West Africa.

Arienne Jones, C'2012, is one of 25 women selected for the 2019 Women in Government Leadership Class. The Governing Institute made the announcement June 19, 2018. Jones, judicial law clerk for the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Alabama, has been selected as the class' rising star — a young woman not yet holding office, but with political aspirations.

Screenwriter **Namina Forna, C'2009**, closed a six-figure book deal with Delacorte Press, a Penguin Random House U.S. imprint. The article, "First-timer Forna in six-figure deal," ran on *TheBookseller.com*, March 26, 2018, highlighting Delacorte Press' acquisition of the North American rights to Forna's "Deathless," and two other novels.



Erin Jones, C'2008, becomes Erin Geter after marrying James Nelson Geter, Morehouse Class of 2007, Aug. 18, 2018, on Martha's Vineyard. In attendance were several of her Spelman sisters. Pictured left to right standing: **Marissa Tuck, C'2007, Belindra Vereen Jones, C'2008, Kimberly Hogg Massey, C'2008, Rebecca Clayton, C'2010, Jade Williams, C'2008, Charde Scott-Pearson, C'2008, Angela Wheeler Bass, C'2008, Denice Mitchell, C'2008, Racheal Woods, C'2013, and Kelly Mitchell, C'2005.** Pictured sitting: **Julienne Doyle Vinson, C'2008, Allison Beddingfield Geter, C'97, Geter, Morgan Jones, C'2012, and Chari-Elyse Lawrence, C'2008.**

Maisha Wynn, C'98, appeared on the "Racheal Ray Show" July 18, 2018. The piece, "This Woman Went From a Size 20 to a Size 4 — and Here Are 3 of Her Best Weight-Loss Motivation Tips," was also posted on *RachealRayShow.com*.



In July 2018, **Ambria M. Berksteiner, C'2016**, was honored by the city of Savannah for exposing area elementary and high school students to STEM through her organization Operation Changing the World One STEM at a Time Inc. The reigning Miss Black Savannah USA was recognized as a leading STEM ambassador for the city.

Joi Baker Jones, C2003, married Augustus J. Jones III, Sept. 17, 2017, in Decatur, Georgia. The wedding was featured in *MunaLuchi Bride* online.



Reisha L. Raney, C'95, a direct descendent of Thomas Jefferson's grandfather, was installed as the first elected African-American officer in the Maryland State Society Daughters of the American Revolution. She is one of only three known Black officers in the history of the 127-year-old mostly White organization. The NBC affiliate *WBALTV-11* aired the piece, "Maryland DAR inducts first Black officer," July 13, 2018.

Atlanta magazine has named **Robin Christian, C'97**, as one of “13 Women Making a Mark.” Christian, the principal of Barack and Michelle Obama Academy, has helped increase attendance and test scores at the school, making it the fifth most-improved school of 2017 in the Atlanta Public Schools.

Talithia Williams, C'2000, is one of three co-hosts of the innovative new science series “Nova Wonders,” which debuted April 25, 2018, on PBS. The six-episode series has the co-hosts introduce audiences to young, diverse scientists tackling some of today’s most baffling problems in an effort to find solutions. Williams, an associate professor of mathematics at Harvey Mudd College and an author, was tapped by “Nova Wonders” producers after they viewed her popular TED Talk, “Own Your Body’s Data.”

Lezli Levene Harvell, C'2000, was featured in the article, “Icons in the Making: The Iconoclast Dinner Experience Is a Delicious Opportunity for Guests and Chefs,” on *The Root* June 4, 2018. The article highlighted Guests of the Iconoclast Dinner Experience who assembled at the James Beard House in New York City June 9, 2018. With the desire to inspire a cultural shift in culinary culture, Harvell created a series of events that would introduce foodies of color to chefs who reflected their experiences, as well as introduce chefs of color to audiences that would have an innate appreciation for what they were offering and give them opportunities that might not otherwise arise.

Dionne C. Griffiths, C'2001, is the recipient of the state of Kentucky’s 2018 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. State Commission Adult Leadership Award. Griffiths was recognized for outstanding leadership, achievement of the principles of a just society and her continued work to support King’s dream.

Courtney Gladney, C'2006 recently created and wrote a web series called “Adulting,” co-produced with fellow Spelman sister, **Christina Ford, C'2006**. They recently were featured in the *Los Angeles Sentinel* newspaper and on 102.3 KJLH Radio station in Los Angeles. They also were chosen as an official selection at “Indie Night Film Festival,” which showcases at the historic TCL Chinese Theatre in Hollywood. Their series continues on the film festival circuit and can be seen on their “Adulting TV Show” YouTube channel.



In April, **Moya Bailey, C'2005**, was named No. 5 on *Essence* magazine’s coveted Woke 100 Women of 2018 list. Bailey is assistant professor of Cultures, Societies, and Global Studies and Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies at Northeastern University. This is the second year *Essence* is honoring women who are proven change agents, shape-shifters, and power players across the nation and beyond with the Woke 100 Women list.



Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer for the Atlanta Hawks and Philips Arena, **Nzinga Shaw, C'2001**, was appointed by former President Jimmy Carter to serve on the board of councilors for The Carter Center, a not-for-profit organization advancing peace and health worldwide, in June 2018. The board of councilors is a leadership advisory group that promotes understanding of The Carter Center and its activities among opinion leaders and the broader community.

Naima J. Keith, C'2003, is the 2017 recipient of the High Museum of Art’s David C. Driskell Prize in African American Art and Art History. She was honored at the 13th annual Driskell Prize Dinner at the Atlanta museum April 28. Named for the renowned African-American artist and scholar, the Driskell Prize



is the first national award to celebrate a scholar or artist whose work makes an important contribution to art of the African Diaspora. On July 9, Keith delivered a talk about her work and life after Driskell, at the High Museum of Art. Keith, deputy director and chief curator of the California African American Museum, was recently named co-curator of Prospect.5, New Orleans’ international contemporary art triennial, which is slated to open in the fall of 2020.

On Aug. 20, 2018, **Amber-Joy Davis, C'2010**, opened A Joyous Place, a home preschool in Atlanta’s West End. A Joyous Place offers a warm, play-based, home academic environ-



ment that will build the literacy, mathematic, and social skill foundations key to school readiness. She plans to expand to a freestanding building within three years.



Digital Strategist and FLYWheel Instructor **Tulani Elisa, C'2006**, featured in the *Forbes* magazine article, “Advice from a Unicorn: How to Incorporate Magic into Your Day,” Jan. 31, 2018. The article highlights her popular 2018 Advice From A Unicorn Calendar that provides daily inspiration, actionable advice and large doses of magic.

DOVEY JOHNSON ROUNDTREE, C'38

Dovey Johnson Roundtree, C'38, was born April 17, 1914, in Charlotte, North Carolina, to James Elliot Johnson, and Lela Bryant Johnson. After losing her father to the influenza epidemic



of 1919, she moved with her mother and three sisters to her grandparents' house. Her grandmother, Rachel Graham, was a huge influence in her life, instilling strength, confidence and drive in Roundtree at a young

age. Exposed to several powerful women, Roundtree met educator and activist Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune, a personal friend of her grandmother, when she was in the seventh grade.

Originally intent to become a doctor, Roundtree entered Spelman College in 1934. She once shared, "I was in my own way an outsider — a poor working student in a sea of Black privilege." Roundtree worked three jobs simultaneously to remain in school. She graduated in 1938 with a double major in English and biology.

After Spelman, and a short time teaching in South Carolina, Roundtree reunited with Bethune in Washington, D.C. Bethune was helping then-first lady Eleanor Roosevelt in her work to form the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps and was instrumental in Roundtree becoming one of 40 African-American women to serve as the first group of WAACs in May of 1942.

In 1946, Roundtree rekindled her romance with William Roundtree, which started at Spelman. They married but divorced less than a year later.

Dovey Johnson Roundtree entered Howard Law School in 1947, where she studied under Thurgood Marshall, and graduated in 1950. In 1962, she continued to break barriers becoming the first African-American admitted to the Women's Bar Association of the District of Columbia. Her most notable case was *Sarah Keys v. The Carolina Coach Co.* Keys was an African-American WAAC private who was forced by a North Carolina bus driver to relinquish her seat to a White Marine.

Roundtree and her law partner, Julius Winfield Robertson, took the complaint to the Interstate Commerce Commission and on Nov. 7, 1955, it ruled that segregated interstate bus

travel was banned. This landmark decision was hailed as a major breakthrough for the civil rights movement.

In addition to a long-standing legal career as a nationally acclaimed civil rights and criminal attorney, Roundtree, became one of the first women to be ordained as a minister in the African Methodist Episcopal Church in 1961. In 1970, she was a founding partner of Roundtree, Knox, Hunter & Parker, a firm still practicing in Washington. She would add domestic and juvenile cases to her legal expertise before she retired from practicing law in 1996.

In 1996, she received the Founders Spirit Award from Spelman College.

Dovey Johnson Roundtree passed away May 21, 2018, in her hometown of Charlotte, North Carolina. She was 104 years old. A celebration of her life was held May 29, 2018, at East Stonewall AME Zion Church, in Charlotte.

DR. MILDRED FRANCES PONDER-STENNIS, C'47

Dr. Mildred Frances Ponder-Stennis, C'47, was born Nov. 13, 1927, in Quitman, Georgia. She is the daughter of the late Rev. Abner F. Ponder and Essey B. McCray; and sister to her only brother, the late Rev. Alvina F. Ponder Jr.

Ponder-Stennis graduated in 1943 from Brooks County High School in Quitman. She received her bachelor's degree in home economics from Spelman College in 1947. In 1986, she earned a master's degree in clothing and related arts from New York University. Ponder-Stennis was awarded her doctorate in education administration and supervision at the age of 59 from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.



As a dedicated educator, she taught in the Detroit Public School system for over 37 years. She began her career as both a teacher and a counselor at Central High School in Detroit Sept. 5, 1960. With her wit and sense of humor, one can only imagine how much of her counseling was more of the curative comedy that gave rise to a cherished fellowship of endearing and timeless friendships.

Ponder-Stennis went on to teach at several academic institutions, including: Clintondale Public School in Mt. Clemons, Mississippi; Clark College, Atlanta [Clark University 1953-1957]; Fort Valley State College, Ft. Valley, Georgia; Alcorn State University, Alcorn, Mississippi; Dock Kemp High School, Morven, Georgia; Marygrove College, Detroit; and Highland Park Junior College in Highland Park, Michigan.

Not only was Ponder-Stennis a renowned educator, she was also a model and a consummate performer of the arts. She could be seen on the hit NBC show “Juvenile Court” as the court bailiff. She also guest starred on Comcast Cable’s “Thedamus Presents.” She donned the stage as an actress with The Jewish Ensemble Theater of Detroit, appeared in various automotive print ads, and performed animated voiceover work for radio.

Mildred Ponder-Stennis was a lifetime member of the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists and the Detroit Federation of Teachers. She was a licensed lay reader in the Diocese of Michigan, and a proud member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc. since 1962.

Mildred Ponder-Stennis was a cheerful giver who loved philanthropy. Her generosity extended to so many charitable organizations, that there are just too many to name. She was a proud supporter of the arts and education. She loved God and her church, Christ Church Detroit. Mildred Ponder-Stennis has two scholarships in her name, one at her beloved alma mater Spelman College, and the other at Wayne State University.

She received the Founders Spirit Award from Spelman College in 2003.

Dr. Mildred Ponder-Stennis passed away July 7, 2018, at her residence in Farmington Hills, Michigan. A celebration of life service was held Aug. 25, 2018, at Christ Church Detroit in Michigan.

MARCELITE J. HARRIS, C’64

Maj. Gen. **Marcelite J. Harris, C’64**, was born Jan. 16, 1943, to Cecil O’Neal Jordan and Marcelite Terrill Jordan. One of three children, Harris grew up in Houston, Texas, where she graduated from Kashmere High School in 1960.

Harris attended Spelman College immediately after high school. In 1964, she earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in speech and drama. After graduation, she enrolled at Lackland



Air Force Base for military training and then joined the Women in the Air Force program spanning a 30-year highly decorated career in the United States Air Force. The major general also earned her Bachelor of Science degree in business management from the University of Maryland.

Determined and dedicated, she consistently climbed in rank beginning with second lieutenant in 1965; first lieutenant in 1967; and captain in 1969. In 1975, she was named a White House aide during the presidential administrations of Gerald Ford and Jimmy Carter. In 1978, she became commanding officer of Air Force Cadet Squadron 39 at the Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colorado, making her one of only two women in the history of the Air Force to have that assignment during that time.

She was assigned to the Pacific Air Force Logistic Support Center at Kadena Air Base in Japan in November 1982. She went on to become deputy commander for maintenance at Kessler Air Base in Mississippi and the first woman wing commander in 1988. On May 1, 1991, Harris was promoted to brigadier general, making her the first African-American woman general in the U.S. Air Force. In 1994, she served as the director of technical training at Headquarters Air Education and Training Command, Randolph Air Force Base, Texas.

On May 25, 1995, she made history when she was promoted to two-star major general, becoming the first woman to hold the position of major general in the U.S. Air Force. She retired from the Air Force in 1997. Thirteen years later, former President Barack Obama named Maj. Gen. Harris to the Board of Visitors for the United States Air Force Academy. That same year, the Black Girls Rock Foundation honored her with the Trailblazer Award.

In addition to her numerous awards, medals and honors, Harris was bestowed an Honorary Doctorate Degree from her beloved alma mater, Spelman, in 1999. She was also a proud member of Delta Sigma Theta sorority. In 1980, Harris was married to the late Maurice A Harris. She leaves two children, Tenecia Marcelite Harris (daughter) and Steven Eric Harris (son).

Major General Marcelite J. Harris, passed away Sept. 7, 2018.

in MEMORIAM

1940

Gladys Beverly Wallace

Died: July 3, 2018

Services: July 10, 2018, Friendship Baptist Church, Atlanta.

1946

Evalyn Young

Services: March 21, 2018, Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church, Chattanooga, Tennessee.

Harriett Barker White

Died: April 28, 2018

Services: May 4, 2018, Paradise Missionary Baptist Church, Atlanta.

1947

Agnes L. Amos

Died: Jan. 19, 2018

Services: Jan. 25, 2018, Evergreen Memorial Park.

Eloise McKinney Johnson

Died: May 27, 2018

Services: June 14, Coventry Place, San Francisco.

1948

Naomi Johnson

Died: August 24, 2018

Services: October 21, 2018, University Church, Chicago.

1949

Elizabeth York Holloway

Died: May 25, 2018

Services: June 2, 2018, Lindsey Street Baptist Church.

1951

Leatrice Traylor Bell

Died: March 7, 2018

Services: March 14, Allen Temple AME Church, Atlanta.

1952

Josephine Felton Alexander

Died: May 27, 2018

Services: June 4, 2018, Union Baptist Church, Moultrie, Georgia.

1953

Gloria Wingfield

Died: July 29, 2018

Services: Aug. 2, 2018, Murray Brothers Funeral Home, Atlanta.

1961

Carolyn N. Stinson Traylor

Died: March 13, 2018

Services: March 23, 2018, First Baptist Church of Highland Park, Landover, Maryland.

Annie Merita Chunn Mitchell

Died: March 23, 2018

1964

Deborah Vernona Dorsey Mitchell

Died: Sept. 16, 2017

1965

Beverly Dinkins

Died: July 21, 2018

Services: July 28, 2018, Church of the Incarnation, Atlanta.

1968

Sandra Ruth Sandra Ruth Hall Cummings

Died: Feb. 22, 2018

Services: Memorial, March 1, 2018, Ben Hill United Methodist Church, Atlanta; Homegoing and burial, March 2, 2018, Calvary Baptist Church, Madison, Georgia.

1969

Aundrella Hamed

Died: Jan. 12, 2018

1970

Cynthia Arrington Wright

Died: June 9, 2018

Services: June 16, 2018, Lindsay Street Baptist Church, Atlanta.

1972

Barbara Washington

Died: Aug. 10, 2018

Services: Aug. 18, 2018, Calvary United Methodist Church.

1974

Deborah Garron Richardson

Died: Feb. 25, 2018

Services: March 3, 2018, Greater Grant Memorial AME Church.

1975

Karen Churchill

Services: March 18, 2018, Virginia

Highlands Church, Atlanta.

1976

Anne Beletta Billingslea

Died: May 20, 2018

Services: June 2, 2018, Headland Heights United Methodist Church, East Point, Georgia.

1977

Sherrell Dameron-Bloom

Died: March 1, 2018

Services: March 9, 2018, Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church, Baltimore, Maryland.

Cynthia Wilson

Died: March 5, 2018

1978

Andrea Battle Sims

Died: June 8, 2018

Services: June 13, 2018.

1990

Lea Pulliam

Died: March 1, 2018

Services: March 6, 2018, St Joseph/St Mark Church, Gary, Indiana.

1994

Tara Jones

Died: March 13, 2018

Services: March 19, 2018, Silver Spring, Maryland.

1997

Dr. Tiffany Austin

Died: June 23, 2018

Services: July 7, 2018, Independence Church of Christ.

2007

Cara J. Mathews

Died: May 21, 2018

Services: May 31, 2018, Boston Audubon Society, Mattapan, Massachusetts.

Lorraine Robertson is an Atlanta-based freelance writer.

Spelman

REUNION 2018

Thank you to all of those who made Reunion 2018 a success, including, but not limited to reunion attendees, volunteers and participants. The weekend would not be possible without their hard work and dedication.

Reunion 2018 celebrated classes ending in three and eight, which included 15 classes. Over 38 percent of Spelman alumnae donated a total of \$1.2 million in 2018 compared to the \$1 million given in 2017.

Several classes received the Every Woman...Every Year! Award, including the Golden Girl classes of 1968 and 1953, and the Class of 2003 for having the highest participation rate at Reunion this year. The Reunion 2018 Class Gift was given to the Golden Girl Class of 1968 for their five-year cumulative total donations of \$426,277.

Melody Greene, C'2020



Commemorating 137 Years of Educating Women Who Change the World

In April, Spelman celebrated 137 years since its founding. This year's Founders Day Convocation saw the esteemed recognition of two amazing Spelman alumnae. A long-standing, luminous light in the Spelman community, Christine King Farris, C'48, was this year's recipient of the Founders Spirit Award. Also, the College honored Kathleen Jackson Bertrand, C'73, shining jazz recording artist and writer, with a Spelman honorary degree for her excellence and service. In addition, the College celebrated Furery Reid, a Clark Atlanta University alumna and current engagement technician in Spelman's technology services department, with the 2018 True Blue Award for her tremendous impact on the College's advancement.



Tierra McClain, C'2021



Kathleen Jackson Bertrand, C'73, received an honorary degree.



Furery Reid received this year's True Blue Award.



Christine King Farris, C'48, was this year's recipient of the Founders Spirit Award.

SAVE THE DATE

Mark your calendars and make plans to **Celebrate, Reminisce, and Reunite with Spelman.** Show your commitment to Spelman College, stay connected, and make a contribution to the Annual Fund by visiting www.spelman.edu

Celebrate with Spelman

Oct 25 - 28, 2018

HOMECOMING 2018

Reminisce with Spelman

April 4 - 11, 2019

FOUNDERS DAY 2019

REUNION 2019

Reunite with Spelman

May 16 - 19, 2019



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