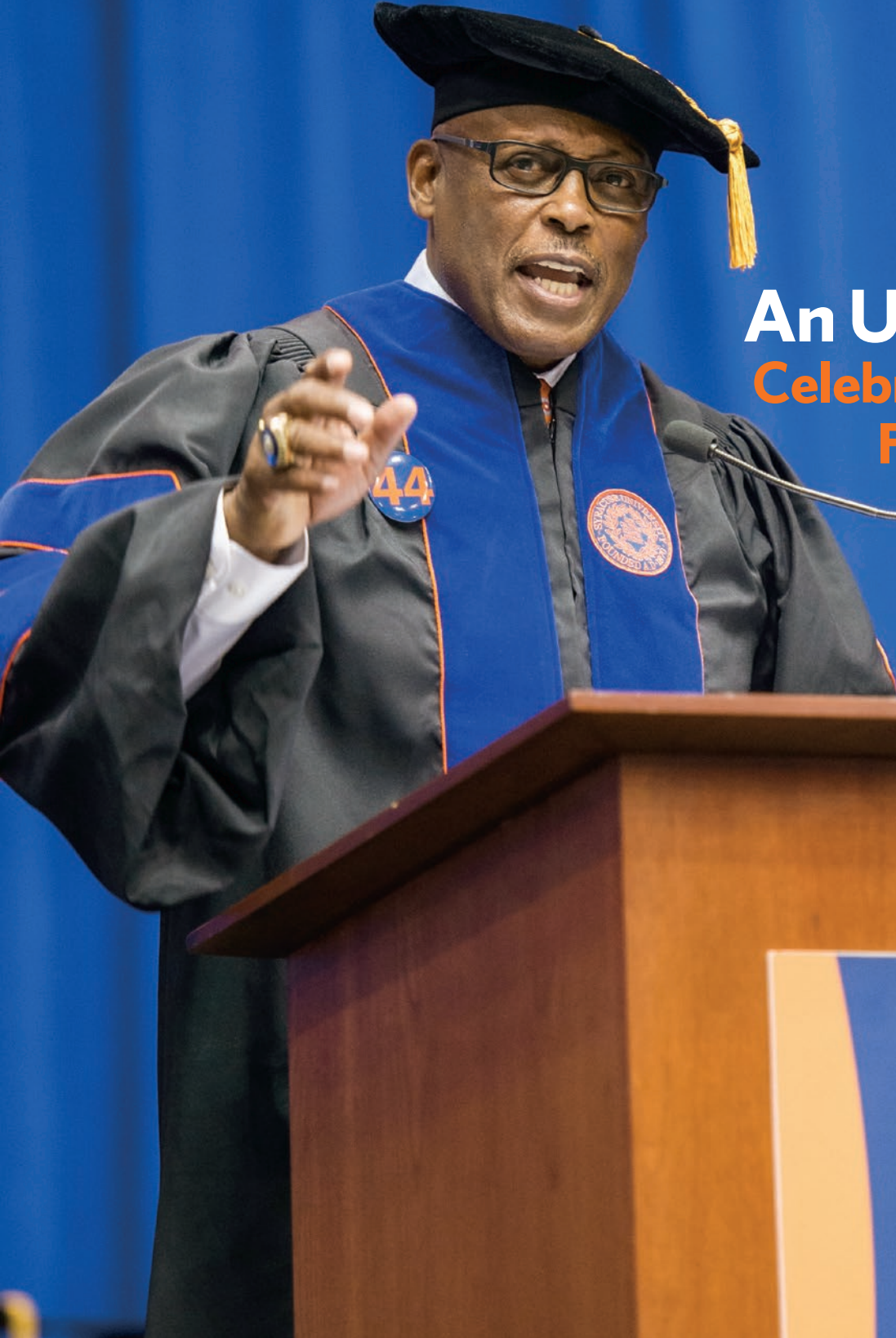
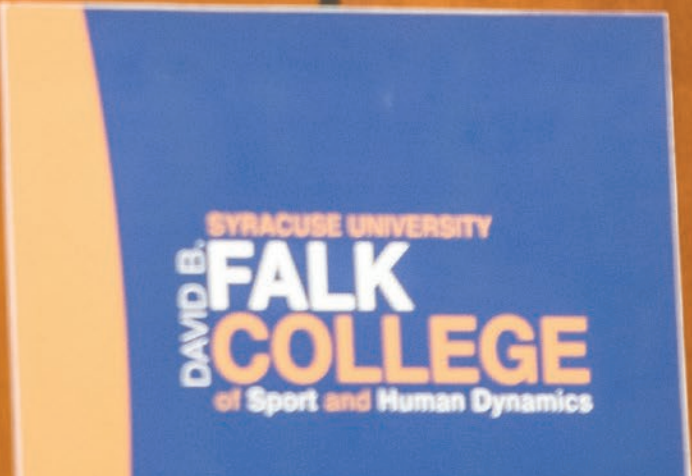


# Syracuse Manuscript

SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY'S BLACK AND LATINO/A ALUMNI MAGAZINE



## An Uncommon Man Celebrating the Legacy of Floyd Little '67







Abigail Joy Covington '19, G'20

# Syracuse Manuscript

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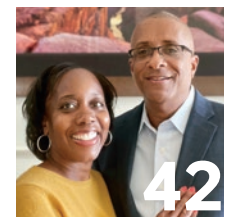
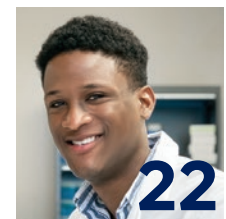
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**On the Cover:** Floyd Little '67 during convocation activities at Commencement 2016. Little was awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters.

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## Hope Springs Eternal

Hello Orange Family,

As I write from my home office on this sunny day, I am feeling hopeful. I received my first COVID-19 vaccine, and I look forward to completing the process so that I can enjoy the freedom I had taken for granted—walk with more confidence, hug my extended family and friends and explore the world once again. We've persevered through a year of uncertainty, challenge and loss. As the sunshine reminds us, there is always hope for the future—a future filled with normalcy, opportunity, progress and, best of all, human connection. A silver lining from the past 12 months is that we now appreciate “the little things” a whole lot more.

Since our last issue, we've announced that Coming Back Together (CBT) is set for Sept. 9-12, 2021. Our team is so thrilled to host you on campus again this year, for a safe, socially distanced in-person reunion! After months of lockdown, our students are anxious to meet and be inspired by each of you. We will optimistically look to see you during our Pre-CBT receptions this summer and we hope that you'll feel comfortable joining us this fall. We are working diligently to ensure that this year's reunion will be safe and enjoyable for all in attendance. Registration will open in early summer.

We are excited about the new OTHC Leaders program, which is open to all Black, Latino/a and Native students on campus who want to receive leadership development training, whether or not they receive OTHC scholarships. This new program will allow our team, partners and alumni to touch so many more students each academic year. Our goal is to recruit 200 students, along with much needed corporate and foundation support this year, so that we can make a greater impact.

I'm hopeful about all that is happening on campus. As you'll read in this issue, the newly renovated Schine Student Center has opened. Many generous donors have made the multimillion-dollar Schine renovation a reality, including a new student activity area, a spacious and sunny atrium, an updated dining area with a variety of food options, a refreshed office space for our colleagues in the Office of Multicultural Affairs and the beautiful Intercultural Collective Lounge. As always, it will be our “home base” during CBT.

Students interested in Black culture may also enjoy the house at 119 Euclid Ave., which will open soon. This student-led facility has also been newly renovated based on feedback provided to our colleagues in the Office of Diversity and Inclusion from students, the broader campus community and alumni advisors. A five-minute walk from the Quad, the space will offer several naming opportunities for those interested in honoring and preserving SU's Black history and helping to provide a safe haven for students to eat, study, socialize, meet or just be. Contact us if you'd like to be a part of this historic space.

The University has reopened the Stadium following the completion of phase-one renovations, including a new roof, the largest scoreboard in college sports and other fantastic improvements, which you'll experience during CBT weekend's football game against Rutgers University. The brand new National Veteran's Resource Center (NVRC) building has been completed, with a rooftop event space, state-of-the-art auditorium and a patio overlooking Marshall Street. Most importantly, campus will be open to visitors this fall, welcoming them back for the first time in two semesters.

As always, we are most encouraged by our resilient alumni and students, who face challenges with grit and grace, and always manage to inspire.

I'm optimistic about what's to come and I hope you are too! Be well, be safe and know that we look forward to continuing to build a future with you as part of our beloved Orange community. The best is yet to come.

With Orange Love,  
Rachel Vassel '91





Established in 1983, the Coming Back Together reunion for Black and Latino/a alumni has become a model for colleges and universities nationwide.

## Coming Back, Giving Back

**From the first reunion for alumni of color to more than \$10 million in student scholarships—the Office of Multicultural Advancement has created avenues for Black and Latino/a alumni to share success and support with today’s students.**

**R**obert Hill vividly remembers attending a Syracuse University reunion dinner in the spring of 1982 and looking at the sea of white faces gathered in the Carrier Dome. Out of the 1,000 or so attendees, Hill counted only six Black faces in the crowd, he and his guest among them. “I remember thinking, ‘Where are all the Black alumni?’” Hill recalls.

Hill knew those alumni existed. From its very early years, Syracuse University had accepted students that many other higher learning institutions at the time did not—Blacks, Jews and women.

Hill had recently been appointed by Chancellor Melvin Eggers to a newly created vice president position within the University Relations division. “Essentially, he asked me to take advantage of the growing influence of African Americans on American life and do some good for Syracuse University,” he says. Because it was a loosely defined role, Hill came up with an equally ambiguous name for his new department: the Office of Program Development.

Pretty quickly, a series of events unfolded that gave Hill some direction. In his previous role as vice president for affirmative action, Hill had developed relationships with Black and Latino/a staff, faculty and students across campus. The Office of Minority Affairs reached out to Hill to discuss upgrading a series of mentorship events held for Black and Latino/a students.

“Typically, they would bring alumni in on a Saturday, have day-long mentorship sessions for students, then have a dinner and dancing in the evening,” he says. “They wanted to expand that somehow.”

Around the same time, he was approached by some members of the Friends of Syracuse, an alumni group comprising Black and brown alumni in the tri-state area, who wanted to plan a five-year reunion for the Class of 1978. Then he attended that reunion dinner.

“That convergence of events gave me the idea to have an alumni weekend for Black and Latino/a alumni. Not merely the Class of 1978, but all classes, all schools, all colleges, all programs,” says Hill.

When Syracuse University hosted the first Coming Back Together reunion in 1983, it was the first schoolwide reunion of “minority” alumni ever held by a predominantly white college or university and was covered in the *New York Times* and *Newsweek* magazine. Four decades later, that reunion—and the office





CBT III—Robert Hill, Lyn Bolles '71, Locksley Spencer '80, Lawrence Morgan '76, Vanessa Williams '08, Robert Spencer '78, Raymond Colon '79 and Chancellor Melvin Eggers



Program Development team members Larry Martin, Evelyn D. Walker and Lola Gualtieri in the 1990s

that created it—is an established model for other colleges and universities seeking to engage alumni of color and continues to break the mold as it expands its mandate.

In addition to holding triennial CBT reunions, the Office of Multicultural Advancement, as it's now known, has engaged alumni through trips around the country and globe, cultural and networking events, fundraising for student scholarships and other University initiatives, and efforts to right historic wrongs that include University recognition of the Syracuse 8 and the historic honorary degree awarded to Exonerated Five member Kevin Richardson H'20.

Perhaps most important, record numbers of Black and Latino/a alumni play pivotal roles at the University, serving in policy-making and advisory capacities ranging from the Board of Trustees to school and college advisory boards (see story on page 10). "More than ever before, our diverse alumni are integrally involved in advisory and decision-making processes that ensure our campus provides an inclusive and equitable experience for all students, faculty and staff," says Rachel Vassel '91, associate vice president of multicultural advancement. "That alumni involvement is in large part due to the efforts of program development/multicultural advancement to build and maintain those relationships."



CBT V—Robert Hill and Larry Martin in 1995

**B**ut it all began with CBT. To plan that first reunion, Hill assembled an alumni committee including Wayne Brown '78, Alfreda Mayer '78, Steve Edwards '78, Gwynne Wilcox '71 and Walter Braswell '73. Hill recalls meeting at the Chancellor's apartment at Lubin House in New York City to make their pitch. "We couldn't have done this without the Chancellor's support," says Hill. Eggers had concerns about holding a separate reunion. "I felt that it could form a conflict between the desire to be one university," he told *The New York Times* in 1983.

Ultimately, Eggers conceded that Black and Hispanic alumni were not attending Homecoming and other University events and gave Hill the okay to proceed.

Hill needed help and turned to Evelyn D. Walker, then director of the Office of Minority Affairs, and her assistant, Cheryl Chambers '82. Their greatest challenge was developing a list of alumni of color. "We had to build a database and we didn't have a lot of time. We had to have the reunion in 1983 so it could serve as a five-year reunion for those 1978 folks," says Hill, who literally spent hours scouring the photos in old yearbooks and team photos at Manley Field House. It was an imperfect system. "There were light-skinned Blacks that we missed and ruddy-skinned white people that we mistook for Black. After sending out the invitation, I remember getting a letter from one lady saying, 'I'm not Black, but it sounds like a heck of a party. Can I still come?'" he says.







CBT III—Coming Back Together in 1989



CBT II—Alumni from the 1920s and 1930s



The Athlete Workshop at CBT VI. From left, Manny Breland '77, Vincent Cohen Sr. '57, L'60, Billy Hunter '65 and Jim Brown '57

Hill spent an evening in a Harlem Club with Vaughn Harper '68, host of the popular New York City radio show *The Quiet Storm*, and his best friend Sam Penceal '66, who filled up a legal pad with names of alumni of color. By the end of the evening, Hill had also signed the duo performing at the club to come to Syracuse to play the reunion. (Shortly after CBT, singer Johnny Kemp would score a major hit with "Just Got Paid" and Hill liked to say that he discovered Johnny.)

Hill also received significant assistance from Larry Martin, then a University development officer responsible for both the Midwest and West Coast, who had relationships with many

CBT II—The Landmark Theater marquee for the Friday night concert



successful Black alumni. Hill wanted to get the support of some "name" alums so that he could create a buzz and get participation from others. Martin invited Hill to accompany him on a trip to California that included visits with Suzanne de Passe '68, Jim Brown '57, Sylvia Mackey '63 and Floyd Little '67.

Invitations were sent to 1,600 alumni. Harper, the Mackeys and Little were among the 300 attendees at that first reunion, joined by other influential alumni including the author John A. Williams '50, Vincent H. Cohen '57, L'60, an All-American basketball player who became managing partner of Washington law firm Hogan & Hartson; basketball legend Dave Bing '66 and L. Ross Love '68, an advertising executive at Procter & Gamble who was given the first Chancellor's Citation for Distinguished Achievement at the event.

The oldest alumna, Gladys Bryant, represented the Class of 1929; many had not been back to campus since their graduation. Not only did the alumni enjoy each other, the reunion began the process of healing the slights and injustices many of them had experienced during their student years.

Although successful by all accounts, Hill was still stuck on his meeting with Jim Brown, who had told him "I don't need to come to Syracuse for a party. If you bring me back, give me duty."

That framed Hill's thinking for the second incarnation of CBT





CBT II—Donald Rivas '77, L'80, Beatriz Diaz-Taveras '81 and Eva Lopez '81



Evelyn D. Walker, Angela Morales-Patterson, Larry Martin and Carol Melendez

in 1986. The theme of the four-day CBT II was “Careers: Producing, Polishing, Perfecting” and was structured around a series of topical discussions and career workshops in which successful professionals shared their experiences with fellow alumni and undergraduates, a model that has continued. Attendance more than doubled and included even more big names, including Brown, de Passe and Vanessa Williams '83. “I think we had more celebrated people of color in Syracuse at one time than we have had before or since,” Hill says.

Hill could see that these diverse alumni were genuinely interested in helping students of color and he wanted to extend that interest to financial support. He was heavily influenced by Jesse Jackson, at the time one of the nation’s pre-eminent Black political figures, who spoke about Black empowerment and building a wealth class. At the 1984 Democratic Convention, Jackson gave a powerful speech with the mantra “Our Time Has Come.”

CBT IV—Tree Planting Ceremony to honor the 25th anniversary of S.A.S. (background image)

**“My goal was to welcome alumni into the Syracuse family as full members, both as donors and to get them involved with various University activities outside of CBT.”**

—LARRY MARTIN

2008 Chancellor’s Citation recipient Marcus Solis '91 and former Syracuse University Chancellor Nancy Cantor







Paul Robeson  
Company performing  
at CBT III 1989—  
A Tribute to Marvin  
Gaye—What's  
Going On

CBT alumni trips were initiated by Robert Hill in 1987 with a trip to Jamaica. Subsequent destinations included the Bahamas, Cancun, Aruba, Martha's Vineyard and South Africa, pictured above.



Syracuse University's CBT: Our Journey to South Africa in 2007

Hill adopted that for his first fundraising campaign, \$1 million in support of scholarships for underrepresented students. "Asking Black alumni to give to a white university was unheard of," says Hill. "Most middle class Black people only gave to their church. We had to create a culture of philanthropy."

The campaign was launched in 1987 with a \$25,000 endowment from Wayne K. Brown '78—the first gift—\$150,000 from campaign chair Dave Bing and corporate support from Phillip Morris Co., Corning Glass and U.S. Airways.

Fundraising efforts would continue to grow under the leadership of Larry Martin, who took the helm of program development after Hill became vice president of public relations in 1989. (Program Development reported to Hill until his retirement in 1998.) Because of Martin's development background, fundraising for the OTHC Scholarship program became a natural focal point.

Over the next 26 years, Martin and his team—Evelyn D. Walker,

Miguel Sapp '82, G'88, L'89, and Angela Morales-Patterson—focused on fostering relationships with alumni and cultivating them as donors, significantly growing the scholarship fund and the number of Black and Latino/a students assisted with scholarships. "My goal was to welcome alumni into the Syracuse family as full members," says Martin, "both as donors and to get them involved with various University activities outside of CBT." Martin's relationship with Derryck Palmer '78, for example, led not only to major gifts, but also to Palmer joining the Syracuse University Board of Trustees, and later, co-chairing the successful Campaign for Syracuse \$1-billion fundraising campaign.

The department's alumni newsletter, *Minority Manuscript*, grew into a magazine and was renamed the *Syracuse Manuscript* to reflect changing tastes in vernacular. The office hosted nine more CBT reunion weekends and eight off-campus trips, including a journey to South Africa for 140 alumni in 2007. "It was a milestone experience for everyone involved," recalls Martin. In addition to immersing themselves in the history and culture of the country, Felix James '95 coordinated a visit to an impoverished school so the alumni could give back. "We had collected school



The inaugural issue of *Minority Manuscript*, spring 1994—originally a newsletter and now this magazine, *Syracuse Manuscript*



**“I was lucky enough to inherit a really great program from Robert and Larry. The goal for me and our current team is to continue to grow it and to make it a more robust and prestigious program for our students and a more impactful part of the University as a whole.”**

—RACHEL VASSEL '91



supplies and also made an \$8,000 donation to renovate their bathroom and library,” says Martin. “It was a very powerful experience and the highlight of the trip.” He also organized the first alumni weekend on Martha’s Vineyard, Massachusetts, which has become a nearly annual summer event.

Martin is most proud of playing a role in helping the University recognize forgotten alumni for their sacrifice and contributions. A relationship builder, he became acquainted through the years with a few members of the Syracuse 8, the Black football players who quit the football team in 1970 in protest of unequal treatment. At the CBT III gala dinner in 1989, Hill recognized the Syracuse 8 in his remarks, bringing to the stage Alif Muhammad '71, who was in attendance. Some 10 years later, Martin wrote to each of the former Syracuse players and invited them to the next CBT. They came and Martin acknowledged them during the gala dinner. “The alumni gave them a standing ovation several times,” recalls Martin.

That planted a seed. Art Monk '80 took up their case to Chancellor Nancy Cantor. On Oct. 21, 2006, the Syracuse 8 were honored during a halftime ceremony in the Carrier Dome. They were presented with the letterman jackets they’d never received and were awarded the Chancellor’s Medal for Courage.

“We were able to repair relationships with those men and to share their important story, which was unknown to younger students and alumni, including student athletes,” says Martin.

But they were not alone. In 2005, Martin led efforts to retire the jersey of one of Syracuse University’s greatest sport stars, pioneering Tuskegee airman Wilmeth Sidat-Singh '39, whose



Zhamyr “Sammy” Cueva '93 with his family cutting the ribbon at the unveiling of the NALFO plaques during CBT 2017

No. 19 jersey now hangs in the Carrier Dome among those of the University’s most revered athletes. “His story was only known to a few, but he was a pioneer in everything he did and should be celebrated,” says Martin.

Monk would go on to fund an endowment creating the Syracuse 8 Scholarship in the OTHC program. With financial support from Syracuse trustee Palmer, Martin recruited historian and writer David Marc to work with the Syracuse 8 on a book. *Leveling the Playing Field: The Story of the Syracuse 8* was published by the Syracuse University Press in 2015, the same year that Martin retired.

**R**achel Vassel '91, nationwide director of multicultural marketing for the American Cancer Society at the time, was recruited to the helm as assistant vice president of





2017 Chancellor's Citation recipient  
Connie Orlando '89 with Chancellor  
Kent Syverud and Rachel Vassel '91



Damaris Mercado '03 and Shane Evans '93 at CBT IX

Frances McMillan Parks, who  
retired as director of Students  
Offering Service and African  
American Programs at Hendricks  
Chapel in 2007, at a CBT  
worship service



program development in 2016. “I understood the value of the program. I’ve benefited personally from the connectivity that CBT provides, and although I wasn’t an OTHC scholar, I experienced and understand the challenges of being a first generation college student,” she says.

Each chapter in the growth of the department has reflected its leadership and Vassel wasted no time in making her mark, bringing a fresh perspective to take the department’s mission to engage diverse alumni in an effort to serve diverse students to a new level.

The first order of business was CBT 2017, which broke all previous records for attendance and alumni giving. More than 800 alumni returned for the reunion, raising an astounding \$1 million in 2017 for OTHC scholarships.

The following year, in an effort to augment services to OTHC Scholars, the department launched the OTHC Mentors program and the OTHC Leadership Development program. The Mentors program pairs alumni with students based on professional interests to provide students with guidance on matters such as securing internships, creating a professional resume or evaluating job offers. The Leadership program consists of monthly professional development programming to help students prepare for adulthood and the working world, as well as corporate immersion visits, where students have the opportunity to spend the day experiencing the culture of a specific business. In Spring 2021, the OTHC Leaders program was created to extend these leadership development services to students of color who do not require the OTHC Scholarship funding. “Our goal is to impact more students

of color and help them to succeed post college,” says Vassel.

In 2019, the office was rebranded as the Syracuse University Office of Multicultural Advancement (SUMA), a name that more closely aligns with its longtime mission to foster diverse alumni involvement with the University and raise funds to support Black and Latino/a students. “This was simply an effort to more accurately reflect the mission and focus of what we do, particularly as we seek out external partners and sponsors for support,” says Vassel, now associate vice president.

At the same time, the office created the Multicultural Advancement Advisory Council. This group of successful Black and Latino/a alumni plays an advisory role to help the office achieve its mission, particularly through fundraising. “In particular, we are working to increase our corporate and foundation support,” says Vassel.

To date, the OTHC Scholarship Program has awarded more than 1,500 scholarships. This year, 75 students—many of them first-generation college students—are receiving support. But the scholarship program hasn’t come close to meeting the need: only 30 percent of qualified applicants were awarded a scholarship this year. SUMA is currently closing in on a goal to raise \$2 million by CBT 2021.

In other words, there’s no slowing down. “I was lucky enough to inherit a really great program from Robert and Larry,” Vassel says. “The goal for me and our current team is to continue to grow it and to make it a more robust and prestigious program for our students and a more impactful part of the University as a whole.”

# A Seat at the Table

## Alumni of color help strengthen Syracuse University by bringing their voices to boards and councils.

**W**hen Jason Mills '95, G'96 was asked by the late Dean Raymond Von Dran to serve on the iSchool Board of Advisors 16 years ago, there were very few board members who were alumni or people of color. Mills says he has enjoyed providing thought leadership in the areas of technology, digital product development and artificial intelligence and the impact of those on students and communities of color. “My career in technology provides strong guidance for the school’s future,” says Mills, a director at Google and technology entrepreneur who enjoys interacting with students and the relationships he’s built over the years with other board members and the Syracuse University trustees community.

Mills is no longer an anomaly. When Syracuse University held its inaugural leadership summit for alumni volunteers in spring 2019, there was something notable about the group assembled: the number of Black and brown faces present. More than at any other time in history, Syracuse’s Black and Latino/a alumni are offering their wisdom, experience and perspective as members of University advisory boards—from regional alumni boards to school and college councils to the Board of Trustees.

That’s no accident. Rachel Vassel, associate vice president of multicultural advancement, considers it part of her mission. “We want to engage Black and brown alumni—not only as donors—but as participants in conversations on campus. Our diverse alumni can provide the University some unique perspectives on what’s happening in our world now, leading to opportunities for greater equity and inclusion at the University and additional support for our students.”

Michael Blackshear '91 was a volunteer who attended the inaugural summit. A longtime member of the Management Advisory Board at the Whitman School of Management, Blackshear was also an inaugural member of the Office of Multicultural Advancement advisory council. And in September 2020, he became a member of the Whitman Advisory Council, which supports the dean in his leadership of the business school.

“When I graduated, there were only two people of color graduating with a finance major,” Blackshear says. “Not only were there few peers of color, there were also very few professors of color that I could connect with or mentors or sponsors for me to engage with.”

Blackshear wanted to fill that void. “I thought my involvement could make a change in students’ perception of the possibilities and opportunities that exist with a major in a business platform,” he says. Blackshear has come back to campus to speak to Whitman students about his successful career in compliance and risk management as part of the Our Time Has Come Leadership Development program.



Jason Mills



Michael Blackshear



Nkenge Bergan



Gezzer Ortega





Mary Spio



Eve Marsan



Reginald Acloque



Tara Brown Favors

“Regardless of their major, I’m committed to mentoring students and to help guide them through challenges they may have through their journey,” he says.

That motivation is shared by Nkenge Bergan ’95. As an undergraduate student in the School of Education at Syracuse, Bergan says she could count the number of students of color on one hand. “If I have the opportunity to offer support and guidance for students going into education—particularly minority women—I want to lend my hand.”

Bergan is director of student services for Kalamazoo, Michigan, Public Schools. She recently joined the board of visitors for the School of Education and serves as a mentor to a Ph.D. student.

“I think it is important to give back when you feel as though you have been given so much,” says Bergan. “I received a phenomenal education from the Syracuse University School of Education. I felt so very prepared coming out of undergrad and getting into my teaching career that I wanted to be able to give back to the organization that I felt really gave so much to me while I was there.”

Harvard physician Gezzar Ortega ’03 joined the Dean’s Advisory Board of the College of Arts and Sciences in August 2020, in part out of a desire to pay it forward. “While at SU, I engaged in various academic and support programs that helped guide my journey, such as the College Science and Technology Entry Program, the Ronald E. McNair Scholars Program and the Office of Multicultural Affairs.”

But giving back is only one part of the equation. Alumni stress the importance of having diverse voices at the table. Ortega says his experience as a first-generation college student of color from a low-income background allows him to advocate for students from a range of backgrounds and contribute a perspective centered on improving access, equality and outcomes for all.

As a member of the College of Engineering and Computer Science Dean’s Leadership Council, “I bring unique insight as an entrepreneur, woman, veteran and person of color,” says Mary Spio ’98, president of Ceek VR. “There are sensitivities and

nuances that are often missed by not having diversity on a board. Everyone sees differently,” she says.

Eve Marsan ’96 joined the board of the Syracuse University Alumni Association in 2019 after serving as president of a local alumni club. “In our current climate, the world is being viewed through a different lens,” she says. “While I am not the voice for all people of color, I believe this opportunity has provided me a seat at the table for the many voices that have gone unheard so long. It’s been an honor.”

Reginald Acloque ’99 has shared his professional and industry experiences with Syracuse University students for 20 years. He’s currently a member of both the Atlanta Regional Council and the iSchool Board of Advisors. “As board members, we are uniquely positioned to make a difference in how the University operates, both off and on campus, but we also need a university that works for all of us,” he says. “I try to represent the voices of the diverse student and alumni population by providing additional perspective.”

Almost universally, alumni say their volunteer experiences have enhanced their connection to Syracuse University. “I have found that my love for this University grows with my continuing ability to make an impact,” says Tara Brown Favors ’95, a member of the Office of Multicultural Advancement advisory council.

“Each of us alumni are a part of this University and each of us needs to find a way to be engaged because the students need to see us and the University needs to hear us,” she says. “There are ways to do it financially, which are important, but there are also ways to do it by giving back with the talents that we developed as being students here.”

# An Uncommon Man

## The Orange community mourns the loss of Floyd Little.

**T**he Syracuse University community lost one of its most revered and celebrated sports figures with the death of Floyd Little '67 on Jan. 1, after a year-long battle with cancer.

Little's mantra, "I do not choose to be a common man because it is my right to be uncommon if I can," exemplified his life. He was not only an outstanding student, athlete and businessman, but had rare personal qualities that endeared him to everyone he came in contact with.

"My dad had a larger-than-life personality," says his daughter, Christy Little Jones '92, who is writing a book about the 44 lessons she learned from her father. "He was the most kind-hearted, giving, fun-loving person anyone could ever meet. He had a smile that lit up a room and a gift for being present with people and making

them feel important. He never met a stranger. Even if meeting you for the first time, he would give you a great big hug like you were part of the family. My dad always recognized the greatness in people and inspired them to become the best version of themselves."

In the autobiography *Promises to Keep* (Triumph Books, 2012), Little describes growing up in Connecticut as one of six children raised by a single mother. His father died of cancer when Little was 6, driving each member of the family to contribute to the family's survival. As a youngster and teen, Little washed cars, shined shoes, delivered papers and worked in a deli.

A standout student-athlete, he picked Syracuse from a list of 47 schools, largely because former Syracuse running back Ernie Davis '62 visited him in Connecticut to convince him to attend his alma mater. As the first Black player to win the Heisman, Davis' words carried significant influence. But Little was also being heavily recruited by West Point and Notre Dame. He did not commit to Syracuse until learning of Davis' death from leukemia months later. "I wanted to be the Ernie Davis that he couldn't be," Little once told ESPN in an interview.



Floyd Little with his daughter, Christy Little Jones



SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY



At Syracuse, Little followed the lineage of Davis and Jim Brown '57 in wearing the No. 44 jersey. Little became the only three-time All-American in program history, finishing fifth in voting for the Heisman Trophy twice. In three seasons for the Orange, Little rushed for 2,704 yards and scored 46 touchdowns. As a junior in 1965, he led the nation in all-purpose yards (1,990) and punt return average (23.5). He still holds the Syracuse career record with six punt returns for touchdowns.

But he didn't only make an impact on the playing field. "Floyd was the most popular person on campus," says his Syracuse teammate Tom Coughlin '68, G'69, a former New York Giants head coach. "Everyone wanted to be his friend and every professor wanted Floyd in his or her class. He was the embodiment of positivity and humility. Floyd's work ethic was beyond reproach. He worked hard in the classroom and on the practice field. It was an honor to have shared the huddle with such greatness."

Little was the sixth overall pick in the 1967 AFL-NFL draft. He played nine seasons in Denver, where he earned the nickname "The Franchise" because his signing was credited with keeping the team from relocating and helped persuade voters to approve funds for the Mile High Stadium. Little made the Pro Bowl five times. He led the league in total yardage in 1967 and 1968, and led the AFC in rushing yardage in 1970 and the NFL in 1971.

After his retirement from professional football, Little graduated

from the University of Denver College of Law and went on to complete an executive management training program with Ford Motor Company. He excelled in the business, becoming one of the most successful and well-respected Ford dealers in the industry, serving as president and owner of Pacific Coast Ford and as a consultant and instructor for Ford's Minority Dealers Program. At the time of his retirement from the company in 2009, he was the longest-tenured minority dealer in the Ford portfolio.

Little received numerous honors for his accomplishments. He was inducted into the College Football Hall of Fame in 1983 and the Pro Football Hall of Fame in 2010. He was named a Syracuse University Letterwinner of Distinction and was inducted into the Colorado



Little signs copies of his autobiography on campus



Floyd and his wife, DeBorah Little '14, G'16

Sports Hall of Fame, the Denver Broncos Ring of Fame, the Gator Bowl Hall of Fame and the Multi-Ethnic Sports Hall of Fame. He was honored by the NCAA with its Silver Anniversary Award for his collegiate and professional accomplishments and his civic and charitable activities. A bronze statue of Little stands alongside statues of fellow legendary running backs Davis and Brown outside Syracuse University's football practice facility.

In 2011, Little was recruited back to Syracuse University to serve as a special assistant to athletic director Darryl Gross. For five years, he played a pivotal role with fundraising, recruiting and mentoring student athletes and team development activities. Serving as a University ambassador was a perfect fit. He loved Syracuse University and the greater Syracuse community loved him. When he retired in 2016, Little was honored by the University with an honorary doctorate in humane letters at Commencement.

"The legacy that he leaves here is so much more than just one who wore 44, was an All-American, was in the College Football Hall of Fame and the Pro Football Hall of Fame," says Syracuse athletic director John Wildhack. "Floyd's legacy is that he was a wonderful, wonderful person. He treated everyone with genuine care and respect and was always there for people. His impact as a person is those that he impacted. He was always willing to share his time, his wisdom, his support."

"Floyd Little embodied what it means to be Orange," adds Chancellor Kent Syverud. "Our hearts are with his wife DeBorah, and all who loved him. Floyd Little, number 44, will forever be our Orange MVP"

In addition to his wife DeBorah, Little is survived by his children, Marc, Christy, and Kyra, and his grandchildren, AJ, Skye, Blaze, Hayes and Yakob.

Syracuse University honored Little at a memorial service at Hendricks Chapel on March 27, attended by a small gathering of family and invited guests and livestreamed to the public. Little specifically requested his family and friends gather together one last time in the chapel in memory of the great love and life they all shared together.

ANDREW BURNETT '88

## Problem Solver

**F**or more than 25 years, Andrew Burnett has been involved in launching businesses, providing strategic and management advisory services, and offering capital acquisition and business planning solutions to start-ups and early stage ventures in industries ranging from technology, information services and wireless telecommunication services to energy and cybersecurity.

“I think the overall theme is problem solving,” says Burnett. “As an entrepreneur, I look where there are problems and needs and build businesses to help address them.”

Burnett says he learned to do that at Syracuse University’s College of Engineering and Computer Science. “Engineering teaches you how to solve problems,” he says.

A native of Guyana raised in Brooklyn, New York, Burnett came to Syracuse University as an aerospace engineering major with a goal to become an astronaut. Along the way, he learned how to program computers, becoming skilled enough to launch his first company, Computer Integrated Applications, to develop software for paying clients.

After earning a degree in engineering, Burnett was hired by DuPont in software development, ultimately earning an MBA from the University of Pennsylvania’s Wharton School of Business with a concentration in entrepreneurial management and marketing.

Burnett has held executive-level positions in several of the companies he has advised, including chief operating officer of Next Gen Energy Software; chief executive officer of Bright Source Solutions, an energy industry consultancy; chief operating officer of a commercial printing firm; and chief executive officer of a start-up urban marketing company. Burnett also served as managing director at Cathedral Consulting Group, where he

directed business development, client service activities, and the firm’s marketing program. Currently, he is CEO and managing director of the Accela Group, a management consulting and strategic advisory firm that assists business owners in running their operations with an aim toward wealth development.

It’s not just about making money, but also creating wealth for a higher purpose. Burnett says he draws wisdom related to business from the Bible, a philosophy he shares with other volunteers through his book, *My Father’s Business: A Spiritual Guide to the Ministry of Entrepreneurship* (Multnomah, 2009), and a blog of the same name that provides a community for Christian entrepreneurs. “By transforming entrepreneurship into a spiritual calling, wealth is created, the Kingdom is financed, people are blessed in the process, and God gets the glory for it all,” he says.

Burnett, based in New York City, has used his own success to give back to Syracuse University. A member of Alpha Phi Alpha, he recently gave \$25,000 to the Our Time Has Come (OTHC) Alpha Phi Alpha Scholarship. Another gift of \$100,000 created the Joyceleen and Stephen Burnett Scholarship through the OTHC program, which will give preference to supporting an underrepresented student in the College of Engineering and Computer Science. Burnett named the scholarship in honor of his mother, who worked three jobs to put six children through college, as well as his younger brother, who was tragically murdered before he had the opportunity to attend. “My brother’s dream of going to college will be lived by each recipient of this scholarship,” says Burnett, who benefited from an OTHC scholarship as a student.

Mostly, he wants the experience for today’s students to be easier than his own. “Throughout my time in college, there were four of us in school at once,” Burnett recalls. “I used to make my schedule and attend classes, not being registered, trying to come up with the tuition money by the time finals came,” he says.

Burnett, who was president of the Caribbean Student Association as an undergraduate, says he hopes this is just the start to his SU philanthropy. As always, he has several new ventures in the works, including two mobile apps launching this year. “We’ll see what happens,” he says.



Andrew Burnett



MOHAMED JALLOH '01

# Impacting His Community

**A**s a young attorney and former elected official in Union County, New Jersey, Mohamed Jalloh was often asked to speak to young people at schools. “What they always wanted to know was how I got here and how they could get to where they’d like to be,” he says.

That conversation about how to get from point A to point Z in life became so familiar that Jalloh knew he should do more with it. The result is Live Life Virtually, an educational platform in the form of an app that allows young people to experience the consequences of their life decisions.

“It’s a game, but it includes over 2,000 hours of curriculum and resources,” says Jalloh. The app allows users to choose a path—for example, attend college or start a job—and simulates where they would end up based on their choices. Along the way, they learn about valuable life skills, such as budgeting, credit and debt management, and filing a tax return.

“Everything has a consequence, everything has a reaction, and you have to deal with it,” says Jalloh, who has taught classes as an adjunct instructor for 13 years at Kean University in Union. “But life isn’t something you can teach through lecture. The only way to teach something this intangible is through simulation and we now have the technology to do that.”

Jalloh’s product got its launch at three workforce development programs in New Jersey that work with at-risk young people. “After the pilot, they saw a huge uptick of participants interested in enrolling in community college, which was a direct result of using this program,” says Jalloh, who hopes to develop partnerships with school systems this year.

Leadership development is nothing new for Jalloh, a partner in the law firm of Jalloh and Jalloh and an elected freeholder (county commissioner) from 2010 to 2019. As an undergraduate at Syracuse University, Jalloh was a founding member and president of the African American Male Congress and an Our Time Has Come Scholar. He also served as the student representative on the Quality Council, a board of deans and key faculty that focused on the quality of services provided to students on campus.

Jalloh says he was fortunate to grow up in a family that emulated success. His family has strong Syracuse University ties, starting with his grandfather, Clarence W. Bauknight Jr. G’53, who earned a master’s degree in microbiology. “I grew up listening to my mother, aunts, uncles and grandfather all telling stories about Syracuse University,” Jalloh says. “When I thought about college, that’s all I knew.”

Jalloh majored in speech and rhetorical studies and says it was a course in communications and the law that spurred him to buy an LSAT review book and take the test. He attended Rutgers Law School in Newark, where he was elected as the student government representative to the Council of Student Affairs.

After earning his law degree, Jalloh gained experience working at legal services in Newark, New Jersey, before going into partnership with his mother, Bernice “Tina” Bauknight-Jalloh ’75.

“My focus has always been on helping people,” says Jalloh, both of his general practice and his call to public service.

“The support I provide to clients on a case-by-case basis, I was able to do as a freeholder on a grander scale,” he says.

In an effort to foster greater civic involvement among his peers, Jalloh founded the Civic Knights in 2013, a nonprofit professional networking organization focused on community service. “I think of it as a service incubator,” says Jalloh. “The organization helps individual members with the resources, training, and sometimes funding, to get community initiatives off the ground.” Most recently, the group sponsored the creation of the ArtHouse, a community arts space in downtown Linden.

While those efforts are largely on hold due to the impact of COVID-19, Jalloh is spending his creative energies writing a young adult novel, *The Heirs of Ado’Rah*, a fantasy rooted in African mythology. “My favorite books growing up were *Lord of the Rings* and *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, but I never saw myself represented in those pages,” says Jalloh, who has previously published a short story on Amazon based on the pending novel, titled *I, Jari*.

“I’d like to create some characters in the fantasy genre for young people of color to relate to,” Jalloh says, echoing his lifelong dedication to representation and education, and to enlightening and uplifting his community.

To learn more about Live Life Virtually, visit [lifelifevirtually.com](http://lifelifevirtually.com). To download a copy of Jalloh’s short story, *I, Jari*, visit [Amazon.com](http://Amazon.com).



Mohamed Jalloh



DEIRDRE GALL ROBINSON '82

## Talent Champion

**A**s an experienced marketing executive, Deirdre Gall Robinson knows how to sell a product or idea. For 10 years, she led Verizon's marketing for FIOS, from launch as a new product to growth as a multibillion-dollar business. Now Robinson is using her expertise to help Verizon make societal impact. As senior director of corporate social responsibility and marketing talent development, Robinson has spearheaded the company's efforts to inspire and enable more young students of color into technology fields.

"Students of color are significantly underrepresented in tech fields and lack access to digital tools," says Robinson. "We recognize that to be successful in a digital economy you need to be proficient in digital technology."

To that end, Verizon has partnered with 350 low-income schools across the country to provide free internet access, a tablet for each student, and extensive teacher training. The second step is to inspire students to STEM careers by showing them the possibilities of those careers. "Talking with students, we realized most of these kids think their way out of poverty is to become a professional athlete or an entertainer," Robinson says. "That insight drove our #weneedmore campaign, designed to show kids the many, many career opportunities in STEM and their average salaries. You can literally see the students' eyes light up."

Not all of Robinson's efforts at tackling underrepresentation are external. As head of Verizon's marketing capabilities practice, she leads the Verizon Marketing Academy, the in-house training organization for Verizon's 2,500-plus marketers. She also leads Verizon's Adfellows program, the first fellowship program for diverse college graduates in the advertising industry.

"Adfellows was created to grow and develop the entry-level pipeline of diverse talent into marketing and advertising," says Robinson. Now in its fourth year, the competitive fellowship program was created by Verizon to drive change across the industry. Verizon recruits corporate and agency partners to sponsor an annual eight-month rotational fellowship, which is designed to introduce participants to the broad array of jobs within advertising and marketing, as well as provide personal development and marketing training for success in the industry. The consortium of participating companies commits to hiring the Adfellows as full-time employees at the end of the program. "We've had a 98-percent placement rate so far and 95 percent are still employed in the industry," says Robinson.



Deirdre Gall Robinson

"Our point of view is that we serve a diverse group of customers and we need more diverse voices at the table so that our work can be more relevant to every one of our customers," she says. "If we don't have the diversity of voices sitting at the table, then we're going to miss a key part of the market. It's good for business and society."

Robinson attended the High School of Performing Arts in the Bronx and came to Syracuse University to study broadcast journalism, intending to become a newscaster. At the urging of her mother, she picked up a second major in business. A summer internship at NBC gave her exposure to advertising and she realized that was her niche. "It's a perfect combination for me because I get to use my creative side, my analytic side and my strategic side," she says.

Robinson, who was active in the Black Communications Society and served as president of Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority, graduated with a degree in advertising and marketing. Her first job out of college was with the ad agency McCann Erickson, where she worked on an account for NYNEX (which later became Verizon). Two years later, Verizon recruited her to its leadership development program (VLDP), and she has remained on the marketing track ever since.

Last fall, Robinson was honored with the Association of National Advertisers (ANA) 2020 Educational Foundation Talent Champion Award, which recognizes "talent champions" across the advertising and marketing industry who have demonstrated a commitment to paving the way for future generations of leaders in marketing and advertising.

"Working in marketing and advertising has been a great career," says Robinson. "The ability to take everything that I've learned over the years to share and give back and to grow and develop talent is a wonderful place to be."



JACQUELINE URTECHO '92

# Critical Caregiver

Jacqueline Urtecho believes most of her Syracuse University peers will be surprised to learn she became a doctor, and in particular, a neurointensivist who cares for acutely ill patients in the intensive care unit (ICU) at Philadelphia's Thomas Jefferson Hospital.

"I didn't have the focus or drive at that point in my life," she says of her undergraduate years. "I never really thought I was smart enough."

But it's never too late to discover your passion and switch gears, Urtecho says. "I started medical school at 30 and didn't complete all my training until I was almost 40," she says.

Even coming off of the most challenging year in her professional career, Urtecho says she loves her work. "I love everything about what I do, even the sad parts, because that comes with being a good doctor," she says. "I love being at the bedside treating patients and teaching students, residents and fellows."

As a neurointensivist, Urtecho cares for patients in the neurological ICU, working closely with neurosurgeons, neurologists, nurse practitioners and other healthcare providers to treat patients suffering from life-threatening neurological and neurosurgical illnesses. Those include stroke, aneurysm, head trauma, spinal cord injuries and diseases and viruses that impact the brain.

For the last year, that has also included COVID-19. "In the neuro-ICU, we have seen some of the worst cases—patients with ischemic strokes, intracranial bleeds and encephalitis that we believe is secondary to COVID-19," she says. During spring 2020, the hospital experienced a deluge of patients dying.

"The hardest part about treating COVID is having no more tools, nothing else to offer," says Urtecho. "Families couldn't be at the bedside, so we were trying to organize Zoom and Facetime interactions to allow them to see their loved ones one last time. It's very difficult having end-of-life conversations over the phone and that has really impacted a lot of staff."

Despite the difficulty, Urtecho prides herself on helping families at their worst moments. "That's something that I try to teach the residents and the fellows" she says. "When you have a good outcome, that's great. But it's important to be able to talk to families when the outcome is bad."

Urtecho says her empathy stems in part from having suffered tragedy early on in life; her mother died when she was in high

school. "I know what that's like to lose someone you love, and I wanted to help other families during this trying time," she says.

Urtecho grew up in a rural mill town in Maine. Her parents were divorced, and after her mother's death, she wanted to get away. She found a new home at Syracuse University, where she majored in Spanish with a business minor and received support as an Our Time Has Come Scholar. She played drums with the marching band and electric bass with the Sour Citrus Society; she was a member of Alpha Gamma Delta sorority and had work-study jobs with the football program and at the library.

After graduation, Urtecho eventually settled in Atlanta, where she worked for a manufacturing company selling aluminum, electrical wire and cable. "They were moving into South and Central American markets. I did a lot of translating for them and ended up working with those accounts" she recalls.

Urtecho credits the encouragement of a wonderful boss for changing the direction of her life. "He was so supportive about my capabilities, I started thinking about graduate school," she says. Although she initially looked into programs in international business, when she thought about her passions, she kept coming back to medicine.

Urtecho began taking pre-requisite science classes, one at a time, to test the water. After receiving A-grades in each class, she applied and was accepted into a pre-medical baccalaureate program at Columbia University, followed by medical school and a residency at Temple University School of Medicine and a fellowship at Thomas Jefferson Hospital.

She says she was drawn to neurology because she is fascinated by the brain. "The brain is a black box for a lot of people, but I like the idea of discovering what's inside the box," she says.

And she was drawn to sub-specialty training as an intensivist out of a desire to care for people at their most vulnerable. "It's a privilege," Urtecho says.



Jacqueline Urtecho

PALOMA VELOZ '09

## Cooking Up Television

If you watch the Food Network's hugely successful show *The Kitchen*, you're likely focused on the recipes being prepared or the banter between co-hosts rather than the nuts and bolts of how the show gets made. In reality, there's a whole team behind the scenes making sure that what viewers see on air appears seamless.

Producer Paloma Veloz joined the show in November 2020 and is now at work on its newest season. "We have a set number of episodes and it's all about making each episode happen from conception to execution," she says. "That includes the scripts, the details of what each episode is going to look like, supporting various creative teams and just making sure all the moving parts come together in an informative and entertaining fashion so that viewers feel like they are taking away something from each segment."

Veloz's recent production credits include episodes of *Top Chef*, *Project Runway* and the HGTV house hunting/travel shows *Island Life*, *Caribbean Life* and *Mexico Life*. "I've always liked telling stories," she says. "This almost doesn't feel like work because I'm producing in areas I'm interested in—food and travel—so I'm engaged myself and excited that I get share it with an audience."

Veloz says she's known she wanted to work in television since she was a little girl in the Dominican Republic. She came to the United States at age 15 and attended a New York City high school for non-English speaking students. "My first two years of high school were in Spanish with two hours of English-language lessons each day," she says. "In my junior and senior years, classes transitioned more and more to English."

Based on her interests, a high school guidance counselor gave Veloz a brochure on the S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications. "I just knew that this was where I needed to go," Veloz says.

She wasn't disappointed. "It was great to be surrounded by people who also wanted to be in television or journalism and who wanted to excel in the industry," she says. "Many of the opportunities in my career and in my life have happened because of connections made at Syracuse."

As a student, Veloz co-founded the Spanish-language news broadcast on CitrusTV and volunteered as a tutor for low-income students in the City of Syracuse through the Literacy Corp program.

"The kids that I used to work with were part of a program called MANOS, which is the word for hands in Spanish," says Veloz. "Most were from families that had recently moved to the United States for a better life. Being able to work with them was very special because I could see myself reflected in their experience and it felt like giving back."

She was also an Our Time Has Come Scholar. "Being an Our Time Has Come Scholar had a huge positive impact on my experience at SU," she says. "I felt quite lucky to have an amazing community cheering me on and being guided and supported throughout my college career."

Veloz joined the NBC Page Program immediately out of college and worked as a production associate on various NBC News shows. She also worked with NBCUniversal Telemundo Enterprises on its morning program, *Un Nuevo Día*. Now a freelancer, Veloz has felt the impact of the pandemic.

"I was out of work for a few months last year because television production pretty much shut down," she says. Although steadily employed since August, she has had to adjust to remote work via Zoom. "It requires another level of planning," she says. "If my Internet goes down, there are other members of the producing team who can quickly back me up."

When not working, Veloz says she's often trying out new recipes of her own and posting them to her Instagram for her friends. "I miss interacting in real life and the energy that comes from in-person collaboration, but that's the struggle we're all having."





JACQUELINE WELCH '91

# People Steward

In February, *The New York Times* released a sweeping “call to action” over diversity, equity and inclusion practices following an eight-month internal assessment. Top executives acknowledged critical shortcomings and a commitment to bringing about fundamental changes to the company’s workplace culture in an effort to make the newsroom and other *Times* divisions more diverse and inclusive.

Developing strategies to respond to issues uncovered by the assessment is a top priority for Jacqueline Welch, who joined *The New York Times* as executive vice president and chief human resources officer on Jan. 1. “There’s a real hunger and appetite for the evolution of our people practices. This is my primary initial focus,” she says.

Welch leads *The Times*’ human resources team and oversees all aspects of talent acquisition, career development, organizational development, equitable compensation practices, performance enablement and diversity, equity and inclusion. She serves on the company’s executive committee and reports to the chief executive officer, Meredith Kopit Levien, who joined the company in July 2020.

“I’m here to steward people, and so there is something particularly challenging about being head of HR and never actually having met anybody outside of the computer screen,” she says.

Welch came to *The Times* with more than 20 years of executive experience in human resources, most recently serving as senior vice president, chief human resources officer and chief diversity officer at Freddie Mac since 2016.

“From the start of the pandemic until I departed in December 2020, Freddie Mac hired in excess of 400 people. Each time I would think to myself, ‘who on earth would take a new job in this environment,’” she recalls. “And then it happened to me!”

Although not looking to make a change, the opportunity to join *The New York Times* was too unique to pass by. “Journalism is the only profession protected by the Constitution,” says Welch. “In my view, *The New York Times* has a singular importance in the landscape of democracy and U.S. politics, and in journalism and reporting, particularly in this current environment where public trust is such a precious commodity.”

Welch is the first Black woman in her role, and only the second Black woman to be listed on the masthead. It’s also her first experience supporting a female CEO. “From a career perspective, it was a compelling pull,” she says.

It also felt personal. A native New Yorker, Welch grew up reading *The Times*. “To the extent that you can have a crush



Jacqueline Welch

on a thing, I have a crush on the Gray Lady,” she says.

Welch has always loved words, the reason she majored in English at Syracuse University. “I always felt that if I could communicate well, the rest would take care of itself,” she says.

Professor Janis Mayes was a major influence. “If she taught it, I took it,” says Welch. “Dr. Mayes made me a better student and a broader thinker. To this day, I have the map of Africa memorized, including countries that have long changed names.”

Welch was a member of the Caribbean Students Association, and with classmate Abenaa Abboa-Offei, resurrected *The Black Voice* newsletter. But it was an out-of-classroom

experience that focused her career path. She spent a summer in Syracuse working for the Urban League of Onondaga County training people for local jobs. When the director of the department went on an unexpected medical leave, Welch was suddenly in charge.

She’ll never forget the first job placement she made on her own, with the Yellow Freight Trucking Company. “The man I placed came back to the office after completing his probation period, this very tall, proud Black man, and he was open-face crying. He said to me, ‘thank you for giving me a way to provide for my family.’ In that moment I knew what I wanted to do with my life,” recalls Welch.

Three months into her newest role, she says every minute is accounted for. Another major focus is helping *The Times* develop a plan for an eventual return to the workplace. “Public health is the determining factor,” she says. “There are any number of moving variables over which we have no control. The best most organizations can do is to develop a plan and be flexible about when you’re going to execute it.”

She believes the pandemic will leave a lasting imprint. “For employers universally, I think we’re going to see a permanent change in terms of where employees do their work and employers being more flexible about that,” she says. “Office-centricity is dead.”

But having never met her colleagues in person, Welch looks forward to office life. “I haven’t even had the distinct pleasure yet of going into the production facility to see the paper come hot off the press.”

## Malate Aschalew

**A**s the child of Ethiopian immigrants growing up in a melting pot community, Malate Aschalew '21 learned firsthand that medicine is about more than making a diagnosis. "It's about being culturally competent and understanding the experiences of marginalized populations that contribute to health disparities," she says.

The public health major and aspiring physician has volunteered extensively with organizations that serve immigrant and refugee populations in Syracuse, helping students with English reading and writing skills, with homework assignments and with completing college applications.

"I'm a first-generation college student myself and received assistance with my own college applications at a similar center at home in Cambridge, Massachusetts, so I relate with them in that way," says Aschalew. "Immigrant parents come here from different countries with high hopes to give their children the best, but they may not have the experience to provide hands-on guidance."

In the summer after her sophomore year, Aschalew studied abroad in South Africa, where she was able to work with Inkululeko, an education nonprofit that provides academic and moral support to middle and high school aged students in Mahkanda. "My time in South Africa strengthened my knowledge on global issues," says Aschalew.

The Syracuse University senior says she's received invaluable assistance herself from the Ronald E. McNair Scholars Program and the Our Time Has Come Scholarship Program. "The McNair program has been instrumental to my academic success and in helping me make decisions as to what activities to engage in on my pre-med path," she says.

Those experiences include a year of chemistry research in the lab of Associate Professor Nancy Totah. Aschalew has also volunteered and shadowed at local hospitals, completing three five-month internships at Upstate Medical University in the post-amnesia care unit, the ophthalmology department and with She Matters, a community outreach program that educates women on the importance of breast cancer screening. "I'm getting different exposures to try to determine my interests," she says.

Named an Our Time Has Come (OTHC) Scholar this year, Aschalew says the program provides opportunities to strengthen her leadership and professional development beneficial to her goal to become a physician. "I'm thankful to have a supportive community of scholars who are able to share values relating to education," she says. "And I value the encouragement and advice of alumni. Seeing people of color who have made it so far is very inspiring and reassuring."

As a student who works two campus jobs (at Bird Library and Health Promotion), she's also grateful for the scholarship support. "The scholarship has definitely alleviated the stress I face as a low-income student responsible for my own expenses," she says.

In addition to her academic, job and volunteer demands, Aschalew serves as secretary for the African Student Union and as a mentor to first-year and transfer students of color through the Dimensions program. With many activities curtailed due to COVID-19, she has more time to study for the MCAT, which she plans to take this summer. "My plan is to apply for medical school for the 2022 cycle," she says.

She'll have one final experience to draw from. This semester, as part of her senior internship and capstone experience, Aschalew will work with FACES, a New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute-funded program that provides HIV education and support services directed at communities of color.

Aschalew is excited to put her education to practice. "Public health is all about leveling the playing field and making sure that everyone has equal access to everything that society can offer," she says.



Malate Aschalew enjoys volunteering with immigrant communities in Syracuse. The aspiring physician is interested in public health.



# Kevin Camelo Bonilla

**A**s a high school student at the Southwest Career Technical Academy in Las Vegas, Nevada, Kevin Camelo Bonilla '21 found his passion in web design. With the help of a guidance counselor, he discovered Syracuse University's S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications and was thrilled when he was accepted early decision with a financial aid package that made attendance possible.

But he's had to work a lot of jobs to help pay the way, including serving as a residential advisor for two years. As a senior, Camelo Bonilla wanted to step away from his RA position to take on a role as a residential mentor with Syracuse University's InclusiveU program. The only problem was that the position did not provide a meal plan.

"Thankfully, I received an Our Time Has Come (OTHC) Scholarship," he says. "The scholarship has covered my meal plan for two semesters, which has made this opportunity possible."

As a residential mentor, Camelo Bonilla helps individuals with developmental and intellectual disabilities build independent living skills. He's been involved with InclusiveU as a peer mentor since his sophomore year, working with students on daily needs ranging from class schedules and academics to campus navigation and money management. Now, he lives alongside the students, providing the same sort of support and friendship. "My job is to ensure that they're learning how to be independent so that they can successfully transition to an independent living situation," he says.

Working with InclusiveU has been one of Camelo Bonilla's most influential college experiences and helped shape his academic focus: graphic design with an emphasis on user experience and accessibility. "It's all about understanding how humans interact with the world around them. And in terms of design, how humans interact with that little button, that color, that font," explains Camelo Bonilla, now a double major in graphic design at the Newhouse School and information management and technology at the iSchool.

As an intern with Our Ability, a multimedia company that produces web applications for people with disabilities, Camelo Bonilla researched how individuals with disabilities search for jobs, leading to the development of a chat bot to assist with the job application process. "It was wonderful to work on," he says.

Camelo Bonilla's interest in helping those with disabilities is organic. He has an older sister with autism. From a young age, his mother instilled the importance of being considerate of everyone around him. "As a designer, that requires me to think about the human who is interacting with my designs on their screen," he says. "There's a lot of thought that goes into making design accessible in terms of populations and functionality. I want to establish a design agency someday that focuses on accessible functionality."

As digital editor for *The Daily Orange* last year, Camelo Bonilla worked to make the website more accessible to users. He's also a designer for the NewsHouse, a site that showcases student writing.



Kevin Camelo Bonilla has combined studies in graphic design and information technology to specialize in accessibility and user interface.

He's thrilled to start his post-graduation career with a design position at IBM.

The son of Colombian immigrants, Camelo Bonilla says he is thankful for the cultural support he has received through the OTHC program. "Earlier this year, I was struggling with how to get people to refer to me by both of my names," he says. "My second last name is important. It's something that my mom gave to me and that holds my Latino pride very closely."

He found a listening ear in Maria J. Lopez '05, G'12, assistant director of scholarship programs in the Office of Multicultural Advancement, who offered him suggestions for correcting people to use his name properly. "It was such a positive experience to have that support," he says. "I appreciate all that OTHC has done for me in a short time."

## Barrington Bucknor

**B**arrington Bucknor '21 is fascinated by the brain. As a high school student in Kingston, Jamaica, he read *The Diving Bell and the Butterfly*, journalist Jean-Dominique Bauby's memoir about his massive stroke and the neurological consequences. "It made me realize how much the brain controls the quality of life that people are able to live and I wanted to learn more," he says.

At Syracuse University, Bucknor double majored in biochemistry and neuroscience. He got involved with the Strategic Undergraduate STEM Talent Acquisition Initiative (SUSTAIN) program, aimed at retaining STEM students from underrepresented or low-income backgrounds, and was paired with a faculty research mentor. For the last three years, Bucknor has worked with Carlos A. Castañeda, assistant professor of biology and chemistry, conducting laboratory research on the mechanism that causes amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS). "My specific project focuses on the protein ubiquitin and how different ions within our cells cause that protein to phase separate into the cell, which is like forming this droplet within a droplet, trying to understand more about how ions within our cells impact that formation," he says.

Ultimately, Bucknor hopes to become a neurosurgeon. He is exploring master's programs that will bolster his medical school application and prepare him for the MCAT. "I always knew I wanted to be a doctor but before coming to Syracuse, I didn't know how I would actually become a doctor," he says.

But his academic focus and ambition have not held him back from extracurricular involvement. Bucknor currently serves as president of the Pride Union, an organization dedicated to providing a safe space for LGBTQ students on campus. "I want to create a space in which people from different backgrounds and from different identities can have the safe haven to be whoever they wanted to be," he says.

Given the pandemic, Bucknor says much of his effort has been focused on engaging first-year students. "We plan activities to try and create a sense of community, such as game night or movie night or sometimes just a space to sit at your computer and rant about something specific," he says.

He has a similar goal in his involvement with the Syracuse University Chapter of Camp Kesem, a program that sponsors a one-week camp for children of parents with cancer. "We try to create a space where kids whose parents have been impacted by cancer can feel a sense of security to talk about things they are going through with other people that understand and can relate to what they are going through," he explains.

Bucknor also serves as a senior intern with the University 100, conducting virtual interviews with prospective students. He vividly



Barrington Bucknor conducts lab research related to ALS and hopes to become a neurosurgeon.

remembers the excitement of coming to college himself. As a first-year student, Bucknor created a bucket list of things he wanted to do before graduation. Sadly, he says the COVID-19 pandemic has made some of those things impossible. "There are things I took for granted that now I cannot do," he says. "Sadly, I've never been to a basketball game in the Dome."

The pandemic has also curtailed some of his other activities—namely, volunteering at Crouse Hospital and tutoring immigrant students at the North Side Learning Center in Syracuse.

One positive of his senior year was being selected as an Our Time Has Come (OTHC) Scholar. "As someone who comes from a low-income family, it definitely takes some pressure off my parents and myself in terms of student loans," he says. "The scholarship is reducing the amount of debt I will have coming out of college."

No doubt the biggest highlight of the year will be his graduation, virtual or not. "I will be the first person in my family to have a college degree," he says. "So I am trying to pat myself on the back for that because I don't give myself a lot of credit for the things that I've accomplished."



# Kirsis Allennys Dipre

**M**ental health treatment is not one size fits all. In particular, Latinx communities suffer from disparities in mental health services, related both to the cultural competence of practitioners and a lack of research on the complexities specifically impacting those communities. Kirsis Allennys Dipre is hoping to change that.

A third-year doctoral student in the counseling and human services department in the School of Education, Dipre is researching the structural barriers to access of mental health services that exist for Latinx communities in the United States. “I’m approaching this as a social problem rather than an individual problem,” she says. “I’m looking at how systems—political, social, and economic—may create barriers to mental health services. Oftentimes we look at people not using services because of individual choices or beliefs, but I’m trying to look at it how these systems are impacting them in their use of services.”

She’s taking an intersectional approach, also examining how individual circumstances impact use of mental health services. “I am trying to tease apart a lot of the complexities that are overlooked and under-researched specific to Latinx communities,” she says.

One aspect she’s examining is whether there is any difference in use of mental health services among groups with different skin colors. She’s also looking at additional stressors such as racial discrimination, whether someone was born in this country or

migrated, and mental health literacy. “For example, I want to see if someone who is a white Latinx person is using more services than a Black Latinx person, or vice versa,” she says. “And how does being marginalized or advantaged play into that?”

Dipre believes many people are impacted by having multiple identities—for example, being female, Latinx and Black. As part of her dissertation research, she is gathering quantitative statistics via an online survey of Latinx people across the United States to study the interplay between people’s identities. “I want to have a better understanding of how these different identities are impacting people so that we, as counselors, can better provide services and engage in a more culturally appropriate and sensitive manner,” she says.

Dipre is the recipient of a \$20,000 counseling fellowship from the National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC), awarded to support her education and facilitate her service to underserved populations. “The fellowship supports my research without the necessity of a teaching assistantship,” she says. She also receives support from the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education as a Holmes Scholar, and was awarded the Our Time Has Come program’s Keith Brown and Victor Holman Scholarship and Graduate Black and Hispanic Scholarship for the Spring 2021 semester, which covered a shortfall in her dissertation credits. “These scholarships came at a time when I felt without options for funding my doctoral degree, so I appreciate the opportunity to continue moving forward, especially when I am so close to completing my degree,” she says.

Born in the Dominican Republic, Dipre was raised in New Jersey. She attended Ball State University, where she earned a bachelor’s degree in psychology with minors in counseling and Spanish. She also holds a master’s degree in clinical mental health counseling from Northwestern University. Dipre is planning for an academic career, hoping to combine teaching and research with a small counseling practice.

She’s certain she’ll draw from her doctoral research on Latinx identity and mental health.

“At a basic level, counselors such as myself will at least have a more nuanced understanding of the group differences within this community,” she says. “And if we have an understanding of that, we are able to adapt our approaches in the way that we teach counselors and treat clients.”



Doctoral student Kirsis Allennys Dipre is researching structural barriers to mental health services for Latinx communities.

## Gloria Nabbosa

**A**s a high school student in the predominantly white city of Rensselaer, New York, Gloria Nabbosa '21 knew she wanted to attend a college with a diverse student population. And more than that, she wanted a school with a history of graduating successful students of color.

Nabbosa found what she was looking for at Syracuse University. "Being able to hear words of encouragement from successful alumni really makes a difference," says the Our Time Has Come (OTHC) Scholar, who credits OTHC programming with helping keep her inspired. "The Virtual CBT was really great," she says. "One comment that resonated was, 'You may not know where you're going, but you will find it,'" she recalls.

Nabbosa aspires to a career in medicine as an obstetrician/gynecologist or pediatrician. Coming from a low-income background, she says the path to medical school is not easy. In addition to OTHC, she's received support as a member of the Collegiate Science and Technology Entry Program and Ronald E. McNair Scholar programs and from Student Support Services.

Despite any obstacles, Nabbosa seems well on her way. A public health major in the Falk College of Sport and Human Dynamics, she's currently engaged in her own research project exploring the association between gender roles and maternal health for women in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda.

Nabbosa's mother is from Uganda and the project was inspired, in part, by hearing her talk about health disparities in her home country, as well as the experiences of her aunt, who is a midwife in a Uganda clinic. "Often people live quite a distance from where there is access to care," says Nabbosa. "Also, a person's family plays a role in what kind of care they will receive."

With funding from the Syracuse Office of Undergraduate Research and Creative Engagement (the SOURCE), Nabbosa is conducting secondary data analysis on data collected from the Demographic and Health Surveys Program, which has collected, analyzed and disseminated accurate and representative data on population and health through more than 400 surveys in 90 countries around the world.

"I am learning the coding and methodology now and then will be able to compare responses from the three countries in my study," she says.

An important component to Nabbosa's public health major is regular community volunteer work with immigrant and refugee communities. She has helped teach an ESL class at the West Side Learning Center in Syracuse and tutored middle and high school students through the Refugee and Immigrant Self-Empowerment (RISE) program. This semester she's an intern with Hopeprint, working with six local refugee families to help connect them with needed community resources.

The internship is an experiential learning component to her major. "It's essentially a full-time job," Nabbosa says. She's working



Gloria Nabbosa is conducting research exploring the association between gender roles and maternal health in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda.

with families from countries including Rwanda, Burundi, Iraq, Kenya and Nepal to navigate their new community and assist them with housing, transportation and employment. "I work with them to determine their goals for the next three months and then help them try to achieve that," she says. "The idea is that we're taking what we've learned about community engagement in the classroom and we're out there doing it."

Nabbosa also has a unique work study job in the lab of biologist Kate Lewis, where she is responsible for caring for many tanks of Zebrafish used in the lab's research on spinal cord interneurons, formation of functional neuronal circuitry and evolution of spinal cord patterning and function. "I test the water temperature, the water pH, and I feed the fish," she says. "It's actually pretty relaxing."

Currently, she is applying to master's programs in biomedical sciences, which she hopes to follow with medical school. "I feel like my undergraduate education has given me an understanding of the health care field and foundation with community engagement that positions me well to help people," she says.



# Camryn Simon

Camryn Simon '21 is a natural communicator. Attracted to Syracuse University by the S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications, Simon began her studies in magazine journalism but later switched to advertising. She's currently a business development intern at Code and Theory, a digital agency headquartered in New York City, and has leadership roles with campus publications *Mixtape* magazine, which covers hip-hop, and *Jerk* magazine, which focuses on arts and culture. A web search of her name reveals dozens of feature articles.

"I love being creative," says the Richmond, Virginia, native.

But don't pigeon-hole Simon into one box. The public health minor is also passionate about community development. She's fluent in Spanish and has volunteered as an ESL teacher. She'd like to serve with the Peace Corps in a Spanish-speaking country and also has her sights set on earning a dual master's degree in public health and public administration. "I'm very interested in equitable health and in tackling that from a systemic point of view," she says.

"What does it say about your health if you don't live in a 10-mile radius from a grocery store? What does it say about your health if you don't have access to public transportation near your home?" she asks. "I would love to continue to explore questions like these because I think they are really important. And I think we need more people of color in the health sector trying to push for a better, healthier world."

But first she's going to tackle corporate America. Simon has accepted a post-graduation position as a business development coordinator with Code and Theory. "I'm really excited to continue my experience," says Simon, who believes her advertising background will serve her in any path she pursues. "It's taught me so much about people, about selling yourself and about selling an idea," she says. "I think those skills will always be useful."

Simon says one reason she's been able to have such a broad range of experiences is the financial support she's received as an Our Time Has Come (OTHC) Scholar. "Financially, it has been a burden off of me and my mom's shoulders," she says. "It's given me wiggle room to do more."

Receiving the Helena Mitchell Scholarship, established by Helena Mitchell G'78, G'87 (the first minority student to earn a doctorate in electronic communications from the Newhouse School) is also personally meaningful. "As a Newhouse student, you don't really see a lot of people of color, particularly a lot of Black women walking around," she says. "Having a network of support from people of color through OTHC has been really comforting, especially with the events of the last year."

She was also recipient of the first Dick Clark Memorial Scholarship, awarded by Delta Kappa Epsilon Fraternity, and an SUinDC Summer Scholarship, awarded by the SUinDC alumni chapter.

Simon works part-time in the Office of Multicultural Advancement and had been tapped as student co-chair for Coming Back Together 2020. While she was disappointed that

the reunion was postponed due to the pandemic, she's found no shortage of alternate activities for her time. A member of Kappa Alpha Theta sorority, Simon is the vice president of programing for the Panhellenic Executive Council. She's the secretary of the Syracuse University chapter of the NAACP and also serves as a Newhouse Ambassador, giving tours (now virtually) to prospective students and their parents.

"That's something that's been fun for me, to share my journey and love of Newhouse, especially when I see students of color," she says. "I always try to find ways to give back to any community that's given me a lot."

Advertising major Camryn Simon has accepted a job with digital creative agency Code and Theory, where she interned spring semester.



# Our Time

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Aron Tobias  
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Clarence Travis and Joan Travis '78  
David Trotman-Wilkins '90 and Della Trotman-  
Wilkins



# Has Come

Floyd Tucker '65  
Leslie Tune '90  
Mark Turetsky '70 and Stephanie Turetsky  
Kimberly Twitchell '88  
Tiffany Tyler '98  
Carol Tyrell '81  
Natalie Valentine-Adams '92  
Kimberly Vaquero '91  
Don Vassel '89 and Rachel Vassel '90  
Richard Vengroff '70 and Cynthia Vengroff  
Oscar Villanueva '90  
John Vincent '79 and Anne Vincent  
James Walsh  
Walt Disney Company Foundation  
Harriett Walton '57  
Thomas Warren '94 and Jacqueline Warren '97  
Eric Watson '91  
Teana Watson '90  
Steven Weatherly  
Hillary Webb  
Na 'Tasha Webb-Prather '11  
Diana Wege '76  
Herbert Weisbaum '74  
William Welburn '75  
Davita White '87  
Karen Whiteside '89  
Anthony Williams and Tuwanda Williams '88  
Grant Williams '85  
Jeffrey Williams  
Rachel Williams '04  
Ryan Williams  
Kim Williamson '87  
Thomas Witkowski '85  
Kimberly Wolf Price '03  
Earl Young '92 and Tanya Ess-Young  
Justina Young '04  
YourCause  
Peter Zaehring and Brittany Zaehring  
B. Zelermyer  
Karen Zorn

## GIVING LEVEL OF UP TO \$99

Carolyn Abdenour Bogues '13  
Donna Adams '02  
Amera Adams  
James Aiello '70  
Abdulaziz Fadala M A Al-Sulaiti '19  
Nanci Alderman '65  
Benjamin Allen '18 and Annice Allen '17  
Neema Amadala '17  
Joe Amato '76  
Mary Anagnost '86  
Morris Anderson '88

Nathan Andrisani '92 and Allyson Andrisani  
Lila Annaloro  
Helen Arco '97  
Yolanda Arrington '00  
Tanya Ash '91  
Dulce Avendano  
Charles Baker and Dowanna Baker '94  
Laurentz Baker  
Michael Balintfy and Nicole Balintfy '01  
Simon Ballard '17  
Todd Barnett  
Daniel Barreros  
Marilyn Batchelor '18  
Jane Bean-Folkes '80 and Laurie Folkes  
Patrick Beerman '10 and Courtney Beerman '10  
Andrea Bell-Pitt '97  
Jasmine Bellamy '92  
Anthony Bennia '73 and Cherie Bennia  
Carol Benton '74  
Chelsea Berardicurti '14  
Robert Berwick '70  
Davine Bey and Yalonda Bey  
Hannah Bibighaus '14  
Craig Bingham '82 and Lynne Bingham '82  
Lorine Bizzell '68  
Jason Blackwell '94  
Alicia Blaisdell-Bannon '74  
Lauren Blau '17  
Donald Blodgett  
John Boccacino '03 and Samantha Boccacino  
Gerald Bodlander '73  
Mariama Boney '96  
Doreen Bonnett '82  
Sunil Borkar '07  
Suzanne Boyd '82  
Nina Bracey '16  
Elissa Brachfeld '93  
Monique Brantley '08  
Thomas Bray '72  
James Breed  
Deirdre Brenner  
Alexander Brewer '12  
Raynard Bronson  
Tyson Brooks '11  
Gary Brooks and Jean Brooks  
Kenneth Brown '89  
Khari Brown and Yasemin Washington Brown '90  
David Brown '66  
Valerie Brown-Daye '85  
Sharon Bubniak '71  
LaVasia Bullard '05  
Paris Bunkers  
Julio Burgos '24

Trina Burkett '94  
Karyn Burns '01  
Benjamin Burrows '14  
Julie Burstein  
Dawn Butler '74  
Joseph Caggiano '66  
Bianca Caiella Breed  
Liam Callahan  
Martha Cameron '86  
Alyssa Campbell  
John Canale '72 and Kathi Canale  
Kelly Capozzi  
Kristen Carbone '12  
Davita Carpenter '91  
Francis Carrero '10  
Candace Carter '99  
Scott Cassidy and Melissa Cassidy  
Ylenia Castillo '03  
Gordon Celliers '72  
Lawrence Center '71  
Philip Chan and Stacey Chan  
Catherine Cheo-Isaacs '90  
Bruce Ching  
Carmen Church  
David Clark '75 and Stanlyn Clark '76  
Daniel Clifford '92  
Robert Coakley '04 and Meredith Coakley  
Kevin Coates and Rachel Coates  
Richard Cohlan '70 and Roberta Cohlan '72  
Justin Cole '11 and Cornelia Hall  
Sharon Cole '07  
Michele Coleman '87  
LaVerne Collins '80  
Alicia Collins '14  
Joseph Collins '55  
Sean Collins and Jennifer Collins '19  
David Collins  
Gregory Conley '03  
Jessica Connelly  
Rebecca Conrad '08  
Timothy Conroy '75 and Barbara Conroy  
Naima Cook '03  
Cecily Cooper '99  
Brickney Copeland '09  
Abigail Covington '19  
Jewel Cowart '06  
William Crawford and Diane Crawford  
Peter Cronin and Amy Cronin  
Edward Cunningham '75  
Jennifer Cunningham  
Danielle Cushion  
Ann Cutter-Specht '73  
Maria Czaplicki '17

# Our Time

## SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Kenneth Davis '81 and Karen Davis '83  
Matthew Davis '80 and Schaelon Davis '86  
Mary Day  
Erick De La Cruz '22  
Marita De Lara Sobel '94  
Sherrie Deegan '93  
John Delaney '15  
Jamie Dening '15  
Jon DeTemple '73  
Sadikh Diagne  
Frederick Diddle and Tanya Diddle  
Michael DiDomenico and Megan DiDomenico '19  
Joseph DiOrio '81 and Denise DiOrio  
Matthew Dippold '10  
Hilory Distant  
Sean Doherty '04  
Billy Dorante '83 and Jacqueline Dorante '84  
N'dea Drayton '19  
Kristen Duggleby '18 and Dennis Duggleby  
Andrew Eastham '09  
Lisa Edwards '86  
Alile Eldridge '04  
Sean Ellis '09  
Lawrence Ellison '69  
Robert Enslin  
Barbara Eshbaugh '90  
William Evans '12  
Exact Precise Machine Tools  
Douglas Fabian '74  
Dane Faes  
Robert Fairfield and Danielle Fairfield  
Nicholas Fedorka '18 and Stephanie Fedorka '17  
K. Feist and Elizabeth Feist  
Melanie Fernandes '07  
Joan Fink '60  
Charles Flack '88  
Monique Fortune '82  
Christopher Fowler '13  
Fox Entertainment Group  
Daniel Franklin '66 and Donna Franklin  
Monique Frost  
Jade Fulce '08  
Trisha Gadson '86  
Denise Gadson  
Cindy Galloway-O'Connor '82  
Kiara Garcia '18  
Lou Garcia and Ramonita Garcia  
Alfreda Gaston '70  
Traci Geisler '90  
Nicholas George '19  
Alyssa Gerlack '19  
Brian Gerling '99  
Caroline Gettino '83  
Peter Giancesini '94 and Julie Giancesini  
Colleen Gibbons '17  
Robert Gibson  
Laurel Gilbert '70  
Brigid Gillen '06  
Terrence Gilliam '87  
Gary Girzadas  
Matthew Glynn '92  
Abby Goldberg '13  
Mauro Gomes  
Jason Gonzalez '97  
Vanessa Gonzalez-Figueroa  
Jerry Goodman '65 and Carolyn Goodman '66  
Harold Gordon and Lisa Gordon '90  
Diana Green '75  
Jared Green '01 and Camille Green  
Boris Gresely '15  
Amanda Griffin  
Elizabeth Groen '75  
Maria Guarrera  
Rajesh Gunreddi '06  
Hope Gupple '84  
Bryan Gutierrez  
Kathleen Haley '91  
Jade-Addon Hall '03 and Rachel Skidmore  
Robin Hamlette '85  
Clarissa Hamlin '09  
Chrissa Hammond '88  
Frederick Harle '97 and Amy Harle '95  
Kasandra Harley '91  
Samantha Harmon '09  
Carol Harrell  
Che Harris and Ebony Harris '95  
Kimberly Harris '09  
Tyler Harris '15  
Patrick Hasselwander  
Davida Hawkes '17  
Garland Hawkins '92  
Christopher Healey '04  
Ilyndove Healy '99  
Brian Heckman '17  
Felix Hernandez '19  
Zahilys Hernandez  
Jennifer Herrera  
Sylvia Hetzel '17  
Janet Hicks '51  
Jessie Hill  
Lawrence Hill and Stephanie Hill  
Elaine Hodges '01  
Kristin Hogan  
Katherine Hoole '13  
Felicia Horn '95  
Kerstin Howarth '81  
Timothy Hoyles '77  
Kathryn Hudson '10  
Kathy Hudson  
Victor Impink and Paige Impink  
Alison Jackson Popp '08  
Deborah Jacobs '99  
Rhonda Jaffee '85  
Sahil Jain '13  
Samuel Jakes '79  
Renee James Jakes  
Natasha James-Waldon '94  
Anne Jamison '07  
Patricia Jankowski '70  
Stanley Jimenez '22  
Trevor John '95  
Juleen Johnson '07  
Pamela Johnson  
Paulette Johnson-Davis '68  
Brian Jones '88 and Terri Jones  
Brittany Jones '14  
Hugh Jones and Roberta Jones '82  
John Jones '85 and Jackie Jones  
Patricia Jones '75  
Tracy Jones '07  
Ian Jones  
Tiffany Kalil '99  
Michael Kan '06  
Christopher Kapp '05  
William Kaufman and Kandi Kaufman  
Scott Kelberg '93 and Kimberly Kelberg  
Candice Kelly '94  
Madeline Kelly '14  
Susan Kelsey  
David Kennedy '01  
Kafele Khalfani '96  
Paul Kietzman '69  
Peter King '80  
Carolyn Kleinman '67  
Joseph Kneuer '65 and Teresa Kneuer  
Aaron Knight '07 and Crystal Knight  
Karen Kobylus '87  
Kim Koenig  
Christopher Koliba '88  
Anne Kraft '13  
Christine Kshyna  
Lisa Ladew '15  
Lesleylinda Lannan '79  
Brian Lapis '91  
Martin Lariviere and Monica Russel-Rodriguez  
Sally Larmon '49  
Bianca Laury  
Angela Lawrie '90  
C. Lawton '61



# Has Come

Selina Lazarus  
Michelle Lee '90  
Jocelyn Lee '02  
Ashley Lefebvre  
Legacy Financial Services  
Seymour Lenz '55  
Chelsea Leveille '07  
David Levine and Kim Levine  
Dana Levitt '14  
David Levy '10 and Erin Levy  
Lizette Lewis '13  
Ruben Lira '17  
Jonathan Lisansky '71  
Luis Lopez '06 and Damaris Lopez '05  
Lisa Lopez '73  
Leonard Lopoo and Melissa Lopoo '06  
William Lopriore  
ChunHua Luan  
Jeffrey Ludwig and Katherine Ludwig  
Kim Lunn '89 and Leslie Lunn  
Daniel Lyons '70  
Mark Maben '85  
Lois MacNaughton  
Scott Madison and Kelly Madison  
Philippe Magloire '83  
Sophia Magloire  
Maliz Mahop '15  
Brian Maloney and Faye Maloney  
Matthew Maloney  
Jasmine Mangum '16  
Andrea Marsh '87  
Darlene Marshall '88  
Rasheed Marshall '96 and LaTisha Marshall '98  
Megan Marshall '15  
Delita Marsland  
Stephanie Martin-Thom '18  
Janel Martinez '10  
Marilyn Marx '62  
Charles Masino '90  
David Mason '14  
Max Mathieson  
David Mathis  
Jennie May '17  
Thomas Mayo '77  
Maisel Mazier '99  
Brian McClintock '05  
Jeannine McConnell '85  
Shayla McCullough-Collins '05  
Katherine McDonald  
Shabrea McElroy '95  
Candra McKenzie '06  
Rita McKinney  
Erin McLaughlin '07

Jennifer McLaughlin  
Kevin McLoughlin '71 and Martha McLoughlin  
Janice McMahan '66  
Ryan McNaughton '96  
Stephen McNelis '13  
Martin Medina  
Viviana Mejias Diaz  
Tremayne Melton '96  
Tedd Mendelsohn '74 and Ethel Mendelsohn '74  
Raghu Menon  
Damaris Mercado '03  
Kathleen Mercer  
Katherine Merriman '88  
Christian Messier and Traci Messier '92  
Larry Meyers  
Sydney Michalak '19  
Melanie Milazzo '98  
Stephanie Mindock '15  
Paul Minor '70  
Gary Mis and Claire Mis '75  
Allison Mitchell '08  
Yolanda Mitchell '13  
Kiara Molina '19  
Christopher Moncrief '14  
Juliet Montes '83  
Mario Montesdeoca '07 and Colleen O'Brien-  
Montesdeoca '01  
Sky Moody  
Amanda Moore '05  
Carlos Morales '04  
Evelyn Moris '85  
Dante Moss '18  
Gabriel Mugar '17  
Nadirah Muhammad  
James Mulligan and Pamela Mulligan '89  
Andrew Murphy '87  
Christopher Murray and Jessica Murray '13  
Meghan Nagle '10  
Sagarika Naik '19  
Anwar Nasir '06  
Jeffrey Neal '06  
Marilyn Nelson '14  
Nextrade Marketing Corp.  
Elizabeth Ngonzi '92  
Sonia Nieves  
Cristina Noguera '12  
Robin Norman '69  
Barry O'Connor  
Ryan O'Leary '08  
Meredith O'Hara '85  
Aili Obandja '19  
Nicole Osborne '14  
Iris Otano

Wayne Oudekerk '84  
Denée Page  
Ronald Page '74  
Nicholas Palmateer '15  
Timothy Palmer  
Arunima Pande '99  
Kathryn Parker '90  
Raquel Patterson '02  
Eric Patterson '12 and Angela Morales-Patterson  
Timothy Paul  
Rachelle Paul  
Elizabeth Pehok '80  
Mabel Pena  
John Percival '15  
Ronald Perez '99 and Esther Perez  
Tracy Perez '01  
Jeffrey Perkins  
Leslie Perry '93 and Bethany Perry '91  
Rasheda Persinger-Adams '03  
Richard Pfau and Nancy Pfau '64  
Han Pham '10  
Jo Anne Phang  
Sara Pielsticker '19  
Rose Pirone  
Ricardo Pizarro  
Randall Poe '76 and Pamela Poe '77  
Jason Poles '99 and Nikki Poles  
Liliana Polo-McKenna  
Donza Poole '82  
Derek Pooley  
Jeff Popp  
David Powell and Katherine Powell  
Richard Pregent '84 and Julie Pregent  
Willie Pressley  
Jose Preval '76  
Adrian Prieto  
Betty Pristera '68  
David Puccia '03 and Jessica Puccia  
Raul Puertas and Lisa Puertas  
Maria Quiroga  
William Rae '81  
William Ralbovsky '11 and Carissa Ralbovsky '09  
Jodie Ralston '01  
Mahadevi Ramakrishnan '87  
Becky Ramsey '73  
Phyllis Raynor Surret '82  
Edgardo Rayo Amador '84  
Pamela Rechel '74  
LaVonda Reed  
Douglas Reicher '78  
Andrea Reid '02  
Eric Reitz '09  
Gloria Renneck

# Our Time

## SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Jacob Reynolds '16  
Alison Rhoad  
Amy Ribar '17  
Suzanne Rice '14  
Deborah Richards '00  
Candice Richardson '90  
Asia Richter '15  
George Rizzo '95  
Rebekah Roberts '18  
Jon Roberts '74  
Elizabeth Robinson '68  
Kristenne Robison '05  
Ivan Robles '15  
Kaled Rocha '11  
Edgar Roldan and Edith Vasco-Roldan  
Franklin Romero '14  
Lev Rosenzweig-Ziff '17  
Jason Rubin  
Sarah Russell  
Nicole Russell  
Philippe Sabinus  
Moulaye Samb  
Larry Sampson '69  
Amalia Santana '19  
Almirca Santiago '06  
Joshua Santola  
James Saulsky '14  
Victor Saunders and Zita Saunders  
Shamel Schand '07  
Jake Schatz '19 and Aileen Schatz '13  
David Schiff '97 and Lisa Schiff  
Frederick Schulkind '78  
William Seeland and Linda Seeland '87  
Harold Seigel and Ann Seigel  
Frederick Serr and Mary Serr '75  
Carole Shaine '71  
Michael Sheehan  
Ben Shephard  
Alvin Shiggs  
Eddie Sills '75  
F. Simpson and Nancy Simpson '67  
Laura Siros  
Kendall Slee  
Parrish Smith '14  
Chris Smith  
Bradley Smith  
Zachary Smith and Michelle Saunders-Smith  
Catherine Sobchuk '14  
Nehemiah Solomon  
Joanna Solowey '07  
Emily Stanford '08  
Jennifer Stayton '94  
Michael Stern '70 and Joan Stern

William Sternberg '77  
Kamille Stewart '14  
Elizabeth Stoff  
Judith Stopek '68  
Thomas Strand  
Linda Strand  
Jonathan Stromer-Galley and Jennifer Stromer-Galley  
Charla Stuart '89  
Clifford Surret  
Raymond Swift and Cristina Swift  
Debra Symons-Coleman '08  
Mary Szto  
William Tallman '68 and Rebecca Tallman '68  
Ronald James-Terry Taylor '15  
Jana Telfer '00  
Anita Temares '78  
Russ Terry '00  
Grace Terry  
Anthony Thomas and Karen Thomas  
Mark Thompson '80 and Katherine Thompson '81  
Juwan Thompson '18  
Nayona Thompson '19  
Edward Thornton '57 and Elizabeth Thornton  
Brandon Thorpe '96 and Jennifer Thorpe  
Holly Thuma  
Tiffany & Co.  
Camille Tisdell  
Lenny Tober  
M. Tobias  
Daisy Torres-Baez  
Luis Totti  
Timeka Tounsel '10  
Anthony Townes  
Craig Tucker  
Kathleen Turland '95  
Karl Turner '97  
Lora Urbanelli '82  
Gisela Uzcategui  
Debra Van Alstyne  
Delaney Van Wey '18  
Erik Van Zandt  
Peter Vanable  
Benjamin Vasquez '18 and Ashli Watkins  
Chris Velardi '95 and Karen Velardi  
Adrian Veliz  
Thomas Vennoch and Joan Vennoch  
Danielza Ventura  
Bruce Verbeck and Mary Verbeck  
Carmen Villeta-Garcia '07  
Nicole Wade '18  
Ian Waldon  
Kashi Wali '76 and Kameshwar Wali

Talia Walsh '07  
James Walters and Christine Walters  
Richard Warms '84  
Aja Washington '13  
Torin Washington  
Barbara Washington  
Jasmin Waterman '03  
David Watkins '96  
April Watson '06  
Lottie Watts '09  
Douglas Weinstein and Erin Weinstein '00  
Jeffrey Weitzel '95  
Ian Wells  
Adam White '83 and Susan Cometz-White  
Stacey White '11  
Stefanie White '18  
Zoe Whitehouse '19  
Wendy Williams '90  
Maxine Williams '77  
Demietra Williams '98  
Tiffani Williamson  
Salatha Willis  
Kyle Witman  
Rebecca Wolken  
John Woltman '18  
Leo Wong '14  
Karen Wood  
Omar Woodham '10 and Ann-Marie Woodham  
Charles Woods '72  
Melanie Wurtele '99  
Sarah Yablonsky '09  
Wainie Youn '07  
Jennifer Zalewski '16  
Stephanie Zavala '19  
Yimin Zhu  
Kevin Zuk '11 and Danielle Zuk '14

**If you'd like to support Our Time Has Come Scholars, please give to OTHC at [alumni-of-color.syr.edu/give-now/](https://alumni-of-color.syr.edu/give-now/). If you'd like to mentor a student, visit [alumni-of-color.syr.edu/connect/othc-mentor-application/](https://alumni-of-color.syr.edu/connect/othc-mentor-application/).**



# Has Come

## Students Need Your Support, Now More Than Ever

**S**ince it was established in 1987, the Our Time Has Come (OTHC) Scholarship program has supported underrepresented Syracuse University students through financial awards, professional development programs and mentoring, changing lives in the process.

OTHC Scholars are more than just students who need help with the cost of attending college. They are leaders in campus organizations and top-performing members of their class, many with aspirations to attend graduate or professional school. In short, they represent the promise of a Syracuse University education.

The alumni and student profiles on the previous pages are testimony to the program's impact. But our ability to help these students does not meet the demand. Currently, only 30 percent of qualified scholarship applicants are awarded a scholarship.

The need to provide all students with equal access to transformative learning opportunities has never been

more evident. COVID-19 has disproportionately impacted students of color, with increasing numbers facing financial hardship as a result of the pandemic.

Your support for the OTHC Scholarship Program is more important now than ever. Please consider the impact of your own Syracuse University education and pay it forward to help underrepresented students achieve their own dreams. As always, 100 percent of your contribution goes to help students in need.

**Become an OTHC Mentor. Visit [alumni-of-color.syr.edu/connect/othc-mentor-application/](https://alumni-of-color.syr.edu/connect/othc-mentor-application/).**



## Renovated Schine Student Center Welcomes Back Students

**A**lthough the COVID-19 pandemic continues to place limitations on campus life, students returning to the Syracuse University campus for the spring semester were thrilled by the reopening of the Hildegard and J. Myer Schine Student Center, which has been closed for renovation since April 2019.

The stunning multimillion-dollar renovation project was planned in consultation with, and input from, the campus community. Transformed by an abundance of natural light, the new Schine Student Center offers expanded gathering spaces, new eateries and accessible features, and a vibrant open central atrium that extends from the main floor to the top floor, with a two-story video wall.

“This truly state-of-the-art facility gives all of our students ideal spaces for meeting friends, hanging out, studying, eating, attending events, finding what they are passionate about and developing as leaders,” says Chancellor Kent Syverud. “It is the University’s living room and it is completely student-centric. This is the experience that our students asked for and deserve.”

One focal point is the Schine Center’s Intercultural Collective, home to the Office of Multicultural Affairs (OMA), the Disability Cultural Center and the LGBTQ Resource Center. Previously geographically distant from each other, the co-location of these student resource centers in a central, easily accessible place on campus honors the intersectionality of identity and allows for coalition-building and collaboration, says Meredith Davis, associate vice president of student engagement. “This allows us to better work together across specializations so we can provide robust programming that meets a multiplicity of identities,” she says.

Each office has its area of expertise and will still focus on specific populations, explains Huey Hsiao, associate director of OMA and the Kessler Program, but the physical proximity and attention to intersectionality means that students who identify with more than one marginalized identity don’t have to prioritize one over the others.

“The Intercultural Collective will allow students to explore the many intersections of their identities all at once, rather than having to face those identities separately,” says Olivia Henderson ’23. “No one should feel like they have to code switch, or be different versions of themselves, when they move between different communities.”



The Schine Center’s new Intercultural Collective includes lounge space for students to hang out, socialize, or decompress.

HILDEGARDE AND J. MYER  
**SCHINE STUDENT CENTER**



## 119 Euclid Ave. to Serve as New Campus Hub to Support Black Students

Each room at 119 Euclid Avenue offers a piece of history and a point of pride for Black students at Syracuse University. When it officially opens its doors, it will be a welcoming gathering place in which to build new memories. It's also fulfilling a promise made to the University's Black student and alumni community.

"This new facility is in keeping with the University's commitment to sustaining an equitable and inclusive campus community," says Keith A. Alford, chief diversity and inclusion officer. "There are several areas on campus that bring together students who have a shared commonality. 119 Euclid Ave. is such a place established to support and celebrate the Black student experience, and it represents a positive step forward." The facility will complement other University resources that reflect aspects of Black culture, such as the Community Folk Art Center, and those that provide student support, including the Office of Multicultural Affairs and the Office of Multicultural Advancement.

A former private home, 119 Euclid Ave., was most recently used by the University to house administrative offices for the Department of Public Safety. After input from focus groups to determine student priorities, the building was repurposed and renovated, returning it to a more home-like environment that includes social gathering areas, quiet study spaces, meeting rooms, and a kitchen. Each room within the building has a different theme that is reflected in the artwork and historic photography selected to decorate that space. Plans are being made to commission new art by local and national artists. Hiring efforts are underway for a full-time facility manager to be selected before the doors open for gathering and events. Once this staff person is on board, the doors to this facility will be thrown wide open.

In addition to student input, faculty and staff were engaged in the planning process. One University staff member, Eboni Britt, executive director of strategic communications and initiatives in the Office of Diversity and Inclusion, is credited by Alford for managing the project from inception to implementation. "Eboni's participation in this endeavor was both critical and instrumental," he says. "This was her assignment and she ran with it—from coordinating numerous focus groups to meeting with design and construction personnel. Eboni's strong commitment to our students and their success has made a lasting difference."

Cameron Gray '23 was involved in the focus groups, served on the planning committee, sat on one of the subcommittees and worked on the design of the movie- and music-themed room. "Establishing 119 Euclid Ave. as a permanent home to support, showcase and celebrate the Black SU community will strengthen and empower students," says Gray, an Our Time Has Come Scholar and student co-chair for CBT 2021. "I'm excited to have this physical space where Black students, and faculty and staff from all backgrounds, and those interested in supporting and learning about Black history, culture and experience can hang out, decompress and learn from each other. Seeing this space come to fruition fills me with hope and joy."



A view of the interior at 119 Euclid Ave., a new space for Black students on campus.

Alumni also helped shape 119 Euclid and, will no doubt, play a vital role in sustaining it for generations to come. They are welcome to join students in the space and continue to be engaged in its development. "119 Euclid Ave. is a temporary name until we have a donor who would like to create a legacy at Syracuse University around this project," says Rachel Vassel, associate vice president for multicultural advancement. A \$1-million gift will name the building. Opportunities to name interior spaces range from \$25,000 to \$200,000. Vassel invites and encourages alumni to contact her if interested and inclined to support this facility with a monetary gift.

For Gray, the visibility of the project speaks volumes about the University's commitment to an inclusive campus. "It is a reminder to Black students and faculty that we are not alone but rather a part of a tight-knit community known for its legacy of excellence," she says. "To those outside the Black community, it is an acknowledgement of our important contributions to SU throughout its history and well into the future."

**For more information on fundraising opportunities related to 119 Euclid Ave., please contact Rachel Vassel at [revassel@syr.edu](mailto:revassel@syr.edu).**

**For an update on Syracuse University's Campus Commitments to Diversity and Inclusion, visit [www.syracuse.edu/life/accessibility-diversity/diversity-inclusion/commitments](http://www.syracuse.edu/life/accessibility-diversity/diversity-inclusion/commitments)**

## Multicultural Advancement Launches OTHC Leaders Program

While many think of Our Time Has Come (OTHC) in terms of student scholarships, the program has expanded in recent years to provide students with far more than financial support. While OTHC scholarships help students pay for their college degrees, recipients often cite other aspects of the program as equally beneficial—professional development training, networking with alumni professionals and being part of a community of scholars from similar cultural backgrounds.

In an effort to reach more students, the Office of Multicultural Advancement is expanding the OTHC program beyond scholarship recipients through the new OTHC Leaders program. “OTHC Leaders will offer many of the programmatic aspects of OTHC without the scholarship support and personal mentoring,” says Maria J. Lopez ’05, G’12, assistant director of scholarship programs in the Office of Multicultural Advancement. “OTHC Leaders will participate in monthly leadership development programs and receive invitations to corporate immersion opportunities and campus events, such as Coming Back Together reunion activities.”

The impetus for the new program is to provide leadership development opportunities to more students. “Our scholarship dollars are limited,” says Lopez. “Through OTHC Leaders, we can include students who don’t qualify for scholarship support because of family income or those who already receive full financial aid.”

Like the scholarship program, participants in the leadership program are selected through an application process that considers GPA, extracurricular activities, recommendations and an essay on responsible leadership. The first cohort of students was selected this spring and additional students will be added on a rolling basis. “Once a student is selected, they can remain in the program until they graduate,” says Lopez.

“Our goal is to prepare Black and Latinx students for future careers through leadership seminars, alumni engagement, corporate immersion and a community of supportive peers,” she says.



Stacy Fernández and Aru Banks at the 2019 OTHC scholar ceremony held at the home of Chancellor Kent Syverud



## Ruby Bridges Headlines University's Virtual MLK Day Celebration

While Syracuse University is proud to hold the oldest and largest celebration to honor the legacy of Martin Luther King Jr. on a college or University campus, the 2021 celebration looked a little different due to the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic.

With large gatherings on hold and the start of spring semester pushed back until Feb. 8, organizers broke away from the traditional dinner and program in the Stadium to host the MLK Virtual Event Series, which culminated with the 36th Annual Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration on Jan. 31. The virtual series was intended to commemorate the cultural, social and artistic impact of the civil rights movement.

The series kicked off on Jan. 18 in conjunction with the national MLK Day of Service. Syracuse University encouraged students, staff, faculty and local community members to participate in acts of service in their own communities and to share on social media. "The purpose of the MLK Day of Service at Syracuse University is to encourage everyone to think outside of themselves and do something for the good of their communities," says Syeisha Byrd, director of the Office of Engagement

Programs at Hendricks Chapel.

Because the MLK Celebration traditionally involves a soul food dinner, organizers planned two virtual cooking events featuring chefs from Syracuse's new Salt City Market, who demonstrated recipes for dishes traditionally served at the dinner, including black-eyed peas with smoked turkey, baked macaroni and cheese, brown bag fried chicken and oven roasted ribs.

On another evening, former NBA star Maya Moore, who stepped away from professional basketball to focus on social justice, discussed her new "life with purpose" in a conversation moderated by Sean Dorcellus '21 with questions from members of Syracuse University's women's and men's basketball teams.

Exploring the intersections of race and gender in society was the focus of "Sheroes of Poetry," a spoken word event featuring poets Casarae Abdul-Ghani, Ruthnie Angrand, Erisha Beckford, Laurie Fernandez, Rev. Kathy Hodge-Davis, Dawn Johnson, Gaelyn Smith, Michelle Tarshus and Imani Wallace.

But as always, the highlight of the series of events was the annual MLK Celebration, featuring keynote speaker Ruby Bridges.

Bridges was the first Black student to attend an all-white elementary school in the South, integrating into the William Frantz Elementary School in New Orleans at age 6. Despite the angry mobs and threats hurled toward her each day, Bridges refused to miss a single day of school. She blazed a trail for others to follow and has since inspired generations of students in the United States and beyond. She has written multiple books and founded the Ruby Bridges Foundation, which aims to teach tolerance and respect toward all people.

Bridges shared how her experience inspired her lifelong fight against racism and injustice. "Racism is passed on from generation to generation," she said. "I felt early on that I needed to work with kids. I needed to get them very young . . . I guess that 6-year-old Ruby is still inside of me saying, 'If you explain it to them the right way, they'll understand that racism has no place in their hearts and in their minds.'"

In addition to Bridges' remarks, SU's virtual celebration featured dance and musical performances, spoken poetry, an invocation by Dean of Hendricks Chapel Brian Konkol, and recognition of this year's Unsung Hero Award recipients: Bobbierre Heard, who founded BREKY clothing and partnered with Upstate Golisano Children's Hospital to create a program helping children with disabilities; Frederick Gilbeaux, a Syracuse dentist; Evan Weissman, an associate professor of food studies and nutrition who died in April; and SU senior Sameeha Saied.



Ruby Bridges

## Rachel Vassel Promoted to Associate Vice President, Multicultural Advancement

**R**achel Vassel '91 has been promoted to associate vice president of multicultural advancement, reflecting an expanded role supporting the University's diversity, inclusion, equity and accessibility efforts.

"During her four-and-a-half years at Syracuse University, Rachel has demonstrated a successful track record managing the multicultural advancement team to increase fundraising and engagement among diverse alumni in support of our diverse students," says Matt Ter Molen, senior vice president of advancement and external affairs. "Her new title and responsibilities expand on that successful work."

*"My team and I are excited to partner with colleagues across campus to ensure that our students have what they need to thrive at SU and that alumni of color are engaged, recognized, supported and enjoying all that comes with being an alumnus of this incredible institution."*

need. Under her leadership, these programs have resulted in a 60-percent increase in Black and Latino/a alumni gifts, resulting in the tripling of OTHC Scholarship recipients and deep involvement from alumni in its mentoring, internship/immersion and leadership training components. A refreshed CBT 2017 won the CASE Gold Award for Diversity Programs, due to its tremendous attendance growth and \$1 million in funds raised.

"It has been my great honor to serve alumni and students of color in this role over the past four and a half years. As an alumna, it is especially meaningful for me to support my community and the University's DEI efforts each and every day," Vassel says. "My team and I are excited to partner with colleagues

In addition to leading the multicultural advancement team, Vassel will support the Office of Diversity and Inclusion and school and college deans in their fundraising efforts to promote the University's diversity, inclusion, equity and accessibility efforts.

Vassel joined Syracuse University as assistant vice president of multicultural advancement in October 2016. In that role, she and her team host SU's Black and Latino/a alumni reunion, Coming Back Together; plan regional events and trips; and have oversight of the Our Time Has Come (OTHC) Scholarship program that benefits high-performing underrepresented students with and unmet financial



Rachel Vassel has expanded her role supporting the University's diversity, inclusion, equity and accessibility efforts.

across campus to ensure that our students have what they need to thrive at SU and that alumni of color are engaged, recognized, supported and enjoying all that comes with being an alumnus of this incredible institution. The best is yet to come."

Prior to joining Syracuse University, Vassel served as nationwide director of multicultural marketing for the American Cancer Society and held positions in entertainment, brand/multicultural marketing and account management leadership with Turner Broadcasting, The Weather Channel, Music Choice and Young and Rubicam. She holds a dual BS in public relations and marketing from Syracuse University and is currently completing a master's degree in communications from the S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications.



## Hilda Frimpong Becomes First Black Student to Lead Syracuse Law Review

**H**ilda A. Frimpong, a second-year student in the College of Law, has been elected by her peers as the next editor-in-chief of the *Syracuse Law Review*. When she assumes her duties for Volume 72 (2021-22), Frimpong will be the first Black student to lead the Law Review since it began publishing in 1949.

“I am honored to serve in this role because of the trust and support that my peers gave me by electing me editor-in-chief,” says Frimpong, who is specializing in the law and technology program while at Syracuse Law. “I am honored to break down barriers as the first person of color and first Black woman in this role. I am proud that my expertise and unique perspective will be added to the legacy of *Syracuse Law Review*.”

The *Syracuse Law Review* is a journal of legal research and writing. Its longstanding goal has been to provide distinguished scholarly works that address timely and intriguing issues within the legal community. Selection to Law Review at any law school is considered a high honor and coveted credential for law students. Frimpong currently serves as a member of the *Syracuse Law Review* editorial staff.

The announcement of Frimpong’s election as editor-in-chief for next year was made in February, coinciding with Black History Month. “February is a time to reflect on the lives and legacies of our Black College of Law community members and to contemplate and help activate the bright future of our students,” said College of

Law Dean Craig Boise.

“Congratulations on your trailblazing accomplishment, Hilda. I look forward to learning about the plans you and your team have for Volume 72, and to reading the articles and notes you gather.”

“I stand on the shoulders of many great women and men before me,” says Frimpong. “I want to inspire students who didn’t previously see themselves represented on Law Review to seek journal membership and to strive to build and strengthen our position as experts, and in turn our legacy.”

Born in Ghana and raised in Dallas, Texas, Frimpong received a bachelor’s degree in anthropology from Texas A&M University. In addition to Law Review, she is a volunteer for the Cold Case Justice Initiative, a criminal law tutor, a research assistant, and an ambassador for the Office of Admissions. “I am passionate about law and technology and creating a space for women of color in this area of the law,” she says.



Hilda A. Frimpong

## DPS Chief Robert Maldonado to Retire

**D**epartment of Public Safety Chief Robert “Bobby” Maldonado will retire Aug. 1 after 40 years in law enforcement, five at Syracuse University.

Since 2015, Maldonado has led a team of public safety officers, community service officers and residential community safety officers who protect and serve the Syracuse University campus community and surrounding neighborhoods. He is also responsible for fire and life safety, and security and emergency planning, management and response.

“I am grateful for the tireless efforts put forth by the women and men of DPS throughout my tenure,” says Maldonado. “Together, we have confronted unprecedented challenges to public safety and security and created opportunities for significant and lasting change in how we practice campus and community policing. Our goal has always been—and continues to be—to create a university environment where all students, faculty and staff feel welcome, safe and secure.”

During his tenure, Maldonado has helped DPS strengthen its training programs and policing strategies as well as diversity within the department. In the last year, 55 percent of the 96 new hires are Black, Indigenous or people of color; currently, 43 percent of the

DPS team are people of color. He also helped the Department of Public Safety (DPS) secure accreditation from the Commission on Accreditation of Law Enforcement Agencies last year.

Maldonado came to Syracuse from Nazareth College in Rochester, New York, where he was director of campus safety. Prior to that, he was captain of the New York State Police’s Bureau of Criminal Investigations, deputy chief of police for operations at the Rochester Police Department and jail bureau superintendent at the Monroe County Sheriff’s Office.

Maldonado earned a master’s degree in criminal justice from the State University of New York at Albany and a bachelor’s degree in sociology from Cornell University.



Robert “Bobby” Maldonado

# Dave Bing Shares Obstacles and Unlikely Success Story in New Autobiography

**A**ttending Syracuse University changed his life. That's one thing Dave Bing '66 shares in his new autobiography, *Attacking the Rim: My Unlikely Journey From NBA Legend to Business Leader to Big-City Mayor to Mentoring Guru* (Triumph Books, 2020). Bing credits the education he received and his experience on the basketball court with laying the foundation that has carried him through four careers: NBA all-star, steel company founder, mayor of Detroit, Michigan, and currently, youth mentorship leader.

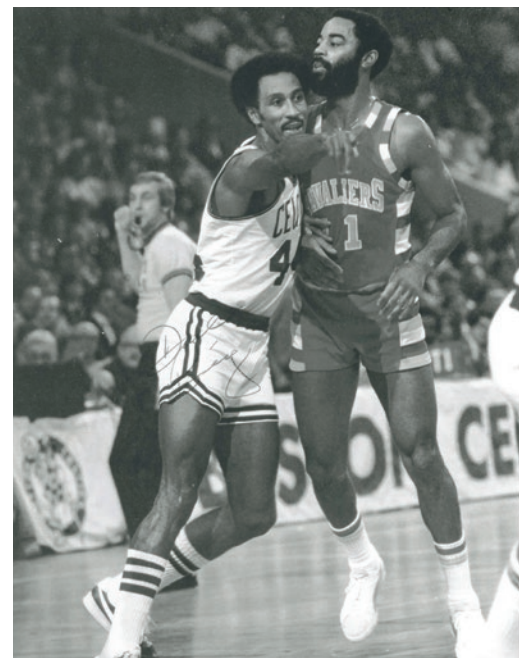
His college experience also changed his world view. "Growing up in inner-city Washington, D.C., I never really interacted with white people before," says Bing, who was recruited to play basketball at Syracuse. On campus, Bing had white roommates that became lifelong friends, first Frank Nicoletti '66, then Jim Boeheim '66, G'73. He and classmate Sam Penceal '66 were the only Black players on the team. (During his recruiting visit, he was hosted by football players John Mackey '63 and Ernie Davis '63.) Despite the fact there were only 100 Black students on campus at the time, Bing says he experienced very little racism.

But there were bumps in the road. Bing's success is all the more remarkable because of the many obstacles he overcame along the way. One of the biggest revelations is that he's legally blind in his left eye, the result of an accident at age 5. He says he kept that a secret, principally to prevent opponents from taking advantage of his vision limitation. "I also didn't want people to feel sorry for me," Bing says.

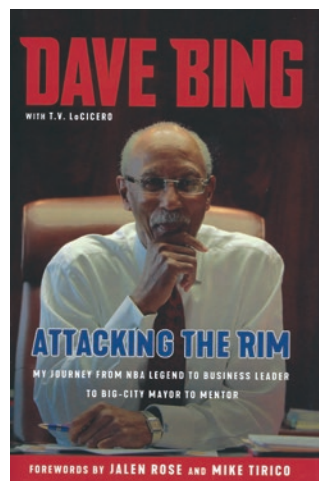
In his freshman year of college, Bing quietly married his high school sweetheart over spring break after she became pregnant. His Syracuse coach and teammates wouldn't learn he was a husband and father for another year. It wasn't until the birth of his second daughter in his senior year that his wife and children joined him in Syracuse.

In 1966, Bing was drafted second overall by the Detroit Pistons, where he played point guard, and later for the Washington Bullets and Boston Celtics. Despite being half blind, he became one of the most celebrated players of his era, a member of the NBA Hall of Fame, and was named one of the NBA's 50 greatest players of all time.

After retiring from basketball, Bing joined a two-year training program with a Detroit steel company. As he learned the business, he increasingly felt confident he could start his own business processing steel for Michigan's auto manufacturers. He founded



Bing today, top left, and while playing for the Boston Celtics, above.





# Milestones

his own business and grew it from four employees to more than 1,400, with \$300 million in annual sales.

In 1984, Bing Steel earned him the National Minority Small Business Person of the Year award.

By 2007, a recession had set in and the auto industry was in a downturn. Now 64, Bing decided to sell his company. But retirement was not in the offing. City leaders had long been urging him to run for office. “I got drafted in Detroit to the Pistons, and then I got drafted to run for mayor,” he says.

Bing became mayor of Detroit in May 2009, facing seemingly insurmountable challenges: intractable debt and corruption, a shrinking population and revenues, woeful city services and infrastructure, massive unemployment, and a self-serving city council. Ultimately, Bing was forced to take the city through the largest municipal bankruptcy in American history. Today, Detroit is enjoying a celebrated urban turnaround.

While in business and as mayor, Bing came into contact with many young people and was always interested in helping young men better themselves. He recognized that he had benefited from the guidance of not only a strong father, but also many other men in his life who played mentorship roles.

Rather than run for re-election, Bing founded the Bing Youth Institute, a nonprofit focused on mentoring fatherless Black boys in Detroit. He reached deep into his coterie of contacts to match successful professionals from similar backgrounds with teen boys at risk. The program has served four graduating classes and has a high school graduation rate of 100 percent; 80 percent of the students are in college.

Bing’s goal for the program is similar to that for his book—to show that despite the odds and obstacles, you can succeed. “My story is very unlikely,” says Bing, who endowed the first scholarship in Syracuse University’s Our Time Has Come program to support underrepresented students. He also serves on the advisory council of the Office of Multicultural Advancement.

He attributes his own success to perseverance, hard work, and resilience—habits instilled by his upbringing that he wants to share with others. “Regardless of the circumstances you may come from, I don’t want anybody to use any of that as an excuse,” Bing says. “I want to show they can succeed, become leaders in their communities, and give back themselves.”

*Attacking the Rim* is available at [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com) or from a bookseller near you.



**Darlene V. Miller '81** has been appointed as the first Black female deputy court administrator for the Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts. Previously, Miller made history as the first female chief of Philadelphia County probation and parole department.



**Douglas S. Reed '84** received the Booklife Prize for fiction and the *Writer's Digest* Annual Self-Published Book E-book Award for contemporary fiction for his second novel, *Child of Gilead* (BookBaby, 2020). The novel tells the story of mother and son who are visited by an old family friend whose arrival brings the potential to uncover dark family secrets.



**James Haywood Rolling Jr. G'91**, a dual professor of arts education in Syracuse University’s School of Art and the department of teaching and leadership, has been appointed to the board of trustees of the Everson Museum of Art in Syracuse. Rolling has served as chair of the University’s arts education programs since 2007 and is an affiliated faculty member in African American Studies. From 2018 to 2020 he served as the College of Visual and Performing Arts’s inaugural director of diversity, equity and inclusion. He is currently president of the National Art Education Association.



**Moses T. Alexander Greene '94, G'17**, has been director of performing arts and film at North Carolina Museum of the Arts since October 2020 and was named as one of 54 Black curators and arts leaders throughout the U.S., Europe, Canada and the continent of Africa who took on new appointments in 2020. He recently received a BroadwayWorld.com nomination for Original Script of the Decade (Raleigh, North Carolina, Region) for his play, *Pooled: A Gospel Musical Drama*.

# Millard “Mickay” and Lynette Hall Fund OTHC Scholarship for Minority Veteran Student

**M**ickay G’88 and Lynette Hall ’89 understand firsthand the value of a Syracuse University education. Now, the Atlanta couple is paying it forward by establishing a scholarship for a minority veteran student through the Our Time Has Come program.

“Syracuse University provided a foundation that continues to favorably impact our lives, professional development and career growth. This scholarship is an opportunity for us to give back and bless someone else,” says Mickay, who earned an MBA from the Martin J. Whitman School of Management through the U.S. Army Comptrollership Program. He retired from the Army at the rank of lieutenant colonel after 20 years of service in the Quartermaster Corps and as a comptroller and has subsequently held senior operational leadership positions with Coca-Cola, Valassis Communications and ISS Facility Services.

Lynette attended Syracuse through the Higher Education Opportunity Program (HEOP). Between HEOP and other scholarships, she was able to earn a bachelor’s degree in nursing with minimal educational expense and went on to earn a master’s in nursing from Emory University in 1992 and a doctorate of nursing practice from Georgia State University in 2015. She is currently a family nurse practitioner at the Southeast Permanente Medical Group. “The opportunity to attend Syracuse provided the foundation for my career in nursing,” she says. “Every nurse has a desire to care, to serve, or to help and I can pay it forward by creating a scholarship for minority students like me.”

The Halls’ scholarship is the first through the OTHC program created specifically for a veteran. In addition to his history as a career soldier, Mickay serves on the advisory board of Syracuse University’s Office of Veteran and Military Affairs. “Our

commitment is to help equal the playing field for the next generation,” he says.

“Earmarking our scholarship for a minority veteran sort of checks both boxes for us.”

Although the Halls attended Syracuse University at the same time and knew some of the same people, they did not become acquainted until years later when both were living in Atlanta and discovered their Orange connection.

Their OTHC scholarship is the most recent demonstration of support for their alma mater. Members of The Hill Society through their annual giving, they also donate to the Veteran’s Legacy Fund, which supports student veterans and military-connected students at Syracuse University. Both Mickay and Lynette serve on the Atlanta Regional Council.

“We’re engaging other people in our area to make a commitment to Syracuse and build on that bond that we share,” says Lynette. “We believe in giving back and supporting the next generation.”



Lynette and Mickay Hall

## Milestones

**Mina Liona ’08**, a radio personality on SiriusXM and 100.3 Philadelphia, interviewed Joseph Biden L’68 and Kamala Harris just days before they were elected president and vice president. A dual major in television/radio and political science at Syracuse University, Liona says she was “honored and grateful to be part of such a historic moment.”

**Lindsey D. Briggs ’09**, founder and principal of Social U Digital and host of the BNN “Around Town” show, has been named a member of the For(bes) The Culture community. For(bes) The Culture was formed in 2017 to convene Black and brown leaders worldwide to network, collaborate, share opportunities and discuss issues related to their communities and the planet at large.

**Jessica Santana ’11, G’13**, CEO of American on Tech, received the Anywhere Award from The Buildies, which recognizes pioneers pushing the future of work and living forward. She also received the 2020 Inaugural Technology Catalyst Award from the Council of Urban Professionals.



# Don McPherson Honored by National Football Foundation

**F**ormer Syracuse Football All-American Don McPherson '87, a College Football Hall of Fame inductee and long-time advocate for the prevention of gender-based violence, was honored by the National Football Foundation (NFF) with its 2020 Outstanding Contribution to Amateur Football Award.

The award recognizes individuals who support the NFF's mission of promoting the power of amateur football to develop the qualities of leadership, sportsmanship, competitive zeal and academic excellence in America's young people. McPherson is recognized for using his platform as a star athlete to address violence against women and for serving as a powerful advocate for the NFF at both the local and national level.

McPherson annually conducts 25 to 30 events for student-athletes that focus on combating gender-based violence. Over the past 25 years he has visited more than 350 college campuses to lecture, conduct workshops and talk one-on-one with young men.

Don McPherson



His 2019 book, *You Throw Like a Girl: The Blind Spot of Masculinity*, chronicles his work harnessing the power and appeal of sport to address complex social issues. He has also delivered school and community-based programs addressing issues including drunk driving, alcohol and substance abuse, bullying, youth leadership and mentoring.

McPherson has served as a board member, consultant or advisor for several national organizations, including the Ms. Foundation for Women and the U.S. National Committee for UN Women. He was a member of the NCAA Task Force on Sexual Violence and the NCAA Board of Governors' Commission to Combat Sexual Violence. Currently, McPherson serves on the board of directors for the New York City Chapter of the NFF and is a member of the advisory board of Press Forward and the Solidarity Council of Vital Voices.

As quarterback and captain of the undefeated 1987 Syracuse football team, McPherson set 22 school records, led the nation in passing and won more than 18 national "player of the year" awards, including the Maxwell Award as the nation's best player. He played in the NFL with the Philadelphia Eagles and the Houston Oilers and in the Canadian Football League with the Hamilton Tiger-Cats and the Ottawa Rough Riders. McPherson is a past recipient of the George Arents Award, the University's highest alumni honor, and a Letter Winner of Distinction, the highest honor bestowed upon a former Orange student-athlete. In 2013, the University honored McPherson by retiring his No. 9 jersey.

**Evan Floyd Robinson III '12, G'14**, co-founder and president of American on Tech, has been named a 2021 Global Good Fund Fellow. The Global Good Fund accelerates the development of high potential young leaders tackling the world's greatest social issues by investing human and financial capital in promising young leaders through its fellowship program.

**Ronald James-Terry Taylor '15, G'16** has been named head of middle school by the Browning School in New York City. He is the first Black head of school in the institution's history. A Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Syracuse University, Taylor previously taught at the Horace Mann School, the Harlem Children's Zone, and in the Syracuse City School District.

**Ambar Parades Martinez '16** published her first novel, *Under Delusions of Grandeur* (2020), available at Amazon.com or AmbarParades.com. When not writing, she is currently a master's candidate in philosophy at the New School for Social Research and works midnight to 8 a.m. in a New York City hospital emergency room.

**Justyn Knight '18** posted a world-leading 2-mile time of 8:13.92 in the 2021 New Balance Grand Prix. As a Syracuse University senior, he won the NCAA titles in the 5,000 meter (indoor track) and the 10,000-meter (cross country), and as a sophomore in 2015, was part of the Syracuse team that won the NCAA cross country championship.

# IN MEMORIAM



**Steven Schmidt '73**, of Mount Vernon, New York, died on Jan. 3, 2021, as a result of COVID-19. He is remembered by friends as a leader and mentor who inspired those around him to work harder and to lead by example. His motto was “We have hard work to do and loads to lift.”

Schmidt was a 1970 initiate of the Kappa Chapter of Omega Psi Phi at Syracuse University and served as chapter basileus as a senior. After earning a bachelor's degree in political science with a minor in economics, Schmidt began a career in finance and worked on Wall Street until his retirement.

He remained active in Omega Psi Phi throughout his life, serving as chapter advisor at Columbia University, affiliating with the Kappa Omicron chapter in New York City and Beta Alpha Alpha chapter in White Plains, and holding various leadership positions at the district and corridor levels.

He is survived by his father, Clarence M. Schmidt; a daughter, Nicole A. Schmidt; sisters Melania Schmidt and Joselyn Schmidt-Jones; and twin brother Vernell Schmidt.

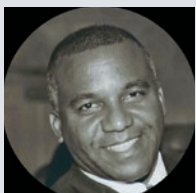


**Jo-Ann K. May G'78**, of Syracuse, died on Feb. 14, 2021. May was a pioneer within Syracuse University's Higher Education Opportunity Program (HEOP) and Office of Supportive Services and impacted countless students during her 37-year tenure.

May began working with HEOP as a counselor with the summer program while a graduate student completing her master's in social work and was hired as assistant director after completing her degree. In an effort to expand programming to students beyond New York State, May wrote the first proposal for the federally funded Student Support Services Program (SSS), and subsequently wrote the grants that funded SU's Ronald McNair Scholars Program and Collegiate Science and Technology Entry Program (CSTEP), resulting in a significant increase of students of color concentrating in the STEM areas.

May eventually served as director of HEOP and Student Support Services in what came to be known as the Office of Supportive Services. Over time, the original HEOP summer program expanded to include any incoming student who wished to participate and was renamed Summer Start with May as its first director. She retired in 2012.

She is survived by her son, James; her granddaughter, Nylah; and other family.



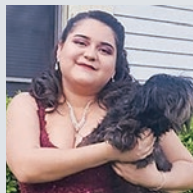
**Phillipe Dorante '88**, of Montclair, New Jersey, died on Nov. 19, 2020, after complications from a medical procedure. He is remembered as a remarkable man with a big smile, and a personality and character that endeared him to anyone who met him.

A talented student-athlete, Dorante attended Syracuse University on a soccer scholarship, following his older brother Billy, who was his teammate for the Orange. He pledged Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity, which continued to be a big part of his life after college, as were the friendships he built with his fraternity brothers. He also met the love of his life, Lisa Perard '93; the couple married in 1999.

Dorante graduated with a degree in electrical engineering, then took a job at General Electric, where he worked on top-secret radar programs for the U.S. Navy. He worked for NYNEX and then co-founded Expert Wireless Solutions, which erected cellular towers around the globe.

Dorante enjoyed family vacations on Martha's Vineyard, managing his son's soccer team and playing golf. He was a voracious reader and enjoyed matching wits with his wife and bestowing knowledge on those in his orbit. A kind and generous spirit, he supported the educational paths of Syracuse University students so they too might soar in an academic setting.

Dorante is survived by his wife, Lisa Perard; a son, Myles; his father, Barnave Dorante; and siblings Louis, Bernadette, Gary and Billy. He was predeceased by his mother, Eupomene Lauture Dorante.



**Laura Natalya Rodriguez**, of Houston, Texas, died on Dec. 22, 2020, the result of a tragic shooting accident. She was a senior in the College of Arts and Sciences majoring in psychology.

A first-generation college student, Rodriguez began her studies at Syracuse in fall 2019 as a member of the Syracuse Abroad Discovery Program in Madrid, Spain.

“My daughter was a strong young lady, full of ambition, with her heart set on seeing the world,” says her mother, Laura Lara. “She was the smallest in stature of her siblings but by far the biggest in attitude. She wanted to experience all that life had to give. She traveled to Europe and foreign lands in the first steps of her blossoming attempts to see the world. She was the ‘little engine that could,’ and in my heart, the ‘little engine that did.’”

Laura was predeceased by her grandfather, Jose Francisco Olmos, and stepfather, Faustino Lara III. She is survived by her mother, Laura Lara; her father, Paul Rodriguez Jr.; sister Lucinda Isabel Rodriguez; brothers Julian Diego Rodriguez and Joel Adam Rodriguez; her grandmother, Juanita L. Olmos; and grandfathers Paul Rodriguez and Wanda J. Rodriguez





Marcus Lane Jr. '19





**Office of Multicultural Advancement**

640 Skytop Rd., Second Floor

Syracuse, NY 13244-5160



# CBT 2021

# September 9-12

ONLINE REGISTRATION OPENING SOON