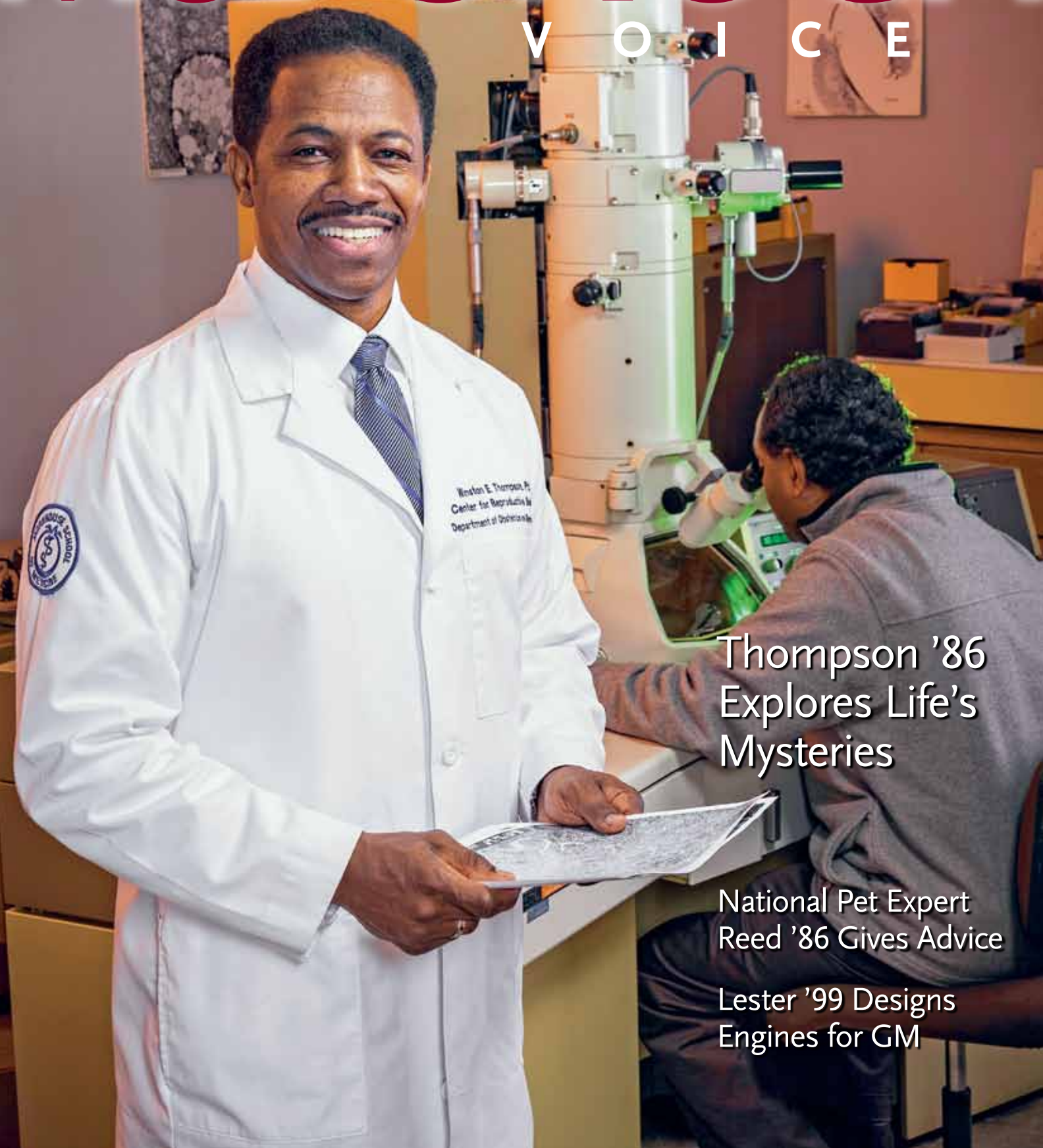


LAFAYETTE

Winter 2015

McDONOUGH

V O I C E



Thompson '86
Explores Life's
Mysteries

National Pet Expert
Reed '86 Gives Advice

Lester '99 Designs
Engines for GM



In Honor of David Kearney McDonogh, Class of 1844

Aug. 10, 1821, New Orleans, La.—Jan. 15, 1893, Newark, N.J.

The McDonogh Network, which provides networking opportunities for African American and other black alumni and students, is named for Dr. David K. McDonogh and is associated with the *McDonogh Voice*, a magazine launched in 2007 to celebrate the impressive contributions of African Americans to the Lafayette College community and beyond. The magazine is not only about past and present achievements, but also about aspirations—the hopes and dreams of all.

In addition, the Presidential Lecture Series on Diversity, launched in 2000 to encourage intellectual discourse on diversity, was renamed in honor of McDonogh in 2009. It is now known as the President's McDonogh Lecture Series.

When McDonogh came to Lafayette College in 1838, he was a slave. His owner, John McDonogh, a Louisiana planter, sent him to receive an education so that he could travel with a group of freed slaves to Liberia to serve as a missionary. But McDonogh wanted to become a physician. When he graduated in 1844 as the College's first black graduate, he went on to attend classes at the College of Physicians and Surgeons in New York. Although the institution would not grant him a degree, his classmates treated him as a physician. He later received a degree from Eclectic Medical College of New York. He became a member of the staff of the New York Hospital and New York Eye and Ear Infirmary. After his death, McDonough Memorial Hospital was named in his honor and opened as New York City's first hospital to admit physicians and patients without discrimination by race. He is buried in the historic Woodlawn Cemetery in the Bronx.



The sculpture, *Transcendence*, which stands adjacent to the David Bishop Skillman Library, was created by Melvin Edwards to honor McDonogh. Dedicated in September 2008, it is made of stainless steel and stands 16 feet tall. The massive upward-reaching form represents struggle, tension, and achievement. Edwards was artist in residence at the College's Experimental Printmaking Institute in 2004-05, supported by the David L. Temple Sr. and Helen J. Temple Visiting Artist Fund. ♦

McDONOUGH

V O I C E



LIFE MYSTERIES EXPLORED 4

Winston Thompson '86 expands the understanding of female fertility and mentors future medical researchers.

By Matt Sinclair '90

SHAPING POLICY 7

Through New York's Children's Aid Society, Yolanda McBride '94 advocates for the educational and health needs of children.

By Benjamin Gleisser



TRAINING THE OWNERS 10

Pet expert Charlotte Reed '86 creates enterprise by talking for the animals.

By Margie Peterson

INSPIRING SUCCESS 13

Tony Duckett '85 leads by building relationships and deepening motivation.

By Kevin Gray



FAST LANE 8

Dom Lester '99 designs and builds high-performance engines for GM—and himself.

By Samuel T. Clover '91

OUR HOUSE: THEN AND NOW. 14

Reflecting on the history of the first black house in 1970; embracing today's Portlock Black Cultural Center.

FISCAL STEWARD 16

Gerald Coleman '70 has helped several universities solve financial problems.

By Larry Atkins

MEETING OF THE MINDS 17

Darlyne Bailey '74 is a leader in higher education.

By Kate Helm

DEPARTMENTS

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE 2

FROM THE 3

McDONOUGH NETWORK CHAIR

ALUMNI BRIEFS 18

- Newsome '75 part of Pa. Gov. Wolf transition team

- Windom '92 helped in fight against Ebola in Liberia

CAMPUS BRIEFS 19

- Community gathers in wake of Brown and Garner decisions

- Seniors perform *Tongues and Hands Untied* at Baccalaureate

- Pearson '15 explores new fields

- New program recognizes intercultural competency

- Studying in South Africa

- Clifton '16 explores gender issues in the Baltic

- Seniors are celebrated at McDonough Network meeting

- Senegalese drum and dance

On the cover: Winston Thompson '86, chair of the physiology department, Morehouse School of Medicine, is well known for his research in women's reproductive health.

Diversity and Inclusiveness Statement

Lafayette College is committed to creating a diverse community: one that is inclusive and responsive, and is supportive of each and all of its faculty, students, and staff. The College seeks to promote diversity in its many manifestations. These include but are not limited to race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, disability, and place of origin. The College recognizes that we live in an increasingly interconnected, globalized world, and that students benefit from learning in educational and social contexts in which there are participants from all manner of backgrounds. The goal is to encourage students to consider diverse experiences and perspectives throughout their lives. All members of the College community share a responsibility for creating, maintaining, and developing a learning environment in which difference is valued, equity is sought, and inclusiveness is practiced. It is a mission of the College to advance diversity as defined above. The College will continue to assess its progress in a timely manner in order to ensure that its diversity initiatives are effective. **Adopted 2009**



Increasing Diversity

This year has been an important and celebratory one, as we honored the traditions of the College's historic football rivalry and launched a capital campaign that will advance the institution. At the same time, the last several months have included serious reflection and dialogue on campus on the subject of race relations at Lafayette and nationwide.

In the immediate aftermath of grand jury decisions not to indict police officers involved in the deaths of Michael Brown and Eric Garner, many college campuses experienced significant tension. I am proud that at Lafayette, these events did not inspire conflict, but instead inspired dialogue. Members of the Association of Black Collegians and other emerging student leaders, working with Dean **John McKnight**, organized and carried out two "die-in" demonstrations to increase awareness of these events. These were followed by a community conversation attended by approximately 250 students, faculty, and staff. Dean McKnight shared facts about the cases, outlined key terminology, and set the context and ground rules. The large group divided into 20 smaller ones with discussions facilitated by ABC and other student leaders. Those who attended found these discussions civil, thoughtful, and productive, and the community expressed clear support for more such conversations in the future.

We also worked to provide robust programming for Black Heritage Month with the theme "Black Bodies, Black Lives," echoing conversations happening at a national level about historical and contemporary race relations, particularly related to law enforcement and the justice system. The series includes several major guest lectures, film screenings, and community discussions.

In January, the College's new Provost, **Abu Rizvi**, along with Dean of Faculty **Robin Rinehart**, initiated a renewed focus on enhancing diversity in faculty hiring. In addition, a group of faculty plans to bring renowned scholar Derald Wing Sue from Columbia in March to offer a faculty training session on racial microaggressions and diversity within the higher education context.

As we continue to increase the diversity of the student body, with the Class of 2018 constituting our most diverse class ever with 26.7 percent students of color, faculty are excited about participating in training that will enhance their ability to make classroom environments safer, more equitable, and more welcoming to all.

Alison Byrly

LAFAYETTE McDONOGH VOICE

Celebrating the contributions of African Americans to the Lafayette community

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The McDonogh Network is an active and engaged networking organization consisting of multiple generations of Lafayette College black alumni and students. The network enriches and informs its constituents through communications, events, and activities that promote their interests on campus and in the community at large. The organization supports and mentors the current black student body by encouraging their academic and social progress and promotes diversity among the student body.

Committees include events, communication, professional development and networking, resource development and fundraising, ad hoc governance, and recruitment, retention, and reclamation. To get involved, contact Robert M. Young, Assistant Director, Annual Fund, (610) 330-5683; youngr@lafayette.edu.

McDonogh Voice is published annually for African American and black alumni, students, parents, faculty, staff, and friends of Lafayette College by the Communications Division, Feather House, 17 Cattell St., Easton, PA 18042; 610 330-5120; fax 610 330-5217; danielss@lafayette.edu.

For more, visit
sites.lafayette.edu/mcdonogh/



Growing Stronger

For McDonogh, 2014 was a year of progress. With the support of President **Alison Byerly** and the continued support from the development office, we were able to connect, network, and organize better than ever. We have hosted events throughout the northeast and even kicked back to celebrate the great win in Yankee Stadium on Nov. 22. **Alvin Yearwood '83** and **George Woods '81** organized a gathering at Cove Lounge in Harlem. In addition, four of us (above, L-R) including myself, **Nkrumah Pierre '06**, **Britney McCoy '05**, and **Terrence Byrd '74**, spoke Nov. 15 at the College's "Our Beloved Community" event for prospective students.

Although McDonogh had a lot to celebrate in 2014, we have great strides to make as we continue to push forward. The new year will bring a new organizational structure, more networking, and a continued drive to strengthen our connection with current students. **Robert Young '14**, who became an assistant director of the annual fund and McDonogh Network liaison in June, will lead the way in developing programming and opportunities for alumni to reconnect and stay involved.

We look forward to continuing the momentum and building the brand of McDonogh with current students and alumni. I encourage each of you to do your part to learn more about, give more to, and do more for McDonogh in 2015. Please send your letters and comments about this issue of *McDonogh Voice* so we can introduce a "letters" column next year.

Let's raise the bar!

UPCOMING EVENTS

McDonogh Network Conference and Senior Celebration

April 25, 2015
12 noon – 3 p.m.

Wilson Room, Pfenning
Network meeting followed
by recognition and
celebration of seniors

Reunion

June 5-7, 2015

McDonogh Network Homecoming Social

Oct. 17, 2015

Alumni, students, faculty,
and administrators gather for
a reception and fellowship at
Portlock Black Cultural Center.

McDonogh Fund

Thanks to your contributions, the fund is now endowed, but its strength depends on ongoing gifts. It supports Network activities, alumni outreach, and student programming. **For questions, contact Robert Young.** Donations may be made online at development.lafayette.edu/give, or sent to the Annual Fund, Lafayette College, Box 3000, Easton, PA 18042, with a designation for "McDonogh Fund" on the check.



LIFE MYSTERIES EXPLORED

Winston Thompson '86 expands the understanding of female fertility and mentors future medical researchers.

By Matt Sinclair '90

Examining how sea urchins balance salt in their systems and the mechanism that enables them to apply pressure on food they find in the sand was so fascinating to **Winston Thompson '86** that his dream of becoming a medical doctor changed to becoming a medical researcher.

"I learned I had more interest in science and discovery than just treating an illness," he says of his experience as a research assistant under the mentorship of **Chuck Holliday**, professor emeritus of biology.

In addition to the excitement of research, Thompson was also thrilled at being published as an undergraduate. "Publishing is important because it serves as an indicator that your peers recognize your contribution as meaningful in the research space. It says, 'I'm doing something that no one has done before.' That piqued my curiosity and led me to think more toward a science career."

Now a well-known and well-respected researcher in the field of women's reproductive health, Thompson continues that legacy. He created the Cooperative Reproductive Science Research Center in 1996 when he joined Morehouse School of Medicine, where he later became director of research for the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology and director of the Mentoring Academy. Recently named chair of the physiology department, he fosters collaborations and mentors the next generation of health care providers and researchers who will change the trajectory of health equity.

In fact, beginning this summer, Lafayette students will have the chance to conduct research in his laboratory. Thompson is launching the program in partnership with **Robert Kurt**, professor and head of biology. "I'm happy

that Robert Kurt acted on the thought of reaching out to me as a way to give students an opportunity to see beyond Lafayette and to do research," says Thompson. "It also helps in diversifying the scientific community at Lafayette and the nation at large."

Fertility Research

Thompson and his researchers are focused on understanding the mechanisms associated with ovarian health and how cells work together to ensure the development of a fertilizable egg. The group has demonstrated how proteins known as prohibitins help modulate specific responses to ovarian granulosa cells, which play an important physiological role in supporting the development and selection of the egg. With that knowledge, they are pursuing a targeted approach to destroying cancer cells in the ovaries without damaging normal cells.

Thompson supervises two junior faculty members, a postdoctorate researcher, and a research technician in his lab. In addition, four local undergraduate students participate via the Atlanta Center for Translational Research in Endometriosis program. ACTRE is a partnership between Morehouse and Emory University that focuses on women's health and reproductive research and introduces underrepresented minority students to translatio-

nal human reproductive research that demonstrates how cellular and molecular biology can become a bridge to clinical therapeutic treatments in reproductive medicine.

About 10 students from undergraduate institutions are involved each summer—four or five are assigned to Thompson's laboratory. The schools include Emory, Georgia State, Clark Atlanta University, Spellman College, Morehouse, Agnes Scott College, and now Lafayette.

"Winston is a great mentor, and he is passionate about recruitment and retention of underrepresented students in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics fields, which is one of the objectives of our Howard Hughes Medical Institute grant," says Kurt. "We have funds to support five Lafayette students to work with Lafayette alumni next summer. The opportunity to work with Winston and obtain an educational experience not available on our campus is particularly attractive to them."

Thompson draws on the entirety of his background to understand the issues women face when dealing with infertility. As department chair, he is in a better position than ever to advance the type of research that will make a difference in human lives. "One thing I'd like to develop here is a strong women's health program," he says. His plan is to take an interdisciplinary approach in addressing women's health issues.

In particular, he wants to develop a program that focuses on how those areas affect women of color—a field that remains under-researched. "We haven't had a functional program that focuses on the reproductive issues that disproportionately affect women of color," Thompson says. "For example, fibroids tend to occur more often in women of color."

Building Expertise

A biology graduate, Thompson earned a master's in endocrinology from Rutgers and a joint doctorate from Rutgers in cell and developmental biology and University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey in biomedical sciences.

At Rutgers, Thompson worked on a collaborative research project that involved the ability of jellyfish to develop in microgravity and the effect it might have on their sense of up and down. The jellyfish were sent into space on board the Space Shuttle Columbia.

The desire to uncover rarely traveled avenues of research led him to his work in reproductive medicine. His work at Rutgers led to him being part of the centennial class of embryology fellows at Woods Hole Marine Biology Laboratory, where he earned a certificate in embryology.

"It was a boot camp for young scientists," Thompson says. "It's very intense, but you're free to think, without



Winston Thompson '86 is providing research opportunities for Lafayette students in summer 2015.

distraction, in the lab at any time. We used marine organisms to address biological questions."

His talent and tenacity led to his appointment as a postdoctoral fellow under the highly regarded Everett Anderson, Stillman Professor of Comparative Anatomy and professor of cell biology at Harvard Medical School. He received three years of postdoctoral training in *in vivo* and *in vitro* studies on the ontogeny, physiology, biochemistry, and molecular aspect of rodent ovarian biology that he later utilized to develop his embryological expertise in human reproduction.

These days, much of his tenacity is directed toward securing funding. Research grants have become increasingly competitive. "It is even more difficult at minority-serving institutions," he says of the ever-present challenge of raising funds for his laboratory. "As a scientist, you have to be adaptable. You cannot be stagnant. We have to find ways and means to get grants funded. . . . You can't work in silos. You have to work in a more collaborative fashion and build bridges. Where there are weaknesses in your program—through collaboration—you find strengths."

And as the relationship between Thompson's laboratory and Lafayette's biology department blossoms, who knows where the research will lead. "It's an opportunity for Lafayette to reach out and develop a program that bridges the gap between current students and alums," Thompson says. "It's another way to engage Lafayette's distinguished alumni community and to build programs that are assets to the local, national, and global communities. The possibilities are endless and exciting!" ♦

SHAPING POLICY

Through New York's Children's Aid Society, Yolanda McBride '94 advocates for the educational and health needs of children.

By Benjamin Gleisser

AS DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC POLICY

for Children's Aid Society, **Yolanda McBride '94** goes into battle on behalf of children and families who can't fight for themselves.

The social service organization, which has been serving children from low-income families in New York City for more than 160 years, was faced with proposed state budget cuts in May 2013. The cuts would have closed the agency's five school-based health centers, which provide medical, vision, dental, and mental health services for more than 5,000 youngsters.

McBride conferred with representatives from other social service groups that were also threatened and lobbied before New York state and city elected officials. "We won a one-year stay," she says. "The state is working with us to figure out a solution to our funding situation. This was a huge win for children and families."

The society was founded in 1853 to help find homes for homeless children. It has been an innovator in children's services including having the first free school lunch program, the first industrial school for poor children, and the first day care program for working mothers.

McBride oversees government external affairs in areas that encompass education, health and child welfare, early childhood education programs for working families, youth development, adolescent pregnancy prevention, and community schools.

"My work is to push for legislative and regulatory changes to benefit the population we serve—children and families living in poverty," says McBride, who travels quarterly to Washington, D.C., to confer with the New York state delegation and other legislators on Capitol Hill.



Danny Stern

"I enjoy helping people tell their stories, to advocate for themselves because they can," she says. Recently, she enabled several young people, about to age out of foster care, to talk with state legislators about why they want to go to college. A proposed college success initiative, backed by the statewide Youth in Care Coalition and staffed by the Children's Aid Society, would provide financial and emotional support for these

youngsters to achieve their educational goals.

McBride learned the importance of community service growing up in Newark, N.J. "My mother was a nurse's aide who also visited the sick and cooked and brought clothing for people who were in need," she says. "My father owned a subcontracting business and helped young men find jobs, often paying them out of his own pocket so they could get experience and learn a trade."

An American studies graduate, McBride was a member of the Association of Black Collegians and conducted research with **Rexford Ahene**, professor of economics, and the late **John T. McCartney**, associate professor of government and law. Her volunteer activities included visiting elderly Easton residents who lived alone and tutoring elementary school students. She was awarded the Aaron O. Hoff People's Choice Award.

McBride, who holds a master's in public administration from New York University, was previously senior policy adviser to New York City's deputy mayor for economic development, acting as the mayor's liaison to the New York City Housing Authority. She was also senior policy analyst for New York City Council and research project manager for New York University's Institute of Education and Social Policy. ♦



TRAINING THE OWNERS

Pet expert Charlotte Reed '86 creates enterprise
by talking to and for the animals.

By Margie Peterson

Most people find jobs. **Charlotte Reed '86** invented a career as a pet trends entrepreneur. For the past two decades, she has dispensed advice about caring for dogs and cats on a host of national television shows, including *The View*, *Steve Harvey*, *Today*, and *Fox & Friends*.

She has tracked pet trends for *Dog Fancy* and *Cat Fancy* magazines, written columns and blogs, and can be heard regularly giving pet tips on 25 radio stations around the country. Her book *The Miss Fido Manners Complete Book of Dog Etiquette: The Definitive Guide to Manners for Pets and Their People* teaches pet owners how to be good citizens, to use what Reed calls “petiquette” with their companions.

“I appeal to people who want to have great relationships with the pets in their lives,” says Reed. “Think of yourself as a canine ambassador. Wherever you go you need to leave joy. That means scooping up the poop or going to a hotel and bringing a sheet so that your pet doesn’t sleep on the linen.”

Reed’s reputation has made her a natural spokeswoman for products geared toward pets and pet owners. Clients as diverse as GM and Dyson have hired Reed to talk about the best cars for dogs and which vacuums are most efficient for picking up pet hair.

“I’m the CEO of a brand,” she says. In fact, Google the word *petrendologist*, which means pet trends expert, and listings about Reed fill the screen. The reason? She coined the word.

After graduating with a history and international affairs degree and earning a J.D. from Fordham

University Law School, Reed took a job as a securities lawyer in New York City. Although she had always wanted to be a lawyer, a random episode tapped into her entrepreneurial streak. She arrived home one day in the mid-1990s to find the dog walker for her two cocker spaniels, Katie and Kidder, trying on her clothes.

“And you know what really angered me?” she jokes. “He looked better in the clothes than I did.”

Twist of Fate

Reed started hearing from other pet owners who had poor experiences with dog walkers and decided to quit her job and set up her own pet-care business, Two Dogs & A Goat (the goat is a reference to herself, she’s a Capricorn). She took grooming and training classes as well as veterinary technician courses.

Friends and relatives thought she was crazy to leave a steady, lucrative career to start a dog-walking business. They would ask, “When are you getting a real job?”

“I’ve always been a little unorthodox, and that’s OK,” Reed says. “Life is really dull without passion, and it’s even worse if you’re doing something you don’t love. I can be creative all day long.”

Her company grew rapidly and began attracting celebrity clients, including media mogul Barry Diller

and the late composer Marvin Hamlisch. In order to better promote her business, Reed hired a publicist and started to market herself for interviews on pet care to television and radio stations, as well as to print publications.

The first TV show she did was *Good Day New York*. After that, Reed could be found on numerous broadcasts, especially morning shows, giving tips for how viewers could have better relationships with their cats and dogs, information on care, and money-saving advice on products.

“People liked me on TV, people liked what I was talking about,” Reed says. “Then I found it was much easier to make money doing those things and less headaches because I could write an article and make as much in a few hours as I could as a dog-walker all week.”

While Reed has had a lot of high-end clients, she stresses that her pet advice is aimed at people with all lifestyles and incomes. She’ll talk about the finest expensive shampoos for dogs but also the affordable stuff at Walmart.

“I like to have topics that people have not thought about and thus people are going to stop what they’re doing and sit on the bed for three minutes and watch me. So anytime I do a segment, that’s always the goal, to show a product and have a discussion that’s going to make someone say ‘Aha.’”

Over the years, Reed has incorporated more social media in her work, including Twitter parties for her 6,000 followers. She gets corporate sponsors for the parties and then dispenses pet advice in tweets, while giving away products.

Pets Are Big Business

Reed developed her business at the right time. Americans are marrying later, having fewer children, and having them later in life. They have more time and money to spend on their pets and to create a pet-friendly lifestyle. The American Pet Products Association says Americans



“If you have no passion, you will never become successful. Passion is what gets you up every single day and helps you to create opportunities.”

spent \$55.7 billion on pets in 2013. The National Retail Federation predicted people would spend \$350 million on Halloween costumes for their pets last year.

Reed recalls seeing a couple in their early 60s pushing a stroller on the Riverwalk in Bradenton, Fla. In the stroller was a very well-groomed shih tzu. “If you had asked this man five or ten years ago, ‘Can you imagine yourself pushing a stroller with a dog in it,’ he’d probably laugh in your face,” Reed says.

Reed explains people’s devotion to their pets this way: “When you get home, that pet never yells at you. He’s always happy to see you. He doesn’t care if you overspent on your credit card. He doesn’t care if you screwed up at work today.”

Among the lessons she learned in going from Wall Street lawyer to dog-walker was the value of humility. She’s equally comfortable talking to high-profile media celebrities and the local butcher. Reed relishes defying stereotypes.

Reed says she found people were surprised that someone who makes a living on pet care reads *Vanity Fair* magazine and is well versed in news and politics.

“It taught me a very valuable lesson, and the lesson was that you treat everybody with dignity,” Reed says. “If you treat everybody the same, you’re amazed how it works. You just don’t patronize anybody.”

After living in New York City for decades, Reed moved in 2013 to Sarasota, Fla., to be with her boyfriend, veterinarian Dr. Michael Fleck. She met Fleck after calling him for advice on pet sunscreen for a TV segment. They ended up talking for two hours. Now they conduct TV and radio interviews together.

Reed says she is really happy with this chapter in her life but points out that being an entrepreneur comes with innate risks. “It’s not for the faint of heart,” she says. “Some people can’t do it. If you have no passion, you will never become successful. The passion is what gets you up every single day and helps you to create opportunities.” ♦

INSPIRING SUCCESS

Tony Duckett '85 leads his teams by building relationships and deepening motivation.

By Kevin Gray

"IF YOU BUILD A VISION, then that vision usually matches what you sell," says **Tony Duckett '85**, vice president of sales for Sodexo USA.

Duckett directs Sodexo's national sales team of 30 junior and senior representatives, who are dispersed throughout the country. The team sells café services and provides facilities-management services for more than 6,000 customers.

"The average deal that we go after is about \$2.5 million," says Duckett, who lives in Carlsbad, Calif., with his wife and 8-year-old son. "These deals are not the kind that just pop up. You have to nurture these relationships. My job is to use my network of people across the country to get my team in front of the right people early in the game so that we can structure the vision, which makes it easier for us to win."

He directs his sales team in the same way he was mentored in college, by exhorting the value of passion and diligence.

"If you showed an interest in being successful at Lafayette, the professors worked harder for you," says Duckett, an economics and business graduate and star basketball player. He cited professors, including **Dale Falcinelli**, who "did great jobs at bridging the gap by using life examples."

"On the court, I convinced people to walk into fire with me. Now I help the people who work for me to translate that to their worlds in the way they deal with people. College doesn't teach you how to be successful. It teaches you to start and finish responsibly."

For most of his nearly 25 years in business, Duckett has held executive positions where he led and solidified sales teams and made them understand that they were more capable than they ever imagined.

Duckett says one of the most important skills he has learned is reaching people who have been with an organization for a long time when he comes on board as an executive.



"Many of the employees I manage don't necessarily believe in my understanding of the product and service that they sell when I come in," he explains. "Finding a way to bridge that gap and getting them to understand that I have value has probably been one of the most difficult, but also one of the most rewarding, things that I've had to do in my career."

Duckett refers to an adage his basketball coach—the legendary **Butch van Breda Kolff**—imparted: "People want to know how much you care, and they care how much you know."

"The first order of business is to make sure that they understand that I am there to make them more successful than they've ever been before," he says. "It proves I care about them, and after I share some of the things I know that can help them do that, they release their inhibitions."

"I train, I motivate... and my job is to get teams to overachieve," he says. "... All the companies I've been with, we changed the image and how people looked at them. You're selling the look, but also yourself. It's about building trust."

A member of the Maroon Club Hall of Fame, Duckett is the all-time assists leader in Lafayette men's basketball. He was drafted by the NBA's Atlanta Hawks in 1985 and later played on the European circuit.

He stays connected to basketball. He has worked with Los Angeles Lakers' rookies on making the transition to the NBA. He also wrote and directed a series of videos for children to teach them how to "think basketball." The series features NBA coaches Phil Jackson and Jim Clemons.

"The message is on the importance of contribution," says Duckett. "We tell kids that you don't necessarily have to focus on winning; you have to focus on always doing something that's contributing to the success of the team." ♦



FAST LANE

Dom Lester '99 designs and builds high-performance engines for GM—and himself.

By Samuel T. Clover '91

As a boy tinkering in his stepfather's auto repair shop in Maryland, **Dom Lester '99** dreamed of racing fast cars. "I always wanted not only to race but to design my own engines and have my own shop."

These days Lester is living his dreams. At GM, he's been designing, testing, and validating engines for 15 years. He currently manages a team of engineers for the company's high-feature V6 program.

"I oversee 15 development engineers who are responsible for dynamometer testing and all validation

testing—power, torque, emissions, fuel economy, durability," Lester says. "We develop new engines and validate that what we develop is viable for the market."

He's secured four patents—including one for a powerful, energy-efficient cylinder head that led to his receiving the "Boss" Kettering Award in 2010, GM's highest award for technical innovation.

On College Hill, Lester moved beyond his boyhood nuts-and-bolts knowledge of cars to learn the theory behind the internal combustion engine. Classes in the

engine lab shifted his interest into high gear. “The lab class allowed me to dyno-test engines,” he says, referring to the process by which an engine’s power is measured. “I was coming from more of a machine background, and this gave me the opportunity to go to the next step and learn the theory about design and engineering.”

Getting Started

As his knowledge grew, so did his ambition. Taking advantage of a connection in his hometown with a friend who owned a Chrysler dealership, Lester interned for three summers at Chrysler and was hired by the company after graduation. “It was knowing the right people at the right time, and speaking up,” he says.

Of course, experience and know-how helped. During senior year, he and a team of classmates entered the Society of Automotive Engineers regional mini-Baja competition in Dayton, Ohio, for which the team had to design, build, test, promote, and race a 10-horsepower off-road vehicle.

“It required a ground-up build-up of the car from the frame, chassis, suspension, and so on,” Lester says. “Lafayette traditionally hadn’t done well in this competition, but that year we came in third. Over 100 cars from around the country showed up. Every part of the car was graded, and the overall average from each category was the final score,” says Lester, a mechanical engineering graduate with a master’s in mechanical engineering from Oakland University.

After starting his career at Chrysler, opportunity opened up after only three months in GM’s dynamometer lab—and Lester raced ahead.

“It was just what I did at Lafayette, but on a bigger scale,” Lester says. “That’s the way it tends to work: you work for GM, Ford, or Chrysler and learn from your experience there and maybe move on. My wife, Danielle, works at Chrysler as an attorney, so there’s a little bit of a family feud. But she doesn’t know anything about engines so it all works out.”

In his current work, the team he supervises develops and tests high-feature V6, 3- and 3.6 liter engines for the 2016 to 2018 model years. And the focus is always on cost-effectiveness.

“We’re trying to make a vehicle as efficient as possible for drag—lower weight, lower drag,” Lester says. “The whole name of the game is fuel efficiency. Every time we bring a product to market, we ask what is the marketplace demanding of us as a company, and what are we trying to accomplish from an engineering standpoint.”

This drive led to the cylinder-head patent for which he won the Kettering Award.

“It was risky. The design was pretty revolutionary, and I take my hat off to GM for letting us do that,” Lester says. “In a big company like GM it’s hard to introduce revolutionary technology because if you have a hiccup from an engineering standpoint, that can amplify into a huge loss. It doesn’t take much of a misstep to take away any margin you might have, and this is a very low-margin business.”

Racing His Own

In his backyard, Lester really revs things up. He runs L&L Racing Engines, when he co-founded with friend Pascal “Frenchie” Lecompte in 2007. Its headquarters and shop are literally 30 yards from Lester’s back door. L&L custom-builds performance engines for small-block and big-block Chevy dragsters. Fifty percent of the company’s business consists of high-end racing engines of 15,000 horsepower, and customers range from enthusiasts across the U.S. to racers in Brazil and Australia.

“I’ve always been passionate about racing,” he says. “It’s a six-digit business from a revenue perspective, but we do it selectively. The margins are good—37 to 40 cents on the dollar, whereas GM makes 6 to 7 cents on the dollar.”

Lester races top dragsters at National Hot Rod Association and International Hot Rod Association events in the Midwest and Middle Atlantic. His personal best time is 1/4 mile in 6.8 seconds—about 208 mph. “Danielle says she closes her eyes for 6.8 seconds,” he jokes. They travel to the competitions in a slow-and-steady RV, where they spend time between races. “We call it going camping with the race car,” he says.

It’s not that his racing career and his work at L&L compete with his day job at GM. Quite the opposite: everything fuels everything else. “The things I learn at L&L and the race track and the things I learn at GM go hand-in-hand,” he says. “I share my learning from each experience.”

Perhaps what keeps Lester running fastest these days is his 1-year-old daughter Allison. “Since my wife works for Chrysler, and I work for GM, we think she might end up working for Ford, so we have the Big Three covered.” ♦

Dom Lester '99 (opposite) with engines he is building for customers including a 522 cubic-inch-displacement, supercharged Chevy, a 540 CID Chevy, a 588 CID Chevy, and a 598 CID Chevy.



OUR HOUSE: THEN AND NOW

Reflecting on the history of the first black house in 1970;
embracing today's Portlock Black Cultural Center

In September 1970, a center for educational, social, and residential purposes for black students at Lafayette was opened at the east end of the Quad. The three-story, white wooden house, which had previously served as faculty housing, was remodeled to feature meeting rooms, a library, kitchen, office, and three rooms to house six students on the second floor.

The house fulfilled one of the five requests in the Black Manifesto issued by the Association of Black Collegians in fall 1969. Plans for the house, described in the Sept. 22, 1970, *The Lafayette* included presenting seminars and public lectures by members of the community and invited guests to explore aspects of the black experience.

"We never imagined that the administration would even give the request for a house serious consideration,"

says **Larry Lennon '71**. "But thanks in a large part to the response presented by Dean **David Portlock**, what was known as the black house was the first of the demands that became a reality.

"The mere presence of the house gave validation that black students were part of Lafayette College. It was our place, a place where we could have our parties with our music. A place where we could play bid whist and hang pictures of Huey Newton, Stokely Carmichael, and Angela Davis. It was a place where we talked about what was important to us, and the rest of the college community was welcome to join us. It was our house."

By 1988, the College had grown, and the need for a student center was pressing. With a pledge of \$11 million from **William B. Farinon '39** and PT Farinon, plans for

The first black cultural center circa 1989 (top left); students gather in front of the center (below left); at the current center are Alvin Yearwood '83 (front, L-R), Terese Brown '07, Alma Scott-Buczak '74, Hemendrda Bhola '12; Rob Young '14 (back row, L-R), Abdul Dopson '14, and Larry Lennon '71.

the center were finalized. Because a site on the Quad was needed, two buildings had to be taken down in June 1989—the black cultural center, also referred to as the black house, and the former Delta Upsilon house.

The new location for the black cultural center was 101 McCartney St., across from McKeen Hall, just behind the College center site. A decade later, the house was renovated and rededicated as the David A. Portlock Black Cultural Center in 1999 in honor of Portlock, the first black administrator at Lafayette, who served as dean, from 1970 until his death in 1996.

“The center today continues to serve as a campus safe haven for students of color, but its scope has broadened over time, and it is now a hub of activity for students of all backgrounds who are seeking cross-cultural exchange and friendship,” says **John McKnight**, dean of intercultural development. The center’s purpose is to enhance cultural awareness, support community-wide programs, and provide a forum for networking. It features the EPI/Riley Temple Art Gallery, Aaron O. Hoff Library, an upstairs living room, and a full service kitchen.

Reflecting on the first black house, where she was a resident in 1981-82, **Lisa Clay Settle '84** says, “The house gave us the strongest connection to the rest of the campus. It was our home away from home, a place we could go at any time just to sit and chill. It was ours.”

Friends who lived in the house with her were **Denise Farrington '82** and **Traci Lennon '82**. She recalls stopping in and finding a spades game going on between classes, gatherings for the Black Children Can program on Saturdays, and ABC meetings on weeknights.

“My connection to Lafayette as a whole was lost when the house was torn down. It felt as if the presence, the physical prominence that couldn’t be ignored, was pushed off to the side. While it may not have been the intent, I think I can say that most of us became bitter about this move.”

She notes that while many in the classes of the late 1980s have not felt connected to the Portlock Center, that now, after 30 years, “we are ready to at least check it out. We need a special event. I’m up for the challenge. Let’s make it happen.” ♦

An invitation: You are welcome to stop by the Portlock Center whenever you are on campus to both reflect on fond memories of the black house, and to offer suggestions and lend support for the center’s present-day purposes.

—John McKnight, mcknight@lafayette.edu

Way Back When . . . A Tribute to the Black House

By Leroy D. Nunery II '77

It was Way Back When, as I recall
“The Black House” lived, with its wooden white walls.
Where “Brick House” blared on the old console
and Mayfield’s “Future Shock” stirred the soul.

Where Gil Scott Heron once slept, like George Washington,
Dashikis, beads, platform shoes were in fashion,
Where so many of us truly came of age
emerging from one world onto a new, strange stage.

Where we gathered to hook up, argue, pass through
A safe place, called “home”—though not in truth.
The only place where you might really be heard
On the hill, on the Quad . . . without saying a word.

Old school, “Big Brother” DJ was spinning the vinyl
They sweated and bumped . . . “What final?”
A place for expression, for being yourself,
Free for the moment, be someone else.

A “gift” of sorts, after years of protest:
Was this what they wanted? Was this their best?
A wooden white house? Gone now and removed,
The memories lost, and its soul entombed.

Decorated walls of poetry, art, and signs
Long stories told about real moments in time,
The Godfather screamed “Say It Loud!”
And we did, in the wooden white house, Black and Proud.

Where *General Hospital* each day promptly at noon
Was standing room only. And then came *Roots*—
And eerily silent was the House for 7 days,
As Kunte Kinte’s life was gloriously displayed.

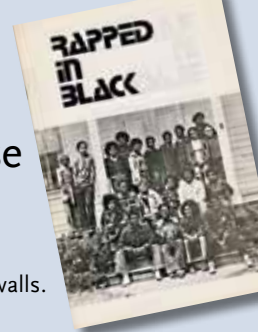
Where distances closed, and lives were shared
Sometimes hearts broken, but at least someone cared.
At the white wooden Black House, true oddity
Amongst brick, stone, concrete and Hall of Pardee.

Where sometimes anger and sometimes pain,
Met laughter, consoling you inside that wooden frame.
Many all-nighters held, aromatic candles lit
Hours of bid whist put some GPAs at risk.

Where you learned about the real Laf College scene—
“Laughing Yet”? The Black House was irony.
Front door of campus, structured in wood,
A different symbol in this hilly neighborhood.

Pizza, hoagies, Miller beer a-flowing
Feeding many. Starving, striving and knowing
They needed a place to be understood
Shelter from the rain, in this House of wood.

From the porch, facing campus, each year
They gathered to pose, smiling ear-to-ear
For a picture at The Black House, as it was known
Rapped in Black, a place I once called “home” . . .
Way Back When.



FISCAL STEWARD

Gerald Coleman '70 has helped
several universities solve financial problems.

By Larry Atkins

WHEN GERALD COLEMAN '70

came to Dillard University in 2012, he faced a formidable task of turning around the financial situation of a school recovering from past financial difficulties compounded by the disastrous aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.

"It's my job to make \$1.25 out of 75 cents," muses Coleman, describing his role as vice president for finance and administration. "That's my challenge."

It took nine years and \$300 million in renovations for the school to reopen all of its dorms. Before Katrina, the student population was 2,200. The lowest post-Katrina enrollment dipped to 800, but it is now up to 1,200.

"To get there took effort," Coleman says. "The biggest hurdle back to pre-Katrina is keeping profitability with a smaller base of students. It's very challenging. I'm proud that we managed the bottom line with minimal layoffs. We did cost-cutting and took on challenges of re-growing our student population. We're one of the class institutions among our peers, such as Howard, Spellman, and Morehouse." Dillard is ranked no. 13 in the *U.S. News & World Report* rating of historically black colleges and universities.

Coleman reports to President Walter Kimbrough, with whom he worked at Philander Smith College, and the board of trustees. He manages a staff of more than 100. In two years, he has significantly reduced operating deficits.

One of his proudest accomplishments is realizing nearly \$5 million dollars in tax credits for the university when many thought the effort was hopeless. In addition, he negotiated a reduction in the cost of Dillard's property and casualty insurance from \$2 million to \$1 million, and managed the university's spending in the face of revenue shortfall.

Coleman—an economics and business graduate with an MBA from University of Rochester and a certificate in management development from Emory—has extensive experience in turning around difficult situations. He has



been CFO for Cheney University and other historically black colleges and universities, which he notes are usually underresourced and underfunded. "I discovered I had a gift, a talent for helping historically black colleges strengthen and turn around their financial condition. That's been my niche. It's very satisfying that I left every university better off."

At Lafayette, Coleman was a member of Association of Black Collegians. Classmates included the late **Gerald Gill '70**, a distinguished history professor at Tufts; the late **Hap Hairston '71**, Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist;

John Cann '70, retired chief medical officer for Bermuda; and **Hank Smith '69**, who worked on Wall Street. Coleman has fond memories of those classmates, as well as **Hubert Clemmons '70**, **Bob Lambert '70**, **Mike Jackson '70**, and **Raja Sharif**, who transferred after his first year.

Noting that only eight of the 500 students in his class were black, Coleman says, "I was pretty isolated. We sustained each other. We looked like each other, talked like each other. We understood each others' issues. That was important to me. We had informal relations before joining the association. We gathered in the dorms. I'm happy to see that Lafayette has increased the percentage of its black students."

Coleman says that his Lafayette experience gave him the knowledge that he could compete with anybody. "I was a student from the South who had grown up in an all-black neighborhood. Competing against, and having success with, the best and brightest at Lafayette gave me confidence that I could compete with the best in the real world."

Coleman relishes his role at Dillard. "I like working with students and seeing progress. We're graduating more students due to our financial efforts. I love it when I can look at myself in the mirror at the end of the day and say, 'That was a good day.'" ♦

MEETING OF THE MINDS

Raised in Harlem, mentored by Paulo Freire,
Darlyne Bailey '74 is a leader in higher education today.

By Kate Helm

TALK TO DARLYNE BAILEY '74

for any length of time, and you'll notice two things: she possesses an incredible amount of positive energy, and she is clear about her "path."

Dean of the Graduate School of Social Work and Social Research at Bryn Mawr College, Bailey also serves as special assistant for community partnerships to President Kim Cassidy. Among other activities, she represents Cassidy on the national board of HERS Institute, an association of female college presidents. She also confers with members of the community around the college to explore opportunities to collaborate on ventures of mutual interest.

Collaboration has always been Bailey's *métier*. While dean at Case Western Reserve University, she received a grant from the Department of Housing and Urban Development to evaluate Cleveland's Central Vision federal initiative for public housing. She included public housing residents, staff and administration, community members, and faculty and students from the university's Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences.

The researchers learned from people who actually lived in public housing. In return, those residents acquired valuable research skills. As a result of the collaboration, significant changes were made in service-delivery mechanisms and greater professionalization introduced into interactions between residents and local social service agencies.

When Bailey looks behind her, she sees mentors who helped along the way: her late parents; the late Dean **David Portlock**; and education activist Paulo Freire, among others. When she looks ahead, she sees students who remind her of herself—having tremendous potential and less-than-tremendous resources who need mentors.

She has blazed a unique trail—one of the first women to attend Lafayette when the College went coed in 1970; first African American female dean at Case Western and University of Minnesota; and first African American female vice president and dean at Columbia University



Joan Ford

Teachers College. The firsts are impressive, but not a space where Bailey dwells.

"It's a matter of showing up. What I've learned is that faith and fear have a hard time coexisting, and sometimes, you have to say 'yes' before you even know what it's going to look like, but you know it's something you've been called to do."

Bryn Mawr, for instance, was all about faith. Bailey had built a career in urban university settings, so moving to a small college on Philadelphia's Main Line was a challenge. Leaving Minnesota was one of the hardest decisions she's ever made, but when several

members of both her and her partner's families who lived in that area became seriously ill, spending more time with them became the priority.

Bailey's parents did not attend college, but taught her and her sister that there is power in education. Many years later, that message was reinforced. Inspired by Freire's book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Bailey boldly called the author. The chat went so well that he invited her to Brazil to learn more, beginning a deep friendship that lasted until his death in 1997. Once banished from Brazil for teaching peasants to read, Freire was invited back to serve as minister of education for São Paulo.

While Bailey has reached the upper echelons of academia—she holds a Ph.D. in organizational behavior from Case Western and a master's in psychiatric social work from Columbia University—she has never forgotten growing up in Harlem. She hopes to set an example for students that if she could do it, they can too.

A psychology graduate, she says she discovered her strength, resiliency, and strong belief in the ultimate goodness of humanity at Lafayette.

"I was exposed to some of the brightest minds, met incredible people, and truly witnessed the power of the people. I learned that what my mother told my sister and me—and what my dad reaffirmed—that I could do anything I wanted to do was true." ♦

Translating the Numbers

TO FIRE UP a conversation with **Mike Newsome '75**, turn to numbers. This CFO discusses figures with the vibrancy of a three-star chef expounding on truffles or an artist elucidating brushstrokes.

Pa. Gov. Tom Wolf called on Newsome's financial management expertise as part of his transition team this year. Two other alumni on the team are its chair, **John Fry '82**, president of Drexel University, and **Robin Wiessmann '75**, former treasurer of Pennsylvania.

Newsome is executive vice president, CFO, and head of human resources at The Wolf Organization Inc., a building supply firm with more than \$200 million in annual sales and 250 employees. Wolf recruited him 12 years ago.

"People look at me as an anomaly, with responsibility for the numbers and accounting but also for HR. It's unusual to be a numbers person and a people person. I think in numbers. I've spent my entire life turning numbers into words so people can understand."

A mathematics graduate, Newsome previously worked for Armstrong World Industries, Lancaster, Pa., and *The York Daily Record*.

Growing up in Hampton, Va., Newsome hoped to enroll in Virginia Tech. He was studying high school calculus, in fact, on the day his life changed. While working at the soda fountain on Hampton University campus, a man approached and asked what he was



Gov. Tom Wolf (left) and Mike Newsome '75

studying. During the conversation, the man mentioned Lafayette College, which Newsome had never heard of, and asked for his name and address. Shortly afterward, a letter arrived inviting him to visit.

"Lafayette has been a great influence on my career. It has a great reputation. I knew I wanted to be involved in business. I fell in love with *The Wall Street Journal* there. Those pages and pages of numbers fascinated me."

As for the man at the soda shop, Newsome says, "I never saw him before that day, and I've never seen him since. I call him my angel." ♦

Robert Windom '92 Helps in Fight Against Ebola



WHEN THE NUMBER of Ebola cases in West Africa doubled in three weeks in September, the U.S. and other countries began sending help. A major concern was the impact on the health-care systems. Hundreds of health workers had already become sick or died, and the epidemic had drained resources from treating other diseases.

A special U.S. Public Health Service team of 69 deployed in October to Liberia included CDR **Robert Windom '92**, a member of Rapid Deployment Force 2 since 2008.

"Our mission was to provide hope and support in the fight against Ebola," says Windom, who returned in late December. "The establishment of the Monrovia Medical Unit set the tone for health care workers to feel more confident about the care that they would receive

if contracting Ebola. Other countries took note of this example of capacity building and also lent resources and support in the fight."

Windom was responsible for staff safety and accountability, as well as patient tracking. He also assisted with facility engineering, construction projects, and mortuary affairs.

A senior public health analyst in the Health Resources and Services Administration, Windom provides oversight for community health center programs in Southern California, Hawaii, and Federated States of Micronesia.

A government and law graduate, Windom earned an MPH from East Stroudsburg University. He served as a Medical Service Corps officer in the U.S. Navy for nine years, including a deployment during Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2006. A member of Lafayette's 1988 Colonial League Championship football team, his roommates **Ricardo Noguiera '92**, an ROTC participant, and **Randall Bentley '93**, who previously served in the Army JAG Corps, inspired him to explore a military career. ♦

Community Gathers in Wake of Brown and Garner Decisions

About 250 students, faculty, and administrators gathered Dec. 8 in Farinon College Center to talk together in the aftermath of recent announcements of grand jury decisions not to indict the police officers responsible for the deaths of Michael Brown, Ferguson, Mo., and Eric Garner, Staten Island, N.Y.

John McKnight, dean of intercultural development, who led the gathering, said in the invitation to campus: “Events in Ferguson, Cleveland, Staten Island, and other communities have captured our collective attention because they raise such important questions about race, class, and the American legal system. For so many of us, this is a time of great sadness, frustration, and anger. Colleges and universities are uniquely positioned to bring together some of the greatest minds to explore social questions. . . . We are even stronger when we choose to seek greater knowledge and understanding of the issues at hand. We are strong. We are Lafayette.”



Prior to the forum, student organizers staged brief “die-ins” in Marquis Hall and Skillman library to tie with national protests, encouraging onlookers to attend the Dec. 8 discussion. “The most important thing was for students to be at the helm of deciding what we should do as a campus community to provide space for students who needed to share their feelings,” says McKnight.



Clay Wegrzynowicz '18

Forum attendees split into groups for discussions facilitated by students, many from the Association of Black Collegians. Afterwards, participants shared their feelings and experiences via open mic with the full gathering.

—Brooke McDermott

Seniors Perform *Tongues and Hands Untied*



A new feature of the Baccalaureate service held prior to the 179th Commencement in 2014 was a series of original senior reflections in music, film, poetry, and prose. Jenny Mena (L-R), Shanequa Lassiter, Abenezer Solomon, and Kahmia Moise (not shown) performed *Tongues and Hands Untied*, a spoken-word and percussion piece.

Douglas Kilpatrick / Zovko Photographic LLC

Pearson '15 Explores New Fields

Chuck Zovko



Working with Career Services' Gateway program, **Stacy-Ann Pearson '15** took advantage of opportunities to explore new interests.

A civil engineering major, she interned as a credit risk analyst at Morgan Stanley in New York City over the summer and added a minor in economics.

"One of the pivotal moments in my college career was deciding my best skills weren't compatible with my major," says Pearson. "My Gateway counselor allayed my fears and reassured me that a change of interest is common and acceptable. The guidance and support I received was instrumental in the success I've experienced after adding a new field of interest."

Pearson is involved in other activities on campus as well. One of these was Lafayette's 14th annual Literacy Day during which local children participated in a variety of student-organized activities based on the book *Falling Up* by Shel Silverstein. Organized by the College's America Reads-America Counts team, the program promotes enthusiasm for reading and is one of dozens of programs sponsored by the Landis Community Outreach Center.

Program Recognizes Intercultural Competency

More than 100 students enrolled in a program launched this fall in which they earn an Intercultural Competency Certificate from the Office of Intercultural Development.

They receive recognition for participating in co-curricular diversity and social justice education initiatives such as discussions on local, national, or global issues; guest lectures, artist residencies, and cultural performances; Landis Center programs; Safe Zone training; International Student Association programming; Social Justice Institute; and Posse Plus retreats.

The students are advised by intercultural development

professional staff and are required to write reflections on each program or event and complete a capstone project before earning the certificate. The program not only encourages more students to get involved but also develops skills that will be beneficial upon graduation, says **John McKnight**, dean of intercultural development.

A session was held prior to fall semester for faculty and staff to discuss intercultural competence as an essential component of a 21st-century education. A monograph on this topic was published by the Association for the Study of Higher Education in 2012.

Studying in South Africa

"Nelson Mandela died on Dec. 5, 2013, just before we arrived in South Africa," says **Kathy Delsener '14**, a student in the interim-abroad course there last January who graduated with a B.S. in civil engineering. "I will never forget seeing the memorials in various cities decorated in flowers, many with inspirational words. The one that I will never forget read, 'Rest in the peace you gave us.'"

Students in Voices of South Africa: Cultural Diversity, Hegemony, and Agency experienced a country still in the aftermath of apartheid, a system of racial

segregation which concluded with Mandela's appointment as the country's first democratically elected president in 1994.

The course immersed students in the history of colonialism and apartheid, the country's structures of power and politics, and the ways it strives now to be a society founded on unity in difference.

Margarete Lamb-Faffelberger, professor of German, focused on the strengths and challenges the country faces as a multiracial, multi-ethnic society. **Rexford Ahene**, professor of economics, focused on post-apartheid policy.



Clifton '16 Explores Gender Issues in the Baltic

In an EXCEL Scholars project, **Devon Clifton '16** has been collaborating with **Katalin Fábrián**, associate professor of government and law, on research related to the intersection of gender, politics, and women's rights.

Clifton, a double major in women's and gender studies and English, is working on a project that explores domestic violence and the evolving issue of home birth in the Czech Republic.

"I analyze texts concerning women's rights, and legal and policy issues, which fits into my academic as well as professional interests," says Clifton, who plans to become a lawyer.

"One-on-one interactions with professors are very important, especially the opportunity to conduct research with them," she says.

EXCEL Scholars work collaboratively with faculty on



Chuck Zovko

research projects that expand the boundaries of knowledge.

Selected to be a student coordinator of peer education, Clifton is a member of the Kaleidoscope team. These students lead weekly open discussions on issues of social justice and present workshops.

Senior Celebration



Chuck Zovko

The fourth annual meeting of McDonough Network and senior celebration was held April 26 at Pfenning Alumni Center. Seniors recognized included Danyelle Smith (L-R), Abdul Dopson, Morgan Bethea, Justin Butler, Ciera Eaddy, Edwin Liriano, Shanequa Lassiter, Carter Tindill-Hall, and Rob Young.

Senegalese Drum and Dance



Douglas Kilpatrick / Zovko Photographic LLC

Lamine Touré, one of Senegal's leading percussionists, and Patricia Tang, an ethnomusicologist specializing in West Africa, presented a lecture and sabar dance workshop this fall at the new arts building on 248 North Third St.

Sabar is a vibrant drum and dance tradition of the Wolof people of Senegal. Sabars are played exclusively by griots, a caste of hereditary musicians to which Touré belongs. The ensemble creates complex polyrhythms including bakk (musical phrases), some derived from the spoken word tradition, taas.

Tang, associate professor of music at MIT, is a violinist and keyboardist. She has performed with Touré as well as other African artists. Touré leads Group Saloum and directs Rambax, MIT's Senegalese Drumming Ensemble.

Hosted by Africana Studies, the event was partially funded through Lafayette's Mellon Foundation grant.

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