

OAKWOOD UNIVERSITY

MAGAZINE
SPRING 2011

Drs. Leslie and
Prudence Pollard

**Enter to Learn...
Depart to Serve...
Return to Lead.**



A Message from the Editor

Oakwood in Transition

The year 2010 was marked with transitions for Oakwood University—transitions that came in the form of major facility renovations and, eventually, new leadership. This issue examines some of those transitions, although, even as this publication goes to press, we are in the midst of still further shifts as we conclude the 2006-2011 Constituency Meeting and the University's Board of Trustees prepares to meet for its annual spring session, all of which will be covered in our next issue. These changes mean fresh ideas, new insights, and a recommitment to the institution's goals, mission, and vision.

Also in this issue, we look at Oakwood's participation at the General Conference 2010 Session that was held in Atlanta, Ga., and at the election of OU's 10th president, Delbert W. Baker, to vice presidential service for the Seventh-day Adventist World Church. His appointment to that new post instigated Oakwood's presidential search for its next CEO. We'll examine the highly involved search process that spanned approximately four months, under the interim presidency of Dr. Mervyn A. Warren, and the final vote of the Board that led to the naming of Oakwood's 11th president, Dr. Leslie N. Pollard.

We welcome our new president and first lady, Drs. Leslie and Prudence Pollard, as they return to lead our institution to its next rung of excellence in higher education. At a time when many historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) are perishing or experiencing a sharp decline in enrollment, we are thankful to God for His divine guidance and wisdom through the selection of our leaders—leaders who come highly qualified and are committed to the completion of His work. We also recognize the unique role that Oakwood, as an HBCU, continues to play in the nurture and preparation of our young people for service to God and humanity.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michele A. Solomon".

Michele A. Solomon, Executive Editor



Oakwood University Magazine

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MAGAZINE

Mission Statement:

Oakwood University, a historically Black Seventh-day Adventist institution of higher learning, provides quality Christian education that emphasizes academic excellence; promotes harmonious development of mind, body, and spirit; and prepares leaders in service for God and humanity.

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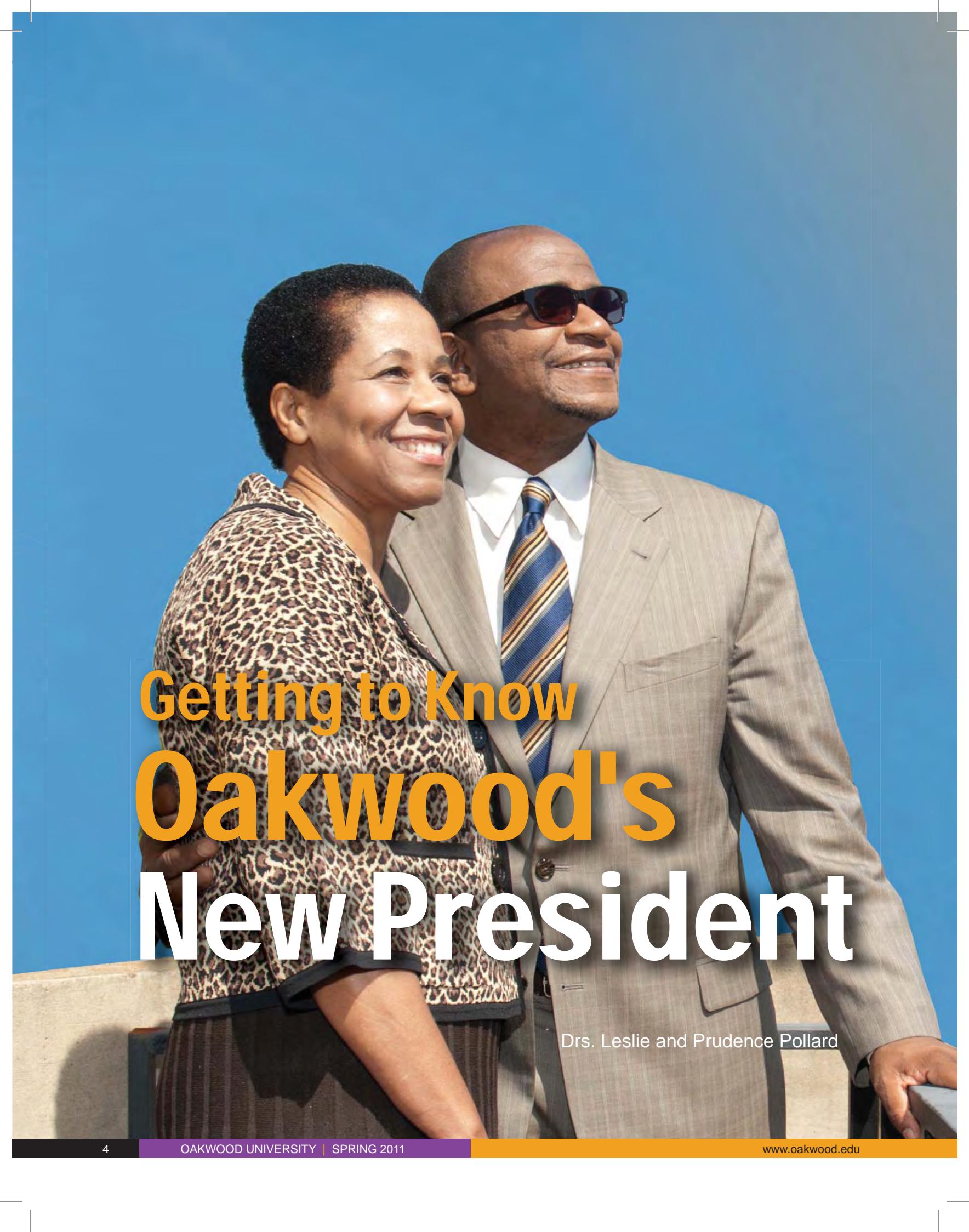
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Getting to Know Oakwood's New President

Drs. Leslie and Prudence Pollard

“We worked very, very hard to find a gifted and qualified candidate, and we found one—one of the best—Dr. Leslie Pollard....It is a good time for Oakwood University.”

By Michele Solomon

The Oakwood University Board of Trustees voted Leslie N. Pollard, Ph.D., D.Min., M.B.A., the 11th president of Oakwood University on November 1, 2010, following several hours of prayerful deliberation in all-day, closed-door sessions. Mervyn A. Warren, Ph.D., who was voted interim president at the end of the 2010 General Conference session, served in that capacity since August 1.

The final vote was the culmination of a meticulous process. A formal presidential search committee worked diligently with a professional consulting firm to comb through all 24 confirmed applications that had been under consideration since the search team officially began its work in August. The committee was comprised of representatives from Oakwood's Board of Trustees, administration, faculty, staff, and students. It hosted four separate campus forums in the week preceding the Board's Fall Session, to allow faculty, staff, students, administrators, alumni, and members of the local community to pose their questions and concerns directly to the three final candidates and become more engaged in the how the selection process works.

The Board also met with the final candidates on Oakwood's campus as part of its regularly scheduled Fall Session. General Conference president Ted Wilson, who serves as the interim chair of the Oakwood University Board of Trustees, made the official announcement to the press that evening, following the conclusion of the Board session.

Pollard was one of three finalists for the presidential seat vacated in July when former president Delbert W. Baker, Ph.D., accepted the nomination as one of nine general vice presidents of the Seventh-day Adventist World Church. Pollard assumed his new position as the 11th president of Oakwood University on January 3, 2011.

Asked to comment on the overall presidential search process, Elder Wilson said, “We had three very fine candidates who were shared by the search committee with the board. We prayed earnestly prior to the vote...and asked for the Holy Spirit's guidance.” Vice chair Doris Gothard added, “We worked very, very hard to find a gifted and qualified candidate, and we found one—one of the best—Dr. Leslie Pollard....It is a good time for Oakwood University. It's a wonderful experience when an institution can have one of its own come home, and so we welcome him.”

For the first time in the institution's presidential selection process, Oakwood allowed its student body to interview each of the three finalists and to express their concerns during a separate forum. Asked to give her reaction to this student platform, interview subcommittee chair Cherryl Galley, Ph.D., stated, “The opportunity was greatly appreciated. Interest was shown in the candidates' visions for the institution, spiritual enhancement, student scholarships, and academic growth.” Galley is an associate professor in the Department of Psychology at Oakwood.

A one-on-one interview with the then presidential candidate just days prior to the final vote revealed his commitment to excellence and his vision for the university. What follows are his responses to some of the questions excerpted from that interview.

MS: What do you view as Oakwood's greatest strengths as an institution in today's higher education arena?

LP: Oakwood has a number of strengths that we can leverage. First is the incredible spiritual passion of Oakwood University. It's everywhere, and all you've got to do is live in some other place where it's not as visible. So, the spiritual strength of Oakwood, its history is an amazing resource, the founding of the institution is an incredible resource, its connection to the HBCU [historically black colleges and universities] community, its connection to the Seventh-day Adventist Church. When you think about HBCUs in this very tough recessionary period, they're either struggling or going under. There's a story to be told about the benefit of Oakwood, as an HBCU, being connected to a globally-sponsored world church of Seventh-day Adventists. That's a story that's waiting to be told. (There are HBCUs that have lost their accreditation.) Those are just some of its strengths—its dedicated, highly-respected faculty. Then, there is the student body. I think all of these are strengths.

MS: What do you consider Oakwood's greatest resources to be, natural and/or human?

LP: First of all, the greatest natural resource is location—deep South, here in Huntsville, a growing city, almost an idyllic

location, just perfect—so I think that's a great natural resource. Our connection to the Huntsville community and the support that we enjoy—that's a great civic resource. Human resources would be the personnel, the staff. We have a very dedicated staff, and we need to tell them that more.... That's an area where we could strengthen the organization. The staff needs to hear that they are appreciated for all their hard work.



MS: What really motivated you to apply for the position of Oakwood University president?

LP: Part of what attracts me is that I was nominated by a number of people, repeatedly. Secondly, the potential for doing good is so great here at Oakwood that in my leadership this would be, I think, a natural place to use the training that God has given me across the last 25 years. To be equipped in ministry, in management, in leadership, that's a wonderful combination, and to give that back to Oakwood, the place that formed me, would be a wonderful honor. I think about it as a stewardship.

MS: In what particular area do you think Oakwood could broaden its horizons?

LP: I think Oakwood is missing an opportunity in the international market. By that I mean, one opportunity we have is to grow an online delivery system for education....It's high income, lower expense. That could be in the form of an online university, but we're missing a great opportunity. We need to keep a high residential program, but maybe [add] Oakwood Online University—OU and OOU.

MS: How do you think we can encourage greater cultural diversity on our campus?

LP: First of all, we have to tell our story. We have to explain that our historic mission to African Americans is an inclusive mission. It's not an exclusive mission. So, we'll keep that historic mission. It's in the very founding of Oakwood that it was to reach a population that had been marginalized. The sociology of the black community, here and around the world, that's still true. We must keep that, and yet we must also create on campus a welcoming environment for others who wish to come to Oakwood. So then, we say, "Yes, this is

"My personal vision has a number of elements to it. One is that Oakwood would be the premier university in the Huntsville community and in the Seventh-day Adventist Church by the year 2020."

an HBCU, and you are welcome to participate in that experience. And we will honor *your* experience." So if we think about Oakwood as a big tent, then we can welcome a variety of cultural groups onto the campus, and be supportive of them in their particular cultures. So organize a Latino club, which I think we already have, now. I met the president of that [organization] a few days ago, down in Florida. I think he called it OLA—Oakwood Latino Association. That is so promising, and it's so exciting. So, yes, we can do more. We can support, nurture, and sustain the diversity that we have on campus.

MS: I know that each president has a very unique course that they would like to chart for the institution. What legacy would you hope to leave behind as Oakwood's next president?

LP: I'd like to leave behind a highly secure, a financially secure organization that has grown in every area with a student body of probably 5,000 students, and an international, online university for another 1,500 international students. I'd like to leave behind a legacy of care and nurture for the faculty, staff, and students of Oakwood.

MS: Finally, what is your personal vision for Oakwood University?

LP: My personal vision has a number of elements to it. One is that Oakwood would be the premier university in the Huntsville community and in the Seventh-day Adventist Church by the year 2020. By premier, I mean that all of Oak-

wood's operations, as well as its initiatives, are undergirded by a strong commitment to quality. Today, in health care, there's a big, strong push around quality initiatives, and it's also working in higher education. So, part of my vision is to lift Oakwood to that premier level. I think we're doing excellent work right now, but the difference between excellent and premier has to do with the quality initiatives that would define the institution. Oakwood would be the leader in international affiliations, especially around the Pan-African consortium of Afro-American, Afro-Caribbean, Afro-Latino, and Continental-African SDA universities. I'd love to see Oakwood be in that kind of sisterhood network. I'd love to see the diversity. I'd love to see DEEP [Diversity Education Exchange Program] be matched with DEFT—Diversity Exchange Faculty Teaching—so that in the summers, our faculty can be exchanged in places like Trinidad, Tobago, Jamaica, Haiti, Nigeria, Costa Rica, Panama, Honduras, Uganda, Tanzania, and other places to do teaching at sister institutions and to get those kinds of experiences. I'd also love to see the master's programs grow...and that would mean, of course, we'd need to upgrade our library resources as we undertake broader and broader master's programs.

Pollard's commitment to excellence is evidenced in his own educational pursuits. He earned his undergraduate degree from Oakwood University and an M.Div. degree from the SDA Theological Seminary at Andrews University, after which he earned the D.Min. degree in Preaching and Worship from Claremont School of Theology. Seeking higher-level fiscal and administrative development, Pollard earned an M.B.A. in Organizational Management from the La Sierra University School of Business. His last earned degree was the Ph.D. in New Testament Language and Literature, with a specialization in apocalyptic literature, which he received from Andrews University.

Pollard's 32 years of leadership reflect local, national, and international service. He has served as senior pastor, a youth pastor, a university chaplain, a health care program administrator, and an educational administrator at Loma Linda University. As a clergyman, Pollard pastored the Oakwood University Church (formerly Oakwood College Church) from 1994 to 1997, and has functioned as an evangelist, professor, ministerial educator, and leadership development facilitator to the General Conference family. He regularly leads denominational and non-denominational leadership and mission conferences all over the world.

The president's orientation to fiscal leadership emerges from his experience as senior pastor of major congregations, from administering university budgets and grants, and from his graduate business education. Pollard views chief-executive leadership as a team-based collaboration between executive team members. For him, servant leadership accomplishes both the mission-related and financial goals of the organization, through the careful placement of committed



people, the diligent monitoring of organizational processes, and the implementation of data-driven initiatives and strategies. Leadership development of his colleagues is an active passion, and Pollard's commitment to racial, cultural, and gender inclusiveness has been internationally received and affirmed.

Pollard, 54, is a productive writer, speaker, and engaged scholar on the subjects of leadership, cultural competence, and mission. He is editor and contributing author to the volume on leadership and cultural competence entitled *Embracing Diversity: How to Understand and Reach People of All Cultures*. Since its publication, *Embracing Diversity* has been translated into Spanish, German, and French, and has become a global text for trans-cultural leadership education. Pollard also writes regularly for the *Adventist Review* and *Ministry* magazines. He is a member of the editorial board of the *Journal of Applied Christian Leadership* of Andrews University. In addition, Pollard has published numerous articles and authored several book chapters on the subjects of leadership, cultural competence, and mission.

Leslie Pollard has been married to the former Prudence LaBeach for 31 years. Prudence holds a Master of Public Health degree and a Ph.D. in Evaluation, Measurement, and Research Design from Western Michigan University. Additionally, the Pollards have received numerous acknowledgments across their 32 years of denominational service and were honored in April of 2009 with the Oakwood Alumni Association's Certificate of Merit and are both lifetime members of the Oakwood University National Alumni Association. They are the parents of two daughters, Kristin and Karin, who are both graduates of Oakwood University.

Inaugural events will be announced later in the year.

Michele Solomon serves as the director of Public Relations at Oakwood University.

OU Presidential Search Committee Process

1. The Board of Trustees approved the selection of the Search Committee on July 2, 2010.
2. The Search Committee had a target completion of 120 days to conclude its work and give the OU Board of Trustees regular Search Committee updates on progress.
3. Oakwood University approved a Search Committee Budget.
4. Before the search commenced, the chair of the Search Committee requested the budget for:
 - Administrative Secretary (20 Hrs/wk: Period 6-Months) and administrative support services.
 - Dedicated Executive Conference Call Line for all Search Committee Meetings.
 - Travel, as required.
 - Purchase of ACG Resource Documents for Search Committee.
 - Retention of an Executive Search Consultant Firm to assist in the Search Process.
 - Writing/Modifying the OU President Job Description.
 - Writing the Search Process.
 - Writing the Terms of Reference.
 - Writing the Schedule for completing the search task within 120 Days.
5. The job description for the President of Oakwood University job opening was posted on the internet and in printed publications.
6. The chair recommended (to the Search Committee) a small group of three to four Search Committee members to create the above-mentioned documents.
7. The chair recommended to the Search Committee that the services of an internal/external executive search consulting firm be retained to facilitate the OU presidential search process, field/vet all résumés and referral names based upon job requirements, and confirm each candidate's interest in the posted position.
8. Regular conference call meetings were scheduled for the Search Committee.
9. Search Committee on-campus meetings at Oakwood University were scheduled, as required.
10. After the search period closed, the search committee/external executive search firm consultant reviewed multiple candidate names and profiles. As a mode of operation, the search committee/external executive search consultant met, via telephone conference call meetings, to plan, discuss and execute: (a) the general conduct of the search, (b) any concerns about the process or executive search consultant, and (c) any other issues or concerns of which the Board of Trustees (BOT) should have been aware.
11. Background investigations were requested on the top five (5) candidate names.
12. Before the final Search Committee Report was submitted to the Board of Trustees, the Search Committee held a formal teleconference to discuss the top five candidate names and BI reports.
13. After the Search Committee had completed its determination of the top three (3) from the top five (5) candidate names, an opportunity was provided to meet with each candidate, by a group of the search committee/executive search consultant, via teleconference, or at an off-campus airport location, to interview the candidates.
14. Top three (3) candidate names were confirmed.
15. A copy of the search results and BI's on the final top three (3) candidate names were distributed to all members of the search committee and Board of Trustees, at least 10 days before the Board meeting, where the final Search Committee Report was presented to the BOT, and on-campus interviews of each candidate were conducted by the BOT; a final vote was executed by the BOT for the next OU president.
16. On November 1, 2010, the BOT made the final selection for the OU President from the names recommended by the Search Committee.

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JOB DESCRIPTION

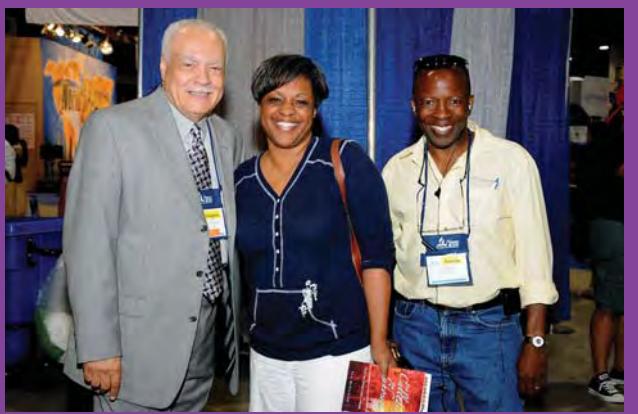
Oakwood University President

Job Summary

The president is the principal executive officer of Oakwood University. He/She is appointed by and serves at the pleasure of the Board of Trustees and is responsible to the Board for overall administration of the University. This position also calls for a person who has the ability to analyze complex issues, make decisions, and manage multiple responsibilities in a high-volume, diverse working environment. The president is a member of the faculty and carries out the policies and programs established by the Board of Trustees. The president provides the spiritual, administrative, and academic leadership for Oakwood University. The president has primary responsibility for personnel, programs, budgets, and fundraising. The president represents and speaks for the University before the Board of Trustees and to all public and private agencies.

Essential Duties and Responsibilities

- Direct the implementation of the policies and the fulfillment of the directives of the Board of Trustees.
- Serve as the secretary of the Board of Trustees.
- Provide institutional and fundraising leadership for the University and be an advocate for Seventh-day Adventist Christian education.
- Develop specific goals and objectives for the University.
- Promote the recognition and the public awareness of Oakwood University.
- Actively promote and demonstrate support of the programs of the Alumni Association as a means of strengthening the University/Association relationship, while facilitating growth in alumni membership recruitment.
- Manage the accreditation process to ensure reaffirmation by the Southern Association of Universities and Schools.
- Foster an atmosphere of shared governance where SDA principles of Christian education are central to university life.
- Develop, present, and manage the annual budget of the University.
- Recommend to the Board of Trustees the appointment of the administrative officers of the University.
- Render an annual comprehensive report that includes the annual audited financial statement.
- Preside at and conduct public official functions, including commencements and convocations, and confer degrees.
- Serve as the chairperson of the faculty, Administrative Advisory Council, and the President's Council.
- Ensure a timely response to all queries of the administration made by members of the Board of Trustees.
- Recommend to the Board appointments of faculty.
- Approve appointments of staff.
- Appoint other administrators below the rank of vice president.
- Appoint, promote, reassign, discipline, or terminate employees and other administrators within the policies of the North American Division Working Policy, the General Conference Working Policy, and/or the Oakwood University Faculty and Staff Handbooks.





Oakwood at GC

2010 GENERAL CONFERENCE SESSION

ATLANTA, GEORGIA

OU was well represented at the 59th General Conference Session in Atlanta, Ga., (June 23-July 3, 2010). Our booth (#949), prominently located in the exhibit hall, was visited by thousands of people over the course of the 10-day session. The Aeolians ministered to an audience of over 50,000 in the packed Georgia Dome. Oakwood's president Dr. Delbert W. Baker was elected to serve as a vice president of the Seventh-day Adventist World Church.

See you in 2015!



Oakwood University

Bids the Bakers

Goodbye

By Michele Solomon

Oakwood University bid its 10th president, Delbert W. Baker, Ph.D., goodbye at a special farewell program held July 31, 2010, at the Oakwood University Seventh-day Adventist Church. The program, emceed by Timothy McDonald, Ed.D., vice president for Advancement and Development at Oakwood, took place in the church sanctuary. A reception for faculty, staff, students, and community well-wishers followed at the Blake Center Student Dining Hall.

The Bakers received numerous awards, gift certificates, and commendations, including the Key to the City from Huntsville Mayor Tommy Battle, and a special resolution presented by City Councilman Richard Showers. A large number of Oakwood administrators, faculty, staff, students and OU Board members, Huntsville education, business, and government representatives, family and community members joined the Bakers and their family as they made their departure.

Dr. Baker, who has served as president of Oakwood University for the past 14 years, was nominated by a 246-member Nominating Committee at the 59th General Conference Ses-



sion of Seventh-day Adventists, held at the Georgia Dome in Atlanta, Ga., last summer. As the governing body of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, the General Conference appoints nine general vice presidents to serve the global church, each overseeing an assigned national and international region. Baker's new appointment took place on Sunday, June 27, 2010.

During the reception, Oakwood's outgoing president passed the baton to Mervyn Warren, Ph.D., with an official sounding of the gong. Warren had been voted interim president in At-

lanta on July 2, 2010, in the final week of the General Conference Session. Warren has served as the University's provost and senior vice president during Baker's administration. Over the past four decades, he has held numerous other administrative positions at OU, including Chairman of Religion and Theology, general vice president for Instruction and Student Services, and assistant to the president. A graduate of Oakwood, he has also served as professor in the Religion and Theology Department. He is married to Barbara (née Moseley), a retired member of the Oakwood faculty. Their three adult children (Mervyn, Karis, and Shana) are all products of Christian education at Oakwood, from elementary school through college.



Drs. Delbert and Susan Baker receive one of several gifts of appreciation at a special farewell program held in their honor July 31, 2010.

Dr. Baker assumed his new position at the General Conference, headquartered in Silver Spring, Maryland in September of 2010, serving the 16.3-million member Global Church. During his OU administrative watch, Baker facilitated progress in various areas, including peak enrollment, maintaining a strong financial base for the institution, completing numerous major facilities on campus, and leading out in record fundraising. Oakwood achieved university status and began offering graduate degrees (in 2008). In a brief interview with Dr. Baker, he credited success to providence, his wife, Susan, an excellent team of administrators, faculty, and staff, the Board of Trustees, and to the gracious support of alumni and friends. Dr. Susan Baker, a licensed physical therapist, served as an associate professor and director of the Allied Health Program in the Chemistry Department at Oakwood University from 2002 to 2010.



Dr. Delbert W. Baker is named one of nine general vice presidents of the General Conference on June 27, 2010 during the 59th General Conference Session, held in Atlanta, Ga.



Oakwood Campus Construction

The Clara Peterson-Rock Museum: In recognition of Mrs. Rock's years of service as the institution's first archivist, the newly-renovated Museum opened on October 6, 2010. Mrs. Rock began the Archives and Museum in 1973, to display historic photographs, artifacts, memorabilia of the school's past, and historic gifts to the school. Historic records are housed in the Archives. *(Above)*



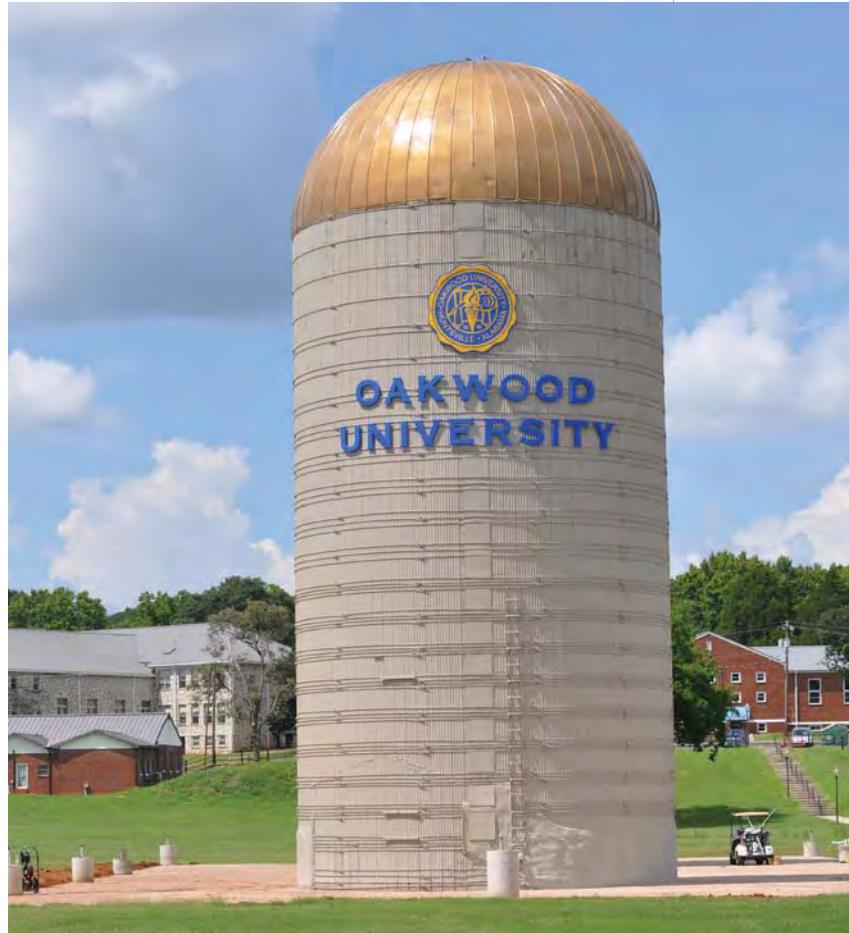


Huntsville Beautification Award: Oakwood's campus, recognized by the City of Huntsville for 10 consecutive years, was one of 249 properties to be considered for the Mayor's Award in 2010. OU's Grounds Department is to be commended for its selfless dedication to maintaining a beautiful campus.

E.C. Ward Way and Parking Facility: Oakwood University and the Oakwood University Church combined efforts and funds to renovate and expand the church parking area. The result is the beautifully landscaped E.C. Ward Way and Parking Facility, dedicated on October 22, 2010, to the memory of the late Elder Eric C. Ward, who was pastor of the Oakwood Church when the present sanctuary was built in the 1970s. *(Bottom left)*

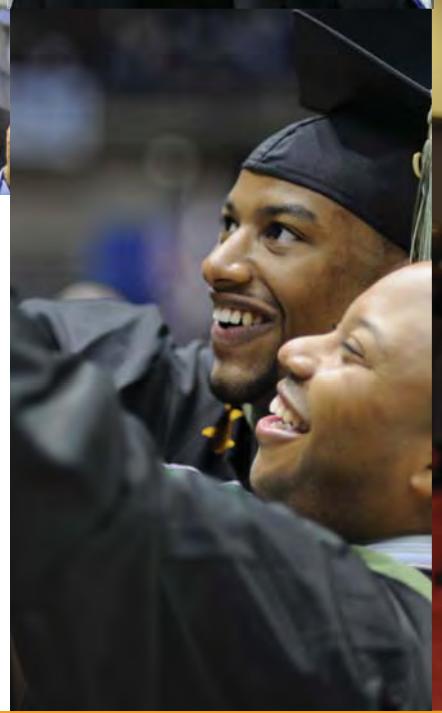
Oakwood Memorial Gardens Crosses: As part of the master plan for beautification and expansion of Oakwood Memorial Gardens, a Cross Garden was dedicated on July 27, 2010, in memory of Elder Harold Cleveland and his ministry in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. An irrigation system, columbaria and mausoleum were also installed as part of the master plan. Over 300 cemetery plots have been sold during the last five years. *(Bottom center)*

The Lawrence Jacobs Silos Plaza: The family of Lawrence Jacobs provided a generous gift to Oakwood for the renovation of the historic silos and plaza, once used for grain storage, reminding future generations of Oakwood's rich agrarian beginnings. The Jacobs Historic Silos Plaza was dedicated on July 30, 2010. *(Bottom right)*





2010 COMMENCEMENT





Approximately 312 seniors participated in commencement exercises May 6-8, 2010. Among them were husband and wife duo Pastor Isaac Ibarra, Sr., and Damarys Lozada-Ibarra, a former Oakwood employee in Student Accounts. Speakers, Pastor Andrea Trusty-King, Pastor Charles Wesley Knight, and Jamaica, West Indies, Governor General Sir Patrick Allen, advised and motivated the graduates. One highlight of the commencement ceremony was the awarding of an honorary doctorate to Mrs. Inez Lang Booth, a pillar of Oakwood's music and jail band legacy. The photos here show the pride, joy, and good memories of the occasion. Congratulations to the senior class of 2010!





Alumni News

Young Alumna Serves at Florida Hospital

Jacquelyn Doggette, who graduated from Oakwood University in 2009 with a B.A. in Communication and a concentration in Photojournalism, currently serves as a Marketing Coordinator at Florida Hospital Altamonte. Florida Hospital is operated by the Seventh-day Adventist Church and is a major tertiary referral hospital for Central Florida, much of the Southeastern United States, the Caribbean, and South America. Of the 18 hospitals throughout Florida, Florida Hospital Altamonte, established in 1973, is Florida Hospital's first and largest satellite campus and continues to be the leading healthcare provider for Seminole County.



Jacquelyn Doggette, B.A., '09

Doggette is responsible for marketing and all internal communication at Florida Hospital Altamonte. She maintains and elevates community relations through the media and community events. Writing/directing internal and external video projects, finalizing ad concepts and campaigns, copywriting for web and collateral, and internal website management are just a few of the projects on this Oakwood alumna's plate. She constantly seeks to contribute to the Florida Hospital mission of "extending the healing ministry of Christ."

In addition to her position as a Marketing Coordinator, Doggette is a nationally recognized photographer. Her fine art photography can be found in one of the art galleries of Central Florida and in Best of College Photography 2009. It is also featured on www.jdperspective.com.

Jacquelyn Doggette's passion for life stems from her relationship with God, her love for family, and her personal goal to embody Mark 12:30, 31. She is a third generation "Oakwoodite."

Oakwood Alumna Honored in *Ladies Home Journal*

Dr. Marlo Hodnett (formerly Marlo Murray-Jackson) graduated from Oakwood University in 2000 and continued her education at Loma Linda University School of Medicine, receiving her M.D. degree in 2004. She completed her Internal Medicine residency in Knoxville, Tennessee, and now has her own practice, Abundant Life Medical Care, in Huntsville, Alabama. Dr. Hodnett was recently featured in the March 8, 2011, issue of Ladies Home Journal. In honor of International Women's Day on March 8, Ladies Home Journal saluted amazing American women who are helping change lives around the world. The following is quoted from the article "Global Citizens," by Amanda Wolfe.

Since her college years, Dr. Hodnett has traveled the world to volunteer with the National Association for the Prevention of Starvation (NAPS). She has helped feed children, build schools, and provide much-needed care to families in Guyana, Madagascar, Malawi, and other countries. "On those first trips I realized that I wanted to go to medical school so that I could dedicate my life to helping these people," says Dr. Hodnett. She now has a private practice in Alabama, but devotes each Friday, Saturday, and Sunday to providing free treatment to migrant workers and people living in extreme poverty in southern Alabama and Mississippi.

Got News?

The Office of Alumni Relations would like to hear from our alumni. If you've received an advanced degree or promotion, or would like to share how your Oakwood degree has served you, we'd love to hear it.

We'll share your news in upcoming issues of Oakwood magazine. Please contact Alumni Relations director Barbara Stovall at 256.726.7039, fax your information to 256.726.7529, or email it to bstovall@oakwood.edu.



Social Work Graduate Recognized for Excellence in Teaching

The Department of Social Work is proud to recognize Dr. Ann-Marie Buchanan Jones, a 1995 Social Work graduate of Oakwood University who was awarded the Daniel A. Augsburger Excellence in Teaching Award by Andrews University on March 2, 2011. The award "recognizes faculty whose teaching reflects the high standards of excellence modeled by Dr. Augsburger in his 60 years of teaching at Andrews University. Augsburger's leadership, academic rigor, breadth of knowledge, teacher-scholar role, along with care and concern for students, exemplify the best of faculty endeavors." (Keri Suarez, Andrews University)

Dr. Jones was chosen by the faculty of the College of Arts and Sciences at Andrews University where she currently serves as the Undergraduate Program Director for the School of Social Work.

OU Faculty Member Places in Defense Acquisition University Competition



Congratulations to Dr. Everett Roper (Business & Information Systems Department) who's paper entitled, "MOVING TOWARDS IMPROVED ACQUISITION OUTCOMES: The interrelationships between organization culture, management leadership style, employee commitment and organizational outcomes" has been selected as runner-up in the 2010 Defense Acquisition University AA Research Paper Competition. Dr. Roper's research paper will appear in the April edition of the Defense Acquisition Research Journal which will be distributed to the US Department of Defense community. Dr. Roper has been invited to present his research at the DAU Acquisition Community Symposium in April where he will also receive a cash award.

OU Alum Appointed to Florida Public Service Commission

Ronald Brisé of North Miami, an Oakwood alumnus (Class of '99) and Florida State Representative, District 108, has been appointed as one of the Commissioners on the Florida Public Service Commission (PSC), and the state's first PSC member of Haitian-American descent. As a Public Service Commissioner, Brisé along with other commissioners will be responsible for the oversight of basic services such as electricity, gas, telecommunications and water and the companies that provide these services to assure that they remain operable and affordable for consumers.



After graduating from Oakwood College with a Bachelor of Science degree in Biology Education in 1999, Brisé and taught at Miami Union Academy for five years. He then went on to earn two MBA degrees in Marketing and Management from American Intercontinental University. Brisé is a faithful member and an elder of the Tabernacle SDA Church, and is a member of several professional and civic organizations. He is married to Jo An Solomon Brisé, a registered nurse, and they are proud parents of their son Ronald Brisé II.

Oakwood LEAP Educates

By Rachel Williams-Smith, Ph.D.

When you think “Oakwood University,” you probably don’t think “low tuition” or “online class sessions.” You certainly don’t think of forgiveness for an old Oakwood bill! When you think of Oakwood students, you probably don’t picture a 45-year old grandmother living and working in Georgia, or adults in the Huntsville community members pursuing a flexible, shortened path to a four-year college degree.

That’s because the LEAP (Leadership Education for the Adult Professional) Adult Degree Completion Program is, by far, Oakwood University’s best-kept secret! Even if you have heard of it, some things about the program might surprise you. For example, most people don’t seem to know that someone who has an old bill with Oakwood can have it forgiven by going through the LEAP program. Or that the LEAP tuition is half the cost of Oakwood’s regular tuition—it’s more in line with what one might expect to pay at a four-year state institution. They also don’t know that they can receive academic credits for their learning from life experience. And some people don’t even know that they can take courses while living at a distance because of our flexible delivery, which includes online options. Finally, some do not realize that they can complete their college degree in as little as 18 months if they enter the program with at least two years of earned credit. Sometimes they can do it in even less time than that, especially if they are former Oakwood students.

One young man worried for three years after he left Oakwood about how to finish college. Then someone told him about LEAP. The next morning, he drove straight from Nashville to the office at 4920 University Square in Huntsville. He filled out an application while an advisor reviewed his academic record. In a short time, she handed him an application for graduation. Though he had been unaware, he had already completed all requirements for a degree in General Studies. So after three years of agonizing over what to do, he was in and out of LEAP in 30 minutes!

Of course, that rarely happens (so far, only one other time), but the point is that inquirers are often surprised at how quickly and simply they can move forward with LEAP.

The Challenge of Going Back to School

When adults try to go back to school, they typically find that

- Their credits are too old and have “expired.”
- Many of their credits cannot be accepted toward a new degree.
- They must basically start over.
- They must attend classes more than one day or night a week even when taking a single course.
- They cannot receive financial aid for part-time enrollment.
- They must either quit work or neglect life obligations to attend school full-time.
- They have to pay exorbitant tuition rates with an online degree program.



Adults . . . and Forgives

About LEAP

Oakwood University's LEAP program is designed to enable working adults, age 25 and above, who have earned a year or more of college-level credits, to complete a bachelor's degree without having to take off from work or life obligations to do so. Upon applying, prospective students find that old credits are still usable, and that unrelated credits can be used as electives to move the student closer to graduation. They find that most trade school and military credits are also accepted. Students enroll full time and so are able to apply for financial aid. However, instead of taking their courses concurrently as is typically done, they take them sequentially, allowing them to focus on one course at a time and attend class only one night per week or partially online. Thus, they are able to maintain work and family obligations. Furthermore, students are able to do much of their coursework online which gives them considerable flexibility, and students living at considerable distances are able to make additional arrangements based on their individual circumstances. Finally, these adult students learn with other adults with whom they start and finish the program.

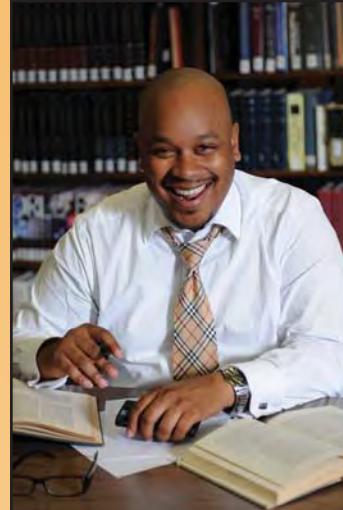
Changes and Growth

The Oakwood LEAP program was started in 1994 as an innovative and forward-looking community outreach arm of the school. LEAP is beginning to live up to its name—catapulting forward at a high rate of speed! In the past two years, enrollment has jumped from 24 to 153 students, and the program now offers five degrees: Organizational Management (Business), Psychology, General Studies, Information Technology, and Church Leadership. In the future, LEAP will continue to grow, likely offering additional degrees. Recently, an Information Technology certification program was adopted by the program as the first of several future non-degree credit and certification options to come.

For more information about LEAP and its offerings, visit the website at www.oakwoodleap.com.



Dr. Rachel Williams-Smith serves as director of the Adult & Continuing Education Department at Oakwood University.



Marquis Johns,
Church Leadership,
Graduating Senior.



Zulekia Stewart,
Organizational Management,
Graduating Senior.



"Most people don't seem to know that someone who has an old bill with Oakwood can have it forgiven by going through the LEAP program."



LEAP students are working adults, age 25 and above.

Oakwood Musicians Take Top Honors

Aeolians

By Michele Solomon

Oakwood University's Music Department, traditionally known for turning out promising vocalists, has had a powerful representation in national music competitions during the 2010-2011 academic year, successfully vying against some tough contenders.

The university's signature choral ensemble, the Aeolians, took top honors in the 2010 iSing College Choir Scholarship Challenge. The choir, directed by music professor Jason Max Ferdinand, has performed both nationally and internationally and was one of four choirs from Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) to have been invited to compete in the finals held last November at Reid Temple AME Church in Glenn Dale, Md. Winners of the competition are considered the top vocal ensembles representing America's HBCUs.

The Aeolians took the stage performing "My Soul's Been Anchored"—an arrangement full of diverse rhythms, challenging harmonies, and musical nuances—as their first selection. This initial selection featured student soprano soloist Whitney Morrison, a vocal performance and pedagogy student who took home \$1,000 in first-prize award money when she surpassed some 250 other contestants at the 2010 National Classical Singer University Competition held in New York last June. (Morrison's accomplishment was mentioned by *The Huntsville Times* staff writer Paul Gattis on the front page of the September 23, 2010 edition, and was featured online at www.al.com.)

Still more astounding was the choir's second piece—the Aeolians' adaptation of "Jerusalem"—which incorporates melody lines from Kirk Franklin's "Hosanna." And as if the first arrangement hadn't required enough vocal calisthenics, the second selection included massive instrumental support that suddenly dropped out, leaving the voices sustained by their own vocal percussion, impressively syncopated by the men's section. The winning performance brought with it a \$5,000 first-place award for the Aeolians.

The choir was also featured last June at the 59th General Conference Session in Atlanta, Georgia. In addition, the ensemble went on to perform at the opening session of the 2010 Pastoral Evangelism and Leadership Conference, which took place at the Oakwood University Seventh-day Adventist Church last December.

The Aeolians received even greater exposure just a few weeks ago, when their live recording was filmed at the Oakwood University Church during the GC Spring Council 2011, which was hosted on Oakwood's campus. Hope Channel uplinked a live broadcast of the Friday evening, Sabbath, and vespers services and aired the events on Hope Channel, Hope Channel Europe, and Hope Channel International to an audience believed to have been in the hundreds of millions. The broadcasts were a joint production of Oakwood University, the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, and Hope Channel.

Whitney Morrison

In May of 2010, Whitney Morrison, a vocal performance and pedagogy student of the Oakwood music department, won First Place in the National Classical Singer University Competition. Morrison, a voice student of faculty member Julie Moore Foster, qualified with two other semi-finalists, Laurie Gardiner and Tamara Richards, also Oakwood students.

The Competition was held at New York City's Marriott Marquis, in Times Square. Morrison progressed through a total of three semi-final rounds, where she performed the winning aria, "Se il ciel mi divide," from Alessandro nelle Idie, by Niccolò Piccinni. Her repertoire also included "At Saint Patrick's Purgatory," from the *Hermit Songs* of Samuel Barber.



Committed Wins!

Last December, ten groups from across the country, including six young "Oakwoodites" known by the name, "Committed," competed in the second season of NBC's *The Sing-Off*. On December 20, these talented young men won the grand prize of a Sony Music recording contract and \$100,000.

It was all over the local news and social media networks that "Committed, the new *a cappella* singing sensation, [had] taken the championship title on NBC's *The Sing-Off*." Local television station WAFF-TV Channel 48 carried the story on its 10 o'clock newscast, and *The Huntsville Times* front page headline read, "COMMITTED WINS! Huntsville *a cappella* group takes title on NBC's 'The Sing-Off'."

The group took the championship at NBC's vocal competition, advancing through each episode by winning the approval of the judges, who determined the songs they should perform. Though accustomed to performing religious selections, the group persevered through less familiar musical genres to demonstrate the diversity of their vocal range, something the NBC competition watched for keenly. The judges left the final vote to the American public, though, soliciting fan votes that came in by phone calls, text messages, and the internet polling.

Though the group's members have changed since some high school boys got together to kick around a few tunes at Forest Lake Academy back in Central Florida, the members' commitment to God has been a constant. Since then, all six of the current members—Dennis Baptiste, Tommy Gervais, Geston Pierre, Robbie Pressley, Maurice Staple, and Therry Thomas—have attended Oakwood at some point in time, while one, Gervais, is still enrolled and working on an undergraduate degree in music composition. At least two members of Commit-



ted have also sung with the Aeolians while attending Oakwood University and one member is also an alumnus of Oakwood Adventist Academy.

Dr. Cedric Dent is credited with having recommended Committed to NBC when producers were looking for acts for *The Sing-Off*'s second season, despite the fact that casting had already closed. Dent is a member of the Grammy Award winning group Take 6, which, like Committed, began at Oakwood University. He had heard the aspiring musicians sing a medley of Take 6 songs at the United Christian Artist Association's Music Legends Ball in 2008 and was blown away by how accurately Committed executed the Take 6 *a cappella* sound.

Take 6 and Committed will appear on the program of the 33rd Annual UNCF Gala hosted by Oakwood during Alumni Homecoming Weekend 2011.

Oakwood University praises God for the privilege of having nurtured the musical abilities of several vocal ensembles throughout the years and is happy to have had a part in the shaping of these young vocalists' talents. The university congratulates the dedicated faculty and staff who have nurtured the musical abilities of these groups and charges these gifted musicians to remember always to place God first as they continue their singing ministry.

In Memoriam

Our hearts go out to the families of:

Berhe, Tekle –

brother of Moges Selassie, Business & Information Systems

Butler, Sr., Xavier –

former faculty member, Religion & Theology

Clay, Louise –

mother-in-law of Trevor Fraser, Religion & Theology; mother of Edith Fraser, former faculty member

Gibbs, Lucille –

mother of Pastor Craig Newborn

Hamer, Dr. Justin –

former chemistry professor

Humphrey, Sr., Edwin J. –

retired pastor and conference administrator

Jessup, Ruth Daniels –

mother of OU Board Member Clifton Jessup

Lee, Young See –

father of George Lee, Eva. B. Dykes Library

May, Doris –

mother of Chuck May, Administrative Systems

McKinney, Jr., Oliver J. –

Southern Union Conference administrator

Roper, Gregory –

brother of Everett Roper, Business & Information Systems

Scott, Leo –

brother of Lionel Scott, Physical Plant

Sherrod, Jon-Paul Henri –

son of Wanda Lott, Enrollment Management

Smith, Tanisha –

Oakwood student

Taylor, Herbert –

father of Charles Taylor, Campus Communications

Tucker, Jacqueline –

mother of LaTanja Banks, Financial Aid



Booth, Inez – former chairman of the Music Department; Jail Band ministry leader



Davis, Ruth Faye – former chairman of the Family & Consumer Sciences Department



Dudley, Sr., Charles E. – former Board of Trustees member, conference president

This listing represents the loved ones of the Oakwood “family” who have passed away and whose names we have received as of the date of publication. We thank God for the blessing of allowing us to know them. To all other members of the Oakwood family who have lost loved ones, we apologize if any names have been omitted.

Where Honor is Due...

During its annual Spring Session, the Board of Trustees, along with the Administration of Oakwood University, recognize those individuals who have served at "The Oaks" for 20 years or more, as well as those who are on the verge of retirement. After serving at Oakwood University (and sometimes other institutions), the following individuals either already have, or are planning, to retire in 2010-2011:

*Flore Aubry-Hamilton
Nigel Barham
Isadore DeSouza
Yvonne Donatto
Lorna Harrison
Belvia Matthews
Savonia McClellan*

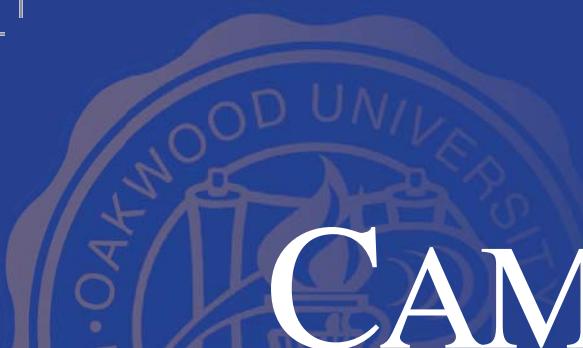
*Juanita McClendon
Faith McKeiver
Ella Olive
Charles Taylor
Eaton Tomlin
Charles Turner
Carole Washington*

The individuals, listed below, who have served at Oakwood for 20 years or more are to be congratulated for their commitment to servant leadership and excellence in education.

*Joseph Dailey
Cecily Daly
Isadore DeSouza
Edith Fraser
Sylvia Germany
Lillian Green
Kyna Hinson
Regina Jacob*

*Henrietta Lathon
Rise Lowery
Charles May
Anthony Paul
Sonia Paul
Fred Pullins
Agniel Samson
Paula Wilson*

This section is compiled by Debbe Millet, who serves as Communication Services Coordinator for the Office of Public Relations.



CAMPUS BUSINESS

Nursing Program Receives Continuing Accreditation Through 2018

The Board of Commissioners of the National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission (NLNAC) has granted the Oakwood University Department of Nursing's baccalaureate nursing program continuing accreditation. The next evaluation visit will take place in spring of 2018.

A self-study report for continuing accreditation was prepared by Dr. Carol Easley Allen, chairperson of the Department of Nursing, with input from the faculty. This report was then submitted to NLNAC in January of 2010. Three program evaluators from NLNAC visited the campus on March 2 through 4 to conduct the site visit. The evaluators observed classroom teaching, clinical sites, departmental and institutional resources, and reviewed a number of supporting documents. They also met with university administrators, academic and student support personnel, the department chair, faculty, and students, and community members, among others.

In order to reach their decision, the NLNAC commissioners considered the self-study report and supporting documents, the university catalog, the site visitors' report, and recommendations from the evaluation review panel that met earlier in the summer. Dr. Allen serves as an NLNAC Commissioner, but of course, could not participate in the discussion or the decision-making process.

The NLNAC Board of Commissioners identified the following strengths in the nursing program:

- Strong congruence between the mission and philosophy of the University and the nursing program, which emphasizes spirituality and service to mankind.
- The partnerships that exist to promote excellence in nursing education and benefit the community.
- The number of doctorally prepared faculty.

Oakwood Approved as Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) Participant



The Office of Personnel Management approved Oakwood University's participation in the Combined Federal Campaign (September 1 through December 15). Oakwood's participation was a collaborative effort of the OU Office of Financial Affairs and the Development Office. The CFC is a wonderful avenue through which OU alumni who are federal employees can give to Oakwood. The kick-off event took place on September 29, 2010, at the Redstone Arsenal, where Oakwood was represented at a booth.

The mission of the CFC is to promote and support philanthropy through a program that is employee-focused, cost-efficient, and effective in providing all federal employees the opportunity to improve the quality of life for all. CFC is the world's largest and most successful annual workplace charity campaign, with more than 300 CFC campaigns throughout the country and internationally to help

raise millions of dollars each year. Pledges made by Federal civilian, postal and military donors during the campaign season (September 1 to December 15) support eligible non-profit organizations that provide health and human service benefits throughout the world.

Read more about this opportunity at <http://www.opm.gov/cfc>, a website of interest to anyone interested in workplace giving. It is tailored to meet the particular needs of the Federal donor, CFC Campaigns, and charities participating in or considering participation in the CFC.

Cheri Wilson is the Director of Development at Oakwood University.

Oakwood's Relationship with NASA/SAIC Continues



By Marcia Burnette

On October 28, 2010, NASA awarded the Enterprise Applications Service Technologies (EAST) contract to SAIC. As a subcontractor, Oakwood had to submit a proposal to NASA through SAIC.

With much prayer, diligence and hard work, Oakwood's proposal was accepted! Under the contract, SAIC will be responsible for providing all services necessary to operate and maintain NASA's set of integrated enterprise application systems supporting all ten NASA field centers. Oakwood will benefit by the placement of student interns, and will have the opportunity to hire employees and consultants through the contract.

There will be a two-year base period, followed by one two-year option and one one-year option that may be exercised at NASA's discretion. It is a firm-fixed price contract, with an indefinite delivery and indefinite quantity (ID/IQ) feature. The base award of this contract is \$85.6 million. If all options are exercised, the maximum potential value of the contract, including the maximum ID/IQ value, is \$321.2 million! Under the base award, Oakwood will see a profit of more than \$5 million dollars! This contract went into effect on February 1, 2011.

Further, NASA announced on March 25, 2011 that it is awarding the NASA Integrated Communications Services

(NICS) contract worth up to \$1.3 billion to Science Applications International Corp. (SAIC) of McLean, Virginia. The work will include support for NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center in Huntsville, Alabama.

SAIC will provide managerial and technical support to NASA's Chief Information Officer for corporate and missions communications, including local area network management at all NASA centers. The contract is part of NASA's ongoing IT infrastructure integration program known as I3P. Again, as a sub-contractor to SAIC, Oakwood University will benefit substantially through student internships, employees and multi-million dollars in revenue to the institution.

The contract is cost-plus-award-fee/incentive-fee. The base award is \$340 million. If all options are exercised, it is worth \$1.3 billion.

Marcia Burnette is Assistant VP for Advancement and Development and Director of Sponsored Programs.

“There She Is...”



Breanda Mulzac was crowned Miss Oakwood 2011-2012 at the Miss Oakwood pageant held March 27, 2011.

Miss Oakwood 2011-2012

By Raymond King III

Breanda Mulzac was crowned Miss Oakwood 2011-2012, at the conclusion of the Miss Oakwood pageant held on March 27, in the Trinity United Methodist Church New Room Auditorium. Breanda is from St. Joseph, Michigan, and is a junior nursing major, graduating in May 2012. She envisions a campaign to restore the purity of Oakwood University and plans to coordinate seminars to educate and bring views and mindsets higher.

“Oakwood’s Next Top Woman” was the theme of the event, which was selected with the intention to encourage all Oakwood ladies to embrace high moral standards and represent the values set by our Christian institution. Six young ladies participated in the program with poise, confidence and elegance. The Miss Oakwood Pageant seeks

to identify, develop, and promote leadership within the Oakwood University community among Christian, college-aged women. The pageant’s goals are preceded by several months of seminars on proper business decorum, public speaking, table etiquette and resume writing, and roundtable discussions on topics concerning current issues facing Oakwood students and women, in general. As is expected in pageantry, contestants had to endure extensive rehearsals.

When a contestant pursues the “Miss Oakwood” title, she is indicating that she is becoming a strong, vibrant, spiritually-minded, intelligent, progressive-thinking, independent and intelligent woman who cares for the well-being of both herself and others. She is a role model in her church, her college community, and the community, at large. Miss Oakwood is willing to assertively address the challenges of today, while effectively reaching towards her goals for tomorrow.

Raymond King, III serves as the director of Student Activities at Oakwood University.

Miss UNCF 2010-2011

By Barbara Stovall

At a small event that has been called “elegant and classy,” Imani Penn, a Pre-Law senior, was crowned as Oakwood University’s Miss UNCF 2011-2012. Approximately 34 people, including family, friends, members of the Advancement and Development Division, and then-President-elect Leslie Pollard, attended the coronation of Miss UNCF on December 5, 2010, at the McKee Business and Technology Complex.

As the reigning Miss UNCF, Imani will serve as a member of the Pre-Alumni Advisory Board, attend UNCF fundraising events in Birmingham and Huntsville, and make local media appearances as allowed by her academic schedule. Miss UNCF also represents



Barbara Stovall, Diane Douglas, Dr. Leslie Pollard, Imani Penn (l-r).

Oakwood University at the annual conference organized by the National Alumni and National Pre-Alumni Council of the UNCF. This year's Pre-Alumni Conference took place in Birmingham, Alabama, from February 2 through 6.

Although the two contestants are both beautiful young women, the Miss UNCF competition is based on far more than mere outward appearance. Candidates indicate their commitment to educational excellence, and are required to

raise funds for UNCF scholarships. Dr. Pollard announced the 1st Runner-Up, Diane Douglas, who had raised over \$2,500. She was crowned and presented a bouquet of roses. Dr. Pollard then announced that Imani Penn would be crowned Miss UNCF 2010-2011, having raised close to \$3,000 for scholarships.

A special thanks goes to the Pre-Alumni Council Advisor; the OU Pre-Alumni Council members; Sodexo Dining Services; In Bloom; Gigi's Cupcakes; Party Plus; Shannan Moore Malone (event planner); Mariana Stovall (photography); the OU Advancement & Development team; Drs. Leslie and Prudence Pollard, for their participation, presence and support; and everyone who helped make the evening possible. Applications are now being accepted for the 2011-2012 school year.

Barbara Stovall is the director of Alumni Relations at Oakwood University.

TRUST

IT'S NOT JUST A WORD



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you
remembered
God's
work
in your
will?

OAKWOOD UNIVERSITY TRUST SERVICES DEPARTMENT

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Fred Pullins, Director; Carol Moore, Associate



Devotional

Vision 20/20

By Leslie N. Pollard, Ph.D, D.Min., MBA



the Psalmist's vision
Psalm of David.
is my ashephe
not want.
akes me lie
en pastures;
ds me beside
restores my
eldes me
recovered
my strength
like an eagle
on the wings
of the wind.
My soul shall
be satisfied
as with
rich food;
my mouth
shall
be filled
with
delight
in your
house,
and
of your
glory.

“Oakwood graduates of the 21st century receive a quality education that prepares them for top-tier professional or graduate schools.”

Let's envision what Oakwood University will look like a decade from now. What do we see? In 2020, Oakwood University is considered a premier University in the Huntsville Community and the Seventh-day Adventist Church. With a vibrant student population of 3500 students, Oakwood remains a preferred faith-based provider of excellence in education. A consortium of African-American, Afro-Caribbean, Afro-Latino, and Continental African Universities complements DEEP (Diversity Educational Exchange Program) with DEFT (Diversity Exchange for Faculty Teaching). Oakwood's faculty spend their summers in research, teaching in distant locations. But it began with active affiliations and articulation agreements among our sister universities. By 2020, as part of faculty development, our Pan-African Consortium of Colleges and Universities, with its DEFT program, allows Oakwood's superbly trained faculty to teach at sister institutions in Jamaica, Haiti, Trinidad and Tobago, Kenya, Nigeria, Costa Rica, Panama, Honduras, Uganda, and Tanzania.

The growth of the academic program includes an MBA in business leadership, a Master's in Teaching, a Master's Degree in Education with its celebrated emphasis in Faith-based Pedagogy, and a Doctor of Ministry in Urban Mission. By 2020, OOU is launched Oakwood Online University. By 2020, we have OOU cohorts in China, India, Africa, and the Caribbean. By 2020, our committed and accomplished faculty contribute to the effective growth of non-traditional revenue streams and enjoy decompressed salaries while serving at mission-focused Oakwood University. The lower-expense revenue from Oakwood Online University helps grow the amount of institutional aid to needy students in our residential program. By 2020, OU's Centers, Institutes, and Schools are flourishing as grant funding for targeted social science and scientific research on under-served populations reflect our continued transition from Oakwood College to Oakwood University. And by 2020, Oakwood partners with Huntsville's under-privileged populations through our OU Office of Community Partnerships.

Customer service is a high-quality experience for our students and their parents. By 2020, the finances of Oakwood University, with its growing endowments and portfolio of diversified investments, adequately fund operations and minimize our need for routine tuition increases. Market-normed salaries assist in the recruitment of high performing, sacrificial employees. Staff development is also crucial to a quality university. Front-line service delivery reflects excellence to our students and constituents. By 2020, Oakwood wins the prestigious

“Best Workplace in Huntsville” award. Faculty and staff work together seamlessly. By 2020, Oakwood is nationally regarded for quality in its services, quality in its delivery of learning, quality in its faculty's scholarly products, quality in operations, and quality in its students. We will affirm and acknowledge our diverse community. In 2020, Oakwood is acknowledged as a robustly diverse institution. By 2020, our diversity, in all its richness, will be seen as a resource of strength, organized and mobilized around our mission. We will maintain the historic mission of our founders but grow our mission to diverse communities.

This vision leads us to serve our students with renewed purpose and passion. Oakwood graduates of the 21st century receive a quality education that prepares them for top-tier professional or graduate schools. The spiritual atmosphere and culture at Oakwood engages every student in mission to communities. Intentionality around the spiritual formation of OU students is evident in every area of the campus. Every class within the curriculum reflects the integration of faith and learning. Technology supports a culture of highly interactive learning. Weeks of Prayer run at noon for faculty and staff and nightly for Oakwood University students. Our male and female Associate Chaplains provide dormitory visitation, spiritual support counseling, group Bible studies and high-quality programming, on-campus. Focus on faculty and staff spiritual development is provided by our Senior Chaplain. Administrators, faculty, and staff are schooled in how to lead students into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Oakwood Online University students attend weekly chapels through our OU Chapel Webcast of chapel services. Oakwood University in the next decade produces enthusiastic graduates who gladly join and support their local alumni chapters. OU students are motivated to reach back and help the generation that follows them.

Finally, I close with a brief quote from one of my favorite poets, Pablo Neruda, who wrote, “They can cut all the flowers, but they cannot stop the coming of the spring!” Oakwood University’s spring is on the way. We are one decade into the 21st century, already. Oakwood is a young university with a world of possibilities before it. In this season, opportunities to spread our wings, locally, nationally, and internationally are all around us. But no one will give us anything. In the words of Martin Luther, ‘we must work, as if prayer meant nothing. And we must pray, as if work meant nothing’. Under God’s providence, the future is ours!”

Leslie N. Pollard serves as the President of Oakwood University.



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Oakwood University

HUNTSVILLE, ALABAMA

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