

# HOWARD

MAGAZINE

FALL 2022



## THE WOMEN

How they're changing the University—and the paths for students.

## DEANS

HOW BLACK  
WOMEN ARE  
CHANGING THE  
CAREER GAME

EMPHASIZING  
MENTAL HEALTH  
CARE IN BLACK  
WOMEN

MINORITY  
WOMEN IN  
PHYSICS

\*Dean Andrea Hayes Dixon was appointed dean of the College of Medicine after this photo was made.



Perspective

■ **BACK AT THE MECCA** — DJ Jae Murphy (BA '12) pumps up the crowd as Yardfest returns to Homecoming 2022 in full force after a pandemic hiatus. *Photo by Rin-rin Yu*





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**CHANGING THE CAREER GAME**  
Black women continue to advance in a range of professions, despite systemic barriers.

**THE WOMEN DEANS OF HOWARD UNIVERSITY**  
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Three percent of physics doctorates nationwide are earned by women of color. But that's changing – and Howard is working to be that change.



The Black Women Leaders of Howard

■ IN MID-AUGUST, DURING THE WHIRLWIND OF GREETING new students and parents to campus and the start of classes, I was (miraculously) able to gather nine women deans of Howard University together, in one room, for a photo shoot. (We caught up with Dean Andrea Hayes Dixon later in October, after she was named dean of the medical school). Each chose clothing that reflected their personalities and professionalism. Portraiture photographer and Howard alumna Rhonisha Franklin (BBA '04, MBA '10) played tunes, chatted, and portrayed them as they saw themselves: as leaders, proud women, educators, nurturers. By the time the group shot occurred in the afternoon, they were comfortable around the camera, with Dean Phylicia Rashad leading them in a dance number from “Dreamgirls.” While each dean sat in the makeup chair, I asked them: How was gender presented to you as a child? When did you first realize it would be a factor in your career? Who are your role models?

They shared their stories. All of them said gender expectations weren't set in their childhoods. None of them thought they'd become a university dean. All of them recognized the importance of their positions, both as a Black leader and as a Black woman. This was important, they acknowledged, to have students—male and female—see this as something very normal and achievable.

It's important for more than just Howard to see it—the world has to see it, too. Because it's completely mind-boggling that, even today, in the year 2022, we're still experiencing such “firsts” when it comes to women, especially minority women. Imagine how much further along we'd be as a society if all women were in leadership decades (centuries!) ago. However, as these deans can attest, they're very busy catching the world up to what should be and more—and passing that down to generations to follow, to become the norm.

I hope you enjoy what these women—and all the others featured in this issue—have to share with their fellow Bison and beyond. As always, my phone, email, and door are always open, so please reach out with those exciting Bison stories.

Happy Autumn,  
Rin-rin Yu, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF



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COVER ART  
Howard University's women  
deans. Photography by Rhonisha  
Franklin (BBA '04, MBA '10)

BACK COVER  
Photography by Rhonisha  
Franklin (BBA '04, MBA '10)

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■■■■  
Autumn hues  
on Sixth Street

From the President

Dear Howard University  
Community,

■■ IN 2013, OUT OF HOWARD’S 13 SCHOOLS AND COL-  
leges, we had only one female dean. To allow for  
such underrepresentation among our decanal lead-  
ership, as our University’s student body became  
more predominantly female, and especially as  
Howard was known as a champion of representa-  
tion and inclusivity, was a wrong that we desper-  
ately needed to set right.

When we recognized this transgression, we  
did not impugn the 12 male deans and the work  
they had done for the University or the executives  
who installed them in positions of leadership. We  
can highlight the virtues of a hiring process that  
enabled Howard to identify such capable men for  
these deanships while also casting a spotlight on  
the imperfections that caused equally highly qual-  
ified women to be overlooked.

When we fail to admit our mistakes, it becomes  
more likely that they will be repeated. Rather than  
rooting out the prejudices that contributed to the  
underrepresentation of women, we would have  
run the risk of entrenching those unconscious bi-  
ases into how we conducted business.

Reverence of the past requires a delicate balanc-  
ing act. We should extol our history, our traditions  
and our culture—but not to so great an extent that  
we blind ourselves to their shortcomings. Indeed, to  
truly respect our past, we must be willing to critique  
it. History should never be so heavy a force that we  
are prevented from moving forward or dragged  
backward. Rather, our past should serve as guide-  
posts to steer us toward a more prosperous future.

Nothing about our University is beyond reproach  
or grounds for change. Even our most iconic build-  
ings and campus fixtures are liable to be replaced if  
they no longer suit the needs of the University or in  
some manner are thwarting our forward trajectory.

In this issue of Howard Magazine, you will read  
about Howard’s 10 female deans. I would be remiss if  
I didn’t also mention, Ranti Akiyode, the interim dean  
of the College of Pharmacy. In total, we now have 11  
women serving as decanal leaders. There are more  
Black women leading our University than at any



“  
THERE ARE MORE BLACK  
WOMEN LEADING OUR  
UNIVERSITY THAN AT ANY  
OTHER INSTITUTION OF HIGHER  
EDUCATION IN THE COUNTRY.”

■■■■  
other institution of higher education in the country.

In these important leadership positions, we are  
not only more reflective of our student body, we  
are not only practicing the lessons in representa-  
tion and inclusion that we preach, but we have  
identified immensely talented, visionary, and qual-  
ified leaders who are taking their schools and col-  
leges to unprecedented heights. This success, like  
so many personal and institutional achievements,  
began with a past failure and our willingness to  
talk about it and take measures to correct it.

■■■■  
Excellence in Truth and Service,

**Wayne A. I. Frederick, MD, MBA**

CHARLES R. DREW PROFESSOR OF SURGERY  
PRESIDENT

■■■■  
Dr. Frederick with  
Dean Danielle  
Holley, Dean Gina  
Spivey-Brown and  
Dean Sandra Crewe



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WOMEN'S RIGHTS

When We Can't Choose

by LISA A. CROOMS-ROBINSON

ON JUNE 24, 2022, THE SUPREME COURT announced its decision in Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization. More than seven weeks earlier, however, Justice Samuel J. Alito's opinion for the six-justice majority was leaked. In the days that followed, I pored over the draft, eager to see not only how far the majority would go but also how it would reach its doctrinal destination. By the time the final opinion was released, we knew which justices were part of the 6-3 majority that overturned both Roe v. Wade (1973) and Planned Parenthood of Southeastern Pennsylvania v. Casey (1992), laying waste to 50 years of precedent. The leak was surprising. The outcome was not.

In the months since the Dobbs decision was announced, I have spent hours thinking about what the decision means for both the School of Law and Howard University. Howard administrators will have to consider what Dobbs means at a university where 71% of the student body is made up of people who were assigned female at birth. But what about the faculty? Should Dobbs matter to the University's academic program beyond the School of Law and Women and Gender Studies? The short answer is "yes." If we are guided by our institutional mission, then the outcome of Dobbs, as well as what's needed in its aftermath have very specific implications for



those of us who belong to Howard's "cadre of faculty who are, through [our] teaching, research and service, committed to the development of... historically aware, and compassionate graduates and to the discovery of solutions to human problems in the United States and throughout the world."

There is work to be done across the University to staunch the flow of harms emanating from Dobbs which will be particularly acute for our students. Dobbs should matter to colleagues in the Colleges of Medicine and Nursing and Allied Health Sciences because federal and state efforts to substitute political judgments for decisions that should be made by healthcare providers and their patients are unethical and dangerous. Dobbs

makes healthcare professionals operate in a legal environment that requires them to ignore data about high rates of maternal mortality and morbidity among the people of African descent we are institutionally bound to serve.

Dobbs should matter to colleagues in the College of Pharmacy who might prioritize guaranteed access to safe and affordable self-managed abortion medication.

Dobbs should matter to colleagues in the School of Business because they train students who not only will run corporations in states where abortion is now illegal, but also can choose to include travel assistance and leave for employees forced to travel to states where comprehensive reproductive healthcare remains accessible.

Dobbs should matter to colleagues in the School of Social Work because their students will have to deal with how criminalizing pregnancy and reproductive healthcare puts fragile families further at risk of state surveillance, intervention, and destruction.

Dobbs should matter to colleagues in the School of Divinity as their students grapple with the ways in which reproductive justice means the bodily integrity and autonomy of all within the beloved community are protected.

Reproductive justice including, but not limited to the rights Dobbs rejected, must be an essential part of our work both inside and outside the classroom. Dobbs presents us with an opportunity to determine how to live both parts of our motto, "Truth and Service," in a post-Dobbs world.

→ Lisa A. Crooms-Robinson (BA '84) is a professor at Howard University School of Law.

JUSTIN D. KNIGHT

IN THEIR SHOES

WHAT WOMEN'S ISSUES NEED TO BE ADDRESSED?

by N'DIA WEBB (SOC CLASS OF '24)



Ashley Hamilton  
SOPHOMORE HONORS  
MARKETING MAJOR

"I think sisterhood is really important. I think that oftentimes with men and gender equality issues, we're kind of pitted against each other in order to get into those spaces and have leadership roles or positions. I think that we shouldn't have to sacrifice kindness and compassion in order to get where we want to go in life and be successful."



TONIA HOPE  
Director of the  
Ralphe J. Bunche  
International  
Affairs Center

The issue of reproductive rights, I think, is key, as is the issue of pay equity for women."



Sanaiya Hammon  
FRESHMAN  
CHEMISTRY MAJOR

"I think that women need to be recognized for their contributions in STEM, or just in general, because we are constantly doing things to impact the world, yet we get no recognition. We don't receive the same amount of Nobel Prizes that men do. We aren't as recognized in papers. There are no speeches or conferences that really recognize women, especially Black women's contributions to medicine and other world issues."



Abortion. Seeing as Roe v. Wade was just overturned and it impacts a lot of people, especially in Southern states where there are conservative administrations and such."

MAYAH GAINES  
Senior psychology major



Monyell Sessoms JUNIOR POLITICAL SCIENCE MAJOR

"Women not being equally included in sports. I skateboard, and in a lot of skate culture and communities, women are not seen as skaters. We aren't typically included in a lot of skate events, and there aren't a lot of us in skating, honestly. A lot of men think that women cannot do the same things that they do and don't see us as actual athletes. Women can do the same things – women can skate, women can participate in any sport that they want to, and we should be provided the same opportunities and resources as men."



ROLE MODELS

DENTAL LEGACY AND CHANGE

by JEANNE CRAIG SINKFORD, DDS, PHD, DSC

■ **Dentistry has come a long way** since 1881, when Howard University College of Dentistry (HUCD) was founded in a country with only 26 licensed Black dentists out of a total of 15,000 nationwide. Segregation at large left Howard and Meharry Medical College in Nashville alone in producing Black dental professionals to meet the urgent dental needs of Black communities. However, there continues to be a shortage of Black dentists today throughout the United States. Only 3.8% of U.S. dentists are Black to serve a US population that is 12.4% Black, according to the Journal of the American Dental Association.

In addition to the absence of Black dentists, there are 6,803 dental health professional shortage areas (DHPSA) in the United States, where access to dental care is absent or minimal.

An estimated 64 million adults and children live in the DHPSAs.

However, dentistry, as in other health professions, has experienced a significant change in the enrollment and leadership of women. We hope this shift will increase more Black dentists and reduce DHPSAs. Howard today has 63% women in the dental class of 2025. Women dental students at Howard now peer-mentor each other. They founded the sorority, Delta Phi Sigma, Inc., in 1991, which includes women from both medicine and dentistry.

The profession has also seen this gender shift in leadership: 21% of dental deans (interim and permanent) are women; 46% of students in dental specialty programs are women; 23% of practicing dentists are women and 36.8% of dental faculty are women. The



dental deans at both Howard and Meharry are women – I served as Howard’s first female dean in 1975. In 2021, 20% of first-time enrollees in U.S. dental schools are historically underrepresented racially/ethnically diverse students.

In a recent book I published with dental leaders Sheila Price and Marilyn Woolfolk entitled “Undaunted Trailblazers: Minority

Women Leaders for Oral Health,” 31 contemporary minority women leaders share their journeys in a male dominated profession and advance oral health for the wellbeing of generations. The fascination of “Undaunted Trailblazers” comes from “a-ha moments” in personal stories that contributed to their decisions, professional accomplishments, and leadership trajectories.

For example, Melania G. Mayberry, DDS, remembers when a patient said: “You know, there was a time when I would not have let someone like you treat me.” That “someone like” her included women – specifically, minority women.

Oral health is no longer a neglected issue on the global health agenda. In our book, we highlight women experts who are striving “to educate and empower families about good oral health” and “[understand] the role of viral infection as it relates to oral infection and clinical disease.” A resolution adopted by the World Health Organization in 2021 called for developing a framework that aligns oral health with noncommunicable disease and universal health coverage. The pandemic also presented health equity challenges and opportunities for transformative changes as we build more integrated and resilient health systems at home and abroad.

I look to the future to see more leadership development and opportunities in oral health especially with minority women and younger male professional colleagues. Women and minorities must be both change advocates and change agents in the future. We must learn from each other as we engage in partnerships that contribute to human survival at home and abroad.

➔ **Jeanne Craig Sinkford** is professor and dean emerita of the Howard University College of Dentistry and senior scholar emerita of the American Dental Education Association.

JUSTIN D. KNIGHT

ATHLETICS

Title IX and the Black Female Athlete

by KAREN HEALY-SILCOTT

■ **I HAVE BEEN INVOLVED WITH LACROSSE** for most of my life as a player, a coach, and mentor. Without the enactment of Title IX 50 years ago – a law that prohibits sex-based discrimination in any school or any other education program that receives funding from the federal government – those avenues would have remained closed to me, a Black woman in sports. Title IX is not exclusive to sports, but it is in this arena that I have most felt its impact.

When I was a high school freshman over 25 years ago, I watched my parents and coaches battle on behalf of the girls’ teams for equal funding, comparable facilities, equipment, and overall support in a system that prioritized boys’ sports. There has been vast improvement since then, but the struggles continue, even at the college and professional levels. The salaries of the women on the USA national soccer team and the spending disparities between the men’s and women’s NCAA basketball championships, for example, are still being fought today.

In addition to those challenges, athletes of color face additional obstacles that the majority of college athletes (i.e., white athletes) do not. This includes being coached by those who look like us and convincing other athletes that we belong here, too. In my first game as head coach at Howard last year, I had to navigate my team through a racist and misogynistic experience that followed us through the season. I was grateful our team of minorities had each other, rather than face it alone.

The NCAA took an in-depth look at participation gains, ongoing deficiencies, and inequalities faced by females of color at all levels of college athletics. Its data shows that while overall participation and racial diversity have increased, the larger percentage of participants favor basketball and indoor/outdoor track, sports that athletes of color have long been already accepted. At Howard, those



sports had tremendous success this year and gained national recognition.

Sports like lacrosse are historically less accessible to minorities. The lacrosse community has been pushing to diversify the sport. I believe that Howard can capitalize on the changing landscape and become a leading force in attracting top student-athletes and set a pathway for Black and underrepresented girls to enter the sport. Although Howard has had a women’s lacrosse team for 20 years, it has yet to see success on the lacrosse field similar to that of the basketball program.

In this Title IX anniversary year, it is important that we acknowledge and applaud our progress. But we should also reflect on how those successes were achieved and to commit to continuing the upward trajectory. Increased access to sports is wonderful. Having more coaches of color and administrative staff is wonderful. But successful programs also require the full support of the administration, alumni, and community, in all sports. My hope is that we can continue to enhance our facilities, update our processes, and hire more staff, so we can effect change on college lacrosse on a national level.

People of color in America need more than a top-notch education to thrive and excel. They also need tenacity, grit, discipline, and resilience – the very qualities that are developed on a playing field. The bonds cemented among and between players last a lifetime. For Black people, these relationships become a critical asset

in ensuring career success. We should harness the power of sports to add depth to our commitment to produce strong, well-educated Black women who are fully equipped to excel in all endeavors.

➔ **Karen Healy-Silcott** is the head coach for the women’s lacrosse team at Howard.





# CAMPUS NEWS



**CAMPUS CHEER**  
Howard kicked off Homecoming Week with Bison Madness

## HOMECOMING

### Welcome Back to the Mecca

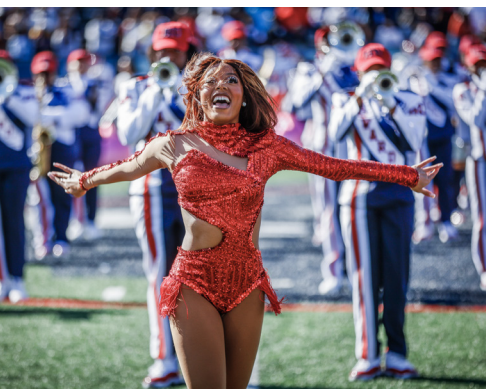
By Rin-rin Yu

■ AFTER THREE YEARS OF CAUTIOUS tip-toeing around large events due to the pandemic, Howard University swung its gates wide open to alumni and the greater community for the 2022 Homecoming.

For three-quarters of the student body, this was their first in-person Howard Homecoming experience. The seniors were the only ones who were present for the last full Homecoming, held in 2019.

Howard kicked off Homecoming week on October 17 with Bison Madness in Burr Gymnasium, where students cheered on the Bison women's and men's basketball teams, officially marking the beginning of basketball season. At the Greek Step Show, Delta Sigma Theta and Alpha Phi Alpha took first place, each winning checks worth \$2,500. Students from the College of Fine Arts showcased their latest designs at the annual fashion show, including two whose varsity and flight jackets and pants are available for sale in the Howard bookstore through a partnership with FISLL. Each school and college held various receptions and open houses to welcome back their alumni.





■ ■ ■

**WELCOME HOME, BISON**

Top L-R: Homecoming halftime show; Alpha Phi Alpha at the Greek Step Show; women's basketball at Bison Madness. Middle L-R: Tailgating; Bison charge to victory against Del State; Fashion Show students walk the runway. Bottom L-R: Yardfest; R&B duo Chloe X Halle take the stage; the football team celebrate their victory post-game.

Yardfest, Howard's cherished tradition, was finally held in the Yard with a live stage in front of Founders' Library. It featured a diverse range of artists and entertainment including DJ Jae Murphy (BA '12), rapper Flo Milli, rapper GloRilla, R&B singer Jacquees, and R&B duo Chloe X Halle. On Saturday, the Showtime Band and student organizations kicked off game day with a community parade, followed by the time-honored tradition of tailgating in

the Howard Center parking lot.

To cap off Homecoming week, Howard cheered its football team to victory against Delaware State 35-17, as Vice President Kamala Harris (BA '86) boosted the team with a message broadcasted on the field. The next morning, she stopped by Rankin Chapel to address the audience gathered for Sunday service. Alumni filled the Shaw neighborhood for farewell brunches and celebration. Until next year, Bison! HU! (You Know!)

JUSTIN D. KNIGHT; CHRIS CAMPBELL; QBAN CIGAR PHOTOGRAPHY; JONATHAN SPINKS; DORIAN KIRKWOOD; KROWN MEDIA & MYNOR VENTURA



**Convocation 2022**

■ U.S. Congressman James E. Clyburn delivered the keynote address at this year's Opening Convocation on September 16. He reflected on his successes and failures as a student and as a career politician, including three defeated elections. He encouraged Howard students never to give up, no matter how many times they may falter.

"A friend of mine said to me, 'What are you going to do now? You just ran for the third time, and you have lost the third time. You know what they say, three strikes and you're out.' I said to my friend, 'That's the baseball rule, and nobody should live their lives by baseball rules,'" said Clyburn. "I don't care how many times you try; you keep trying until you get it right. If I had quit after losing the third time, I would not be standing before you today as the number three guy in the United States House of Representatives."



**Howard and Jordan Brand Sign 20-Year Partnership**

■ Howard University and Nike's Jordan Brand recently formed a historic 20-year partnership, aimed to elevate Howard's athletic department, create recruitment opportunities, and increase influence of HBCUs on collegiate sports and global culture. The football team's uniforms were unveiled on August 27.

In 2020, the Jordan Brand, along with basketball legend Michael Jordan, made a commitment to donate \$100 million over 10 years to organizations dedicated to ensuring racial equality, social justice, and greater access to education.

**ABROAD**

**HOWARD LAW STUDENTS VISIT GHANA TO EXAMINE NEW AFRICAN TRADE AGREEMENT**

■ HOWARD LAW PROFESSOR JOHN Woods recently led a team of law students to Accra, Ghana as part of a capstone project. This initiative, created by Woods, examines the legal and economic integration of Africa through the new African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) agreement and AfCFTA's potential impact on Africa's development efforts. During its visit to Ghana, the team held high level meetings with dignitaries, including recently appointed U.S. ambassador to Ghana Virginia Palmer and African Union officials.

Woods views this trade agreement as a social justice initiative. "Raw materials from the continent are relied upon to produce almost all goods and products globally. Yet, Africa accounts for only 2% - 3% of world trade," Woods said. "By effectively transitioning the general African economy from a heavy reliance on supplying natural resources to the world to that of: one, producing goods; and two,

enhancing trade among African countries, can transform the economic condition of the Continent. As such, by strengthening the African economy, the AfCFTA can fuel development and anti-poverty efforts throughout Africa."

The students who served on Woods' team were Charkera Ervin, Rekyia-Cordelia Anthony, Ylisha Ford, Oluwatoyin Rebecca Doherty, Sydney Hawkins, Renesha Cook, Sage Stewart, and Amir Muhammad.

To gain practical legal experience, the students interned for small and midsize African enterprises (SMEs) in legal, health care, cosmetics, real estate, and non-governmental organizations. Through field placement opportunities, they also provided legal assistance to SMEs, primarily women-owned businesses, that African officials have identified as an essential demographic regarding the future and sustained success of the AfCFTA.

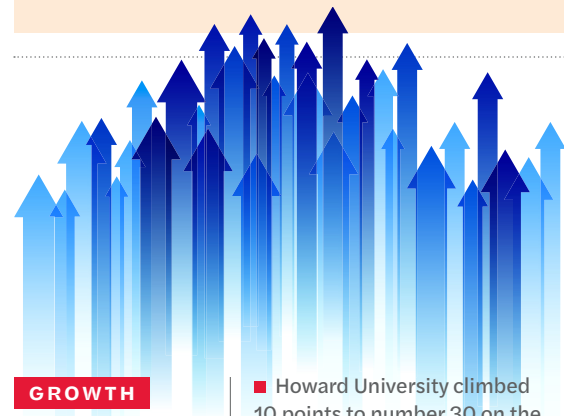






## HBCU NEW YORK CITY CLASSIC

■ The offense came alive in the second half as the Bison scored 31 points to post a 31-0 shutout win over the Morehouse Tigers before a lively crowd of 35,042 at MetLife Stadium in the inaugural HBCU NYC Classic on September 17, 2022. Earlier in the week, the Showtime Band performed in Manhattan's Times Square in celebration of the upcoming game.



## GROWTH

## Howard University Rises in National Rankings

■ Howard University climbed 10 points to number 30 on the latest U.S. News & World Report 2022 rankings list of most innovative schools. The University remains listed among the top 100 schools on U.S. News & World Report's list of best national universities with a ranking of number 89. The positive increase in the ranking represents the success of the Howard Forward strategic plan, which emphasizes measures that enable resource savings through

upgraded technology and automation; initiatives that expand the campus footprint through facility improvements and real estate development; and processes that drive excellence in customer service and delivery of products and services.

Howard University School of Business has been named to Bloomberg Businessweek's ranking of the best U.S. business schools of 2022-23. Howard University's Master of Business Administration (MBA) program has been featured on the prestigious ranking for the past several years. Howard University, ranked No. 28, is the only ranked historically Black college or university on the list. This year, the publication ranked 117 MBA programs around the world, including universities in Europe, Canada, and eastern Asia.

## PROGRAM

## DATA SCIENCE FOR JUSTICE TAKES ROOT AT HOWARD

■ AS DEMAND FOR SKILLS IN DATA science and statistics continues to grow in many social science fields, Howard is opening its application to its new master's degree in applied data science. The program aims to help those interested in minority health and health disparities, environmental justice, and economic empowerment. The 30-credit, online-only program is designed to empower the use of data science that is "ethically responsible in terms of bias and ethics," said Amy Yeboah Quarkume, PhD, associate professor of Africana studies and who is part of organizing the program.

"We at Howard believe data is for all, and everyone should be knowledgeable, literate, and ... using data to solve everyday social problems," she said.

The initial cohort is expected to be about 30 students, a mix of people from different fields and from around the world. To apply, visit provost.howard.edu/datascience. Applications are due January 15, 2023 for priority admission; April 15, 2023 for regular admission with a Fall 2023 start.

The program comes on the heels of the National Data Science Alliance (NDSA), an initiative designed to increase the number of Black people earning data science credentials by at least 20,000 by 2027. The NDSA is formed through a \$10 million award from the National Science Foundation awarded to four HBCUs, including Clark Atlanta University, Howard University, Morehouse College, and Fisk University. Howard economics professor LaTanya Brown-Robertson, PhD will lead the northeastern regional hub of the NDSA, and Moses Garuba, associate dean of engineering and computer science, will lead the industry-university collaborations.

## SPIRIT

## Ladies First

THE HOWARD  
UNIVERSITY  
SHOWTIME  
MARCHING  
BAND IS NOW  
75% WOMEN.

by Edward Hill Jr.

■ In the past two years, the Howard University Showtime Marching Band has gone through a subtle transformation in the gender makeup of the group. Reflective of the demographics of the University, the band now is 75% female, making it perhaps the only one in the country where women dominate and are transitioning it into something new and different.

Kathryn Boxill has been a part of the band program since 1984. She has served as alumni band coordinator since 2001 and has noticed the shift, especially during the recent MEAC/SWAC Challenge in Atlanta and the HBCU/New York City Classic.

"You would not know whether it is female or a male unless they take off their hats. It's all about



showmanship, style, and marching," Boxill says.

Georghette Conaway is one of the many freshmen in the band. "I grew up in the South and have always loved marching bands," professes Conaway, a political science major from Fairfield, Alabama who plays saxophone. "As a freshman, [I] don't necessarily look at [gender makeup] as being a factor. It is like a family, and we are all striving to take advantage of the uniqueness," she says.

Kelvin Washington is in his third year as director of bands and 15 years overall with the band. "We have to recruit students who not only meet the academic requirements, but at the same time they are musically inclined and love being in the band," he says.

Washington adds that being in the band means more than just being able to play an instrument.

"We have band camp ... like football and other sports," Washington says. "We pride ourselves on being musicians, and, at the same time, they are required to be students in the classroom. And then when you add the demands of travel,

it takes special people to meet all those demands."

The band has performed over the years at numerous high-profile events and venues. But none has been as important as the invitations to perform at the inauguration celebration with Howard alumna Vice President Kamala Harris.

One of the attractions for prospective members of the band is the rich history of successful alumni. During the pandemic, the band, like all other parts of the University, was greatly impacted. The numbers dropped, and it affected performance. Then, in its rebuilding phase, the band received a huge assist from alumni, adds Washington.

One such alum is dean of the Chadwick A. Boseman College of Fine Arts, Phylicia Rashad.

"She is a godsend," says Washington, without hesitation. "She understands the dynamic of being an artist and student. Her support has been tremendous for this program."

The roles that were once filled by males has shifted. In fact, the drum major, which was a traditional role for males throughout the history of the band, was filled by a female for the first time in school history last year.

This year's drum major, Keanu Powell, has been watching the change in the band since his freshman year. "It has been a progressive change," he says. "By having more women, we seem to have better options, better creativity."

*Edward Hill Jr. is a retired sports information director for Howard University.*



PHOTOS BY QBAN CIGAR PHOTOGRAPHY



CONTRIBUTIONS

# GIFTS THAT KEEP GIVING

■ HOWARD CONTINUES TO RECEIVE RECORD-BREAKING GIFTS FROM ALUMNI and organizations worldwide to help create scholarships, programs, experiential learning opportunities, and more for Howard students. Alumni continue to pay it forward, hoping that their contributions can support current and future students in the same way they were supported during their Hilltop days. As expressed by alumna Kirstyn Martin Fields (BBA '02), “There are not enough words or anecdotes to express the ongoing value that the Howard experience has provided for me, the foundation that it laid for my life and the way it has equipped me to navigate any environment.” These are just a small select few of the many gifts Howard received this past fiscal year.

\$10 MIL

THE WILLIAM AND FLORA HEWLETT FOUNDATION  
For the Equitable Economic & Sustainable Society Center

\$5.4 MIL

Netflix, Inc.  
FOR THE CHADWICK A. BOSEMAN MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP FUND

\$5 MIL

Thurgood Marshall College Fund  
FOR THE GOOGLE CAPACITY FUND

\$1.38 MIL

Paul L. Brown, Jr.  
Trust BS '59  
For the Howard University Annual Fund

\$1.25 MIL

Ford Foundation  
For the Center for Journalism and Democracy

\$1.02 MIL

Delta Dental Community Care Foundation  
For the Delta Dental Scholarship for Opportunity

\$1 MIL

The Walt Disney Company  
For the Center for Arts and Communications

Dewey D. White, Jr., BSME '71  
HU ANNUAL FUND

“Howard U. was my springboard to adulthood and gave me the wonderful perspective of attending a HBCU in a major city during the later civil rights era.”

Margaret A. Major, MS '83  
HU ANNUAL FUND

“I am a Howard Alum.”

Craig O. Chapman, BA '88  
HU ANNUAL FUND

“I love my alma mater for all it represents!”

Nicole D. Pichon, BBA '93  
HU ANNUAL FUND

“My time at HU was the most powerful, validating, and enlightening experience of my young single life. I want future generations of students to be blessed with a similar experience.”

Jason L. Brown, BA '95, JD '98  
HU ANNUAL FUND

“Howard University helped transform me into the person I am today.”

Sendy M. Brown, BFA '96  
CHADWICK A. BOSEMAN COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS AND THE COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING & ARCHITECTURE

“Howard U has enriched my life and elevated my thinking. I am proud of our history and accomplishments!”

Kirstyn Martin Fields, BBA '02  
HUAA ATLANTA CLUB ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP FUND

“I love my HU!”

William M. North, IV, BBA '09  
HU ANNUAL FUND

“I want to do my part to ensure that Howard continues to be a space where our people can continue to develop their minds and their hearts.”

- 17 Gender
- 18 Creative Writing
- 19 Biomedical
- 20 Entrepreneurship



GENDER

## A New Minor on a Major Subject

Exploring the role of gender in our global society

by SETH SHAPIRO

■ In Fall 2021, the minor in women, gender and sexualities studies (WGSS) was offered for the very first time at Howard University, housed within the Interdisciplinary Studies Department in the College of Arts and Sciences. By Spring 2022, more than 30 students officially declared the WGSS minor with many more having expressed interest in doing so.

The minor introduces students to new concepts, theories, and knowledge systems as well as critical thinking from a gender, feminist, and sexualities perspective. It will also help students identify organizations they can intern with to gain empirical experience.

According to J. Jarpa Dawuni, Esq., PhD, the founding director of the Howard University Center for Women, Gender, and Global Leadership and a co-creator of the minor in women, gender, and sexualities studies, most universities have a women, gender, and sexualities program. Given the history and contributions of



“WE MUST PREPARE OUR STUDENTS TO BE LEADERS WITH AN EXPANSIVE UNDERSTANDING OF THE ROLE OF GENDER AS A SOCIAL CONSTRUCT.”

Black women to the history of the United States and globally, the absence of a WGSS program at Howard has left a big gap in the efforts of the Black community to address gender issues.

“With the growing number of Black feminist scholars, this minor offers our students the opportunity to connect with and learn the history and lived experiences of Black women from theoretical [and] empirical

contexts to prepare them to be gender aware and globally connected to transnational women’s struggles,” Dawuni says. “As a leading HBCU, and one that has produced some of the best Black leaders nationally and internationally, we must prepare our students to be leaders with an expansive understanding of the role of gender as a social construct not only in Black communities domestically, but also globally.”

Dawuni also mentions how diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts are becoming more popular across our society. But, she stresses, they cannot be effective if one does not have a foundational understanding of women, gender, and sexualities. “Gender is central to everything in society,” Dawuni says. “However, it must be understood within the cultural and historical context.”



CREATIVE WRITING

# Immersive Storytelling

Creative writing concentration heads into the countryside with the Zora Neale Hurston Summer Writing Workshop

by AALIYAH BUTLER

■ THE SUN PEAKS OVER THE HORIZON AS Selam Guta grabs her bow and arrow. It was one of the activities provided to inspire students who might need a different perspective or idea, by trying something new. With a staggered stance and a deep breath, she envisions the story of an Ethiopian American teen who returns to Ethiopia following unforeseen circumstances. This creative narrative is one that Guta has been working on for quite some time but was able to thoroughly nurture during her time at the Zora Neale Hurston Summer Writing Workshop. What better way to craft the best creative writing masterpiece than to tap into your very own Hunger Games’ Katniss Everdeen?

“Writing this piece became a sort of thought experiment into ‘what would happen if my fears about identity and loss came true together?’,” says Guta, a junior majoring in English and minoring in African studies. “Having the opportunity to work in community with such amazing writers and authors that I admire and a group of peers that inspire me was an absolute privilege. We really built a writing family together and have continued to support one another since this Summer.”

The Zora Neale Hurston Summer Writing Workshop was organized by Howard professor and bestselling author Ta’Nehisi Coates to build a community between emerging young authors. During this two-week retreat in rural Virginia, 10 Howard University English students were meticulously selected to escape the everyday distractions and get back to the foundation



**THE JOB OF ART IS TO SEE THE WORLD CLEARLY – TO SEE BEYOND NUMBERS AND SEE THE HUMANITY IN PEOPLE.”**

of storytelling. Among other activities, they were visited by a host of acclaimed writers, including Jacqueline Woodson, Yona Harvey, and Hanif Abdurraqib.

“The goal of the retreat is to give students an idea of what it is like to be a real writer,” says Coates. “The job of art is to see the world clearly – to see beyond numbers and see the humanity in people. Given the particular space that Black people occupy in American history, I think we should have a creative writing program at all our HBCUs.”

Sociologist, author, and poet Eve Ewing, PhD, and Coates taught two separate classes every day for three hours each. The coursework incorporated various methods of analyzing creative writing, including peer reviewing, examining the work of award-winning authors, and exploring various genres. Students received academic credit for



their participation and a new support group for their creative minds.

Howard is only one of a few HBCUs that offers an undergraduate creative writing program. Students focus on writing fiction, poetry, or non-fiction. The retreat is one of several ways to engage students interested in creative writing. Students also produce the campus literary journal The Amistad.

Creative writing is a crucial way of affirming one’s culture, says Dana Williams, PhD, dean of the Graduate School. “No nationality or ethnic group with a robust body of literature can be denied,” she says, noting why it’s important to offer a creative writing outlet on campus.

“There is something about the Howard student who is aware of culture in such nuanced ways,” says Williams, who is also an English professor. “The thinking that happens on the campus just creates such a complicated and sophisticated writer that you aren’t going to get anywhere else. Students are so saturated with global Blackness that the way that they think about artistic production is just unique and necessary. The legacy of Zora Neale Hurston, Sterling Brown, Amiri Baraka, Lucille Clifton, Toni Morrison, AB Spelman persists!”

JESSICA ALMANZAR/THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS MD ANDERSON CANCER CENTER

BIOMEDICAL

## COLLABORATION IN CANCER RESEARCH

Three Howard doctoral students advance cancer studies while enhancing their research skills at MD Anderson Cancer Center

by SETH SHAPIRO

■ After an arduous first year in their PhD programs came to a conclusion in May 2022, three Howard University students had little time to rest before beginning a labor-intensive Summer experience.

From June to August 2022, Ayanna Woodberry, a student in the Department of Biology; Omotola Ogundipe, a student in the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences; and Shantol Graham-Hyatt, a student in the Department of Microbiology, participated in the Partnership for Careers in Cancer Science and Medicine (PCCSM) Graduate Student Summer Research Experience at The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center.

“There [are] so many people working on so many different types of cancer,” says Woodberry. “Just being here at MD Anderson, attending webinars, and meeting with different people has been extremely beneficial for me.”

The students participated in important cancer research studies while building skills that will enhance their doctoral projects at Howard—and their future career ambitions. Ogundipe worked in a wet lab studying the synergism between three drugs for the effective treatment of bladder cancer. Her Summer research poster won the prize for the graduate student category in the 2022 MD Anderson Partnership for Careers in Cancer Science and Medicine poster competition.

“It’s been quite interesting. This is my first time doing biological characterization,” Ogundipe says. She carried out in vitro drug

assays using bladder cancer cell lines to assess synergism between a currently approved targeted therapy and two other candidate drugs. Additionally, she carried out DNA cloning for the evaluation of drug resistance in a colorectal cancer cell line. “I feel more confident doing similar experiments now.”

The research she participated in at MD Anderson was particularly relevant for her doctoral studies at Howard.

“[The MD Anderson team] uses at least two drug combinations to reduce the chance of resistance in cancer treatment. I’m working on this as well because I’m targeting two particular indicators in ovarian cancer,” Ogundipe says. “That was why I was really interested in working

with [the MD Anderson team] because [it’s] using combinational approach in overcoming chemoresistance, a major challenge with cancer treatment.”

Ogundipe says research like this has the potential to reduce the rate of chemoresistance, minimize treatment-induced toxicity, and improve cancer survival rates.

Graham-Hyatt says that, by the end of the program, she was running experiments on her own with limited supervision from the researchers she was supporting. Her experiments at MD Anderson focused on the DEAR1 gene, which is found in breast cancer.

“This will definitely help in developing laboratory techniques as well as my research at Howard, which is to find out if exercise or non-exercise lifestyle has an



**There [are] so many people working on so many different types of cancer.”**

impact on early onset of Alzheimer’s,” Graham-Hyatt says.

Woodberry used a coding program called RStudio to analyze large data sets created by her research team, which was studying prostate samples obtained through the Harvard University Health Professionals Follow-Up Study. The purpose of the study was to assess the relationship between mosaic chromosomal alterations (mCAs) and cancer outcomes. Ultimately, the pilot informs a larger study with 1,000 patients with advanced prostate cancer and 1,000 patients without advanced cancer.

She has done research with the Howard University Cancer Center about the role of patient navigation in reducing breast, colorectal, and prostate cancer disparities. Woodberry wants to apply her research skills to look at the environmental and biological factors that could enhance cancer outcomes, particularly for minority patients.

“I was a little nervous at first,” she says. “But I’m coming away from the experience definitely feeling more comfortable, and I’m hoping that I can use RStudio for my future research.”







ENTREPRENEURSHIP

## The Great Reprioritization

The Small Business Development Center at Howard has seen record numbers of people move into entrepreneurship

by **KIMBERLY IVERSON-HOLMES**

■ **Carl Brown (BA '83) wants** to help you quit your day job. He says too many people have told him they're fed up.

"Whether it's COVID, diabetes, stroke, whatever, folks are saying 'nah, I'm going to call it a day and move on with my life,'" Brown says.

Brown runs the District of Columbia Small Business Development Center (SBDC). He says a record number of people are leaving their traditional jobs and moving into the entrepreneurial space. As executive director, Brown saw demand for his office's services recently skyrocket. In 2019, his staff provided 2,073 hours of

counseling; in 2020, they provided 4,600 hours of counseling.

"We've seen growth in the number of Black women coming in," Brown says. "They are the number one client in the District of Columbia. Sisters call me and are ready and prepared."

Located in the Howard School of Business, the SBDC launched on the campus of Howard University in 1979; the same year Brown enrolled at Howard.

The self-proclaimed "one-stop shop for small business success," SBDC provides research, resources, webinars, and one-on-one counseling to anyone looking to start or enhance

a small business. The center was established as part of a congressional pilot program and managed by the Small Business Administration (SBA). The centers are located primarily on university and college campuses throughout every state and territory. The Howard School of Business also offers help with patents and trademarking. Clients do not have to be a Howard student, faculty, or staff. All services are offered free of charge.

"That is your tax dollars at work," Brown points out.

With more than 25 years of experience, Brown brings a wealth of small business development knowledge to those who visit. His consultants



**Folks are saying 'nah, I'm going to call it a day and move on with my life.'"**

are also highly educated professionals with extensive entrepreneurial expertise.

The New York native is passionate about entrepreneurship. He also hosts a weekly radio show on SiriusXM Channel 141. "The Small Business Report" showcases interviews with leaders, entrepreneurs, and business experts such as Black Ambition CEO Felecia Hatcher and Midwest regional director for Goldman Sachs' 10,000 Small Businesses Voices Janetta King. Brown has also been interviewed by national media outlets including History Channel, "Food that Built America," and the Wall Street Journal.

He recommends making an appointment to talk to his staff early in your startup process.

"Don't be afraid to discuss your idea – in fact, I would prefer that you come see me when you just got an idea and not start all these bad practices that we got to help you change," Brown says.

Another million-dollar idea? Buying a boomer's business.

"A lot of these baby boomers have never even thought about selling their businesses," Brown says. "They say, 'who wants Carl Brown Tax Service?' But at the core, it's a tax service. 'Tammy' can take over. Tammy offers \$50,000 over the next five years. Now that retiring owner gets \$50,000 extra every year while laying on the beach. Who's benefiting? Both of us."

Many of Brown's clients say they've benefited from his advice. "I took my mother to the doctor one day, and a former client walked in with his wife," recounts Brown. "He's like, 'Oh, my God. It's Carl Brown!' He then told his wife 'Honey, this is the man responsible for the house you live in.' They live in a mansion."

A big house built by a big idea that was nurtured on the campus of Howard University.

"I'm trying to bring Black intellectual excellence to the table," Brown says.

JUSTIN D. KNIGHT



**HOWARD  
UNIVERSITY**

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ARTS AND CULTURE: Raul Ferrera-Balanquet and Kathryn E. Coney-Ali have plans to bring the gallery of art to new heights.

## HOWARD UNIVERSITY'S GALLERY OF ART LOOKS AHEAD

BY

Sholnn Freeman  
(MA '12, PHD '21)

■ IN NINE DECADES OF ITS EXISTENCE, the Howard University Gallery of Art has amassed one of the world's finest collections of portraits, abstractions, photographs, and ethnographic compositions. Its latest acquisition: a two-person leadership team devoted to positioning the gallery for success in the fast-moving art world.

The Gallery of Art now has two new co-executive directors, Raul Ferrera-Balanquet and Kathryn E. Coney-Ali. Ferrera-Balanquet earned a doctorate in Latin American and Caribbean cultural studies from Duke University

and brings to the gallery an extensive background in international exhibitions. Coney-Ali is a cultural historian experienced in collection management and museum operations. She is completing her doctoral studies at Howard University in African Studies and had matriculated at the University for her bachelor's and master's degrees in fine arts. As an undergraduate, Coney-Ali trained in Howard University's Gallery of Art in grant sponsored conservation and collection management programs.

The vision of the new directorship is in aligned with the Chadwick Boseman

College of Fine Arts call for a more intense focus on the themes related to the African diaspora under the leadership of Dean Phylicia Rashad.

"We want to bring out the African connection with an interest in the art of the African diaspora," says Coney-Ali. "We are inviting people to engage in these conversations."

Ferrera-Balanquet adds: "The concept of global Africa or diaspora is so alive in contemporary culture. We would like to invigorate what the gallery has always done with international and global connections. We are not reinventing the wheel but reinvigorating what has already been established."

In one of their first projects, the pair hosted a mini-symposium on Afro-Mexican artistry in early October. The symposium highlighted the artistic work and life of renowned expatriate sculptor and activist Elizabeth Catlett. A much-celebrated Howard alumna, Catlett exemplified global connectivity. After graduation from Howard in 1935, Catlett embraced art with powerful and translusory political implications. In the 1950s, Catlett found herself targeted by the House Un-American Activities Committee and victimized by the intolerant McCarthy-era. She was forced to leave the United States for Mexico. Her works drew subjects from African American and Mexican life and made a deep impression on Mexican art.

Ferrera-Balanquet says Howard University ranks among a select group of institutions that can boast of a distinguished roster of graduates who have made an impact on the international art world. "You cannot imagine the prestige this place has in the global art world," he says.

Both Ferrera-Balanquet and Coney-Ali vow that the Gallery of Art's purpose won't stray from its original mission. The Howard University Gallery of Art was officially established in 1928 by action of the Board of Trustees, "to make revolving exhibitions of contemporary arts and crafts available for visitation and study."

JUSTIN D. KNIGHT

The two co-executive directors have vowed to stay committed to furthering the fine arts education of Howard students, serving as a creative space for African American artists, and promoting artistic knowledge in the larger community and the world outside the University. Coney-Ali expresses the continuance of the Gallery's legacy of being a collecting institution and maintaining a high-quality collections management operation with a more prominent focus on collection stewardship.

Two years ago, Howard University announced that it had received the coveted African American Art collection of Ronald W. and Patricia Turner Walters. Mrs. Walters donated the collection to the Gallery of Art in honor of the legacy

of her late husband, Dr. Ronald W. Walters, who was a civil rights activist and expert in Black politics. Walters taught at Howard University in the Department of Political Science for 25 years, serving as the chair for nearly a decade. The gift includes 152 artworks which contains some the earliest works by African Americans in this country.

Coney-Ali believes the collection is a cosmopolitan representation of the art world which is what sets it apart from other HBCUs. She notes that the collection provides a unique survey of art spanning five continents and varying periods, including Italian renaissance, German expressionism, African and Oceanic art in the Alain L. Locke Collection, and modern and contemporary American art; placing Howard at the forefront among HBCUs.

"The discourse on art history which documents experiences and culture of people—our people—is what needs to be preserved," Coney-Ali explains. "It is with this mission and understanding of the collection, we will continue the legacy of [past] Howard art historians and gallery directors ... [who] have paved the way forward committing to Black excellence at Howard."

“  
YOU CANNOT  
IMAGINE THE  
PRESTIGE  
THIS PLACE HAS  
IN THE GLOBAL  
ART WORLD.”







Black women continue to advance in a range of professions, despite systemic barriers

# Changing the Career Game

Story by  
**Otesa Middleton Miles** (BA '94)

Illustrations by  
**Erick Ramos**



# D

ENISE STREETER, PHD, CPA (BBA '84) assistant professor of finance and international business in the School of Business, recalls being excited to go to her internship at a major New York City bank in the summer of 1982.

That excitement dampened when she arrived. She wore her hair straightened with bangs. She pulled the rest of her hair back into a single French braid down the middle of her head.

"I was told my hair was too ethnic," Streeter says.

Her manager and internship coordinator gave her two options: go home for the day to change her hair or they would give her money to have her hair curled during her lunch break. She chose to find a salon during lunch. "She told me to come back and see her before I returned to my desk."

"That wouldn't happen today," says Streeter. "That disrespect impacts self-esteem."

Streeter, now a tenured professor, who had served as a chief financial officer, says she experienced many incidents driven by racism and sexism. Stories like Streeter's underscore the situations Black women often face as both employees and entrepreneurs. Despite the challenges, Streeter remains optimistic, as Black women continue to make never-seen-before strides. "We see a Black woman, a Howard graduate, as vice president of the U.S. We're closer to the White House than we've ever been," says Streeter, who is interim accounting department chair. "We're making lots of progress."

### The Uphill Battle

EVEN WITH ADVANCED DEGREES, BLACK WOMEN earn 70 cents for every dollar earned by a white man with an advanced degree, according to the U.S. Department of Labor. That pay difference adds up to a loss of almost \$1 million over a career. The median yearly pay for Black women was \$43,209 in 2020, compared to \$50,525 for Black men, \$67,629 for white men, \$53,731 for white women, \$83,173 for Asian men and \$68,442 for Asian women.

Landing jobs is another obstacle. Public sector jobs, often considered more open to hiring and promoting Black women, have also been cited for disparities. Black women are 58% less likely to be hired than white men, according to a 2021 report by the recruiting website GovernmentJobs.com. And

even after they are hired, issues persist after they get the job. Black women experience more workplace challenges such as being interrupted while speaking or having their judgment questions, according to a 2021 report by Lean In.

In fact, Streeter experienced several more negative incidents that she attributes to her race and gender. Streeter tells a story of going to lunch with her team she led as chief financial officer, a group of white males.

One of her team members told a friend who stopped by, "I'm out with my boss and my team." The friend looked at the other white men to see which one was the boss. The employee said, "no, she's my boss." The friend seemed shocked when he said "You work for her?" The employee quit weeks later. "I had to believe it was because of peer pressure from his friend," Streeter says.

Another time, she sat at the secretary's desk looking for something. A white man who reported to her said, "Oh, I see they finally put you in your place."

He said he was joking when Streeter questioned him, but she had felt that attitude from him before. She escalated the incident to her boss. "I had a supportive male boss who agreed with me and we let that person go."

“

**We are not seeking permission to be in corporate spaces. Don't look around for the barriers.”**



### Barriers, Road Blocks, and Obstacles

DOUBTING BLACK WOMEN AND QUESTIONING THEIR WORK adds to the stress they experience on the job. This can further impede their career progress, experts say.

"We can't be afraid to stand up for ourselves. Be bold, not bashful," says Streeter, who teaches her students how to succeed in corporate environments. She adds, "One has to know that you are good at what you do and you belong there to do it. We are not seeking permission to be in corporate spaces. Don't look around for the barriers. Just focus on achieving your goals and helping others to do the same. At an HBCU, we not only teach you the content, we teach you how to navigate and how to express that you understand the content," Streeter says.

Cyntoni Miller, who attended Howard in 2008, first truly understood the disparities Black women face when she worked in California as a recruiter for universities. Miller earned very little at the time, \$9 per hour and sold plasma when she needed extra

money. She found herself surrounded by Black women in similar circumstances – not quite making it.

The realization was underscored when Miller says she interviewed a well-qualified Black woman for a position that paid \$112,000.

Miller, who was raised in Compton, California by her grandmother while in foster care, says she planned to offer the job to this woman who held a master's degree. Her boss, however, for the first time didn't want to go with Miller's choice. He wanted to offer the job to another candidate, who did not have a master's degree, because their resume looked better, Miller says.

With the Black applicant's permission, Miller revamped her resume, landing the woman the job. That experience reinforced for Miller that even when Black women have better qualifications, they still face a multitude of road blocks.

This incident made Miller grow more frustrated with lower salaries offered to Black women, comments



about how they speak and even scrutiny about how Black women wear their hair. Miller began sharing resume, interview and career advice online to help Black people circumvent the discrimination. This led to her building a Facebook group that now includes more than 68,000 members, “Black On The Job with AdminCyn” and a career coaching service that exclusively serves Black people to eradicate the wage gap.

### Forging Her Own Path

LILLIAN LINCOLN LAMBERT (BA '66), THE FIRST BLACK woman to earn an MBA at Harvard University, credits her Howard education with helping her overcome obstacles. “I got a great foundation at Howard

— just as good as I received at Harvard,” she says.

In 1962, Lambert didn’t come to Howard directly out of high school because she had other plans. She moved from her family’s farm in Virginia to New York with hope of being a secretary. “I was an 18-year-old know-it-all,” says Lambert, author of the book, “The Road to Someplace Better: From the Segregated South to Harvard Business School and Beyond.”

“I thought getting a secretary job would be easy,” Lambert recalls, who instead worked as a typist at Macy’s in the comparison shopping department and cleaned houses.

Despite the challenges in the work world, or perhaps because of them, Black women like Lambert are more likely to start a business. Last year, 17%



**13.6%**

of all women in the U.S are Black.

SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS

**Black women earn 90 cents for every dollar Black men earn.**

**BLACK WOMEN OWN 36%**

of Black-owned businesses – for healthcare and social assistance businesses, Black women own more than half: 53%.

SOURCE: USA FACTS

**53%**

of the Black labor force in 2018 are black women

SOURCE: U.S. BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS

**Black woman-owned companies grew 50% from 2014 to 2019.**

SOURCE: USA FACTS

For every 100 men promoted to manager, **ONLY 58 BLACK WOMEN WERE PROMOTED.**

SOURCE: MCKINSEY & COMPANY

**1.5 million**

The number of Black woman-owned firms grew almost 67%, from 900,000 in 2007 to in 2012.

SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS

**Of degrees earned by Black people, Black women earn 64% of bachelor's degrees, 71% of master's degrees and 66% of doctoral, medical, and dental degrees.**

SOURCE: AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN

**24%**

of Black women hold a bachelor's degree or higher.

SOURCE: AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN

Lambert sometimes found that being a Black woman worked in her favor. She connected better with her employees. In her industry, most of the workers were women, while the vast majority of owners were men. Finding the right balance left Lambert often feeling like she was “walking a tight rope.” “You don’t want to be considered an angry Black woman or a pushover,” she says.

### The Inequality in “Black Girl Magic”

LAMBERT URGES BLACK WOMEN TO FIND CREATIVE solutions, use their networks and ask for support, which is how Lambert gained additional funding for her business.

“Getting a bank to loan you money was basically unheard of for a Black woman-owned business,” says Lambert. Her method? She invited a banker she knew to lunch, told him about her business, and asked for a line of credit. It worked.

Businesses run by Black women receive the least amount of venture capital investments, as well as nonprofits run by Black women, says J. Jarpa Dawuni, PhD, associate professor of political science at Howard University and director of the Howard University Center for Women, Gender and Global Leadership. It’s not just businesses, either.

“Nonprofits led by Black women receive less than 1 percent of philanthropic funding in the U.S.,” Dawuni says.

Dawuni’s solution: “People must stop expecting Black women to do ‘Black Girl magic.’ People are used to us achieving and making impact with the little we are given,” she says.

This leads to high expectations while Black women continue to receive lower pay. “Working in service industries, Black women are underpaid and overworked with less benefits and limited opportunities for upward mobility,” says Dawuni, whose center will create more programs to build connections between current students and alumni to close some of the gaps.

In response to uprisings sparked by police killings and racial injustice in recent years, more companies emphasized diversity, equity, and inclusion programs. However, these initiatives fall short if Black women still earn significantly less than their counterparts, she points out.

“These programs should not be yet another effort at window dressing,” Dawuni says. “Create sustainable opportunities and safe spaces that allow Black women to thrive. Organizations should be intentional and committed to creating institutional mechanisms that don’t cause us to do magic with nothing.”

of Black women were starting or running a new business compared to 10 percent of white women and 15% of white men, according to the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor. The study also found that Black women are more likely to fund their ventures themselves, like Lambert did.

After finishing school in 1976 with a few thousand dollars of her own money, Lambert started Centennial One – which eventually became a \$20 million industrial cleaning service with federal contracts and 1,200 employees in six states.



In 2014, when Howard chose a new president, there was one woman dean. Today, there are 10. Here's how they're changing the University — and the paths for Howard students.

by Rin-rin Yu and Misha Cornelius

PHOTOS BY RHONISHA FRANKLIN (BBA '04, MBA '10)

# *The* WOMEN DEANS *of* HOWARD UNIVERSITY



\*Dean Andrea Hayes Dixon was named dean of the College of Medicine after this photo was made. Read her story on page 35.



**I**N THE ICONIC FOUNDER’S LIBRARY, nine Howard University women are gathered. Morning sunlight peaks through the ornate windows of one of the campus’s most historic buildings, casting a glow on the bookcases that line the room. Though their journeys may differ, each of the women arrived at Founders with a shared purpose. These are the women deans of Howard University.

“When I became president in 2014, there was only one fully-appointed woman dean,” says President Dr. Wayne A. I. Frederick, MD, MBA. “I was determined to change that.”

Howard gave Black women a chance to lead as deans at a time when other universities did not. Lucy Diggs Slowe was Howard’s

very first, named Dean of Women in 1922. There have been approximately 35 women deans at Howard (31 academic). Each has and continues to overcome challenges. Still, all of them have achieved great success.

“In a world where women, and Black women specifically, are underrepresented in higher education leadership, it is critical that Howard be a leader in changing that tide,” Dr. Frederick says. “It’s even more important that we start right here on our campus.”

On these next pages, we introduce the 10 deans whose leadership, determination, education, experience, knowledge and more are opening up opportunities for future generations of Howard students.

### Sandra Edmonds Crewe

When Dean Sandra Crewe (PhD ’97), speaks, it’s always very thoughtfully and with zeal. “Leadership isn’t the loudest person,” she says. “It is probably the person in the room who has the most passion.” And passion in the profession of social work is something that Crewe emanates.

While social work leans female-dominated, its leadership is more evenly split, she says. And, as a leader, she says battling misconceptions about social work – that it’s negative work, designed to dismantle families – is one of her bigger tasks at hand. “We have the role of protecting children and vulnerable families,” she says. “And really it should be looked at as one of the highest skill sets we have.”

As a dean, she hopes students look upon her as “an advocate for social justice, in all its forms, and that they will see that I am reliable, dedicated, knowledgeable, and a little feisty when necessary.” She emphasizes that being a leader requires commitment and dedication; as a woman leader, “you lean in when necessary on issues, and use your lived and practice experiences to weigh in on important matters impacting quality of life.”



SCHOOL OF  
SOCIAL WORK



CATHY HUGHES  
SCHOOL OF  
COMMUNICATIONS

### Gracie Lawson-Borders

Dean Gracie Lawson-Borders, PhD, knows her position as dean of the school of communications is crucial right now, as America’s democracy, its media, and its racial reckoning intersect at a defining crossroads.

“Journalism needs these students. Not just Black students ... but all students of color and backgrounds to really help people understand the world,” Lawson-Borders says. “They have to know their craft ... how we function and what things are happening across this country.”

As a Black and female former journalist, Lawson-Borders has dealt with her fair share of inequality in the newsroom. She acknowledges that changes are happening in the communications industry, albeit slower than she’d like, where Black women are finally in positions of leadership. But she cautions her students against becoming comfortable: “You have to do the work. You have to roll up your sleeves.” She emphasizes experiential learning in tandem with their classroom learning, to equip them with the necessary tools upon graduation. She also stresses to keep filling that toolbox: “To me, that’s what contributes to their success ... never stop learning and never stop growing.”



SCHOOL  
OF LAW

### Danielle Holley

Dean Danielle Holley, JD, grew up in an environment that empowered girls: her mother was an accounting professor, her grandmother was one of the first Black women to attend college in Texas, and her law professor father would take her to his classes at the ripe age of 5. However, she understood the societal structure of the time: that men were default leaders and women had to work twice as hard to prove their abilities.

Holley is the third woman dean of Howard’s School of Law, which she notes is almost 70% women students. Outside of Howard’s campus, she and her students are a rarity – only about 5% of lawyers are Black (3% are Black women). Having women deans at Howard sets an example, she says. “We are strongly representing what is possible for Black women to do. When we establish that in this setting, we establish it for Black women ... in every other sector of industry and nonprofits and universities in the country.”





CHADWICK  
A. BOSEMAN  
COLLEGE OF  
FINE ARTS

## Phylicia Rashad

From Clair Huxtable on “The Cosby Show” to Lena Younger in “A Raisin in the Sun,” Dean Phylicia Rashad (BFA ’70, H ’09) has portrayed strong, leading women on stage and on screen throughout her acting career. However, she says offering her best work – not her gender – is what earned her roles as an actor, director, educator, and now as dean.

“I think it has to do with the work I do ... and the manner in which I’ve accomplished it,” she says. She wants her students to recognize that giving their best work is necessary to forge ahead in the creative world.

However, when it comes to gender bias, particularly in a male-dominated industry, she says it’s about balance. “If a theater company announces we have all these plays [by] all female writers, I’ll say, well, wait a minute ... did the men stop writing plays? If you swing the pendulum that far to the left, it’s going to swing that far back to the right.”

She thinks that Howard has struck that balance with its 10 women deans, all of whom she said were clearly chosen for their abilities. “Howard is a very progressive environment. It shouldn’t be a shock and surprise to anyone that this University is recognizing excellence in women.”

## Andrea Jackson

Though the field of dentistry was long dominated by white men, Dean Andrea Jackson (BS ’80, DDS ’82) was undaunted: the combination of her own positive dental experiences plus being unhindered by gender differences growing up encouraged her to remain at Howard to pursue her DDS, after finishing her undergraduate studies in zoology there.

Today, women only make up 35% of all dentists nationwide, and 3.8% of dentists are Black. But at Howard, women are nearly 60% of the dental class, and more than half are Black. Through her years of practice and teaching, Jackson is not surprised, especially as she isn’t even the first Black female dean of the college – giving her a completely different perspective than most of her colleagues. “First of all, women are capable, and as long as you are knowledgeable about your passion, willing to listen and be a lifelong learner, [there] is nothing [students] can’t accomplish,” she says. “There are no shortcuts.”



COLLEGE OF  
DENTISTRY

COLLEGE  
OF MEDICINE



## Andrea Hayes Dixon

Dean Andrea Hayes Dixon, MD, FACS, FAAP, is familiar with the concept of being first, even though she grew up in a family of educators and women leaders. But it wasn’t until someone in medical school pointed out that she was tall and could look other male surgeons in the eye that she realized that her being a woman, and a Black woman, was exceedingly rare in the field.

When she applied for fellowships in pediatric surgery in 1998, there wasn’t a single Black female pediatric surgeon in the United States. There wasn’t even a single female surgeon of any kind in her medical school. Just to become a surgeon was “an uphill battle, because none of the white male surgeons wanted me in the club,” she recalls.

Today, she knows her firsts are important. She is the first Black woman nationwide to become a board-certified pediatric surgeon and the first woman chair of the Department of Surgery at Howard University. In September, she was named the first Black woman to serve as dean of Howard University’s College of Medicine. She wants more minority women to join her in the club of surgeons. As dean, she wants students to realize how much they’re needed. “I’m just super, super excited to lead this next generation of Black and brown doctors. It’s so important for us to have doctors in their communities that look like us.”



**Yolanda Pierce**

“No one ever put limits on what I could be or who I could become,” Dean Yolanda Pierce, PhD, says about her childhood. And it stuck with her up to present day.

Pierce was the first in her family to attend college. She became the first female dean of Howard’s School of Divinity. Between college and becoming dean, she was aware that being a woman, and a Black woman, defied certain stereotypes in the field of religious studies, but the idea of being a scholar excited her and she stayed the course with her eye on obtaining her master’s and doctoral degrees.

Pierce aims to serve as a role model for her students. Her goal as dean is to make sure administration, students, faculty, and staff work together smoothly as one. “For me, what is important is... tearing down the silos that exist between different groups, whether between academic fields or administrators and faculty. I love teaching and I look forward to returning back to the faculty and to the classroom one day.”

COLLEGE  
OF NURSING  
AND ALLIED  
HEALTH  
SCIENCES



**Gina Spivey-Brown**

Being a woman was not the barrier that Dean Gina Spivey-Brown, PhD, MSA, RN, faced; it was being Black, she says. She remembers a patient who refused Brown’s treatment because she was African American, and the times people didn’t think she was the nurse in charge. But she was in charge; and coupled with her degrees in health services administration and nursing administration, she knew she was well-positioned to change things.

“I could make a difference, as a Black leader, as a female ... in nursing, where the minority of nurses are Black,” she says. Black nurses make up only 6.7% of all nurses nationwide. “I knew that I had the ability, the brilliance, knowledge and the aptitude to make a significant difference in someone’s life.”

In a field dominated by white females, she has the reverse position of helping male students adjust comfortably to the profession (12.6% nationwide are men, of which 7% are Black). She emphasizes the difference between equity and equality. Her leadership approach, both as a nurse and as a dean: treat everybody as you would want to be treated. “Don’t look down on people who may not have reached your status in life,” she says. “There is no difference between me and that person, except that I’ve chosen to do some things in life that were different, by God’s grace.”

SCHOOL  
OF DIVINITY



**Dawn Williams**

In the family of Dean Dawn Williams, PhD, it took one generation to go from an unfinished education to dean of Howard’s School of Education.

Her father is a product of the segregated South, where schools refused to desegregate and instead closed for five years – preventing him from completing his education. Since then, she’s dedicated much of her own education and life’s work to challenging inequitable practices and increasing access to educational opportunities – her doctoral dissertation, for instance, is dedicated to him. “I look at all that he has done and all that he has accomplished ... in spite of the opportunities that were really stolen from him.”

Williams said she was always been called to leadership roles – whether as high school track team captain, sorority president, and later as dean, with students telling her it is motivating to see a person who looked like them in a leadership role. Williams grew up in the New York City public school system and taught elementary and high school, all of which she says was integral to her focused study of urban education and in her role as dean. “[I] have a perspective... of having been a product [of the system], having also had the opportunity to teach and lead in schools, and being empathetic to the needs, but then also realistic to the challenges.”

GRADUATE  
SCHOOL



**Dana Williams**

Dean Dana A. Williams (MA ’95, PhD ’98), a literature scholar, sees her role as more than administrative. “I am always trying to model what it means to be a scholar, even as an administrator,” she says.

At Howard, she is the first permanent woman dean of the Graduate School, and one of the few who has had a humanities background – a rarity in graduate schools nationwide, which Williams says are typically very STEM-based. “Graduate deans are often seen as research deans, and the fight to consider the humanities as critical research continues. So a research dean who is a humanist is still too rare,” Williams added. As a woman leader, when all things are equal, Williams believes talent makes room for itself. As a former basketball player, she likens being tapped for administrative work to being a successful rebounder: “To be good at it, you have to be attentive enough to the game to know where the ball is likely to land. That’s mostly a talent and skill. But there’s also a bit of luck.”

Among the Howard deans, male and female, there’s no microaggression that might occur at another university, she says. “That gives us a freedom to do the real work. We can be as serious and thoughtful about innovation and research as anybody anywhere, while also enjoying ourselves.”

SCHOOL OF  
EDUCATION





# A HEALTHY MIND

**More Black women are starting to take charge of their mental health. Here's why.**

ON A MORNING IN MAY 2020, GISHAWN MANCE, PHD, returned from a walk and checked her mailbox. Inside was a card from a close friend, Latisha, who had died unexpectedly just days earlier. "She was having headaches and went to sleep and never woke up," recalls Mance, an associate professor of psychology at Howard University.

Soon, video would surface of George Floyd's murder by police in Minneapolis, which sparked global protests for racial justice. Nearly eight months pregnant at the time, she was also readying for the birth of her child in a pandemic. She welcomed a daughter; then, her father's cancer returned.

The weight of it all—navigating grief, inconsistent daycare, work responsibilities, doctor's appointments, and racial stressors—led her to seek professional mental health therapy. "My anxiety had heightened because of

everything that was going on with me," shares Mance, who purposefully chose a therapist that worked with Black mothers. "I needed to talk to somebody."

Black women have a storied and complicated relationship when it comes to their mental health. Despite being uniquely affected by conditions like depression, anxiety, and traumatic stress, they are less likely to get treatment. Comprehensive data is scarce. Still, when compared to their white counterparts, Black women are more than two times less likely to ask for help managing their mental health, according to a 2015 national survey by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).

Understanding the reluctance surrounding Black women prioritizing their mental health means peeling back the layers of their lives—and the personal and racial traumas to which they are exposed.

by  
**Arnesa A. Howell**  
(BA'96)





### A Mental Health Crisis Defined

FOR SOME, THE REASONS FOR SEEKING THERAPY — OR not — may rest in a question not so easily answered. “If I seek help, what does that mean about me and my ability to handle all things?” poses Mance. Understandably, it can be a lot to unpack.

Within Black families and communities, the woman is often viewed as the backbone, capable of juggling motherhood, career, and countless other responsibilities; she is labeled a “strong Black woman,” even if it means sacrificing her emotional well-being.

“The strong Black woman feels that she cannot show pain or ask for help. She reflexively puts the needs of others first,” explains author and literary activist Marita Golden. In her recent book, “The Strong Black Woman: How a Myth Endangers the Physical and Mental Health of Black Women,” she states that this persona “requires that Black women perpetually present an image of control and strength.”

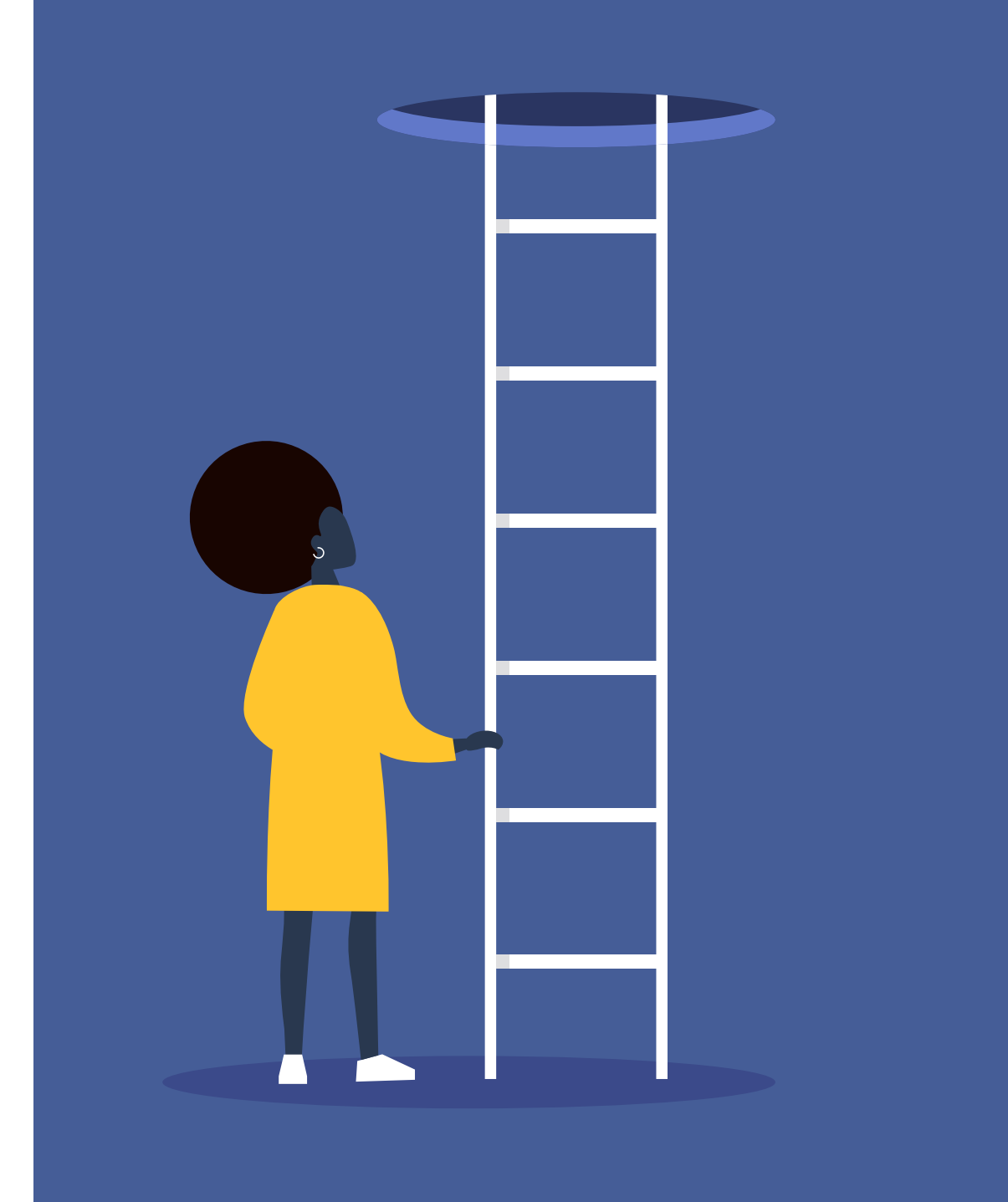
Being a woman who is also Black means there are multiple identities that people target, notes Alfiée Breland-Noble (BA ’91), MA, PhD, MHSc., founder and president of AAKOMA, a nonprofit dedicated to empowering Black, indigenous, people of color (BIPOC) and their families about mental health. So the anti-Blackness is real, she says, as is the anti-woman misogyny and gender discrimination. “We get that all rolled up into one.”

On top of that is the intergenerational impact from a legacy of slavery, in which it was literally punishable to stand up for yourself, Breland-Noble notes. “That’s in our DNA,” she says, and these factors can make it difficult for Black women to either actively reach out for help or feel comfortable doing so.

Studies show manifestations of chronic stress and depression include hypertension, or high blood pressure, a risk factor for cardiovascular disease. Black women suffer at disproportionately higher rates — 60% — compared to white women, according to statistics from the Health and Human Services’ Office of Minority Health. “We know that African American women are living in the midst of a health emergency,” Golden continues. “We have extremely high rates of diabetes, stroke, and heart attack, much greater than the percentage of our population would seem to dictate.”

### Stress Shows Up Differently

STRESS, ANXIETY, AND DEPRESSION MANIFEST IN SOME very unique ways for Black women, says Danielle Hairston (MD ’12), assistant professor in the Department of Psychiatry at Howard University.



“Black people are less likely to come out and say, ‘Hello, I’m feeling depressed. I’m feeling down,’” explains Hairston. Instead, body complaints and physical symptoms are more commonplace. Signs include exhaustion, lack of concentration or motivation, not caring about one’s job, or loss of interest in what’s happening in life.

“They’re less likely to describe their feelings in these psychological terms that you hear with white people,” Hairston points out.

Some people withdraw. Still others “go hard,” so to speak. Overworking, showing up for everyone, and staying busy is not unusual for Black women, adds Mance. “You’re not allowing yourself to slow down

and to be and feel because if you do, then there’s the sadness or numbness,” she says, noting sometimes the person who’s the life of the party socially when alone settles into darkness and low-key isolation.

There may be other, unexpected behavioral changes as well. While most associate depression with loss of appetite, actually the opposite is sometimes true. Or anxiety and depression can surface as anger.

For Leslie Tarleton, those emotions stemmed from childhood. Her dad committed suicide when she was nine. Within six months, she received a Type 1 diabetes diagnosis. Tarleton remembers wondering why everything bad was happening to her. These experiences left her sad, angry, and overwhelmed, feelings that followed her into adulthood. “I was really angry at life. I would lash out,” she shares. At 24, she decided to seek professional help because, “I did have suicidal thoughts. But I knew I couldn’t do what he did.”

### Finding Culturally Appropriate Care

CULTURAL BELIEFS, SOCIAL STIGMA, AND COST ARE ALL barriers to accessing mental health treatment. And so is the lack of mental health professionals with diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds; it has been reported that the American Psychiatric Association cites 2% of psychiatrists and about 4% of psychologists are Black.

An older white man was Tarleton’s first psychiatrist. He said she was bipolar. For a second opinion, she turned to a Black woman therapist and recalls receiving much more compassion throughout the process. “Honey, you have anxiety and depression,” she recounts being told.

Now 32, Tarleton still has weekly therapy sessions with her. “I was talking to a Black woman that looked

like me, and understood my pain and my trauma,” she says. Prayer, walks, meditation, and meal prep for healthy eating habits (she takes insulin four times a day) are now part of her practice of self-love, self-care, and mental health awareness, which she shares through her online community, Brown Girls Embrace.

### Training Ground for Service

HAIRSTON, ALSO THE PSYCHIATRY RESIDENCY TRAINING director at Howard University Hospital and College of Medicine, says she purposefully recruits residents, or doctors-in-training, who care about the University’s mission and diverse patient population, and understand the struggles of the Black community. For the first time since being appointed to the position in 2019, she has all Black residents—and predominantly women. Training opportunities include an AI (artificial intelligence) virtual reality-based project called The Visibility Project, funded by a Microsoft grant. Hoping to encourage empathy, the project immerses doctors in the day of a misdiagnosed patient experiencing racism and biases.

Both agree there are ways to overcome the shortage and infuse the pipeline with much-needed Black mental health professionals. Hairston advises networking and mentorship, so emerging psychiatrists can see others like themselves in leadership roles. “It’s about influencing a large number of people who are really interested in improving the mental health of Black people and other marginalized groups in this country,” says Hairston, herself the youngest Black person in the U.S. at the time to step into that role.

### Campus and Community Outreach

WITH THE DUAL TRAUMAS OF A PANDEMIC AND BLACK women’s mental health, some might ask: “What’s the role of the faith community?” There may not be a definitive answer but it’s an important part of the discussion that shouldn’t be overlooked. “The faith community needs to be intentional about the importance of mental health and its relationship to spiritual health,” says Bernard Richardson, dean of Andrew Rankin Memorial Chapel at Howard University. “Sometimes the church itself has to do some soul searching as it relates to their role in either supporting or even hindering mental health.”

Mance, for one, emphasizes that faith has been a part of her personal journey. “My faith, family support, and therapy helped,” she shares. “My faith in God was also important in coping with everything.”

“  
I WAS TALKING TO  
A BLACK WOMAN THAT  
LOOKED LIKE ME,  
AND UNDERSTOOD MY PAIN  
AND MY TRAUMA.”



The AAKOMA Project

PSYCHOLOGIST ALFIEE BRELAND-Noble (BA '91), MA, PhD, MHSc., known as Dr. Alfiee, recalls her days at Howard being an empowering and political time, from the 1989 student takeover of the Administration Building to the rallying cry of Public Enemy's "Fight the Power" against racism. Together, these experiences ignited a spirit of activism and inspired her to pursue psychology – and eventually create the The AAKOMA Project. The nonprofit helps all young people of color know they, too, are valued and supported in their mental health, says Breland-Noble. "AAKOMA is about raising conscious-



ness, empowering people, and changing the system of mental health," she says, with a focus on Black, indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) youth and their families. AAKOMA has a network of partners to provide suicide prevention resources, mental health information, and free virtual therapy sessions addressing conditions like depression,

anxiety, and traumatic stress. It also has convened candid conversations with students on racial trauma, built relationships with BIPOC teens that serve as youth advisers across the U.S. and internationally, and collaborated with Lady Gaga's Born This Way Foundation, among other organizations, to specifically reach teens and young adults. Whether discussing types of depression with actress Jada Pinkett-Smith on "Red Table Talk" or leading dialogues about suicide in the Black community, Breland-Noble emphasizes this: "I'm gonna be unapologetic about being for Black young people." — AAH

There are readily available resources for mental health support available to students, faculty, and staff, and the community. One that has grown during the pandemic is the HU Wellness program, a University-wide initiative led by Richardson and his Office of the Dean of the Chapel. Much of the program's focus is on mindfulness, a practice of deep awareness of the moment and self, without judgment. Its Mindful Training Initiative started at the beginning of the pandemic specifically to train faculty and staff to emotionally support students. The chapel also coordinates a series of faith-forward sessions for students, faculty, and staff across campus. These include mindfulness trainings, walking meditations, prayer and meditation moments, with plans for a more immersive free, four-week meditation and mindfulness class for students.

Normalizing the Discussion

HIGH-PROFILE WOMEN LIKE FORMER FIRST LADY Michelle Obama, tennis stars Serena Williams and Naomi Osaka, gymnast Simone Biles, and actress Taraji P. Henson (BFA '95) have all been candid about their struggles with anxiety and depression. In her self-titled "The Michelle Obama Podcast" in 2020, Obama shared that amid the pandemic and racial unrest, she dealt with "some form of low-grade depression," acknowledging the impact on her mental health. "I'm waking up in the middle of the night 'cause



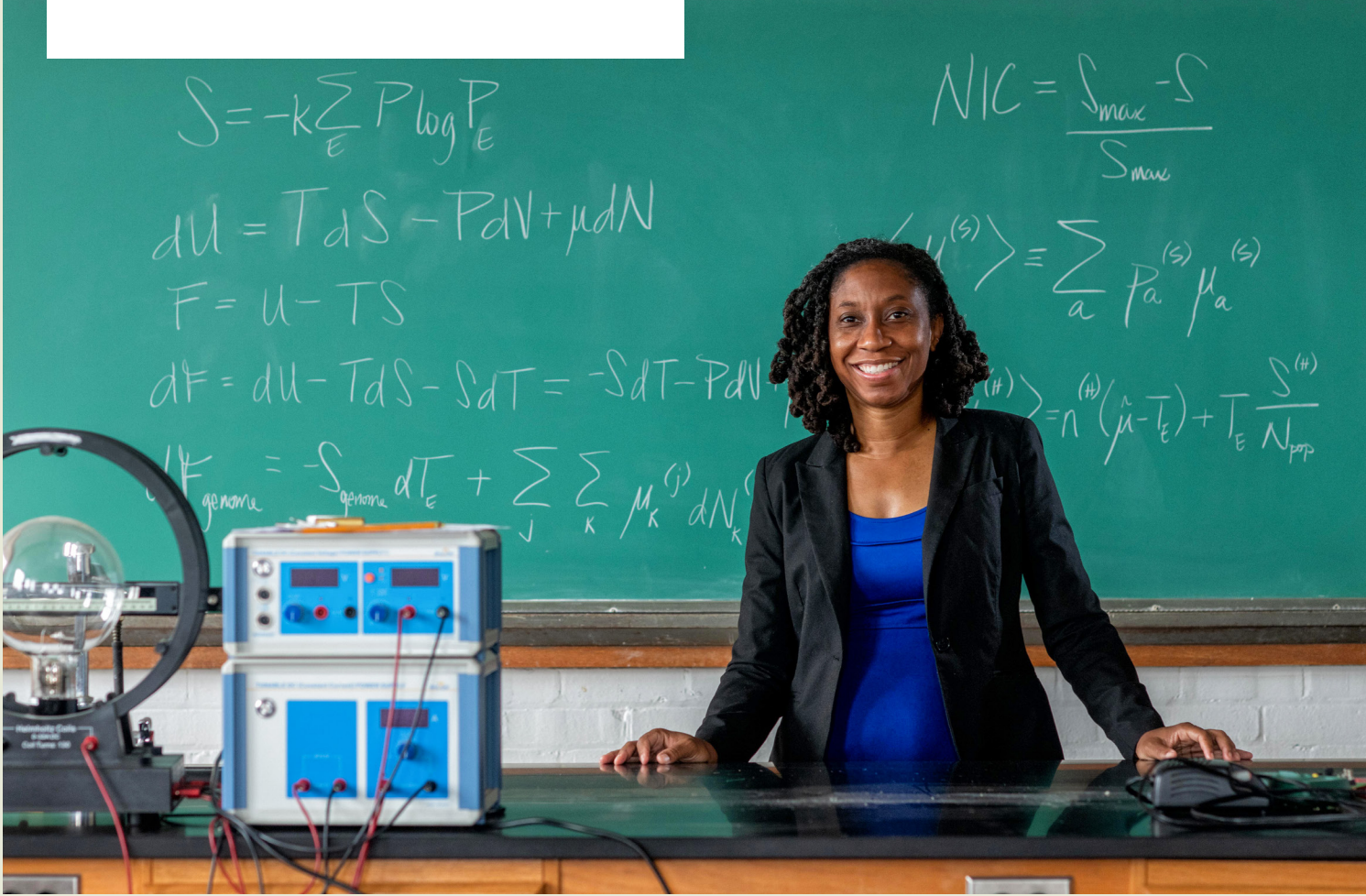
THEY'RE LESS LIKELY TO DESCRIBE THEIR FEELINGS IN THESE PSYCHOLOGICAL TERMS THAT YOU HEAR WITH WHITE PEOPLE."

For a list of resources including podcasts, visit Magazine. Howard.edu

In the United States, about 3% of physics doctorates are earned by women of color. But that's changing—and Howard is working to be that change.

BY UMARAH MUGHNEE (BA '16)

Hidden Figures, Made Visible



MODEL PHYSICIST Kenisha Ford, PhD, started a nonprofit to attract kids K-9 to science and to show that anyone can look like – and be – a scientist.

JUSTIN D. KNIGHT

AS A CHILD IN RURAL INDIA, TAMANNA JOSHI (PHD '22) remembers access to electricity and clean water was lacking for many. Although some perceived these living conditions as adverse, she saw them as opportunity. While typical children gravitated toward baby dolls and Legos, Joshi would go around her grandmother's house, find electrical circuits that were broken and fix them with the knowledge she learned in school and at science fairs. She was especially interested in what she called dynamo generators. In simple terms, a dynamo is a generator that produces electricity through an electric field with rotating magnets. She would concoct a current with a little brainpower and tenacity and voilà! A working circuit. In hindsight, Joshi realizes that she was developing a mantra as a child, one that she still keeps in mind to this day: Physics is all around us.





■■■  
**CONNECTIONS**  
 Tamanna Joshi, PhD, found common ground with the other minority physics doctorates at Howard.

Joshi went on to learn as much as she could about physics in high school and for her bachelor's degree. In fact, she was in great company. She had classes with around 150 other women and was taught by several women professors and mentors. That's why she was so taken aback when her journey started to become more niche.

While studying for her master's degree, the concepts and fundamentals of physics looked the same, but the people around her started to look a little different. She went from being surrounded by plenty of brilliant women interested in science to being one of just a few. Some of the women Joshi went to school with dropped out due to family issues. But Joshi thinks that gender norms and a lack of support played a role as well.

"Having somebody telling you all the time ... you're not smart enough, you can't do it," she says. "Sometimes, some people just believe in that, and it's not true." Joshi went on to pursue her doctorate at Howard, focusing on condensed matter and materials physics.

Joshi's story is familiar to many women who choose to pursue their PhD in physics. According to the American Institute of Physics, based on the data from 185 doctorate physics departments across the nation, a little over 20% of degrees are conferred to women. Between 1973 and 2012, 803 women of color earned their doctorates in physics compared to 22,172 white men, according to figures from Quartz and the United States National Science Foundation. Contrast that at Howard University, close to 55% of degrees are conferred to women, notably, women of color. That is more than double the national average of women PhD physics candidates. This past year, Howard graduated three women, including Joshi. Two of them Black; all three come from minority backgrounds.

**“You can focus on the physics and not whether you belong.”**

### Finding Support

GROWING UP IN NIGERIA, FARINRE OLASUNBO (PHD '22), can similarly attest to seeing women in the field of science not being supported by their community because of societal expectations put on them. Olasunbo grew up seeing women constantly being told they were not smart enough to pursue science. Luckily, her family was different: her father encouraged her to be the best that she could be. She remembers being the best overall graduating chemistry student in high school because her family provided the resources she needed to grow. Today, she is a planar process engineer at Intel, having studied computation physics and condensed matter physics during her doctorate work at Howard.

It's clear that community support helps foster better students. In Olasunbo's case, she makes the connection that the field of physics, uniquely, "has the lowest representation of women compared to other sciences, which is largely a result of racial and gender discrimination."

She continues, "Women in Africa are trained to be good wives to their husbands, homemakers, mothers from childhood and not be too career inclined because society believes these are your primary responsibilities. Therefore, this discourages them from pursuing careers in male-dominated fields like physics."

Kenisha Ford (PHD '22) points to her story as an example of how the physics industry is not as inviting for women, especially women of color. Ford began her journey in science and engineering as a child because she wanted to be like her mother, who was an engineer. During her senior year of high school, Ford had her very first "aha!" moment when she built a Goldberg apparatus in physics class. A Goldberg apparatus is a set of tasks that work in succession and trigger one event after another until the desired outcome. A lightbulb went off in Ford's head because she realized that, whether it's a bridge, mousetrap, car, or a Goldberg apparatus, physics can be applied to everything.

Momentarily, Ford's career in physics blossomed. She went on to pursue her bachelor's in physics at Spelman College, where she finally had the opportunity to not be the only Black woman or student in the class. There, she worked as a research associate at two universities in condensed matter physics and modeling computational fluid dynamics and also for the federal government. When the craving to go back to school was knocking at her door, she answered, but only had one requirement: It must be a doctorate in physics where she would be able to apply the principles of physics to breast cancer research.

### Joining the Club

AS A DOCTORAL GRADUATE OF THE 2022 HOWARD University physics program, Ford explains how connecting with other Black graduate students in other disciplines at Howard allowed her to feel more comfortable in the space. Even though Ford is doing what she loves, physics is no easy beast to tame. On top of the difficulty of the subject, being both Black and an American woman can create a very isolating experience for many. The statistics of Black women who graduated with their PhD in physics can support this social risk factor.

"As I neared graduation, a classmate of mine [was] the sixth Black American woman to graduate from Howard's physics department. That made me, coming out this year, the seventh. Since the first Black woman [received a PhD in physics in the United States] in the 1970s, there [has] barely [been] over a hundred [women who have received a PhD since]. I think this year I was like the 111th African American woman to get a PhD in physics," Ford says. "So all these years, lots of progress, but very, very slow progress."

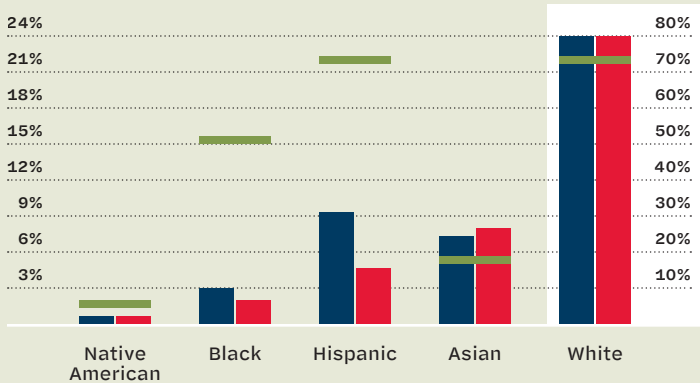
Quinton L. Williams, PhD, professor and chair of the Howard University Department of Physics and Astronomy, highlights how the benefit of being surrounded by people who look like themselves helps foster community support. "Students are in an environment where you can be yourself. You can focus on the physics and not whether you belong. We want to show that you are a person. We care for you. We want to make this work."



KENNETH RUDOLPH/INTEL; GRAPH SOURCE: AMERICAN PHYSICAL SOCIETY

### Physics Degrees by Race/Ethnicity

5-YR AVG. 2014-2018



■ US Population (20-24)  
 ■ Bachelor's  
 ■ PhD

■■■  
**FINDING SUPPORT**  
 Farinre Olasunbo says family encouragement is the first step to pursue careers typically dominated by men.

Ford's emphasis on the fact that there is still progress, no matter how slow, should be noted. A research report from the American Institute of Physics shows that since 1980, women who have earned a PhD in physics have gone up close to 15%. The industry is changing, but it still has a long way to go.

Ford provides a solution to this obstacle that we see with the lack of women in the physics profession. She explains, "HBCUs are an easy place to increase recruitment. If you want to increase the number of Black women in programs (and Black students in general), start with the spaces where more Black people are graduating from." Ford also pays it forward to upcoming Black physicists through her nonprofit started with her mother and sister. Science and Math Innovators Inc. focuses on children in grades K-9 from underrepresented groups to dispel the "myth" of how a scientist looks. Joshi and Olasunbo say they also chose Howard because of the mentorship the professors provided and the community it fostered.

Olasunbo doubles down on the idea of providing more resources to recruit women of color in physics. She clarifies, "I believe if more scholarship opportunities are available for women, most especially women of color, they would be encouraged to pursue a degree in physics. We also need more support groups on campuses to help encourage these women and provide all the support and resources they need to thrive and succeed."

The solution Joshi provides focuses on mentorship. Joshi is a strong believer that younger women and girls need to see someone who looks like them in the physics space. The discrimination that women in physics face is not going to stop, and she sees this gap as an opportunity to encourage up-and-coming physicists to persevere just like Howard encouraged her to navigate her cultural differences.

"I have a responsibility to contribute to the community, to young women or to anybody who would benefit from my skills," Joshi says. "At Howard, everyone has different backgrounds and stories — you get to discuss their stories and struggles."



We Are One

# BISON FAMILY



Before a background of our Capitol scenery are these Howard coeds who are seen on the grass in front of the Washington Monument . . . The majestic figure of Abraham Lincoln is in the background in the lower snap as the coeds are seen within the arched doorway of the famous Lincoln Memorial . . . They are Dorothy Steele, Gertrude Missouri, Grace Thompson, Angela Jones, Myrtle Thorne, Evelyn Morrow, and Della Ellis.

## ARCHIVES

### The Class of 1942

■ **EIGHTY YEARS AGO** the entire world was immersed in World War II. The campus prepared for air raids. Meanwhile, Howard University celebrated its 75th anniversary and the women of Howard enjoyed time on the National Mall (pictured).

## CAREER

### CARING BEYOND PRESCRIPTIONS

Pharmacist Sahar Kassem purchases historic pharmacy in D.C.

by TAMMARA SUTTON

■ **DURING HER HOWARD NEW STUDENT** orientation, Sahar Kassem (PharmD '16) was asked what branch of pharmacy she wanted to pursue. She raised her hand high, as she knew without a doubt that one day she would own and manage an independent pharmacy. But little did she know that only six years later she would be the successor of the 110-year-old Morgan's Pharmacy in Georgetown, the second oldest pharmacy in the nation's capital.

Kassem's career began when she was the caretaker of her ill grandmother. "I was exposed to the pharmaceutical world early in my life; my grandmother didn't understand why she was taking some of her medications, so I Googled them and reached out to her doctor to ask questions. We didn't know about drug interactions, so the pharmacist helped us with that. My grandmother was so happy I could help her with her medications that it sparked an immediate interest in me for the pharmaceutical field," recalls Kassem.

From her early experiences with her grandmother, Kassem knew that she was meant to pursue pharmacy. "This is my purpose. I never had a back-up plan. I only applied to Howard. Howard made me love pharmacy even more, introduced me to the world of medicine, and taught me how to positively impact people's day-to-day lives," asserts Kassem. With a clear vision of her future, she only made decisions



“**THIS IS MY PURPOSE. I NEVER HAD A BACK-UP PLAN. I ONLY APPLIED TO HOWARD.**”

that would lead to her dream of one day owning a pharmacy and delivering exceptional care to her patients.

In her first years as a pharmacist, Kassem worked at large and small chain pharmacies and noticed there was an opportunity for pharmacists to give patients more quality and attentive service. She knew that she could deliver such service if she owned her own pharmacy.

Shortly after, she began working at the independently owned Grubb's Pharmacy in Southeast D.C., under the leadership of Michael Kim, PharmD, RPh, former owner of Morgan's Pharmacy. Kim shared that he was selling Morgan's Pharmacy. After encouragement and support from her husband, Kassem decided to pursue ownership

of Morgan's, affirming that this was one of the best decisions that she has made.

Kassem now owns and operates the historic neighborhood pharmacy in D.C. Photos of Morgan's circa 1922 line its walls, and Kassem plans to maintain its historic aesthetic. In the near future, she plans to expand its impact to other parts of D.C. through its delivery service. "It's a dream and a huge responsibility. Some of our patients have been loyal to Morgan's for over 50 years and for generations. Knowing how greatly cared for Morgan's patients have been throughout the years, I have a goal to take care of them twofold. I know how lucky I am," she says.

Through her exceptional leadership and dedication to service, Kassem is creating a name of her own. "I want to be remembered as the pharmacist that did everything to help others to achieve better health and to inspire other women pharmacists," remarks Kassem. "I want women who are thinking of owning a pharmacy to know that it is doable. One day, I want my future daughters to know that they can achieve something like this and better. Anything is possible."

JUSTIN D. KNIGHT



PORTRAITS

# ART THAT REFLECTS

by N'DIA WEBB (SOC CLASS OF '24)

■ **BISA BUTLER (BFA '95) WANTS THE ART** she produces to invoke feelings from her audience. She wants everyone, but especially the Black community, to feel powerful and strong. The goal is for her art to reflect the positive parts of who people are and who they want to be.

“I want our people to feel like they’re seen and respected. And I want them to feel that I understand them. And I get it. Like, I want us to feel good. And I want us to feel powerful. Like, that’s part of it,” Butler explains.

Her art has been described as “quilted,” in which different fabric textures, patterns, and colors are layered and pieced together to create bright, colorful, eye-catching portraits of African Americans – young and old, past and present. Her works have been shown in the National Museum of African American History and Culture (her quilted portrait of Harriet Tubman resides there), the Renwick Gallery (her largest piece to date, of the Harlem Hellfighters, will be on display through April 2023), the Perez Museum of Miami, the Art Institute of Chicago, the Museum of Fine Arts Boston, and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, to name a few of many. In 2022, Butler was awarded a Gordon Parks Foundation Fellowship and went to Switzerland for an exhibit during Art Basel in June with the Jeffrey Deitch Gallery.

Butler is a formally trained artist who graduated cum laude from Howard’s College of Fine Arts, where she sharpened her natural art talents with lecturers such as Al Smith Jr., Jeff Donaldson (dean of the school), and visiting professor Ernie Barnes.

It was at Howard where Butler



began to experiment with fabric and collage techniques. Aside from a unique and extensive education, Butler also found her voice at Howard, not only for herself, but for the greater community. After graduation, she earned a Master of Arts in teaching from Montclair State University and

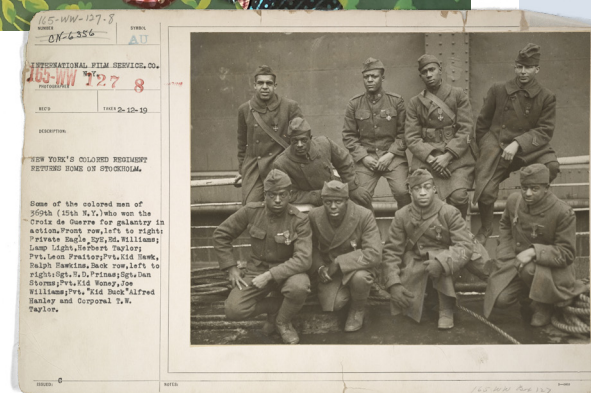


taught high school art in Newark Public Schools and Columbia High School in Maplewood, New Jersey.

Growing up, Butler did not feel that her Blackness was something to be ashamed of, as it was constantly embraced by her family and reinforced by the people around her. She and her four siblings were born and raised in South Orange, New Jersey with their Louisiana-born, Moroccan-raised mother and Ghanaian born-and-raised father. Butler wants others to feel the same as she did, that their Blackness is natural and to be celebrated, not minimized.

“I tell people sometimes think about my work like a Black photo album,” she says. “You’re at somebody’s house, and the album is on the table. So what images do we want to collect and see? And that’s what my artwork looks like.”

Her next exhibits will be at the Gordon Parks Foundation this Winter, at the Jeffrey Deitch Gallery in New York City in May 2023, and at the Smithsonian American Art Museum in 2024. To keep up with Butler, visit her website at [www.bisabutler.com](http://www.bisabutler.com).



PAUL CHINNEY

## MULTITUDE OF LAYERS

Bisa Butler’s work can take hundreds of hours of research and preparation.

## LEADERSHIP

# The Lifesaver

Yvonne Chase becomes the new president of the National Association of Social Workers

by KIMBERLY HOLMES-IVERSON



■ **YVONNE CHASE (MSW '73)** probably won’t share this publicly, but she’s saved a lot of lives. The pioneer of social work and Howard alumna has now been voted in as the president-elect of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW), beginning July 1, 2023. She follows in the footsteps of another Howard alumna, Mildred “Mit” C. Joyner (MSW '74), current president of NASW.

She’s well equipped for the task. Chase has more than 30 years of professional experience in child protection, juvenile justice, and mental health along with significant experience in the nonprofit sector. The associate professor at the University of Alaska-Anchorage also teaches at Walden University. From working directly with clients in foster care and adoption to global social work, she’s done it all and taught countless students and mentored professionals on how to help others.

“I think it would be hard to understand everything if I had never been out in the field myself,” says Chase, PhD, LCSW, ACSW, MSW.

It’s a journey the Michigan native began as a young college graduate who was simply looking for a job but found a calling.

“One of the things that [my first supervisor] stressed was the importance of paying attention to what each child needed,” Chase says.

That stuck with her. That – plus the resiliency of the children in her care.

“Friday seemed to be the time when there was always an emergency to find a home,” Chase says. “This little boy was coming out of a juvenile facility. I said, ‘Well, let’s pick up your things,’ and he picked up two bags and said, ‘Okay lady, let’s go.’ I’m trying to treat him like a nine-year-old; he’s acting like a 20-year-old.”

Today, Chase conducts adoption studies in her “spare time.” Her passion and

expertise are greatly needed.

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) projects that social work will grow by 12% between 2020 and 2030, meaning an average of more than 78,000 job openings each year as workers retire or change careers. New practices are needed to fight issues such as burnout.

“I think that social work is probably needed now more than ever,” she says. “Technology has made a difference in how we conduct ourselves, but I think it’s had some drawbacks.”

Chase cites licensure across states as one issue of concern. With the increase in telehealth services, more social workers are licensed in one state but finding themselves having to end relationships with clients who move or travel to other states.

But above all else, Chase warns veterans and those newly entering the field to find ways to protect their peace.

“Many say, ‘leave work at work and go home,’ but you worry about a child in protection,” says Chase. “So I’d say to the person looking to enter the field to look at your strengths and then look at what is the area of social work that you think you would be best suited for.”

As for herself? She admits she’s still working on finding that work-life balance.

“My husband tells me I should stand in front of the mirror and learn how to say no,” Chase chuckles. “I don’t put email on my phone. I know that may sound a little old-fashioned, but I have five email addresses. Someone can wait an hour.”





FILM

## Feels Like Team Spirit

Howard University alum Maia Miller thrives on building creative community and producing stories rooted in excellence, consideration, and accountability.

by TRACY E. HOPKINS (BA '92)

■ BEING A SUPPORTIVE AND TAKE-charge team player comes naturally to Maia Miller (BA '14), and the collaborative process is what attracted her to becoming a film producer.

"You're in the trenches for a short amount of time, and you are working for one common goal," Miller explains. "I really love see[ing] how things come together, witnessing what's happening on set, and acknowledging [that] this is the grounds for life-changing experiences, life-changing moments, and relationships to be built."

Miller recently produced "Glitter Ain't Gold," an award-winning short film written and directed by Howard classmate Christian Nolan Jones. Rapper Common was executive

producer, and the film co-stars "Stranger Things" actress Priah Ferguson. The story centers around a sixth-grade boy trying desperately to impress his crush, and he visits the flea market with his best friend (played by Ferguson) to buy his first fake gold chain.

"It felt like we were creating a world that we used to play in. By the end of a project like 'Glitter,' you have gone back



down memory lane. You remember some of your rites of passage, whether it was getting your first [gold] chain or getting the first hairstyle that you actually wanted from your mom. Whatever it may be, you remember those firsts, and I think that's what made so many people fall in love with 'Glitter,'" she says.

The 30-year-old Atlanta native credits her undergraduate study at Howard University with nurturing those attributes and building camaraderie with like-minded peers.

After graduation, she moved to New York City, coordinating audiences for "The View" and "Good Morning America" and working with the American Black Film Festival (ABFF), a launchpad for influential Black creatives like Will Packer and Issa Rae, founded by Howard alum Jeff Friday (BBA '85).

Another early career highlight was working on Spike Lee's "She's Gotta Have It" series for Netflix — a gig Miller landed by showing up at Lee's "40 Acres and a Mule" Brooklyn production office and asking to speak to the assistant director.

"What I learned from Spike is to keep your aces around you. Keep the people that have shown you time and time again that they admire, enjoy, and support you. It makes you want to pour right back into them," she says.

In 2019, Miller moved to New Orleans and manifested her desire to work on the feature film "Queen & Slim," written by Lena Waithe and directed by Melina Matsoukas. She landed a production assistant position through the Howard network.

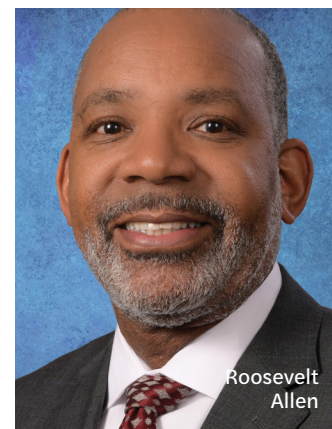
For her next chapter of her career, Miller will continue to produce (her production company is called That Feeling) but is taking time to write and hone her creative voice. During the pandemic, she directed an experimental short film called "Home," which is about Black women and self-care.

"[On indie projects], I prioritize working with amazing women," she says. "But seeing on the industry side that it can still exist, can still be Black, can still be female, and it can still be stylish."

## CLASS NOTES

### '70s

**Paulette Brown (BA '73)**, former American Bar Association (ABA) president, was appointed acting CEO and executive director of the Association of Law Firm Diversity Professionals, a nonprofit organization representing DEI leaders from top law firms internationally.

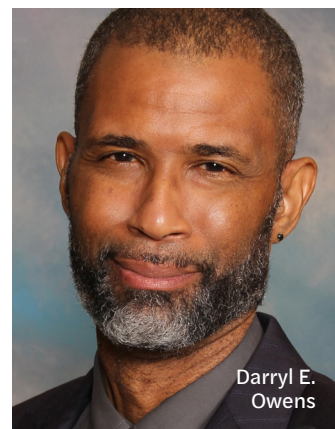


Roosevelt Allen

### '80s

**Paul Cotton (BS '83, MS '88, PHD '00)** is the new director of the Office of Extramural Research Activities (OERA) at the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities.

**Gregory Robinson (BSEE '83)** won the 2022 Samuel J. Heyman Service to America Medal's Federal Employee of the Year award for his leadership with NASA's James Webb Space Telescope program. Robinson's work culminated in the successful launch of the revolutionary telescope in December of



Darryl E. Owens

2021, producing stunning images of cosmic objects across the universe.

**Roosevelt Allen (DDS '86)**, MAGD, ABGD, has been named chief dental officer of United Concordia Dental. Since 2018, Allen has served as United Concordia's vice president and dental director of government business. He spent 30+ years in the United States Air Force as medical operations director and chief of Dental Corps, Office of the Air Force Surgeon General.

**Gina Merritt (BBA '88)**, founder of Northern Real Estate Urban Ventures, was named a finalist in the social changemaker



George Daniels

of the rear, race category in the 19th annual Stevie Awards for Women in Business. Merritt was nominated for her work with Project Community Capital, for which she is the founder, helping people of color who live in low-income, overlooked communities access job opportunities and eliminate barriers to employment.

### '90s

**Darryl E. Owens (BA '90)** was promoted to associate vice president of communications and engagement at Beacon College in Leesburg, Florida. In his new role, he will oversee internal, external, and digital communications at the college for neurodivergent students; the Beacon Salon Speaker Series; and the PBS-bound neurodiversity-focused TV show he created, "A World of Difference."

**George Daniels, PhD (BA '92)**, former Hilltop editor-in-chief, won a Fulbright Award for educators in May. Daniels will participate in the pilot cohort of the Global Challenges Teaching Award through the U.S.-U.K. Fulbright Commission and American Council on Education. He is a professor of journalism at the University of Alabama.

**Sherman W. Smith III JD '92)**, a recent add to Greenberg Traurig, LLP, represents the third generation of HU law graduates. He



## Bison Family

continues a tradition laid by his father and grandfather, who not only were legal scholars, but also judges on the Los Angeles County Superior Court.

### '00s

**Maya Gilliam (BA '06)** runs Ma'ati Spa, a full-service luxury spa in Accra, Ghana and in Winston-Salem, North Carolina.



### HOWARD FAMILY TREE

**Peter Ugbong (BA '79, MA '81, JD '84)** kept coming back to Howard for all his degrees, so he extended his Bison pride to the rest of his family. “I brought all of my children here, and now we are into the third generation,” says Ugbong, who is the Howard director of international student services. “I consider it very special and a big blessing to me – to be able to live to see my own granddaughter coming to Howard University. It is the best institution in the world, particularly in this moment, when we have one of the best administrations for the institution. And so I am very happy and proud.”

His daughter, **Ungieikem Ugbong (BS '12)**, agrees. “It means so much to me because they can go to any HBCU but they chose our legacy. I’m glad that we were able to inspire them and show them what it means to be a Bison.”

The newest Bison entering through Howard’s doors is Peter’s granddaughter, **Storm Ugbong**. “I decided to come to Howard because of family. I want to keep it going,” she says. “Hopefully my kids will go to Howard.”



Three generations: Ungieikem Ugbong, Peter Ugbong, and Storm Ugbong



**Christopher N. Aguwa (JD '08)** was recently named one of Crain’s Notable Healthcare Leaders as well as the Modern Healthcare 100. He is the executive vice president, head of growth and business development at CityBlock Health, a provider of advanced primary care services inclusive of primary, behavioral, and social care for low income and underserved communities based in New York with subsidiaries across the U.S.

### '10s

**Ronya Foy Connor (MSW '10, PHD '14)** was recently featured in UN Women for her work around gender equality, which was published

throughout the Caribbean and Latin America. She is the national gender development coordinator in the Ministry of Social Development and Education in the Government of Anguilla.

**Brittany Luse (BA '10)** is the new host of NPR’s “It’s Been a Minute.” Most recently, Luse co-hosted the podcast “For Colored Nerds.”

**Saraya Wintersmith (BA '13)**, a reporter for WGBH in Boston, was honored with a Gracie Award for her piece, “Like Other Arab Americans in Politics, Boston’s Essaibi George Faces Questions About Her Identity.” The Gracie Awards recognize individual achievement and exemplary programming created by, for, and about women in all facets of media and entertainment.

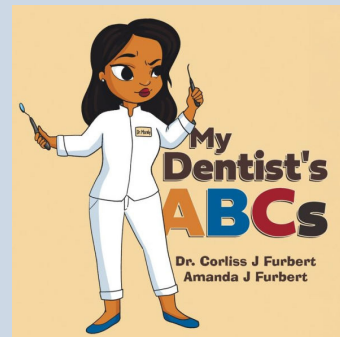
**Toni Benn (BBA '18)** was named a fellow in the Foreign Affairs IT (FAIT) Fellowship. As a part of the fellowship, she is attending New York University to obtain her master’s in cybersecurity management and upon completion will join the foreign service as an information management specialist.

### '20s

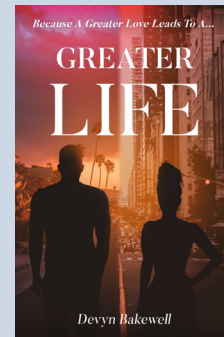
**Tiffany Thames Copeland (PHD '20)** received a Fulbright to Ghana for the 2022-2023 academic year, where she will teach at a university while conducting research on Africans of the diaspora who have relocated to Ghana via the country’s “Year of Return.”

## BISON BOOKSHELF

BY RIN-RIN YU

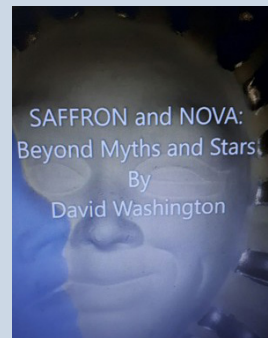


■ **My Dentist’s ABCs** by Corliss Jean Furbert (DDS '85) and Amanda Jean Furbert. Now your kids can learn what “halitosis” and other dental terminology means in this illustrated alphabet book.

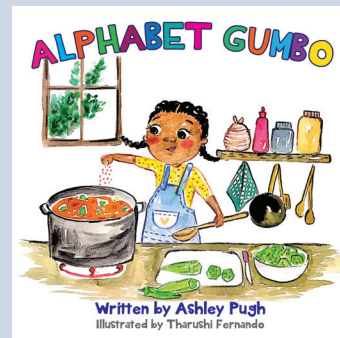
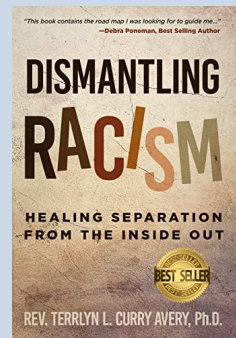


■ **Greater Life** by Devyn Bakewell (BA '21) is the sequel to her first novel, “Greater Love,” which follows two HBCU students and couple, Ryan and Devyn, as their relationship is put to the test with family, career opportunities, and a summer apart.

■ **Saffron and Nova: Beyond Myths and Stars** by David Washington (MA '73) is a 100+ sonnet sequence verse drama, a semi-autobiographical allegory of the romance and marriage between the right and left hemispheres of the brain.



■ **Dismantling Racism: Healing Separation from the Inside Out** by Rev. Terrlyn L. Curry Avery, PhD (BS '88). A strategic approach to examine racial narratives and focus on moving past symbolic gestures and towards achieving racial equality.



**Alphabet Gumbo** by Ashley Pugh (BS '07). Egrets, etouffee, alligators, trumpets? Beignets and king cake galore! School of Education graduate Pugh helps early readers explore Louisiana’s unique culture with fun vocabulary.

➡➡ To submit a book for consideration in **BISON BOOKSHELF**, please mail a copy to Howard Magazine, Office of University Communications, 1851 9th Street NW, 4th Floor, Washington, DC 20059



ABDUL-AZIZ YAKUBU, PHD



■ **ABDUL-AZIZ YAKUBU, PHD**, SERVED as chair of the mathematics department at Howard from 2004-2014 and as faculty for more than 20 years. In many facets of his professional career and his personal life, Yakubu lived by Howard University’s foundational principles. His research in

mathematical biology focused on the control and prevention of infectious diseases. As interested as he was in mathematics, he was more interested in the world outside the classroom and passionate about applying his knowledge to improve the lives of people across the globe. Originally from Ghana, where he studied mathematics and computer science at the University of Ghana, he moved to the United States to obtain a master’s from the University of Toledo and a PhD from North Carolina State University. Yakubu was a devoted mentor, particularly to people of color as he championed greater diversity and inclusion in the field of mathematics. Yakubu has always been a kind friend and a sage colleague. I have always admired the gentleness of his spirit and how he exemplifies the essence of our University: to amplify the humanity of others. —DR. WAYNE A. I. FREDERICK

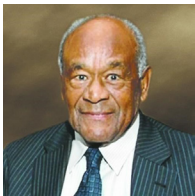
- **Earl Melvin Lloyd** (BS '48), May 26, 2022
- **Irvin Heath** (JD '75), July 7, 2022
- **James Leonard Powell Jr.** (BA '99), Aug. 1, 2022
- **Rodney Coleman** (BArch '63)
- **John J. Kennedy** (JD '86), July 21, 2022
- **Clarissa Brielle Gaddis** (BBA '21), Mar. 29, 2022

■ **Trudy Haynes (BA '47)** made history when she became Philadelphia’s first Black television reporter, at CBS3, where she spent nearly 34 years. After graduating from Howard and some other stints, she became the first Black weather reporter in Detroit. In her career, she served as an entertainment reporter and hosted several public affairs shows. She won several awards for her work and was inducted into the Broadcast Pioneers of Philadelphia’s Hall of Fame in 1999.

■ **Shauneille Perry Ryder (BA '50)** was an award-winning actress and playwright who was also one of the first Black women to direct plays off-Broadway. From 1971-2006, she directed 17 plays at the New Federal Theater in New York City, a place that served to inspire and showcase Black actors and directors. She wrote several plays as well, including “Things of the Heart: Marian Anderson’s Story” and later taught theater at Lehman College in the Bronx.



■ **Marion Mann, PhD (MD '54)**, physician and pathologist, served as dean of the Howard University College of Medicine from 1970-1979. He was deputy coroner of Washington, D.C., and rose to the ranks of brigadier general as a reservist in the Army Medical Corps. In 1961, he returned to Howard as assistant professor of pathology.



As dean, he led the medical school to a decade of growth and advancement. Most significantly, he increased the size of incoming classes to 128 students, creating more opportunities for aspiring medical students and generating greater diversity in the medical profession by graduating more doctors from Howard. He also enhanced student support services to improve student success and reduce attrition, and initiated programs that led to the PhD in anatomy, genetics, and microbiology.

■ **The Honorable Johnny J. Butler (BA '68, JD '71)** served as secretary of Pennsylvania’s Department of Labor and Industry under former Governor Tom Ridge in 2005 and as judge of the Commonwealth Court from 2008-2011. He also taught at Howard University and Temple University as an adjunct professor. He spent more than 20 years as legal counsel for the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunities Commission.



LORI WILSON, MD

■ **LORI WILSON, MD**, WAS AN INNOVATOR, trailblazer, advocate, and a servant-leader. She was a talented cancer surgeon, the first woman to hold the surgical oncology division chief position at Howard University Hospital and the first woman to be promoted to full professor in surgery at Howard University College of Medicine. She was associate dean for faculty development and diversity. She was also a breast cancer patient, and, for many years, a breast cancer survivor. It was this personal experience with breast cancer that made Dr. Wilson such a tremendous doctor and resource for women at Howard and in the Washington, D.C. community. As a two-time Georgetown University graduate who was born in Germany on a military base and called the Newport News area home, she was very intelligent about a wide variety of topics and extremely contemporary. Through her involve-

ment with the Howard University Cancer Center, Dr. Wilson participated in hundreds of community conversations. She would travel to church basements, senior centers, and local health fairs to talk to women about the risks of breast cancer and the critical importance of cancer screenings. Through her kindness and her knowledge, she was able to help countless women access preventive care and take the measures necessary to ensure their health and well-being. Due to her efforts, Howard is able to provide tremendous resources to patients in our community to prevent and treat breast cancer. The mammography program at Benning Road in Southeast D.C. will be renamed in her honor. Thanks to Dr. Wilson’s willingness to mentor and teach and advise, numerous medical students and surgeons today are capable of carrying forward her work. —DR. WAYNE A. I. FREDERICK





## IN TRUTH AND SERVICE, ALWAYS

BY  
Andreyia J. Davis (BA '16)

■ MORNING WAKE-UP CALLS BEGAN AT 6:00 A.M. Participants were required to start the day with a positive attitude and ready to work after spending a night on the floor of a local church. We volunteered in the early mornings into the late evenings—in public schools, soup kitchens, and literacy centers.

It was March, 2013. I was leading 50+ of my peers to complete a week-long service project in my hometown of Detroit as a site coordinator for Howard University Alternative Spring Break (HUASB). My fellow site coordinators and I were guided by Dean Bernard L. Richardson, PhD, of the Andrew Rankin Memorial Chapel; our advisor Glen Vinson; and our fearless executive student director, Miss Greta Foster. Throughout months of sleepless nights spent planning, they reminded us time and time again: the program was bigger than us and had implications—not just for Howard, but for the world.

When we showed up to Cramton Auditorium on the brisk Saturday morning for departure day and saw the hundreds of students who chose to serve others during their spring break, it all resonated. In that moment, I was a contradiction: both anxious

and at peace. I was going home and simultaneously embarking on a journey that was completely foreign.

As a result of Detroit's adult illiteracy rate (just under 50% at that time), our initiative and focus was combatting illiteracy and issue advocacy. Our itinerary was ambitious. As I look through my old notes, I am reminded of a commitment that now seems unfathomable.

In the primary schools, the Howard students read books to the kids, organized and cleaned classrooms, and even created a garden. The team leaders outlined a wonderful idea to host a spelling bee. This allowed them to focus on key vocabulary lessons with students, give them one-on-one attention, and celebrate what they learned. In the secondary schools, the participants led panel discussions in neighborhood high schools, helped review college admission essays, and even exposed students who had never heard of HBCUs to the opportunities they held.

My favorite experience was witnessing the growth that occurred during daily reflections—a mandatory and necessary component of the program. Reflections provide the physical and metaphorical space for deep thought, bold perspectives, and purposeful conversations. During that time, participants formed new bonds, became deeply tuned into their true selves, and redefined selflessness. I'd never experienced such warmth and vulnerability from my peers—who just weeks prior were strangers.

Our team became family in less than one week.

Of course, I'd heard the words "truth," "service," and "student leader" many times over. But, this was different. In that week, the words were inscribed on my heart. Because of the Howard University Alternative Spring Break program, the lens through which I viewed life was stroked with a new paintbrush and forever altered.

During HUASB I learned that Howard's motto: truth and service was more than words on paper; it was then and always will be my call to action. Howard University Alternative Spring Break 2013 is when I fell in love with Howard.

➡➡ **Andreyia J. Davis** (*in sky blue shirt and cap*) is the director of administrative operations and internal communications at Howard University. She wrote this in loving memory of Donald A. Hill Jr., HUASB Chicago 2013 site coordinator and Olivia I. Phifer, HUASB Detroit 2013 participant.

# Support Howard with a Gift of Retirement Assets

Designating Howard as a beneficiary of your retirement assets like an IRA, 401(k), 403(b), or other qualified plan is an effortless way to make a future gift to the University to support schools or colleges, scholarships, programs, or areas of greatest need.

## Why a Charitable Gift of Retirement Assets?

- » It is easy to set up. Fill out a beneficiary designation form provided by the plan administrator. Include Howard's legal name and address: Howard University, 2400 6th Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20059 and Tax ID#: 53-0204707.
- » If your financial circumstances change, you can adjust the amount.
- » You can continue to make withdrawals during your lifetime.
- » Howard is a nonprofit institution and will receive the full amount designated. If given to family members or other loved ones, the assets will be taxed upon distribution.

Please let us know if you named Howard as a beneficiary of your IRA or other retirement plan. We want to thank and recognize you and include you as a member of our Legacy Giving Society.

**For more information, contact Quina De Laine, Planned Giving Officer at [quina.delaine@howard.edu](mailto:quina.delaine@howard.edu) or 202-238-2518. You can also visit [PlannedGiving.Howard.edu](http://PlannedGiving.Howard.edu).**

*Did you know you can transfer money from your IRA directly to Howard University? If you are at least 70½, a qualified charitable distribution (QCD) up to \$100,000 a year can save you taxes while helping Howard students. For more information about this charitable rollover gift, please contact us.*



**Paul L. Brown, Jr. (BS '59)** graduated summa cum laude from Howard and was a member of Phi Beta Kappa. He worked for Radio Corporation of America and its subsidiary until he retired.

One day, Mr. Brown filled out a beneficiary designation form and included Howard as the sole beneficiary of his IRA. When he passed away, Howard received notification of a \$2.8 million gift.

## Sample Bequest Language

I hereby give, devise and bequeath \_\_\_\_\_ and No/100 dollars (\$DOLLARS) to Howard University, a nonprofit organization located at 2400 Sixth Street NW, Washington, DC 20059, Federal Tax ID #53-0204707, for Howard University's general use and purpose.

Visit **[plannedgiving.Howard.edu](http://plannedgiving.Howard.edu)**



Legacy Giving Society

"This represents general information only and should not be taken as legal, financial, accounting, or other professional advice. Please seek professional assistance to determine how any giving approach discussed here might impact your situation."



# HOWARD

HOWARD UNIVERSITY  
OFFICE OF UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS  
1851 NINTH STREET NW, FOURTH FL.  
WASHINGTON, DC 20059

Marketing Mail  
PRSR STD  
U.S. Postage Paid  
Washington, DC  
Permit No. 6115



LEADING THE WAY The women deans of Howard University (story on page 30)