



# *The Battering Ram*

*"Linked together in unity. Serving together with purpose."*

This newsletter is an official publication of WSSU National Alumni Association  
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## UPCOMING EVENTS

### September 14

9 am - Fall Board Meeting  
6 pm - WSSU vs Catawba

**October 31 - November 2**  
Homecoming Activities  
(See p. 7)

What



is it?

It's

**MEMBERSHIP  
RENEWAL TIME**

*Our new fiscal year starts July 1*

See the president's letter on the  
next page for detailed information  
about the different forms  
of membership for  
joining and supporting the  
WSSU National Alumni Association

**Rams, we need you!**

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear RAMily,



The Association's fiscal year spans July 1 to June 30. It is within the start of each fiscal year that we "ramp up" our financial commitment to alumni membership, in service and support of WSSU. Your WSSUNAA continues to work, effectively, to ensure that we align our efforts with the strategic plan of the university, while also

adhering to the goals and mission of the organization.

In doing so, we solicit your continued patronage or new membership, as follows:

### EXISTING MEMBERS (REGULAR OR ASSOCIATE)

It's time to renew or become a life member! Your regular or associate membership is scheduled for renewal each fiscal year. **Renew or apply today!**

### LIFE MEMBERS

If you are participating in the life member payment option, please remember to make your scheduled installment before the fiscal year ends. Typically, four payments are the standard to meet the required official life member status, if dues aren't paid in full upon application.

Don't forget to contribute to the National Alumni Scholarship Endowment Fund. **Make your contribution today!**

### NEW MEMBERSHIP

Now is a great time to become a member of WSSUNAA. Make the decision to serve, via your financial support. **Submit your application today!**

Please access the Membership link on the WSSUNAA website at: <http://www.wssunaa.org> for specific information, i.e. membership application and online payment options, etc.

As always, it is important to take part in the rich heritage and foundational legacy of WSSU, by departing to serve. Service through financial support is an excellent way to solidify this commitment, as an alumnus of Winston-Salem State University. Get plugged in and don't forget to use the hashtag, #servingbysupportingwssunaa, on your social media platforms.

Respectfully,

*Victor Bruinton*

Victor "Vic" Bruinton  
WSSUNAA President

WSSU National Alumni Association

## CHAPTER NEWS

### ATLANTA



The chapter will host its 7<sup>th</sup> Annual All White Boat Party at Lake Lanier Georgia on Saturday, July 13, at 7 pm. Proceeds of the event will support local scholarships. This year is very special as the event will reveal its renaming in honor of RAMily member Willie

Yellock, '77, who passed away December 10, 2018 after a long battle with a respiratory disease. Willie was the visionary for this annual sold out event. For more information, go to the Atlanta Chapter website at [www.wssuatlalumni.weebly.com](http://www.wssuatlalumni.weebly.com)



Congratulations to our Atlanta alumnus Jamerian Myles, '10, who was honored at the WSSU 40 Under 40 Awards Gala at the Benton Convention Center in Winston-Salem, NC April 13. Jamerian is one of the youngest African-American men to be an owner/operator of a Chick-fil-A franchise.

The Chick-fil-A Corporation chose him to serve in their National Fellows Program where he mentors high school students from around the nation, leads workshops and provides students with on-the-job experiences. Jamerian's restaurant is located in Glenwood Park in east Atlanta.



Congratulations to our Atlanta Chapter president, Veronica Jackson, RN, BSN, MBA'90. Veronica was recently appointed as the Executive Director for Sunrise Senior Living (Lilburn, GA). Sunrise Senior Living

provides assisted living and memory care communities for seniors. They are located throughout the U.S. and Europe. Veronica joined the company in October 2017 as a Resident Care Director with oversight of the Wellness Department. In April of 2019, she was awarded the Southeast Region Service Award during a Leadership Conference in Orlando, Florida. Veronica began her new position as Executive Director on June 1<sup>st</sup>.



Congratulations to our Atlanta Chapter member, Octavius Robinson, '92. Octavius was recently promoted to Operations Manager for MAXIMUS Health Services East Division in the Atlanta, GA office. MAXIMUS is an outsourcing company that provides business process services to

government health and human services agencies throughout the U.S. and abroad.

# CHAPTER NEWS

## DC METRO

The chapter has supported DMV based students through providing six \$1,000 scholarships. The chapter hosted a social on the night before the Bowie State football to welcome RAMS to the area and fellowship with local RAMS. During the event the chapter collected donations to create travel snack bags for the Red Sea of Sound and the cheerleaders.

Senior members of the chapter were celebrated during the chapter's Senior Prom. During this event, chapter leadership honored the senior members of the chapter for their work and sacrifice. In March the Rainbow Tea raised funds for scholarships. To follow the DC Metro Rams visit [www.dcmetroram.com](http://www.dcmetroram.com).



Four of the scholarship students supported by the DC Metro Chapter



DC Metro seniors: Milliceson Hayes, Alice McNeil, Herman McNeil and Bettie Kornegay

## RICHMOND METRO

The chapter is pleased to announce that they have two local students, Ja'Nya Badgett and Christopher Josephs, who will be attending in the fall. Ja'Nya and Christopher are the recipients of the Robert "Trent" Curry Book Scholarship.

The Richmond Metro Chapter created this scholarship to honor a former member and president. The scholarship is to assist students attending WSSU in his honor. 'Trent,' as he was known, received his Bachelor of Arts degree in 1979 from WSSU. He pledged and was a loyal member of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. From 1992-1996 Trent served as the president of the Metro Richmond Alumni Chapter. He loved WSSU and became a "Lifetime" member of the National Alumni Association. He was very passionate about encouraging and supporting area students attending Winston-Salem State University. Scholarship recipients will be honored at a luncheon in August before they begin their journey as Rams.





# CHAPTER NEWS

## SALISBURY-ROWAN

On April 27, 2019, we had a great time at the Salisbury VA Medical Hospital where we hosted their BINGO games and we blessed the veterans with gifts and snack bags.

Congratulations to chapter member Larry Keaton-El, who was named as Hanford Dole Elementary School's Teacher Assistant of the Year for 2018-2019.

In May, we celebrated our second anniversary as a chapter!!!

We proudly presented our first scholarship to Zakiyaa Rankin, a senior at North Rowan High School.

Congratulations to chapter member Samone Houston-Graham on being recognized at Winston Salem State University's 40 Under 40 Alumni Awards. Samone is an Assistant Principal at Mooresville High School, where she is the 2019 Southwest Education Alliance award recipient from Mooresville Graded Schools. The award is dedicated to support Graham's participation in Go Global NC's Global Teachers - Mexico 2019 program.



We are planning events for the summer to attract new members to our chapter.

## *In Memoriam*



**Jay Perrie Bailey**  
Class of 1990

(Twin brother Jan died in December 2018)

Son of former alumni association president Beaufort O. Bailey

## SUPPORT THE MISS AND MR. ALUMNI CONTESTANTS



**Ca'Vette-Latrice J. Buford**  
Class of 2007



**Kenyetta Amina Richmond**  
Class of 2007



**Dr. Daniel McSpadden**  
Class of 1990



This contest is the major fundraiser for the association. See the Spring 2019 *Battering Ram* online for detailed information about each contestant and how to support them.

Deadline for contributions is August 31.



## **WSSU NAA 2019 HOMECOMING RAFFLE**

### **Homecoming Package**

2 Homecoming Football Game Tickets  
 1 Homecoming Football Game Parking Pass  
 2 Nights Lodging Marriott Downtown  
**\$10.00 per ticket**

- Start Sell Date: April 13, 2019
- End Sales Date: October 1, 2019
- Drawing: October 12, 2019 - (Winner announced at football game)
- 5000 printed tickets
- Online purchase available: <https://rafflecreator.com/pages/29481/wssunaa-homecoming-package>
- Goal is to sell at least 4000 tickets
- Proceeds to benefit: Athletics (1/3), Band (1/3), NAA Scholarships (1/3)
- Optional: Package can be exchanged for cash value (\$800 cash gift card)

**Raffle Coordinators:** Winfred Mack – [athletic.liaison@wssunaa.org](mailto:athletic.liaison@wssunaa.org) (404) 309-4888  
 Gordon Everett - [corporate.relations@wssunaa.org](mailto:corporate.relations@wssunaa.org) (240) 535-9173

### **Points of Contacts (POC):**

Al Mitchell – Central Region – [centralregion.coordinator@wssunaa.org](mailto:centralregion.coordinator@wssunaa.org)  
 Maurice Thompson – Eastern Region – [easternregion.coordinator@wssunaa.org](mailto:easternregion.coordinator@wssunaa.org)  
 Cassandra Herndon – Southern I – [southernregion.coordinator1@wssunaa.org](mailto:southernregion.coordinator1@wssunaa.org)  
 Murdock Williams – Southern II – [southernregion.coordinator2@wssunaa.org](mailto:southernregion.coordinator2@wssunaa.org)  
 Veronica Carter Jackson – Western Region – [westernregion.coordinator@wssunaa.org](mailto:westernregion.coordinator@wssunaa.org)  
 James Dubose (Athletics) – [dubosejm@wssu.edu](mailto:dubosejm@wssu.edu)  
 Michael Magruder (Band) – [magruderm@wssu.edu](mailto:magruderm@wssu.edu)

<b>WSSU NATIONAL ALUMNI ASSOCIATION</b> <b>2019 HC PACKAGE RAFFLE</b> <b>Weekend Package includes:</b> Lodging 2 nights @ Marriott, 2 HC Football Game Tickets and Game Day Parking. Drawing October 11, 2019 <b>Ticket Price: \$10.00</b> <b>PROCEEDS TO SUPPORT ATHLETICS, BAND &amp; SCHOLARSHIPS</b>				0000	0000
				NAME	PHONE
				EMAIL	



## BLONNIE THOMPSON '75 REFLECTS ON VARIED CAREER PATH



For someone that could be considered a trail blazer, Blonnie Thompson '75, has blazed a number of career paths.

Thompson graduated from Winston-Salem State University in 1975 with a bachelor's degree in biology earned a master's degree in biology from Clark Atlanta University. She was the first African-American woman to graduate from Wake Forest School of Medicine with a doctorate, having completed an PhD in microbiology and immunology. After earning her PhD, she completed postdoctoral research in biochemistry at Duke University. She also served as a research associate studying the differentiation of myeloid leukemia cells at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and the Yale School of Medicine.

Dr. Thompson branched out into academic leadership and management as director of the Human Nutrition Institute at the University of Bridgeport in Connecticut. She also taught in part-time faculty roles at Sacred Heart University, Lincoln University, the Community College of Philadelphia and Holy Family University.

Thompson survived breast cancer in the late 1980s. As a result of this life-changing experience, she developed a passion for health promotion and added a certification as a nutrition specialist to her credentials. In May 2016, she earned a Master of Theological Studies degree from Palmer Theological Seminary, and she is now an ordained Baptist minister.

Earlier this year, Dr. Thompson moved back to North Carolina from Pennsylvania. She and her husband, Rev. Vernon Thompson, have three sons and two grandsons. She is the daughter of alumnus Kirby Thompson '63.

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## 99-YEAR-OLD WWII VETERAN WALKS AT WSSU 2019 GRADUATION 70 YEARS AFTER EARNING HER DEGREE

From bold new caps and gowns to a degree 70 years in the making, WSSU's 2019 Commencement Ceremony on May 10 was one for the record books.

Once you're a Ram, you're a Ram for life. Elizabeth Barker Johnson, a 99-year-old World War II veteran and retired school teacher, embodied this spirit on Friday as she finally got her chance to walk on stage to receive her degree from WSSU. Johnson had enrolled at what was then called Winston-Salem Teachers College 70 years earlier.

Johnson served in the US Army during World War II, then enrolled under the GI Bill at what is now Winston-Salem State University. She missed her commencement because she was working as a teacher, but 70 years later she was finally able to walk across the stage. She is the embodiment of WSSU's motto, "Enter to learn; depart to serve."

Johnson, a member of the famed 6888<sup>th</sup>, the only all-female, all-African-American Army Corp battalion stationed overseas during the war and a member of the class of 1949, received a standing ovation from the audience of 12,000 at the coliseum as she walked to the podium to accept a Bachelor of Science in Special Education from Chancellor Elwood L. Robinson.



WSSU National Alumni Association



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SUMMER 2019

## **WSSU HOMECOMING 2019 NAA SCHEDULE OF EVENTS**

### **Thursday – October 31**

#### **Return to Serve**

8:00-8:45 am Continental Breakfast  
9:30-12:15 pm Classroom Visits  
12:30 - 1:45 pm Lunch

Miss and Mr. Alumni Tea and Reception  
2:30 pm  
Location: TBA

### **Friday – November 1**

Wreath Laying – 8:30 am  
Location: K.R. Williams Auditorium

Convocation – 9:45 am  
Location: K.R. Williams Auditorium

Alumni Check-in/Registration –  
11:00 am  
Location: Thompson Center

Crowning Rehearsal – TBA

Hall of Distinction/Crowning Ceremonies  
7:00 P.M.  
Location: Benton Convention Center

Joint Activity TBA between NAA &  
University – 9:00 P.M.  
Location: TBD

### **Saturday – November 2**

WSSU Homecoming Parade  
10:00 am

Homecoming Football Game  
1:30 pm  
Location: Bowman Gray Stadium

NAA Evening Event TBD

## **HOST HOTELS HOMECOMING 2019**

### **Residence Inn by Marriott - \$199**

7835 North Point Blvd  
Winston-Salem, NC 27106  
336-759-0777

### **Marriott Downtown - \$175**

425 North Cherry Street  
Winston-Salem, NC 27101  
336-725-3500 / 877-888-9762

### **Hawthorne Inn & Conference Center - \$159**

420 High St.  
Winston-Salem, NC 27101  
877-777-3099

### **Best Western Plus University Inn - \$100**

3050 University Pkwy  
Winston-Salem, NC 27105  
336-723-2911

**MAKE RESERVATIONS ASAP!!!**

**ROOMS WILL GO AT A FIRST COME  
FIRST SERVE BASIS!!!**

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## **HALL OF DISTINCTION**

Initiated in 2007, the Alumni Hall of Distinction recognizes and honors alumni for their professional accomplishments, outstanding character, community service and most importantly, their commitment to our alma mater.

To nominate someone for this award, please check Legacy Links, then Hall of Distinction Nomination Form on the association website: [wssunaa.org](http://wssunaa.org).

Submit nominations by July 1.  
Mail to:  
WSSU National Alumni Association  
S. G.. Atkins House  
Winston-Salem, NC 27110

"EDUCATION  
IS OUR PASSPORT TO THE FUTURE,  
FOR TOMORROW BELONGS TO THE PEOPLE  
WHO PREPARE FOR IT TODAY."

MALCOLM X

<https://www.facebook.com/TheEnlightenedMind/> 



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