Reaffirmation of Civility and Equality Day at West Chester University

February 20, 2008

A HISTORICAL APOLOGY

Edited by
Dr. C. James Trotman
Professor Emeritus and Founding Director
of The Frederick Douglass Institute
West Chester University

As the 14th President of West Chester University, I thank former President Madeleine Wing Adler, Dr. Carson Carr (Class of 1958) and other University officials for their vision in developing the February 20, 2008 "Reaffirmation of Civility and Equity" program. More importantly, I commend our African American alumni participants for their courage in describing some of the regrettable indignities that they encountered as students. Their stories and experiences reinforce our continued commitment to insure that West Chester University creates a welcoming environment for all individuals.

This commitment has appropriately become an important component of our Strategic Plan – Building on Excellence, which states: "West Chester University envisions a campus climate that is nurturing to all and seeks to attain inclusion and equity in the treatment, support and achievement of its students, staff, faculty and administrators. We value that each individual brings a unique and diverse combination of background, experiences, and we value the contributions of each individual to our collective diversity."

I am pleased that Dr. C. James Trotman, Professor Emeritus of English, has provided ongoing leadership in capturing the transcripts of the 2008 Reaffirmation of Civility and Equity program as a significant historical record and a tribute to those who have gone on to achieve much in spite of the obstacles that were placed before them. I appreciate his work in producing this document.

Dr. Greg R. Weisenstein
President, West Chester University

The February 20, 2008, "Reaffirmation of Civility and Equality" was a big step in the history of West Chester University. The event was prompted by the vision and encouragement of Dr. Carson Carr. In an open forum before our campus and community,we listened and responded to African American alumni voices insisting that their alma mater face the practices of racial discrimination that had scarred their lives as undergraduates and left an indelible memory in their hearts and minds as graduates.

One by one, they stood and spoke in clear, plain words about the indignities they had encountered from the classroom to the residence hall. The transcript of these statements testifies to the power of these narratives, delivered without bitterness but with firm resolve. Their stories also tell us about their capacity to overcome the worst of times with strength and honor that bequeath to us a legacy of courage for future generations.

As the 13th president of West Chester University, I saw the opportunity for a genuine renewal of our commitment to fairness and to the community-building values that these alumni voices challenged. Just as they looked beyond the past to the years of prosperity they now enjoy, we all must look ahead, as well. Our alumni provided us with a source of wisdom to embrace: no matter how dismal, cruel, or callous the moment may seem, together we can build a better world for tomorrow.

With the individual stories on February 20, 2008, we looked back at a shameful and disappointing part of the past. With the transcript of that day, we have begun a journey of respect for those earlier alumni voices and have declared: We will not forget yesterday as we build for a better tomorrow.

I continue to be proud of our alumni and of having served West Chester University as its president at the time of the "Reaffirmation of Civility and Equality." I deeply appreciate having been included and involved in this very special day in our history.

Dr. Madeleine Wing Adler
President, West Chester University
1992 – 2008

We have heard it before but not quite like this. The gathering was an exceptional moment with West Chester University graduates telling their stories of racial discrimination and institutional segregation. And they were vividly presenting their experiences to Dr. Madeleine Wing Adler, then president of West Chester University. She invited these alumni to campus to tell their stories and to publicly accept her apology on behalf of West Chester University for the indignities they suffered.

The program began at 3:00pm in Sykes Ballroom, and all were still seated more than two hours later. There were as many as two to three hundred in attendance , the largest number being students; others included faculty, academic deans, administrators, guests and other "Alums" as they like to refer to themselves. Like the oldest of human stories, the narrators in this volume delivered their messages in a familiar way. The speakers, the sixteen who volunteered, began with the most obvious of details. They identified themselves by name and class year, from 1939 to 1958 in fact, offering a generational perspective on themselves and West Chester. Furthermore, the introduction led to some individual comments about the contacts and relationships that initially brought them to what was then known as West Chester State Teachers College. Strong family remembrances and military experiences from returning veterans were connected with college aspirations but these acknowledgments were not limited to friends and family. Other teachers, mostly from high schools, are noted respectfully as sources of inspiration as well. Some came from urban areas, some from the suburbs, and some from neighboring counties. They were essentially a very diverse and highly motivated group of people, ready for college life, prepared to explore the intellectual world of the campus and, significantly, to find their places in it.

Then the Alums went on and spoke, some longer than others, about the campus climate and personalities that changed their lives, some who scarred their lives but, in the end, turned them not into victims but into permanent victors, having overcome what could have been an academic apocalypse and a personal nightmare for each of them. Instead, they saw opportunities and through them the challenges to meet a destiny of their own choosing. A veteran from World War II testified

to being chauffeured to a Philadelphia college campus rather than be allowed to take swimming classes at West Chester with other students, denied because he was black. Another veteran lost his dining room job because he was black. Other students, already honor students, were told by a faculty member that they would never earn a grade higher than "C" because they were black and their race had never contributed to civilization. The "six girls' room" may epitomize the degree to which the deliberate acts of racism expressed themselves through intentional acts of racial segregation. The Alums, however, came to tell stories of successes and triumphs over what their audience understood were recognizable forces of old evils of social segregation and racism. While they looked back, they firmly and unhesitatingly situated themselves in the present, declaring their refusal to permit others to define their fate or limit their opportunities.

The occasion marked an official reaffirmation in two distinct ways. The first was that the transgressions of the past had to be engaged and not relegated to catchy phrases like the "past is the past" or "let sleeping dogs lie." That was just not enough because at the very least these entrenched moral errors had the potential to sustain themselves. They had to be confronted directly because they formed part of our identity, part of the social foundation, part of the culture, that made the institution what it is today. To ignore the transgressions would be to invite a deeper insanity into our campus history. There were lessons to be learned in light of the fact that the human violations were widely known, from administrators, faculty, and students as well as from others who were silent but knew these iniquities took place. Further, the open forum called by President Adler exposed the hurtful encounters and allowed those who suffered to openly name their accusers. That is why so many names of offenders are listed with as much detail as possible.

Finally, the open forum in which this reaffirmation took place is a staple of the democratic process. It is in fact one of the most sacred places for free men and women to assert themselves in their full humanity and claim their rights as independent thinkers, as members of the group, as moral agents carrying out their responsibilities to tell the truth. This gathering reminds us of the kind of site that led to our own

nation's revolution. Our campus is in fact a small picture of this national truth and the process needed for reconciliation. Let that be the impetus to carry us all to a new day where everyone has the same opportunity to learn and to become educated, while sitting as an equal in classrooms and laboratories as a community of learners.

Alums, thank you for your stories, your honesty, your honor and dignity.

Dr. Adler, thank you for your courage to remove the covers from the past and help us to walk in the light of truth and reconciliation.

President Weisenstein, thank you for your support of this historical document.

To the future campus leaders, faculty, students, and staff of West Chester University, the responsibility for eliminating the unresolved psychological issues and social detritus of racial discrimination rests with you.

Edited by Dr. C. James Trotman
Professor Emeritus and Founding Director
of the Frederick Douglass Institute
West Chester University
June , 2014

Special thanks to Dean Anita Foeman, Mr. Larry Dowdy, and to Ms. Cynthia Bednar for reading this manuscript while it was being prepared for publication; to Mr. and Mrs. Leonard and Rose Miller for much needed help in identifying the names of the women in the "six girls room"; to Ms. Loretta MacAlpine and her assistant Ms. Paulette Rowe for the alumni photographs used in this booklet; and to Ms. Tara Wink and Ms. Emily Bergen of Special Collections of West Chester University's Harvey Greene Library for their assistance with archival materials; Dr. Mark Barnes '93, for photographs of the event; and to Mr. Matt Born for his editorial assistance.

Reaffirmation of Civility and Equality Day at West Chester University

February 20, 2008

A HISTORICAL APOLOGY

Edited by
Dr. C. James Trotman
Professor Emeritus and Founding Director
of The Frederick Douglass Institute
West Chester University

JIM TROTMAN: I am Jim Trotman. I am the Director of the Frederick Douglass Institute here on campus. I'm also a professor of English.

This is a pinch-me moment. So you can look to your neighbor to the left, or to the right and say, I'm here.

ALL: I'm here!!

JIM TROTMAN: This is an extraordinary event,

and I'm so very pleased to be a part of it. And to be a part of this campus.

We're here to salute you individually and collectively the lives of black alumni today. They are graduates in a dual sense. They are achievers who categorically refused to bow before the historic practices of racial discrimination. It left scars of pain, of hurt, of disappointment, of abandonment, frustration, and confusion. But it also tested their character. And that character was born in the flames of a racist terrorism.

They come to us not only as alumni, but as prodigal sons and daughters. And we welcome you home.

(Applause)

We are here to remember that the experiences of discrimination took place on our campus. The discrimination was local, but the resistance was epic-like. They joined the voices and the forces of Cheyney University's Fannie Coppin Jackson , West Chester community activist Rachel Harris, Bayard Rustin, and faculty of West Chester Ruby Jones, Herb Lee, and many others.

We remember that while local, they stand shoulder to shoulder with Nelson Mandela, Martin Luther King Jr., Richard Wright, and the Tuskegee Airmen. We remember that through you, our prodigal sons and daughters, that the resistance to the integrity of college life was not forgotten at all.

Dr. Philip P. Hoggard remembered. Dr. Patricia Grasty Gaines remembered. The Gospel Choir which sings today also remembers. And the living legacy of Frederick Douglass, who could speak here and who gave his last public lecture here nineteen days before he died, but he could not have been a student here. We remember. We recognize. And we are here to hear your stories.

And to begin with these stories, I want to acknowledge one of the moving figures in this assembly, Dr. Carson Carr, Jr. Dr. Carr is the associate vice president for academic affairs at the University of Albany in

the New York State system. He will bring his remarks to us. (But before we turn to Dr. Carr, he can sort of take a swallow and get himself ready for this.)

I do want to acknowledge two of our special guests in the audience. The first is West Chester University trustee, Mrs. Jessie Pincus. Will you please stand?

(Applause)

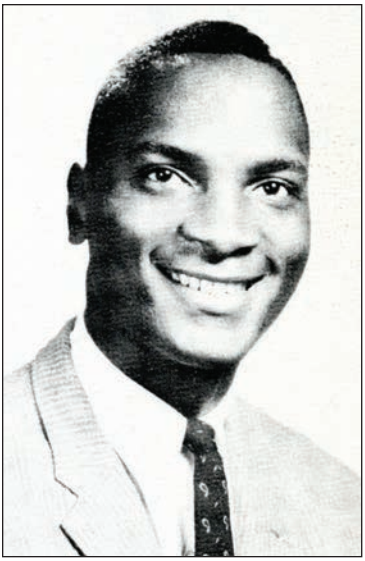
Now, you saw that look they gave you ,Mrs. Pincus

MRS. PINCUS: And I love that look.

JIM TROTMAN: That is a historical look. And I hope the students, the many, many students who are here, I hope that you will take advantage of this opportunity to touch these prodigal sons and daughters. Living history may be just words to you, but they're alive. They are flesh and blood. And they have come to speak to you about their triumphs, their successes. But now, let me turn the podium over to Dr. Carr where is – Dr. Carr is right here. (Can't miss Dr. Carr because of his height.)

(Laughter)

Please give him a round of applause.



Carson Carr

(Applause)

CARSON CARR:

My wife and I drove down from Albany, New York. And she told her sister to see what the weather was like. The sister said, "Well, it is 24 degrees down here. Make sure you bring your warm coats." Well, in Albany, we have winter all year long.

(Laughter)

We have nothing but warm coats. Giving honor to God, to President Adler, other officers, faculty members, students, alumni, and yes, this great university. And it is a great university. I like to say, good afternoon.

ALL: Good afternoon.

CARSON CARR: This is a historical time in all of our lives. I like to first

thank President Adler for assembling all of us here today. Because this is a program of feeling, a moment. So let's look at this occasion as a period of forgiveness, a period of history, major history.

The thing about Black History Month, we always look at some of my historical people. And we miss them. But there were some people at West Chester University who were historical to us. And those were people who were victimized by a policy, a ban against living on the college campus.

And if you can picture yourselves –

Can you hear back there?

CARSON CARR: If you can picture yourselves attending schools with your friends and then living up here at West Chester University as a student, and just because of the color of your skin, you had to live in the town of West Chester with black families. You were given a list when you got here. And you were told that you were not able to live on campus, but what you have to do would be to use this list and find a home during the weekend. That was quite humiliating to those students who were subjected to this kind of experience.So today, what we are trying to do is to look at this Jim Crow practice. Basically, Jim Crow laws lived here right here at West Chester University.

I would like to thank those individuals, and many of them are here today, [who chose to] attend a school, a great school. They got a good education; they complained about conditions. They had their parents complain about the fact that they wanted to be treated like everybody else. And because of their circumstances, many of them had to leave school at a time when they really wanted to stay around and develop their leadership skills.

I was among a group of students that came in and followed this ban. And we reaped the rewards. We stand on their shoulders. I will say this again. We stand on the shoulders of these black students who had the ability, who persevered, who were excellent students here, and kept their heads up at all times.

So I would like to thank you. We were able to be accepted by the other students that came in. We were able to join clubs and organizations, athletic programs, and religious programs. We developed our leadership skills like those that were our equals. So I would like to acknowledge my fellow students and classmates. And when you look at it, it

really reached a term that we use very commonly today, cultural diversity. Because these black students wanted those that followed us to have the experience of being included at all times and not to be excluded.

So again, we developed our leadership [skills]. We didn't feel separate or different from the other students. They made us a part of [the] American dream. That's what it is all about. Being able to the reap awards.

So now we look at West Chester, which must have [at least] eight, nine hundred black students. Then, when I was here, there must have been 25, 30. And we were proud to be among those individuals who followed this group, because they exhibited character.

So if I can take one more moment. Those individuals, those alums who were subjects, victims, of these abusive racist practices. Can you stand for a moment so we can look at you and acknowledge you?

(Applause)

We the black alums, we thank you, humbly thank you. And we appreciate the fact that this is a moment in time for us to acknowledge you. It was a long time in coming. And it's not the fault of those folks who are here now. We do want to say thank you again to Dr. Adler and her staff for acknowledging this part of history that we will never forget. All we are trying do now is to forgive. Thank you.

(Applause)

JIM TROTMAN: Dr. Carr, I don't need this (microphone), I'm not as tall as you. No.

Most of the developments that we now associate with academic progress both in the classroom and outside of it are directly attributable to the quality of the leadership that has guided us for the past sixteen years.

I think everybody here knows that Dr. Adler is retiring. [Underscore that]. She is not being pushed out. There is no coup. There is no faculty outrage. She is retiring to enjoy the next chapters of her life. We owe her a great debt of gratitude for the humility and strength that she brought to this campus and to this particular occasion. I don't need to remind our prodigals that this event is an act of strength to look at this past, the painful part of the past, and to lead us into the future. This is a remarkable, remarkable moment.

Ladies and gentleman, the president of the university, Dr. Madeleine Wing Adler.

(Applause)

PRESIDENT ADLER: And thank you, Dr. Carr, for encouraging and inspiring this reaffirmation of civility and commitment to equality at West Chester University.

Thank you, as well, to everyone here this afternoon for your individual civility and equality. I'm grateful to the alumni who are sharing and understanding of what happened to them on this campus.

Every life touches every other life. What happens to one concerns us all. In the same way, the past, the present are not separate. Who we are now as individuals and as an institution depends in part on what we have experienced.

And so, we must study the past, its reasons for shame and the knowledge of learning where there were errors. By acknowledging, we hope to ensure that it will not be repeated.

Today and tomorrow are strongest when we learn and live by the lessons of the past, whether these are the contributions of our alumni, or the wrongs that caused your suffering. Those who were taught great lessons through their hardship and through their success have earned our highest appreciation.

Alumni, on behalf of West Chester University, I would like to express that appreciation to you again. I am proud that such outstanding individuals are graduates of this university and I am privileged to know each and every one of you.

The ceremony reminds us of what can happen when we fail to live by the tenants of mutual respect for every person. The ceremony is also a chance to show how values, attitudes, behavior, and policies have changed and continue to strengthen West Chester University. We embrace our weighty responsibility to foster equality and civility and to affirm this central place in all the dimensions of our life.

(Applause)

JIM TROTMAN: The mayor [Richard Yoder] of West Chester is down with the flu. Somebody said, well, we might as well say is he under the weather. I say, "Nah." That won't cut it. Tell the truth. He is human. He is down with the flu.

But we are, of course, very happy to have a representative of the Pennsylvania legislature here who is also a member of our faculty: Representative Dwayne Milne, will you please rise?

(Applause)

Now, back to the business at hand. The next person is Dr. Anita Foeman, my colleague on the 5th floor in Communication Studies. She will lead us into what you came here to hear. And that is the stories of our African American alumni..

(Applause)

ANITA FOEMAN: I will get to the real meat of this. This is why we are here. What I would like to ask, are the people that were here during the period of time that we are talking about, would they think about some of the stories that really come to mind when people ask you what it was like when you were here. I saw several heads nodding when some events were brought up. I would like to ask you to come to the podium and share briefly those stories with us .

Okay, we have a microphone.

And just share briefly some of the things that happened to you. I thought people might be hesitant to start. So there was one story I read about a student who was not able to use the pool at the [West Chester] YMCA. And it really gave me shivers. So if you wouldn't mind starting.

Littleton Mitchell

Please introduce yourself.

LITTLETON MITCHELL, ALUMNUS

I came to West Chester from Delaware in 1939. I didn't want to come to class. I wanted to be a pilot. I went to the Tuskegee Air Force Program and then came back.

While I was here in my second year, one of the things that we had to do as College of Education majors was to qualify and meet the requirements for life safety. And I was the only African American in my physical education

class. And up until that point, it was fine. But when we got ready to have our swimming classes, I was told that I couldn't go to the YMCA where we swam, where the class was used, the YMCA in West Chester. Right up the street here then.

So I tried, just to see. I told my Dean [of Instruction Winfield W.] Menhennett.

Littleton Mitchell and George Allen

He said, " You are going to swim down in the pool in the women's gymnasium. I think it is still here. And in the bottom floor of it, there is a pool by the bathroom. The water was up to the waist. I went down there and looked at it. There wasn't even water in there. I guess I was a little bit angry. I said I wasn't going to do it. And Dean Menhennett, who was an instructor, then said I needed to do it, or I would be sent home. And my answer was I'm not going to do it. And I'm not going home neither.

The reason I wasn't going home was because I was here on behalf of my father, who was a veteran of World War I. And that scholarship that he got for me came from the bank in Milford, Delaware. So I could call the bank and I could talk bad.

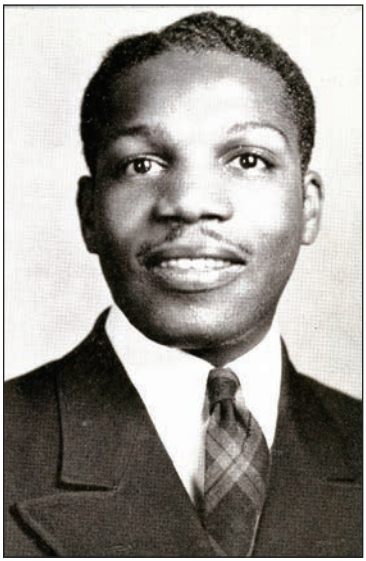
(Laughter)

They told me – I had an ultimatum from Dean Menhennett that he would give me 24 hours to get back to that pool. So I just decided I wasn't going to push it. Not to push [argue over] it. I said I'm not going to; I'm not going until we make a noise. He got a call; I think he got a call from the bank. I'm not certain.

But the next morning very reluctantly looking down, he [the dean] said, we are going to send you to Temple University. I said, "For what?" In order for you to get your swimming class. So they provided me with a car, a chauffeur, and I went to Temple University and joined their life saving class and got my life saving certificate. Just the same way as others did only mine was a little bit different. It had an extra notation on it that West Chester graduates didn't have on theirs. So I was very fortunate. But that is one of the things that happened to me at West Chester.

(Applause)

ERNEST GOLDSBOROUGH, ALUMNUS



Ernest Goldsborough

I will trace my work history. I finished -- I graduated from [West Chester's] school of social work. My training was at the Pennsylvania Prison Society. I was with them for 20 years. Twenty years, because there were no odd jobs on the level that I was going to that would hire a black person at that time. So that's why I was there for so long. So I had one position [and I went] from student, to worker, to supervisor, and assistant manager in those twenty years.

I went from there because the Philadelphia prison system was trying to upgrade their system. And they were looking for qualified people to participate in the Los Angeles government program that provided the money to improve the programs, but they did not have a staff with which to handle this. So the Prison Society let me come to West Chester.

So I did ask the superintendent of the program. We were there for five years. We had women social workers to humanize the situation.

And a major and deputy warden who were murdered by a couple of inmates. They blamed this on social service. Next time Mayor Rizzo came in. I was there when he said, "Some heads are going to roll." Not thinking it was mine. But [the] next morning I came in, I had no job. He fired me on the spot. I was there for about five and a half years.

Then there was a hiatus in Philadelphia. Next I participated in the national prison programs [of] the American Foundation. And they took me on and they did evaluations and studies of national and local prisons and made recommendations. So we worked with them for about three years. Then the state was looking for a director of probation of human services who would be coordinator for the State of Delaware. And they hired me. I don't think [they did it] with the chief judge's permission. But I went there and the person who hired me in several months was gone. But I was with them about four and a half years to finish out my time to retirement. And it was murder trying to get in those last years. Fighting all the way. But I held on. And then they asked me to provide a training course before I left for the entire state. Because I had the three counties to supervise. And I did so and felt good about that.

But in the meantime, I also taught a state employees workers' course at the University of Pennsylvania at the School of Social Work. Then they hired, and I was on the main staff for a number of years. But I still was working with the prison system at that time.

So I have had – I remember information while serving on various forums of the community, Elwyn Institute and others, and with people from other national correctional programs. So this is a great idea with what I have done from what I have received here.

(Applause)

ANITA FOEMAN: Can somebody come and talk about some of the housing issues?

Thank you.

BETTY ANN BROWN JEFFERSON, ALUMNA

My name is Betty Ann Brown Jefferson, Class of '59. I came to West Chester ready to learn. I had a meeting with Assistant Dean of Women Bernice Bernatz who welcomed me. She told me, "Oh, we are very happy to have you. We are glad that you have come to West Chester. But you won't be able to stay on campus this year. Because we have to find a

Betty Ann Brown Jefferson

colored roommate for you." So the first year I commuted.

(Applause)

ANITA FOEMAN: Come right up. Name?

JEAN SMITH JACKSON, ALUMNA: They call me in church "Jackson." My name is Jean Smith Jackson. I'm married to Arnold Jackson who graduated in 1957. I graduated in 1956.

My experience was, the first day I came out to West Chester to register, my father brought me out because he happened to be off from work at the time. And they said you are supposed – were supposed to go in the Six Girl Room in Frosh Hall. The Six Girl Room is a black girls' room. All blacks. They thought one of the girls had not paid her tuition and so she was going to leave and I would take her place.

Jean Smith Jackson

When I came out later, she had paid her tuition. And so there was no longer room for me in the dorm. So my father talked to Dean King. And Dean King suggested to my father that he get a room for two girls and that he, my father, would pay for both girls. I would be the only girl in the room, because I was black. And he would pay double. I said "No, way. No way." My father hardly had two pennies to rub against the other. He was struggling to get me out here and struggling to keep me here.

And so he spoke to Dean King. He said, " I will bring her out every day for this week. At the end of the week, you have your business straight. And at the end of the week, they had transferred two black girls to a room, Thelma Rumor and Geuretta

Rose Hawkins Miller

Whittington. They transferred them to a three-girl room. Two black girls and I was the third black girl in the room.

So they did provide for me. And I must say, West Chester was a wonderful experience in spite of everything.

(Applause)

ROSE HAWKINS MILLER, ALUMNA: My name is Rose Miller. I came to West Chester in 1952. I was one of six girls who roomed at Frosh Hall. I believe it was in the second year that African Americans were allowed to live on campus. But my experience living with five other girls was a marvelous one. They became my lifelong friends. It really taught us that in order to succeed and excel in an adverse situation, we had to really hang together. And it gave us a lot of strength by being together.

However, during my four years at West Chester, my most memorable experience was that I became engaged to one of the fellas, Leonard Miller, who was also a freshman. And I became engaged in my sophomore year and married after graduation, because my dad would not hear of anything else.

And, West Chester does hold some very fine memories for me in spite of the adversity that occurred back in the day.

ANITA FOEMAN: How long have you been married?

ALUMNA MILLER: We have been married for 52 years, since 1956.

(Applause)

LEONARD MILLER, ALUMNUS : Everyone knows who I am now.

(Laughter)

Old school. That's how you stay married 52 years.

(Laughter)

Rose told her story. But the one point that she didn't add is that I made sure her dad paid all the bills before we got married.

(Laughter)

Leonard Miller

We went to school between 1952 and 1956. I was kind of person that got out in the end and never kept my mouth shut. I'm going to confine my comments to West Chester related stories.

First thing in the freshman year of 1952, a group of us, a few blacks on the campus, we had Dr. [Hazel L.] Lamborn of the Art Department. Right Vivian? Dr. Lamborn came in the first day of class and said, "No colored student in here will get higher than a "C" because colored people haven't contributed to the art in this country. The only famous artist we had was Horace Pippin. And he was self taught, a primitive artist. And he didn't count.

So Vivian [Barrett], stand up a minute. Stand Up.

This is our friend for all those years. And a friend of my wife's in high school. She didn't make the dean's list because she got an automatic "C" that kept her off the dean's list in the first semester of her freshman year. So we all got C's.

West Chester was very competitive in the right sense in terms of competing for scholarships. Remember, in those years, the Rockefeller Foundation and the Ford Foundation had the major scholarships in the United States. So West Chester would take a straight "A" student, whether they were black or white, straight "A" students and compete against the Ivy League students.

So I was like a malcontent. When the Korean War was on, I stayed in the upper third of the class so I didn't have to go in the service.

[Pointing to Retired Army] Colonel James Williams, don't let them hold that against me.

So I kept my grades up there. So after – after the war was over, I let my grades go down a little bit. So they wouldn't let me compete for Ford Foundation scholarship.

But in those days, my mother worked for all these rich people down here on the Main Line. In fact, my Aunt Loni worked for Ernest Hemingway's family as a nurse. So she called the Board of Trustees, [specifically] Dr. Sidney Roland. My mother said, " My boy is up there and he needs to go take that test." So Dr. Roland said, put that boy in that test. And out of 500 tests that they gave, they had like half Ivy League and half not Ivy League, all day long. And I ranked like 50th out of 500, right up there with the Ivy League students—all day long.

(Applause)

So I went and got a master' degree. My wife, she is happy as a lark. Because she didn't marry a dummy.

(Laughter)

So that's how I got my master's degree. And there are some good stories here too. I was in the United States Army, Third Army, one of the best armies America has ever put on the battlefield. I was down in the direct automotive support. Because usually, what I did when I was in college [was to work on cars]. You can read it in my book Silent Thunder. After college I worked on these cars up here in white neighborhoods. I would rent these garages and work on the cars. So they put me in the automotives, one of the special companies that would do emergency repairs under battlefield conditions.

So one day, a jeep pulls up in front of our company and the soldier said we want Private Leonard Miller up front. You are going to the general's headquarters. They had this educator up there. He said, "You went to West Chester State Teacher's College, soldier?" I said "Yes sir." He said, "Well, that's the finest teacher's college on the east coast." He said, "You are going to be reassigned up here to this headquarters' company."

And I was in there with all Princeton, Harvard, and Yale students. That's all that was in there. Princeton, Harvard, Yale, and one fella from a historical black college, Hampton Institute, which was at that time the second best teacher's college.

So we are up there, and it is all because of West Chester. So I got a wife. I got a free master's degree.

(Applause)

And one final statement. I'm gratified to be here. My wife has always donated to this university. I have been a kind of a malcontent but

Agnes V. White Barksdale

they are going to do a movie of my life in Hollywood right now called "Silent Thunder" It's like a major $50 million movie. So the opening scene, I'll wear a West Chester University shirt.

(Applause)

ANITA FOEMAN: It's so clear that you are all so wonderful. It's just so clear.

AGNES V. WHITE BARKSDALE, ALUMNA: My name is Agnes White Barksdale. I'm a '52 graduate with double majors in math and chemistry.

(Cheering and applause)

I didn't plan to come to West Chester. I was on my way to Howard [University] for pharmacy when the competitive exam gave me a full four year scholarship from a West Chester alumni group.

And there is one experience that I had at West Chester that I will never forget. First of all, in all my math and science classes, there was no other black student. And I had a lot of questions from my white classmates about blacks and how they lived, and whether I was baptized in a river or in a church.

But the most compelling thing was that Dean [of Women, Irene. M] King one day called me to her office. And she said, your zoology teacher recommended you. And I said, for what? She said, well, you tutored students in science and math. And she thought you would be a good candidate for this assembly program, whereby there was a portrait to be put on stage of a southern scene. This scene would also have a mammy sit with two Caucasian children. And you were highly recommended because you are on the dean's list.

I was appalled. I mentioned to her that I marched with Dr. Martin Luther King as a high school student at Chester where he attended the Crozier Seminary. And I could not in any good conscience do that. Dean King was appalled. She said, "Uh-huh". And I was asked if that was all; could I be excused. And I was.

But to my dismay, another student, a black student, accepted that. I was not too concerned because remember, with blacks, there is always an element of fear. And I'm sure that was one of the issues in the other student's acceptance of the role.

But in talking about the dorm, I was like the second or third generation to live in the dorm. I found out from my roommate, Shirley Redcross Rhone, Class of 1950, who was asked when she came to West Chester why she didn't go to Cheyney [as recommended] by Dean King. She told me that her first roommate, Fleta Broadhead Watters, Class of 1950, had her father go to the state authority because blacks paid taxes, and therefore, she would be able to live in the dorm of state universities. And that's how blacks began to live in the dorm. So that's

Students and Alums

the history of blacks moving into the dorms.

But as mentioned, there are many good things that came from West Chester. I also met my husband.

(Applause)

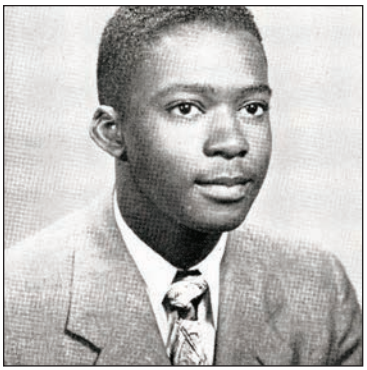
I didn't plan to meet him, because I only came the last week of August to register because of that scholarship. I wasn't coming here at all.

But I did meet him. I won't go into the details of how. But I did learn that he dated my roommate before I came.

(Outburst of laughter from audience)

He was a senior and I was a new freshman.

So I will let him talk. But as I said the good things: his mother was a graduate of West Chester Normal School who attended classes in Anderson and Swope Halls. And my daughter, we have three generations here at West Chester. And she met – one of my daughter's met -her husband here, who is an outstanding alumnus, Roland Thompson.



James Barksdale

So I'm going to turn it over to my better half, Jim.

(Applause)

JAMES BARKSDALE, ALUMNUS: She did say better half. I thought she was the better half.

As my wife indicated, my coming to West Chester, which I've never regretted, was primarily because my mother matriculated here. And when I did come in September of 1945, I knew that I could not stay on campus. But it didn't bother me because we lived in suburban West Chester. So my commuting was not a problem.

One of the things that I do recall, which would be along the lines by which we are here, when I came, I was one of two male men of color that semester, the first semester. The second semester most of the colored were coming back from the service in WWII, so that there were more of us on campus.

But as time went on, I did have a very fine experience here at West Chester, at the university. And it really prepared me professionally for many of the positions which I was fortunate enough to hold.

My third year when I was a junior, that would have been September of 1948, I, by being a music student at that time, I was a participant in the marching band. That particular year was a year that West Chester had its first bowl day game. That bowl game was at Johnson City, Tennessee, the Tobacco Bowl.

There were three men of color, if you will, that participated in the band at that time. And we were planning to attend the bowl festivities with the team. But we were called into the president's office. As my wife indicated, the president at that time, Charles Swope, who was one of my mother's classmates, reminded us that we were ready to graduate as of May of 1949. And he said that if we were to go to the game, we could not participate, because men of color were not permitted to participate according to the bowl game – the bowl committee. So we elected not to go because we were going to graduate in May. And of course, that was not a good time to start rustling of the feathers, the few feathers if you will.

But that's the one thing that I remember that was rather distasteful for me. But beyond that, I felt that we got a very fine education at West Chester. I have never regretted it. And we do come back often when there are alumni days.

Geneva Bost

(Applause)

ANITA FOEMAN: You don't even have to stand.

GENEVA BOST, ALUMNA: My name is Geneva Bost. At the time I entered West Chester my name was Geneva Henderson. And I came from Darby, Pennsylvania. And I was told that West Chester had the finest music department. And I decided the finest was for me. And when I sent my letter of application in, I was accepted until I sent my picture. And then I was told that I should take primary or secondary education, because at the time colored people did not find jobs teaching music because colored schools couldn't afford them and white schools wouldn't have me.

So I decided – so I wrote a letter and said send me my $10 activity fee back.

(Laughter)

But my mother wrote a four-page blistering letter stating that we as taxpaying citizens should have, at least, the opportunity and that I

should be accepted, and even if they put me on trial basis, which they did. Dean Menhennett asked that my mother and I come up to visit him. And my mother came the first day and he asked questions which she didn't like. And she told him-- she straightened him out very nicely, but with a lot of fire.

When I came up, he asked me to walk around the room. Just walk around the room. And my friend said that it was bad because he wanted to see if I had a tail. He could see there were no horns. But he really did not understand colored people.

And he later became my friend because when a little later on, my father fell and broke his leg and he was unable to make one of the payments. And I went to the dean and said, I'm sorry, but here I have to drop out of school because my father is unable to make the payment. He said, "Geneva, when your father gets well and is able to make the payment, bring the payment to me. You don't have to worry about that. I don't want you to drop out."

I found that there were a lot of friends at West Chester. One was Uncle Ned. And I have to tell you this story. When I went home and said to my family, I spoke to Uncle Ned, because he was really a dear person. And my parents' family said isn't he a white man? I said, yes. And you are calling him uncle. You know that he does not want you calling him uncle. I said, well, everybody else does. They said, everybody else isn't colored. My mother said, maybe you should ask him.

So I said to him one day, "Could I say something to you? He said, "What is it?" I said, "Is it all right for me to call you Uncle Ned?" And he said, "What else would you call me?"

(Laughter)

Uncle Ned was [Head of the Department of Public School Music] C. Edgar Hausknecht. I said "I will call you Mr. Hausknecht." He said, "You can call me Uncle Ned." He had a trivial way of putting his tongue in his cheek. Every time he saw me there after --he put his tongue in that position.

(Laughter)

We became very good friends and I was quite happy at West Chester. But have to mention this. I know what "C" for colored means. Because I -- a lot of my classmates had trouble sight reading. And they would

Leroy Murray

ask me, Geneva, sight read for me. And I would sing their part. They got A's and B's. And I got a "C".

AUDIENCE MEMBER: "C" for colored?

ALUMNI MEMBER: Yes.

(Applause)

LEROY MURRAY, ALUMNUS: My name is Leroy Murray. I am a 1939 graduate of West Chester.

(Applause)

I went to West Chester State College from West Chester High School because all I [had to do] was walk a mile a day. So I did that. And I did fairly well at West Chester. So I think I did. I majored in science and math for secondary education. And at that time, in that particular location, there were no positions for blacks to teach in high school. And so I ended up teaching in Montgomery, Alabama and at Alabama State High School and Grammar School. I stayed there until [I was inducted] by Uncle Sam and the Army. I came out of the Army. I went to graduate school, got my Master's. And I went to the Philadelphia School System where I stayed for about 30 years. And I ended up in the Philadelphia School System as a counselor at the John Bartram High School. I looked around and somebody said, you were my counselor at Bartram High School[Philadelphia]. And I thought, now I'm pretty old, so I could be.

I just thought you should have that perspective because most of the people, I guess started in the '50's. I thought that old problems should have a say.

(Applause)

GEORGE ALLEN, ALUMNUS: I got a "C" in student teaching. And went on to be the first black instrumental music teacher in Philadelphia public school system.

(Applause)

I was going to come over to Carson and have you stand up next to me. Carson and I played on the basketball team. But we never played at

George Allen

the same time. I was his substitute. And there was one game that we played, we played Villanova. And the coach came to Carson and me and said, "How can we beat Villanova?" So being the talkative one, I told the coach how we could beat Villanova. And we played the game. About two minutes left in the game, we were winning. I called time out. The coach asked me why I called time out. Well, at that time, you could freeze the ball, okay? So I told him we are going to freeze the ball. Except one person didn't hear me. He shot the ball. And it was like a wave after that.

But there were times when we would play away games and the coach would have to go and ask [the person in charge at the restaurant] if we could come in to eat. There were many times where we just said we will sit on the bus and we would drink our orange juice and kool-aid. Because that [the money for meals] was money for us to get back on the bus from campus and get back to Philly.

Gloria Brown

The other thing that Carson and I did: one night out of courage, we said we are going to go to the movies at West Chester. And we were not going to sit in the balcony. We were going to sit downstairs.

We figured we could do it because we sort of had a rep [reputation]. You know. You know, Carson was always in the paper. And I was dealing with the music. And the people in the community knew us. So we paid our money and sat downstairs. And we integrated the movie in West Chester.

(Applause)

GLORIA BROWN, ALUMNA: My name is Gloria Brown. I entered West Chester in 1954. I graduated in 1958. And I will tell a very brief story about my first day on the campus. I was with my good friend Viola Bradford. And we were very excited having just registered. And wearing our [required frosh] beanie caps. And we decided to go into town. We were from Coatesville. We just decided to go into the town of West Chester to have lunch. And we sat down at the counter and we waited, and we waited, and we waited.

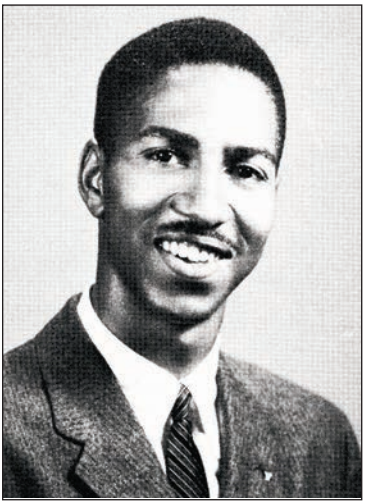
Finally, it dawned on us what was happening. And so I spoke up and said, we would like to be served. And the waitress kept passing us by. And I said it again a little loud. And she came back and she said, "We don't serve Negroes here."

Leonard Miller, Jim Trotman, Jim Williams

At that point, I just slammed my hand on the counter and said " I know the law." I want a hamburger and a milkshake. She finally did say, we are not allowed to not serve you. And she brought a hamburger and milkshake for my friend and myself, which we left on the counter having lost our appetities a long time before that. And we left. So that was a rather daunting first day on campus.

I was a commuting student because I had to work. So I don't have the stories of dormitory life. And I'm glad of that.

But I must say, when I graduated and went to interview for my first job in Cherry Hill, New Jersey, which was then Delaware Township, NJ, I had an interview with the superintendent. And he said to me, "Oh, you are from West Chester and I know you are prepared." And I was hired on the spot.



Colonel James Williams

(Applause)

COLONEL JAMES WILLIAMS, RET. USA, ALUMNUS: Good Afternoon. Jim Williams from the class of 1959. Just a couple of reflections.

Do you remember assembling in the lobby after dinner in the evening? That was a great time.I was a waiter. At that time, athletes didn't have scholarships here at West Chester. So I earned part of my tuition by being a waiter in the dining room. And I also helped the staff because in order to work in other social gatherings, trustees meetings for example, I served, if I wasn't in class.

And luckily enough in the second semester of my freshman year, I became a headwaiter. I didn't have to carry the load on that tray. Just made announcements during mealtime. I think those on campus remember that. It was a coat and tie also. You had to wear a coat and tie for dinner.

When I came back my sophomore year, I was no longer a headwaiter. When I tried to find out why, I was told because of the student unrest in the south; in other words the black student unrest in the South. The staff here at West Chester didn't feel that white students would follow the lead of a black waiter. So I lost my headwaiter position.

And then, I was continually asked to serve the faculty and trustees and the staff at various occasions they would have at Tanglewood center. And I refused.

The penalty for that refusal was for the next three years, I waited on tables as others below me, freshmen and sophomores, gained the title of headwaiter.

One other thing, as a student athlete, I ran cross country and track. My cross country coach was named Hawthorne [Arthur S. Hawthorne, Dept. of Geography, Coach of Cross Country.] My track coach was named Dr. Clokey [John W Clokey of the Department of English, Head Coach of Track]. We were on the Mason-Dixon line across the state, which means we competed south [in states] below the Mason-Dixon line. When we got in Mr. Hawthorne's van or Dr. Clokey's van, when we crossed the Mason-Dixon line there was always a problem-- where we were going to eat. And if we stayed overnight, [the question was] where were we going to sleep?

I remember we found a haven in the south; it was called Morgan State University. And the first time the cross country team stopped there to eat on the way south-- I think we were competing against Martha Washington or George Washington, or some small school down south-- I went and we saw these beautiful black women at Morgan State University. And for the next four years, every time we headed south, we stopped at Morgan State University.

Vivian Thompson South

(Applause)

VIVIAN THOMPSON SOUTH, ALUMNA: My name is Vivian Thompson South. I'm in the class of 1956. You heard of my story from my roommate over there. We were in that "six girls room" when they made the freshman hall into a dormitory. In the first floor, they had a room that housed six girls. At that point, the six black girls that came to West Chester at that time were put into that same room. That's why we couldn't find Jean over there. So we all go back a long way together.

As I heard people talk, it did bring back some hurtful kinds of things. Because I had gone to school in Philadelphia. I went to the Philadel-

phia High School for Girls. So I thought I was rather smart at West Chester. So it was quite hurtful to me. I would not pursue my academic success because I could not draw, from Mrs. Lamborn's bias [against blacks] was told you. The other thing that was also hurtful, too, when I first came I was interested in a music career. And, I too was told that I needed to be trained as an elementary teacher because there would not be a place for me in the music world.

One of the things that kept us, quote, in our place, as someone said, but which was ironically a treat for me, when we became juniors. We moved over to main dorm, and I still had some of the same roommates. And we were in a hall with physical education majors. They always had to practice something, their floor exercises or do something. And they always made a lot of noise. And so we were in that hall. So one night what happened was that , the hallway sort of was a little noisy and a little rough. So the other girls complained. So we were called down to Dean King's office. And we were told that we were making a disturbance. And they, of course, were going to call our parents. Because we of all people should not be making noise, because it was such a privilege that we were able to attend West Chester. And if we make any more noise, she was going to see that we would go to Cheyney.

Cheyney, of course, is a state college also. It had the same program where we were [at West Chester] but we just did not choose to go to Cheyney at that time.

But there were some good things about West Chester. And in my lifetime, I have had several professional careers all in education. And I have to thank West Chester for one, that now, every week I have been called, although I'm retired, and yet someone wanted me to work. And I'm not sure whether it was quite right just for me as an individual or it was not quite right because I was colored.

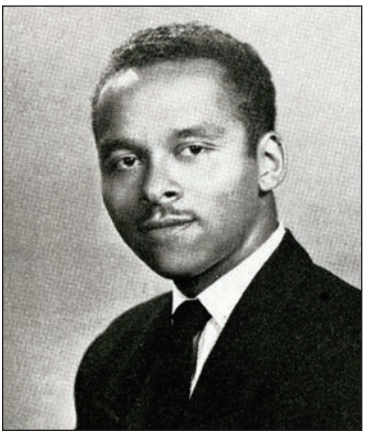
When I got in front of teachers, I always had to speak a certain way. And when I got into the education field, I was told that I had a lisp. So I had to go to speech class. Mrs. Tyson had a speech class. And I went to speech class. And in watching her work with the people, I was fascinated. And they really did have some youngsters there that had problems. And I worked with them -- that's how I overcame my lisp. I was allowed to work with the students.

So that in my second career, after I taught elementary school for a couple years, I went to Temple and got my Master's degree in speech and hearing problems. I am a speech pathologist, and I worked in that field for several years.

So as everyone else has said, there were hard times in West Chester. The education that we got here and the things that we did here, the friends that we have made have all stood us all through the stages of life. And I'm glad for West Chester.

(Applause)

ANITA FOEMAN: Thank you, it's been 60 years in the making. So say your piece.



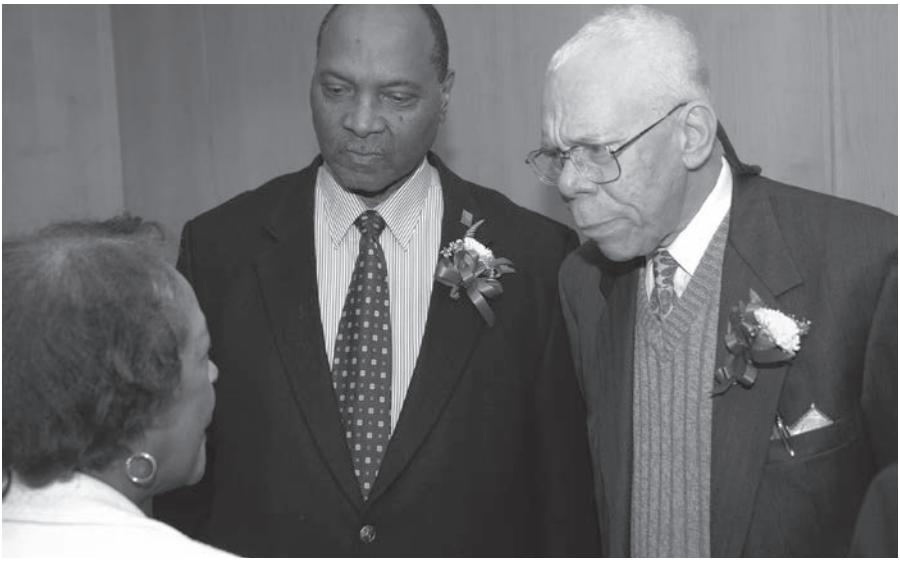
Leon Bass

LEON BASS, ALUMNUS: My name is Leon Bass. I'm from the class of 1949. Some of my classmates are here. Hey!

I was a young man of 18 when I volunteered to be apart of the United States Army. Of course, the Army was segregated. I came face-to-face with institutional racism. They sent me down to Georgia, Mississippi, and Texas, all those places for basic training. Of course, I became an angry, young black soldier. It took me a long time to go through that war and be sure that I came home alive. Went through the Battle of Bulge, went through a concentration camp and saw what it was like. Then came home, free at last.

So I put my life together. So I had a friend who was going to a place called West Chester State Teachers College. So I decided to go out there and I did. And I registered at West Chester. I didn't think I would get in. My grades weren't that good. But I got in.

And on that day, I went to go into the dorm to register to live on campus. And they said no, you can't live on campus. Here I am, a veteran. I put my life on the line. Take all these people and in this college they say I wasn't good enough. What a damning experience that was. Eighteen years old, you get in the Army and come home, and they told you, you are not good enough.



Carson Carr, Vivian Thompson South, George Allen

Well, that made me angry, my friends. I'm going to be honest with you. I had a hard time trying to understand why I had to risk everything and then I was being denied. One thing that I wanted was a good education. Well. Anyway, I wasn't such a good student, I graduated in 1949. And I went to Philadelphia to teach. I taught elementary school, at two of them, one in South Philadelphia, one in North Philadelphia. After that, they sent me to an all white school. Yeah, I was wondering about that.

(Laughter)

But I stayed there. I stayed there for a quite a while.

But during the time I was there, the clarion voice of Dr. Martin Luther King came to me. And he caused me to re-think about my feelings. I didn't have to be angry at what transpired. I could get above that. So I did.

But one day, After Dr. King was assassinated, the school was in turmoil. And guess what? They sent me down to the Benjamin Franklin High School on Broad Street. An all black male high school. I didn't know what I was getting into. But I went down there in this turmoil. And that took me long time to find out how I could reach those young men. I came out talking to the teacher. I said, "You have to love those

young men." They thought I was crazy. They looked at me like a red balloon.

It was a struggle for me to deal with them and the 14 years that I spent there. But I had a wonderful time. As painful as it was, I remember a great deal. And I came out there a better person.

And because of the "call" from Dr. King, he made it possible for me to say one day I would go out to West Chester and speak. And that's what I did. I came out to West Chester and spoke. And that's what I did. I came out to West Chester, the scene of the crime. I spoke to them and told them how we must love each other. This is what James Baldwin said in one of his writings. You either love one another, we need to be good to one another, or the sea will engulf us and the light will go out.

And I'm so glad that Dr. King and somebody else touched my life. It made it possible for me to make a re-entry to West Chester without all that bad feeling.

Thank you.

(Applause)

ANITA FOEMAN: Thank you to everyone who spoke today.

JIM TROTMAN: Thank you very much alumni. The men and women who have touched our lives and who have become so very central to where we are. I hope you all know that we are just bridging so many gaps today. The past and the present, the personal and the collective, the institutional history. This is about as rich as it gets. And it's a magnificent experience.

The next speaker is Dr. Tonya Thames-Taylor. She is the embodiment of the Douglass Institute and all that it has meant for this campus. Dr. Thames-Taylor is a professor of history. But she came here as a part of the initiative that we now call the Douglass Institute.

She will remind you that she is from Mississippi, that she went to Tougaloo College and did her doctoral work at the University of Mississippi. And she has been a most, most impressive and singular voice on this campus for diversity and for the multicultural themes that we will pursue. Will you please join me in welcoming Dr. Thames-Taylor.

(Applause)

TONYA THAMES-TAYLOR: That is so kind. I told you, this is a wonderful day. It's a wonderful experience. And it touches. And I have to pause to enjoy in saying that.

When I was looking up what experience, what word I thought that could capture this moment, I thought about a famous lawyer I knew. He said that a young lady he was admiring said that she was made for a time such as this. I didn't get it.

And so I looked up the word, "pioneer." And the word, pioneer, a pioneer is a person who opens up an area to prepare a way. The students opened up a way because I am a faculty member here at West Chester University and "C" doesn't stand for "colored" any more. And, I stand on the experience that you actually have shared. The faculty share in the experiences that you had. The students share in the experiences that you had, the pioneering experiences that you had.

The only thing that I had to say sincerely was thank you. Because of you, I am.

And then I thought about a story. It was a crow and it was half dead of thirst. It came upon a pitcher which had been once full or water. But when the crow put its beak into the mouth of the pitcher, he found that only a little water was left. And he realized that he could not reach far enough down to get that water. And then the thought came on him. And he took a pebble and he dropped it into the pitcher. And then he took another pebble and he dropped it into the pitcher. Then he took another pebble and dropped it into the water. And he took another and dropped it into the pitcher. He took another pebble and dropped it into the pitcher. At last, when he saw the water was mounting up, and after casting more pebbles, he was able to quench his thirst.

So we look at this pioneering experience. It is just that. You help to give the life while at the same time quenched your own thirst. Thank You.

(Applause.)

We thank you, pioneers. We now are in an environment founded on equality of opportunity and appreciation for the ideal of an inclusive society.

We thank you, pioneers. Because of you, we have an Office of Multicultural Affairs. And in that Office of Multicultural Affairs, we actually have an ongoing mentoring program with the students. We have a Kente cloth ceremony for graduating students. We have a multicultural program for the students and we help to develop their advocacy and leadership skills. We thank you, Pioneers.

We also offer scholarships found at our Office of Multicultural Affairs. Also, we conduct a summer institute in which we assist 40 to 60 Pennsylvania Board of Governor's scholarship awardees with their transition from high school to college. We thank you.

We have a general curriculum now that is responsive to diversity. We also have a diverse curriculum that includes Women's Studies, a Holocaust and Genocide Studies master's program. We also are the second in the state system, with the highest number of minority faculty. We thank you.

We also have a Frederick Douglass Institute. What this institute does is present opportunities for advanced study for public and private school teachers and members of the academic community. It also sponsors exhibits, lectures, and also library collections. We thank you. West Chester University is also the founding and leading institute of that Frederick Douglass Collaborative [of the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education].

Again, we also have the Frederick Douglass Society. This society consists of faculty and staff and it raises scholarship funds that help to promote intellectual standards here at West Chester. We thank you.

We also have a Pennsylvania state marker dedicated in 2006 to Frederick Douglass because he gave his last speech here.

We thank you.

We also have at the University the Office of Residential Life. I hope this really hits home to you. And our Office of Res Life and Housing Services has a diverse professional and para -professional staff. In a typical year, about one third of all residents' life personnel are para- professionals and are composed of African American and Latino persons.

Also, in Res Life and Housing Services our resident assistants are among the students, staff, and administrators who have completed " Beyond Moving Barriers and Understanding Boundaries." It was an experimental opportunity to discuss diversity issues in an open and honest way. In total, more than 300 participants have involved themselves in that program. We thank you.

We also have a Campus Climate Intervention Team. So if any acts of intolerance shall occur, this team will get together and they address that issue. We thank you.

We also opened up a Multicultural Center that is located inside Sykes. It's actually where this reception is. Thank you.

We have an Academic Development Program in which we actually help students who have potential to come to college, just like our alumni. They actually come and they participate in programs that help them succeed.

We have a Curriculum Integration Seminar in which faculty participate in the program. They incorporate issues of diversity into curriculum and their classrooms instruction. We thank you.

We also have an Office of Services for Students with Disabilities. And they too are benefitting from the services about physical and learning disabilities. They help them transition to campus life.

We also have a Multicultural Faculty Commission. Actually, it helps to span the support for global faculty in areas of scholarship. And their views. This year, I can tell you we gave out $20,000. And it felt real good giving that money away.

We also have Diversity Film Series, Diversity Lunchtime Lecture Series, and a Martin Luther King Day. We also have the Bayard Rustin Book Scholarship which is coordinated by the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Ally Advocacy committee.

In our secondary education program, we now offer a class that is dedicated to raise more emphasis on racism in America. We have a program in which we bring students from urban areas to help them pursue their goals through higher education.

We also have a World Perspectives and Curriculum Integration Program that helps basically to direct programs that deal with multicultural and global education.

Our Office of Social Equity hosted the first student round table dialogue to help with racism and the round table on homophobia. And also, our Student Government Association has Diversity Day. And I'm sharing all of that with you, because you see the pebble that I talked about, drop by drop by drop, drop by drop by drop, feeding your thirst. Look how many of the folks' thirst that you actually have quenched.

We thank you, so much.

(Applause.)

I do want to end on this note. I am --I actually work with fantastic people who are diverse. They are member of the Multicultural Faculty

Commission. And as I stand here, I am a representative of that experience along with the Frederick Douglass Institute.

I like to ask those people who work with me to stand. Because let me explain why. I want you to acknowledge this group. This group worked entirely over the past year to ensure that this program occurred. So I would like the members of the Multicultural Faculty to please stand.

(Applause.)

And I would like -- I'm going to conclude my remarks. Thank you. But I'm also going to end with someone who was a representative of an era that many of you have attended schools in the 30's, 1940s, '50s. Forget Michelle Obama. This woman was our first black woman in the White House. She was Mary McLeod Bethune. And I really think she encompasses many of your experiences.

Her last will and testament that she basically left, she left what she wanted people to remember her by. Here is a woman who basically served as confidant to President [Franklin Delano] Roosevelt. Here is a woman who started a college. Here is a woman who worked with the national youth administration. Here is a woman who worked with the National Association of Colored Women.

And this is what she left. She said I leave you love, because love leads. I leave you hope so this world can be better. I leave you the challenge of developing confidence with one another. I leave you a thirst for education. I leave you respect for uses of power that we must produce in all of our people. I leave you faith. I leave you dignity. I leave you the desire to live with your fellow a man. I leave you finally, a responsibility to help our young people.

Her last will-- and at the present time I also thought about the stories that I had heard [from you] and I'm glad that you shared. I thought that was the most appropriate thing. I thank you. Now, I'm going to have the president of the University read the proclamation.

Thank You.

(Applause.)

President Adler: West Chester University of Pennsylvania proclamation, A Reaffirmation of Civility and Equality. West Chester University of Pennsylvania hereby practices and doesn't tolerate acts or expressions of prejudice or injustice. The current administration, students, faculty and staff of West Chester University acknowledge with pro-

found regret discriminatory practices such as restrictions on campus houses and the use of other facilities and services and unequal and ill treatment to African Americans students.

We offer a deep sense of remorse and heartfelt gratitude to alumni, many of whom have shared their stories. These injustices happened on West Chester's campus. They deprived African American students of opportunities, privileges and rights, and contributed to the societal error of intolerance instead of mutual respect, deprived all students of the benefits from a diverse and welcoming community, and finally, violated the values for which West Chester University now stands.

We also congratulate and celebrate these alumni for overcoming the barriers and achieving lives of understanding and service to their communities, professions, and to their families.

On the occasion of this Reaffirmation of Civility and Equality, we pledge that West Chester University will be a community committed to eliminating discrimination and promoting acceptance, diversity, and opportunities for all. This day, February 20, 2008, Civility Day, signed by Madeleine Wing Adler, President

(Applause.)

This concludes our formal program. Please join me in saluting these great individuals, our West Chester alumni.

(Applause.)

I'm going to ask that the alums to join me in front of the ballroom for a photo opt. I will present you a copy of the proclamation.

We are going to hold a reception. So you will be able to see these wonderful folks downstairs in the Multicultural Center.

Again, thank you, very much.

(Applause.)

(End of event.)

In Memoriam

DR. CARSON CARR

NOVEMBER 12, 1936 – OCTOBER 3, 2014