

# OAKWOOD

M A G A Z I N E



# Take 6 at 25

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**28** Aeolians  
bring home GOLD

**Take 6:**  
*Off Stage*  
**10** *On the*  
**Record**

**19** OU's  
Accreditation  
Reaffirmed

Helen Miller  
**7** Kanion  
honored with  
scholarship

**Jonathan  
Slocumb:**  
**17** Still  
Laughing

*"In 1988, These Guys—  
My Former Schoolmates at  
Oakwood College Gave Me  
My Professional Start."*

— Jonathan Slocumb,  
The Clean Comic

**Special  
Section**  
**Building  
Success  
with yOU  
in Mind**



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- 18 **OU Afghans** \$40/each + \$10/each shipping = \$50/each. Print order form from Oakwood's website - [www.oakwood.edu](http://www.oakwood.edu) - clic on Campus Services, then Public Relations, then "Afghan Order Form," print, fill out and send with your payment.

More OU gear available at the OU bookstore, which is managed by Barnes & Noble, or purchased online on the Oakwood website: [www.oakwood.edu](http://www.oakwood.edu), then click Campus Services, then Bookstore.

[WWW.OAKWOOD.EDU](http://WWW.OAKWOOD.EDU)

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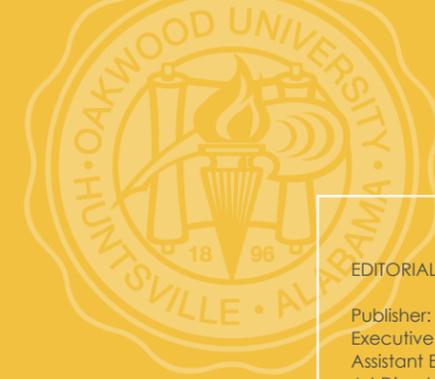
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# From the Editor



*Tim Allston*  
Tim Allston, APR

Quick, let's play a word game . . . But first, this:

1. Since 1896, Oakwood continues to train students primarily in the teaching, healing, preaching and music ministries. . . . with our traditional and trademark OU branding. Agreed? And
2. Oakwood's products continue to flourish. Right? But –
3. Now and more than ever, they do so in an –

OK, . . . back to our word game: when I say “Oakwood” and “out of the box” – I mean, “**OU**t of the box!” - *What comes to mind?*

For most of the people we surveyed randomly, one word (all right, two!) surfaced most readily: “Take 6” – the most awarded vocal group in the history of the music industry. This Oakwood-birthed sextet comes home to celebrate its 25th anniversary, and tells its story to this *Oakwood Magazine* for the first time.

And there's more **OU**t of the box-ness, especially from the harmonizers' schoolmates of the 1980s:

- Pastor Anthony Medley combined pulpit ministry with martial arts, in doctoral studies – again, **OU**t of the box; and
- TV funnyman Jonathan Slocumb credits schoolmates Take 6 with his 1988 professional launch as “the clean comic” – **OU**t of the box.

But, there's still more **OU**t of the box-ness, sans the 1980s:

- With their initial \$100,000 gift, Dr. Zavon and Mrs. Jackie Kanion have established the Helen Miller Kanion Scholarship;
- Bermuda's Joelle Williams expands pre-school school teaching beyond the three Rs; and
- University Historian Dr. Roy E. Malcolm asks and answers the much-debated question, “What is the Oakwood Sound?” – and the answer will surprise you, guaranteed.

And **still** much, much more **OU**t of the box. Like this magazine issue. This Spring 2013 *Oakwood Magazine* forecasts two new **OU**t of the box realities:

1. No longer just the “alumni weekend magazine” O mag, as we call it affectionately, will now be published twice a year – in the springtime and the fall season; and
2. For the first time in memory, it will also be mailed out to our stakeholders (alumni, donors and friends) whose snail-mail addresses and updated information we have.

And now, enjoy. Thanks.



# Oakwood establishes new \$100,000 Scholarship Endowment to honor

*Helen Kanion*



Helen Miller Kanion was born in 1915 to Elder Henry and Mrs. Elizabeth Miller. Elder Miller is considered one of the pioneer black Adventist ministers and Mrs. Miller was the first full-time black bible worker for the Mid-America Union Conference. The Millers' were strong believers in Adventist Christian education.

Helen was educated in Adventist schools from kindergarten through college. She was enrolled in Oakwood Academy in 1930 and graduated from Oakwood Junior College. Helen always wanted to be a nurse but due to racial barriers at that time, she could not do clinical nurse training in some Adventist hospitals. She instead enrolled in the School of Nursing at Meharry Medical College in Nashville, Tennessee, and graduated as a registered nurse (RN). After graduation, Helen remained in Nashville to work at Riverside Hospital. She soon decided to pursue further education and enrolled at Emmanuel Missionary College, now Andrews University, and completed her BSN degree.

Helen married William Kanion in 1949 and together they had four children: Will Kanion, Dr. Zavon Kanion (Jackie), Neva Kanion Artis (Dr. Keith) and Dr. Shaun Kanion (Vickie). All four children were educated in Adventist schools kindergarten through Oakwood College.

Of note, Neva Kanion Artis is a graduate of the first nursing class at Oakwood College and Helen's daughters-in-law, Jackie and Vickie, are both nurses.

Helen Miller Kanion's commitment to health care and service to others has passed through her children to her grandchildren as Dr. Tiffany Kanion Simpson, Dr. Ashley

Artis, and Dr. Adriene Artis are all physicians. In addition, one other grandchild is a hospital administrator and another is currently enrolled in Meharry Medical College School of Dental Medicine. Nicholas Kanion is currently an Oakwood University sophomore.

*Helen and William Kanion believed in the education of the head, heart, and hand-- academics, God, and work.*

Helen Miller Kanion has lived a life of service to others. She was engaged in nursing for 60 years. As a member of the church in Kansas City, she has served as pianist, choir director, Sabbath School superintendent, Pathfinder Leader, camp meeting nurse and many other church tasks over the years. She now is enjoying retirement and keeping up with her children, grandchildren and great grandchildren as much as she can.

To honor Helen Miller Kanion's love of Oakwood University, Christian education and her commitment to a life of service to others through a career in healthcare, Dr. Zavon and Mrs. Jackie Kanion have established the Helen Miller Kanion Scholarship. Their initial gift of \$100,000 dollars is to assist in the education of future healthcare providers who have the noble goal of a life of service to others.

For more information on how you can establish an endowed scholarship at Oakwood University, please contact, Kisha Norris, Executive Director of Advancement at 256-726-7201 or [developmentoffice@oakwood.edu](mailto:developmentoffice@oakwood.edu).

# Oakwood University

## Development Philosophy

by **Kisha Norris, M.Ed., CFRE**, Executive Director of Advancement and Development

Oakwood University belongs to God. He is ultimately responsible for the funding of His work. Trust in Him and His provision through prayer is central to all development efforts.

Money follows ministry. People will not be viewed as money, but rather as people. Generous “TLC,” under the guidelines of fiscal responsibility, will be offered to all donors both before and after they give.

Money follows involvement and commitment. Donors give to what they believe in and belong to. The Oakwood story and God’s workings in and through this ministry must be communicated effectively in “asks” and is the basis of all funding appeals.

Oakwood University will work to provide income based on programs, events, and product sales and will not be solely donor-driven.

Giving money to ministry is a privilege. It is with this attitude that asks will be offered. It is a privilege and a joy to link up people who have the means with a ministry that has a need to serve God’s purposes.

Development efforts will be relational and donor-specific.

Development efforts will recognize that not all gifts from donors are financial. Some donors offer volunteer hours, talents, possessions and networking.

Development efforts will acknowledge both the “small” and “major” donor as offering a

meaningful contribution to God’s efforts at OU. While major donors will be pursued and valued, respect and value will be ascribed to the “widow’s mite” offered with a willing heart.

Development efforts will adhere to biblical, IRS, CASE and AFP standards with the highest integrity.

Communication with donors will be a priority. Donors will be informed as to how their gifts are used in the ministry. Donors will be thanked promptly and sincerely for their contributions.

### Our Priorities:

1. Demonstrate good stewardship in our use of the resources available for fund-raising by:

- Holding ourselves accountable to our donors, beneficiaries, external agencies, and the general public.
- Exercising our best professional judgment in determining how much to invest in each fund-raising effort and in overall allocations between donor acquisition, cultivation, and education.

2. Earnest prayer that God would “stir the hearts and minds” of the people to participate in meeting the needs of Oakwood University and its projects.

3. Effective communication of the needs of those who will benefit from our ministry and offer opportunities for people to become involved through giving, prayer, and personal action.

4. Minister to our donors by:

- Providing an opportunity to exercise the gift of giving.
- Assisting them in understanding the needs of Oakwood University.
- Sharing lessons learned from the field.
- Encouraging them by sharing how God is at work in our students, faculty, staff, community, and alumni.

Development and fundraising opportunities at Oakwood University are spiritual. We give and we know that God will multiply. We pray for our supporters and want them to know that they are partners with us as we strive to make a difference in the lives of our students. When donors invest in Oakwood we know that they are showing their commitment to our Mission Statement, Oakwood University is in the business of transforming lives – both for now and, more importantly, for eternity.

## PROFILE Kisha R. Norris



Although relatively new to fundraising, Kisha R. Norris, CFRE, has begun to establish herself in the Adventist philanthropic world.

As an undergraduate student, Ms. Norris worked in the Advancement Office at Southwestern Adventist University (SWAU) in the areas of annual giving and gift records. After graduation her full-time philanthropy career started at SWAU as the Assistant Vice President for University Advancement where she handled management of the development office, donor relations, campaign management and major gift fundraising.

Before her current position, Ms. Norris was the Director of Development for the School of Allied Health Professions at Loma Linda University (LLU) for five and a half years. During her years at LLU, Ms. Norris earned the designation Certified Fund Raising Executive (CFRE). Individuals granted the CFRE credential have met a series of standards set by CFRE International which include tenure in the profession, education, demonstrated fundraising achievement and a commitment to service to not-for-profit organizations. They have also passed a rigorous written examination testing the knowledge, skills and abilities required of a fundraising executive, and have agreed to uphold Accountability Standards and the Donor Bill of Rights.

Her experiences also include publications, fundraising event planning, planned giving and alumni relations. Ms. Norris is currently the Executive Director of Advancement and Development at Oakwood University in Huntsville, AL.

Alvin Chea  
Khristian Dentley  
David Thomas  
Claude McKnight  
Mark Kibble  
Joey Kibble

# take 6

*Off Stage*  
*On the record*

by Tim Allston, editor

**Saturday, January 19, 2013**  
**Tuscaloosa, Alabama – where champions overlap:**

- A few “Hail Mary!” passes away from the Moody Music Building, Alabama Crimson Tide devotees gathered to celebrate their football team’s most recent NCAA championship – its third in four years;
- Inside, the Oakwood University Aeolians Choir – the 2012 World Choir Games Spirituals champions, and currently world-ranked #1 in the sponsoring Interkultur’s gospel/pop/jazz category and #16 overall of its 1,000 internationally-ranked choirs – were tuning up its SSAATTBB voices, to co-headline that evening’s annual MLK “Realizing the Dream” concert, along with
- Take 6, the most-awarded vocal group in history – 10 Grammys, 10 Doves and one Soul Train Award, along with two NAACP Image Award nominations, . . . – ‘nuff said?

For their “birthplace,” Take 6-ers – Claude McKnight, Mark Kibble, Alvin “Vinny” Chea, David Thomas, Joey Kibble and newbie Khristian Dentley – share their prologues, pleasures, pains, perspectives, people and prospects.

And ‘ppreciations.



## The Prologue

**Vinny:** For us, there's nothing like coming back home. (glancing outside) We don't know anything about football, but don't mess around with singing, 'cause Oakwood's got you!

**How did those first two Grammys feel at that time, from nominations in 1988 – 25 years ago?**

**Vinny:** Yes, we got the two, but the one we lost is the one we're actually very proud of, because it represented the arrival of Christian gospel music – it was the first time that a gospel group had ever been nominated for Best New Artist. And an Oakwood product did that, Take 6.

Now for us on the road, it's always a perpetual Oakwood Alumni Weekend!

**David:** Our road managers are always getting upset with us, because we're always needing 15 tickets, per night –

**All (in one-part harmony):** . . . because Oakwoodites don't buy tickets!

**How did it all start?**

**Claude:** I was a 17-year old freshman, and started a quartet there in Gentlemen's Estates. We were doing Breath of Life Quartet stuff, . . . all of those Shelton Kilby arrangements, . . . because everybody on campus wanted to be Walter Arties!

So, Mark came in (from Oakwood Academy), added a fifth part and started arranging for us. That's when we left the Breath of Life sound, and began the "Mark Kibble sound." That's when we started calling him the "Markitech!" We added one more member at the time, Mervyn Warren.

**"Markitech," what's the challenge of adding a sixth part?**

**Mark:** The sixth part just enables you to do much more, to not just imply, but to actually hear the chords that . . . ah . . . are associated with, ah . . . jazz harmony.



**Claude:** Oh, he finally said: the J word.

**Mark:** Yep (big sigh), I said it, the very word that got us . . . kicked out –

**David (uncontrollable laughter):** Yeah, the very word that took us 25 years to –

**Mark:** Yes, "the J word". (Now recovered) It simply allows us to do so much more. Y'know, the Take 6 sound is not just jazz, not just gospel, but an intertwining of the two, along with a few other aspects. But with six, we found out we could cover a lot of ground: have a solid background; a solid walking bass; a lead; and then switch up the formation, and do a whole lotta stuff. It just made us more flexible . . . vocally.

## The Pleasures

**What is it in our (Black SDA) culture that lends itself to creating a Take 6?**

**Joey:** Our culture is good for putting passion in music. In the (Black) Adventist community, you're going to find a lot of harmony and you're gonna find a lotta soul, because it's a part of the African American community.

**Claude:** When we started out in the early 1980s – and I don't know what it's like at Oakwood University now – but I do know growing up and then going to Oakwood, in the Black Adventist church, rhythm instruments were frowned upon more so than harmonies. I mean, everyone seemed to be able to sing harmonies in the Adventist church, growing up, because that's what we gravitated toward since we couldn't do all the other stuff – or, rather,



we weren't allowed to do all the other stuff.

So, you had a lot of a *cappella* groups on campus, because that's where you could shine, putting harmonies together. You had trios, quartets, octets, choirs and they were all voices, because that's what we grew up doing.

**So, it was because of the restrictions that we became creative?**

**Vinny:** That was the only thing left.

**David:** That, as well as there were times when Wednesday night prayer meeting was at Moran Hall, instead of at the Church, and there was no one to play the piano, and –

**Claude (replicating the Black church call-and-response cadence):** C'mon, now, . . .

**David:** And Elder Tottress would lead the Wednesday night prayer service, and the congregation would just sing . . . a *cappella* . . . and that is just something that we just did.

**So in many respects, you were ahead of your time, trendsetters even. How did that make you feel?**

**David:** It's more like being a fish out of water, struggling and trying to find some sort of significance! We were doing what we were doing, and there were some places – such as Oakwood, for example -- where we weren't readily accepted.

**Because Oakwood and the Christian community did not accept you all, . . . wasn't that sort of a blessing in disguise?**

**David:** Yeah, it made our entire career. For example, when we went to get our recording deal, we invited all the gospel record companies and Christian music companies to the table.

And they said, "Six guys singing a *cappella*? Ah, no thanks." However, Warner Brothers came, uninvited, and said, "Hey, this is unique."



To me, it was just like the story of Joseph: we meant something to go in one direction, but God said, I'm going to take it somewhere else!

## The Pain

**What have been some of the drawbacks, some of the pains of being trendsetters?**

**Joey:** Well, for one, you're misunderstood. The old church is not familiar with your music, not familiar with your style. (...) and we've had to suffer because of that.

**What turned the corner, guys? Did y'all change, or . . . did we change?**

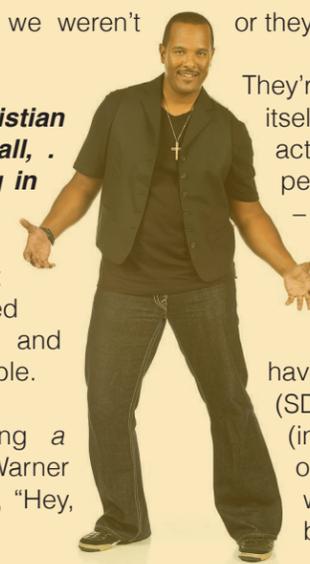
**Joey:** I'll say this, and then I'll shut up: honestly and I hate to have to put it this way, but it's until you get out there and accomplish something – without the help – and the world has actually recognized you for that accomplishment, now it's "Take 6, . . . they're us!"

**David:** One of the things we recognized early on is that we, Take 6, we're a frontier-type ministry; we're not the meat-and-potatoes type, the entree. We're the introduction, the appetizer. So we're OK with that.

**Joey:** We found that most of the people who listen to our music or who come to our concerts have either had bad experiences with "religion," or they've never heard about Jesus Christ.

They're (first) actually drawn by the music itself, and then later on, the message actually grows on them. Many of these are people who've been jaded by "religion" – bad religious experiences – and by people that they've seen.

So, our ministry isn't really to our (SDA) selves. We (Adventists) have (SDA) ministers who are for our (SDA) selves. We (SDAs) have our own (institutional) pastors, our own groups, our own teachers who minister to people who are within the (denominational) body of Christ. But our (Take 6) ministry



“...it was the first time that a gospel group had ever been nominated for Best New Artist. And an Oakwood product did that, Take 6.”



is not for those people. It's actually focused on those people who've never heard of it – why? – because there has to be an introduction.

**Khris, how did you even get involved with this “band of radicals”?**

**Khris:** Well, I got into this group as a radical, because I sneaked into one of their concerts, actually!

I feel like the story of the Christian faith. If you were of the seed of Abraham, you had the promise. The lady came up to Jesus and, when she asked him to help her daughter, he replied, “I didn't come but for the lost sheep of Israel.” But then Paul picks it up, saying, “If ye be in Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.” So, I didn't have to grow up in the Adventist community; I didn't have to go to Oakwood; I didn't have to know all the things of the Adventist culture. Because it's not about the Seventh-day Adventist church; it's not about Oakwood; it's about the gospel of Jesus Christ.

And we're still embarking on new things. We're headed to Australia for the first time, and I'm honored to be a part of this ministry.



### The Prospects

**Guys, if Take 6 were to stop tomorrow, for example, what would be your legacy? What would you hand down to the next generation?**

**Vinny:** I think we boldly went where no others would go before. Our legacy? I think that we are six guys from Alabama, who did what God told us to do “for such a time as this.”

**Mark:** Bottom line is it was not even just us, but it was by Divine intervention that it all came together, and the right people came into the group at the right time. In fact, He's had His hands on this group the entire time.

**But let's go back to 1984-85. I'm sure you had many detractors who said, “Yeah, this (Alliance) thing is nice, for college, that is. But you gotta get a degree, get a job.” What gave you the staying power?**

**Mark:** Well, the truth be told, it was really difficult in 1984-85. Claude took a hiatus –

**Claude:** Ugh, Ugh, Ugh.

**Mark:** . . . and when he did, there was Eric Greene, who went back to New York; and Jerry (Hutchinson); we lost Keith . . . Paschal –

**Claude:** And all of that happened at the same time, . . .

**Mark:** Mervyn and I knew we had something good; we were not going to let go of the idea of the group, 'cause the sound was too good. And, we were having way too much fun. We knew that Claude was key.

**David:** But we tried NOT to let Claude be the key. We tried real hard to get different keys! I even tried being the key!

**Mark:** You know what? Again, it had to have been Divine intervention because, I promise you, everybody was going through their “thing” at the time. I can't even tell you how this group came together – how, for example, we found Vin from San Francisco; and how David was trying to avoid rehearsals!

his dissertation. When he did, at some point, we knew he was going to be a professor, and now he's doing that full time at Middle Tennessee State University.

This group has not only been a springboard, but these guys will always be a part of the Take 6 legacy.



### Home-cookin'?

**Final question: what is each of your connections to Oakwood?**

**Mark:** I went to school there and graduated from there – 1986.

**Vinny:** Came to school there in '85, graduated from there in '89, with a double major – English and communications.

**David:** Wow, I grew up around Oakwood; my father (Dean Claude Thomas) was a professor there; my mother (Jocelyn Thomas) worked there; (my sister, Patti Conwell, now teaches there); and my son (freshman David, Jr., -- a.k.a. “D.J.”) actually attends there now!

**Joey:** Went to school there; joined Take 6; came back to Oakwood, as part of the LEAP (adult degree completion) program; and graduated in Organizational Management.

**Khris?**

**Khris:** I'm in Take 6 today because of a bathroom at Oakwood College! Because that day that Mark walked into that bathroom, . . . that started this whole thing. So, I'm in this group because of Oakwood College.

**Claude:** My parents (Claude McKnight and Elaine Willis-McKnight) went to Oakwood; my uncles, my aunts, all my cousins (Willis Nation?) . . . I ended up going to Oakwood and subsequently, not only started the group, I got thrown out of Oakwood in 1982, . . . but stayed in the group, and stayed around Oakwood, to hang out with these guys, to continue what we were doing.

So Oakwood has always been a special place for me.

### Where have you gone – Mervyn and Cedric? And why?

**To those of us on the outside, Mervyn left, and then Cedric left. Are y'all still friends?**

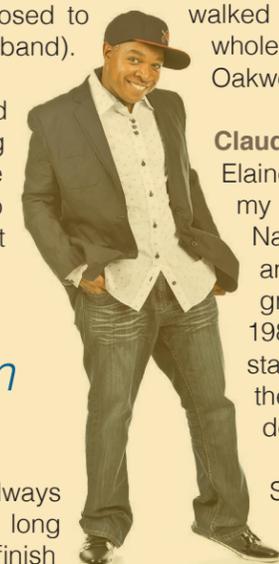
**Vinny:** Oh, absolutely.

**Claude:** One of the examples that I think is really good, is that we are really good friends with Marcus Miller, an incredible producer. What he mentioned to us was that when he was working with, for example, Miles Davis, was that Miles had a culture in his bands always to teach/teach/teach, so that you could later go out and do your thing – either to lead other bands, or to do whatever is your passion, as opposed to necessarily having to stay there (in the band).

Having said that, I applaud and completely support Merv in following the dreams he had always had. We always knew that Merv wanted to do movie soundtracks and things of that nature.

*“I'm in Take6 today because of a bathroom at Oakwood College.”*

We knew very early on that Cedric always wanted to teach. In fact, it took him a long time – once we became successful – to finish



# Take 6 Discography

Take 6 has come a long way from their days at Huntsville, Alabama's Oakwood College where McKnight formed the group as The Gentleman's Estate Quartet in 1980. When tenor Mark Kibble heard the group rehearsing in the dorm bathroom, he joined in the harmonies and performed on stage that night. When Mervyn Warren joined shortly afterward, they took the name Alliance. Yet, when they signed to Reprise Records/Warner Bros. in 1987, they found that there was another group with the same name, so they became Take 6. Says McKnight: "Take 6 was all about a democratic process of sitting in a room together and throwing a couple of hundred names at each other and Take 6 was the one that got the most yay votes [laughing.] It pretty much was a play on the Take 5 jazz standard and the fact that there are six of us in the group, so it became Take 6." Their self-titled debut CD won over jazz and pop critics, scored two 1988 Grammy Awards, landed in the Top Ten Billboard Contemporary Jazz and Contemporary Christian Charts, and they've never slowed down. > What makes the music and the group last this long? The answers are direct and simple: faith, friendship, respect, and love of music. Such qualities garnered them awards beyond musical category - a Soul Train Award and two NAACP Image Award nominations. From their exceptional live performances to their recordings, these qualities remain at the heart of the Take 6 phenomenon. > One, Take 6's recent recording on Shanachie, is notable for three reasons. First, it's the group's return to their spiritual heritage. Second, it is their first project without Cedric Dent, who retired from full-time touring with the group last year. "Cedric had taken a position with MTSU (Middle Tennessee State University in Murfreesboro, TN) which didn't allow him to go out on the road during the school year and kind of limited him only to the weekends and that's if it worked for the schedule," says Kibble. "So we decided it was best to find a person to step in and cover him when he couldn't be there. Third, it introduces Khristian Dentley as a full-time permanent member of Take 6. Kibble continues, "We actually had a pool of three people we used over the years. Khristian was one of those people called on to step in. He did it beautifully and had a lot of energy. In standing in for Cedric, we were able to learn his personality and he was able to learn the music. After 7 years, Cedric decided to go full time into academia and when he did, Khristian was already primed to step in behind him." As Take 6 celebrates their 25th Anniversary with a brand new show, they'll share the memories in the music of the past 25 years as well as reveal what the future holds! > **Albums** 1988, *Take 6* • 1990 *So Much 2 Say* • 1991 *He Is Christmas* • 1994 *Join the Band* • 1995 *Best of Take 6* • 1996 *Brothers* • 1998 *So Cool* • 1999 *Greatest Hits* • 1999 *We Wish You a Merry Christmas* • 2000 *Tonight: Live* • 2000 *Best of Take 6* • 2002 *Beautiful World* • 2006 *Feels Good* • 2008 *The Standard* • 2010 *The Most Wonderful Time of the Year* • 2012 *One* • **Grammy Awards** 1988 Best Soul Gospel Performance – Duo, Group, Choir or Chorus, *Take 6*, Won • 1988 Best Jazz Vocal Performance – Duo or Group, "*Spread Love*", Won • 1988 Best Gospel Performance – Duo, Group, Choir or Chorus, "*The Savior is Waiting*", Won • 1988 New Artist, Nominated • 1989 Best Jazz Vocal Performance – Duo or Group, "*Like the Whole World's Watching*", Nominated • 1990 Best Contemporary Soul Gospel Album, *So Much 2 Say*, Won • 1991 Best Jazz Vocal Performance, *He Is Christmas*, Won • 1992 Best Jazz Vocal Performance, "*I'm Always Chasing Rainbows*", Nominated • 1994 Best Contemporary Soul Gospel Album, *Join the Band*, Won • 1994 Best Rhythm & Blues Vocal Performance - Duo or Group, "*Biggest Part of Me*", Nominated • 1995 Best Rhythm & Blues Vocal Performance - Duo or Group, "*All I Need (Is a Chance)*", Nominated • 1996 Best Instrumental Arrangement Accompanying Vocal(s), "*When You Wish Upon a Star*", Nominated • 1996 Pop Vocal Group, "*When You Wish upon a Star*", Nominated • 1997 Contemporary Soul Gospel Album, *Brothers*, Won • 1997 R&B Group Vocalist, "*You Don't Have to Be Afraid*", Nominated • 1999 Contemporary Soul Gospel Album, *So Cool*, Nominated • 2002 Contemporary Gospel Album of the Year, *Beautiful World*, Nominated • 2002 Best R&B Performance by a Duo or Group with Vocals, "*Love's In Need of Love Today*" (with Stevie Wonder), Won • 2003 Best Instrumental Arrangement Accompanying Vocalist(s), *Comes Love* (with Gordon Goodwin, Gordon Goodwin's Big Phat Band, and Brian McKnight), Nominated • 2004 Best Pop Collaboration with Vocals, "*Moon River*" (with Stevie Wonder), Nominated • 2009 Best Gospel Performance, "*Shall We Gather At The River*", Nominated • 2009 Best Instrumental Arrangement Accompanying Vocalist(s), "*Grace*", Nominated • 2009 Best Jazz Instrumental Solo, "*Seven Steps To Heaven*", Nominated • **GMA Dove Award wins** 1988 Contemporary Gospel Album, *Take 6* • 1988 Group of the Year • 1988 Contemporary Gospel Song, "*If We Ever*" • 1988 New Artist of the Year • 1990 Contemporary Gospel Song, "*I L-O-V-E You*" • 1990 Contemporary Gospel Album, *So Much 2 Say* • 1990 Contemporary Gospel Album, *He Is Christmas* • 1992 Contemporary Gospel Album, *Handel's Messiah: A Soulful Celebration* • 1994 Contemporary Gospel Album, *Join the Band* • 1996 Special Event Album, *Tribute: The Songs of Andrae Crouch* (various artists) • **Albums** 1988, *Take 6* • 1990 *So Much 2 Say* • 1991 *He Is Christmas* • 1994 *Join the Band* • 1995 *Best of Take 6* • 1996 *Brothers* • 1998 *So Cool* • 1999 *Greatest Hits* • 1999 *We Wish You a Merry Christmas* • 2000 *Tonight: Live* • 2000 *Best of Take 6* • 2002 *Beautiful World* • 2006 *Feels Good* • 2008 *The Standard* • 2010 *The Most Wonderful Time of the Year* • 2012 *One* • **Grammy Awards** 1988 Best Soul Gospel Performance – Duo, Group, Choir or Chorus, *Take 6*, Won • 1988 Best Jazz Vocal Performance – Duo or Group, "*Spread Love*", Won • 1988 Best Gospel Performance – Duo, Group, Choir or Chorus, "*The Savior Is Waiting*", Won • 1988 New Artist, Nominated • 1989 Best Jazz Vocal Performance – Duo or Group, "*Like the Whole World's Watching*", Nominated • 1990 Best Contemporary Soul Gospel Album, *So Much 2 Say*, Won • 1991 Best Jazz Vocal Performance, *He Is Christmas*, Won • 1992 Best Jazz Vocal Performance, "*I'm Always Chasing Rainbows*", Nominated • 1994 Best Contemporary Soul Gospel Album, *Join the Band*, Won • 1994 Best Rhythm & Blues Vocal Performance - 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"...Instead, I live by a personal motto loaned to me by Wintley Phipps: 'I will not compromise just to be recognized!'"

Jonathan Slocumb

# Still Keeping them Laughing

By Michele Solomon

Jonathan Slocumb started noticing his "gift" for stand-up comedy while still a Pathfinder. While on a campout, he greeted a counselor with his usual beaming smile and cheerful disposition, "Good morning!" She replied with a frown, "What's good about it?!" To which he responded, "You woke up!" Slocumb says he's been committed to soliciting smiles and laughs ever since.

In a recent interview with Esperanza Terrell, a student intern with the Office of Public Relations,

Slocumb fondly recalled his first audiences during his school days. In recounting those early years, he was quick to make the distinction that while he was voted Most Humorous, he was never labeled Class Clown. When it came to academics, that is one aspect of life the entertainer took very seriously. "At every level of education, I ranked in the top 10 percentile of my class," he stated, "and served as student government president at one time."

But, what was the defining moment that made Slocumb say, "Hey, I think I can make a living



**Then and Now:** Jonathan Slocumb and best friend/roommate, Leon Seard, pictured at Oakwood in 1984 (left) and in recent photo (right).



at this?" As a young adult, he became a lover of gospel music and ultimately became a choir director. Shortly thereafter, his gift for emceeing gospel concerts began to precede him.

"It was unheard of back then to have people laughing at a concert of that nature. So, word spread, and I was in demand around the country to host gospel concerts. One such event featured Take 6. At the end of the concert, their then manager, Gail Hamilton, thought it would be great to have me host all of their upcoming dates. I worked as an account rep for AT&T on weekdays, and was on the road with Take 6 on weekends. One day, I looked at my check from the weekend...then looked at the one from AT&T and wrote a nice 'buh-bye' letter to AT&T. The rest is history."

Known as the "clean comic" along the family-friendly mold of Bill Cosby and Sinbad, it was interesting to discover whether or not Slocumb had ever spoken with either of these fellow entertainers, and if so, what counsel they might have offered him as one clean comic to another. Here's what he had to say:

"Soon after my appearance on HBO's Def Comedy Jam, I noticed that my popularity had increased. To assure my fan base that they could be comfortable that I would always uphold certain standards as a Christian, I came up with the title, Gospel/Christian Comedian. It was a hit...at the time. However, it became problematic because now the church community was calling my work 'ministry'—not my intention. I firmly believe that what you do for a living is your job...who you are and the choices you make are ministry. If I had followed the mold of "the Def Jam comedian," I would have gone further and been richer. But I chose not to. Instead, I live by a personal motto loaned to me by Wintley Phipps: 'I will not compromise just to be recognized!'"

Slocumb did have a chance meeting with Sinbad one day, who, much to his surprise, was aware of his presence on the comedy scene. The first bit of advice he recalls receiving from Sinbad was, "You don't need that title before your name, man. On sight, the way you dress and treat people, they KNOW you're a Christian. Be funny, be clean, but just be a COMEDIAN."

Because of his many years in the entertainment industry, many young, upcoming comedians now look to him for advice and mentorship. "I simply tell them, 'If you feel you were born to do this, then do it! To be famous and make money should not be your reason to enter this highly competitive and oftentimes discouraging field. If it ain't PASSION, then PEACE—good-bye)."

Toward the end of the interview, Slocumb ran through some of his most memorable comedy experiences. Here's what topped his list:

1. Getting booed his first time at the Apollo Theatre (long story)
2. Sharing the stage with Richard Pryor, Sinbad, James Brown, and Bill Cosby
3. Seeing his name on the marquee at the Apollo Theatre
4. A woman in Atlanta laughing so hard, her water broke
5. Receiving a standing ovation on HBO's Def Comedy Jam.

Judging by some of his comedic material, some might get the impression that Slocumb keeps a real pulse on breaking news. "Ironically," he confesses, "I'm not a news buff. I'm more of a life buff. My material comes from observing people and internet websites. I'm a full-time dad and husband, and a part-time entertainer. He concluded by saying, "I looooooove people!!! I want you all to laugh daily and laugh hard. Don't laugh at...laugh because. You'll feel better."

# Oakwood's Legacy of Accreditation

The year 2012 saw Oakwood win multiple championships – e.g., men's basketball, Honda academics and Aeolians' international gold medals. Congratulations to these student teams and their sponsors!



## Accreditation

A conversation with Jan Newborn, Director of Institutional Effectiveness

**OU Mag:** Having been here during the last accreditation preparation process in 2000, what was different this time?

**JN:** We functioned with a different set of criteria. The criteria in 2000 were very prescriptive and detailed. The Principles of Accreditation followed in 2012 were more general in nature. The hidden danger was in the temptation to answer more generally and not provide adequate "evidence." In 2000, we had a large steering committee, with varying assignments. In 2012, we had a smaller leadership team and the sections were mainly written by people with expertise in the specific area of the requirement, for example, finances, library, student services, institutional effectiveness, etc.

**OU Mag:** During the SACS team visit in March 2012, what were some of their stated impressions of Oakwood?

**JN:** They were particularly impressed with the size and beauty of our campus and also how well prepared we were. Dr. John Russell, President of McMurry University and SACS chair of the 10-member site-visit team, said that the presentation of our evidence was, "Inspiring!"

**OU Mag:** Finally, what initiatives will we embark upon to ready ourselves for the next ten-year visit?

It is critical to maintain compliance at all times so that we are not put at a disadvantage at any time we wish to expand programs and/or methods of delivery. Also, we face a midterm report in five years, which requires that we demonstrate compliance at that time.

However, in OU's biggest and longest-running contest—the reaffirmation of accreditation from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS)—Oakwood maintains an unbroken streak of consecutive SACS 10-year affirmations dating back to 1958.

Bravo! But just what does it all mean?

Let's ask Mrs. Janis Newborn, Director, Office of Institutional Effectiveness.

**OU Mag:** Just what did OU receive from SACS in December - reaffirmation or reaccreditation? What's the difference - what do they each mean?

**JN:** OU was reaffirmed (Reaffirmation)

Reaffirmation suggests that the institution successfully completed the self-study process and adequately demonstrated compliance with the Principles of Accreditation; the review process "reaffirmed" its accreditation status of "good and regular standing."

Reaccreditation means "accredited again." It suggests that there may have been a break in the accreditation status.

Note that an institution may maintain its accreditation, and NOT BE reaffirmed, as in cases involving sanctions--probation, warning.

Reaffirmation is withheld, but accreditation continues during the time of the sanction.



# Thousands show up to cast their votes at Oakwood on Election Day

Thanks to the Madison County Board of Voter Registration and all the voting poll workers of Precinct 27, who assisted close to 3000 voters at the Oakwood University Church polling location on Election Day, Tuesday, November 6, 2012. The last ballot was processed around 9:00 p.m. The long lines and high voter turnout at this location even made the local news!

Some would say that the long lines were worth it. The next day, November 7, to celebrate President Obama's re-election, the Administration served refreshments to students and employees at Blake Center. Although he was out of town, President Leslie Pollard sent the following message to begin the festivities:

"Last night, we witnessed the peaceful re-election of President Barack Obama to be President of the United States for the next four years. We want to thank the Oakwood University community for turning out in record numbers to vote. "As Seventh-day Adventists, we believe that God sets up leaders according to His will. The Oakwood University community will support him with our prayers and our engagement in our local community."

Forward, forward, forward! Forward for our country, forward for state, forward for our city, and forward for Oakwood University. Congratulations President and Mrs. Obama. We at Oakwood University are proud to call you our national leader.

Oakwood University celebrates today. To every student, staff, faculty, and administrator, enjoy this historic moment." ■



for the Presidential Inaugural Prayer Service at the National Cathedral, Washington, D.C. President Barack Obama, Vice President Joe Biden, interfaith leaders and other dignitaries attended. We congratulate Wintley for this esteemed second consecutive invitation.

Five current Oakwood students -- Julia Phipps (lead), Stephanie Campbell, Tamar Ellis, David McNair and Andrews Sellers --chaperoned a group of 14 boys and girls from the John McClure Snook Youth Club in Foley, Alabama. Julia Phipps and Andrew Sellers were also interviewed by Daniela Perallon from the local CBS affiliate station, WHNT-TV News 19. In a follow-up story, al.com/Huntsville Times reporter Carol McPhail said that the children were 'excited, happy' to see the inaugural activities.

*"But [America] is still the place where, if you work hard, and fight [the] right fight, the fight for excellence, the opportunities are many!"*



WAAY-TV News 31 also covered the story. Oakwoodites Sharon Thomas Yarbrough and Glynis Pierre-Louis coordinated a well-attended Swearing-In Ceremony Inaugural Brunch. This event was held by Sisters Empowering Hawaii, of which Sharon is the Founder

and President. Attendees included: Madame M.C. Townsend (CA) Regional Director of the Black Chamber of Commerce; Elizabeth Coggs (former Wisconsin legislator); Maria Amor Torres, Board Member Council on Trade and Investment for Filipino Americans; Donna Hakimian, Representative for the Advancement of Women Baha'is of the United States; Dr. Andrew R. Harewood, Senior Pastor 4th Friendship Church, Washington, D.C.; Denise L. Cook, The ORACLE; and Steve R. Allen, Cultural Ambassador for DRC (Congo). ■



## Oakwoodites' presence in Washington during Presidential inauguration activities



The second inauguration of Barack H. Obama as the 44th President of the United States was witnessed by several Oakwoodites, including Oakwood's President and First Lady, Drs. Leslie and Prudence Pollard, and Board member *emerita* Mrs. Lois Peters. President Pollard's

observations are recorded as the cover story in the NDIGO Magapaper for the Urbane. Wintley Phipps (Oakwood, class of 1976), founder of the U.S. Dream Academy, award-winning vocalist and pastor, was a featured soloist





# Oakwood's "Dual Career" lawyers advise — *pro bono!*

*"Pursue what comes naturally to you and what you enjoy. Conscientiously, learn what skills and abilities you have and develop them. ...Your work will be your fun."*

**Q:** Each of you can be called at least a "dual careerist"; and, each of you also has a legal background. How did you come to "law and . . ."

What advice do you offer future "dual careerists"?

**Professor Margo Cooper Bagley**

From the time I heard a woman from the Tennessee Valley Authority talk to my 9th grade class about careers in engineering, I wanted to be a chemical engineer. It was not until I was working as an R&D engineer at P&G that I began to seriously consider patent law as a career.

Chemical engineering was more relevant to my work as a practicing patent attorney (it really gave me credibility with my clients who were inventors), but my patent law practice was, in turn, very relevant

to my position as a law professor (my practical experience makes me a better professor as I am focused not only on legal theory but on the practical problems my students will face as attorneys).

Talk to people in careers you are considering. I not only talked to attorneys at P&G, I also opened the Yellow Pages and cold-called patent attorneys, asking them what they liked and did not like about their jobs.

**Author W. Sherman Rogers**

I chose a law career because it best represented the intersection of my talents and my passion, to make a difference in people's lives. Dual careerism was more of a natural extension of the omnipresence of law. Lawyers have special analytical training that makes them a good fit for over 300 jobs, captured in South Texas School of Law's brochure, What can you do with your law degree?

Both my first book *"The African American Entrepreneur Then and Now,"* and my second book, *"Winners and Losers in the American*

*Capitalistic Economy: A Primer"* (currently being edited) involve law, ... law, sociology, political science, history, hard-core business concepts, economics and other disciplines.

I grew up on campus, where Dad (Dr. E. E. Rogers) was its first biblical languages professor. Because I loved an academic environment, I knew while in law school that I would likely enjoy teaching law as much (or more) than practicing it!

**Editor Carmela Monk Crawford**

When I discovered that people could actually make a living as writers, I set my sights on journalism, writing, or broadcasting. (Later) I decided to pursue law to try to deepen my analytical abilities and work in the community. I fell in love with the idea of advocating for children in court. Lawyering became my way of protecting the childhood and dreams of children.

My current call to *Message* from the law was just that, a call. Because I committed my life's work to God years ago, I answered the call without hesitation. Don't drop out. Don't stop. Your best bet is to finish. Watch the forecasts. There will be jobs and careers in the future that we don't even know about today. Develop your 'inner

entrepreneur' and keep your side hustle. Don't dig a pit for yourself with debt of any kind. Finally, it should go without saying that you should commit your way to the Lord, and He will bring it to pass.

**Pastor Jackson Doggette, Jr.**

Beyond my Masters degree, I concluded a law degree would give me an education to apply to anything else I might choose; it also provided a skill I could use to earn a living if for some reason I could not secure a job.

"Law is a jealous mistress." A law practice may be more all-consuming than another profession might be. It is not the easiest profession to balance with another.

I learned three childhood lessons: 1) from my father, Jackson Doggette, Sr., who said: "Rules vs. principles? Always live according to principles."; 2) from my mother, Edythe Doggette, who said, "Find a need and fill it."; and 3) from my grandmother, Edythe Rice, who said: "Learn all you can, because you never know when you might need that information." With these lessons in mind, I have sought to make myself as useful to God and man as possible. Therefore, I became a dual careerist, unintentionally. It just turned out that way.

Pursue what comes naturally to you and what you enjoy. Conscientiously, learn what skills and abilities you have and develop them. Then, you will not have to "work" a day in your life. Your work will be your fun.



Pastor Dr. Anthony Medley:

# Martial Arts for Ministry?

**When did you first become interested in the martial arts?**

I grew up in the era when martial art was popularized in the media - TV shows like “Kung Fu,” “The Green Hornet,” and martial artists like Jim Kelly, Chuck Norris and Bruce Lee. They all made the martial arts exciting in America.

While I was a student at Pine Forge Academy, Calvin Lester (an exceptional martial artist and our physical education instructor) taught a class that focused on the philosophy of exercise and introduced me to the benefits of holistic fitness that sparked my interest in martial arts.

**In your observation, what are some of the biggest myths surrounding martial arts and Christianity?**

I don't accept that there are myths. Christianity is centered in the life, death, resurrection, intercession and second coming of Christ. Period. Martial arts are not centered in Christianity or Christ. The question I often get, and many of the

Seventh-day Adventists [martial arts] practitioners are asked is, should Christians participate in martial arts? That answer is also simple: If you perceive a conflict in studying the martial arts and your relationship with God, (then) don't do it.

**Recently, you received your doctorate, and you used your “martial arts ministry” in your dissertation; please explain.**

My Doctor of Ministry dissertation was entitled, “A Program of Physical and Spiritual Disciplines for Youth at Takoma Academy” (MD), as I taught a Taekwondo class as a part of its physical education department. For six years, I was blessed to be able to teach from a holistic perspective the benefits of physical and spiritual disciplines. The class was not focused on teaching students to fight, but how to live healthy, Christ-centered active lives. I based the class on our definition of true education from the concept presented from prophetic counsel to the church:

“Our ideas of education take too narrow and too low a range. There is need of a broader scope,

*“Martial arts’ exercises, self-discipline, and lifestyle practices can complement the Christian’s spiritual holistic disciplines. As Christians, we are called to honor God through self-development.”*



a higher aim. True education means more than the pursuit of a certain course of study. It means more than a preparation for the life that now is. It has to do with the whole being, and with the whole period of existence possible to man. It is the harmonious development of the physical, the mental, and the spiritual powers. It prepares the student for the joy of service in this world and for the higher joy of wider service in the world to come.” Ellen G. White, *Education*, p. 13.

I am not the first to write or practice from a Christian perspective. There are many Christian martial artists who have written extensively on the subject. I am the first to write on the subject of physical disciplines (the exercise of martial arts activity for fitness) and spiritual disciplines as a holistic approach to developing academy students in the Doctorate of Ministry program at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University.

**Do you see a future of intersecting martial arts and ministry?**

Columbia Union Conference’s Visitor magazine (December 2012) highlighted a women’s self-defense/self-empowerment class that I led at our church. Our women’s ministry sought to expand upon the North American Division’s End-it-Now initiative, to stop violence against females.

Here, we were able to develop a self-defense/self-empowerment class for women that impacted their safety, physical strength, street-smart awareness, professional counseling for victims of abuse, avoiding date rape, preventing bullying against girls, and more.

This is just one example of how ministry and martial arts can successfully interact.

Martial arts’ exercises, self-discipline, and lifestyle practices can complement the Christian’s spiritual holistic disciplines. As Christians, we are called to honor God through self-development.

Often in the Christian life the advancements of education, spirituality, healthy relationships, and commitment to God through service is at the sacrifice of physical development. I believe the Christian way of life calls for the total development of body, mind, and spirit.



# Preschoolers learn fine art at Seasons Learning Center

*"I am a strong believer that the arts and academics go hand in hand,"*

says Ms. Joelle Williams. Her remarkable, one-of-a-kind, OUt-of-the-box program, the Seasons Learning Center in Bermuda, creates a strong academic foundation for preschoolers through fine arts. It is definitely a forerunner for a better approach to education.

### **When did you graduate and what was your concentration?**

After graduating from the then Oakwood College in May 1997 with a BS in Human Development and Family Studies, I moved on to Alabama A & M where I receive my MA in Early Childhood Education. This was when the journey began. I left the US and returned to my home in Bermuda and began my teaching career with the Bermuda Public School System.

### **How did Seasons Learning Center come to be? What does it include?**

After seven years, I decided to take a leap of faith and walk out into the unknown. I took my life's savings and created a preschool program that had a concentration in the Arts along with Academics. Seasons Learning Center began in 2006 in a studio apartment with two three-year-old boys. Three months later, our numbers moved up to 14. By the following September, we had a full house with the capacity of 30 in a newly-purchased location. Due to the popularity of the program, we had no choice but to expand, so the search began for a bigger location. God finally led me to the approximately

3000 square feet office space, which has been transformed into a production stage, cafe area, art gallery, child-size doll house, build-and-drive play area, library, two foundation one classrooms (2-year-olds), one infant/toddler classroom (10 months - 2 years), a large drama and art center, a science classroom, language classroom and math/music classroom for our foundation two (three-year-olds) and foundation three (preschool) classes that rotate between these classes throughout the morning.

### **How has your program succeeded?**

- Over the last four years, 99.75% of our preschool students have left reading and writing on an above-grade level.
- Students have achieved Kindergarten and grade one level math course work.
- Students have had exposure to violin and piano and have recently been able to read and play simple songs and scales.
- Students have memorized play scripts and spoken word and have successfully presented at the two school productions that we have each year.
- Students have produced multiple pieces of art, of all genres. They have also had their artwork sold at our annual auction.
- Students have used dance expression of all different genres and have performed during our two productions each year.
- Students have demonstrated multiple science experiments while learning basic science concepts.
- Students have benefited from an intense fine and gross motor program leading to 100% of our preschoolers riding bicycles without training wheels.

## Campus Spotlight:



by Esperanza Terrell

In the Fall of 2006, Oakwood's Administration made a decision to think "OUtside the box" and help to fulfill a need of the growing number of single-parent students, generally between the ages of 18 and 25. Dean Dedrick Blue (then Vice President of Student Services) and Jacqui Gates-Shipe (then Vice President of Advancement and Development) presented to the President's Council an idea for a program that would help single parent students finish their education. Dr. David Sedlacek, from Oakwood's social work department, agreed to direct it. His experience and skills made him the perfect man for the job. So with the help of strong supporters, more research and planning, the program became a reality.



The New Beginnings Single Parent Resource Center has been serving the Northern Alabama community ever since. With the funds and housing donated by Oakwood University and outside sponsors, New Beginnings has been able to assist 29 students to graduate. Four more students are expected to graduate in the spring of 2013. The programs services include: assistance for tuition, textbooks and child care, a bi-weekly support group, counseling/case management services, life skills workshops, mentoring, computer lab, and household necessities. Both current and former participants testify to the how much all of these services helped them complete their education.

Dr. Sedlacek served as director until 2009, followed by Mrs. Helen Fischle, also of the social work department, who directed the Center until 2010. While Mrs. Fischle was serving, Mrs. Geraldine Thompson was appointed as the program's coordinator. Mrs. Thompson continues to lead this vital ministry. Currently the program is serving 14 students, from Oakwood University, Alabama

A&M University, University of Alabama Huntsville and Calhoun Community College. Most are out-of-state students attending Oakwood, and some students are in their 30s. All are helped because someone chose to think OUthe box, to go beyond the status quo.

The Center's staff has a number of immediate plans. They are in the process of improving the Center's office and its equipment. Many single parents attending Oakwood find themselves at a loss for affordable housing near or on

campus; New Beginnings staff hopes that one day this will not be an issue someday. Also they are looking to expand their child care services. They have a strong desire to provide better care for more children, to then be a blessing for even more students. The New Beginnings staff, under Mrs. Thompson's coordination, is also making big plans for the long-haul. They are pushing towards generating more funds: first, to help program participants rely less on loans to graduate; and second, to allow them to relocate or expand their present location.

There's no telling what this extraordinary ministry will achieve next.



# Aeolians win the gold at the 7th World Choir Games!!!

Finally, for the contemporary music category, Max decided to resurrect a selection, “Cantate Domino,” from the Aeolians’ 2008 CD project – that this group of Aeolians had never sung. How to learn this un-earthed song and still perfect their now-mothballed standards for world competition, at the 22nd hour? According to the Adventist News Network, July 16, 2012 online issue, “Earlier in the summer break from school, the group practiced new songs for the competition individually. They later held group rehearsals remotely using Google Plus. All 42 members met for a final rehearsal at the university campus the weekend before the competition.”

Sixteen international choirs competed in the “Music of the Religions” category. After practicing flawlessly and repeatedly their auditorium entrance and stage spacing, Alabama’s finest strode majestically on to the world stage, (...) and won the gold in the “Music of the Religions” category singing “John Saw Duh Numbuh,” “The Prayer,” “The Holy City” and “The Seven-fold Amen.”

This biennial event, the world’s largest choral competition, will next occur in Riga, Latvia in 2014.

Following is an excerpt of “*The Making/Fine-tuning of a World Champion: My Backstage, yet Frontrow Observations*” by Tim Allston, which appears in its entirety in the Aeolians Fall Concert program, which can be found on Oakwood’s website.

The Aeolians Choir of Oakwood University—the lone choir from Alabama and Seventh-day Adventism—in its first-ever world choral competition, won three gold medals in its three competing categories: “Music of the Religions,” “Musica Contemporanea” and “The Spirituals,” at the 7th World Choir Games, held July 4-14, 2012, in Cincinnati, Ohio.

Oakwood’s challenges were several: an unbudgeted event, coming at the end of a financially-stretched fiscal year; student choristers scattered across the country, fulfilling previously-scheduled summer-school and summer-employment obligations; new music to learn, for specific competitive categories; and, most importantly, the un-familiar landscape and politics of being new- and late-comers to international competition. An historically-black David amongst the multi-national Goliaths.

First, President Pollard and senior administration OK’d the Aeolians’ participation, with Mordecai-like reasoning, Esther 4:14: “For if you keep silent at this time, . . . And who knows whether you have not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?” Next, manager Vilroy McBean and Education Department’s Dr. Ingrid Ennis began canvassing last year’s 44 Aeolians (including recent 2012 grads) for their interest, willingness and 23rd-hour availability.

Then, to shore up the 37 consenters, Director Jason Max Ferdinand (“Max”) and Music Department Chair Dr. Wayne Bucknor recruited alums: 1) Jared Roseborough, choral conducting grad student, Georgia State University; 2) Christine Jobson, Miami Union Academy choir director/music teacher and Barry University adjunct voice instructor; 3) Kayus Dare, newlywed and teacher at the Bermuda Institute; and 4) Ryan Lang, rising 4th year Vanderbilt University Medical School student; as well as added a highly-recommended entering freshman, Chad Lupoe from Greater Atlanta Adventist Academy’s choir!



# Ambitious Oakwood Alum Launches Online Magazine

by Michele Solomon

For Brittany Winkfield (Class of 2010), Youth Congress 2012 was more than just a spiritually charged weekend of fun, fellowship, and good music. After incubating an entrepreneurial idea that had been cradled in the back of her mind since graduation day, Winkfield partnered with two forward-thinking pastors, Kymone Hinds and Donald Rolle, and decided to launch a new online magazine: B2B Mag (short for Back to Basics Magazine)

The official launching event for the publication was the 2012 "I Am the Church" Youth Congress, hosted by the Central States Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

As publisher for B2B Mag, Winkfield is thankful for the preparation that Oakwood has given her for a career in

online journalism. She says, "Aside from my academic training...there are qualities that I possess that I learned during my time [at Oakwood]. " Today, she values the principles that OU has instilled in her, and speaks of the leadership skills that her experience at "The Oaks" has taught her.

Winkfield's desire is "to fill the pages with relevant content for young people looking for answers to life's everyday questions. I want this to be a publication that excites the young and encourages them to get involved in God's work in some shape or form. I want it to be attractive, interactive, and have content that appeals to them right now.

"There is no better time than now to get back to the basics in living," says Winkfield. "We are facing the end, which means that we are too close to lose sight



Brittany pictured at left with Devon Franklin

of our goal. God has given us 'Basic Instructions Before Leaving Earth', the Bible. B2B Mag is here, not only to inform and inspire, but also to simplify

our walk with Christ by providing content that excites and encourages young people, giving them a forum through which to express and share the message of God."

B2B Mag is seeking funders to support its efforts to continue to build a lifestyle publication for Adventist youth and young adults. Although primarily an online magazine, there are plans to expand to print in the near future. The e-zine currently averages over 1200 unique views per issue and handles its promotions via social media and church partnerships. If you would like to become a subscriber or supporter, visit [www.back2basicsmag.com](http://www.back2basicsmag.com).

## Update from Spring 2012

*In our Spring 2012 issue, we asked "To whom are you related?" on the 1974-75 school roster of Oakwood students.*

*Here are the responses we received:*



"I am answering the blood-related question in the Oakwood Magazine Spring 2012. I am Lita Bush, and I am the oldest daughter of Larry J. Bush. (Facebook)

This is Ashley Herron. I currently am attending OU. I am responding to the article on student blood-relation with the students of the 1974-1975 school year. My mom was a sophomore during this time. Her name is Janet Futch, but for some reason her name was not printed. (Facebook)



Caprice Brathwaite 2011-2012 is the daughter of Van Martel Brathwaite 1974-1975. She is also the daughter of Sharon Denise Raynor, not listed in the 1974-1975 senior class. (from Jennifer Gill Fordham, Facebook)

## Public servant "received Spiritual footing, fortitude" at the Oaks



**Sheila McNeil, what sparked your interest in public service?**

As a Social Work/Urban Studies major at Oakwood, I knew I would be serving the community in some capacity. I worked in child protective services, for two city council members and for a state representative. When I was asked if I would consider running

for office, (...) I felt that I knew too much to not give back what God had given me. (...) I won the city council seat without a runoff, and served as the District 2 City Council member for the 7th largest city in the country until I was term-limited out in 2009.

**Do you see this as your calling or just a career?**

I can clearly see the hand and the favor of God in everything I did, and believe I was divinely prepared for and guided to politics. (...). I do see this as my calling, because while it was a huge responsibility, it never felt like work.

**Do you see yourself as a "Daniel in Babylon"? Yes or no? Please explain.**

Well, I do remember feeling at times like I was in the lion's den. Despite the stereotype of corrupt politicians, there are some very good people in politics and many of them are Christians. It's interesting how, if we as Christians live and act according to God's standards, the people around us will respect those standards.

**Should we, as black SDAs, be more involved in politics?**

I believe God has put each of us here to fulfill His

will. Some He called to be preachers, teachers, prophets -- and some, politicians. We should all be encouraged to pursue what God has called us to do: to be aware of the political process, participate in that process and to vote.

**Any final comments, observations?**

I am eternally grateful for how God is directing my life. He has allowed me to see and do things I would have never imagined, like meeting President Obama. I am grateful for a supportive family, especially my daughter, Devin, who is also an Oakwood graduate. My experience at Oakwood was my launching pad into the world as an adult. It was the place, aside from my parents' home, where I received my spiritual footing and fortitude and the courage to trust God wherever He sends me, even in politics.

EmpowerOU is still accepting money for the generators. To date, we have received about \$40,000. The Alumni Association will be presenting a check to the University for this project during Alumni Homecoming Weekend 2013.

~ Jennifer Mosley Stone, D.D.S., President, OUAA



# The Oakwood Sound

by Roy E. Malcolm



“The wind bloweth where it listeth and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, or whither it goeth.” John 3:8.

A similar mystery seems to apply to that which loyal Oakwoodites call the “Oakwood Sound.” They hear it, sense it, but they are uncertain about it. What, then, is the Oakwood Sound?

Scientists define sound as the sensation produced by stimulation of organs of hearing. Sound is essential for communication and understanding. The Creator of the hearing process uses sound to arrest attention when He has an announcement for the universe, which is usually expressed in music and the spoken word.

At the introduction of the newly created earth, Job 38:7 states, “The morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy.” Imagine that heavenly sound! To prepare pious and sincerely dedicated young men for leadership in Israel, God instructed Samuel to provide music as one of the subjects at the School of the Prophets. Through the ministry of Ellen White, the Oakwood School was founded and music has always been one of its strengths.

Considering its origin, mission and purpose, there should be no wonder that the Oakwood Sound in music and word is sublime! Across the decades, many individuals whose voices have made the

Oakwood Sound musically renowned. To name just a few -- Joyce Bryant, George Sampson, Wintley Phipps, Whitney Morrison.

Songs of hope, adoration, obedience, service and dedication as presented by Oakwoodites through the years are precious memories of the Oakwood sound, including:

- “My Hope is Built on Nothing Less Than Jesus’ Blood and Righteousness” – Brenda Spraggins
- “The Lord Be Praised” – Anika Sampson
- “I’ll Go Where You Want Me to Go Dear Lord” – Edrene Malcolm
- “It Pays to Serve Jesus” – Jeremy Winston
- “Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing” – Jacquelyn Clemmons

Choral groups like the Cathedral Quartet, Take 6, Connect 5, Virtue, Committed, College/University Choir, Voices of Triumph and Dynamic Praise, in their own style and award-winning performances, have demonstrated aspects of the Oakwood Sound as well as its image.

## The Aeolians

Derived from Greek mythology, “aeolian” means sound. Each of the 14 directors of the Aeolians, including its founding director, Eva B. Dykes, felt no burden to emulate their predecessors, yet in their own musical preparation and style, achieved

and maintained the Oakwood sound of musical excellence. Someone said in The Huntsville Times (in 1997) that “The Aeolians could sing passages from the phone book and still make you feel the presence of the Divine.” This compliment could be given to the Aeolians in any given year.

## The Spoken Word

As in singing, the Oakwood Sound has been profoundly portrayed through the spoken Word of God. The University Church has been the venue for this, providing preachers of distinction including recent pastors Eric C. Ward, Leslie N. Pollard, John H. Nixon, Craig Newborn and Carlton C. Byrd, who is also the dynamic speaker of the Breath of Life Broadcast Ministry.

The Bradford-Cleveland-Brooks Leadership Center serves as a monument of recognition for the many alumni whose ministries as Bible workers, teachers, evangelists, etc., have contributed to the impact of the Oakwood Sound in soul-winning here in the United States and abroad.

Huntsville’s first school-owned and operated radio station, WJOU (formerly WOCG) 90.1 FM has, for three decades, contributed to the positive image and community recognition of the mission and purpose of the institution through the daily broadcast of music and the spoken word.

Theodore Rivers, an early WJOU pioneer, is a preserver of the Oakwood Sound through recordings of unique programs of the distant past.

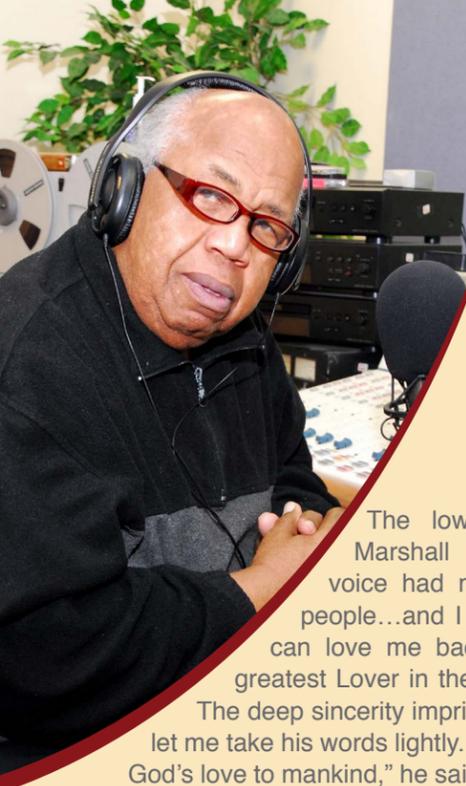
At the highest level of U.S. Representative government, the Oakwood Sound, through the voice and eloquence of U.S. Senate Chaplain Barry C. Black, echoes throughout the Senate Chamber reminding politicians of the virtues of truth and honesty as outlined by Him “In Whom we trust.”

Finally, the Oakwood Sound is uniquely yours. Lifestyle, speech, action of student, employee, even trustee, speak volumes about our alma mater. What, then, is the Oakwood Sound according to you? The University song by Dr. O.B. Edwards offers this pledge of allegiance and loyalty:

*“Wherever we may be, We’ll always be true to thee.”*

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# T. Marshall Kelly

## A Man for All Seasons

By Esperanza Terrell

The low rumble of Pastor T. Marshall Kelly's one-of-a-kind voice had my full attention. "I love people...and I don't love them so they can love me back, because I have the greatest Lover in the universe, that's Jesus."

The deep sincerity imprinted on his face wouldn't let me take his words lightly. "I want to be a conduit of God's love to mankind," he said. If you've ever talked to Pastor Kelly, you know that he is just that.

Born in Cleveland, Ohio, Thomas Marshall Kelly was reared as an only child in a Christian musical family. He sang his first solo at the age of 11 in his hometown church, and began singing in a quartet soon after. It was also at that time that Kelly realized his calling to be a minister. While he attended Oakwood College, he sang with the Oakwood male chorus under the direction of C.E. Moseley, and also sang bass for a traveling quartet called the Velvetones.

While many consider him an artist, instead, he calls himself "a minister who likes to sing." As a theology major at Oakwood, he was only asked to sing, not to preach or even make announcements, because he had a terrible stutter that only stopped when he sang. Desperate for help with his speech impediment, he left Oakwood after two years and transferred to Emmanuel Missionary College (now Andrews University) where he completed his degree. The December following his graduation in 1952, he married his wife Garnet Jean Garland, whom he had known from childhood. In time they had two children, Eric and Nadine.

Never having written a resume, he wrote a short and sincere letter, applying for a pastoring position, explaining that he loved people, and wanted to serve as a pastor. After getting the job and moving his family, Pastor Kelly received a far-from-warm welcome. His young age, 22, was a distraction to many of the members. This, however, helped him learn to "love people anyway."

Not for a second does Pastor Kelly give himself credit for any of his success or pretend that his life is void of

regret. He describes his years in ministry as a journey guided by God full of trial and bliss, failures and victories. With every story of success, he shares a humbling experience that preceded it.

Just before one of his most successful pastoring experiences, Kelly was forced to leave pastoral ministry and teach not only Bible, but Physical Education classes at a church school in Chicago. He was furious. He had never taught a class before and wanted to pastor, not teach. "I could've written a book on 'A Hundred Ways to Feel Sorry for Yourself,' and it probably would've been a best-seller," he admits jokingly. His counselor, Dr. Wong, said: "I don't want you to spend five minutes feeling sorry for yourself. God is working on your character. He doesn't care anything about your reputation...go and do what you were asked to do." After overcoming the self-pity, Kelly testifies that he had a wonderful experience. He and the children fell in love with each other.

After 25 years in pastoral ministry, during which he became a world-renowned evangelist and vocalist. Pastor Kelly went on to teach at Oakwood Academy for 14 years. Following his first retirement in 1995, he was called to be the Interim Chaplain at Oakwood College, where he served an additional two years.

He is grateful to Oakwood for the opportunities he's had to teach and encourage. "I was an obnoxious kid," he confesses, "that's why I believe in people at Oakwood... I know God isn't through with them yet." He is also grateful to God for leading him to transition from pastoral ministry to spend more time with his family. He encourages pastors to never neglect their daily devotion. He believes spending time with God every morning gives ministers the strength and wisdom necessary to pastor well without sacrificing their families.

Although "retired," Pastor Kelly remains an active member of Oakwood University's Office of Spiritual Life. The wisdom and experiences he has to share can't be summarized, but he keeps himself available for prayer and counsel for anyone who needs it. For his love, sincerity, and willingness, Oakwood is forever grateful.

# The Last Word

by President **Dr. Leslie N. Pollard**

In these pages, Oakwood Magazine showcases the "Oakwood Experience." A few days ago, while flying at 30,000 feet to the North American Division Theology of Ordination meetings at the General Conference in Silver Spring, Maryland, I began consciously reflecting on the tremendous blessing the "Oakwood Experience" has meant to me on a personal level. As I reflected, I began searching for words to describe what I experienced as a young freshman of 18 years, having my first encounter with Seventh-day Adventist education. I had never attended a Seventh-day Adventist school on any level. But, little did I know at the time, I was ushered into the experience of a lifetime! Now, 39 years, and a few life experiences later, I have a testimony for the Oakwood Nation. I share it below:



"The Oakwood Experience impacts our entire lifetime; it lasts, not simply for four years, but for 40 years! It is academically rigorous and emotionally gratifying--faith is integrated with learning. The Oakwood Experience is set in the American South, and it transcends the South. It arises from the blood-soaked sod of a former slave plantation. It flows east, and west, and north, and around the world--wherever Oakwoodites are found! Its music is bathed in the rhythms of black-church spirituality. The Oakwood Experience is connected by lasting friendships and joyous reunions. Caring teachers, loving staff, wonderful students--the experience spans generations. It is God-appointed, faith-grounded, and service-centered. The experience puts God first! It is transformational, inspirational, exhilarating and stimulating. To know it is to love it! And to love it is to never leave it. The Oakwood Experience--it's you and me and 'we'." Leslie N. Pollard, February 22, 2013 .

The mission--yours, mine, ours--is to invite thousands more young people into the Oakwood Experience. We are birthing a mighty nation of Oakwoodites, ready to take the world by storm. In our next issue -- the first-ever fall publication of the O mag -- we will present to you numerous examples of Oakwood University emerging leadership -- positioned on local, regional, national and global platforms. You will be inspired as you trace how the Oakwood nation is impacting the world for God. These entered to learn, and departed to serve!

To the Oakwood Nation, we salute you, and let's make sure that every son and daughter we know comes to Oakwood University to be baptized into the life-changing Oakwood Experience.



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