2002 - 2015
The Tatum Tenure
‘Nothing Less Than The Best’
The Spelman Messenger, founded in 1885, is dedicated to participating in the ongoing education of our readers through enlightening articles designed to promote lifelong learning. The Spelman Messenger is the alumnae magazine of Spelman College and is committed to educating, serving, and empowering Black women.
Nothing Less Than Her Best
President Beverly Daniel Tatum Leaves Spelman with a Legacy of Excellence as a Scholar, Administrator and Change Agent
By Adrienne S. Harris

Voices
Beverly Daniel Tatum, Ph.D.

Points of Pride
Conversations
Scholar
Administrator
Change Agent

Books & Papers
Book Notes
Alumnae Notes
In Memoriam
I invite all of you here that love Spelman College to join me in making our love visible – collectively working to ensure that the Spelman of the 21st century provides ‘nothing less than the best’ for the next generation of Spelman women.

The theme of our inaugural events has been *In Search of Social Justice: Liberal Education for the 21st Century.* That seems like such a fitting theme, not only because of my own work as a social justice educator, but because Spelman College has been from its beginning grounded in a vision of social justice.
There is a verse from Proverbs (9:1-2) that someone paraphrased and illustrated for me that hangs in my home office in Reynolds Cottage. It says ‘Wisdom has built herself a house and set herself a table.’ And I think of it when I think about Spelman. Beginning with the founders, Sophia Packard and Harriet Giles, and the indispensable Father Frank Quarles, there have been generations of wise women and men that have devoted their time and energy here to build this house of learning, and set a table of academic opportunity for generations of students.

2011 Convocation Speech: Project 2015
Certainly the election of 2008 changed a fundamental narrative in American culture. **Today the story has a new ending.** We can no longer predict the winner based on race (and perhaps, soon, not even on gender.) The election of 2008 and the victory of Barack Obama mean that anyone with talent, drive and a great game plan can win. That new possibility makes for a much better story and a much better society.

Birthing Pains and the Emergence of a New Social Narrative
November 13, 2008

“The march through the Alumnae Arch reminds me that no alumna returns to an institution exactly like the one she left. To paraphrase the Greek philosopher, Heraclitus, we can never step in the same river twice. **Spelman, like a river, is always changing,** changed by our presence in it, and by what has happened after we depart, and we ourselves are always changing, never exactly the same as we were when we first stepped in. And that is as it should be, because every healthy organism must grow to maintain its health. When growth ceases, decline begins. Yet even as change is constant, what the March through the Arch also makes visible each May is the enduring tradition of excellence embodied in the lives of Spelman graduates, and the everlasting love of Spelman College in the hearts of the daughters who return home once more. Truly that is something to celebrate!”
“Anyone who has the drive and the discipline to achieve world-class excellence is likely to have what it takes to be successful at Spelman College.” And *that* is what you all have in common with Gabby Douglas, the capacity to perform with excellence – to achieve our personal and collective best – to “go for the gold!” And it is *exciting* to look back and see how *together* we have improved in many ways over the last ten years! But as good as we are, individually and collectively, we can *always* be better – and that’s what *going for the gold* is all about. Continually striving for world-class excellence!

Truly we are caught in a “web of mutuality,” and that means we must look to *include*, rather than *exclude*; we must *expand* opportunity for all, not *limit* it; we must *recognize* talent in *all* communities including low income communities of color, not *overlook* it; we must set the example, knowing that others will follow.

John Hope Franklin Center for Reconciliation Symposium on the Politics of Reconciliation, June 1, 2012, Tulsa, Oklahoma
Book Reviews

Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria? – And Other Conversations About Race
by Beverly Daniel Tatum, Ph.D (Basic Books)

EDITOR’S NOTE: This review appeared in the winter-spring 2003 presidential inaugural issue of the Spelman Messenger. It is being repeated at the retiring of President Tatum, because, 11 years later, the message of this book is still relevant.

It always amused me and my colleagues at my former job, that as soon as three of us Black folk got into a conversation, invariably, a White co-worker would wander over to see what we were discussing, or so it seemed. It happened so often, we joked and made bets about how long it would take for someone to see if we were “plotting a revolution.”

So it is not surprising to most Black people that the title of this book has proven provocative.

Beyond shock value, however, the questions remain: Are we getting our children ready for a true, multicultural society? Or has the presence of racism, and the fear it raises, caused us to foolishly hide our heads in the sand?

Scholar, psychologist, diversity specialist and now retiring president of Spelman College, Dr. Beverly Daniel Tatum has updated her groundbreaking 1999 book on how to have open discussions about race and racial issues in our classrooms and homes.

When Black and White people get together to talk about racial situations, are they talking on the same level? Do Black people too often perceive an attitude of paternalism from White people or feel we have to play the role of a victim? The author writes, “In order for there to be meaningful dialogue, fear, whether of anger or isolation, must eventually give way to risk and trust. A leap of faith must be made. It is not easy, and it requires being willing to push past one’s fear.”

Think about it. The price we pay for unresolved racial issues, for example, is seen in today’s ongoing debates about the continuation of affirmative action in universities and employment.

Dr. Tatum emphasizes that this dialogue goes “Beyond Black and White.” Our country includes a rapidly growing population of Latino and Asian people, who also face the same dilemma of preserving their racial or cultural identity vs. assimilation.

Fortunately, Dr. Tatum offers a way in which we can work toward achieving racial harmony in our communities. In her epilogue and in the book’s appendix, she encourages the continuation of cross-cultural dialogue, and offers a plan to follow that includes a reader’s discussion guide and a reading list suitable for all age groups from young children through adults. This book is definitely one to be read by anyone hoping to be around to make positive change in this 21st century.

(P.S. If you can answer the question in the book’s title, proceed to the head of the class!)

Can We Talk about Race? And Other Conversations in an Era of School Resegregation
by Beverly Daniel Tatum, Ph.D. (Beacon Press)

When this book was published in 2007, it provided one of the first open discussions of the decline of cross-racial relationships in education since the landmark 1954 Brown v. Board of Education Supreme Court case that was the beginning of desegregation of the nation’s public schools.

Since then, conservative court challenges to affirmative action activities, the return to the neighborhood school concept over busing, and the resegregation of neighbor-
racial categorization is that of ‘human.’”

Now, in 2015, this volume and the issues raised in healing the discordant activities about race relations in this country, remain relevant. The current marches against discrimination and other civil rights activities point to this. Now, more than ever, dialogue about the rights of all citizens to equal education, housing, social justice, health and job opportunities needs to be open and ongoing.

“If we don’t fully engage in dialogue about what we can do differently, and bring an understanding of the legacy of race and racism in our society into that conversation, we will not be successful in addressing this and other national challenges,” Dr. Tatum writes.

“We have a wealth of untapped and underutilized talent in communities of color across the country; we need that talent. Can we talk about race?”

Listen up, America!!

Assimilation Blues: Black Families in a White Community
By Beverly Daniel Tatum, Ph.D. (Greenwood Press)

Dr. Tatum, president of Spelman College since 2003, took on the task in 1987 of studying the lives of 10 Black families who opted to move from traditional Black neighborhoods to predominantly White, sometimes suburban areas, to find out how they fared.

During the 1970s, many college-educated, professional and business people took advantage of changing anti-segregation housing practices and sought better housing conditions and integrated schools for their families. Some were the first in their families to afford a middle-class lifestyle and others ventured into all-White neighborhoods.

Dr. Tatum looked at the differences between the Black families and their goals and those of White suburbanites. For example, because of lower salaries offered to Black professionals, a two-parent working couple often depended on extended family to help with childcare. Also, there was a need to make sure their children were able to bond with their Black kin so as not to feel isolated as a minority in their new communities. In those early years it was found that families were usually no more than 30 miles away from old neighborhoods, and kept close ties to their churches and friends. Today, families are living longer distances from the homes in which they grew up.

Were these families really able to assimilate into the lifestyles of their new communities? Were friendships made with their new neighbors, and did their children lose a sense of their Black heritage by being isolated in mostly all-White classrooms?

While there is stress for these families trying to balance so many issues, the underlying fear most prevalent is “hidden racism.” Dr. Tatum writes, “The detection of racism in the schools is, perhaps, the most distressing since in that setting it is their children who have to bear its brunt most directly.”

She continues, “The majority of parents interviewed volunteered anecdotes about race-related incidents which have necessitated their intervention.” Some parents opt to send their children to private schools where they feel they have more control, but this may add financial stress to already burdened budgets. Some try to ignore the issue of racial differences and racism altogether, and try to “just get along.”

In the final analysis, it seems that most Black families in White communities face an added burden of balancing their desire for the better living conditions as afforded to White people, while at the same time, taking a conscious pride in Black achievements and history.

An update to this study would be enlightening. It’s a battle that isn’t going away anytime soon.


Renee Hutchins, C’90, co-authored, with Ric Simmons, *Learning Criminal Procedure* (West Academic Publishing, 2015). A part of the Learning Series, the book teaches students the laws of criminal procedure by presenting clear, succinct sets of rules for each topic, summaries of actual cases that illustrate how the rules operate in practice and substantial excerpts from leading Supreme Court cases.

Alexis M. Scott, C’93, contributed to the book *The Influential Entrepreneur: Position Yourself for Win-Win Engagement*, (Splendor Publishing) compiled by Kimberly Pitts, July 2, 2014. A collective treasure chest of knowledge, this work brings 10 power-packed and successful entrepreneurs together to share their expertise and experience and to provide you with the tools you can use – today, tomorrow and next year – to design engagement strategies and implement key positioning techniques, so you can quickly become an entrepreneur of influence. Scott is credited with chapter four, “Maximum Influence: Three U’s of the Triple Crown.”

Kristen D. Folsom, C’96, wrote and published the novel *Marriage Is Over-Rated Anyway*, in 2014. In her first novel, Folsom creatively takes on the controversial topic of single Black professional women, the pressure to marry and have children, and the cause and effect between education and marriage.

Krystal A. Batts, C’98, published the book, *What’s Done in the Dark A Mona Baker Novel* (Mona Baker Novels Book 1), (The Real Ideal, LLC) in August 2014. Batts’s heart-pounding debut has all the makings of a hit thriller including deception and secrets – the kind of secrets that can lead to murderous consequences.

Monica White Ndounou, C’99, released the book, *Shaping the Future of African-American Film: Color-Coded Economics and the Story Behind the Numbers*, (Rutgers University Press) in May 2014. In a work as revealing about the culture of filmmaking as it is about the distorted economics of African-American film, Ndounou clearly traces the insidious connections between history content and cash in Black films.

Djamilia Milton, C’2004, published the novel *Tea Leaf: What Hides Beneath* under the pen name Mia Mitns. The book centers around the main character, Cinnia, whose life is about to change. Cinnia has new career as a scientist at Sciecor, where secrets are hidden in the basement, as well as a new, friendly neighbor with a hidden agenda. She does not want to face a change in friendships, but she will realize things are not as they appear. Magic lives outside of fairy tales.

Stephanie Deltor, C’2013, released the book, *From Spelmanites to You*, (Xulon Press) in December 2013. This book aims to promote motivation to all Spelman women on their path to excellence. As a prospective student, you will get to decide if Spelman is for you. As an incoming student, you will learn more about the Spelman experience and be comforted by your decision in selecting this distinguished institution. As a current student, you can utilize the advice to enhance your time at Spelman. As an alumna, you may rekindle the bonds of our sisterhood once again. Over 200 quotes simply share our story: the mistakes we could have avoided, the sisters we couldn’t live without, the knowledge we hope to pass on and the memories we wish we could live out once again.
Toni Cade Bambara was a writer, teacher, filmmaker, visionary, feminist and cultural community activist. In what would have been her 75th year, Bambara’s works were celebrated in 2014 at seminars, honorary recognitions and this biography written by one of her early students.

Linda Janet Holmes’s book is part of the Women Writers of Color Series published by Praeger, which is sharing the many contributions of writers who are too often overlooked. Holmes notes that it took seven years to complete this project, told in chronological order of Bambara’s life from childhood in Harlem to her college years, world travels, studies, filmmaking, teaching and to her final projects ending with her untimely death in 1995 at age 56.

A complex personality as witnessed by the many friends Holmes interviewed, Toni Cade Bambara was one who made complex seem normal, in fact, inviting. She supported writers, especially women (and all people) of color, and was willing to share her own genius with many. But she had the ability to dismiss phoniness in a nanosecond: she brooked nonsense from no one, and if you were wrong-minded, she quickly tuned you out.

Linda Janet Holmes combed many resources to offer this incisive study of Bambara, who, outside of a select portion of the literary and arts world, still remains an unsung treasure. During her years in Atlanta, Bambara was a writer-in-residence at Spelman College. Holmes had access to Bambara’s daughter, Karma, as well as the Spelman College women’s resource and research department and the Spelman archives, which hold some of Bambara’s papers. In addition, Walter Cade III, Bambara’s brother, as well as several cousins were able to provide valuable insight into Bambara’s early years and development. Her interest and studies of African ancestry and culture, and especially the influences of the culture of Mali, is what led Toni Cade to add the name, Bambara, to hers.

Bambara’s first published book in 1970, The Black Woman, a collection of writings, including Bambara’s, by Black women in several genres, was a “ground-breaking work that ignited a new political movement within the Black community,” Holmes writes and introduced the world to the thoughts of the Black feminist woman and her battle with male chauvinism.

A year later, Gorilla My Love, a collection of short stories, was published. It gave insight to life through the eyes of a young Black girl growing up in Harlem, with all the nuances that were perceived by the street-smart young Bambara. It was through this collection that readers caught a glimpse of the humor and literary strength of this prolific writer. The stories have since been published numerous times in anthologies and literary magazines.

I first met Bambara in Washington, D.C, in the early ’70s when I interviewed her for a story about her being honored by the Black Child Development Institute, not long after the publication of Gorilla. I told her how much her stories had reminded me of growing up in a Black community in Brooklyn, and how I had laughed aloud unabashedly while reading the stories during my commute to work. No shame! We had a good laugh at that, and she was very encouraging to me in my journalism career infancy. I believe she interviewed me as much as I did her. Later, while living and writing in Atlanta, I was honored to be able to learn much more from her.

Holmes writes of instance after instance when people were the recipients of that encouragement and support throughout the years. Students, emerging writers and scholars alike give credence to Bambara’s willingness to give of her time and spirit.

Bambara’s novel, The Salt Eaters, (1980) mirrors her interest and involvement with female ancestral healing methods and faith, and of approaching life in a holistic manner for survival. Moving from short stories and essays to writing a novel, was a long, stop-and-go process for Bambara, but as she listened to her inner voices and knowledge, it was done. To this day, the novel remains a highly acclaimed accomplishment, illustrating the innate and trained skills of its author.

Holmes’s research and diligence provides us with many views of this gifted woman. In her early days in Atlanta, she struggled to find paying work while offering workshops at her home and organizing community groups to build the arts movement in the budding cultural arena of 1970s Atlanta. While mourning the lack of jazz venues and other arts activities she had enjoyed at home in New York, Toni Cade Bambara was on the forefront of building up interest and collaborating with other artists, writers, musicians and business people to give the city a semblance of becoming the New York of the South.

Holmes notes, “When Bambara moved to Atlanta in 1974, the writer was attracted to the cultural work already
in motion. Bambara, however, made a significant contribution in growing a Black arts movement in the South that was much more inclusive of women than the historic 1960s movement had been. Bambara’s teaching, promotion of Black publications, and development of writers’ networks such as the Pamoja Writers Guild that met at her home were critical. Bambara is singularly significant as a champion of the Neo-Black Arts Movement in the South.”

When Bambara left Atlanta in 1985 and moved to Philadelphia, she left a void in the hearts of the people who worked with and befriended her. But the activities that she initiated still resonate in that city. She was an activist who inspired others to “do something.”

In Philadelphia, Bambara immersed herself in the art of filmmaking. Working with director Louis Massiah at the Scribe Video Center, she narrated and partnered in the production of the award-winning film, *The Bombing of Osage Avenue*, about the “police bombing and the fire that ensued, destroying a series of homes (51) in the predominantly Black neighborhood in West Philadelphia, where MOVE, the radical black organization… had its base.” The film “provided the first Afrocentric documentary perspective on the tragedy.”

Bambara continued at breakneck speed in the following years, traveling to Cuba, attending and conducting workshops for writers and filmmakers, honoring the works of other writers, traveling on city transportation to keep her ear tuned to the people’s voices, and writing extensively. Through it all, she wrote her last book, which was published posthumously with the assistance of her long-time friend and editor, Toni Morrison, changing the ending many times. That book, *Those Bones Are Not My Child*, gave an unusual voice to the tragic murders of children in Atlanta during the early 1980s. Always conscious of the women and the Black community those killings affected, Bambara told the story in their voice. Her ability to hone into the hearts and voices of the people most affected by this tragedy, was unique.

During her lifetime, Toni Cade Bambara never veered from generously offering more of herself to her community and art. In this volume documenting many of those accomplishments, Linda Janet Holmes has captured an enormous number of facts and anecdotes to present an accurate picture of Bambara’s genius.

Gone too soon, but her spirit will never be forgotten.

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**Firebird**

*By Misty Copeland. Illustrated by Christopher Myers (Putnam Books)*

In this beautifully illustrated book for young people by American Ballet Theatre soloist Misty Copeland, she tells the story of a ballerina who teaches a little brown girl how to soar into her dreams.

Copeland remembers that when she was young and looked at books about ballet, there were no brown faces to mirror hers.

*The Firebird*, a ballet by Igor Stravinsky, is the story of a mythical bird of brilliant colors that rises above trouble and flies triumphantly to the sky. It is one of the most demanding and colorful roles for a ballerina, with many dramatic movements and flying leaps.

In the book, the ballerina encourages a young girl, telling her that she, too, can strive to dance and be the Firebird.

“you are the sky and clouds and air your feet are swift as sunlight”

But the girl answers:

“me? I’m gray as rain heavy as naptime, low as a storm pressing on rooftops”

Then the ballerina builds her confidence and lets the girl know that she, too, was once a little girl, “a dreaming shooting star of a girl with work and worlds ahead…”

She guides the youngster by telling her of the sweat and work she must do to achieve her dream.

Then finally, “you will soar, become a swan, a beauty, a firebird for sure.

The illustrations by Caldecott Honoree Christopher Myers are brilliant and will bring joy to any budding dancer for many years.
Life in Motion: an Unlikely Ballerina
by Misty Copeland,
(Touchstone Books; Simon & Schuster)

Whether or not you’ve taken a special interest in ballet, you probably have been exposed to Misty Copeland on television, YouTube videos, and various talk shows. Her taut, athletic body bends and moves with impossible grace as she performs in both traditional and nontraditional variations of dance.

Her name and face and magnificent body are on display in ads for Under Armour athletic wear and Dr. Pepper, on television talk shows, at red carpet events and more. Her sultry performance with Prince will be remembered by fans for a long time.

What is so unlikely about Misty Copeland’s success is that through perseverance, pain and uncertainty, and sometimes with extraordinary support, she has been able to beat the odds that are especially high against an African-American ballerina, and she has reached solo status with one of the top classical dance companies in the world, the American Ballet Theatre (ABT).

In 2007, as only the second Black ballerina in two decades to dance solo with ABT, Copeland is breaking barriers for other young dancers, especially for non-white aspirants.

How has she done it? Her memoir, written with Charisse Jones, shares with us her journey from an unsettled childhood, as her mother, a former Kansas City Chiefs cheerleader, shuttled her six children from town to town as she grappled with several marriages that didn’t work out. Her mother often had to work 14 hours a day to feed and keep her family together. Despite what could have been a depressing situation, Copeland tells of the warmth and closeness the family shared as they bounced about and looked out for one another.

Through a chance encounter while doing gymnastics at the Boys and Girls Club, a teacher noticed Copeland’s natural skills and directed her to take ballet lessons. From that time on, Misty Copeland knew what she wanted to do — to become a ballerina. Then the fun began, as the saying goes.

School first, then long hours of daily practice filled her life. Her book tells of the several mentors who saw her potential and took extraordinary steps to help her grow, including a white family that took her in to live with them and paid for lessons. Others would step in and help her compete and attend summer workshops given by major dance companies. All of this growth was not without pain.

Being separated at times from her much-loved family brought about stress, even though she thrived in being able to focus solely on dance. With candor and insight, Copeland shares all of her doubts, fears and triumphs. A latecomer to dance lessons at 13, Copeland had to overcome her insecurities, which she did by becoming an over-achiever.

As Copeland faced the competitiveness of the dancer’s world, coupled with the extra burden of discrimination, she continued to practice to be the best, putting in long and painful hours, keeping her dreams in sight. And it paid off.

Her goals now include encouraging other young dancers of color who may not have the financial means to study, by mentoring and teaching. She works with the Boys and Girls Clubs of America, where she got her beginnings, with the ABT’s Project Plie, which sends dance teachers across the country to scout talent. She’s on a mission to help others as she was helped.

“This is for the little brown girls,” Copeland muses, as she waits to go onstage in one of her most triumphant roles. “Tonight I will become the first Black woman to star in Igor Stravinsky’s iconic role for American Ballet Theatre, one of the most prestigious dance companies in the world. “As the Firebird.”

ANGELA BROWN TERRELL is a writer and editor based in Columbia, Maryland.
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Conversations with Beverly Daniel Tatum

During her successful tenure, President Beverly Daniel Tatum has engaged, enlightened, and educated the Spelman community by hosting a popular series of conversations with alumnae, celebrities, politicians, journalists and corporate executives. We share just a few Spelman samples of Beverly Daniel Tatum’s “Conversations with ...”

SCAN THIS CODE TO ACCESS THE EIGHT CONVERSATIONS LISTED BELOW

http://www.spelman.edu/conversations

» (right) Oprah Winfrey and Beverly Daniel Tatum, May 2012

Ursula Burns
CEO, Xerox Corporation
November 2009

Katie Couric
TV news journalist
April 2010

Frank Blake
CEO, Home Depot
October 2010

Judith Jamison
Pioneering dance icon
March 2011
Stevie Wonder
Legendary singer, songwriter and humanitarian
April 2011

Misty Copeland
American Ballet Theatre soloist
November 2014

Nancy Pelosi
House Democratic leader
February 2014

Alia Jones-Harvey, C'95
Broadway producer
October 2014

Misty Copeland
American Ballet Theatre soloist
November 2014
Nothing Less Than *Her* Best

BY ADRIENNE S. HARRIS

PRESIDENT BEVERLY DANIEL TATUM LEAVES SPELMAN WITH A LEGACY OF EXCELLENCE AS A SCHOLAR, ADMINISTRATOR AND CHANGE AGENT

PHOTO: JFLIP CHALFANT
Happy in her position as acting president and dean at Mount Holyoke College, the private women’s institution in South Hadley, Massachusetts, Beverly Daniel Tatum had never given any thought to becoming the president of a historically Black college, not even the prestigious Spelman College in Atlanta.

But when she was approached by a member of the Spelman presidential search committee about her possible interest in the nation’s leading liberal arts college created for African-American women, she thought she would at least consider the idea.

So, Tatum – who always makes decisions with her head and her heart – went to Spelman unannounced, just to get a feel for the place. That clandestine visit was all it took. Walking the campus, soaking up the culture, experiencing the sisterhood, Tatum knew she was in the right place.

The clincher was a recruitment brochure she happened to pick up.

“It had a strong message for prospective students: This is your heritage and your calling,” said Tatum. “But, through that brochure, the still, small voice was speaking directly to me. When I got home, I called the person who had contacted me and said, ‘Yes, I’m interested.’”

That was 13 years ago. Now, after a successful tenure as Spelman’s ninth president, Tatum, who turned 60 in September, feels the time is right for her to step down and for the College to welcome new leadership. When she retires at the end of June, Tatum will leave behind an institution poised for the next phase of its growth as well as a legacy of excellence as a scholar, administrator and change agent that reflects her highest hopes for the College.

“My vision for Spelman has always been that it will be nothing less than the best,” she said. “That means realizing the dream of the founders beyond what they could even imagine – providing a world-class education without barriers for a future without limits.”

Under Tatum’s leadership, Spelman has made great strides toward that future. With an enrollment of 2,000 women from 16 countries, it is among the most highly selective academic institutions, annually accepting about one in three applicants into its first year class. Once enrolled, students are immersed in an innovative curriculum led by a stellar faculty whose achievements have earned national and international recognition. Most impressive, Spelman’s graduation rate is 76 percent (average over six years) – the highest among historically Black colleges and universities and higher than that of many top-ranked institutions.

Spelman is also in an enviable financial position – “healthy, but not wealthy,” said Tatum – compared to other HBCUs that have been harder-hit by the economic downturn. During a 10-year fundraising campaign that ended June 2014, the College raised $157.8 million, the most in its history. And today, the endowment stands at $367 million, due to outstanding fiscal management and help from campaign contributions.

Thanks to academic and financial strengths honed during the Tatum administration, Spelman was recognized by U.S. News & World Report as one of the 100 best liberal arts colleges.

“The Spelman community truly appreciates and highly values the significant strides made under Beverly’s visionary leadership,” said Rosalind
Gates Brewer, C’84, chair of the Board of Trustees. “As she prepares to retire, our charge will not be to rest on our laurels, but to continue to develop Spelman’s strength and innovation as a leader in higher education.”

**Working on Behalf of Scholars**

A fourth-generation professor, Tatum has devoted her entire career to scholarship and served the academy as a researcher, teacher, author, administrator and race relations expert. With earned degrees in psychology, clinical psychology and religious studies, she understands firsthand the essential link between education and opportunity. And since coming to Spelman, Tatum has made it a priority to strengthen that link for the College’s unique population of scholars.

“Spelman offers what no one else can offer to a young Black woman – an excellent liberal arts experience in an environment designed especially with her in mind,” she said.

A key pillar of that experience – known as the Spelman MILE (My Integrated Learning Experience), the College’s individualized liberal education curriculum – is academic excellence. During the Tatum administration, faculty in every discipline from the arts and humanities to the physical and social sciences to business and economics, undertook a comprehensive review of the curriculum to reshape it for the 21st century and raise the bar on the quality of teaching and learning.

A major academic emphasis has been to globalize the curriculum. That effort got a huge boost in 2008 when Spelman received an anonymous $17 million gift to endow the Gordon-Zeto Center for Global Education – the hub for the College’s internationalization initiatives, which include travel and study abroad and service-learning opportunities, curricular and co-curricular program enhancements, and increased recruitment of international students and visiting scholars.

Another major academic emphasis has been to increase opportunities for students to participate in research and career-related internships. This strategy has had a significant impact, particularly in the science, mathematics, engineering and technology (STEM) disciplines where Black women are underrepresented. Today, almost a third of students earn degrees in STEM fields, making Spelman a major pipeline of Black female engineers, mathematicians and health professionals.

One of the most innovative curricular enhancements is the Social Justice Fellows Program. Launched in 2011, the initiative creates opportunities for rising juniors to develop skills and experience as social justice advocates on issues such as education, economic and personal security, and health and wellness. Students in the program, which is housed in the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Residence Hall, receive scholarship support, semester stipends, faculty and alumna mentoring, and social justice advocacy training and internships. Ten social justice fellows and 10 social justice associates reside on the first floor of the hall.

“Our aim through all of our academic programs is to provide an extraordinary liberal arts education that opens the world of possibilities to our students,” said Myra Burnett, Ph.D., interim provost and vice...
president of Academic Affairs. “We are equipping our students to excel and make a positive impact in whatever fields they choose to pursue.”

Along with academic excellence, Tatum wanted Spelman’s tradition of leadership development to have an even stronger presence and impact. So in 2003, she established the Center for Leadership and Civic Engagement or LEADS, which stands for leadership, economic empowerment, advocacy in the arts, dialogue across differences and service learning. Since its inception, LEADS has engaged more than 700 students in co-curricular programs designed to develop their skills as authentic, ethical leaders.

As proud as she is of Spelman’s academic and leadership development programs, Tatum believes that offering an outstanding education simply is not enough. The College must also help ensure that qualified young women have access to that education – something that is increasingly challenging for the vast majority of applicants whose families cannot afford the cost of attending college.

“At Spelman we say, ‘This place was built for me.’ There are not many places in America a Black woman can say that, but Spelman College is one of them,” said Tatum. “So, there is nothing more important to our educational enterprise than ensuring that young women who want and deserve to be here have the resources they need to achieve their academic goals.”

Tatum’s focus on raising money for scholarships made the difference for hundreds of students. In 2008, she launched the President’s Safety Net Fund (also known as the Starfish Initiative) to help fill the funding gap, so those unable to meet all of their financial obligations would not have to leave school before they graduated. And through the campaign, the College raised $53 million for new scholarships and doubled the number of students who receive institutional aid.

Balancing Batons While Running
Tatum likes to compare being a college president to running a relay race. A new leader receives the baton from her predecessor, runs as fast and far as she can during her tenure, then passes the baton to the leader who succeeds her.

But for a 21st century college president, there is not just one baton to worry about. The job calls for the leader of an academic institution to have the strength and grace to run while carrying many batons – people management, fiscal oversight, community relations, fundraising, academic integrity and professional contributions, to name a few – without letting any of them drop.

At Mount Holyoke, Tatum was lauded as a “natural-born administrator” with “clear-sighted energy, courage and caring.” At Spelman, she has stayed true to form, earning a reputation and the respect of the community for her transparency, persistence, and optimism in leading the College to achieve its goals.

“She always keeps the big picture of the greater goal before us – our core mission and vision,” said Kassandra Kimbriel Jolley, vice president for Institutional Advancement. “Because she believes we can do it, she pushes us as an institution to reach greater heights than we may have thought we could.”
One of Tatum’s most difficult administrative challenges has been navigating through the global financial crisis, which contributed to a decline in student enrollment. To keep the budget balanced, she had to cut $5 million in annual expenses, which meant making the tough choice to eliminate some positions and programs.

At the same time, Tatum was gearing up for a $150 million capital campaign. Even as philanthropic support for higher education was declining because of the economy, Tatum leveraged her personal courage and conviction to rally the board, alumnae, corporations and foundations to invest in the College. The result: Spelman surpassed its fundraising goal by nearly $8 million.

Most important to Tatum, the campaign also surpassed predictions for alumnae participation, with more than 12,000 graduates, or 71 percent, making a gift. “Spelman women love Spelman,” she said. “This kind of enthusiasm and support for the College is a great foundation on which the next president can continue to build.”

Successful fundraising coupled with smart capital investments made possible a number of much-needed improvements to the campus, including the renovation of four historic buildings – Packard Hall, Rockefeller Hall, Laura Spelman Rockefeller Residence Hall and Sisters Chapel – and the construction of The Suites, a 300-bed residential complex. In addition to being the first LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certified building at a historically Black college, the new residence hall allowed the College to increase the ratio of students who live on campus from 50 percent to 70 percent.

“That is the accomplishment I am most proud of,” said Tatum. “Returning Spelman to its character as a residential campus – a place where women can live and learn together – was important to me because it is a defining quality of the Spelman experience.”

**Championing Institutional Change**

When Tatum accepted the position as president of Spelman, she viewed it not so much as a job, but a calling. To her, the College was a jewel, already precious, that just needed a bit of polishing. And she believed she was the one who could lead the community to make the changes required to reveal Spelman’s true brilliance.

Some of the most important of those changes were inspired by Tatum’s commitment to three underlying principles, what she calls the ABCs: A – affirming identities for all Spelman students and employees; B – building community where everyone feels included; and C – cultivating leadership by preparing students to engage effectively with people different from themselves.

“The Spelman motto, ‘Our whole school for Christ,’ has continuing relevance today because at the core of Christian teachings is the principle of hospitality,” she said. “At Spelman, our definition of excellence should include a pervasive sense of hospitality and generosity of spirit for each other and everyone who passes through our gates.”

To help create a more welcoming environment, Tatum led the College to change its employee benefits policy to include coverage for same-sex partners. She also encouraged scholarship and
dialogue among faculty, staff, and students about LGBTQ issues. The annual Christmas party became a “Gifts of the Season” celebration for people of all faiths, and readings from Muslim, Bahai, and other sacred texts were included in Baccalaureate services.

As much as Tatum wanted members of the Spelman community to have high regard for others, she also wanted them to have high regard for – and take better care of – themselves. With mounting evidence that more and more students were facing health challenges, such as high blood pressure, diabetes and obesity, Tatum was moved to take a bold step to change that reality. So, in 2012, she eliminated intercollegiate athletics and redirected funds to launch the Wellness Revolution – a program that encourages fitness through good nutrition, more exercise and proper rest.

Today, Spelman offers 30 wellness classes that draw 1,300 participants each week, and the Wellness Revolution 5K Run attracts more than 700 students and faculty each year. By fall 2015, the $18 million renovation of Read Hall will be open to students. The new facility will include a multi-purpose basketball court, a swimming pool and a demonstration kitchen for teaching students how to prepare healthy meals.

“Our goal for the Wellness Revolution is simple,” said Tatum. “We want Spelman women to take the lead in their own health, so they can be well to take on their leadership roles in the world.”

**Listening, Still Listening**

Although her to-do list is full of things she wants to accomplish before she leaves Spelman – for example, launching an arts building renovation project and always, always raising more money for scholarships – Tatum took the opportunity during her last Opening Convocation address as president to reflect on her legacy.

“At the end of the day, an educator’s most important legacy lies in the lives we touch through the ideas we shared,” she said. “How are they transformed and used by others? Who is inspired by them? Who takes action because of the experience that has been provided? Who truly makes a choice to change the world?

“Women of Spelman, you are the living legacy,” said Tatum. “Not just for me, but for all of us gathered here to support you in your educational journey. Where you go and what you do will be the legacy that we will point to for years to come.”

When she leaves Spelman, where will Tatum go, what will she do? Updating her landmark book, Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?, which will celebrate the 20th anniversary of its publication in 2017, is one of her top priorities. She also wants to write about leadership and the lessons she learned at Spelman.

“If there is one piece of wisdom that has been important to me and that I would offer to anyone else, it is to listen to the still voice within,” said Tatum. “It was in a quiet moment that I felt called to Spelman, and there has been a tremendous amount of satisfaction in answering that call. Listening to that still, small voice within will always steer you in the right direction.”

**Adrienne S. Harris** is an Atlanta-based strategic and leadership communications consultant, facilitator, writer and coach.
ALIVE

2002 Introduced Spelman ALIVE as an acronym for the strategic plan for the College.

Academic Excellence
• SIS Program honors oral history tradition (2002)

Leadership Development
• Sisters Chapel WISDOM Center (2002)

• The Center for Leadership and Civic Engagement (LEADS) is established in partnership with J.P. Morgan executives/co-founding directors Pamela Carlton and Kimberly B. Davis, C’81. (2003)

Improving Our Environment
• The Suites Residence Hall opens as the first HBCU building to attain Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design certification through the U.S. Green Building Council. (2008)

Visibility of Our Achievements
• Spelman College 125th Anniversary Celebration (2006)

• Spelman named one of six institutions to receive $4.2 million grant from the National Institutes of Health to eliminate health disparities among racial and ethnic minority groups (2003)

Exemplary Customer Service
• Wireless campus (2003)

• The College honors the campus community with Customer Service Awards. (2004)

Visibly Of Our Achievements
• Spelman College 125th Anniversary Celebration (2006)
“Every one of you here is a leader, a builder – we are building the future one interaction, one classroom discussion, one hiring decision, one university community at a time. It is undeniable – we have the power to create something new.”

– BEVERLY DANIEL TATUM, FROM ‘THE TRUE MEANING OF RECONCILIATION’ AUGUST 7, 2013, SOUTH AFRICA
“I have said that being president of a college is like running a relay race... I think the same analogy applies to being a student at Spelman.

You get the baton from the women who came before you. They pass it to you, and they ask you to run with it – to make your contribution, not just to this community, but to the world. And each of you will, but my message to you today is to “run your own race.”

– BEVERLY DANIEL TATUM,
FROM ‘A LIVING LEGACY’
2014 CONVOCATION, SPELMAN COLLEGE
• In 2013, Dr. Tatum becomes the first HBCU and Georgia college president to receive the prestigious Carnegie Corporation Leadership Award honoring higher education innovators

**The Campaign for Spelman College**

• Alumnae donors broke record with 71 percent or 12,348 alumnae making a gift during the campaign

• Scholarship support tripled with $53 million generated

• Every Woman…Every Year! slogan embraced by alumnae and resulting in 7,060 or 41 percent of alumnae making gifts in FY’14

• Success obtained as Spelman’s visionary leadership yields $157.8 million

**Strengthening the Core: Spelman College’s Strategic Plan for 2017**

**The Spelman MILE (My Integrated Learning Experience) curriculum**

**GOALS for students:**

- Global engagement in at least one international travel experience

- Opportunities for undergraduate research and career-related internships

- Alumnae connections to strengthen our sisterly bonds early on

- Leadership development focused on individual potential and best practices

- Service learning that pairs hands-on community engagement with coursework

**Beverly Daniel Tatum**

@BDTSpelman · Dec 31, 2014

New Year’s Eve & all’s quiet at Spelman EXCEPT for work on new Wellness Center at Read Hall. Completion date 6/2015!
LEADS, officially named Center for Leadership and Civic Engagement, was established by President Beverly Daniel Tatum in partnership with J.P. Morgan Chase executives and co-founding directors Pamela Carlton and Kimberly B. Davis, C’81.
“Just as Packard and Giles forged a new educational path for Black women, Spelman is forging a new wellness path, one that will lead the way to better health for this generation of students and for those whose lives they will touch. We think this is a revolution we can all participate in, and one that we believe will create a health legacy we can all feel good about.”

— BEVERLY DANIEL TATUM

**Change Agent**

**Beverly Daniel Tatum**

**LEADS – Center for Leadership & Civic Engagement**

- The Leadership and Women of Color Conference starts in 2004 and presents the first Legacy of Leadership Awards.

- LEADS names its first executive director, Jane E. Smith, Ed.D., C’68.

**Wellness Revolution**

**Eat Better. Move More. Sleep Well.**

- The inaugural Wellness Summit is held on campus in 2013 in partnership with the National Institute for Child Health and Human Development. The conference focused on nutrition, exercise and sleep health. The annual Wellness Revolution 5K Run was established at the same time with more than 700 students and faculty participating in the race each year.

**Beverly Daniel Tatum**

@BDTSpelman · Nov 21, 2014

On bus to starting pt of 3-Day walk. Still dark outside & a little rainy but I’m ready, wearing my Spelman gear! 🍀
The Atlanta Chapter of the National Alumnae Association of Spelman College (NAASC) celebrated its 100-year anniversary on October 11, 2014, at the Atlanta Marriott Marquis Hotel in Atlanta. “House of Payne” actress Cassi Davis, C’2009, and “For Better or Worse” actor Brad James served as co-hosts for this event. Davis was also a recipient of the True Blue Award. The goals of the “Painting the Town Blue, 100 Years of Spelman Legacy” themed Centennial Celebration and the Endowed Scholarship Campaign are to highlight achievements of Spelman alumnae and establish a $100,000 endowed scholarship for the College’s current students. The chapter has been able to endow the scholarship at $50,000, and is continuing the campaign to reach its goal of $100,000. Contributions are solicited and payable to Spelman College for Atlanta Chapter Endowed Scholarship.
Chasity Evans, C’2017, Scholarship Recipient 2014–2015

Allegra Lawrence-Hardy, C’93, Community Service Award

Jean Foster Scott, C’53, Royal Blue Leadership Award

Eloise Abernathy Alexis, C’86, Distinguished Alumna Award

Chasity Evans, C’2017, Scholarship Recipient 2014–2015

Allegra Lawrence-Hardy, C’93, Community Service Award

Jean Foster Scott, C’53, Royal Blue Leadership Award
1945
Arizona Brown Price
Personal: Celebrated her 100th birthday on August 1, 2014, in Atlanta.

1963
Bettie J. Durrah
Professional: Wrote a choral poem for five voices, “Painting the Town Blue While Celebrating 100 Years of the Spelman Legacy,” to celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the Atlanta Chapter of the National Alumnae Association of Spelman College. This presentation was made during the Annual Scholarship Brunch sponsored by the Atlanta Chapter. She also wrote a meditation in Volume 22, “Circle of Prayer, Who’s In and Who’s Out,” published by the International Committee of the Fellowship of the Least Coin. She is one of two women from the United States whose meditations are included in this volume.

1964
Edwina Palmer Hunter
Professional: Received the 2014 NAASC Hall of Fame Award for her career excellence as a musician and piano teacher, and her leadership at all levels of the NAASC. She is an officer on the national executive committee, a past NAASC northeast regional coordinator and a consistent fundraiser for Spelman College.

Laura V. Akridge
Professional: Received the 2014 NAASC Merit Award for her career excellence as a science teacher in the Chicago Public Schools, her service in the NAASC for over four decades, her leadership as a member of the NAASC Executive Committee, and her record of sustained giving to Spelman College.

1970
Yvonne R. Jackson

1974
Poppy Finley

1975
Sandra Farragut-Hemphill
Professional: Appointed the new circuit judge for the 21st circuit that encompasses St. Louis County.

1976
Loretta Copeland Biggs
Professional: Confirmed on December 16, 2014, as a United States district judge for the Middle District of North Carolina. She is the first African-American woman to serve as a United States district judge in the State of North Carolina.

Mary Elizabeth Grimes
Professional: Appointed by the board of directors as the new president of Marian Middle School in St. Louis in December 2013.

Sheila Johnson
Professional: Appointed to the Suffolk County Youth Board Coordinating Council to represent the 15th Legislative District in 2014 for a three-year term. She became the board president of the Long Island Minority AIDS Coalition in 2014; and was awarded Unsung Hero at the Leadership in Law Awards by Long Island Business News.

1977
Mary Lynne Diggs
Professional: Appointed to the board of the South Carolina First Steps School Readiness Commission during the closing session of the 2014 South Carolina Legislature.

1978
Cassandra A Jones
Professional: Developed a new degree program for Charlotte Christian College and Theological Seminary which has been accepted by the accreditation agency with no revisions or suggestions. The degree program is Bachelor of Arts in Liberal Arts with four areas of concentration: Urban Studies, Linguistics, Organizational Leadership, and Health and Wellness.

1983
Lovette Twyman Russell
Professional: On September 16, 2014, honored by the Girl Scouts of Greater Atlanta for her commitment to the Girl Scouts with a private luncheon for the women of the Second Century Circle.

1984
Vida L. Avery
Professional: Her book, Philanthropy in Black Higher Education: A Fateful Hour Creating the Atlanta University System, was chosen as the Outstanding Publication winner for the 2014 CASE John Grenzebach Awards for Outstanding Research in Philanthropy for Educational Advancement.

Jacqueline Calhoun Marshall

Connie F. Smith-Lindsay
Married: Bryan Keith Lindsey on June 21, 2014. The ceremony was held at Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta.

Aubyn Elaine Thomas
The Los Angeles Alumnae Chapter of the National Alumnae Association of Spelman College was named the Small Alumni Chapter of the Year at The National Black College Foundation Inc.’s 2014 Legacy of Leaders Alumni Awards. The event was held September 26, 2014, at the Hyatt Regency Atlanta.

On August 20, 2014, the Tom Joyner Foundation acknowledged the Dobbs family for being the largest sibling set to graduate from Spelman College. This 1948 photo featured on the Tom Joyner Foundation Facebook page includes Irene Dobbs Jackson, C29; Juliet Dobbs Blackburn, C31; Millicent Dobbs Jordan, C33; Josephine Dobbs Clement, C37; Mattiwilda Dobbs January, C46; June Dobbs Butts, C48; and their parents Irene and John Wesley Dobbs.


The late Taronda E. Spencer, C80, was honored by Spelman College President Emerita Dr. Johnnetta B. Cole at the HBCU Story Symposium on October 24, 2014. Dr. Cole delivered the keynote address, “A Spelman Story: Taronda Spencer, Spelman College, C80,” which was also livestreamed. Spencer returned to her beloved alma mater as the archivist in 1998 and was appointed College historian in 2000.

Celeste D. Briggs, C81, was profiled on Spelman’s website for her work with sustainability. On October 17, 2013, Briggs joined President Beverly Daniel Tatum on Campus Sustainability Day to announce Spelman’s new partnership with General Motors which is designed to build upon the College’s mission to achieve climate neutrality. As a result of the College’s sustainability initiatives, Spelman will sell the automaker carbon credits, which can net the institution up to $100,000.

Roxana L. Walker-Canton, C91, produced a documentary called “Living Thinkers: An Autobiography of Black Women in the Ivory Tower.” The documentary is being distributed by Women Make Movies and is included in their 2014 New Releases Catalog.

1986
Kathaleena Edward Monds

Alysa Marie Story
Professional: Served as the designer/art director for CNN Design, Domestic Television. Worked on the on-air, Web and set graphics for the 2014 “CNN Heroes All Star Tribute” which aired December 7, 2014, on CNN. She was also the project art director for “CNN Roots, Our Journeys Home.” Her designs are implemented in the title design, set, on-air graphics, Web design and promos for the project. The two-hour prime-time special aired October 21, 2014.

T. Renee Willis
Professional: Named the new superintendent of the Richmond Heights local school district in Ohio in July 2014. She also was an honoree for the 14th annual 100 Black Men in Black Ties Awards Gala in October 2014.

1987
Joni Johnson Williams
Education: Earned her Ph.D. in English/ literary studies from Georgia State University in December 2013 with a specialty in ethnic American literatures and post-colonial literature.

1988
Leticia A. Hawkins
Professional: Recognized July 23, 2014, for her significant contributions performing professional-level administrative work as a human resources specialist. The Ames Honor Awards are peer-submitted, selective awards for employees at NASA Ames Research Center. It is the highest level of recognition given by the center.

Carmen Lampkins Hughes

1989
Monica McCoy Purdy
Professional: Honored as one of Dallas’s Top 25 African-American Women at the Steed Media Group’s Inaugural Dallas Female Success Factor 2014 in Dallas, Texas, on September 9, 2014.

Filmmaker and novelist, Bridgett M. Davis, C82, participated in Spelman’s Digital Moving Image Salon’s conversation and film screening of Naked Acts on September 25 and 26, 2014. She was featured in “Patrick’s Picks” in the October 2014 issue of Essence Magazine for her latest book, Into the Go-Slow, published in September 2014.

Spring 2015
1991

Tess Marie Vismale
Professional: Named “Meetings Trendsetter for 2014” in Meeting Focus Magazine.

Che D. Watkins

1992

Monica Lawson

1993

Lesha Neal Wallace
Education: Received her Ph.D. in Educational Leadership from the University of Dayton in August 2014.

1994

Jamie Marie Bennett
Professional: Founded Assistance for Hire, A Lifestyle Management/Personal Concierge company dedicated to giving busy people “The Gift of Time.” Assistance for Hire opened for business in April 2013. She also won the Business on The Rise Award from the Unstoppable Women’s Conference in September of 2014.

Jurine H. Owen
Professional: Selected as a 2014-2015 Satcher Health Leadership Institute Health Policy Leadership Postdoctoral Fellow at the Morehouse School of Medicine.

Yanick Mary Vibert
Professional: On November 6, 2014, received the Roosevelt Award for Service to Humanity at the March of Dimes Signature Chef’s Gala – The Basic Ingredients.

1995

Tawakalitu Jogunosimi Mitchell
Professional: Joined the Digital Media & Learning team as a program officer for U.S. Programs.

Jan-Néé Sheats-Mathis
Birth: Daughter, Zoe Simone Mathis on October 20, 2014.

1996

Andrea Ford Wilkerson
Professional: In August 2014, recognized by P&G and received the AALN (African-Ancestry Leadership Network),

1997

Jamyala Bennu
Professional: Her company, Oyin Handmade, opened its first hair salon in Baltimore, Maryland in the fall of 2014.

Amanda W. Chivers
Professional: Appointed as director of acquisitions and business development at Hospitality Ventures Management Group on September 23, 2014.

1998

Stephanie Scott
Professional: Selected in 2014 to be on the board of directors for New York Women in Communications, Inc. as the VP of the membership empowerment grants.

1999

Dionne Cowan
Professional: Became associate director of The Principals Center at Georgia State University on August 4, 2014.

India Phipps Epps

Janel A. George
Professional: Recently named senior education policy counsel for the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. Her article was published in the winter issue of the National Bar Association (NBA) Magazine, Undermining Opportunity: Race, Gender and Discipline Disparities.

Monica White Ndounou
Professional: Granted tenure and promoted to the rank of associate professor in the department of drama and dance at Tufts University in 2014.

2000

Darriere B. Driver
Professional: Named superintendent of Milwaukee Public Schools on July 1, 2014, making her the first woman to hold the position.

Amika King
Birth: Son, Aiden King Carter, in 2014.
Professional: Opened a second location for her business, Beya Salon Studios, in February 2014.

Afiya McClaughlin Johnson

Tiffany Pryor Nelson
Professional: Named director of admissions and enrollment management for the Rollins School of Public Health at Emory University in August 2014.

2001

JaDawnya Cintelle Butler
Professional: Received the Ronda F. Williams Professionalism Award from the Young Lawyers Division of the National Bar Association in July 2014.

Danica Tisdale Fisher
Birth: Son, Aiden King Carter, in 2014.

Theodora Rochelle Lee, C’84, was featured in the San Jose Mercury News article, “Wine: Mendocino ‘Queen’ Producing Rare Symphony Grape,” in November 2014, highlighting her vineyard, “Theopolis Vineyards.”

Tomika DePriest, C’89, was featured in Essence magazine’s article, “The Baby Rain Check,” in the September 2014 issue. The article discusses the increasing number of women who choose to freeze their eggs, and it highlights Beauchamp’s personal story.
Access Hollywood co-anchor and weekend correspondent Shaun C. Robinson, C’84, received the Diamond in the Raw Action Icon Award on October 10, 2014. She was featured in People Magazine’s spring 2015 “Gorgeous at Any Age” special issue; served on the jury selection panel, for the Pandora Hearts of Today Award in 2014; photos of her in a stunning green dress at the 2015 Golden Globe Awards ran in multiple media outlets.

Alva Bell Bullard, C’87, appeared on C-Span, presenting at the Women of Color Empowerment Conference on September 17, 2014.

Karin Gist, C’93, co-wrote the script for Drumline: A New Beat which debuted on VH-1 on October 27, 2014. The movie is a sequel to the 2002 movie, Drumline, starring actor and producer Nick Cannon.

Georgia House Minority Leader Stacey Y. Abrams, C’95, was named Governing Magazine’s 2014 Public Officials of the Year. Abrams also received top honors from TheRoot.com coming in at #11 on The Root 100 List. She was featured on New York Magazine’s website in an article titled, “Georgia’s Battle for the Ballot Box,” on October 24, 2014.


State Farm Agent Ashley Deadwyler-Jones, C’98, was featured in two national State Farm Insurance television commercials, along with comedian Rob Schneider, in August 2014.

Spelman College Board of Trustees’ Chair Rosalind Brewer, C’84, was named on the Ebony Power 100 List in November 2014. The list celebrates the world’s most inspiring African Americans. She was also honored as one of the Atlanta Business Chronicle’s 2014 Outstanding Directors at their awards event on December 4, 2014 at the Georgia Aquarium.

Sparks Robinson, C’84, received the Diamond in the Raw Action Icon Award on October 10, 2014. She was featured in People Magazine’s spring 2015 “Gorgeous at Any Age” special issue; served on the jury selection panel, for the Pandora Hearts of Today Award in 2014; photos of her in a stunning green dress at the 2015 Golden Globe Awards ran in multiple media outlets.

Attorneys Shana M. Rooks, C’97, and Joy White, C’2002, were named in the 2014 40 Under 40 class by the Atlanta Business Chronicle in November 2014. Rooks’ firm, Shana M. Rooks & Associates LLC, specializes in family law and personal injury. White is a partner at McFadden, White, Sprattlin & Davis LLC.

Actress Keshia Knight Pulliam, C’2001, competed on the hit television show, “Celebrity Apprentice” which premiered on January 4, 2015. Other cast members included NFL star Terrell Owens, talk show host Geraldo Rivera, actress Vivica A. Fox, gold medal Olympian Shawn Johnson and Kenya Moore, former Miss USA and star of The Real Housewives of Atlanta. Pulliam was the first to be “fired” from the show and appeared in several media outlets surrounding the show.

Designer Tori Lynn Soudan, C’96, launched an upscale, handmade shoe line in 2013. Tori Soudan Collection has been featured on several media outlets including “Good Morning America,” CNN, and The Baltimore Times.

Carlotta Johnson Berry, C’92, was promoted to assistant to associate professor of electrical and computer engineering at the Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology in August 2013. She also had her first op ed published in the New York Times on Sunday, November 2, 2014, titled, “They Call Me Doctor Berry.”

Alva Bell Bullard, C’87, appeared on C-Span, presenting at the Women of Color Empowerment Conference on September 17, 2014.

India Gary-Martin, C’91, was interviewed by Boss Magazine about her nail polish line, Only Fingers + Toes, on October 19, 2014.
Take Note!

Kirstie and Kristie Bronner, C’2013, were named to the 40 Under 40 list in the Activists Category by Jet Magazine in October 2014.

Alia Jones-Harvey, C’95, award-winning producer, was featured in a special arts and entertainment Homecoming convocation on October 16, 2014, at Spelman College, hosted by President Beverly Daniel Tatum. Jones-Harvey is among a small group of Black producers and the only woman of color currently working as a lead producer on Broadway. She has produced plays such as “Cat on a Hot Tin Roof,” “A Streetcar Named Desire,” “The Trip to Bountiful,” and “Romeo & Juliet” for Broadway.


Shani Jamila O’Neal, C’97, had an interview about her current works featured in Parlour Magazine’s Travel the Seven section.

Etiquette consultant Erika L. Ford-Preval, C’98, was featured in the June 2014 issue of Modern Luxury/The Atlantan magazine. The article, “Miss Manners,” highlighted her company, Charm, and her work with children’s etiquette.

Je-Shawna Wholley, C’2011, was featured in the November 2014 issue of Essence Magazine in the article “The New Civil Rights Leaders,” for her work with the National Black Justice Coalition.

Che Smith, C’2005, was a contestant on the television game show Jeopardy on November 6, 2014. She was also featured in the article, “Q&A with Ph.D.-student Jeopardy contestant Che Smith,” on the dailytarheel.com on November 9, 2014, highlighting her experience.

Singer Denise N. White, C’98 is known in the music world as Avery Sunshine. Her song, “Call My Name,” hit the top of the Billboard Adult R&B charts for multiple weeks. The song is her first Billboard number-one single, topping the chart at the end of December 2014 after 28 weeks on the chart.

Brigitte F. Daniel, C’99, was featured in the article, “Brigitte Daniel’s Got a Plan to Get Young Women of Color Into Technology,” in the News + Option section of Phillymag.com on August 27, 2014. She was also highlighted in the “Mogul Maintenance” column of the September issue of Marie Claire magazine.

Keisha Lynn Bursey Reddick, C’99, was featured in the article, “Docs Reddicks’ Dreams Come True,” in the Savannah Now, January 5, 2015 issue. The article highlights the marriage, medical school and careers of Reddick and her husband, Dr. Bonzo Reddick.

Statistician Talithia Williams, Ph.D., C’2000, was featured on the Ted website for presentation “Own Your Body’s Data” at TEDx Claremont Colleges in February 2014.

Ayana Davis Hernandez, C’97, North Carolina Central University director of public relations, was featured in the September issue of Time magazine.
The marriage announcement of Lauren A. Sprott C’2010, and First Lt. David Theophilus Leapheart was featured in the New York Times. They were married on Sunday August 31, 2014. The ceremony was held at the Roman Catholic Church of the Sacred Heart in South Plainfield, New Jersey.


The marriage announcement of Alisha Nichole McClung, C’2009, and husband Jordan Michael Johnson was featured in the Bridal Bliss section of Essence magazine online in July. The couple were married in June 2013.

Nzinga C. Shaw, C’2001, was the recipient of the inaugural “Women Who Mean Business” award from the Atlanta Business Chronicle in October 2014. In December 2014, she was named diversity and inclusion officer for the NBA basketball team, the Atlanta Hawks. Her announcement was covered in several local and national media outlets.

Tara Collier’s, C’2003, article, “Development Should Include Everyone” was published on Forbes Magazine’s website on October 19, 2014. Collier is an impact-investing specialist at GroFin Capital, a pan-African impact investing fund.

Alexandria Lee, C’2004, was featured on the Echoing Green website for her school’s highlight of receiving the 2014 Black Male Achievement Fellowship.

Ashley L. Derby, C’2006, was featured in the Beauty, Brains and Business section of the LA Sentinel in July for her ownership of Chick- fil-a.

Former student, Maci Peterson, (2008–2009) created an app, On Second Thought, that allows users to recall texts before they are received. She was the first place winner at The Kauffman Foundation and UpGlobal SXSW pitch competition in March 2014. She was featured in the article, “New Messaging App Allows You to Take Back Texts You Regret,” in the independent.ie/Business Web Summit in June 2014; she was a featured startup and exhibitor at The Summit in November 2014.

Lauren A. Anderson, C’2011, was selected as a 2014 Young Memphian. Each year the Greater Memphis Chamber selects ten outstanding young professionals to feature in the Young Memphian edition of their Memphis Crossroads magazine. Anderson is an associate of development for Teach for America Memphis.

Mickie L. Jackson, C’2011, Atlanta Falcons cheerleader, was named as one of Atlanta’s Most Beautiful by Jezebel Magazine in 2014. She was featured in the article, “Cheerleaders Make JEZEBEL’s ‘Most Beautiful’ List,” on the Atlanta Falcon’s website on November 7, 2014.
2002
MyLynda J. Moore
*Professional:* Products from her company, Petunia Essentials, were included in the gift bags for Michelle Obama’s First Lady’s Luncheon 2014.

Jylana L. Sheats
*Professional:* Completed a postdoctoral research fellowship at the Stanford Prevention Research Center within the Stanford (SPRC) School of Medicine in Palo Alto, California, in August 2014. Accepted a position as a health and information technology research associate with the Healthy Aging Research & Technology Solutions lab at the SPRC where she conducts research focused on reducing health disparities and promoting health through the use of innovative, evidence-based technologies.

2003
Tiffany Draper Casey

Tara Collier
*Education:* Received her MBA from the University of Oxford in 2013.

Shate’ L. Edwards
*Education:* Graduated with a master of fine arts in dance from Sam Houston State University in May 2014.

Thea Stevens
*Professional:* Started her position as the northwest Georgia infant toddler specialist for the Georgia Program for Infant & Toddler Care in July 2014.

2004
Johneica L. Hardaway-Mason
*Married:* Rodney A. Mason, Jr. on April 12, 2014, in Atlanta.
*Professional:* Accepted business professorships at Shorter University and Georgia Piedmont Technical College.

Alia Smith McCants
*Birth:* Son, Carter Wynn McCants, and daughter, Aria Ella McCants, on December 11, 2014.

2005
Adrienne Hunter
*Education:* The 1st graduate of the Medical University of South Carolina’s Doctor of Health Administration in Information Systems program in May 2014. She was also inducted into the Upson Phi Delta National Honor Society.

Bianca Lacey Keaton

Tiffany M. Mallory
*Professional:* Awarded the 10th Annual Ethics and Professionalism Award by the State Bar of Georgia Young Lawyers’ Division; recognized by Augusta Magazine and Metro Chamber of Commerce as a 2014 Top 10 in 10 Young Professionals to Watch, and named to the 2015 class of Leadership Augusta on June 6, 2014.

Sibo McNally
*Professional:* Recently joined the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) as an attorney advisor in the Wireline Competition Bureau, Telecommunications Access Policy Division.

Juwana Riggins-Simon

Crystal Romeo Upperman
*Professional:* Received an $84,000 STAR (Science to Achieve Results) fellowship from the Environmental Protection Agency in the fall of 2014 for research on the relationship between climate change and health outcomes.

Tierra C. West

2007
LaMonica Inez Davis
*Married:* Completed pediatric dental residency at Bronx-Lebanon Hospital in Bronx, New York and became the youngest African-American pediatric dental specialist in the state of Mississippi. Opened the private practice clinic, Smiles on Broadway Dental Care, in Jackson, Mississippi in November 2014.

Michelle Bradley Emebol
*Professional:* Received the NAASC Young Alumna Award for her professional accomplishments as a research project coordinator at Northwestern University, her service in the NAASC as administrative assistant and her ongoing financial support of Spelman College.

Sarah Stephens

Terrica Bradley Phillips
*Professional:* Became communications manager with My Brother’s Keeper, Inc., in Jackson, Mississippi, on November 3, 2014.

Leigh Ann Sennette
*Married:* Darren Sheffield, Jr. on October 4, 2014, in Dallas, Texas.

2008
Erin Jones
*Professional:* Accepted the position of employee resources manager with General Electric on November 17, 2014.

Jasmine Walker
*Professional:* Began her position as the BRC Coordinator at PPL Foods, LLC, in Augusta, Georgia, on August 25, 2014.

Kisha Marie Woods
*Professional:* Selected for a year-long graduate education diversity internship with the American Evaluation Association in the Summer of 2014.

2009
Tiffany T. Blakemore
*Professional:* Accepted a new position in the transaction real estate practice of Ernst & Young.

Danielle D’Neen Dickens
*Education:* Earned a Ph.D. in psychology with an emphasis in applied social and health psychology from Colorado State University during summer 2014.

Shelvia Richele Grant
*Professional:* Sworn into the Louisiana State Bar on October 30, 2014, in New Orleans.

Japera Johnson
*Professional:* Selected as a 2014–2015 Satcher Health Leadership Institute Health Policy Leadership postdoctoral fellow at the Morehouse School of Medicine.

Brianna Nicole Lewis
*Education:* Graduated with a master of science degree in arts administration from the Savannah College of Art and Design.

Leigh A. Pollard
*Professional:* Guest speaker at Spelman College Sisters Chapel worship service on September 14, 2014.

Laje Reine-Brooks
*Professional:* Awarded a certificate as a lactation counselor and educator from the University of California San Diego Extension June 2014.

Kirstie and Kristic Bronner
*Professional:* Presented the first lecture of the 2014 fall semester during Albany State University’s lecture series on Thursday, September 25th. It was hosted by the ASU Center for Teaching, Learning and Scholarship.

Elizabeth J. Sullivan
*Professional:* Received the Arthur Zankel Urban Fellowship awarded to Teachers College students at Columbia University. The $10,000 fellowship is given to graduate students to work with disadvantaged inner-city youth.
Aurelia Doris Robinson, C’47

Aurelia Doris Robinson earned her bachelor’s degree in teachers’ education in 1947. That year, in the Campus Mirror, she was described by her classmates as “cooperative and sweet.” These consistent and genuine characteristics endeared her not only to her classmates but also to generations of Spelman alumnae and students, faculty, staff and presidents.

After graduation, Aurelia Doris Robinson continued her connection to Spelman with passion and precision. As her educational pursuits and career choices took her from Atlanta to Oklahoma City, Camilla, Macon and Savannah, Georgia, she attended Spelman events and hosted alumnae and presidents of the College wherever she resided. When she returned to Atlanta, Dr. Robinson concluded her career at Spelman as a visiting associate professor of reading.

Dedicated to her beloved alma mater, she served as a reunion class agent and as national chair of the Alumnae Annual Fund from 1999–2000. She was a longtime member of the National Alumnae Association of Spelman College (NAASC) and made regular annual contributions to the College. She took a personal interest in encouraging and recognizing the Spelman College staff responsible for the alumnae affairs and fundraising programs. She celebrated her Spelman legacy as the niece of Spelman alumnae and the sister of the beloved Christine Robinson Sinclair, C’46. In 2005, she received the College’s highest alumnae honor – the Founders Spirit Award.

Aurelia Doris Robinson passed away on July 4, 2014. A celebration of life service was held on July 11, 2014, at Trinity AME Church in Atlanta.

Ora Sterling King, C’54

On June 3, 1978, the sixth president of Spelman College, Donald M. Stewart, received a letter from Ora Sterling King, expressing her passion for her treasured alma mater.

“… I graduated June 7, 1954, the only member of my immediate family to receive a college degree … Spelman College’s commitment to me was filled at a superior level. My commitment to assist in fostering the growth and development of Spelman College is synonymous with my commitment to provide for my mother as long as she shall live. No matter what goals I shall achieve in life, the degree from Spelman College is for me my most important achievement.”

King consistently and enthusiastically supported, led, gave to and served Spelman.

She organized the Columbia, Maryland, chapter of the NAASC; as appreciation for her years of service, the Columbia chapter provided scholarship support for Spelman students in her honor.

She served as president of the NAASC from 1986 to 1988. During her tenure, she instituted many new programs and worked aggressively to increase alumnae giving and support for the College. She was the recipient of Spelman’s Alumnae Achievement Award in Education in 2001. The Dr. Ora Sterling King Endowed Scholarship was established at Spelman in her honor by her husband, Lonnie King, Jr., in May 2006.

After graduating from Spelman, King received her master’s degree from Atlanta University and subsequently a Ph.D. in early childhood development from the University of Maryland in College Park, Maryland. She enjoyed an illustrious career in education, teaching students from kindergarten to graduate school. At the apex of her educational career, she served in the dual role of dean of education and of graduate studies at Coppin State University; she retired from the university in 1995.

King loved her family, friends, her beloved Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Incorporated, and most of all, she loved Spelman College.

Ora Sterling King passed away on July 1, 2014. A celebration of life service was held on August 2, 2014, at The Sisters Chapel, Spelman College, in Atlanta.
In Memoriam

1934
Melbahu Theodora Bryant Mason
Died: October 26, 2013
Services: October 31, 2013, Church of the Covenant, Cleveland, Ohio.

1939
Franzetta Palmer Williams Durant
Died: January 10, 2015
Services: January 21, 2015, May Funeral Home, Willingboro, New Jersey.

Dorothea C. Jackson
Died: September 28, 2014
Services: October 11, 2014, H.M. Patterson Funeral Home, Atlanta.

1940
Gladys Forde
Died: June 29, 2014
Services: July 8, 2014, St. James Episcopal Church, Houston.

1941
Vivian Hunt Johnson
Died: June 22, 2014
Services: July 15, 2014, Holman United Methodist Church, Los Angeles.

1942
Malissa Kilgore Briley
Died: October 29, 2014

Gettys Sylvia Bryant-Simon
Died: October 29, 2014
Services: November 8, 2014, Owen Chapel A.M.E. Church, Alamogordo, New Mexico.

Doris Perry Carter
Died: November 16, 2014
Services: November 22, 2014, Jackson Memorial Baptist Church, Atlanta.

Imogene Turner Yongue
Died: December 22, 2014
Services: January 3, 2015, John C. Smith University, Charlotte, North Carolina.

1943
Austella Walden Colley
Died: September 13, 2014

1944
Norma Odessa Peyton Reid
Died: November 4, 2014
Services: November 14, 2014, First United Methodist Church, Santa Monica, California.

1945
Jacqueline Allen Ormes
Died: August 24, 2014
Services: September 6, 2014, Lincoln Memorial Congregational Church, Los Angeles.

1946
Mavis L. Morgan
Died: June 19, 2014
Services: June 24, 2014, Vermont Avenue Baptist Church, Washington, D.C.

1947
Gloria Butler Hightower James
Died: July 22, 2014
Services: July 30, 2014, St. John Baptist Church, Gary, Indiana.

Catherine Wilson May
Died: February 18, 2015
Services: February 27, 2015, Jamison Temple, CME, Kansas City, Missouri.

1949
Elise Dunn Cain
Died: November 26, 2014
Services: January 30, 2015, People’s Congregational United Church of Christ, Washington, D.C.

1950
Elise Gilham
Died: October 19, 2014
Services: October 25, 2014, Ebenezer Baptist Church, Atlanta.

Verna Turner Venning
Died: January 30, 2015
Services: February 6, 2015, St. Paul AME Worship Center, Lithonia, Georgia.

1952
Dorothy W. Dawkin
Died: December 17, 2014
Services: December 23, 2014, Mt. Calvary Baptist Church, Atlanta.

Elythe Banks George
Died: November 16, 2014
Services: November 25, 2014, John Wesley United Methodist Church, Fayetteville, North Carolina.

1953
Ruth Harvey-Brown
Died: September 27, 2014
Services: October 4, 2014, Bible Based Fellowship Church, Tampa, Florida.

1954
Ouida Jordan Whitfield
Died: January 12, 2015
Services: February 27, 2015, Gaines Chapel AME, Waycross, Georgia.

1955
Janie Carithers Holman
Died: November 13, 2014
Services: November 21, 2014, Greater Paul Baptist Church, Cocoa, Florida.

1960
Myla Francene Churchill-Barrett
Died: June 10, 2014
Services: June 16, 2014, Kumble Theater, Long Island University, New York.

1964
Elinor Fowler
Died: June 27, 2014
Services: July 3, 2014, Warren Memorial United Methodist Church, Atlanta.

1965
Gloria Bailey Matthews Person
Died: December 28, 2014
Services: January 5, 2015, Wheat Street Baptist Church, Atlanta.

1966
Patricia Lynn Travis
Died: June 10, 2014
In Memoriam

1967
Cheryl Birchette Pierce
Died: February 23, 2015
Services: February 28, 2015, Alfonso Dawson Mortuary, Atlanta, Georgia.

1968
Lillian Panish Kotovsky
Died: January 19, 2015
Service: January 22, 2015, Beth Israel Cemetery, Phoenix.

1970
Carolyn McClain
Died: September 7, 2014
Services: September 15, 2014, Metropolitan African Methodist Episcopal Church, Washington, D.C.

1971
Paltry “Pat” Thomas Hines
Died: August 25, 2014
Services: August 30, 2014, Greater Travelers Rest House of Hope, Decatur, Georgia.

1974
Sharon Lorraine Cariah Crenchaw
Died: July 16, 2014
Services: July 24, 2014, Beulah Missionary Baptist Church, Decatur, Georgia.

1975
Earnestine “Tina” Clayton Vaughn
Died: August 22, 2014
Services: August 28, 2014, New Birth Missionary Baptist Church, Lithonia, Georgia.

1978
Jacquelyn Champion Owens
Died: December 7, 2014
Services: December 13, 2014, Salem Bible Church, Atlanta.

1979
Ninette Reshee Pratt
Died: February 6, 2015
Services: February 14, 2015, Greater Springfield Baptist Church, Bolivar, Tennessee.

1984
Robin Sanders Sutton
Died: December 31, 2014
Services: January 16, 2015, Enon Tabernacle Baptist Church, Philadelphia.

1989
Sheri LaBranche Jackson
Died: November 26, 2014

1996
Lea Kari Green
Died: November 4, 2014
Services: Asylum Hill Congregational Church, Hartford, Connecticut.

1999
Kimberly Brown-Thomas
Died: January 29, 2015
Services: Saturday, February 7, 2015, New Jerusalem AME, Wadmalaw Island, South Carolina.
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