

PENN STATE UNIVERSITY
AFRICAN AMERICAN CHRONICLES

125

YEARS OF
ACHIEVEMENT

1899-2024

3rd Revised Edition

Compiled by Darryl B. Daisey '83

PENN STATE UNIVERSITY
AFRICAN AMERICAN CHRONICLES
1899 – 2024
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June 2024

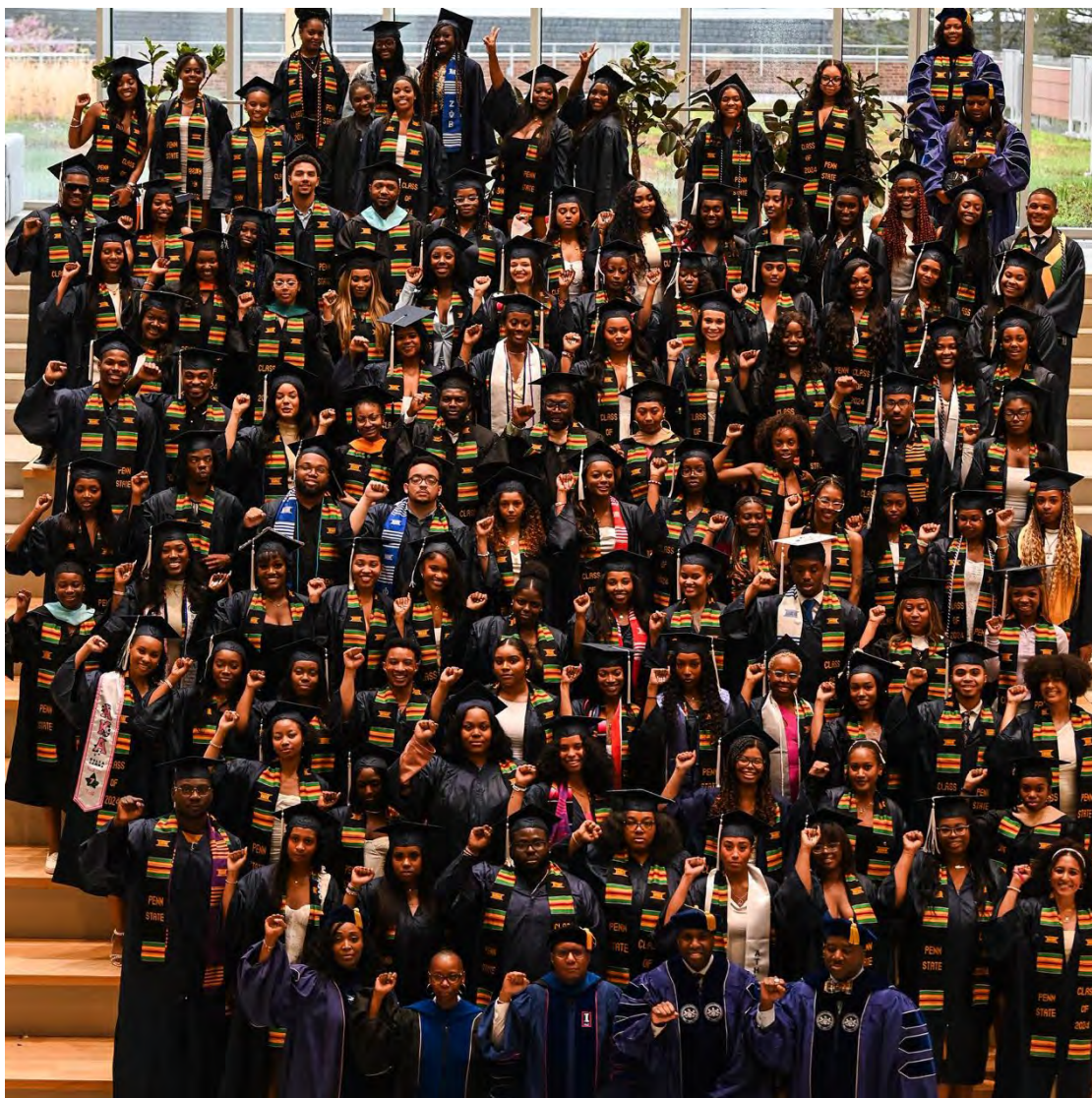
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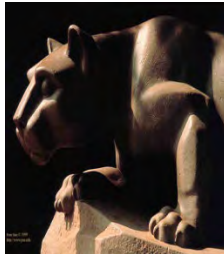


Class of 2024

"May our lives but swell thy fame..."

INTRODUCTION

*"Armed with a knowledge of our past,
we can with confidence charter a course for our future."*
- Malcolm X



Sankofa (sang-ko-fah) is an Akan (Ghana & Ivory Coast) term that literally means, "To go back and get it." One of the symbols for Sankofa (above right) depicts a mythical bird moving forward, but with its head turned backward. The egg in its mouth represents the "gems" or knowledge of the past upon which wisdom is based; it also signifies the generation to come that would benefit from that wisdom. It is hoped that this document will inspire Penn State students, faculty, staff, and alumni to learn from and build on the efforts of those who came before them.

Source: Center for Teaching & learning - www.ctl.du.edu

125 years ago (1899) the first Black student walked onto the Penn State campus to seek a degree. Ever since, and despite relatively small numbers, Black students, alumni, faculty, and staff have been a very important part of the university's fabric. Achievements by many Blacks through those years have helped to shape and enhance Penn State's international reputation as a world class institute of learning. The efforts of Black activism have not only opened the door for other Blacks, but also broadened opportunities for women, international students, and other people of color. In turn, all these groups have played their part to "*swell thy fame*."

It is my honor to help shine light on many of these achievements in the hope that they may inspire all Penn Staters. I am especially proud that others have been able to build off this research and share the stories to a broad audience. I firmly believe that upon gaining a better understanding of our legacy at the university, the growing number of Black students, alumni, faculty, and staff can say with even greater confidence that **WE ARE... PENN STATE!**

In 1979, my twin brother Darnell and I arrived at Penn State's University Park campus to begin our college education. While confident in my academic abilities, arriving at college as part of the then Black Scholars program, there were nagging concerns of "Can I handle this?" and "Do I truly belong here?"

I am proud of my academic and social accomplishments at Penn State, but I still wonder what could have been achieved if I had been able to build on the courage and the political successes of groups like the Douglass Association (1967) or been inspired by the determination of Mildred Settle Bunton (1932). We had heard of neither. More importantly, I wonder if this knowledge would have made a difference to the many Black students who never felt they belonged, and eventually left prior to graduation.

In November 2007, after registering to attend the 2008 Black Alumni Reunion, I was somewhat surprised to discover there was no documented comprehensive account of the Black experience at Penn State. I believed that sharing the rich contributions and struggles of Black Penn Staters that

came before us could help inspire and empower current students, faculty, and staff, and reconnect Black alumni to the university. I therefore undertook the process of compiling a brief historical timeline. That “brief” timeline, with the encouragement and help of Penn State staff, alumni, family, and friends became the “Penn State University African American Chronicles.”

The project gained momentum when the Office of Educational Equity, the Africana Research Center, the Penn State Alumni Association, the Department of African and African American Studies, Penn State Public Broadcasting, the Penn State Archives, the Black Alumni Reunion Committee, and others enthusiastically contributed resources and assistance. This support greatly enhanced, enriched, and expanded upon the initial research and ultimately led to this 3rd revised edition and the creation of the extraordinary website www.blackhistory.psu.edu.

Darryl B. Daisey – Class of 1983

I would like to thank the following people, whom without their support this project would not have been possible: W. Terrell Jones, Edward N. Thompson, Marcus Whitehurst, Jeffrey Moore, Cheraine Stanford, Roger Williams, Heather James, Charles Blockson, Amy Caputo, Cheryl Harrison, Keith Wilson, Lovalerie King, Grace Hampton, Perry Smith, Wally Triplett, Frederick B. Phillips, William “Rick” Collins, Rod Woodson, Cynthia Hamlin, Paul C. Taylor, Carlos Wiley, Diana Kenepp, Lee Stout, Lou Prato, Jackie Esposito, Toby S. Jenkins, Anthony Keith, Paul Dzyak, Deborah Marron, Tina Hay, Ryan Jones, Darnell K. Daisey, T. Ryan Poole, Keith Burris, Lisa Roney, Tiffanie Lewis, Donna King, Michael Bezilla, Paul Clifford, Holly Hawkins, Michael A. Brahosky, Lindsey Whissel Fenton, Erna Rosemond, Dionne Williford, William H. Daisey Sr., and Shirley C. Daisey. **Special thanks** again go to Sari Daisey and our two sons, Benjamin and Warren.

Note: This document is a continual “work-in-progress.” Every effort was made to create an accurate depiction of known relevant historical events, people, and places. It is recognized that some errors and omissions are probable on a document such as this. If you identify such an error or omission, please e-mail the information to daisey158@comcast.net for consideration.

The citations maybe incomplete for this document, but the following sources have been utilized:

Sources: Penn State Archives, Daily Collegian Archives, Penn Stater Magazine, psu.edu, Penn State Office of the Vice Provost for Educational Equity, Penn State Alumni Association, Penn State African American Alumni Interest Group, Penn State Africana Research Center, Penn State Department of African and African American Studies, Penn State Department of Public Information, Penn State Libraries, The Penn State Fact Book, Penn State Dickinson School of Law, Paul Robeson Cultural Center, Mildred Bunton-Calvin Waller Fellows Handbook, Diana Kenepp, Intercollegiate Athletics Diversity Council, Lou Prato, “The Black and White Behind the Blue and White: A History of Black Protests at Penn State” by Robin Hoecker, BigTen.cstv.com, Astronautix.com, Centre Daily Times, OnwardState.com, Voices of Central Pennsylvania, Center for Teaching & Learning, Rita (Frealing) Shultz, Esq., Lorraine Hutchings Oliver, “Black Student Alumni at Penn State Oral History Project” by Maia Hill, various organization websites, and personal interviews.

Photos: Penn State Archives, Penn State Department of Public Information, The Daily Collegian, *LaVie* Yearbook, Centre Daily Times, OnwardState.com, Penn State Alumni Association, Paul Robeson Cultural Center, Robert Preston, Robin Hoecker, Edward Leos, George Oliver, Tommie Ingram and family, and various Facebook pages. Barack Obama Photo by Andy Colwell.

Important Note on Racial Terminology

The author deliberately used what is believed to be the most preferred racial terminology of African Americans/Blacks during the referenced time period. As such, **Colored** is mostly used from 1899 until 1939, **Negro** is mostly used from 1940 to 1965, **Black** is mostly used from 1966 to 1980, and **African American** and **Black** are used interchangeably, or as appropriate after 1980. While not intended, apologies in advance to anyone who might be offended by any of these terms.

Abbreviation Key

Academic Units

A&A	- College of Arts and Architecture
Agr	- College of Agricultural Science
Bus	- Smeal College of Business
Com	- Bellisario College of Communications
Edu	- College of Education
EMS	- College of Earth and Mineral Sciences
Eng	- College of Engineering
H&HD	- College of Health and Human Development
Hershey	- College of Medicine
IDF	- Interdisciplinary Fields
IST	- Information Science and Technology
Law	- Dickinson School of Law
Lib	- College of Liberal Arts
Nur	- Ross and Carol Nese College of Nursing
Sci	- Eberly College of Science
SIA	- School of International Affairs

Degrees

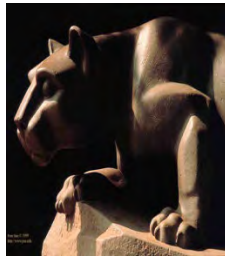
a	- Associate
BS, BA	- Bachelor
DEd, PhD	- Doctorate
h	- Honorary
JD	- Juris Doctor
MA, MS	- Master
MD	- Medical Doctor

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1899 - 1939

1855 – February 22 – Farmers’ High School of Pennsylvania is founded. In 1862 the school changed its name to the Agricultural College of Pennsylvania, and later (1874) to the Pennsylvania State College (Penn State).

1865 – *13th Amendment to U.S. Constitution passed to put an end to legally sanctioned slavery in the United States.*

1899 – September – First colored student, Calvin H. Waller, is admitted to Penn State to study agriculture.

1903 – Ralph Brock is admitted to the Pennsylvania State Forest Academy (now Penn State Mount Alto). Brock was the only colored student among the first class of 13 students admitted to the school. Brock was a graduate of Howard High School in Wilmington, Delaware.

1905 – Calvin H. Waller becomes the first colored graduate from Penn State. Hailing from Macon, Georgia, Waller was described by the 1904 *La Vie* Yearbook as “a member of the trio that runs State.”

Calvin Hoffman Waller (BS Agr 1905)

Calvin Hoffman Waller, class of 1905, is believed to be Penn State's first colored graduate, although there are no official school records from that time to indicate the students' racial identity. A native of Macon, GA, Waller earned his Bachelor of Science degree in Agriculture.

His arrival on campus in 1899 does not seem to have provoked any disturbances; instead, he distinguished himself as associate editor of Penn State's 1904 La Vie yearbook, a member of Alpha Zeta agricultural fraternity, the natural history club, association of athletics, marshal for the football team, and quarterback for the intramural football team, the Tumblers. In addition, he was an accomplished vocalist who served as president of the Glee Club, and a member of the Cecelian Quartette. Waller was described by the 1904 La Vie Yearbook as "a member of the trio that runs State."

His professional accomplishments include Head of the Agricultural Department at Prairie State University in Texas (now known as Prairie View A&M University), faculty member at Haynes Institute in Augusta, GA, and Texas State Leader of Negro Extension work. By the time of his sudden death due to a heart attack on April 15, 1941, Waller had established a reputation that was widely respected among African American agriculturists throughout Texas.

Sources: Calvin Waller Fellows Handbook, LaVie 1904, 1905, 1906, Daily Collegian Jan 31, 2000, (Photo from 1904 LaVie)

1906 – Ralph Brock becomes the first colored forester in the nation upon graduation from the Pennsylvania State Forest Academy (now Penn State Mount Alto). Brock was among the first class of six students to graduate from the school, which was founded in 1903. The Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission dedicated a formal marker recognizing Brock on October 24, 2003. The marker was unveiled at the entrance to the Penn State Mont Alto campus.

(Photo from Penn State Mont Alto)



1908 – Clarence Muse, a Baltimore native, becomes the first colored person to attend the Dickinson School of Law. The son of a shoeshine man, he would become a respected Hollywood actor. He appeared in over 200 films, including such well-known movies as *Huckleberry Finn* (1931) in the pivotal role of Jim, and the screen version of *Porgy and Bess* (1959), as well as *Car Wash* (1976). Muse was inducted into the Black Filmmakers Hall of Fame in 1973. He received an honorary Doctor of Laws degree from the Dickinson School of Law in 1978, a year prior to his 1979 death. Muse was a member of Phi Beta Sigma fraternity.



1909 – Cumberland “Cum” Posey Jr. enrolls at Penn State as the college’s first colored student athlete. While at Penn State he played on the freshman basketball (1909-1910), varsity basketball (1910-1911) and freshman baseball (1910) teams but left school after less than two years.

February 12 – National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) established.

Cumberland Posey Jr. (1909 - 1911)



Cumberland “Cum” Posey Jr. enrolled at Penn State in 1909 as the college’s first colored student athlete. Posey, who studied chemistry and pharmacy, would become one of the great entrepreneurs of professional sports, first playing for and then owning the Pittsburgh based Homestead Grays, one of the most successful franchises in Negro Baseball League history. While at Penn State he played on the freshman basketball (1909-1910), varsity basketball (1910-1911) and freshman baseball (1910) teams, but suddenly left school in February of his sophomore year “when permission was refused for him to make a trip with the varsity squad because his studies were not up to the required minimum.”

After leaving Penn State and a brief stint at the University of Pittsburgh, Posey helped to form and played for the famous Monticello Athletic Association team that captured the Colored Basketball Championship in 1912. In 1913 the club changed its name to the Loendi Big Five. By this time, Posey was the star player and operator (which included managing, booking, and promoting) of the club. Loendi won the Colored Basketball World Championship four years in row from 1920 - 1923.

In 1915 Posey played for Holy Ghost College (now Duquesne University) – using the alias “Charles Cumbert” – and led the basketball team in scoring for three seasons. At five foot nine and 140 pounds, Posey was “lightning fast, controlling the ball and the tempo of a game,” wrote Ocania Chalk in Black College Sport, adding, “and being regarded as the best colored player in America.” Simultaneously, starting in 1911 Posey played centerfielder and subsequently became the owner of the Homestead Grays baseball team. He owned the Negro Baseball powerhouse until his death on March 28, 1946.

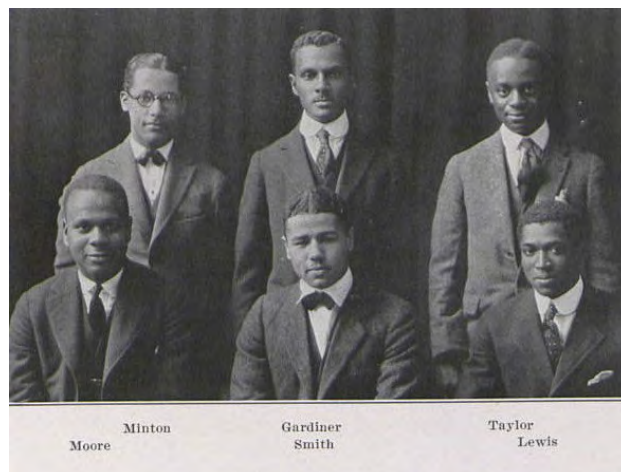
In 2006 Posey was inducted into the National Baseball Hall of Fame. Ten years later, on October 9, 2016 he was also inducted into the Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame, making him the only person inducted into both halls of fame.

(Photo from 1912 LaVie)

1910 – May – Orrin B. Suthern (BS EMS 1910) becomes the first known colored graduate from the Penn State School of Mines (now The College of Earth & Mineral Sciences), earning a degree in mining engineering. The School of Mines was established at Penn State in 1896. Suthern was from Renovo, PA.

1911 – May – John S. Burns (BS Eng 1911) becomes the first known colored graduate from the Penn State School of Engineering, earning a degree in civil engineering. The School of Engineering was established at Penn State in 1896. Burns was from Renovo, PA.

1921 – March 15 – Omega Psi Phi fraternity established at Penn State as the first colored organization and fraternity on campus. It was reported that all 8 colored students on campus at the time joined the fraternity. (Photo from 1923 LaVie)



1923 – First recorded acts of racial discrimination in State College occurred when Ko Wie Gbu “William” Donma was refused service at several area restaurants. At one point, he fell ill and required the attention of a doctor, who described his condition as severe malnutrition. An investigation revealed that “for months, Donma had been attempting to prepare meals in his room at the Old Main building, as no eating establishment in town would serve him because of his race.” Donma, a native of Liberia, earned a Bachelor of Science degree in animal husbandry in 1923. He would go on to have a distinguished teaching career at South Carolina State Agricultural and Mechanical College (now South Carolina State University) from 1928 until his death in 1951. On May 2, 1973, the South Carolina State College Board of Trustees honored Donma by naming the school’s main administration building the “Ko W. G. Donma Administration Building.” (Sources: South Carolina State University Archives, Daily Collegian January 14, 1964, Photo from 1923 *LaVie*)



1929 – September – Mildred Settle from Uniontown becomes Penn State’s first colored co-ed.

Mildred Settle Bunton (BS H&HD 1932)



In the face of overwhelming poverty, Mildred Settle Bunton refused to let economics steal her dream of attending college. Bunton, recognized as the first colored female to graduate from Penn State, earned a Bachelor of Science degree in home economics in 1932. Raised in poverty as the seventh of nine children whose father died when she was very young, she had to work her way through school. She worked for faculty in exchange for room and board, borrowed money for tuition, and won scholarships from the State Federation of Pennsylvania Women. Money was not Bunton’s only obstacle; when she arrived at Penn State in 1929, she was the only colored co-ed on campus. Even with these challenges, her name consistently appeared on the Dean’s List, and she graduated with honors in 1932 with the highest grades in the home economics department.

In the March/April 1989 Penn Stater Magazine, Bunton indicates “No one ever mistreated me when I was there (at Penn State).” Bunton said in the interview that on occasion, she was called “the woman on the box” — Aunt Jemima — but she attributed this to unfamiliarity, not cruelty. “They had never seen a colored woman before.”

Mildred Settle Bunton went on to earn a master's degree in nutrition from Cornell University in 1953. Her career accomplishments include director of Dietetics at Freedmen's Hospital; associate Professor at Howard University; working with the 1969 White House Conference on Nutrition, Food and Health, and Nutrition; and subcommittee chairman on the District of Columbia's Mayor's Commission on Food, Nutrition, and Health. In 1983 Bunton was listed in Who's Who Among Blacks in Metropolitan Washington.



Source: Penn State Mildred Bunton-Calvin Waller Fellows Handbook, Photos from LaVie 1932 and Penn State Alumni Association

1932 – May – Mildred Settle becomes the first colored female graduate from Penn State. She would consistently appear on the Dean's List and would graduate with honors and the highest grades in the home economics department.

1933 – April 4 – Omega Psi Phi fraternity reported as achieving the highest grade point average of any social fraternity or sorority at Penn State during the 1932 fall semester.

1936 – Skull and Bones honor society tapped its first colored student, James H. Redmond. Redmond was an agriculture economics major who captained the track team and was a star on the cross-country team. Skull and Bones was the first of the Penn State honor societies to initiate a colored student.



1939 – Herbert Nipson becomes the first colored student in the nation elected to Sigma Delta Chi, the national journalism honor society (now known as The Society of Professional Journalists). Because Penn State did not note Nipson's race on the nomination, Sigma Delta Chi did not recognize they had a colored member until 1946.

February 24 – Duke Ellington and his band perform at Recreation Hall for a Friday night Ball. They would perform several more times over the next 30 years.

**Herbert Nipson (BA Lib 1940)**

Herbert Nipson was born in 1916 in Asheville, N.C, and grew up in Clearfield, Pa. He graduated in 1940 from Penn State, where he majored in journalism. The first known colored *Penn State Collegian* newspaper reporter (1936), Nipson would be selected assistant sports editor in 1939 and join the paper's Managing Board. He also lettered on the cross-country track team and participated on the wrestling squad. Nipson became the first colored student in the nation elected to Sigma Delta Chi in 1939, the national journalism honor society (now known as The Society of Professional Journalists). Because Penn State did not note Nipson's race on the nomination, Sigma

Delta Chi did not realize they had a colored member until 1946. In 1949 he was hired as associate editor of *Ebony* magazine and was promoted to executive editor in 1972 after having acted in that capacity in an interim basis previously.

When Herbert Nipson joined *Ebony* magazine's editorial staff in 1949, the publication, founded just four years earlier, had a target readership of urban African Americans, and its stories reflected that interest. As the civil rights movement surged to the forefront of American consciousness, Nipson helped push the magazine to a broader audience, with more focus on rural African Americans, and branching out into sports, the arts, and entertainment. By the time he retired in 1987, after 15 years as executive editor, the magazine enjoyed national recognition and mainstream appeal for both its issue-oriented reporting and its cultural coverage.

He received the Capitol Press Club's outstanding journalist award in 1965, and after 38 years at *Ebony*, retired in 1987. Nipson died on December 10, 2011, at the age of 95.

(Sources – 1940 LaVie, Chicago Tribune 12/28/2011, Photo from 1940 LaVie)

1940 – 1949

1940 – February – Henry Norwood “Barney” Ewell, Penn State’s “Ebony Sprint Ace,” is selected to the AAU All-American track team in the 400 meters. At the 1939 and 1940 Penn Relays, Ewell broke, and then bettered, the 50-yard dash world record with times of 5.1 and 5.0 seconds. In 1942 Ewell set a world record in the 200-yard dash with an 18.9 second performance. Ewell would be the most dominant and best-known athlete at Penn State during the early 1940s, even having an entire page dedicated to him in the 1941 *LaVie* yearbook. Ewell was a member of Omega Psi Phi fraternity. (Photo from *LaVie*)

May – **13** Negro students are estimated to be enrolled at Penn State.

December 9 – Paul Robeson, famed athlete, singer, actor and activist performs for a capacity crowd at Schwab Auditorium as part of the *Artists’ Course Series*. The two-hour concert included nine encores and several standing ovations. He would again perform at Penn State on December 9, 1946.

1941 – September – Dave and Harry Alston from Midland, PA join the freshman football team, becoming the first Negroes to play the sport at Penn State.



Dave and Harry Alston



Dave Alston (Pre-Med 1941 –1942)

On August 15, 1942, Dave Alston, star of the 1941 Penn State freshman football team, died from complications following a tonsillectomy operation about six weeks prior to his highly anticipated regular season varsity football debut. The 20-year-old sophomore pre-medical student had been a dominant halfback on the undefeated Penn State freshman football squad (freshman were not allowed to play varsity football at that time) and was expected to lead the varsity squad to a similar record during the 1942 season. Alston and his younger brother Harry, who also played on the 1941 freshman team, are reported to be the first Negro football players at Penn State.

In an April 18, 1942 varsity practice game against Navy, Alston demonstrated his potential in leading Penn State to a 12 - 6 victory over the Midshipmen. Unfortunately, Alston bruised his eye in the final three minutes of the game and had to miss the last practice game against Duquesne. Many in the State College Negro community believed Navy deliberately hurt Alston, and that the injury contributed to his early death.

Weighing over 200 pounds and standing well over six feet tall, Alston was a triple-threat on the gridiron. He ran with amazing speed, was an exceptionally accurate passer, and could kick more than 60 yards. He was often compared with such greats as Jim Thorpe and Paul Robeson by Penn State football coach Bob Higgins and other football experts. Higgins called Alston “the greatest player I ever coached.” Alston had been named the top sophomore football player in the nation and a preseason All-American by Esquire Magazine just prior to his death.

Alston was exceptional off the field as well. The son of a minister, he had been student council president and an honor student at Midland High School (Midland, PA), as well as a basketball and football star. At Penn State he was known as a friendly, intelligent, and fun-loving student who wanted to be a “good doctor” one day. Despite his almost unbelievable ability on the gridiron, his attitude was unassuming and sincere. Teammates indicated that Alston would “go out of his way to help anyone.” He was a great source of pride for the school and the state of Pennsylvania, but particularly among the Negro population.

At 9:00 am on August 15, 1942, Alston went to Centre County Hospital for a tonsillectomy. Shortly following the operation, a blood clot formed and caused his lungs to collapse. By 11:45am Dave Alston was dead. The entire Penn State community was stunned by his early death.

Sources: Daily Collegian July 22, 1947, Perry Smith (Eng 1948), Lou Prato, Diana Kenepp, Penn State Archives

December 7 – The Imperial Japanese Navy airplanes bomb the U.S. Naval Base at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, resulting in 2403 fatalities.

“Lincoln Hall” – Unofficial Colored Dorm

A boarding home for colored male students from the late 1930s to the early 1950s, “Lincoln Hall” would serve as an unofficial colored dormitory and early sanctuary for its residents. Located at 119 North Barnard Street, State College, Lincoln Hall was operated by Harry and Rosa Gifford, their children Bessie and Emanuel, and the latter’s wife, Agnes. The family had moved from Mississippi and Louisiana to take employment as cooks at local white fraternity houses, including Phi Gamma Delta and Theta Chi. The Giffords and other colored cooks assisted many colored students by employing them to work in exchange for their meals. In addition, they were supportive of the colored students in many ways, including lending them money when necessary.



Lincoln Hall 1940s (Photo Courtesy T. Ingram)

Lincoln Hall could house about 6 - 8 students at a time (which represented up to half the colored students on campus during the late 1930s) and became the center of colored life at Penn State. While the few colored female students could stay in the dorms during this period, the males were referred to either Lincoln Hall or to the homes of a few white families that rented to colored students. Born out of an unofficial segregated housing rule that ran until about 1946, Lincoln Hall is credited for nurturing, supporting, and encouraging an early generation of colored students in the isolated State College environment. State College recognized the building as a historical landmark in 2012. Some alumni of Lincoln Hall include:

- Barney Ewell – Penn State track star and Olympic gold medalist
- Wally Triplett – Penn State football star and future NFL player
- Roger K. Williams – Vice president for Academic Affairs at Morgan State University
- Ernest Lowe – Boston University physician
- Perry Smith – Electrical engineer
- James H. Robinson – Associate dean and director of Student Affairs at Jefferson Medical College
- Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity founders (Penn State Chapter) – At least 3 of the charter members of Alpha Phi Alpha lived at Lincoln Hall during the formation of the chapter.
- Kappa Alpha Psi fraternity founders (Penn State Chapter) – At least 3 of the charter members of Kappa Alpha Psi lived at Lincoln Hall during the formation of the chapter.

Sources: Perry Smith ('48), Wally Triplett ('49), Clayton Wilson III ('49) 1930 US Census.

1942 – May – Charles Townes from Petersburg, VA earns a PhD in physics from Penn State. He had also earned a master's degree in physics from the college in 1938.

May – Robert Beale from Philadelphia earns a PhD in chemistry from Penn State. He would serve as a teacher and administrator at eleven different colleges during his career including North Carolina A&T, the University of Maryland, and Virginia Union. Beale retired in 1986. In 1990, Beale returned to teaching in the Prince George's County School District (MD), upon hearing there was a shortage of Negro male teachers.

April 13 – Marian Anderson, famed contralto and world-renowned singer, performs on campus. Track star Barney Ewell serves as her bodyguard.

August 15 – Dave Alston, the first Negro star football player at Penn State, dies from complications following a tonsillectomy. The 20-year-old sophomore pre-medical student had been the star halfback on the undefeated Penn State freshman football squad (freshmen did not play varsity football at that time) and was expected to lead the varsity squad to a similar record during the 1942 season. Alston and his brother Harry — who also played on the 1941 freshman team — are reported to be the first Negro football players at Penn State.

1945 – Eugene J. Richardson Jr. (BS 1973) completed his training at the Tuskegee Army Airfield in Tuskegee, Alabama, the only place during World War II where a Negro could receive pilot training. Richardson would join the famed Tuskegee Airmen and would later head the speaker's bureau for the Philadelphia chapter of the group.

November 17 – Wallace “Wally” Triplett III becomes the first Negro starter for the Penn State varsity football team when he is promoted for a late-season contest against Michigan State. Triplett also holds the distinction of being the first Negro to play on the Penn State varsity football squad (1945), to earn a varsity letter at Penn State (1946), and the first Negro draftee to play in a National Football League (NFL) game (1949).

1946 – Roger Kenton Williams earns a PhD in psychology from Penn State. Williams, a native of Harrisburg and magna cum laude graduate in sociology from Claflin College (SC), went on to become vice president of Academic Affairs at Morgan State University. Williams was also an accomplished pianist.



November – After a vote by the players, Penn State officials cancel a scheduled football game at the University of Miami because that university would not allow Penn State to bring its two Negro players, Wally Triplett and Dennie Hoggard. That decision to cancel the game set a new precedent in college football of northern schools refusing to play without their Negro players when they traveled to the segregated south.

Wallace “Wally” Triplett III (BS H&HD 1949)

Wally Triplett established a football legacy as he became the first Negro to start and the first to earn a varsity letter on the Nittany Lion varsity football team in 1946. Triplett was born on April 18, 1926, in La Mott, Pa. A three-sport athlete at Cheltenham High School, it was on the football field where he earned a spot on Penn State's roster. While his freshman year was nothing to brag about, by stepping on the field against Michigan State (November 17, 1945) for that first snap, Triplett became the first Negro to ever start for the Nittany Lions. When Triplett arrived back on campus in 1946, he found that the team was scheduled to play against the University of Miami (FL), a segregated school. At that time, schools like Miami would not allow Negro athletes to play with white athletes. It was also common for schools to bow to discrimination and leave their Negro players at home. The team had two Negro players at the time, Triplett and Dennie Hoggard. A meeting was set up by the team to discuss and vote on this issue. In a players vote, Penn State decided to cancel the game and in doing so established a new precedent.



The 1947 Nittany Lions ended the season undefeated and were invited to play in the 1948 Cotton Bowl against Southern Methodist University. Triplett would be the first Negro player to play in the Cotton Bowl. Both teams entered the game undefeated and ended the game undefeated, as the two teams played to a 13-13 stalemate, with Triplett catching a six-yard pass in the third quarter to tie the game.

Triplett is often credited for inspiring Penn State's famed “We Are!” chant, which was later popularized by Penn State cheerleaders in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

Upon receiving his physical education degree at Penn State, Triplett was drafted in the 19th round of the 1949 National Football League draft by the Detroit Lions. Because the NFL only had ten teams at the time, he would be equal to a fifth-round draft pick today. While Negroes were not uncommon on NFL rosters, by stepping into a uniform and onto the field he became the first Negro player to formally be drafted by a team and play in the NFL.

Triplett played two seasons with the Lions, setting a team record for the longest run from scrimmage, a 90-yard touchdown scramble against the Green Bay Packers, and an NFL record with 294 return yards in a single game which stood for 44 years. Triplett left after the 1950 season for a year of military service in the Korean War. Upon his return, the Lions traded him to the Chicago Cardinals where he played for one season. Triplett, who later in life became a Penn State icon, died on November 8, 2018 at the age of 92.

Source: www.BigTen.cstv.com

1947 – April 10 – Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity is chartered at Penn State.



1947 -1948 Alpha Phi Alpha chapter (Photo from 1948 *LaVie*)

April 15 – Jackie Robinson becomes the first Negro major league baseball player of the modern era.

December – Penn State’s boxing team refuses on principle an invitation to participate in the “Tournament at the Sugar Bowl” in New Orleans because the tournament rules would not allow Negroes, despite the fact the team had no Negro boxers.

1948 – January 1 – Penn State plays in the first interracial football game in Texas when they participate in the 1948 Cotton Bowl. Because their two Negro players (Wally Triplett and Dennie Hoggard) would not be allowed in the same hotel as their white teammates, the entire team stayed at the nearby Dallas Air Naval Training Base.

March – Council on Racial Equality (CORE) is established on campus. Its influence continued into the early 1960s.

March – National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) chapter organized on campus. The group lasts only a few years at this time but would reform several times over the years.

August – At the age of 30, Henry Norwood "Barney" Ewell (BS H&HD 1947) wins a gold medal in the 400-meter relay and silver medals in the 100-meter dash and the 200-meter dash at the 1948 London Olympics. His three Olympic medals are still the most medals won by a Penn State alumnus. Lou Prato, a Penn State sports historian, contends that "Barney would have been as well-known an Olympian as Jesse Owens if two Olympics (1940 & 1944) had not been cancelled due to World War II when Barney

was in his prime.” Ewell, a Penn State legend in his time, also took home 4 NCAA Gold Medals. *Track & Field News* later voted him one of the top ten sprinters of all time.



October – Dennie W. Hoggard Jr. is selected to the Lion’s Paw honor society, becoming the prestigious group’s first Negro member. Founded in 1908, Lion’s Paw membership was reserved for senior men who had distinguished themselves in service to the college and extra-curriculum activities. Hoggard was a member of the football team and Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity.

(Photo from 1949 *LaVie*)

December 10 – 300 students rally and protest six State College barber shops that refused to cut “Negro hair.” The protests were led by the local NAACP and CORE. While Negroes made up some of the leadership, the majority of the protesters were white students. After further protests, CORE raised enough money to lease space in a downtown building and bring in a barber from outside the area who agreed to cut “Negro hair.” That shop opened in September 1949.

1949 – September – **60** Negro students are estimated to be enrolled at Penn State College, about half of which are pictured in the Fall 1949 photograph below. The photo was taken at a reception hosted by Agnes and Emanuel Gifford who were fraternity house cooks who ran the boarding home earlier dubbed “Lincoln Hall.”



1949 (Photo Courtesy T. Ingram)

First Row (Sitting on floor - left to right) - Irene Jeffress (Overton) '52, Edmundo Ojeda '53, Marcella Ellis (Upton) '50, Gwen Allen (Peyton) '52, *Nadine Howard (Williams) '51, Mrs. Agnes Gifford, Mr. Emanuel Gifford, John Bundy '52, Gwen Kelly (Richardson) '52, UNKNOWN

Second Row – Natalie??, Don Watson '50, Betty McGee '51, UNKNOWN, Bettye Phillips (McNichols) '52, Roslyn ??, Yvonne Carter (Williams) '53, Chandois Johnson '52, Earle Mundell '52, UNKNOWN, Carolyn Morris (Vance) '53

Third Row – Bob Pittillo '52, Hope Winborne '50, Anna Wiggins'51, Clayton Wilson III '49 ('59), UNKNOWN, John Harris '50, Walter Tresville '53, Lazarus Lemon '52 ('57)

Fourth Row – Arthur Bagley '51, UNKNOWN, UNKNOWN, Mary Jane Winston (Roy) '52, Jane Randall (Tresville) '53

1950 - 1959

1950 – March 3 – W.E.B DuBois speaks to a capacity crowd at the Sparks Building as part of Negro History Week. “Modern democracy cannot succeed unless all races and creeds can integrate themselves and live together on an equal basis,” proclaimed DuBois. During that appearance DuBois was reported to be the first Negro to stay at the Nittany Lion Inn, though he was not allowed to eat in any of the dining rooms.

May – Mildred N. Jordan from Norfolk, VA, became the first Negro woman to receive her PhD from Penn State when she earned her doctorate in Textile Chemistry. She received her master’s degree from Penn State in the same major two years earlier and received her undergraduate degree in home economics from the Hampton Institute. A member of Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority, Jordan died July 3, 2012 at the age of 102.



1951 – Parmi Nous honor society taps its first Negro member, Hardy Williams. Williams, a Liberal Arts major from Philadelphia, co-captained the basketball team and was the first Negro to earn a varsity letter in the sport (1949) at Penn State. A member of Omega Psi Phi fraternity and president of the Pi Lambda Sigma pre-law honor society, Williams would later serve on the Penn State Board of Trustees (1972-1975) and serve thirty years in the Pennsylvania State House and Senate (1968-1998). Formed in 1907, Parmi Nous is the oldest hat society at Penn State. (Photo from 1952 *LaVie*)

1952 – April – Yvonne Carter, the organizations first Negro member, is elected as president of the Mortar Board honor society. Mortar Board was established on campus in 1935 and offered senior women membership based on service, leadership, and scholarship. Carter would also serve as Chair of the Women’s Student Government Association (WSGA) House of Representatives, president of Delta Alpha Delta Debate honor society, secretary of the Hat Society Council, a member of the Liberal Arts student council, and feature editor of *LaVie* yearbook. Carter was also a founding member of the Penn State chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority in 1953.

(Photo from 1953 *LaVie*)



May 17 – Kappa Alpha Psi fraternity chartered at Penn State.



1952 Kappa Alpha Psi chapter (Photo from 1952 *LaVie*)

1953 – March 14 – Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority chartered at Penn State as the first Negro sorority on campus. Ethel Brown served as the charter president of the group.



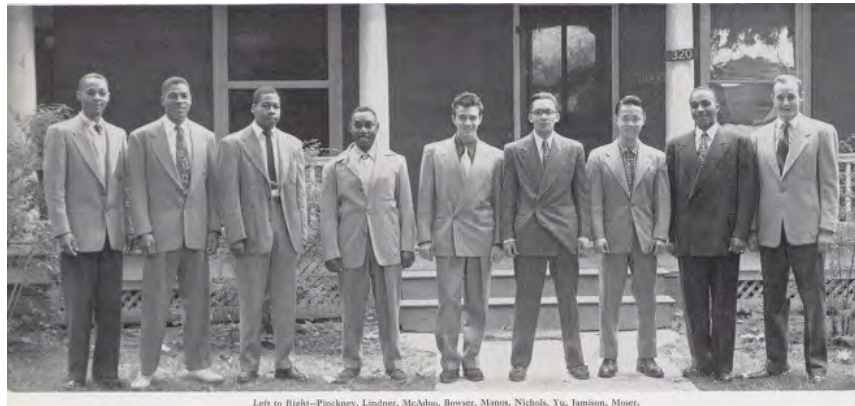
1953 – 1954 Alpha Kappa Alpha chapter (Photo from 1954 *LaVie*)

April – Betty Love, a freshman physical education major, a featured dancer, and an Olympic quality gymnast, decides to try out for the Penn State cheerleading squad. Love, from Pittsburgh, wanted to be a cheerleader to demonstrate her strong school spirit, and to utilize her dance and gymnastics abilities. Unfortunately, when she attempted to sign up for try-outs, she was told by officials that “colored students were not allowed on the squad.” While deeply disappointed, she indicated that she simply “brushed it off” and focused on getting her education and honing her dance



skills. In 2006, the then Betty Love Gibbs was awarded the “Keeper of the Flame” Award by the Legacy Arts Project in recognition of her becoming a “celebrated dancer, educator and choreographer.” On February 28, 2010, the then 75-year-old Gibbs was named an “Honorary Penn State Cheerleader” by the Penn State Athletic Department. On January 8, 2013, she died at 78 years old. (Photo by Edward Leos 1954)

September 23 – Omega Psi Phi fraternity is recognized as achieving the highest-grade point average of any fraternity or sorority at Penn State during the 1952-53 school year. The fraternity had placed near the top of the list several times during the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s.



1952 – 1953 Omega Psi Phi Chapter (Photo from 1953 *LaVie*)

November 14 – The Pennsylvania State College officially changes its name to The Pennsylvania State University.

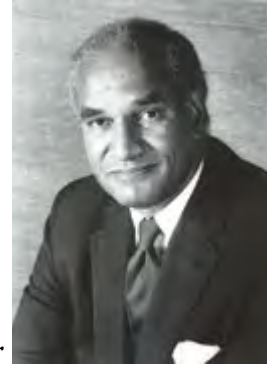
1954 – February – Commissioned through the Navy ROTC Program at Penn State, Ensign Louis A. Ivey (BA Lib 1953) reports as the first Negro officer aboard the USS New Jersey battleship. After his first night aboard, his white roommate requested Ivey be reassigned to another room due to his race. Upon completing his tour of duty in 1958, Ivey went on to become a well-respected surgeon in the Washington, DC area, and a member of President Jimmy Carter’s traveling medical team. While at Penn State, Ivey was a founding member of the Penn State chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi fraternity in 1952.



April – H. Jesse Arnelle, star basketball and football player, is elected All-University student body president by a landslide margin. He was reported to be the first Negro elected to head the student government of a major white university in the nation. Arnelle had previously served as junior class vice-president.

H. Jesse Arnelle (BA Lib 1955, JD 1962)

Jesse Arnelle is not only one of Penn State's all-time greatest athletes, he is also one of its most distinguished graduates. A highly regarded retired senior partner with Arnelle and Hastie, a San Francisco based law firm, Arnelle has served on many corporate boards, including Wells Fargo and Company, Eastman Chemical Company, Gannett Company and Met Life Series Fund.



As a football standout from 1951-1955, he earned All-East honors, and All-American honorable mentions. On the basketball court, the 6-foot-5 center ended his career as the Lions' all-time leading scorer with 2,138 points (a record that stood for 55 years) and remains Penn State's only basketball All-American for nearly 70 years. Arnelle led the team to the NCAA Final Four in 1954 -- the Lions' only Final Four appearance. He became the first Penn State player to play in the NBA, with Fort Wayne. He also played for the world-renowned Harlem Globetrotters.

Arnelle's achievements outside of the athletic arena are equally as impressive, if not more so, and include many firsts at Penn State. He was elected the first Black All-University student body president in 1954. A 1955 graduate of Penn State in political science, and Lion's Paw member, he received his LL.B. from the Dickinson School of Law in 1962, following service as an Air Force officer.

In May 1968 he was awarded the first Alumni Association Award, but publicly turned it down as a protest to Penn State's lack of progress regarding the recruitment of Negro



students and faculty (see Appendix). In June 1969, he was the first Black person elected to Penn State's Board of Trustees and was a strong proponent of minority recruitment and of the University divesting from companies with interests in South Africa. In 1996 he was elected the first Black chair of the Board of Trustees. Arnelle celebrated his 45th and last year on the Penn State Board of Trustees in 2014. Arnelle died on October 21, 2020.

Source: Daily Collegian February 23, 1994, Photos: Penn State Archive



September – Ethel Brown, founding president of Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority, is selected for membership in the Mortar Board honor society. Brown would serve as treasurer of Mortar Board as well as in the House of Representative of the Women's Student Government Association (WSGA). (Photo from 1955 *LaVie*)

1955 – Entre Nous was founded by a group of students who felt a need for an organization to represent Negro students on campus. The primary aim of the interracial (but mostly Negro) club was to “promote and develop social, academic and cultural interest of the students, and to promote interracial understanding.” Entre Nous, which loosely translates to “among us,” sponsored mixers, parties, concerts, speakers, and Negro History Week events until 1963. Presidents of the organization included Robert S. Hoover (the first Negro varsity baseball player at Penn State), Floyd Greer, and Donald Collier.

December 5 – Montgomery (AL) Bus Boycott begins when Rosa Parks is arrested for refusing to give up her bus seat to a white patron.

1956 – Mary E. Godfrey was hired the first full-time Negro faculty member at Penn State. Godfrey had received a bachelor of fine arts degree from the Pratt Institute and a master's degree from Columbia University. She served at Penn State for 23 years, teaching courses in elementary and secondary art education, supervision, the history of art education, and introduction to crafts. Godfrey retired July 1, 1979 and died April 30, 2007. (Photo from Penn State Archives)



May – Richard W. Mahoney (BS Bus 1956) becomes the first known Negro graduate from the Penn State College of Business Administration (now The Smeal College of Business Administration) earning a degree in business administration. The College of Business Administration was established at Penn State in 1953. Mahoney was from Philadelphia and served as president of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity.

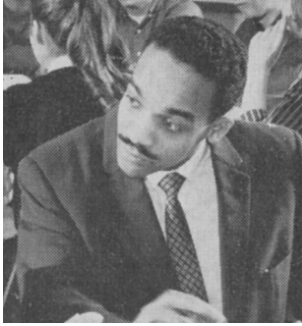
September 8 – Rev. Preston N. Williams, assistant professor of religion at Lincoln University, is named assistant to the chaplain at Penn State. An ordained minister in the



Presbyterian Church, Rev. Williams was the second Negro professional staff members at the university. He was eventually named assistant chaplain and would serve as acting university chaplain from late 1959 until early 1960. A member of Kappa Alpha Psi fraternity, Rev. Williams was an active speaker at various university events and forums and chaired the committee on Interreligious affairs. Rev. Williams was also very outspoken against discriminatory practices on and off campus. Rev. Williams

left the university in 1962 when he accepted an appointment as professor at the Boston University School of Theology. In 1971 he became a Houghton Professor at Harvard Divinity School. In 1974-75, he served as acting dean of the Divinity School and then, in 1975-77, was acting and founding director of the W.E.B. DuBois Institute for African American Research. After his June 2002 retirement, Harvard recognized Williams with the establishment of the Preston N. Williams Black Alumni Award. In 2021, Harvard

further honored Williams by renaming its remodeled Divinity School Chapel (Andover Chapel), the Preston N. Williams Chapel.



1957 – September – Robert H. Davage joins the Penn State faculty in September of 1957 as an associate professor of psychology. He led the “Pyramid Program” which was started that same year. The pyramids were composed of freshmen, sophomores, a junior and a senior as a study group. The goal was for students to develop the attitudes, knowledge, and skills to enable them to pursue their academic work with greater motivation, resourcefulness and independence. In the fall of 1959, Davage left the university to teach at Hunter College (NY). (Photo from Penn State Archives)

1958 – 126 Negro students are estimated to be enrolled at Penn State.

March – Robert H. Davage, associate professor of psychology, conducts a survey of Negro students to determine the level and impact of racial discrimination in the State College community. The “Davage Report,” which was issued in the fall of 1958, was sponsored by the Centre County Layman’s League. The report outlined some major problems, especially in the areas of off-campus housing and personal services. (See Appendix).

May – Harriett J. Harper (BS Bus 1958) becomes the first known Negro woman graduate from the Penn State College of Business Administration (now The Smeal College of Business Administration) earning a degree in business administration. The College of Business Administration was established at Penn State in 1953. Harper was from Washington, DC and served as president of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority.

August – Robert A. Daniel (PhD A&A 1958) becomes the first full-time Negro faculty member at Bridgewater State University. He would spend the next 30 years teaching and mentoring aspiring art teachers of all races at the university.

1959 – December 19 – Charles Janerette Jr., a member of Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity, becomes the first Negro to play against the all-white Alabama squad when the Penn State football team met the Crimson Tide in the inaugural Liberty Bowl, held in Philadelphia. The Nittany Lions won the game 7-0. (Photo from 1960 *LaVie*)



1960 - 1969

1960 – March 26 – The “Barbershop Poster-Walks” begin outside of Bunn’s Barber Shop (110 South Allen Street, State College, PA) after owner Kenneth Bunn refused to cut the hair of a Negro student. The multiracial coordinating group, Direct Action for Racial Equality (DARE), maintained the picketing for over a month. While the barber did not relent, the protesters expanded their focus to include a dean of men’s list of “approved” off campus housing which showed discriminatory racial and nationality preferences of the landlords. (Photo courtesy of Penn State Archives)



May 21 – Delta Sigma Theta sorority is chartered at Penn State.



1960-1961 Delta Sigma Theta chapter (Photo from 1961 *LaVie*)

1961 – Charles T. Davis joined the faculty in 1961 as an associate professor of English after teaching at Princeton and New York University. He had also held visiting professorships at Yale University, Bryn Mawr College, and Rutgers University.

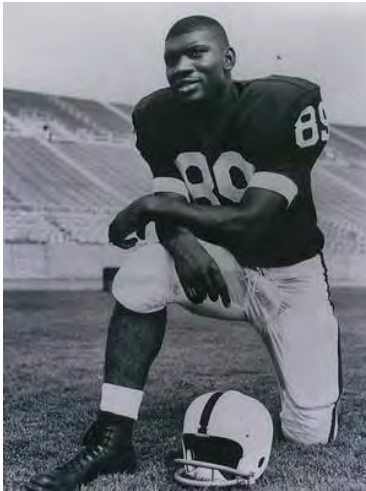
March 9 – DARE launches a campaign to require all fraternities and sororities to eliminate any constitutional clauses that forbid membership due to race or religion. The campaign received little support from the major student organizations.

December 28 – Eugene “Gene” Harris, basketball team captain, scores a Penn State record 46 points against Holy Cross during the Quaker City Tournament in Philadelphia. Harris, a senior from Pittsburgh, eclipsed the previous record of 44 points scored by Jesse Arnelle in a 1955 contest against Bucknell.

((Photo from 1962 *LaVie*)



1962 – January 9 – The University Senate rules that all social organizations on campus, including fraternities and sororities, must eliminate any constitutional clauses that forbid membership due to race, religion, or creed.



November – Richard “David” Robinson, star offensive and defensive end for the varsity football team, is named NEA first team All-American. Robinson, a civil engineering student, was the first Negro Penn State football player to receive that honor. Robinson would later be drafted in the first round by the Green Bay Packers, and help them win 3 NFL championships, and 2 Super Bowl titles as a linebacker. Robinson was inducted into the College Football Hall of Fame in 1997 and the Pro Football Hall of Fame in 2013, becoming one of only two Penn Staters to reach both halls of fame.

1963 – Henry Tomes becomes the first Negro to receive a Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology at Penn State University.

July 1 – Charles T. Davis, associate professor of English, is promoted to a full tenured professor of English. He was the first Negro faculty member to become tenured at Penn State.

1964 – 250 Negro students are estimated to be enrolled at Penn State.

NAACP is re-established on campus primarily through the efforts of the Omega Psi Phi fraternity.

Student Union for Racial Equality (SURE) is organized at Penn State. Its purpose was to promote equal rights and fair treatment for all races at Penn State and in the State College area. SURE had a multiracial membership.

Charles T. Davis, Professor of English (1961 - 1970)



Charles Twitchell Davis was born on April 29, 1918, in Hampton, Virginia, into a middle-class family. He attended Dartmouth College where he was awarded a bachelor's degree in 1939. He went on to the University of Chicago, graduating with a master's degree in 1942, and became an instructor in American civilizations at New York University (NYU) in 1948. While working at NYU, Davis earned his doctorate in 1951 before moving to Princeton as an assistant professor in 1955.

Davis joined the Penn State faculty in 1961 as an associate professor of English. He also held visiting professorships at Yale University, Bryn Mawr College, and Rutgers University. On July 1, 1963, Davis was promoted to a full tenured

professor of English, becoming the first Black faculty member to become tenured at Penn State. During the 1966-67 academic year, Davis took leave to lecture on the "American Romantics" at the University of Turin (Italy) under the Fulbright-Hays Act Grant.

In September 1968, Davis developed and taught the new "Afro-American Literature in the 20th Century" course. He would become the first Black faculty member elected to membership in the State College Literary Club on November 4, 1968. The Literary Club is the oldest faculty organization on campus, was founded in 1896, and is dedicated to the promotion of the liberal arts as well as good fellowship. In July of 1969 Davis was elected chair of the university's Senate Committee on Undergraduate Student Affairs (SCUSA).

Davis would leave the university in September 1970 to head the Afro-American Studies Program at the University of Iowa. Davis would later become the director of the Afro-American Studies Program at Yale University, where he gained a national reputation as an influential literary critic, author, and scholar. Prior to his March 26, 1981 death, Davis mentored and influenced young future high profile scholars such as Henry Louis Gates.

Source: Daily Collegian Archives, Photo from Penn State Archives



February 26 – Julie Cromitie, a secondary education major from Philadelphia, is installed as the new president of the Association of Women Students (AWS). AWS was the coordinating body for cultural, social and educational activities for the women of Penn State. Cromitie, a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority, becomes the first Negro elected to this leadership position. Cromitie also served as treasurer of the Mortar Board honor society. (Photo from 1965 *LaVie*)

April 15 – Julie Cromitie becomes the first Negro selected as a Miss Penn State finalist. Judged on the basis of their activities, appearance, grades, personality, and poise, the five women were chosen from among thirty-eight entries.

April 17 – Bruce Trotman from Philadelphia is elected senior class president with more than twice the votes of his nearest challenger. He had been elected junior class president the previous year. Trotman was also a member of Lions Paw, Skull and Bones, and Omicron Delta Kappa honor societies, as well as Acacia fraternity. (Photo from 1965 *LaVie*)



1965 – January 21 – Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. speaks to an estimated crowd of between 8,000 and 9,000 people who had packed the newly expanded Recreation Hall. 6 weeks after receiving the Nobel Peace Prize, and just a few days after being punched and kicked at a hotel in Selma, Alabama, King told the crowd that “segregation is on its death bed today,” and the only question was “how costly the segregationist will make the funeral.” A full text of the speech can be found at www.blackhistory.psu.edu.



Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. speaking at Recreation Hall on January 21, 1965

February 21 – Malcom X is assassinated in Manhattan.

June – Julie Cromitie is named the recipient of the 1965 Ralph Dorn Hetzel Memorial Award, the most prestigious student award given by the university. Cromitie was the first Negro student to receive the honor. Established in 1949 and named for Penn State's tenth president, the Hetzel Award recognizes a combination of high scholastic attainment together with good citizenship and participation and leadership in student activities. Cromitie served as president of the Association of Women Students (AWS), treasurer of the Mortar Board honor society, and a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority.

1966 – November 5 – *The Supremes* perform two sold-out concerts at Recreation Hall for over 15,000 fans. The chart-topping Motown group was originally scheduled for one show, but it sold out so quickly that a second show had to be added. Because group member Florence Ballard had expressed an interest in bowling, the university made the Recreation Hall lanes available to her prior to the concerts.

1967 – January 16 – SURE sponsors a four-day “Black Power” Conference on campus. The purpose of the conference was not only to educate Blacks on Black Power, but to also educate whites on their role in the Black Power movement. On the first night of the conference, the one “Blacks Only” meeting was the cause of small demonstrations, public arguments and editorial scorn. SURE President John Warner defended the meeting by saying that “Black Power is not a white thing.”

September 23 – Emmett Smith Jr. suits up as the first known Black member of the Penn State Marching Blue Band. Smith, from Pittsburgh, was selected as a tuba player and would perform with the band for two years. Andrew Jackson would follow in 1970 on the bass drum and silks. Both were members of Omega Psi Phi fraternity. (Photo from *LaVie*)



October – The Frederick E. Douglass Association (Douglass Association) is established to petition for the creation of an Afro-American history course at Penn State. The Douglass Association would later press for increased Black enrollment and awareness. Frederick B. Phillips (left), a member of Kappa Alpha Psi fraternity, was the group's founder and served as its first President. (Photo from *LaVie*)

Frederick E. Douglass Association (1967 - 1969)



Founded in October 1967, the Frederick E. Douglass Association was the first organization to petition for the creation of an Afro- American History course at Penn State. The group would later press for increased Black enrollment and awareness. Frederick B. Phillips, a member of Kappa Alpha Psi fraternity, served as the group's first president. A course called "The Negro and the American Experience" was established in

the spring of 1968 as a direct result of the Douglass Association petition. On May 13, 1968 (about 5 weeks after Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated), 100 members of the Douglass Association, led by newly elected President Wilbert Manley and Vice-President Vincent Benson, confronted University Vice President for Student Affairs Charles L. Lewis at his Old Main office with a list of 12 demands for changes in the University's policies regarding Black students. The meeting lasted almost 3 hours, and it was reported that Lewis was "visibly shaken" when he left.

The demands focused on the need for more Black undergraduate and graduate students, Black faculty and athletic coaches, and the creation of an African cultural study program. The Douglass Association held several more demonstrations to continue to press for status on their demands.

On January 13, 1969 five representatives from the Douglass Association gave University President Walker a list of thirteen demands aimed at making a stronger black presence felt on the campus. On the list were demands that a thousand Blacks be admitted within a year, a special recruiter for Black students be appointed, courses in Black history and culture be added to the curriculum, and more black faculty members be hired. The Douglass Association also wanted a special collection in Black literature to be established in the library and a new building to be named after Martin Luther King Jr.

In February 1969 the Douglass Association, now led by William "Rick" Collins, lobbied the then Pennsylvania State House Majority Leader K. Leroy Irvis for support. As a result, Irvis convinced University President Eric Walker to include an extra \$1 million in his budget strictly for the purpose of Black recruiting.

In April of 1969 the Douglass Association transitioned into the Black Student Union, but the mission remained basically the same. Two years later, the then inactive Black Student Union was replaced by the Black Caucus.

Sources: Dr. Frederick B. Phillips, Rod Woodson, Daily Collegian Archives

November 21 – The Douglass Association presents a petition to the College of Liberal Arts requesting the creation of an Afro-American history course (See Appendix). Included among the 130 signatures on the petition were Charlie Pittman (All-American football player) and Ted Thompson (future USG president). A course called “The Negro and the American Experience” was established in the spring of 1968 as a forerunner of the Black Studies Program. Daniel Walden, a white associate professor of American Studies, would teach the course.

1968 – January 9 – The Douglass Association elects new officers. The officers were: President John F. Warner, Vice-President Wilbert Manley, Planning Chairman Raymond Edgerton, and Secretary-Treasurer Meryl Nimmons.

April 4 – Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. is assassinated in Memphis, Tennessee.

April 5 – The Douglass Association, along with a racially mixed group of students, forcefully lowers the United States and Pennsylvania flags in front of Old Main building to honor Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., who had been assassinated the previous day. The students used a crowbar to break the lock mechanism. As the flags were being lowered, an argument and skirmish developed between the students, bystanders and campus police, until the administration announced that President Johnson proclaimed that all flags should be flown at half-mast that day.



May – **310** Black students are estimated to be enrolled at Penn State, along with **3** Black faculty members.

May 13 – **100** Black students from the Douglass Association, led by newly-elected President Wilbert Manley, confront Vice-President for Student Affairs Charles L. Lewis at his Old Main office with a list of 12 demands (See Appendix) for changes in the University’s policies regarding Black students. The meeting lasted almost three hours. The demands focused on the need for more Black undergraduate and graduate students, Black faculty and athletic coaches, and the creation of an African cultural study program. A tentative agreement was reached on May 16th with the administration agreeing to step up recruitment efforts among other remedies.

May 18 – H. Jesse Arnelle (BA Lib 1955, JD 1962), the former Nittany Lion Basketball All-American and football star, was the guest of honor at the Penn State Football Awards Banquet. Arnelle would stun many in the crowd by denouncing the

University's record in failing to recruit more Black students, faculty, and staff instead of talking about sports. He further shocked many by turning down the Penn State Alumni Association's first annual alumni award in protest (See Appendix).

May 29 – Ten Black high school seniors from Harrisburg are accepted for admission into Penn State, even though they did not meet the typical academic requirements. The “Harrisburg Ten” were all a part of Youth for Advancement of Black Students (YABS) which was led by David Patterson. The rationale used by Patterson for why the University should admit the students was that individual determination must be factored as a predictor of college success for poor Black students. In August 1969 the University would establish the Educational Opportunity Program.



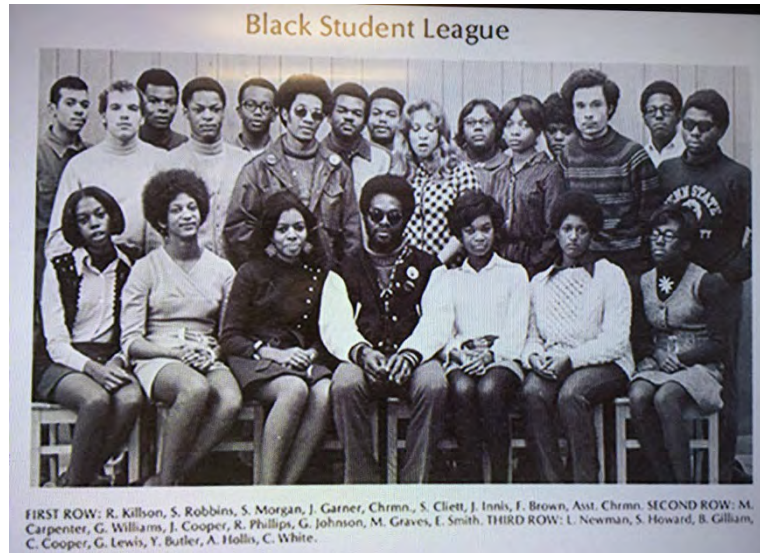
June 5 – Roosevelt “Rosey” Grier (BS H&HD 1956), former Penn State football player, helps disarm and detain the assassin immediately after the shooting of Democratic presidential candidate Senator Robert F. Kennedy in Los Angeles. Grier was at the Ambassador Hotel guarding Kennedy's wife Ethel the night Sirhan Sirhan assassinated the senator. It was reported that Grier “wrenched the smoking gun out of Sirhan's hand” following the shooting. The multi-talented Grier would have an All-Pro football career, star in several movies, record a top selling record, host a TV variety show, author several books, and act as a spiritual advisor to O.J. Simpson during his murder trial. (Photo from Tumblr.com)

July – Warren Coleman is named assistant track coach at the university, becoming the first Black to coach any athletic team at Penn State. Coleman, a very successful high school track coach and athletic director from Virginia, would become just as well-known at the university for his long running Sunday morning radio persona, *The Good Witchdoctor*, on WQWK 97 FM



September – “Afro-American Literature in the 20th Century” course is added to the curriculum. The new course was developed and taught by Charles T. Davis, professor of English.

September – The Black Student League forms at Penn State Delaware County (now Brandywine) campus. Zawdie Abdul-Malik (né James Garner) was founding president.



October 4 – A petition requesting changes in the University’s admission policy was circulated among the faculty. The goal of the petition was to mainly increase Black student representation at Penn State.

October 11 – Barbara June Rose, a freshman from Beaver, PA, becomes the first Black female intercollegiate student athlete at Penn State when she is selected to the women’s gymnastics team. Her best event was the uneven parallel bars. She only competed on the team for one year due to a family illness and increased involvement in the Douglass Association / Black Student Union. Rose, an agricultural economics major, would graduate in 1972 but did not discover she was the first Black female intercollegiate athlete at Penn State until 40 years later in 2012.



November 4 – Charles T. Davis, professor of English, was the first Black elected a member of the State College Literary Club, an exclusive group (having only 117 members since its founding in 1896) dedicated to the liberal arts and the oldest campus faculty organization.

1969 – January – Afro-American Studies concentration is initiated as an interdepartmental program that relied on courses from various departments.

January 21 – Nearly 100 Black students deposit 132 red bricks and 1 black painted brick on the floor of President Eric Walker's outer office, building a three-foot-high triangular wall to symbolize the lack of communication from the administration. On the top black brick the students attached a note that said "Next time we won't build a wall." The demonstration only lasted a few minutes, but once the Black students left a group of 15 white students came in and attached a second note that stated "This wall is not only black — we're here too," in solidarity with the Black students.

February 3 – African Student Association is first chartered. The mission of the group is to foster a fraternal relationship along with a better understanding among fellow Africans. Another goal is to protect the African image in American society through social and cultural activities.

February 21 – About 20 students —mostly from the Douglass Association — lower the Old Main lawn U.S. and Pennsylvania flags to half-mast by breaking the lock with a crowbar to commemorate the 4th anniversary of the assassination of Malcolm X. The Douglass Association had asked permission from the administration to lower the flags, but the request was refused. A group of opposing white students would later raise the flags back up, only to have the Black students — supported by several sympathetic whites — lower them again. The two groups, with little physical contact, confronted each other for over 3 tense hours.

March 8 – Rev. Ralph D. Abernathy, leader of the Southern Christian Leadership Council, speaks at Schwab Auditorium.

April – Barbara Toomer, a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority, is featured as the first Black "LaVie Belle" in the 1969 *LaVie* Yearbook. LaVie Belles were selected by a committee of *LaVie* editors. Candidates were screened, interviewed and photographed. The candidates whose photos showed an inherent beauty and whose accomplishments showed the most dedication to the advancement interest of the University were selected.

(Photo from 1969 *LaVie*)



April – Douglass Association transitions into the Black Student Union. The broader intent of the Black Student Union is to address social as well as political issues for undergraduate Black students on campus.

April 3 – George R. Culmer, a planning consultant for the Model Cities Program in Philadelphia, is named admissions director of Special Projects. His primary duties

were to facilitate the recruitment of disadvantaged students, including Black students, to the university. In August Culmer would be named as interim director of the new Equal Opportunity Program (EOP).



April 21 – Theodore Q. “Ted” Thompson is elected USG president, becoming the 2nd Black student to serve as president of the Penn State Student Government. Thompson had served as USG vice president and was a member of the Douglass Association/Black Student Union. (Photo from 1970 *LaVie*)

May 12 – The first annual *Black Arts Festival* kicks off. Coordinated by the Black Student Union, the week-long event features appearances from James Brown, Rep. Adam Clayton Powell, Ruby Dee, and the Muddy Waters Blues Band. The purpose of



the festival was to educate whites about Black culture and to strengthen the pride and unity of campus Blacks. The festival would be an annual tradition for the next 23 years.

May 23 – Muhammad Ali speaks at Recreation Hall. He indicates that the only peaceful solution to the racial crisis in America is the total separation of the races.

June – H. Jesse Arnelle (BA Lib 1955, JD 1962) is elected by Penn State Alumni Association to become the first Black member of the Penn State Board of Trustees.

July – Charles T. Davis, professor of English, is elected chair of the University Senate Committee on Undergraduate Student Affairs (SCUSA). He would leave the University in September of 1970 to head the Afro-American Studies Programs at the University of Iowa, and later at Yale University.

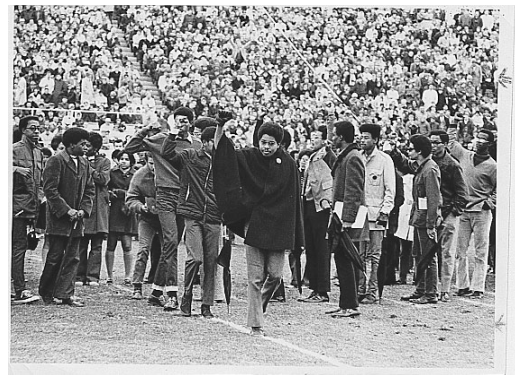
August – Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) is created to provide services such as financial aid, tutoring and counseling for students who may need extra assistance to succeed at Penn State. While perceived as a “Black program,” only a slight majority of the students in the EOP program have historically been Black. While sometimes troubled and controversial, the program has been directly or indirectly responsible for the admission and graduation of thousands of Black students who may not have otherwise been admitted to Penn State.

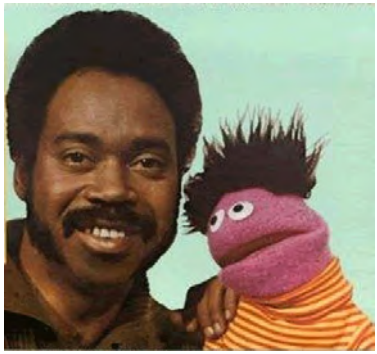
October – Lorraine Hutchings, a freshman from Huntingdon, PA, becomes the first Black female on the field hockey squad when she took the field as the starting center. Hutchings, a member of Delta Sigma Theta sorority, would also be the first Black to play for the Lady Lions basketball (1970) and lacrosse (1970) teams. While playing only one season of basketball, she would star in field hockey and lacrosse. (Photo by George Oliver)



October 10 – Almaria Eberhardt, a first-term freshman elementary education major, is elected Homecoming Queen. Eberhardt becomes the first Black student to wear the crown at Penn State. “I was shocked when I won, considering where I was and the competition, but I guess I was in the right place at the right time.” Eberhardt would later pledge Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority. (Photo from 1970 *LaVie*)

November 1 – The Black Student Union articulates their demands and grievances at halftime of a Penn State football game. “Since we cannot reach you at any other place, we find it necessary to come to a football game to ask you to think as members of an academic community. We wish to express an analysis of our situation, and we ask you to join us in these thoughts,” stated the group spokesperson. At the end of the 8-minute speech, the students marched off the field single-file with fists held high. (Photo from Penn State Archives)





November 10 – Matthew “Matt” Robinson Jr. (BA Lib 1958) debuts as Gordon on the first episode of *Sesame Street*. Appearing in that role for the first three seasons, Robinson was one of the original creators of the show. He wrote *The Gordon of Sesame Street Storybook*, recorded an album of children’s songs, and helped shape the show into an international success. He would also achieve acclaim writing and producing for *The Cosby Show* (1983 - 1990), the movies *Save the Children* (1973) and *Amazing Grace* (1974), and the play *The Confessions of Stepin Fetchit* (1993). The former president of the Penn State Omega Psi Phi fraternity chapter, Robinson and his wife Dolores would have two children, actress Holly Robinson Peete and Matthew Robinson III. A recipient of an NAACP Image Award, Robinson was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease in 1982 and passed away on August 5, 2002. (Photo courtesy muppet wikia.com)

1970 - 1979

1970 – January 22 – Black Panther Party representatives hold a “closed door” meeting on campus with the Black Student Union to speak about “Education and Revolution.” The following evening the representatives would discuss “Where Does Our Struggle Begin?” at an open meeting.



April 8 – Black Student League (BSL) of the Ogontz Campus blocks the entrance of Sutherland Hall, the main administration-classroom building, until campus officials agreed to meet and discuss their 11 demands. Due to the demonstration, the campus cancelled all classes for the day and had police with clubs monitoring the events. Led by BSL Chairman James Belcher, the group’s demands were similar to those made by the Douglass Association two years earlier.

(Photo courtesy of Robert Preston Class of 1975)

April 14 – In support of the Black Student League (BSL) of the Ogontz Campus, about 70 students from the Black Student Union seal off Shields Building for several hours. USG President, Ted Thompson, was among the demonstrators.

September 19 – Mike Cooper from Harrisburg becomes the first Black starting varsity quarterback on the Nittany Lions football team when he lined up behind the center to open the 1970 season with a 55 - 7 win against Navy. However, the Nittany Lions would lose three of the next four games and Cooper would be replaced in mid-season by future All-American, John Hufnagel.



September 21 – First “Black Student Orientation” kicks off. Sponsored by the Black Student Union, the week-long series of programs was designed to provide incoming Black freshmen and transfer students with the information and assistance they needed to prosper at Penn State.

October – The first Black Student Lounge is approved by the East Halls Council. The lounge was to be set up in Johnston Hall.

November 6 – *The Daily Collegian* printed information about a “closed” Black Student Union meeting from a reporter who had overheard it. The Black Student Union reacted to this typically unethical practice by burning 9,400 copies of the November 10th issue of the paper.

1,300 Black undergraduate students are estimated to be enrolled at Penn State.

1971 – Groove Phi Groove Fellowship is established at Penn State. The Nittany Lion chapter of the Black social organization operates under a fraternal structure but is not considered a Greek organization.

January – Benson L. Dutton (BS Eng 1933) receives the *Distinguished Alumni Award* from the Penn State Board of Trustees. Dutton, a retired director of construction for the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare and former dean of the School of Engineering at Tennessee State University, becomes the first Black alumnus selected for the award. The Distinguished Alumni Award is the highest honor that Penn State bestows upon an outstanding alumna or alumnus.

January – Black Staff Assistants (BSA) group is created by the Student Affairs Office to alleviate racial tension in the residence halls and to help disadvantaged black students on campus. The BSA staff were considered part-time university employees and each was given an apartment and an office in a residence halls area. The first BSA members were Barry Manns (director), Charles Cooper, Darryl Trent, Tom Brown, Lee Coffey, Michael Carpenter, and Eldridge Gibson.

January 14 – The second Black Student Lounge is approved by North Halls Association of Students. The lounge was later set up in Beam Hall.

January 23 – The opening of the East Halls Black Student Lounge is celebrated with a public open house. The lounge, which was originally set up in Johnston Hall, was moved in 1982 to Findlay Hall and renamed the “George T. Clark Memorial Lounge.”



1971-1972 Cheerleading Squad

April – Paula L. Jones (Philadelphia), Patricia R. Holloway (Pittsburgh), and Nelson Cox (Sharon Hill, PA) are selected as the first Black members of the Penn State cheerleading squad. They would be followed by Lorraine Bias (1974-76), Rita Frealing (1976-79), Tom Edwards (1976-79), Debra Johnson (1977-80), Carmen Redfern (1979-82), Greg McGee (1979-1980), and Caryn Holt (1983-1986) as the first ten Black Penn State cheerleaders. (Photo from Penn State Archives)

June – Black Caucus is formed to replace the now mostly inactive Black Student Union, as well as to represent a broader constituency (including Puerto Ricans, and Black graduate students). The Black Caucus emerged from the midst of dissent over the Equal Opportunity Program (EOP) during the summer of 1971. The group helped to gain support in the EOP controversy from Black state legislators. The Black Caucus actually

adopted its name in tribute to the Pennsylvania Black Legislative Caucus, who championed their causes with the Penn State administration.

Black Caucus (1971 – Present)



The Black Caucus serves as the umbrella organization for Black undergraduate students at Penn State. Its mission is to promote the positive and successful growth and development of its constituency. The Black Caucus aids in the political, social, and cultural development of Black students while acting as the representative voice of Black students to the University and other student organizations.

The Black Caucus was founded in 1971 to replace the then mostly inactive Black Student Union, as well as to represent a broader constituency (including Puerto Ricans, and Black graduate students at the time).

The organization emerged from the midst of dissent over the Equal Opportunity Program (EOP) during the summer of 1971. The group helped to gain support in the EOP controversy from Black state legislators. A group of “concerned Black students” (later to form the nucleus of the Black Caucus) presented the Black Legislative Caucus with a list of 42 grievances about the program. The list included the lack of black advisors, counselors, tutors, research personnel, and administrators. The lack of supportive services for EOP students, including financial aid packages based on need, was also cited. As a result of student efforts, an internal investigation, and legislative pressure, EOP was restructured, and the director was terminated.

The organization was not officially chartered by the university until February 24, 1972, shortly after “merging” with the remaining leadership of the Black Student Union. In essence, the Black Caucus took over for the Black Student Union as the representative group for Black students at Penn State. James Lomax, a Vietnam veteran, would become the first Chairman of the Black Caucus.

While best known for its political activism, including calling for the university to divest from South African related corporations and increasing minority recruitment, the organization has continuously provided a variety of social, educational, and cultural programming.

The Black Caucus adopted its name in tribute to the Pennsylvania Black Legislative Caucus who early on championed their causes with the Penn State administration.

Sources: Black Caucus website, Daily Collegian Archives.

August 18 – University administrators, including Acting President Paul Althouse, meet with members of the Pennsylvania Black Legislative Caucus to discuss student concerns with the Equal Opportunity Program (EOP). A group of “concerned Black students” had presented the Black Legislative Caucus with a list of 42 grievances about the program. The list included the lack of Black advisors, counselors, tutors, research personnel, and administrators. The lack of supportive services for EOP students, including financial aid packages based on need, was also cited. As a result of student efforts, an internal investigation, and legislative pressure, EOP was restructured, and the director was terminated.

October 12 – Black Student Union officially agrees to merge into the Black Caucus, making the latter the primary representative group for all Black students at Penn State. James Lomax, a Vietnam War veteran, would become the first chairman of the Black Caucus.



October 23 – The student operated Black Cultural Center (BCC) offers an inaugural programming event when it shows the movie “*A Search for the Past*” at the Walnut Building. The objective of the Black Cultural Center was to “provide a place for Black students to socially relate to when they come to the University.” Warren Coleman served as the unofficial coordinator, until his official appointment as acting director on January 24, 1972. James Carter was named director of the BCC later that year but resigned on March 2, 1973.

(Photo of Warren Coleman from Penn State Archives)

1972 – The Paul Robeson Cultural Center (PRCC) is established at the Walnut Building. The Paul Robeson Cultural Center replaced the student-operated Black Cultural Center. The purpose of the PRCC was to function as a forum for the cultural enrichment, educational development, and social advancement of all students while promoting the appreciation of diverse cultures. Elmore Browne served as director of the PRCC from September 10, 1973 until retiring in 1982. Lawrence W. Young followed Browne for a 22-year term until his retirement in 2004. Dr. Toby S. Jenkins replaced Young that September and held the position until 2009. Carlos Wiley would follow Jenkins in 2010 for 12 years, until his 2022 resignation. Evan Williams took the helm in 2023.



January – The United Soul Ensemble forms. The Black gospel singers were singing informally in various lounges on campus until Rev. Charles Coleman, program director of Religious Affairs, advertised the formation of a Black gospel choir.

January 7 – Hardy Williams (BA Lib 1952), a Pennsylvania state representative and former Penn State basketball player, is appointed to the Penn State Board of Trustees by Pennsylvania Governor Milton Shapp. Williams, the second Black on the Board of Trustees, would serve until 1975. In 1982 he was elected to the state senate.

Thelma “Mom” T. Price (1964 - 1986)



Price joined the Penn State staff in 1964 as assistant dean of students at the New Kensington campus. She was named acting director of the Equal Opportunity Program (EOP) at University Park in 1971 and assistant vice-president of Student Affairs in February 1972. Ms. Price acted as a key liaison between the students, the University administration, and state legislators on many issues during the often-turbulent early 1970s, and beyond. Born in Detroit, she received her BA in Social Studies from Bennett College, and her M.Ed. in history

from the University of Pittsburgh.

Price served the University on several critical task teams but is most known for her advocacy of minority student concerns. Nicknamed “Mom” by many students and alumni, Price would often find book money, food, housing, and clothes for needy students, as well as locating untapped resources for student programming such as the Black Arts Festival. She frequently used her business connections to help students obtain internships and full-time employment, and she actively mentored many past and current staff and faculty members.

In 1977 Price was elected president of the local NAACP and served in that role for several terms. After her 1986 retirement from Penn State, she became an active community advocate for children and the poor through her work with Diversity and Respect committees of the State College Area High School, Stand for Children, Housing Transitions Inc. and the opening of Mom’s Kitchen which provided free hot meals.

Appropriately, the Thelma “Mom” Price Scholarship was established for Penn State students who are committed to academics but have high unmet financial need.

“Mom” Price died on January 8, 2014 in State College. She was 89 years old.

Source: Daily Collegian Archives Photo: Penn State Archives

February 24 – The Black Caucus is officially chartered as a student organization by the USG Supreme Court.

February 24 – Thelma T. Price is named assistant vice-president for Student Affairs. Some of her responsibilities would include the Black Cultural Center and the Equal Opportunity Program (EOP).

May 2 – The Undergraduate Student Government (USG) announces the creation of the Department of Minority Affairs to “cover the homophiles of Penn State, and Black/White relations.”

June – The Summer Intensive Program is introduced as part of the Equal Opportunity Program. Funded by the initial Act 101 grant, the Summer Intensive Program was intended to better prepare and transition EOP students for the challenges of college academics and life. Act 101 grants are used to assist institutions in providing curricular innovation, cultural enrichment, counseling, and tutoring services to low-income students. A portion of the EOP incoming students would be invited to campus during the summer prior to enrolling for tutoring sessions and preparatory classes.

July 15 – Three Charlotte (NC) civil rights activists, including Dr. James Earl Grant (PhD Chem 1968), are convicted of setting fire to a barn in 1968 that killed fifteen horses at the Lazy B. Stables near Charlotte. Grant, T. J. Reddy, and Charles Parker were sentenced to 25, 20, and 10 years, respectively. The controversial case dragged on for several years and the three men all denied involvement during the trial that drew international attention. Amnesty International condemned the trial and harsh sentences as a demonstration of U.S. repression. The case became known as "The Charlotte 3." Two years after the trial, two witnesses revealed that the federal government had paid them \$4,000 each as a "relocation fee" following their testimony against the accused. After numerous appeals and hearings, the sentences of the Charlotte 3 were adjusted in 1979 and shortly afterwards they were all placed on work-release or were paroled.



August – African Studies Option is first offered at the University.

December 23 – Franco Harris (BS H&HD 1972) of the Pittsburgh Steelers catches the “Immaculate Reception” during an NFL playoff game against the Oakland Raiders. NFL Films and others have selected the play as one of the greatest in NFL history.

1973 – February – Black Scholars Program is launched to attract and retain academically-talented Black students. Joeyl Jones is appointed the first recruiter for the program.

February – A controversy continued between East Halls Black residents and other student organizations over the use of the Black Study Lounge in East Hall. The lounge, which was given exclusively to Black Students for their use in 1970 was being used by various undergraduate student organizations for workshops and training programs. Ultimately the Black students were able to maintain exclusivity of the Black Study Lounge.

1974 – March 27 – “*BLK Life*” magazine first published by the Black Desk, an organization established and funded by the USG Department of Minority Affairs. The 32-page monthly publication featured articles about the religious, social, cultural, academic, and political affairs of Blacks at Penn State. It also included an editorial that called for the University to establish a position of Vice-President of Minority Affairs. Alfred D. Harrell and William McMillan served as the first co-editors of the magazine.



March 27 – It is announced that in the fall a new Developmental Year (DY) Program would replace the Summer Intensive Program (which was started in 1972). Similar to the Summer Intensive Program, the DY Program was intended to better prepare and transition Equal Opportunity Program (EOP) students for the challenges of college academics and life. The new program, which was also funded by the Act 101 grant, extended the tutoring and preparatory classes from just 3 months to up to a year. Lancelot Braithwaite would be named the original coordinator of DY.

May 6 – “Black Unity Day” is sponsored by the Black Caucus to promote unity within the Black community, and to project a new image for the Black Caucus. “The University will not give us a damn thing unless we get together collectively and go to them with our demands and requests,” stated Black Caucus President, Leonard Howard. Held at the Paul Robeson Cultural Center, the event featured speakers, musicians, and poets. In between segments of the program, the sisters of Alpha Kappa Alpha led songs and danced.

September 17 – The Forum on Black Affairs (FOBA) organizes to represent the Black faculty, staff and graduate students, and to deal with university programs, policies and activities that concern Blacks. The FOBA debuts as a formal organization with a reception at the Nittany Lion Inn, election of the first slate of officers, and a short speech by University President, John W. Oswald. The first officers included: Robert Allen (president), Margot Akom (1st vice president), Rev. Charles Coleman (2nd vice president), Stewart Strothers (secretary), and Beedie Cramer (treasurer).



1975 – January – The first “Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Banquet” is sponsored by the Forum on Black Affairs.

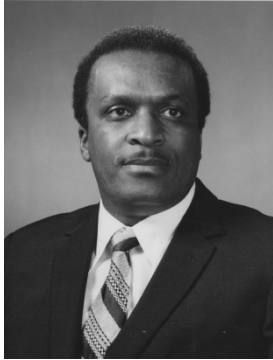
May 1975 – Earl Pace Jr. (BS Bus 1965) co-founds the Black Data Processing Associates (BDPA), which promotes technology inclusion programs and STEM outreach events. The organization operated out of Philadelphia until it became national in 1978. BDPA is now the largest professional technology organization for Blacks/African Americans and other minorities in the country. Pace would serve as the first BDPA president until 1980. He was inducted into the Comp TIA IT Hall of Fame in 2011.



May 24 – Robert Williams and Tony Palimore file to enter the race for Undergraduate Student Government president and vice president, marking the first time that Black students have run for both positions on a single ticket. Williams and Palimore would champion more student aid and campus safety. While they were not elected, Palimore would later be elected Black Caucus president (1975-76).

September – Black Studies Program is initiated to incorporate and coordinate the African and Afro-American Studies concentrations. The revamped program was first headed by history professor Cyril Griffith.

Cyril E. Griffith (1970 - 1993)



Griffith was appointed assistant professor of history at Penn State in 1970. He became an associate professor in 1976 and taught African history at Penn State for 23 years before retiring as an associate professor emeritus in 1993. He served as the first director of the Black Studies Program from 1975 to 1979.

*Born in Bermuda on September 5, 1929, Griffith earned a bachelor's degree from Wilberforce University in 1963, a master's degree from Bowling Green State University in 1965, and a Ph.D. from Michigan State University in 1973. He was the author of *The African Dream: Martin R. Delany and the Emergence of Pan-African Thought* (1973). A founding member of the Black History Advisory Committee of the Pennsylvania Historical Commission, he was cited by them for his "deep commitment to the promotion and preservation of Black history and culture in Pennsylvania." He was a member of the African Studies Association for the Study of Afro-American Life and History and a member of the Penn State Faculty Senate. Griffith died of a sudden heart attack on July 22, 1994. The "Cyril Griffith Papers," housed in the Archives and Special Collections of the Penn State Libraries, include his extensive research into African American history, religion, and culture — including detailed work on A.M.E. churches.*

Source and Photo: Penn State Archives

September - 939 Black students are enrolled at Penn State.

December 12 – Toni Clarke takes the court against Slippery Rock College at the Pitt Invitational Tournament (Pittsburgh) to become the second Black student to play for the Lady Lions basketball team on her way to becoming the first to earn a varsity letter in that sport.

1976 – Charles L. Blockson (H&HS 1956) becomes a founding member of the *Afro-*



American Historical and Cultural Museum of Philadelphia (later to be renamed the *African American Museum in Philadelphia*). Blockson played fullback and was a star on the track and field team for the Nittany Lions. Considered the foremost expert on the Underground Railroad, Blockson devoted his life to research, scholarship, and the collection and preservation of significant materials related to African American history. He

has authored more than 10 books on the subject and is the founder and curator of the famed *Charles L. Blockson Afro-American Collection* at Temple University.

May 1976 – Oliver LaGrone, who was the artist-in-residence for 19 Penn State Campuses in 1975, donated the statue “The University of Family” to the Penn State Scranton campus. LaGrone also created the bust of his friend, Paul Robeson, for the Paul Robeson Cultural Center at University Park.



June 26 – Zeta Phi Beta sorority chartered at Penn State.

September – **1,294** Black students (2.4 % of university-wide students) are enrolled at Penn State.



December 6 – Don Ferrell makes a successful head coaching debut with the Penn State men’s and women’s bowling teams by beating Shippensburg State College. Ferrell, the first Black head coach in school history, would consistently produce nationally competitive squads. His 1979 women’s team would win a national championship, while the men’s team placed third.

1977 – January 23 – “ROOTS” first airs on ABC. The eight-part mini-series, based on the Alex Haley book by the same name, was a critical and popular success which helped spark dialogue on race relations and slavery nationwide.

April – Debra Lee “DJ” Johnson, a gymnast and dancer, is chosen for the Penn State cheerleading squad. Johnson, who performed with the *Paul Robeson Dance Company*, would later be selected as the first Black cheerleading squad captain — leading the 1979-80 team to a Cheerleading National Championship. Debra was also named as an All-American Cheerleader. After Penn State, Johnson would go on to earn her law degree from Georgetown University and would perform professionally as a dancer on both the Solid Gold and Love Boat television shows. Johnson died in 2023 in Albuquerque, NM, where she had practiced law for a number of years.



September – W. Terrell Jones (West Halls) and Marilane Bond (South Halls) begin assignments as Dormitory Area Directors. The two were the first Blacks to head dormitory complexes at Penn State.

September 2 – Sandra Blackwell debuts as the Penn State “mike lady.” The sophomore art student was the first Black student selected to lead Penn State fans in cheers during major sporting events.

October – Barton A. Fields (BA Lib 1954) begins a two-year stint as Pennsylvania’s secretary of the Commonwealth. Fields, a founding member of the Penn State Kappa Alpha Psi fraternity chapter, was appointed by Governor Milton Shapp, and was the second African American to hold the position.

1978 – May – Atlanta child murders begin with the discovery of the bodies of two African American children. By 1981, 30 African American child murders would be linked to the same killer.

May – Pam J. Davis, a psychology major from Philadelphia, becomes the first graduate of the Black Scholars Program.



Barton A. Fields (BA Lib 1953)

Philadelphia native Barton A. Fields graduated from Penn State University in 1953 and then moved to Harrisburg to begin a career in state government. He started as the director of municipal pension and fire relief audits in the Department of the Auditor General in 1957 and rose to deputy secretary of the Department of State in 1971. Governor Milton Shapp appointed him secretary of the Commonwealth six years later, and Fields was reappointed by Governor Richard Thornburgh in 1979.

In 1987 Fields was appointed as secretary of revenue by Governor Robert Casey, while serving as chairman of the Commission on Charitable Organizations. Fields served as president and board chairman of the Harrisburg Development Corporation and as president of the NAACP's Greater Harrisburg Branch. In the latter capacity he helped to re-launch and charter the Penn State Chapter of the NAACP in 1987. While a student at Penn State, Fields was a founding member and a major force behind the chartering of Kappa Alpha Psi fraternity on campus in 1952. Fields died on April 19, 2022.

Source and Photo: Highmark Blue Shield Harrisburg Living Legacy Series

September 6 – The Black Caucus, led by past President William “Butch” Randolph, launches a campaign to gain student support to persuade the University to divest all investments in South African related companies. In 1987, after nine years of petitions, discussions, and protests, the University Board of Trustees would finally vote in favor of divestiture.

1979 – January 24 – Protesting six “racist” hoax help-wanted ads that appeared in the *Daily Collegian* the day before, more than 20 “angry Black students” gathered at the *Daily Collegian* office. Led by Black Caucus President Charles Kennedy, the group demanded a front-page apology from the paper for not screening out the ads. The ads were copied from a Cape Town South African newspaper, and listed Board of Trustees members’ phone numbers as the contacts.

January 28 – Phi Beta Sigma fraternity is established at Penn State.



April 6 – Takesha Dockery is elected the first female president of the Black Caucus. Dockery, a former USG Senator, strongly pressed the University to divest from companies with financial interest in South Africa, as a protest to the apartheid government. A passionate and sometimes controversial leader, Dockery would also win the 1988 Miss Black Pennsylvania crown. (Photo from 1980 LaVie)

May 4 – USG Department of Minority Affairs sponsors its first annual “Spring Fashion Show.” This very popular event featured student models. After three years, the president of USG deemed that the fashion show should not be a priority of the department and cancelled the event.

November – East Halls Black Student Union is established as part of the East Hall Residence Association. The group’s mission was to help bring East Hall Black students, the majority of whom were freshmen, into the mainstream of Penn State residential life through social functions, programs, and networking. Some of the early presidents of the group included John Warren (1979 -1980), Alvistico “Gary” Ricketts (1980-1981), James McCall (1981-82) and Rhonda McDaniel (1982-1984).

1980 - 1989

1980 – April – Kim Hammond (Sophomore, Behrend College) was selected as the student representative on the Penn State Board of Trustees. As the daughter of two Penn State faculty/staff members, she had been a resident of State College prior to attending the commonwealth campus. Hammond was the first African American selected for the student representative role, and she served the bulk of her 2-year term after transferring to the University Park campus.



May 8 – Sharon Thorpe is crowned “Miss Black Penn State” in the inaugural pageant sponsored by Omega Psi Phi fraternity. The pageant was “meant to showcase the beauty of the African American culture through its young women.” An enthusiastic crowd filled the Paul Robeson Cultural Center auditorium to witness the event.

Thorpe, a sophomore health planning and administration major, received a crown, flowers, a trophy, and \$100 for the win. Susan Lindner was the first runner-up and would be crowned Miss Black Penn State in 1981. Anya Armstrong would take the title in 1982.



October – Student Advisory Committee on Minority Admissions (SACOMA) is formed to assist the admissions office in the recruitment of minority students. In addition to conducting recruitment phone-a-thons, providing guided tours of the campus, and hosting visiting high school students, the committee advised the admissions office on content of recruitment literature, activities for visiting potential students, and other methods of reaching a larger pool of qualified minority admission candidates. Roslyn Bradford was the first leader of the group.

1981 – April – The first *Malcom X - Fannie Lou Hamer Student Leadership Award* is presented to Venus D. Young. The award was conceived and created by then students, Paul Davis, Takesha Dockery, Winston Douglas, Akua Jackson, and Venus Young. The award was designed to recognize and reward the student who had demonstrated outstanding leadership abilities in promoting the cause of Black students at Penn State, and was awarded from 1981 until 1991 to the following recipients:

1981 - Venus D. Young
 1982 - Felecia L. Bell
 1983 - M. Linda Banks
 1984 - Rhonda Spearman
 1985 - S. Sinclair and L. Stimpson
 1986 - Larry Patrick and Katrina Scott
 1987 - J. Duval and L. Goods
 1988 - L. Boddie and Courtney Pinkney
 1989 - S. Tabour and R. Seth Williams
 1990 - Jeff Ballou and Norman Eric Bigelow
 1991 - Gail Williams and Chino Wilson

May 5 – Cecile M. Springer is appointed to the Penn State Board of Trustees by Pennsylvania Governor Dick Thornburgh. During her 14-year tenure on the board, she served on all committees and was a strong proponent of the University divesting from companies with interests in South Africa. Mrs. Springer also was the director of contributions and community affairs for Westinghouse Electric.

May 6 – *Brotherhood Day* is first held. The purpose of the program was to “enhance awareness of the positive results of unity and the negative effects of racism and separatism to the Penn State community.” Originally conceived by the East Halls Black Student Union, and the East Halls Residence Association, the program quickly expanded to a campus wide event. Chaired by Darnell Daisey,



Brotherhood Day offered various seminars, panel sessions, and essay contests. It was responsible for bringing speakers such as Julian Bond, Benjamin Hooks, and Martin Luther King III to campus over the next 3 years. (Photo from Penn State Public Information Office)

November – A comprehensive proposal to stabilize and expand the number of Black faculty, staff and graduate students at Penn State is presented to President Oswald by The Forum on Black Affairs. There were only **19** Black full-time faculty members at Penn State (0.87%) that year.

1982 – January 9 – The Penn State Lion Ambassadors, organized by Larry Atwell Jr. (BS Bus 1981), begin serving the role of student/alumni liaisons. The Penn State Lion Ambassadors would provide service to the university while enhancing the relationships between students and alumni. They would become well known for their role as official campus tour guides for prospective students, alumni, and VIPs.

February 11 – East Halls Black Student Union representative uncovers that Penn State’s long time “mandatory” swim test/class was never really mandatory. When Darryl Daisey questioned the “policy” he discovered it was never really a requirement at all, even though it had been communicated as such for over 48 years. It was felt that the elimination of this “policy” removed a small barrier to Black student recruitment.

April 1 – Four African American students are elected to the Undergraduate Student Government (USG) Senate, the largest percentage representation to that point. The USG Senate was made up of 35 members at the time. Keith Burris was elected from East Halls, Charles Blackwell was elected from Nittany Halls, and twins Darnell and Darryl Daisey were re-elected from East Halls.

Hardy Williams (BA Lib 1952)



Williams, a liberal arts major from Philadelphia, co-captained the basketball team and was the first African American to earn a varsity letter in the sport (1949) at Penn State. With the assistance from a young freshman named Jesse Arnelle (who would later become Penn State’s first All-American basketball player in 1955), Williams would also lead the team to its first tournament championship in 32 years. In 1951 the Penn State Parmi Nous honor society tapped him as its first African American member. A member of Omega Psi Phi fraternity, Williams graduated in the top 20 of his 1952 graduating class at Penn State.

Williams also served as president of the Pi Lambda Sigma pre-law honor society. After two years as an Air Force lieutenant serving in South Korea, he returned home to graduate from the University of Pennsylvania Law School. He then practiced as an attorney for several years before he was drawn to a career in public service.

He was elected to the Pennsylvania General Assembly in 1968 and served until 1982 when he ran successfully as an independent Democrat for state senator. In 1971 Williams was the first African American candidate for mayor in Philadelphia to gain widespread public support. His efforts led to the election of other independent Democrats throughout the city. W. Wilson Goode, the first African American mayor of Philadelphia, acquired his initial political experience serving as co-campaign manager for Williams’ 1971 campaign.

Williams would be appointed by Governor Milton Shapp in 1972 to serve on the Penn State University Board of Trustees. Joining his old college teammate Jesse Arnelle, Williams served on the Board of Trustees until 1975.

In 1997 Williams was awarded the Distinguished Alumni Award from Penn State, the highest honor the University can bestow on an alumnus. Williams retired from the Pennsylvania Senate in 1998 when he was replaced by his son Anthony Hardy Williams.

On February 26, 2009, the Renaissance Advantage Charter School (RACS) in Philadelphia was renamed the Hardy Williams Academy Charter School when the RACS leadership chose to name the school after Williams. Williams died at the age of 78 on January 7, 2010.

Sources: LaVie Yearbook, Daily Collegian, Penn State Alumni Association, Philadelphia Inquirer

November – State Representative Hardy Williams (BA Lib 1952) is elected to the Pennsylvania state senate after serving twelve years in the state house of representatives.

1983



Guion “Guy” Bluford, (BS Eng 1964)

“Guy” Bluford was the first African American to go into space. Bluford would serve as a mission specialist on four National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) space shuttle missions.

After graduating from Pennsylvania State University with a B.S. degree in aerospace engineering in 1964, he entered active duty with the U.S. Air Force where he served as a pilot during the Vietnam War. He

earned an M.S. degree in aerospace engineering in 1974 and a Ph.D. degree in aerospace engineering and laser physics in 1978, both from the Air Force Institute of Technology. Bluford earned an M.B.A. degree in 1987 from the University of Houston - Clear Lake.

Bluford was selected as an astronaut candidate in 1978 and first went into space in August 1983. Bluford’s 1983 mission aboard the space shuttle Challenger included the deployment of an Indian communications satellite and the first launch and landing of a space shuttle at night.

In November 1985 Bluford again flew aboard the space shuttle Challenger on a mission dedicated to German scientific experiments. Bluford’s third spaceflight was aboard the space shuttle Discovery in April 1991.

Bluford was inducted into the U.S. Astronaut Hall of Fame on June 5, 2010, and on December 10, 2011 he received the Pennsylvania Society's Gold Medal for Distinguished Achievement. In 2021 Penn State honored Bluford by naming a building in Innovation Park after him.

Sources: www.astronautix.com, Penn Stater Magazine

January 22 – The Board of Trustees approve naming a study lounge in East Halls the “George T. Clark Memorial Lounge” after the recently-deceased head of Minority Recruitment. Clark had died on September 16, 1982. The East Halls Black Student Union had requested the name change. The lounge, located in the Findlay Union Building, becomes the first University Park facility named after an African American faculty or staff member. A formal dedication ceremony was held on May 12th.

February 13 – *The Pittsburgh Press* runs a “special report” that heavily criticized Penn State for its low number of African American students (2.5%) and faculty (1.2%). On February 25th the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* printed a similar report. Both papers, which were jointly operated, cited that the number of Blacks at Penn State had shown little gain over the previous ten-year period. A March 1st editorial in the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* concluded that Penn State “cannot be considered a truly first-class university until it overcomes this shortcoming.”

July 19 – It is announced that William W. Asbury, the University’s affirmative action officer and assistant to the provost, was promoted to executive assistant to the president for administration.

August 30 – NASA Astronaut Lt. Col. Guion S. Bluford (BS Eng 1964) becomes the first African American in space as a member of the crew aboard the third flight of the space shuttle Challenger.

September – **1,293** Black Students (2.2 % of university-wide students) enrolled at Penn State

September 17 – Vanessa Williams is crowned “Miss America,” becoming the first African American to hold the title.

1984 – January 28 – *Ebony and Ivory Weekend* is organized by *Alpha Phi Alpha* and *Beta Sigma Beta* fraternities. Espousing similar goals to its predecessor *Brotherhood Day* (1981 - 1983), the program was made up of a series of workshops, seminars, and concerts. Co-Chairperson Keith Burris indicated that the program was intended to “break the ice” that had formed between blacks and whites on campus. Such notables as Shirley Chisolm, Roberta Flack, Spyro Gyro, Calvin Hill, Stanley Jordan, Edward James Olmos, Bobby Seale, Anita Hill, Gloria Steinem, Principal Joe Clark, and Bobby McFerrin have been a part of the draw. The *Ebony and Ivory Week* has expanded its scope to address religion, gender, and sexual orientation as well as race.

March – Kahadeejah Herbert becomes the first Lady Lion Basketball player to score more than 2,000 points.

April 5 – The first Minority Career Awareness Day is held at the White Building where 18 corporations — including IBM, Dow Chemical, AT&T, General Electric, General Motors, Merck, and Mellon Bank — participated in the day of workshops,

presentations, and networking. The event was sponsored by the East Halls Black Student Union, Kappa Alpha Psi fraternity, United Soul Ensemble, Paul Robeson Cultural Center, and the Career Development and Placement Center (CDPC). Forest B. Wortham, career counselor at the CDPC, served as program coordinator.

May – Norman Lockman (BA Com 1958) and 5 other *Boston Globe* reporters win the Pulitzer Prize for an investigative series on race relations. Lockman, a former *Daily Collegian* reporter, went on to become a nationally syndicated columnist from 1991 until 2004.

Kahadeejah Herbert (BS Lib 1986)

Herbert grew up in Willingboro, New Jersey surrounded by a very hostile environment. She was often mistreated by her family and was afraid for her well-being on numerous



occasions. Herbert also became a mother at the young age of 16 after giving birth to a baby girl. In society's eyes she was heading down a path of destruction. At the time of her daughter's birth Herbert had never participated in any type of athletic competition. Bill and Evelyn Lewis, neighbors of Herbert and parents of gold medalist Carl Lewis, encouraged her to participate in track and field and to play basketball during her last two years of high school. "No one in my family had ever finished high school or went to college," Herbert said. "The Lewises were successful and seeing that gave me hope that there was something better on the other side."

Herbert excelled on the basketball court and graduated from high school in 1981 before moving to University Park, PA to play at Penn State. With this opportunity Herbert was defying the odds. She immediately felt the impact of being part of a team, or in her case, a family.

"It was my first real family experience and coach (Rene) Portland was like the mother I never had," Herbert said. The Lady Lions had success on the court during Herbert's career. During Herbert's freshman year, Penn State went 24-6 and played in the NCAA Tournament for the first time in program history. The Lady Lions would go to the NCAA Tournament all four years of Herbert's career.

Herbert still holds several Lady Lion records. She was the first in program history to score 2,000 points in a career. She is the all-time leading rebounder with 1,103 and she holds the record for field-goal percentage in a season (.764) during the 1983-84 campaign.

Herbert worked for AT&T as an Engineer and Project Manager and played a major role in developing U-verse, the company's digital television service. Herbert's daughter finished nursing school in 2009. Herbert died from pancreatic cancer on November 4, 2021 at 58 years old. Source: www.BigTen.cstv.com

September – **1,625** African American students are estimated to be enrolled at Penn State.

October 26 – Charles Janerette Jr. (BA PE 1960), a former Nittany Lion and National Football League player, is fatally shot by Philadelphia police, who accused him of attempting to steal a squad car. Janerette, who had suffered from a mental illness for the twelve previous years, had played for four NFL teams in six seasons in the early 1960s. He was also noted as being the first African American to play football against all-white Alabama in the inaugural 1959 Liberty Bowl.

1985 – January 13 – James B. Stewart, assistant professor of economics, is awarded the first Forum on Black Affairs (FOBA) Humanitarian Award at the annual Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Banquet. The FOBA established the Humanitarian Service Award to honor an individual who has provided outstanding service to the African American community of Pennsylvania, notably within Penn State and the Centre Region. Stewart is selected for his service to the FOBA, the university, the community, and leadership in his field. (See appendix for a list of awardees.)

April – Katrina Scott takes over as president of the Committee for Justice in South Africa and would lead the regrouping organization through its most impactful period.

Katrina Scott-George (BA Lib 1986, BS Eng 1987)



Katrina Scott became president of the Committee for Justice in South Africa at Penn State in the spring of 1985 and led the organization through its most significant period.

By building strong alliances with African American groups, the Black Student Coalition Against Racism (BSCAR), and the Undergraduate Student Government (USG) as well as

employing innovative and aggressive protest methods, such as erecting “shanty towns” and occupying the office of the university president, the Committee for Justice in South Africa played a major role in increasing the pressure on the Penn State Board of Trustees to divest all holdings from companies doing business in South Africa. For her efforts she was awarded the 1986 Malcom X - Fannie Lou Hammer Award for student leadership. On September 18, 1987, a few months after Katrina’s graduation and after rejecting the measure several times in the past, the Board of Trustees voted 20 to 1 for divestiture.

Katrina remained a passionate reformer and educational equity advocate after her graduation, later working for reform in the Oakland (CA) school district. To her delight, her own two children would earn degrees from Harvard University.

On April 21, 2012, Katrina was awarded the first ever “Christian Ragland / Julie Welker Student Leader Award” at the 2012 Penn State Black Alumni Reunion. The award honors past student leaders who demonstrated the utmost in leadership and advancement of student causes. Unknown to the reunion award committee, Katrina was gravely ill and would die two days later in her Oakland home after a nearly 7-year battle with cancer. She was 48 years old. (Photo from Collegian 1985 File Photo)

April 12 – The first Black Alumni Reunion (BAR) is held at the Sheraton Hotel in State College. About 170 alumni from various classes attended the weekend events that were sponsored by the Penn State Alumni Association. Thelma Price, assistant vice president for Student Affairs; Dr. Harold Cheatham (BA Edu 1961), associate professor of Education; William Asbury, executive assistant to the president; and William Rothwell, executive director of the Penn State Alumni Association; were among the speakers. Carmen Redfern (BA Lib 1982) served as the event coordinator.



1985 - Black Alumni Reunion Participants who graduated in the 1950s



1985 -

Alumni Reunion Participants who graduated in the 1980s

Black

August – The Martin Luther King Jr. Interest House is established on the 2nd Floor of Atherton Hall. The 13 students of diverse races, creeds, and colors came to live and work together to practice and promote the philosophies of Dr. King.

December – Penn State President Bryce Jordan forms the president’s planning committee for Martin Luther King Jr. recognition. Dr. James B. Stewart, director of the Black Studies Program at that time, served as the inaugural chair. The result was the Annual Martin Luther King Jr. Commemoration which includes various university and community events on and around the official Martin Luther King Jr. holiday.

1986 – January 20 – The Black Student Coalition Against Racism (BSCAR) forms two days after the university’s Board of Trustees voted against divesting its South African-related financial holdings. BSCAR, led by Chairman Carlton Waterhouse, would organize 13 African American student groups to boycott the university’s minority recruitment efforts in hopes of pressuring the Board of Trustees into reconsidering their decision.

February – Black Graduate Student Association (BGSA) is established to provide “a cross-academic line-and-support network” for African American graduate students. On December 4, 1986, the BGSA was granted a charter by the Graduate Student Association. At the time there were estimated to be 275 - 300 African American graduate students at the university. Elizabeth Lewis-Brooks, Andrew Jackson, Catherine Lyons, Morgan Laury, Laverne Gyant, Lennox Jackson, Jacqueline Smith, and John Barnes were among the founders of the group.



February 9 – Gina Redmond is crowned “Miss Penn State 1986,” the first African American to hold that title. The freshman telecommunications major performed a dramatic monologue from a Stephen King novel during the talent portion of the pageant and won the swimsuit competition. Redmond, from West Chester, PA received a \$250 scholarship, various prizes from local businesses, and the right to compete in the Miss Pennsylvania pageant. The competition, held at the Schwab Auditorium, was sponsored by Pi Lambda Phi fraternity and WQWK 97-FM radio station.

March 10 – South African-style “shanties” are erected near Willard Building by the Black Student Coalition Against Racism (BSCAR) and the Committee for Justice in South Africa to protest the university’s business holdings in South African related companies. The shantytown was meant to “demonstrate the living conditions of Blacks in South Africa” according to BSCAR Chairman, Carlton Waterhouse. The university would wait until April 29 to remove the shanties.

March 19 – The Black Student Coalition Against Racism and The Committee for Justice in South Africa occupy the office of University President Bryce Jordan for 2 hours and 23 minutes to protest the University’s investments in South Africa.

2,308 African American students are estimated to be enrolled at Penn State (3.7% of total).

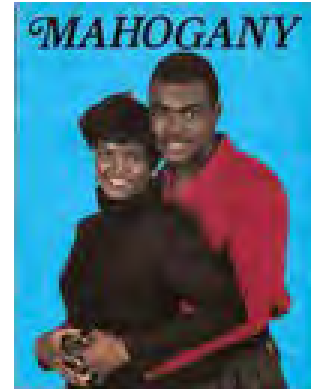
1987 – William Asbury is appointed vice president of Student Affairs. Asbury, a former Pittsburgh Steeler football player, had served as executive assistant to the president prior to the appointment. The William W. Asbury Award is now given annually to outstanding leaders in Penn State student organizations.



July – The Penn State University NAACP college chapter charter is approved during the 78th annual NAACP convention. This re-established the organization that had been on campus periodically since 1948. A formal presentation occurred on October 9, 1987 at the Paul Robeson Cultural Center. Barton A. Fields (BA Lib 1954), NAACP Central Pennsylvania section director and Pennsylvania secretary of revenue, presented the charter. The first officers of the organization were: Seprinia Coleman, president; Yvette Dudley, vice-president; Leslie Jones, secretary; Karl Romain, assistant vice-president; Wendy Washington, treasurer; and John Barnes, advisor.

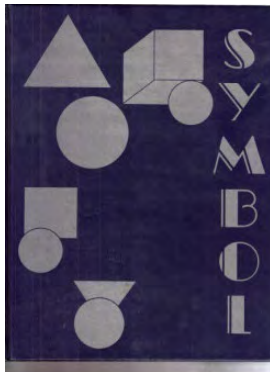
September 18 – The university’s Board of Trustees votes 20 to 1 to divest all holdings from companies doing business in South Africa.

November 30 – *Mahogany Magazine*, a publication designed by the Black Caucus Communications Committee, is formally unveiled by *Essence* magazine editor-in-chief Susan L. Taylor to 200 people at the Paul Robeson Cultural Center. The magazine was initiated by editor-in-chief Roceania Williams, a senior marketing major and a member of Delta Sigma Theta sorority. (Photo courtesy of Roceania Williams)



December 12 – Sigma Gamma Rho sorority is established at Penn State.

1988 – A “*Black Experience*” yearbook is published by SYMBOL, a small group of African American students. Besides focusing on African American students and their activities, the yearbook included write-ups and photos of African American faculty and staff, a history of African Americans at Penn State, art & poetry, and profiles of outstanding alumni. The group indicated that the yearbook would help promote Black unity and help the University’s recruitment efforts. According to Elizabeth A. Lockett, president of SYMBOL, “Black people who know about the Black community at Penn State will be more likely to come here.” SYMBOL (Strong Young Members of a Black Organized League) raised most of the money for the book through fundraisers. In addition to Lockett, the group was led by Christine Smith, Jennifer Mayo, Joyce Williams, Doug Wilson, and Maveta Thompson. (Photo courtesy of Elizabeth Anderson)



January – Donald Watson Sr. (BS Eng 1950) was named “Black Engineer of the Year” by engineering deans from HBCUs. Watson was also a founding member of the Penn State chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity.

March 23 – R. Seth Williams, Black Caucus president, is elected president of the Undergraduate Student Government (USG) by a landslide. Williams became the third African American to head the student government at Penn State.

April 8 – A group of about 175 mostly African American students took over the Telecommunications Building for 15 hours, protesting what was called the university Administration’s indifference to minority concerns. 88 students were arrested for trespassing, including former Black Caucus President Darryl King and newly-elected

USG President Seth Williams. The charges were later dropped. The students' call for the creation of a vice provost for Underrepresented Groups was realized two years later.

R. Seth Williams (BA Lib 1989)



On March 23, 1988, Black Caucus President Rufus "Seth" Williams was elected president of the Undergraduate Student Government (USG), becoming the third African American to be elected to head the Penn State student government. Williams would push for an open university budget, an elected student representative on the board of trustees, student control of the student activities fund, the creation of a vice provost for underrepresented groups, and an increase in the recruitment of African American students, faculty, and staff.

While only part of his platform would be realized, Williams did leave his mark. A second-generation Penn State student activist, Williams marched to Harrisburg to oppose apartheid, challenged Penn State for inappropriately disposing of low-level radioactive waste, and was twice arrested for demanding racial equality on campus.

The Telecommunications Building arrest (he was part of a group that took over the building for 15 hours in April 1988) landed him on national television with Dan Rather of CBS News. During his terms as both Black Caucus and USG president Williams received multi death threats.

After graduating, Williams attended Georgetown University Law Center and went on to serve 10 years as a Philadelphia assistant district attorney. Following an unsuccessful run for Philadelphia district attorney and a two-year stint in private practice, Williams was appointed Philadelphia inspector general in 2005. In January 2008 Williams joined Stradley Ronon Stevens & Young, LLP in its litigation practice group. On November 3, 2009, Williams scored a decisive election victory to become Philadelphia's district attorney (DA) and made history as the first African American elected DA in Pennsylvania.

On June 29, 2017 Williams abruptly resigned and pleaded guilty to bribery and corruption charges and was sentenced to 5 years in prison but served less than 3 years. Williams now runs his own consulting firm, Second Chance Strategies, and has been an adjunct professor at Temple University.

Source: Voices of Central Pennsylvania February 2, 2008 - www.voicesweb.org, NBC10 Philadelphia

May – N. Eric Bigelow is selected as the first "Mr. Black Penn State" in a contest sponsored by Zeta Phi Beta sorority. "This contest was meant to showcase the intelligence, talent, and pride of the African American male."

December – Grace Hampton is appointed university vice-provost. She was the first African American female to hold the position. Before her appointment, Hampton served as director of the university's visual arts program. Hampton previously served as assistant director of the National Endowment for the Arts in Washington, D.C., from 1983 to 1985.

December – Student Minority Advisory and Recruitment Team (SMART) is established to promote and assist the office of Minority Admissions and Community Affairs in every aspect related to the recruitment and retention of underrepresented racial minority students to the University. The group was officially chartered on February 27, 1992.

1989 – February 13 – The “Ebony Escorts” Service is organized by Black Caucus Vice-President Jennifer Demby. The service featured mainly African American male escorts for people who did not feel safe walking alone around the campus area at night. This alternative service was motivated by reports of a local incident where five African American women were accosted by 10 white men in downtown State College. The initial program consisted of 35 screened volunteer escorts.

March – The March/April edition of *The Penn Stater* Magazine featured the first of a three-part series entitled “*The Black Experience at Penn State*.” The series was written by Lisa Roney and contained interviews with several early African American alumni. This series was one of the first known attempts to broadly chronicle the African American history at the university.

May 11 – Barry Robinson (BA Lib 1967) is elected to the Board of Trustees by Alumni Association members and served until July 2004. Robinson, a practicing attorney, was also the senior counsel for Corporate Affairs for the Recording Industry Association of America, Inc., the nonprofit trade association representing the United States sound recording industry.

June – National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC) chapter is chartered at Penn State to formally serve as the governing body of the four African American fraternities and four African American sororities at the University. The NPHC replaced the Black Greek Council, which had not been recognized by the university. Donna Carter and Brian Swain served as the original co-chairs of the NPHC.



Stan Lathan (BA COM 1967)

Director and television producer Stan Lathan was born in Philadelphia in 1945. The youngest of three children, Lathan attended public school and went on to attend Penn State University, earning a B.A. in 1967. While at Penn State Lathan was president of the Jazz Club and an active member of Kappa Alpha Psi fraternity.

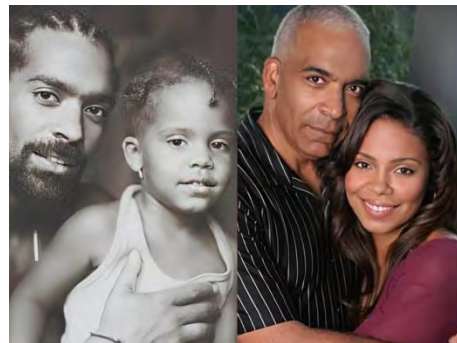
*Stan Lathan has been one of Hollywood's most prolific Directors of TV and film. He directed the pilots and thus seeded the series & syndication success of many cornerstones of American television: "Martin," "Moesha," "The Parkers," "The Steve Harvey Show," "Amen," "Cedric the Entertainer Presents," "All of Us" and "Eve!" Before that, Lathan directed multiple episodes of "Sanford & Son," "Hill St. Blues," "Miami Vice," "Cagney & Lacey," "Frank's Place," "Fame," "Roc" and many others. He also created the mold for hip-hop cinema by directing the pivotal film "Beat Street" in 1984 for Orion Pictures. Some of his other films included *Amazing Grace* (1974), *Richard Pryor: Here and Now* (1983), and *Waist Deep* (2006).*

He executive produced and directed Dave Chappelle's comedy specials "Killin' Them Softly" for HBO and "For What It's Worth" for Showtime. He also executive produced and directed "It's Black Entertainment," a two-hour musical documentary for Showtime. Lathan directed numerous public television dance specials including "Alvin Ailey: Memories & Visions" as well as specials featuring The Martha Graham Company, Mikhail Baryshnikov, and Agnes de Mille. In addition, he directed "Sesame Street" and dramas for Great Performances and the American Playhouse.

In 1989, Lathan and Russell Simmons partnered to create one of the most successful franchises in entertainment: HBO's "Def Comedy Jam" series, which Lathan executive produced and directed. In 2003, the partnership was honored with their first Peabody Award for their groundbreaking series "Russell Simmons Presents Def Poetry" on HBO. That same year, Lathan and Simmons produced and Lathan directed "Def Poetry Jam on Broadway," which won a Tony Award for Best Special Theatrical Event. Currently, Lathan and Simmons also executive produced the MTV hit reality show "Run's House." In 2000 Lathan won his first NAACP Image Award for directing "The Steve Harvey Show."

Lathan and Simmons have established The Simmons Lathan Media Group, a film and television production and acquisitions company that develops and distributes urban content across a variety of media platforms. Lathan has five children, including actress Sanaa Lathan.

Sources: Simmons Lathan Media Group, Daily Collegian, 1967 LaVie Yearbook. Carolyn Moragne



July 1 – Judge Cynthia A. Baldwin (BA, MA Lib 1966, 1974) becomes the first African American president of the Penn State Alumni Association. She would serve in that capacity until 1991.

September 13 – Lydia Abdullah and W. Terrell Jones are named as the first African American administrative fellows at the university. The Administrative Fellows program was designed in 1987 with the idea of getting more minorities and females exposed to the higher-level workings of the university and put them in a better position to advance their careers at Penn State.

September 9 – John Mitchell debuts as the first African American featured twirler on the Penn State Marching Blue Band. Mitchell was also the first male selected for the role.



1990 - 1999

1990 – January 2 – Rodney Reed begins his term as the first African American dean at the university when he headed the College of Education. Reed received his B.A. degree from Clark College in 1951, and his M.Mus. degree in music education from the University of Michigan in 1956. Reed was recruited from the University of California at Berkeley to become dean of the Penn State College of Education. He would serve in that role until his 1998 retirement.



February 11 – *Leading anti-apartheid campaigner Nelson Mandela is freed from prison in South Africa after 27 years.*



July 1 – James B. Stewart assumes duties of the newly created vice provost of Underrepresented Groups. The title was later changed to vice provost for Educational Equity.

September 8 – Mike Harrell takes the field as the first African American drum major for the Penn State Marching Blue Band. From New Castle, Delaware, Harrell would utilize his training in gymnastics as well as his charismatic personality in the role for the next two years. (Photo from 1991 *LaVie*)



1991 – January – *Essence of Joy* choir is formed and conducted by assistant professor Anthony Leach to perform at the Forum on Black Affairs' annual Martin Luther King Celebration. This popular interracial choir now performs African and African American spirituals and contemporary music to audiences around the world.



A Choir Focusing
on Music from the
African and African
American Traditions

of Joy

January – Gary Wesley Hayman (Lib 1974), former star receiver and return man for the Nittany Lion football team, helps revive and lead the Newark, Delaware chapter of the NAACP. Hayman would serve as president of the organization for almost 30 years. In that role he fought against gentrification that was pushing African American families out of certain neighborhoods. Hayman died October 1, 2020.

1992 – January 28 – *Daily Collegian* sportswriter Chino Wilson's column causes several weeks of campus and national debate by calling for fellow African Americans to "bear arms" and "form a militia" against white "devils." Wilson indicated his message was misconstrued. "I know what I advocated and that was self-defense," he said.

April 28 – Groove Phi Groove calls for African American and Latino students to boycott the McDonald's restaurant, on East College Avenue, State College, for allegedly harassing and unfairly calling the police to manage minority students. The boycott, led by Groove Phi Groove president Michael Austin, continued into that summer when it waned due to the summer break and student turnover.

April 29 – Four Los Angeles police officers who had been videotaped beating African American motorist Rodney King are acquitted by a predominately white jury. Riots would break out in the Los Angeles area for the next six days, resulting in 53 deaths.

July 1 – Joanne E. Burley assumes the position of campus executive (chancellor) for Penn State McKeesport (now Penn State Greater Allegheny), becoming the first African American to lead a Penn State commonwealth campus.

September – Comprehensive Studies Program (CSP) launched to replace and enhance the Developmental Year (DY) Program. The goal of the new program is to help Act 101 admitted students (usually with modest financial means and/or limited educational resources) deal successfully with the many economic, educational and personal challenges they may face as they strive to earn their college degree. A program of coursework, tutoring, networking and extensive counseling is utilized to accomplish that goal.

October 14 – John Mitchell is elected as Penn State's first African American Homecoming King. Mitchell, a member of the Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity, had twice held the title of "Mr. Black Penn State."



1993 – April – Ricky Williams is selected to be the Nittany Lion mascot. A Baltimore native and industrial engineering major, Williams becomes the first African American student to serve in one of the most visible roles at the university. (Photo from 1994 *LaVie*)

April 21 – The formation of an African American Alumni Interest Group is announced. The purpose of the group was to help the university with cultural diversity issues, and to help African American alumni stay connected to the school. The group would hold its first meeting in October.

June 1 – Dr. Eddie N. Moore Jr. (BS Bus 1968) becomes the twelfth president of Virginia State University in Petersburg, VA. Moore, a Philadelphia native, had previously served as treasurer of the Commonwealth of Virginia.

September – African and African American Studies Program becomes a full department. The department would focus on three themes of African and African American lives: history, culture and contemporary problems. David McBride was selected to head the new department.

1994 – May 13 – Black graduation recognition ceremony, sponsored by the Black Caucus, was held at the Paul Robeson Cultural Center.

July – Darrell Flood, assistant manager for the Office of Housing and Food Service Operations, is named as the first African American head coach of the university's cheerleading squad. Flood, a Little Rock, Arkansas native and Grambling State graduate, was hired by the university in 1992.

September 8 – Caribbean Student Association is first chartered at Penn State. The organization had been established on campus since the 1970s but was not recognized as an official student organization until this date. The mission of the group is to promote the active dissemination of cultural, political, and historical information about the Caribbean Islands and people.

September – *The Mildred S. Bunton and Calvin Waller Scholarship and Fellows* programs are initiated. The programs, named in honor of the first African American male and female to graduate from Penn State, seek to enhance the diversity of undergraduate and graduate representation at Penn State. *Bunton-Waller Scholarship* participants receive about \$3,000 a year while *the Bunton-Waller Fellows* participants are eligible for full in-state tuition and room and board for Pennsylvania residents and out of state tuition to non-Pennsylvania residents. The programs were meant to replace and enhance diversity scholarships such as the Black Scholars program.



1995 – February – *Essence of Joy* presented a concert titled "*Celebration of African American Spirituals*." Since that time, the event has developed into a collaborative venture in the School of Music and includes high school and guest collegiate choirs/bands as well as professional performing artists. In 2009 the name of the festival was changed to the "*African American Music Festival*" to be more inclusive of the variety of music offered by the performers. The festival is coordinated by Anthony Leach.

April 22 – Ki-Jana Carter, star running back of the undefeated 1994 Penn State football squad, becomes the first Penn Stater ever to be chosen as the first overall pick in the National Football League draft. Carter was selected by the Cincinnati Bengals. (Photo courtesy of the National Football League)



May – Judge Cynthia A. Baldwin (BA 1966, MA Lib 1974) is appointed to the Penn State Board of Trustees by the governor of Pennsylvania. Judge Baldwin had served as the first African American president of the Penn State Alumni Association from 1989 - 1991 and was named a Distinguished Alumna of the university in early 1995.

June – After 13 years as department chair, Dr. Rodrique Mortel was named founding director of Penn State Cancer Institute, the forerunner to the Penn State Hershey Cancer Institute. While in that role he discovered a new treatment for uterine cancer. After practicing general medicine for two years in rural Haiti following his graduation from the Medical School of Port-au-Prince, he spent one year of graduate study in Montreal before entering the United States in 1963. Mortel received training in the field of obstetrics and gynecology at the Hahnemann Medical College and Hospital in Philadelphia. Subsequently, he joined the Penn State University College of Medicine in 1972 as an Assistant Professor and quickly climbed the academic ladder.

September 1 – John H. Stanford (BA Lib 1961), a retired Army major general, becomes superintendent of Seattle (Washington) Public Schools. He became the first African American to hold that post. Stanford gained national notoriety by turning around the failing school district within a couple of years. His leadership was cut short when leukemia took his life on November 28, 1998.

(Photo courtesy of Seattle School District)



September 6 – Jerry Dunn is named head coach of the Nittany Lion men's basketball team, becoming the first African American head coach of a major sport in Penn State history. Dunn was the top assistant for 12 years and would lead Penn State to its first NCAA Tournament "Sweet Sixteen" appearance (2001) since 1955. In his 8 seasons at the helm, Dunn compiled a 117-121 overall record, including 7 wins against Top 10 teams.

October 3 – O.J. Simpson found "not guilty" of murdering his ex-wife Nicole Brown Simpson and her friend Ronald Goldman.

November 10 – More than 2,000 students of various races gathered in front of Schwab Auditorium at the “Take a Stand Rally.” The rally was organized to show support for the victims of ethnic intimidation and stress the value of unity on campus.



November – Artist John T. Biggers (BS, MS. Art Edu 1948) is the subject of a major traveling exhibition, *The Art of John Biggers: View from the Upper Room*, curated by the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas. A world-renowned artist (muralist, painter, sculptor, and printmaker), much of his art depicts African American culture and history. Biggers also painted the murals in Burrowes Building at the University Park campus.

1996 – January – Jesse Arnelle (BA Lib 1955, JD 1962) becomes the first African American elected to chair the Penn State Board of Trustees.

October 10 – Gerardo Jimenez (senior-chemistry) and Suzanne Clement (senior-advertising) are crowned as Homecoming King and Queen. This marked the first time that people of color have held both titles in the same year.



1997 – Beverly Lindsay is appointed dean of the University Office of International Programs. UOIP serves as a catalyst to encourage Penn State to enhance its commitment to internationalization. She would serve in that role until October 2002.





April 28 – Tina Nicholson is selected in the third round (#20 overall) of the inaugural WNBA college draft by the Cleveland Rockers, becoming the first Lady Lion ever drafted by the league.

May 2 – Ground is broken for new HUB-Robeson Center. The Paul Robeson Cultural Center would move into the new building in 1999.

August – Barbara Farmer becomes the first African American principal in the State College Area School District when she takes the helm at Houserville and Lemont Elementary Schools.

September – **2,975** African American students (3.8% of total) are enrolled at Penn State.

September – **88** (2% of total) members of the faculty at Penn State are African American.

November – Curtis White takes over as head coach of the Penn State cheerleading squad. White would lead the cheerleading squad to two national championships.

1998 – January 28 – Richard Lee Snow (BS AG 1981) assumes role of executive director of the international Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc. organization, which is headquartered in Philadelphia. He would hold that position until 2011.

February – “Framework to Foster Diversity at Penn State 1998 - 2003” is first issued by the Office of the Vice Provost for Educational Equity. The document described the actions that would be undertaken from 1998 - 2003 to strengthen Penn State’s efforts to promote diversity as an essential ingredient in its quest for greater excellence. The basic thrust of Penn State’s efforts over the five-year period would be to increase the synergies between the various diversity initiatives and the other missions of the colleges and departments as well as the goals set forth in the university’s strategic planning framework. The focus of this diversity plan included: historically underrepresented racial/ethnic minorities; women; persons with disabilities; veterans; lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender persons; and persons from low-income families who would be the first generation in college.

April – Penn State Alumni Association rename their Equal Opportunity Award for Dr. James H. Robinson (BS Sci 1949). The award is designed to recognize a university faculty or staff member who promotes equal opportunity through affirmative

action and/or contributes to enhancing the educational environment of the University by improving cross-cultural understanding. The award is a \$1,500 stipend and a certificate.



August 17 – W. Terrell Jones replaces James Stewart as vice provost for Educational Equity. Jones had served as associate vice provost of Educational Equity prior to the promotion. Jones started his long career at Penn State as a residence hall area coordinator in East Halls in 1980 and became associate director of the Division of Campus Life in 1984. After an Administrative Fellowship in the Office of the President in 1989, Jones was named deputy vice provost for Educational Equity in 1990. He left the University briefly to take on the role of acting provost and vice president for Academic Affairs at Lock Haven University from 1996-97 before returning in 1997. On August 19, 2014 Jones passed away from cancer. (Photo by Andy Colwell)

1999 – June 24 – Curtiss E. Porter becomes chancellor at Penn State Greater Allegheny campus following the retirement of Joanne E. Burley.

November – Blondell Reynolds Brown (BS 1974, MS EDU 1975) is elected to Philadelphia City Council. The former elementary school teacher and director of the Penn State Philadelphia Recruitment Center is a very effective legislator and highly sought-after speaker. Reynolds Brown is also a member of Delta Sigma Theta sorority.



2000 - 2009

2000 – February 12 – Stan Lathan (BA Com 1967) wins his first NAACP Image Award for directing “*The Steve Harvey Show*.” While at Penn State Lathan had been president of the Jazz Club and a member of Kappa Alpha Psi fraternity. He has five children, including actress Sanaa Lathan.

March – Alisia “Lisa” Salters (BA Lib 1988) joins ESPN as a general assignment reporter. A native of King of Prussia, PA, Salters majored in broadcast journalism and played for the Lady Lions basketball team while at Penn State.

Alisia “Lisa” Salters (BA Lib 1988)

Alisia “Lisa” Salters joined ESPN as a general assignment reporter in March 2000 from ABC News where she served as a bureau correspondent out of Los Angeles, providing news coverage for World News Tonight and other ABC News telecasts since the Spring of 1997.



One of ESPN’s most versatile reporters, Lisa Salters can be seen on the sidelines of NBA, NFL, and major college football games or reporting on the ESPN news magazine, E:60, a role which earned her a Gracie Award from the Association for Women in Radio in Television for best feature in 2009. In 2008 she was nominated for a Sports Emmy Award for the story “Ray of Hope”.

At ESPN, Salters’ reports have also been regularly featured on the award-winning Outside the Lines series. She led the network’s comprehensive coverage of the murder trial of Carolina Panthers wide receiver Rae Carruth in December 2000 through January 2001. During the build-up to Operation Iraqi Freedom through the commencement of the war, Salters covered sports-related stories in and around the U.S. Central Command in Qatar for Outside the Lines, Sports Center, and ESPNNews. On February 9, 2022 Salters participated in ESPN’s first all-women-led NBA broadcast.

At ABC News Salters covered the Oklahoma City bombing trials, the 1998 Winter Olympics in Nagano, Japan, and the crash of TWA flight 800. Earlier in her career Salters served as a general assignment reporter for WBAL-TV in Baltimore.

A native of King of Prussia, PA, Salters graduated from Penn State with a bachelor's degree in broadcast journalism and played for the Lady Lions basketball team.

Source: ESPN Media Zone

March 27 – Helen Darling and Andrea Garner lead the Lady Lions basketball team to their first NCAA “Final Four” appearance, by defeating Louisiana Tech 86-65.

The Walnut Building

The Walnut Building was the powerful center of minority student social, academic, cultural, and political life at Penn State from the opening of the Black Cultural Center in 1971 until the Paul Robeson Cultural Center moved to its current facility in 1999.



The former USO surplus building on an Army base in Lebanon, PA was transported piece-by-piece in the fall of 1947 to the Shortlidge Road site at the University Park campus. The building later served as the Temporary Union Building (affectionately known as the TUB) for Penn State students in the 1940s and '50s. When the Hetzel Union Building (HUB) opened in 1955 it was renamed the Walnut Building and was used by the Division of Student Affairs and then the Department of Anthropology before becoming home to the student run Black Cultural Center (1971) and later the Paul Robeson Cultural Center (1972).

The building underwent makeovers in 1974 and 1986, including construction of a small art gallery, a library, conference room, and meeting spaces. One constant was the auditorium, a multi-function space where the center hosted diverse speakers, dances, performances, meetings, and receptions, such as one for Ossie Davis and Ruby Dee, Alex Haley, Nikki Giovanni, Julian Bond, Jessie Jackson, Earth Wind & Fire and many others. The building hosted over 500 events a year during the 1980s and 1990s.

The Walnut Building was demolished in the summer of 2000 to make way for the current Chemistry Building. On April 15, 2011 a Penn State Alumni Association historical marker was dedicated at the site of the former Walnut Building.

Source: Penn State Intercom

April 15 – Teammates Courtney Brown and LaVar Arrington are selected as the first two players in the 2000 National Football League (NFL) draft, the first time Penn State players were drafted number one and two in the same year. Brown was picked first by the Cleveland Browns, while Arrington was selected second by the Washington Redskins.



September 23 – Penn State freshman cornerback, Adam Taliaferro, “breaks his



neck” in a nationally-televised football game against Ohio State. Despite being told he may not walk again, within a year Taliaferro would complete a determined and courageous recovery. Though he would never again play college football, on September 1, 2001 Taliaferro miraculously led the Nittany Lions on the field to start a new season. (Photo from Penn State Public Information)

October 1 – Southern Illinois University named James E. Walker (PhD Edu 1972), president of Middle Tennessee State University since 1991, as its new president. Walker, the first African American to serve as president of the two-campus, 35,000-student Southern Illinois University system, died in February 2006 after a long bout with prostate cancer.

October 21 – About 300 students dressed in black marched silently in protest of recent racist acts at Penn State. Earlier in the month threatening hate mail had been sent to three students (including Black Caucus President LaKeisha Wolf and an African American football player) and an African American university trustee. A list of hateful acts, from stones thrown at black women to swastika vandalism in dorms, was regarded by many as a sign of problems with the overall climate at Penn State.

2001 – April 20 – Black Caucus President, LaKeisha Wolf, received another anonymous letter filled with racial slurs, profanity, and an explicit threat on Wolf’s life. The university provided Wolf with police security and offered a \$25,000 reward for information leading to the arrest of the letter writer. This event triggered months of racial tension, protests, sit-ins (most notably “the Village”), and led to the university establishing a comprehensive plan to make Penn State a more “welcoming place” for minorities.



April 24 – “The Village” forms following a “No Hate” rally and counter-rally for racial tolerance held at the steps of Old Main. An estimated 4,000 students attended the rallies. Following the rallies, a group of 100 plus of those students marched from Old Main to the HUB and stayed for over a week as Black Caucus and other student leaders negotiated with university officials on several diversity and security issues. Dubbed “the Village” by Black

Caucus member Assata Richards, the students were dancing, singing, and laughing. Students of different races prayed, hugged, and studied the Bible as well as their textbooks, while camping out in sleeping bags. Following the signing of the revised

"Plan to Enhance Diversity at Penn State" the gathering ended on May 3rd. In September of 2022 Penn State's University Park Undergraduate Association (UPUA) installed a plaque in the HUB-Robeson Center commemorating "the Village."

August 19 – A mandatory diversity training video is shown on the first night of freshman orientation by the Office of Residence Life. The video was followed by a scheduled discussion of the topic.

September 11 – Terrorist group, al-Qaeda, executes a series of coordinated suicide attacks upon the United States utilizing 4 commercial airplanes. 2,996 people were killed, and more than 6,000 others were wounded during the attacks.

October – Ronald R. Davenport (BS Bus 1958) and Judith L. Davenport (BS MED Tec 1961), founders of the Sheridan Broadcasting Corporation, pledge \$3 million to the university.

***Ronald Davenport Sr. (BS Bus 1958)
and Judith Davenport (BS Med Tech 1961)***



Ronald R. Davenport Sr. and Judith M. Davenport are the original founders of Sheridan Broadcasting Corporation. Ronald is chairman and chief executive officer of Sheridan Broadcasting Corp. which owns radio stations in Pittsburgh and Buffalo and a radio network with more than 300 affiliates in 39 states. It is the largest African American-owned communications network in the



United States. Judith Davenport, a retired dentist, is a co-founder and a director of the Sheridan Broadcasting Corp. After graduating from Penn State in 1958 with a bachelor's degree in business administration, Ronald Davenport went on to earn law degrees from Temple and Yale. In 1970 he was named dean of Duquesne University School of Law, was one of the youngest law school deans in the country and was the first African American law dean at a predominantly white law school. After 10 years as dean, he spent two years as a partner with Buchanan Ingersoll before assuming the helm at Sheridan Broadcasting.

Ronald has served on numerous civic and corporate boards, including those with the U.S. Committee for Economic Development, National Chamber of Commerce, local and national Urban League, John Heinz History Center, Bell of Pennsylvania, and Aramark Corp. On August 27, 2010 Davenport received the Ronald H. Brown Leadership Award from the Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA).

Judith Davenport earned her bachelor's degree from Penn State in 1961 in medical technology. She received a graduate degree in public health and a doctorate in dental

medicine from the University of Pittsburgh. Dr. Davenport has also served on many professional and civic boards, including the dental review board of Highmark Blue Shield and the Board of Visitors of the University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public Health as well as those affiliated with the Birmingham Foundation, Alvin Ailey Dance Theater Foundation, the Andy Warhol Museum, the Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh, Martha's Vineyard Hospital, the Pittsburgh affiliate of the Susan B. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation, and Carlow University, where she also was board chairman from 2002-2006. She is a trustee emeritus for Forbes Hospital and Pittsburgh Public Theater.

The Davenports have been involved in a number of major civic fundraising efforts, including the August Wilson Cultural Center (Pittsburgh), and President Barack Obama's 2008 presidential campaign.

In previous philanthropy to Penn State, the Davenports endowed two undergraduate scholarships for minority students who have an interest in the sciences and in business. They were also major benefactors in the campaign to build the new Paul Robeson Cultural Center and to expand the Hetzel Union Building on the University Park campus.

In October 2001 the Davenports pledged \$3 million to Penn State to be distributed equally between the Eberly College of Science and The Smeal College of Business Administration. Their gift endows a faculty chair in each college and is the largest single contribution from an African American couple or individual to Penn State.

"Penn State has been so important to us," said Judith Davenport. "We wanted to give something back to the university. It was where we met, where we received our first degrees, and where everything started for us. As an African American alumna, I want other African American students and alumni to know how important we feel it is to support Penn State."

Source: Penn State Public Information

October 19 – Roy L. Austin is sworn in as United States ambassador to the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago. Prior to his August 31, 2001 nomination, Ambassador Austin was an associate professor of sociology, justice, and African American studies at Penn State. From 1994 until 1998 he served as director of the Crime, Law, and Justice Program, and in July 2001 became director of the Penn State Africana Research Center.



2002 – January 5 – Beta Phi Pi fraternity is chartered at Penn State.

January 17 – The *Africana Research Center* celebrates its opening with a reception at the HUB-Robeson Center. Created primarily because of “The Village” 2001

student protests, the center's mission is to promote research and scholarship that will advance the historical and contemporary understanding and enhancement of the lives of people across the African Diaspora. In addition, the center promotes an enabling environment where cultural production and discourse on diversity are nurtured to advance the research, teaching, and outreach mission of Penn State University.

September – **3,741** (4.51%) African American students are enrolled at Penn State.

September – **147** (3% of total) faculty members at Penn State are African American.

2003 – The African American Alumni Organization Scholarship is established with initial contributions as an endowed scholarship. A major push by the 2008 and 2010 Black Alumni Reunions broadened the support.



January 25 – Carly Hughes is crowned “Miss Penn State,” becoming only the second African American to hold that title. Hughes would go on to have a successful career on Broadway, and later as a regular on the ABC television show, “American Housewife” (2016 - 2020).

February 24 – Anita D. McDonald takes over as campus executive officer for Penn State DuBois. Dr. McDonald had previously been the dean of Extended University, Summer Session, and Evening and Weekend Campus at the University of Arizona.

May 31 – Helen Darling (BS H&HD 2001) is presented with the 2003 WNBA Community Assist Award in recognition for the passion that she demonstrated in her community. Darling, a guard for the Cleveland Rockers and mother of infant triplets, had served as a national spokesperson for the March of Dimes, and touched many young lives in the Cleveland area through her numerous local school lectures and basketball clinics.



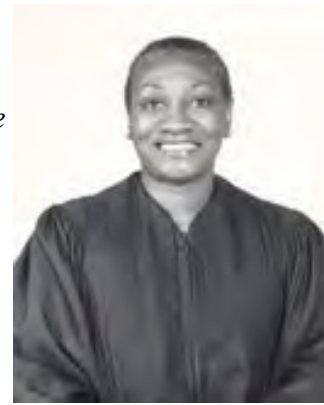
October 31 – The university's College Republicans hosted a Halloween party in which photos were taken of at least one guest dressed in blackface (depicting then USG Vice President Takkeem Morgan), and another wearing a pillowcase as a KKK hood. College Republicans Chair Brian Battaglia's posting of these photos on his personal website received national media attention. Battaglia originally defended the photos as “free speech,” but would later issue an apology after pressure from the Black Caucus and university.

2004 – January – The “Framework to Foster Diversity at Penn State 2004 - 2009” is released by the Office of the Vice Provost for Educational Equity. Like the “Framework to Foster Diversity at Penn State 1998 - 2003,” this plan describes the actions that would be undertaken from 2004 - 2009 to strengthen Penn State’s diversity efforts.

January 23 – Judge Cynthia A. Baldwin (BA 1966, MA Lib 1974) becomes the first African American woman elected to chair the Penn State Board of Trustees. Judge Baldwin served as vice-chair of the Board from 2001 until 2003.

Cynthia A. Baldwin (BA 1966, MA 1974)

A former justice on the Pennsylvania Supreme Court, Baldwin received her bachelor's and master's degrees from Penn State in English and American literature respectively, and her law degree from Duquesne University School of Law. At Duquesne she was a member of the law review and is now a board member emerita.



She served as the first African American president of the Penn State Alumni Association from 1989 to 1991 and was named a Distinguished Alumna of the University in 1995 and Alumni Fellow in 2000. A 1995 gubernatorial appointee to the Penn State Board of Trustees, Baldwin was elected the first African American female chair of the board in January 2004 and served in that capacity until January 2007.

An experienced attorney, Baldwin has been associated with several law firms and served as attorney-in-charge in the Bureau of Consumer Protection in the Office of the Attorney General of Pennsylvania. She is a member of the Pennsylvania Bar Association, Allegheny Bar Association, Homer S. Brown Law Association, and the Women's Bar Association.

In January 2010 Baldwin was appointed to serve as vice president and general counsel of Penn State University. Her primary role was to help establish the office of the general counsel and to help recruit a permanent replacement. In this capacity she became embroiled in representation issues with several of the defendants in the Jerry Sandusky scandal. She would leave that role in January 2012.

In 2022 Baldwin was named the chair of the Fulbright Association Board of Directors, the group that awards the Fulbright Prize.

Source: Penn State Dickinson School of Law March 26, 2001 www.dsl.psu.edu



May 12 – Blannie Bowen is named vice provost for Academic Affairs. Bowen assumed the post on July 1, 2004. He had previously served as the head of the university's Department of Agricultural and Extension Education in the College of Agricultural Sciences from 1998 to 2004. Bowen received his B.S. and M.S. degrees from North Carolina A&T State University and his Ph.D. from The Ohio State University, all in agricultural education. Bowen retired from Penn State on June 30, 2017, after nearly 30 years with the university.

July 21 – All American Consuella “Connie” Moore (BA Lib 2004) becomes the first Penn State female track and field athlete to be selected to the United States Olympic Team. The greatest sprinter in Penn State women's track and field history, Moore earned a program record 11 All-America honors during her superlative career.



September – Keagan-Michael Key (MFA A&A 1996) premieres as a regular cast member of *MAD TV* (FOX Network). Key would gain additional fame as half of the Key and Peele comedy team. On April 25, 2015, he appeared with President Obama at the White House correspondents' dinner in a real-life re-enactment of a popular Key and Peel comedy routine, where Key acts as the president's “anger translator.” He currently has a very active movie and television career.

2005 – February 9 – University officials announce that classes would be cancelled to observe the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday beginning in January 2006.

March 7 – The Undertones group is chartered to provide a safe and supportive environment within the larger Penn State community to focus on the distinct needs of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Ally (LGBTQA) community of color. The organization began meeting during the spring of 2001.

May – The first Larry Young Annual Scholarship Fish Fry was held to raise funds for the Larry Young Scholarship for Educational Equity. Named for the recently retired Director of the Paul Robeson Cultural Center, the fish fry was later expanded to raise funds for 3 other Educational Equity Scholarships, including the W. Terrell Jones Memorial Scholarship, the Ed Thompson Memorial Scholarship, and the Osaze Osagie Memorial Scholarship.



October 28 – Tahiiarah Allen and Theodore Jackson, both seniors, were announced as Penn State’s 2005 Homecoming Queen and King. This was the second time that African Americans have held both titles in the same year. Allen, a member of Zeta Phi Beta sorority, also served as president of the local National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC) at the time.

November 19 – Rohan Murphy, a bilateral amputee grappler for the Penn State wrestling team, makes his debut at the East Stroudsburg Open. The junior 125-pounder grabbed his first win of the season, posting an impressive 19-4 technical fall over a Lehigh wrestler. The first double amputee to wrestle at the Division I level, Murphy also found success as a power lifter, earning the bronze medal at the 2006 International Paralympics Powerlifting Championships.



2006 – January 18 – A Penn State Alumni Association historical marker is dedicated to commemorating Martin Luther King Jr’s powerful January 21, 1965 speech at Recreation Hall.

February 27 – Cumberland “Cum” Posey Jr. (Sci 1911), Penn State’s first African American student-athlete, is selected to the National Baseball Hall of Fame for his contributions as a player and owner of the Negro baseball powerhouse, the Homestead Grays. Famed Pittsburgh Courier sportswriter Wendell Smith once wrote of Posey: “... they cannot deny that he was the smartest man in Negro baseball and certainly the most successful.”

April – Darryl Watson is elected as the first openly gay Black Caucus president. Watson had previously served as vice-president of the organization.

June – Dr. Mercedes Richards, a renowned Penn State professor of astronomy, co-founded the Summer Experience in the Eberly College of Science. This six-week summer program was designed to engage low-income and underrepresented high school students in science research. Richards, a Fulbright Distinguished Chairs Research award winner, joined Penn State’s Department of Astronomy and Astrophysics in 2002. She would die from complications related to a chronic condition on February 13, 2016 at age 60.



September 12 – Tom Shade Jr., widely known as State College’s unofficial greeter, died. From the time he moved to State College in 1969 until his death, Tom waved to people who passed by his West Beaver Avenue home and gave everyone he met on a downtown street a warm, friendly smile. "I don't think anyone ever worked harder to put the happy in Happy Valley," State College Mayor Bill Welch said in tribute. In November, State College re-named a portion of Harley Alley into Shade Way in his honor.

October 20 – Shartaya Mollett is announced as Penn State’s 2006 Homecoming Queen. Shartaya, a Pittsburgh resident and a human development and family studies major, becomes the fourth African American to hold the crown.



2007 – February 1 – Emanuel Osagie, a native of Nigeria, is named chancellor of Penn State Fayette, The Eberly Campus.

February 5 – Jennifer Harris reaches a confidential settlement against Penn State women’s basketball coach Rene Portland. Harris accused Portland of discriminating against her on the basis of gender, race, and anti-lesbian biases (though Harris denied being gay) when she was asked to leave the team. Within a few weeks Portland would resign.

February 20 – John Amaechi (BA Lib 1994), the All-Big Ten basketball player who had led Penn State to a “Top 10” ranking, reveals that he is gay in his autobiography, *Man in the Middle*. The admission sparks national discussion over gays in professional sports.

March – Luther Smith (BS Eng 1977) is presented with a Congressional Gold Medal by President George W. Bush, along with the other 100 surviving members of the famed Tuskegee Airmen. Smith was a German prisoner of war for seven months during World War II.



April 23 – Coquese Washington was named the head coach of the Penn State Lady Lions basketball program. Washington, an eight-year assistant coach at Notre Dame, is the first African American female head coach in Penn State history. In 12 seasons at Penn State, Washington led the Lady Lions to a 209 -169 record, 3 Big Ten Championships, 4 NCAA Tournaments, and 2 “Sweet Sixteen” appearances.

August 30 – Vernon S. Courtney (MA Edu 1978) is elected president of the Association of African American Museums (AAAM). AAAM is a non-profit organization established to support African and African American focused museums nationally and internationally. He was serving as the Hampton University Museum director.

2008 – January 17 – *The Charles L. Blockson Collection of African-Americana and the African Diaspora* opens (on a limited basis) to the public. The collection contains materials relating to African American, African, Latin American, and Caribbean history and culture. A part of Penn State's Special Collections Library at Pattee Library, the Blockson Collection focuses not only on African Americana, but more broadly documents the African Diaspora. An official dedication of the collection occurred on April 18, 2008.

February 8 – Twins Vince and Vance Moss were selected by ABC World News as "*Persons of the Week*." As both surgeons and members of the U.S. Army Reserve, the twins were recognized on the nationally televised nightly news program for their efforts to offer medical treatment, entirely at their own cost, to Afghan civilians during their off-duty time. The Moss brothers, both members of Chi Phi fraternity, graduated from Penn State in 1994 with degrees in science.

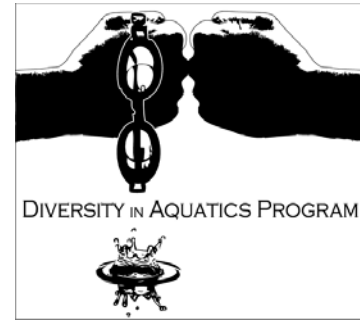


February 12 – Cameroonian Culture Through its Dances (CCTD) club was chartered at Penn State. The CCTD club's aim is to teach students the different dances and their meanings from about 240 African tribes. Lina Kacyem and Mariame Motaze, students originally from Cameroon, were the founding President and Treasurer, and also served as dance instructors along with Carine Eyoum.

March 30 – Presidential candidate Barack Obama addresses a crowd of almost 22,000 students, staff, and community members on the steps of Old Main. During the speech, Obama speaks on issues such as the Iraq War and the economy. "We are spending \$10 billion a month in Iraq ... Imagine if we were spending \$10 billion right here in the United States of America rebuilding roads, rebuilding bridges, rebuilding schools, laying broadband lines, putting Americans back to work," Obama said. "That is what we should be doing. That's what we will be doing when I'm President of the United States of America."



April – Prompted by concerns about the global rate of people drowning and the racial disparities found within the drowning statistics, the *Diversity in Aquatics Program (DAP)* is founded by Shaun Anderson (BS H&HD 2001) and Jayson Jackson (BS Sci 1999), two former Penn State Athletes. *DAP* has created a number of events such as International Water Safety Day which encourages all children to learn to swim and communicates both basic water safety and advanced aquatic activities. www.diversityinaquatics.com



April 8 – *The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education* ranks Penn State 7th in African American student graduation rates among top state universities. Penn State's 68% graduation rate was also significantly above the 44% national average of all colleges and universities.

April 18 – “*Penn State University African American Chronicles, 1899 -2008*” is first distributed to alumni attending the 2008 Black Alumni Reunion. The fifty-page booklet was compiled by Darryl Daisey (BS Bus 1983) who referred to it as a “work-in-progress.” The document was considered by many to be the first comprehensive account of the African American experience at Penn State. In December 2008 an unofficial website was launched to provide broader access to this information.

April 18 – Casey Sandy captures the NCAA All-Around Male Gymnastics title with a total score of 91.350. A junior from Brampton, Ontario, Sandy became the first Nittany Lion to win both the Big Ten and NCAA All-Around titles in the same year. On April 15, 2009 Sandy would be awarded the 2009 Nissan-Emery Award as the top senior gymnast in the nation.



August – Randall Robinson, civil rights pioneer, activist, author, human rights advocate, international humanitarian, and professor was named a Distinguished Scholar in Residence by the Penn State Dickinson School of Law, where he would teach human rights law until his 2016 retirement. Robinson also became professor at the Penn State School of International Affairs (SIA). He died from aspiration pneumonia on March 23, 2023.

September – **4,986 (5.4%) African American students** are enrolled at Penn State.

September – **3.0% (175) of the faculty and 3.0% (372) of the staff** at Penn State are African American.

September 13 – Veno Leigertwood (BA Lib 2001), who worked for the Philadelphia School District and the federally-funded "Gear Up" program, which helps low-income students with academics and college enrollment, was shot to death outside

his home in Yeadon, PA. Leigertwood, a real estate investor, was a community role model who was scheduled to receive his M.B.A. two months after his death. The case was featured on the TV shows “America’s Most Wanted” in 2009, and “Dateline NBC” in 2011. In 2013 Eddie Tate was convicted of Leigertwood’s murder.

November 4 – Barack H. Obama is elected as the first African American President of the United States of America.

November 13 – Iota Phi Theta fraternity is chartered at Penn State, completing the “Divine Nine” African American Greek organizations at the university.

2009 – February 9 – “*The Black Wax Museum*” exhibit/program premieres at the Paul Robeson Cultural Center’s Heritage Hall. “The Black Wax Museum,” a collaboration between Penn State’s chapter of the NAACP and Phi Beta Sigma fraternity, featured students posing as wax figures of historic African Americans. Maya Angelou, Charles Drew, Billie Holiday, Langston Hughes, and Jackie Robinson were among the noted. The 100 or so attendees were free to travel from one historical figure to the next throughout the hall while the performers would recite brief biographies to the students, using props such as poetry books and baseball bats to illustrate the life achievements of their characters. (Photo of Sojourner Truth “wax figure” by Chloe Elmer)



April 27 – Anthony T. Leach, associate professor of music and music education in the College of Arts and Architecture, is named the university’s second Penn State laureate. His yearlong duties included raising awareness of the arts and enriching the public’s cultural experience. Leach, a tenor vocalist, pianist and music educator, is best known as the founder and conductor of the *Essence of Joy* choir.



May 15 – Kenneth C. Frazier (BA Lib 1975), president of the Global Human Health organization of Merck & Co., is elected by the board of trustees to represent business and industry. His three-year term would commence on July 1, 2009.



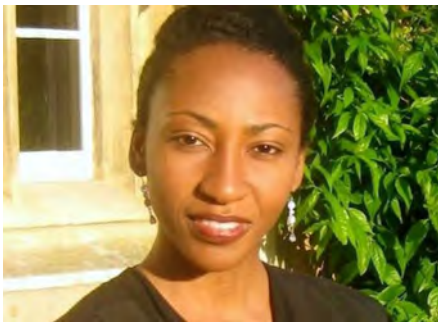
November 3 – R. Seth Williams (BA Lib 1989) scores a decisive election victory to become Philadelphia's district attorney (DA) and makes history as the first African American elected DA in Pennsylvania. While at Penn State, Williams served as president of the Black Caucus and the Undergraduate Student Government (USG).

December 6 – The Black Caucus hosts the first annual Ashe' Awards in which over 300 students packed into the Paul Robeson Cultural Center's Heritage Hall for the event. Black Caucus vice president Travis Salters said the award show was named the *Ashe' Awards* because of the word's positive meaning, "in agreement with" in a West African dialect. Students were given the opportunity to vote for other students and organizations online. The categories ranged from fun nominations such as the *Smooth Award*, *Classy Award* and *Fly Girl*, to *Service to the Community*, *Best Greek Program*, *Best Sorority* and *Best Fraternity*. The idea for the awards originated from similar programs held at a few commonwealth campuses. Black Caucus President Christopher Nock said he also was surprised yet happy with the attendance.

2010 - 2019

2010 – January 22 – Cynthia Baldwin is appointed to serve as vice president and the first general counsel of Penn State University. Baldwin stepped down from both the Penn State Board of Trustees and as a partner in the Pittsburgh office of the law firm Duane Morris LLP to accept the position.

February 7 – Jim Caldwell, a former Penn State assistant football coach, leads the Indianapolis Colts into Super Bowl XLIV during his first year as head coach. Caldwell, a Penn State assistant from 1986 - 1992, became only the fourth African American head coach in Super Bowl history. Despite an impressive 14 - 2 regular season, the Colts fell to the New Orleans Saints in the game.



February 16 – Queen Nworisara Quinn from Orlando, Florida (who earned a bachelor's degree in international politics from Penn State in 2001 and holds a master's degree from Harvard University) is announced among the 29 American winners of the *Gates Cambridge Scholarship*. The students selected were chosen from a field of 800 applicants. Each student selected receives full tuition for their master's or Ph.D. studies at the University of Cambridge in England. In addition, each student receives a stipend

to cover living expenses.

February 26 – “*Penn State University Pioneering African American Faculty & Staff (1956 - 1970)*” research document is released. In conjunction with the Africana Research Center, and the Office of the Vice-Provost for Educational Equity, researcher Tiffanie Lewis (BA Com, BA Lib 2004) identifies and highlights the achievements of the earliest Black faculty and staff members at the University Park campus.

March 9 – Emmanuel I. Osagie, chancellor of Penn State Fayette, The Eberly Campus, dies unexpectedly from complications due to an illness. He was 58 years old. Osagie, a native of Nigeria, had helped to internationalize the campus. He became chancellor in February 2007. Francis K. Achampong, director of academic affairs for the Mount Alto Campus, was appointed interim chancellor shortly after Osagie's death. (Photo courtesy of Penn State Public Information)





David Adewumi Christian Ragland

March 15 – It was announced that Christian Ragland and David Adewumi would be facing off for University Park Undergraduate Association (UPUA) President, marking the first time all candidates for the student government presidency were of African descent. On March 31st Ragland would be elected, becoming the fourth African American president of the Penn State student government.

March 20 – Yvonne Carter Williams (BA Lib 1953), longtime professor and administrator at The College of Wooster (OH), received the *Paul Robeson and Zora Neal Hurston Celebrated Elder Award* for Outstanding Leadership and Service in the Promotion of Black Studies. The award, which is presented annually by the National Council for Black Studies, recognized her contributions to the development and promotion of Africana Studies at The College of Wooster, DePauw University, and the Great Lakes Colleges Association Black Studies Conference. On October 7, 2003 she was honored by being inducted into the Ohio Women's Hall of Fame. Carter was also a founding member of the Penn State chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority in 1953. (Photo courtesy of the College of Wooster)



March 23 – Maya Angelou spoke at the Eisenhower Auditorium about racism, sexism, and spoke directly to the students asking them to eliminate discrimination. Angelou was an author who had won the National Book Award and Pulitzer Prize, a Grammy-Award-winning poet, an Emmy-nominated actress and screenwriter, and a political activist. She had served on two presidential committees and served as the northern coordinator for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference per request of Martin Luther King Jr.

June 21 – Megan Hodge, a four-time 1st team All-American volleyball player, becomes the first Penn State athlete to be selected top Collegiate Woman Athlete of the Year (2009-2010) by co-winning the *Honda-Broderick Cup*. Hodge won many awards while at Penn State and guided the Nittany Lions to an unprecedented third straight NCAA Volleyball title in 2009 while on a 102-match winning streak. Hodge, a business major, was also named the Top Big Ten Female Athlete (2009-10) and Academic All-American of the Year for Volleyball. (Photo courtesy of Penn State Athletics Department)



July 1 – Lance Collins, former professor of engineering at Penn State for over 11 years, becomes the dean of the college of engineering at Cornell University. Collins became Cornell's first African American dean. While at Penn State Collins was noted for making a discovery in powder manufacturing that generated a new area of study and helped to refine climate models.

September – The racial makeup of the 95,833 students in the Penn State system, including all campuses, special-mission colleges, and World Campus, is 78.71% white & unknown, **5.52% African American (5,286)**, 4.14 % Asian American, 4.39% Hispanic/Latino, 0.13 % Native American, 5.44 % international students, and 1.62% two or more races.

September – **2.85% (171) of the faculty and 2.68% (342) of the staff** at Penn State are African American.

September 10 – *African American Chronicles...Black History at Penn State* website (www.blackhistory.psu.edu) is launched at the 2010 Black Alumni Reunion. The website development was sponsored by the Office of the Vice Provost for Educational Equity and was based on the “*Penn State University African American Chronicles, 1899 - 2010.*” The highly interactive website was constructed by Penn State Public Broadcasting, under the direction of Cheraine Stanford, an associate producer at WPSU. The website features video interviews, archived photographs, newspaper articles, and other relevant documents.

October 15 – President Barak Obama names Warren Washington (PhD EMS 1964), senior scientist at the National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR), as one of 10 eminent researchers to be awarded the *National Medal of Science*. Washington received his award — the highest honor bestowed by the U.S. government on scientists, engineers, and inventors — at a White House ceremony on November 17, 2010. Washington earned his Ph.D. from the Department of Meteorology in 1964, is a Penn State *Alumni Fellow*, a *Distinguished Alumnus*, and was the 2010 recipient of the College of Earth and Mineral Sciences *Hosler Scholar Medal*. (Photo by Andy Colwell and courtesy of the White House).

November 1 – Francis K. Achampong is appointed chancellor of Penn State Fayette after serving as interim chancellor since March 22, 2010.

2011 – January 1 – Kenneth C. Frazier (BA Lib 1975), assumes the chief executive officer (CEO) and president position at Merck & Co. Frazier was also elected to serve on the board of directors of the “Fortune 50” company. Frazier had previously served as president of the Merck & Co. since May 2010, and prior to that held the position of

president of the Global Human Health organization of the company. Frazier was a member of the Penn State Board of Trustees from 2009 until 2015.

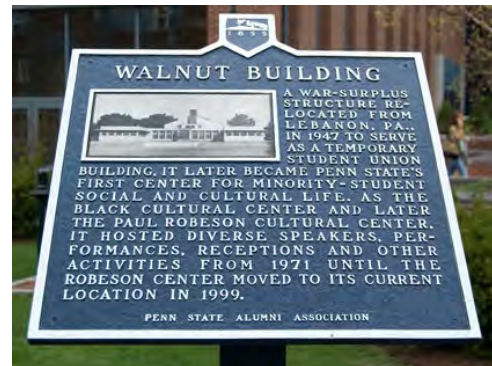
February 3 – President Barack Obama visits the University Park campus to meet with Penn State faculty and researchers regarding the university's role as the lead partner of an Energy Innovation Hub. He also delivered remarks at Recreation Hall on the importance of investing in innovation and clean energy to increase employment and grow the economy. This was the president's first trip to Penn State since he was elected in November 2008.



March – Tyrone Parham is named Penn State police department chief of police, becoming the first African American to hold that position. Parham joined the Penn State police department in 1989 as an auxiliary officer during his time as Penn State student. Parham graduated from Penn State with a bachelor's degree in crime, law, and justice and a master's degree in workforce education and development. Parham became a university police officer after graduation and quickly rose through the ranks. In January 2016 Parham departed Penn State to assume a similar role with the University of Massachusetts Amherst.

March 11 – In leading Penn State to a *Big Ten Conference* Basketball Tournament upset over Wisconsin, Talor Battle eclipsed Jesse Arnette's 55-year-old school career scoring record. Battle would end the night with a career total of 2140 points.

April 15 – A Penn State Alumni Association historical marker is dedicated at the site of the former Walnut Building. The Walnut Building had been the center of minority student social, cultural and political life at Penn State from the opening of the Black Cultural Center in 1971 until the Paul Robeson Cultural Center moved to its current expanded facility in 1999.



June 11 – Former Nittany Lion and NBA basketball player, John Amaechi (BA Lib 1994), was awarded the *Order of the British Empire* by the Queen of England. An extremely high honor in Britain, the award is handed out to a select few individuals for their chivalry. Amaechi, a native of Manchester, England, was given the honor for his work with children and human rights.

August 1 – Cary Fraser, an associate professor of African and African American Studies and former interim director of the Africana Research Center, was appointed president of the University of Belize in Central America.



August 15 – A new Black Student Union, founded by Jasmine Rushum, is officially chartered. The primary goal of the organization is to promote unity among Black students. “The organization will also work towards reducing the gap between students and careers by providing information on scholarships, encouraging further education and organizing student friendly events,” indicated Rushum.

September – **5,781 (6.0%) African American students** are enrolled at Penn State.

September – **2.8% (171)** of the faculty and **2.7% (342)** of the staff at Penn State are African American.

September 20 – Roland G. Fryer Jr. (PhD Bus 2002), professor of economics at Harvard University, is named as a recipient of the 2011 *MacArthur Foundation Genius Award*.



Roland G. Fryer Jr. (PhD Bus 2002)

Roland G. Fryer Jr., professor of economics at Harvard University, is named as a recipient of the 2011 MacArthur Foundation Genius Award on September 20, 2011. MacArthur Fellows each receive \$500,000 in no-strings-attached support over a five-year period. The MacArthur Fellows Program awards unrestricted fellowships to talented individuals who have shown extraordinary originality and dedication in their creative pursuits and a marked capacity for self-direction. There are three criteria for selection of Fellows: exceptional creativity, promise for important future advances based on a track record of significant accomplishment, and potential for the fellowship to facilitate subsequent creative work.

Fryer is an economist illuminating the causes and consequences of economic disparity due to race and inequality in American society. Through innovative empirical and theoretical investigations, Fryer has opened up a range of topics to quantitative analysis, offering new insights on such issues as the cognitive underpinnings of racial discrimination, labor market inequalities, and, in particular, the educational trajectory of minority children. In January 2008, at age 30, he became the youngest African American to receive tenure at Harvard University. He has been the recipient of a number of

honors, including a Sloan Fellowship, the Calvó-Armengol International Prize, and a Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers. He was listed as one of Time Magazine's 100 most influential people in 2009. In 2015 Fryer was awarded the Clark Medal, widely regarded as one of the most prestigious accolades in economics.

In 2019, Fryer was suspended for two years by Harvard for violating sexual harassment policies. The complainants alleged Fryer had engaged in sexual misconduct for years and fostered a hostile environment for women at the Education Innovation Laboratory, a research group he founded and led. An apologetic Fryer returned in July 2021.

(Photo and source courtesy the John D. & Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, The Crimson)

October 23 – Edward N. Thompson, Penn State director of development for Educational Equity, dies from a heart attack while running the *Tussey Mountainback Relay* in Rothrock State Forest (PA). Thompson, 58, had bypass surgery 13 years earlier, but was a lifelong athlete. The former president of the Forum on Black Affairs spent most of his Penn State career raising funds to allow more minorities, veterans and disabled students to attend the university. Thompson was a proud member of Omega Psi Phi fraternity.



Sandusky Child Abuse Case



On November 4, 2011, former Penn State assistant football coach Jerry Sandusky was indicted on 42 counts of sex crimes against 10 young boys following a three-year investigation. Sandusky, who had retired from Penn State in 1999, was arrested on November 5th. While he denied all allegations, he was convicted on all but one count in July 2012.

Penn State senior vice president Gary Schultz and athletic director Tim

Curley were charged with grand jury perjury and failure to report suspected child abuse. The indictment accused Curley and Schultz of not only failing to tell the police, but falsely telling the grand jury that the then graduate assistant Mike McQueary never informed them of witnessing sexual activity by Sandusky and a young boy in a 2001 incident. Schultz and Curley both denied all charges.

In the immediate wake of the scandal, University President Graham Spanier was forced to resign. Joe Paterno, the iconic head football coach, was fired near the end of his 46th season for “not doing more,” even though he reported what he knew to his superiors in a

timely manner. Paterno died of complications from lung cancer on January 22, 2012, less than three months after his tenure as head football coach ended. He was 85 years old.

On July 24, 2012, shortly after the release of the Freeh Report (an independent investigation sponsored by the Penn State Board of Trustees), the NCAA hit Penn State football with a \$60 million sanction, a four-year football postseason ban, the vacating of all wins dating back to 1998, and a reduction of 20 total scholarships each year for four years. Within two years most of these sanctions were lifted in an apparent admission by the NCAA that they had overstepped their authority.

Spanier was later indicted on similar charges as Schultz and Curley. After most of the more severe charges were dropped, on June 2, 2017 the three former Penn State administrators were each sentenced to serve from two to three months in jail for failing to alert law enforcement about the 2001 incident.

December – Southern Africa Chapter of the Penn State Alumni Association is launched in Soweto, South Africa. This would be the first chapter of the Penn State Alumni Association in Sub-Saharan Africa.

December 10 – Guion “Guy” Bluford Jr. (BS Eng 1964) receives the *Pennsylvania Society’s Gold Medal for Distinguished Achievement*. Each year, since 1909, the Society presents its *Gold Medal for Distinguished Achievement* to a prominent person in recognition of leadership, citizenship and contributions to the arts, science, education and industry.

2012 – March 16 – Penn State's Board of Trustees approves a name change and reorganization for the Department of African and African American Studies (AAAS) in the College of the Liberal Arts. The renamed Department of African American Studies more accurately reflects a focus on African American topics, while an African Studies Program will be created as a separate entity.



April – Matthew Rice (BA A&A 2005), former Nittany Lion defensive end and accomplished artist, creates a painting honoring Penn State’s Black history. The painting was unveiled at the 2012 Black Alumni Reunion held later that same month. Rice would pass away on March 17, 2023 after a long battle with brain cancer.

April 17 – The State College Borough Council votes 5 to 2 in favor of renaming Fraser Plaza to “Martin Luther King Jr. Plaza.” Borough Council president Don Hahn expressed his full support, saying that the more diverse population of Penn State and State College was a reflection of Dr. King’s success.

April 20 – A State College historical marker is dedicated at “Lincoln Hall,” the former boarding home for Black male students from the late 1930s to the early 1950s. Lincoln Hall served as an unofficial colored dormitory and sanctuary for early African American Penn State students. The ceremony was held at the 119 North Barnard Street location, during the 2012 Black Alumni Reunion, and included two of the three surviving former Lincoln Hall residents, Clayton Wilson III '49 and Wally Triplett '49.



April 21 – A bust of alumnus David S. Alston (PreMed 1942) is unveiled at the Nittany Lion Inn during the 2012 Black Alumni Reunion. Penn State's first African American football player, Alston played on the 1941 freshman team, along with his younger brother, Harry. Alston died from complications following minor surgery on August 15, 1942, six weeks before his varsity debut. The bust, sculpted and donated by Penn State Professor of Art, Blake Ketchum, is on display at the *Penn State All-Sports Museum*.



May 4 – Adam Taliaferro (BA Lib 2005), who played football at Penn State and recovered from a paralyzing hit on the field in 2000 to walk again less than a year later, is elected by the alumni to the Penn State Board of Trustees. He would not seek re-election after being appointed to the New Jersey General Assembly in 2015.



October 5 – Tracey Edouard, a senior public relations and advertising major, is elected 2012 Homecoming Queen. The Huntington, NY native becomes only the fifth African American woman to hold the crown. A violinist and Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society member, Edouard was involved in a wide range of campus activities including orchestra, a resident assistant, and head of the women's volleyball student section.

2013 – April 14 – Jalon Alexander is elected president of the Council of Commonwealth Student Governments (CCSC). He would abruptly resign on January 27, 2014 for unknown reasons.

August 9 – Miles Chamley-Watson, (2013), made history by becoming the first man from the U.S. to win a Senior World Fencing Championship title. The 2013 world championships were held in Budapest, Hungary. Chamley-Watson had represented the U.S. during the 2012 Olympics and was an All-American fencer at Penn State. Three years later he would win a bronze medal during the 2016 Summer Olympics in the men's team foil



August 19 – Rachel Smith begins a two-year term as diversity resident librarian. The University Libraries launched a new Diversity Residency Program to help prepare recent graduates for leadership positions in the field of librarianship, and to develop more diverse programming and collections. As one of two inaugural resident librarians, Rachel Smith holds a Master of Library and Information science (MLIS) degree from the University of North Carolina - Greensboro, and a bachelor's degree in theatre performance from North Carolina Central University.

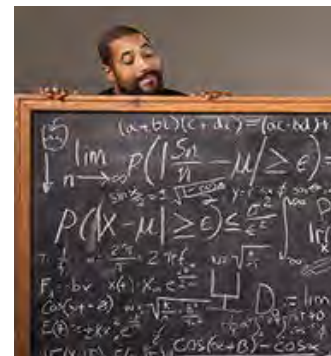


October 12 – Rhonda Bates is elected 2013 Homecoming Queen. Originally from Philadelphia, Bates was majoring in Human Development and Family Studies. She served as president of the Student Minority Advisory and Recruitment Team (SMART) and as co-director of the Martin Luther King Jr. Commemoration Day of Service. Bates became the second straight African American to be elected Homecoming Queen at Penn State, and the sixth overall to wear the crown.

October 13 – The African American Studies Department expands with a dual-title doctoral program. Penn State joined a distinguished group of twelve universities that offered doctoral degrees in African American studies when it launched a degree program in African American and diaspora studies to train future professors and scholars to teach about and study the history and culture of people of African descent.

October 16 – Penn State is selected as a recipient of the 2013 Higher Education Excellence in Diversity Award in the November issue of *Insight into Diversity* magazine. The award, given to 56 higher education institutions this year, recognizes U.S. colleges and universities that have exceptional strategies and programs to help achieve diversity and inclusion across campus. Penn State would repeat this distinction from 2014 - 2016.

December 10 – Nittany Lion offensive lineman John Urschel wins the 2013 William V. Campbell Trophy, which is given to college football's top scholar-athlete. Sometimes called the "Academic Heisman," the award specifically recognizes "an individual as the absolute best in the country for his academic success, football performance and exemplary community leadership."



With the award, Urschel received \$25,000 to go toward his post-graduate work. Urschel graduated in three years with a degree in math, later earned his master's degree in math, and continued working toward a second master's in math education. The lineman plans to pursue a Ph.D. upon completion of his professional football career. Urschel was Penn State's first recipient of the award.

2014 – January 11 – James Franklin is hired as Penn State's sixteenth head football coach, succeeding Bill O'Brien. Franklin, 41-year-old native of Langhorne, Bucks County, had led Vanderbilt to three successful seasons prior to becoming Penn State's first African American head football coach. Franklin is a 1995 graduate of East Stroudsburg University, where he also played quarterback for their football team. Franklin would later indicate that "my goal is to be the first African American football coach to win a national championship."



February 3 – The Black Student Union (BSU), hoping to battle different stereotypes facing African Americans, launches the "WE ARE BLACK" campaign. Secretary of the BSU Chantelle Beachum said they painted the exposed skin of different volunteers with common stereotypes and photographed them for the campaign. "We hope to combat these stereotypes by presenting them to the Penn State community and creating a more accurate, untold perception of African Americans that we all strive to be," Beachum told the Daily Collegian.



February 26 – Kevin Clark (PhD EDU 1994) is honored as a "Champion of Change" at a White House ceremony for his innovative approach to creating diversity and access in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) fields. Clark is the director of George Mason University's Center for Digital Media Innovation and Diversity and a professor in the College of Education and Human Development. Clark's recent activities had focused on the use of video game design to increase interest in STEM careers. The Champions of Change program was created as an opportunity for the White House to feature individuals, businesses, and organizations doing extraordinary things to empower and inspire members of their communities.

March 22 – Nittany Lion wrestler (184 lbs.) Ed Ruth becomes Penn State's first three-time NCAA champion. In the finals Ruth beat previously undefeated Maryland senior Jimmy Sheptock 7-2. Ruth had a record of 136 wins to just 3 defeats in his 4-year career at Penn State. The victory also helped lead the Nittany Lions to their fourth-straight NCAA team championship.



April 11 – John Urschell is named the recipient of the 84th James E. Sullivan Award, presented by the Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) to America's top amateur athlete. Urschel was announced as the winner of the prestigious award during an awards ceremony at the AAU National Headquarters in Orlando, FL. Urschel was selected from a pool of 19 semifinalists vying for the honor in 2014. First presented in 1930, the Sullivan Award honors an athlete who demonstrates the qualities of leadership, character, sportsmanship, and the ideals of amateurism.



May 6 – Kyle Godwin (BA Com 2008) wins a Sports Emmy Award for "Outstanding Sports Documentary Series" as an associate producer for the popular ESPN "30 for 30" series. Kyle, a native of Philadelphia, is a member of Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity. After graduation Godwin worked for ESPN for 6 years before venturing out and starting his own film and multimedia production company entitled Marvalous Entertainment, LLC.

May 15 – Wanda J. Blanchett (BA Edu 1997), an academic administrator with a long and deep commitment to diversity, was named dean of the Rutgers University Graduate School of Education.

July – Kenneth C. Frazier (BA Lib 1975), chief executive officer (CEO) and president of Merck & Co., is proclaimed "Corporate Executive of the Year" by *Black Enterprise Magazine* in their July/August 2014 edition. Frazier was also a member of the Penn State Board of Trustees at the time, serving from 2009 to 2015.



August – Michael Brown, an unarmed black teenager, is shot and killed by white police officer Darren Wilson in Ferguson, Missouri.

August – Penn State begins offering a doctoral program in African American Studies, becoming just the 12th university in the U.S. to do so. Students are now able to enroll in this dual-degree program that pairs African American Studies with the student's choice of history, philosophy, or English. The program consists of hands-on research with faculty members who focus on multiple facets of African American culture from slavery to the post-civil rights era.

September 27 – Kenya Crawford is elected 2014 Homecoming Queen, becoming the third straight African American to wear the crown. Crawford, a senior Human Development and Family Studies major, was active as a member of the Health and Human Development club and Phi Eta Sigma Honor Society. This Philadelphia native's student involvement included serving as a research assistant for the *Family Relationships Project* and the *Center for Healthy Aging*. She also participated in the Women's Leadership Initiative and Global Leadership Initiative Committees. As the president of Keep a Child Alive, a program designed to raise awareness about the HIV/AIDS pandemic, Crawford received an Undergraduate Discovery Summer Research Grant and represented Penn State internationally as a counseling intern in South Africa. Crawford became the seventh overall African American, and first openly-lesbian to be elected Homecoming Queen at Penn State.



December 2 – About 80 Penn State students protest by lying motionless on the HUB-Robeson Center ground floor to spread the message that “Black Lives Matter.” The main catalyst for the protest was a decision not to indict a police officer who was responsible for killing unarmed teenager, Michael Brown, in August in Ferguson, Missouri.



The protests lasted for several days, and included university president, Eric Barron, joining the protesters. The *Black Leadership Union* was the main organizer of the protest, but various student organizations participated, including the *National Pan-Hellenic Council*, *Black Caucus* and the *National Council of Negro Women*. (Photos courtesy of the Centre Daily Times)

2015 – February 11 – The idea of The Underground, a multicultural student-run media site devoted to telling the untold stories within the Penn State community, is first discussed after an inspiring presentation from CNN’s Soledad O’Brien on the Penn State University Park campus. The project began as a simple idea by freshmen Candice Crutchfield and Adriana Lacy. After discussion with other students, the website (psuunderground.com) was created. The first contributors included a small group of friends: Candice Crutchfield, Adriana Lacy, Matthew Lamas, and Adam Tidball.

THE UNDERGROUND

March 15 – Charmelle Green is named Senior Associate Athletic Director and Senior Woman Administrator at Penn State. Green is responsible for the management, supervision, and evaluation of women's volleyball, men's and women's cross country and track & field, softball, and ability athletics.

March 23 – Gregory Drane is selected as the first African American Blue Band Director. Drane became the assistant director for the Blue Band in 2005, putting him in charge of the pep band for women's volleyball, along with the Pride of the Lions basketball pep band. *(Photo courtesy of Onward State)*



June – Penn State establishes the Restorative Justice Initiative (RJI) as part of the College of Education. The goal of the program is to give incarcerated individuals access to a wide range of for-credit classes that would count towards a degree. Studies have found that former prisoners who have advanced their education while in prison are less likely to be re-incarcerated.



July 5 – Tina Q. Richardson, associate dean of academic affairs at Drexel University’s School of Education, assumes the post of chancellor of the Penn State Lehigh Valley campus. Richardson earned her bachelor’s in psychology and master’s and doctorate in counseling psychology, all from the University of Maryland. *(Photo courtesy of Penn State)*

July 15 – Former Penn State football captain and All-American defensive lineman Devon Still (BA Lib 2011) accepts the *Jimmy V. Perseverance Award* at the 2015 ESPYS in Los Angeles on behalf of his 5-year-old daughter Leah. Leah Still was diagnosed with cancer in June 2014 and her story inspired countless football fans around the world to help raise millions of dollars for pediatric cancer research. Her good spirits and “never give up” attitude earned her the nickname “Leah Strong.” She went into remission in March 2015, but due to complications with her medication was not well enough to attend the award ceremony. Devon Still, a Delaware native who was then playing for the *NFL Cincinnati Bengals*, was introduced by NBA superstar LeBron James. When he took the stage Still was greeted by a standing ovation from his peers. “I would beg [God] to give me the fight with death rather than my daughter,” he told the crowd in a very emotional speech. “At the age of 4, my daughter hadn't even begun to understand what life was all about,” he continued of Leah's diagnosis. “She's the toughest person I've ever met and she has the mindset that nothing will hold her down,” the football pro said of his daughter. (Photo courtesy of ESPN)



July 15 – The dead body of 27-year-old Jasmin Wright (BS H&HD 2011) was found in her West Philadelphia apartment. She had been sexually assaulted and strangled. Wright had just earned her master's degree from Drexel University's School of Public Health. About a week later, police charged a 56-year-old former building handyman for the murder. He would later be convicted and sentenced to life in prison.

September 1 – Marcus A. Whitehurst, with more than 20 years of experience in educational leadership, is named Penn State's vice provost for Educational Equity after holding the position in an interim capacity for more than a year. Whitehurst had previously served as assistant vice provost for Educational Equity since July 2007. He succeeded W. Terrell Jones who died August 19, 2014 after an extended illness.



September – **5,556 (5.7%) African American students** are enrolled at Penn State, and for the first time the Hispanic student enrollment surpassed the African American student enrollment. The breakdown of the 2015 total Penn State enrollment was:

<u>Group</u>	<u># of students</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
Hispanic	5,947	6.1
African American	5,556	5.7
Asian	5,334	5.5
Multi-Racial	2,264	2.3
Native Hawaiian	114	0.1
American Indian	113	0.1
International	9,262	9.5
Unknown	2,323	2.4
White	66,581	68.3

(Source: Penn State Fact Book)

December 4 – Emmy Award winning WPSU documentary “*Holding History... The Collections of Charles L Blockson*” premieres during a special screening at the Paterno Library’s Foster Auditorium. Produced, directed, and narrated by Cheraine Stanford, the documentary short tells the story of Charles Blockson’s (H&HS 1956) lifelong journey to unearth, collect, and preserve the history, culture, and contributions of people of African descent. Blockson died on June 14, 2023 at 89 years old. On May 8, 2024 he was posthumously awarded an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree from Temple University. To view the documentary go to: <http://video.wpsu.org/video/2365662169/>.



Tanya R. Kennedy (BA Com 1989)

Tanya Kennedy was appointed as an Associate Justice of the Appellate Division, First Department by New York Governor Andrew M. Cuomo in July 2020.

Prior to her appointment Kennedy served as a Justice of the Supreme Court, New York County, commencing in January 2016 after election in November 2015. She was elected to Civil Court in November 2005 and thereafter served in Criminal Court, Civil Court, Family Court, as Acting Supreme Court Justice, and as Supervising Judge of Civil Court, New York County. She is past President of the National Association of Women Judges and a former Adjunct



Professor at Fordham University School of Law where she taught a Juvenile Justice seminar for ten years.

Kennedy is committed to the pursuit of higher education and increasing the pipeline of underrepresented communities to the legal profession. She promotes the advancement and empowerment of women through membership in the founding chapter of the New York Coalition of 100 Black Women and Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., Tau Omega Chapter. Her honors include the 2021 John E. Higgins Esq. Diversity Trailblazer Award from the New York State Bar Association, the 2020 Inspiration Award from the NY Coalition of Women's Initiatives in Law, the 2018 Brooklyn Technical High School Hall of Fame Designation, the 2017 Diversity Leadership Award from Penn State Law, the 2015 Alumni of the Year Award from Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law, the 2014 NAACP Mid-Manhattan Branch Outstanding Community Service Award, the 2013 Brooklyn Technical High School Alumni Foundation Distinguished Alumni Award, and the 2012 Pat Irvin Personal Service Award from the Association of Black Women Attorneys.

Kennedy also serves on the Penn State Law Board of Advisors. In 2020 she was selected as a Penn State Distinguished Alumni by the Penn State Board of Trustees.

December 10 – Tanya R. Kennedy (BA Com 1989) is sworn in as a justice in the Supreme Court for the State of New York. Kennedy was a judge in the New York City Civil Court in New York prior to her selection to the state supreme court.

2016 – January 5 – Richard Ross Jr. (BA Lib 1992) is sworn in as Philadelphia police commissioner, taking over the nation's fourth-largest police department. Ross, who had served the previous 10 years as deputy commissioner, leads a force of over 7,100 members. Born and raised in Philadelphia, he would bring more than 27 years of service and experience to the top post. Ross would resign in August 2019 amongst alleged "continuous and ongoing" sexual harassment and discrimination from within the department. (Photo courtesy of the Philadelphia Police Department)



Girls, which occupied the Abington site until the principal donated it to Penn State in 1950. (Photo courtesy of Penn State Abington)

January 5 – The Penn State Abington community permanently honors a prominent African American architect who earned little recognition during his lifetime but whose work impacts the campus to this day. Students, faculty and staff dedicated a bronze plaque recognizing Julian Francis Abele, the architect of the iconic Sutherland Building. He designed the structure in 1916 for the Ogontz School for

April 27 – *Sovereign Magazine* releases its first issue with a distribution at the HUB. Advertised as “Penn State’s First Magazine for People of Color,” its cover features a person of color who has done a lot for their community and is heavily involved on campus. The magazine’s aim is “to put students of color and their work in the spotlight. The first issue featured Ramon Guzman, who was the executive director for the 2016 class gift campaign, and Ryan Valencia who was the president of the College Democrats,” said Adrienne Thompson, founder and editor in chief.



August 11 – Nate Parker (Sci 2001) receives the *Sundance Institute Vanguard Award* for writing the screenplay, directing and starring in the film *The Birth of a Nation*. The film, which received critical acclaim at the 2016 *Sundance Film Festival*, and which Fox Searchlight acquired for a festival-record \$17.5M, centers on Nat Turner (played by Parker), a Virginia slave who used his fierce intellect, profound faith, and deep belief in his ability to change things to become a preacher (while still a slave) and eventually lead a 48-hour rebellion in 1831, thirty years before the American Civil War. The film also stars Jackie Earle Haley, Gabrielle Union, Penelope Ann Miller, Aunjanue Ellis, Mark Boone Junior, and Aja Naomi King. *The Birth of a Nation* opened nationwide on October 7, 2016. Parker had previously starred in movies such as *Beyond the Lights*, *Red Tails*, *The Secret Life of Bees*, *The Great Debaters*, *Arbitrage*, *Non-Stop*, *Felon* and *Pride*. While at Penn State, Parker was a nationally ranked wrestler for two seasons but following a 2001 trial (along with his Penn State roommate and movie co-writer, Jean Celestin) and acquittal for sexual assault, he transferred to the University of Oklahoma. (Photo courtesy of Fox Searchlight)



September 9 – Cumberland “Cum” Posey Jr. (Sci 1911), recognized as the first African American student athlete in Penn State history, was inducted into the *Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame*. Posey enrolled at Penn State in 1909 and played forward on the freshman basketball team (1909-10) and the varsity basketball team (1910-11), while also playing on the freshman baseball team (1910). He left Penn State after just two years and joined the Monticello Athletic Association, which later became the Loendi Big Five. By the following year, Posey was the star player and operator of the club. Loendi won the Colored Basketball World Championship four years in a row from

1920 to 1923. He was widely regarded as the best African American basketball player of his time. Along with his 2006 induction into the *National Baseball Hall of Fame*, Posey became the only person enshrined at both sports halls of fame.

September 18 – Keegan-Michael Key (MFA A&A 1996) wins a Primetime Emmy Award for “outstanding variety sketch show” for his recently ended Comedy Central TV show, “Key & Peele.” The show was cancelled after a 5-year successful run because Key and his co-star Jordan Peele wanted to pursue other opportunities.

October 6 – “*All-In at Penn State: A Commitment to Diversity and Inclusion*” kicks off with a public multimedia rally in front of Old Main. The event, which was livestreamed to all Penn State campuses, launched an ongoing University-wide initiative to bring students, faculty and staff together to cultivate a diverse and inclusive environment. President Eric Barron and Vice Provost for Educational Equity Marcus Whitehurst addressed the crowd, while the *Essence of Joy* choir provided entertainment.

November 29 – Robin Pleshette Cooper (BA Edu 1992) is elected to lead the Teamsters Local 502 of the Commonwealth Association of School Administrators (CASA), becoming the first woman and the first African American selected to lead the union for Philadelphia principals, vice-principals and other administrators.



December 3 – James Franklin leads Penn State past Wisconsin in the BIG TEN Championship game, making Franklin the first African American head coach to win a BIG TEN football championship in the 120-year history of the conference.

Keegan-Michael Key (MFA A&A 1996)



Since his time at Penn State, Keegan-Michael Key is best known for co-creating the Comedy Central TV show “Key & Peele” which won a Primetime Emmy Award for “outstanding variety sketch show” on September 18, 2016. The show ran from 2012 until 2015. Key, a Peabody Award winner, also co-stars in the USA Network comedy series *Playing House*. He spent six seasons as a cast member on *MADtv* and has made guest appearances on shows like *Whose Line Is It Anyway?*, *The Middle*, and *Modern Family*. In 2014, he also starred in the first season of the FX series *Fargo* and the final season of the NBC series *Parks*

and Recreation. He has played supporting roles in several films, including “Let’s Be Cops,” “Hell Baby,” “Role Models,” “Horrible Bosses 2,” “The Lego Movie,” “Tomorrowland,” “Pitch Perfect 2,” and “Storks.”

On April 25, 2015 he appeared with President Obama at the White House correspondents’ dinner in a real-life re-enactment of a popular Key and Peele comedy routine where Key acts as the president’s “anger translator,” Luther. The video from that event instantly went viral on social media. That same year he was selected as the Penn State Homecoming Grand Marshal and made a surprise visit to the football team briefing session impersonating head football coach, James Franklin. In 2016 he produced and starred in “Keanu” (2016) with his Key & Peele co-star Jordan Peele.

Key has already starred in a number of movies and continues to be a rising star in the entertainment world.



Photos: Centre Daily Times, 1996 LaVie Yearbook

December 9 – Jeff Ballou (BA COM 1990), a news editor at Al Jazeera English Media Network, is elected the 110th President of The National Press Club. Ballou becomes the first African American male to head the organization. Founded in 1908, The National Press Club is the world's leading professional organization for journalists. He is also a member of the National Association of Black Journalist, and Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity. In March of 2023 Jeff joined ABC News as a producer.



2017 – February 22 – Four of the founding members of the Brandywine Campus Black Student League participate in a panel discussion at the campus, hosted by the current



Black Student League, in celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the founding of the organization. Darryl Trent (BA Lib 1972), Natalie Burrell Wells (BA Lib 1975), Barry Reddish (BA Lib 1972), and Zawdie Abdul-Malik (BA Lib 1970) returned to the Brandywine campus to share their experiences from the late 1960s.

April 6 – The first annual *Paul Robeson Cultural Center Student Awards* were presented in Heritage Hall of the HUB-Robeson Center. The awards honored five students who characterized Robeson’s legacy. Categories included Humanitarian, Athlete, Social Justice Leader, Artist in Activism, and Academic Excellence. See list of winners in Appendix.

May 14 – Led by Malik Moffett (redshirt junior), the Penn State men’s outdoor track and field team won its first-ever Big Ten championship. Moffett captured titles in the long jump and the 200 meters, and teammate Isaiah Harris (freshman) took gold in the 800 meters, helping the team to edge out Ohio State for the team title.

July 13 – Greg Davis (BS BUS 1992) was promoted to chief investment officer (CIO) at Vanguard. As CIO, Davis assumed oversight responsibility for more than \$3.8 trillion managed by Vanguard's Fixed Income, Equity Index, and Quantitative Equity Groups.



October 27 – The Black Caucus hosted a 50th Anniversary celebration for the establishment of the Frederick E. Douglass Association, the predecessor to the organization. Students and alumni interacted and celebrated the historic journey of African American activism at Penn State. William “Rick” Collin and Frederick Phillips, two of the earliest Douglass Association presidents, were among the speakers.

November – Hanif Johnson (BS Bus 2012) was elected as the youngest judge in Pennsylvania. The 27-year-old Democrat won the election by a 73-point margin over his Republican opponent after defeating 3 other Democrats in the primary elections. While a student, Johnson was the president of the Omega Psi Phi fraternity

2018 – April 11 – Brian Davis, African American Studies major in the College of the Liberal Arts at Penn State, has been named the 2018 recipient of the *Eric A. Walker Award*. The award is presented annually to the student who has contributed most to enhancing the reputation of the University through extracurricular activities. Walker was president of Penn State from 1956 to 1970.

April 12 – Haley McClain-Hill (BS Sci 2018) was selected for the NFL Atlanta Falcon Cheerleading squad and later the San Francisco 49ers Cheerleading squad. The former Penn State Cheerleader and Assistant Cheerleading Coach was also a member of the Air Force ROTC. In November 2021 she was featured in a Monday Night Football “Salute to (Military) Service” pre-game segment for her dual roles. In 2021 McClain-Hill also launched *TORCH Warriorwear* fashion bodysuits designed for women in the military. The venture garnered a \$150,000 investment from the popular television show *Shark Tank* in 2024.





May 4 – Brandon Short (BS Bus 1999) was elected to the Board of Trustees by the alumni effective July 1, 2018. Short is Executive Director and Portfolio Manager, PGIM Real Estate. Before his career in finance, the former Nittany Lion linebacker had a 7-year career in the National Football League with the Carolina Panthers and New York Giants.

June – Isaiah Harris (Junior) becomes the first Nittany Lion to win a national championship in the 800 meters in 95 years. The Lewistown, Maine, native finished runner-up in the 800 meters in the 2017 outdoor NCAA track and field championships and the 2018 indoor NCAA championships.

June 18 – Amy Freeman (BS Eng 1991, MS Eng 1991, and PhD Edu 2009) was named director of Penn State's Millennium Scholars Program. Freeman, a former associate provost, chief diversity officer, and research assistant professor of engineering at Tufts University in Medford, Massachusetts started her new position on August 20th.



November 14 – The UPUA approves designated representation for the Black Caucus, as well as the Latino Caucus and the Asian Pacific Islander Desi American Caucus, on the UPUA general assembly.

December 1 – Curt Warner (BA Lib 1983) and his wife Ana release their book The Warner Boys: Our Family's Story of Autism and Hope, published by Amazon. Warner, a two-time All-American and three-time Pro Bowler with the Seattle Seahawks of the NFL, and his wife wanted to tell their story of raising autistic twin boys in an effort to help other families who find themselves in a similar situation.



2019 – February 28 – Clarence Lang was named as Dean of the College of the Liberal Arts. Lang, who had previously been the interim dean of the College of the Liberal Arts and Sciences at the University of Kansas and a faculty member since 2011, assumed the new role on July 1.

March 20 – Osaze Osagie, a 29-year-old African American State College man, was fatally shot and killed by a State College police officer. The officer was attempting to serve a mental health warrant on Osagie. Osagie had been diagnosed with autism and had



a history of anxiety and schizophrenia. The shooting happened as Osagie reportedly brandished a knife and confronted the officers, according to police records. A State Police investigation later determined that the police officer's actions were justified for the situation, however many in the community and at the university continue to question the circumstances of the shooting. Osaze's father Sylvester Osagie filed a lawsuit in November 2020 against the borough of State College. The lawsuit was dismissed in November 2023.

March 28 – Edred Richardson (Sophomore) selected as the first *Black Caucus* UPUA representative at the *Black Caucus* general body meeting.



May 17 – The Warren Washington Innovation Building (formerly the 328 Building) dedication ceremony held. The multipurpose building, named for the pioneering scientist, Dr. Warren M. Washington (PhD EMS 1964), became the first building at the University Park campus to be named for an African American alumni.

June 6 – Christopher Jefferson was named director for the Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life, a unit of Penn State Student Affairs, effective July 1. Jefferson was the director of Fraternity and Sorority Life at Indiana State University since July 2018.

June 24 – College of the Liberal Arts announces the hiring of nine new faculty to strengthen its scholarly expertise in African American and African Diaspora life and culture. All nine would have at least a partial academic appointment in the Department of African American Studies. “This is the biggest single step forward in faculty and academic diversity in the history of the college,” said Susan Welch, dean of the College of the Liberal Arts. The nine new faculty members would start on July 1, 2019.

July 1 – Randolph “Randy” B. Houston Jr. (BA Lib 1991) becomes president of the Penn State Alumni Association after serving the previous two years as vice-president of the organization. Houston becomes only the second African American and the first African American male to hold that position. Following his two-year term, Houston would join the Penn State Board of Trustees as the designated Penn State Alumni Association representative.



October 5 – Seniors Freddy Purnell and Marlisa Shaw were named the recipients of Penn State Homecoming's second ever gender-neutral *Guide State Forward Award* (replacing Homecoming King and Queen). Purnell, a biology major, was the president of the LGBTQA Student Roundtable, vice president of Queer

and Trans People of Color, and a member of the Penn State Black Caucus. Shaw, a biology and psychology major, was an Envisions member, a co-captain for the Dark Storm Step Team, and a member of the National Organization for the Professional Advancement of Black Chemists and Chemical Engineers.

October 8 – Several Penn State football players, along with head coach James Franklin, come to the defense of redshirt sophomore safety Jonathan Sutherland after Sutherland received a letter calling his dreadlocks “disgusting” and suggesting he adopt a more “clean-cut” appearance. The letter, which received national attention, came from alumnus David Petersen (MA Edu 1966) and was shared on Twitter by Sutherland’s teammates in order to bring light to the issue.

December 6 – B. Stephen Carpenter II (MA Edu 1989, Phd Lib 1996), professor of art education and African American studies and interim director of Penn State’s School of Visual Arts, was appointed to the position of dean of the College of Arts and Architecture. Carpenter joined the School of Visual Arts faculty in 2011. His tenure as dean began on January 1, 2020.



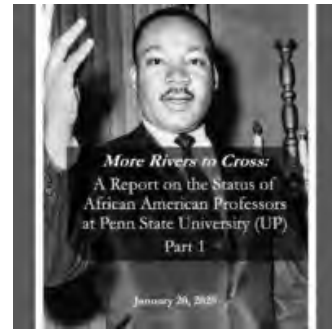
December 28 – Penn State football players wore helmet decals honoring the late Wally Triplett when the Nittany Lions defeated Memphis in the 2019 Cotton Bowl. Triplett and his teammate Dennie Hoggard were the first African-Americans to play in a Cotton Bowl game in January 1948.

2020 – Present



2020 – January – Karla Trotman (BS Bus 1998) is named CEO of Electro Soft, Inc., the largest African American custom electronics contract manufacturing and engineering company in the country. The company was founded by her family in 1986. Trotman gained notice in 2008 when she launched BellyButtonBoutique.com, an e-commerce site offering comfortable and supportive products for pre-and postnatal women, an idea inspired by her own difficult pregnancies.

January 20 – “*More Rivers to Cross: The Status of African American Professors at Penn State University (UP) Part I*” report is published. The report covers a 15-year period between 2004 and 2018 documenting institutional racism in the hiring and retention of African American and Black professors at the main campus of Penn State. The report explicitly details the comparative patterns of hiring and retaining black faculty at the university and each college over a 15-year period. It also includes a literature review of the racial biases entailed in the use of student teaching evaluation forms. A subsequent report (Part 2), published on March 21, 2021, presented the results of a survey of Black professors about their experiences with interpersonal and systemic racism and the academic climate at University Park and the 24 Commonwealth Campuses.



March 11 – Penn State announces that all classes will move to remote learning due to the COVID-19 outbreak. The university would not go back to primarily in-person classes until August 2021.



March 12 – Penn State men’s basketball senior, Lamar Stevens, had his college sports career end prematurely, along with his opportunity to ascend to the program’s all-time leading scorer, when the Big Ten men’s basketball tournament was abruptly cancelled the same day Penn State was scheduled to play, and a week before the Nittany Lions would have made their long-awaited return to the NCAA tournament. Stevens, a first team all-Big Ten forward, fell just 7 points short of passing Talor Battle’s (BS H&HD 2011) 2213-point Penn State record. Stevens would later sign with the Cleveland Cavaliers of the NBA.

April – Ala Stanford (BS Sci 1991, Med 1997) launches Black Doctors COVID-19 Consortium to help mitigate the disparity between the COVID-19 hospitalization and death rates among the African American population of Philadelphia. After a little more than a year, the group was able to basically erase the disparity and greatly increase the vaccination and test rate of Blacks in the city.

Ala Stanford (BS Sci 1991, Med 1997)

Dr. Ala Stanford is the founder of the nonprofit **Black Doctors COVID-19 Consortium**. The consortium started in the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic, when testing was scarce in the Black and Latinx communities where people were dying the most. So, Stanford rented a van, set up shop in church parking lots, and started swabbing noses. Between April 2020-October 2021, the Black Doctors COVID-19 Consortium tested more than 25,000 people for the coronavirus and vaccinated more than 75,000 Philadelphians. Because of her work, Philadelphia was named the No. 1 city in the nation for vaccinating people of color.



During these clinics, Stanford found it was common for people to ask her advice on other medical issues. She realized the services she was providing were just a small part of battling the health inequities that exist for underserved populations. In response, her group founded a more comprehensive, preventative care, health equity clinic, the Dr. Ala Stanford Center for Health Equity (ASHE), which offers blood draws for lab tests, X-rays, behavioral and mental health care, and wellness checkups for adults and children, plus standard immunizations and flu shots. Stanford's ongoing efforts have made her a national symbol and advocate for equalizing access to health care for people of color in disadvantaged communities.

Stanford received the Pennsylvania Society's 2021 Gold Medal for Distinguished Achievement, given annually to a prominent person in recognition of leadership, citizenship, and contributions to the arts, science, education, and industry. She also received the national George H.W. Bush Points of Light Award in 2021 for the critical role she played in Philadelphia's pandemic fight. The award honors individuals who demonstrate the transformative power of service, and who are driving significant and sustained impact through their everyday actions and words.

Stanford was the 100th person honored with The Philadelphia Award, given annually to a citizen of the Philadelphia region who has acted on behalf of the best interests of the community. Among the city's most cherished, meaningful, and prestigious awards, past recipients have included some of the most distinguished Philadelphians, including educators, lawyers, political figures, scientists, physicians, clergy, social activists, musicians, and artists. Her memoir, "Take Care of Them Like My Own: Faith, Fortitude and a Surgeon's Fight for Health Justice," is scheduled to be published in August of 2024. She is a proud member of Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority. (Source: psu.edu)

May 25 – White Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin kills George Floyd, a Black man, by kneeling on his neck for almost 10 minutes. The death was recorded by bystanders and touched off what may have been the largest protest movement in U.S. history and a nationwide reflection and reckoning on race and policing.

June 19 – First official State College Juneteen celebration is hosted by the State College chapter of the *NAACP* at Martin Luther King Jr. Plaza. Due to the Covid outbreak the event was held virtually.



July 29 – Harold E. Cheatham (BA LA 1961) and his wife, V. Arlene Cheatham pledged an estate gift of \$500,000 to create two endowed funds in the Office of Educational Equity, of which \$100,000 would endow the *Harold E. and V. Arlene Cheatham Lectureship in Diversity, Equity and Inclusion*. The gift was committed through the couple's revocable trust. Harold Cheatham spent 16 years, including as head, in the Department of Counselor Education before becoming founding dean of the College of Behavioral, Social and Health Sciences at Clemson University.

September – *The Penn Stater Magazine* dedicated its September/October 2020 edition to “*Black Voices: Alumni, Faculty and Students Speak Out.*” Editor Ryan Jones (BA Com 1995) indicated that the issue was intended to “provide a platform for the voices of Black Penn Staters at a time when brutal acts of racist violence have brought the country’s entrenched racism to the forefront of the national consciousness.” The edition also featured the art of student Aaron Maybin (2008).



September 13 – Karli Short, daughter of Penn State Board of Trustees member and former Penn State linebacker, Brandon Short (BS Bus 1999), was shot and killed in McKeesport, PA. She was just 26 years old and was pregnant. In 2022 Brandon Short launched a foundation named for his daughter to create scholarship funds to provide financial support for college students coping with the fallout of gun violence. "When people are affected by gun violence they're traumatized and they need support," Short said. "And that's the premise of this scholarship."

October 13 – Several of the participants in the “*Black Student Alumni at Penn State Oral History Project*” gathered at University Park for a group video interview by researcher Maia Hill (BA Lib 2020). The project consists of hour-long Zoom interviews with thirteen separate Black alumni from the late 1960s and early 1970s, plus a group interview. Hill said she wanted to cover this period because of the number of protests around the Vietnam War, Black representation in the student body, and curriculum related to Black heritage. The video interviews can be accessed at <https://sites.psu.edu/blackstudenthistories/>.



2021 – January 4 – George Grant Jr. assumed the position of chancellor at Penn State Berks campus. He was selected following a national search. As chancellor, Grant was responsible for all aspects of college administration at the commonwealth campus. Formerly dean and professor of the College of Community and Public Service at Grand Valley State University in Michigan, he earned his bachelor’s degree in social work from Marygrove College, his master’s from Grand Valley State University, and his doctorate in sociology from Western Michigan University. On August 9, 2022 Grant was named the next president of Saginaw Valley State University in Michigan. He began his tenure at Saginaw Valley State on December 1, 2022.



January 13 – Rev. Dr. Donna “Mama” King (PhD Edu 2010), pastor of St. Paul African Methodist Episcopal Church in Bellfonte, retired Penn State African American history lecturer, community activist and local historian, died at the age of 64 from cancer. One of her favorite sayings was “We have an obligation to educate the next generation about our ancestors.” King worked for many years with *Black Caucus* members, and *Black Caucus* President Nyla Holland stated “She was someone who you could tell had been through a lot, but also was so willing to give to others and donate her knowledge.”

January 15 – “*Project 1972: A Conversation with Our Elders*” panel is sponsored by the Penn State Forum on Black Affairs and Penn State World Campus Student Affairs as part of the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday Celebration. The Zoom panel included staff and faculty who worked at the University at the height of the Civil Rights movement and students who were first-year students in 1968 — the year of King’s assassination — and graduated in 1972. The panel included Gary Abdullah, Monte Dawson, Selma G. Harrison, Earl Frank Merritt, Barry Reddish, and Denita Wright Watson.

January 27 – *Black Caucus* members are attacked with slurs and hate speech through a “Zoom Bombing” at their Involvement Fair. Fifty-one unwanted users “ambushed” the *Black Caucus* Zoom room during the online event and filled the chat with anti-semitic and white supremacist language, while several users screamed into their microphones, played loud music or exposed themselves sexually. Additionally, the *Black Caucus* said the attackers used racist and homophobic slurs. The University condemned this attack and launched an investigation into the incident with the University police partnering with multiple officials including the FBI.

March 2, 2021 – In honor of their 100th anniversary at Penn State, the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity Nu Alumni Association (NAA) is acknowledged by Eric J. Barron (Penn State President) and Matthew W. Schuyler (Penn State Board of Trustees Chair) for its generosity in establishing the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity Nu Alumni Association Educational Equity Scholarship. The NAA gift, along with the University’s matching contributions, created a \$375,000 endowment. The fund will provide scholarships in perpetuity.

March 15 – Micah Shrewsberry is named Penn State head men’s basketball coach. Shrewsberry, former associate head coach at Purdue University, had also been an assistant coach at Butler, and with the Boston Celtics of the NBA. He is the 2nd African American head coach of the men’s basketball team at Penn State. During the 2022-23 season, Shrewsberry would lead the Nittany Lions to a 23-14 overall record, its first NCAA Tournament victory since 2001 and its first trip to the NCAA Tournament since 2011. Shortly after the NCAA Tournament ended for Penn State, he would leave the program to accept the same position at Notre Dame.



May 7 – Janiyah R. Davis is elected to a 2-year term as Student Trustee by the Penn State Board of Trustees, effective July 1, 2021. She is the second African American to hold that position. A Schreyer Honors Scholar, Davis was a third-year student in the College of the Liberal Arts studying public policy, criminology, and psychology with minors in anthropology, sociology, and child maltreatment and advocacy studies and a certificate in behavioral health and counseling psychology. She is a member of Penn State’s Black Caucus and president of the National Panhellenic Council. Davis served as



an Undergraduate Research Fellow within the Rock Ethics Institute, president of the Student’s Restorative Justice Initiative, and the University Relations Director for the Multicultural Association of Schreyer Scholars. She is also the VP of the Justice Association, a member of Delta Sigma Theta sorority, and the Student Minority Advisory and Recruitment Team (SMART).

May 12 – Errol Henderson, associate professor of political science, filed a federal lawsuit accusing the university of racial discrimination. He indicated that in response to

his complaints about racism at Penn State, he was disciplined and denied a promotion to full professor. Henderson formally complained about a racially hostile work environment as far back as 2010. In January 2019 he wrote an op-ed published in the *Daily Collegain* titled “Being Black at Penn State” in which he recounted discriminatory instances he experienced during his time at Penn State. The university and Henderson settled the lawsuit in January 2023. The terms of the lawsuit were not disclosed at the time.

September – **5,158 (5.8%) African American students** are enrolled at Penn State. The racial/ethnic breakdown of the Penn State student enrollment in 2021 was:

<u>Group</u>	<u># of students</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
Hispanic	7,265	8.1
Asian	6,098	6.9
African American	5,158	5.8
Multi-Racial	3,057	3.4
Unknown	2,038	2.3
Native American	103	0.1
Native Hawaiian	76	0.1
International	9,303	10.5
White	5,5816	62.8

(Source: Penn State Data Digest. Excludes Penn College)

October 8 – The Guion S. Bluford Jr. Building (formerly the 320 Building, Innovation Pak) dedication ceremony was held. The College of Engineering building naming honored the first African American in space, and became the 2nd building on the University Park campus named for an African American alumni. Bluford (BS Eng 1964) made his historic flight in space in 1983.

October 12 – Tanisha Wright (BA Edu 2006) is named head coach of the Atlanta Dream of the WNBA. After playing in the WNBA for eleven seasons, including four seasons as an assistant coach, the former Lady Lion All-American would land her first head coaching position. In her first season (2022-2023), Wright would be named *AP Coach of the Year*.



October 23 – Penn State seniors DeAndre Malcolm and Jaylen Carr were named the recipients of Penn State Homecoming’s fourth-ever gender neutral *Guide State Forward Award* (replacing Homecoming King and Queen). Malcolm, a liberal arts major, served as president of the Penn State Black Caucus, and Carr, an engineering major, was Treasurer of the Penn State National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE) and Vice-President of the Penn State Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity chapter. Both were also resident assistants in the dorms.



2022 – January 2 – Penn State and Dickinson School of Law alum, Rita Frealing, (BA Lib 1979, JD Law 1982) is sworn in as the mayor of Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. She becomes the first African American and the first woman to be elected to that position. While an undergraduate at Penn State Frealing was a member of the cheerleading squad.

February – Kamila Elliott (BA Com 1999) becomes both the first Black person and the first Black woman to chair the Certified Financial Planning Board, the governing board for certified financial planner certifications in the United States. Elliott is the co-founder of Collective Wealth Partners (CWP), one of the largest Black-owned wealth management firms in America. CWP is dedicated to supporting the creation of wealth for BIPOC and other underserved communities through comprehensive advisory services.



April 8 – Shirley M. Malcom (PhD Sci 1974), scientist and advocate whose pioneering work has helped open doors for women of color in the sciences, was honored by Penn State with the naming of a building at Innovation Park. The 329 Building at Innovation Park was renamed “The Shirley M. Malcom Building” in honor of Malcom who earned her doctorate in ecology from Penn State. In 1976 Malcom co-authored the landmark report, "The Double Bind: The Price of Being a Minority Woman in Science," which brought attention to the challenges of being a Black woman in the sciences. Over her long career Malcom has been a leader in efforts to improve access of girls and women to education and careers in the sciences and to increase the use of science and technology to empower women and address problems they face in their daily lives. The Shirley M. Malcom Building is the third building on the University Park campus to be named for an African American alumni since 2019.

May 9 – Neeli Bendapudi began her tenure as the nineteenth president of Penn State, becoming the first woman and the first person of color to assume that position. With a nearly thirty-year career as a leader in higher education and business, Bendapudi most recently served as the President of the University of Louisville.



May 25 – Calvin Booth (BA Lib 1998) is named general manager of the NBA’s Denver Nuggets. Booth was a three-year starter on the Nittany Lion men’s basketball team and finished school as the Big Ten career leader in blocked shots. He was drafted in the second-round to the NBA and spent ten years in the league before retiring in 2009. Booth had spent almost five years as the Nuggets assistant general manager before being named to run the NBA team. Booth would lead the Nuggets to their first NBA championship in the 2022-2023 season, his first season at the helm..



July 26 – Bria Bryant (BA Com 2020) debuts on the cast of *Love Island USA* (Peacock Network) for the show's fourth season, along with her brother Chazz. The New Jersey native also earned a master's degree at Rutgers University in 2022. While at Penn State, Bryant was the president of the *Black Student Union* at Penn State Altoona, a member of the club cheerleading team, and a telecommunications major. After learning about the technical side of television at school, Bryant was ready to step in front of the camera. Although her time on the show did not go quite as planned, Bryant said she has no regrets and plans to leverage the notoriety she received. Bryant was "dumped" from the villa just five days after arriving. (Source: Onwardstate.com)



August 10 – Charles Dumas, professor emeritus in the School of Theatre at Penn State, received the 2022 *National Black Theatre Festival Living Legend Award*. Presented in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, at the festival's Opening Night Gala



Awards Banquet, the award recognizes Dumas for his "significant contributions to American theatre and to the entertainment industry." Dumas, who came to Penn State in 1995, has acted in, directed or written more than three hundred plays, films and commercials. He received an Emmy Award for his ensemble work in "Separate but Equal" with Sidney Poitier. Dumas was awarded a fellowship for playwriting from the Pennsylvania Council of the Arts and he was honored as best actor by the Hollywood and Beverly Hills NAACP for his work in "B.C. Historia."

August 17 – The Eberly Foundation commits funds to commission a sculpture of the Rev. James Lawson Jr., a renowned non-violence advocate of the civil rights movement, to be installed at Penn State Fayette, The Eberly Campus. Lawson was born in Uniontown, Pennsylvania.

September – Gary Brito (BS H&HD 1986) is promoted to commanding general of the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) after 35 years as a commissioned infantry officer.

October 22 – Penn State Homecoming announced Star Lawson as one of the 2022 Guide State Forward Student Court winners for 2022. This crown is the gender-neutral replacement for what was formerly called Homecoming King and Queen. Lawson is a senior majoring in public relations, on the Paul Robeson Cultural Center marketing and communications team, the African Student Association public relations chair and executive board member, and a member of the Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority. It was also announced that Savanah Jackson was the 2022 Guide State Forward Award winner for the Graduate and Professional School Court. Jackson is a second-year graduate student in the School of International Affairs who is studying race and development.

October 26 – University president Neeli Bendapudi cancels plans to create a Center for Racial Justice at Penn State as part of a budget-cutting effort. The proposed \$3.5 million center was intended to bring together Penn State scholars whose studies focus on racism and racial bias. In March 2022 the university had indicated it had begun a faculty-led search for a founding director. The cancellation drew backlash and criticism from students, faculty, and the media.

November 9 – Summer Lee (BA Com 2009) becomes the first Black woman from Pennsylvania to be elected to the U.S. Congress, representing the 12th District in the House of Representatives. The 35-year-old Lee grew up in the North Braddock and Rankin neighborhoods of Pittsburgh. A graduate of Woodland Hills High School, she went on to study at and graduate from Penn State in 2009, and later Howard University School of Law, where she specialized in civil rights and constitutional law. Lee is also a proud member of Delta Sigma Theta sorority



November 19 – The Barney Ewell Legacy Committee honored Ewell (BS H&HD 1947) with a statue unveiled in Ewell Plaza in downtown Lancaster. Ewell's three Olympic Medals (1 gold, 2 silver) from the 1948 games, at the age of 30, are still the most won by any Penn State alum. If the Olympics Games during his prime had not been canceled due to World War II, it is likely Ewell would have at least tripled that count and been as well-known as Jesse Owens.

December – Joan Durnell Powell (BA Lib 1975) was elected to the Executive Committee of the National Council of Negro Women (NCNW) for the 2023-2024 term. Despite having lived with a diagnosis of myelodysplastic syndrome, a rare blood cancer, since 2014, Joan has taken on several leadership roles, including president of the Orange County section of the NCNW, and an active member of Delta Sigma Theta sorority.

2023 - January 2 – Dr. Ron W. Darbeau was named chancellor of Penn State Altoona.



Darbeau was formerly vice president for faculty affairs and academic operations at Commonwealth University of Pennsylvania, the integrated institution of Bloomsburg, Lock Haven, and Mansfield universities that was established in July 2022. A native of Trinidad and Tobago, Darbeau holds a bachelor's degree with honors in chemistry from the University of the West Indies. He earned master's and doctoral degrees in organic chemistry from Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, Maryland.

January 17 – Dr. Khalid Mumin (Med Edu 2001), a Philadelphia native, is nominated for Pennsylvania Secretary of Education by Governor Josh Shapiro. Mumin served as superintendent of the Lower Merion School District for a little over a year. Before joining Lower Merion, Mumin was superintendent for seven years at the Reading School District, a majority Latino district that is one of the state's largest and poorest districts. While at Reading, he won superintendent of the year from the superintendents' statewide trade association. Mumin would be confirmed by the Pennsylvania State Senate on June 26, 2023. As secretary of education, he is afforded a non-voting role on the Penn State Board of Trustees.



March 13 – Curtis Johnson (BA Com 1991, MEd Edu 1994), was approved by the Board of Directors as the superintendent of the State College Area School District, becoming the first African American to lead the district. Since 2021 he served as the assistant superintendent of secondary schools, working closely with the superintendent and district administrative team. Prior to serving as assistant superintendent, Johnson was the principal of State College Area High School for five years after serving one year as interim principal and ten years in other leadership roles at the high school. Johnson received both a bachelor's degree and a master's degree in secondary school counseling from Penn State and is pursuing a doctorate in educational leadership at the university.

April 5 – Dr. Michael West, head of Penn State's Department of African American Studies, resigned from the role alleging that leadership broke promises and questioning the school's commitment to diversity and equity. West resigned less than a year into his five-year term. He explained his departure in an open letter, claiming that the College of the Liberal Arts had refused to follow through on a commitment to hire two new tenure-line faculty. West continued to serve as a tenured professor in the department.

April 21 – The Paul Robeson Cultural Center (PRCC) celebrates its 50th Anniversary (1972-2022) with a large gala at the Bryce Jordan Center. In addition to the hundreds of guests, several of the founders of what was first the Black Cultural Center attended.



May 1 – Dr. Levon T. Esters, associate dean for diversity, equity and inclusion and faculty affairs for Purdue University’s Polytechnic Institute and professor of agricultural sciences education, was appointed dean of the Graduate School and vice provost for graduate education at Penn State. A core focus of Esters’ career has been developing programs to support underrepresented graduate students with emphasis on STEM-based agricultural and life sciences disciplines. Esters will provide oversight across all of Penn State’s more than 200 graduate fields of study, including 109 research master’s degree programs, 99 professional master’s degree programs and 95 research doctoral programs.



June 22 – Penn State men's basketball guard Jalen Pickett (2nd round, 32nd pick, Denver Nuggets) and wing Seth Lundy (2nd round, 46th pick, Atlanta Hawks) were selected in the 2023 NBA Draft. Pickett and Lundy's selections mark the first time in program history that two Nittany Lions were selected in the same NBA Draft. Pickett and Lundy's outstanding 2022-23 seasons led Penn State to a 23-14 overall record, its first NCAA Tournament victory since 2001 and first trip to the NCAA Tournament since 2011. Pickett was also named Penn State’s first All-American in basketball in 70 years.



July 12 – Edgar (DEd Edu 1978) and Barbara Farmer are named the 2023 Renaissance Fund honorees for their many contributions to Penn State and the State College community. The Penn State’s Renaissance Fund recognizes outstanding community members and helps students in need. Edgar Farmer is professor emeritus of education at Penn State, and Barbara Farmer was the first Black principal in the State College School District. A reception in the Farmers’ honor was held on November 1, 2023.

September – Squire Booker, professor of chemistry, biochemistry, and molecular biology, is named the 2023 Percy L. Julian Award honoree by the National Organization for the Professional Advancement of Black Chemists and Chemical Engineers. The award recognizes and honors achievements in pure or applied science as well as dedication to the scientific research community. Named for the famed African American researcher who pioneered the chemical synthesis of medicinal drugs from plants, the award was presented at the organization’s 50th Anniversary Gala and Conference in New Orleans.



October 14 – Carolyn “Tomi” Oluwaseun-Apo and De’jah Coates were named 2023 Homecoming Guide State Forward Award winners. Oluwaseun-Apo is a human-centered design and development major in the College of Information Sciences and Technology with a minor in Psychology. She is from Yardville/Hamilton, New Jersey. Coates is a fourth-year student from Prince George’s County, Maryland majoring in Biobehavioral Health with minors in African American Studies and Neuroscience.



December 5 – It was announced that W. Forrest Coley Jr. (BS Bus 1985, MBA 1990) had designated \$1.5 million in an estate commitment to fund three endowed scholarships, all of which would support students who contribute to the diversity of the Penn State student body. After two years in the hospitality industry and a year working for Penn State, Coley, a Philadelphia native, leveraged his MBA into 27 years of leadership in the field of healthcare sales and marketing. Now “actively” retired since 2017, he is a member of the National Association of Realtors and a real estate investor in Atlanta, Georgia.

December 12 – Penn State renames its Pittsburgh center location in honor of the late Franco Harris (BS H&HD 1972). Penn State President Neeli Bendapudi said Franco Harris was a true ambassador for Penn State and an outstanding community leader. “Franco’s commitment to excellence, both on and off the field, and his dedication to philanthropy and public service exemplify the values we hold dear as a university,” said Bendapudi. Harris, a Pro Football Hall of Famer, died in December 2022.

December 13 – David M. Davis (BA Com 2004), who served as president of the school’s Black Caucus in the early 2000s, was appointed to the university’s Board of Trustees by Governor Josh Shapiro. Davis serves as Managing Director at Accenture Consulting in Philadelphia where he oversees Accenture’s Public Sector Practice in Pennsylvania and becomes the first openly gay Black member of the Board of Trustees.



2024 - January 1 – Tonya L. Peeples becomes the Dean of the



Penn State College of Engineering, overseeing all aspects of Penn State’s largest academic college. She had held the role in an interim capacity since July 2023. Peeples joined Penn State in 2018 as a professor of chemical engineering and as the inaugural associate dean for equity and inclusion in the College of Engineering. Earlier in 2023, prior to being named interim dean, she was appointed senior associate dean.

February 11 – Terry Killens (BA Com '96) becomes the first person to both play in and officiate in a Super Bowl when Super Bowl LVIII kicked off. Killens played for the Tennessee Titans in Super Bowl XXXIV.

February 27 – Delegates to the Metro Washington Council AFL-CIO elect Samuel Epps (BA Lib 1996), Political Director at UNITE HERE Local 25, to be the next president of the Council. The Metro Washington Council AFL-CIO unites nearly 200 local affiliate unions who together represent more than 150,000 members in Washington, D.C. and Maryland.



March 11 – A group of 5 Penn State Black faculty hold a “read-in” at Old Main to protest the university’s “lack of progress” toward racial justice. Faculty members Gary King, Michael West, Christopher Dancy, Darryl C. Thomas, and Jennifer Black indicated they were protesting to highlight the university’s “deliberate indifference to issues of racial injustice.” The group would return twice more in the next few weeks with several additional participants.

March 23 – Penn State wrestlers Carter Starocci and Aaron Brooks become the school's first four-time NCAA champions, helping Penn State win its 11th NCAA Wrestling National Championship in 13 years. Starocci and Brooks became the first Black wrestlers to win four NCAA championships and just the 6th and 7th wrestlers of all time to accomplish the feat. Brooks was also named the 2024 NCAA Most Dominant Wrestler and the 2024 NCAA Championship Outstanding Wrestler. Additionally, the team posted the highest ever team score and largest margin of victory in the history of the NCAA Wrestling National Championships.



March 27 – Zion Sykes is elected president of the University Park Undergraduate Association (UPUA). Sykes, a third-year student studying global and international studies, advocated for more accessibility for students and faculty members with mental or physical disabilities. Hailing from Philadelphia, Sykes became the fifth Black president of the Penn State student government.

May 1 – Walter T. Mosely III (BA Lib 1990) is announced as New York's Secretary of State nominee by Governor Kathy Hochul. Mosley served in the New York State Assembly from 2013 until 2020, representing communities in central Brooklyn including the neighborhoods of Fort Greene, Clinton Hill, Prospect Heights, and parts of Bedford Stuyvesant and Crown Heights. In addition to his degree from Penn State, Mosley received a law degree from Howard University in 1998.



May 21 – G. Justin Haley (BA Com 2008) wins his sixth Sports Emmy award for Outstanding Live Sports Special for Super Bowl LVIII. Haley is an associate producer at CBS Sports.

June 1 – The Penn State Alumni Association is featured in the June issue of *Insight into Diversity* magazine for receiving their 2024 Alumni Association Inclusive Excellence Award. *Insight into Diversity* magazine is the largest and oldest diversity and inclusion publication in higher education. "Throughout our history, the Penn State Alumni Association has strived to create an inclusive environment for all alumni," said Paul Clifford, CEO of the Penn State Alumni Association. "This award is a recognition of the progress we have made on our DEIB journey and an acknowledgment that our work in this space is never-ending. When we say "WE ARE" we mean all Penn Staters."

June 7 – Penn State sprinter Cheickna Traore secures the NCAA Outdoor Championship in the men's 200 meters, finishing with a time of 19.95 seconds.



July 1 – Aquila Kikora Franklin, professor of theatre/dance and associate director of equity, diversity, and inclusion in Penn State's School of Theatre, assumes the role of interim director of the school. Franklin is an award-winning educator, dancer-choreographer, and community-engaged artist who has been on the School of Theatre faculty since 2003.



*"The most common way people give up their power
is thinking they don't have any."*

- Alice Walker

*"Our crown has already been bought and paid for.
All we have to do is wear it."*

- James Baldwin



Travis Salters (2011), Christian Ragland (2011), and Christopher Nock (2011)

APPENDIX



*"When we stood at childhood's gate,
Shapeless in the hands of fate,
Thou didst mold us, dear old State..."*

Appendix A**Douglass Association Petition for an Afro-American Course**

(Presented to the College of Liberal Arts on November 21, 1967)

AS students of Afro-American heritage attending the Pennsylvania State University we note, as of this writing, that there does not exist a course in Afro-American history.

Such an oversight, particularly during these times of racial strife, only contributes to the misunderstanding, which has been responsible for the continuation of racial troubles.

Therefore we strongly recommend that the University institute a course in Afro-American history to begin no later than Winter Term 1968. We would further recommend that this course be taught by a person of Afro-American heritage.

Such a course in order to cover the full scope of this subject should include the following topics:

- a. Activities of Afro-Americans prior to 1819
- b. The slave revolts
- c. The period of Reconstruction: 1863-1877
- d. The Black Nationalist and Black Muslim Movements
- e. Activities up to and including the Black Power Movement

We further recommend that this course be made a requirement for all education and history majors.

Conrad J. Reid

Ray Stovall

Ray Cooper (Attorney General)

James Thompson

Raymond Edgerton

John Lucas

Charles Pittman

Jim Hates

Charles Adams

Douglas McCutcheon

Elijah Johnson

Ernest Jackson

Ronald C. Johnson

Jeffrey B. Ferguson

Joseph E. Skilling
Kenneth L. Sawyer
Washington

Note: Only first 17 of the 130 total signatures are shown.

Document courtesy of Dr. Frederick B. Phillips, founder and first president of the Douglass Association (1967)

Appendix B**Douglass Association List of 12 Demands***

(Presented to the vice-president of student affairs, Charles L. Lewis, on May 13, 1968)

1. More Black undergraduates. There are presently only about 200 Black students attending the University. The Douglass Association demanded that the undergraduate enrollment include 400 Blacks students by fall of 1968, 1000 by the following fall, and 10% of the undergraduate population thereafter.
2. That a building be named after and dedicated to Martin Luther King Jr.
3. That a Martin Luther King Jr. Scholarship fund be established
4. That a course in Negro History be made a permanent part of the curriculum
5. More Black professors
6. More Black graduate students
7. That a section of Pattee Library be devoted exclusively to Black authors
8. Reevaluation of the athletic recruiting program with regard to Black students
9. More Black athletes
10. More Black coaches
11. More Black literature offered in the University's English section
12. The introduction of an African culture study program

Note: A commitment to take steps to meet these demands was agreed to and signed by the Vice-President for student affairs Charles Lewis that evening. A few days later three administration officials met with the executive board of the Douglass Association to further discuss the demands and potential implementation plans.

** As reported by the Daily Collegian*

Appendix C**Penn State Black Student Government Presidents**

School Year	Douglass Association/ Black Student Union	Black Caucus	All University/ AWS/ USG/ UPUA
1954-55			H. Jesse Arnette (All University)
1964-65			Julie Cromitie (AWS)
1967	Frederick Phillips		
1968	John Warner/ Wilbert Manley		
1969	William "Rick" Collins		
1969-70	* Vincent Benson * Kenneth Waters * Anthony Leonard * Bill W. Patterson * J. Raleigh Demby		Theodore Q. Thompson (USG)
1970-71	# James I Garner/Anthony Leonard		
1971-72		James Lomax	
1972-73		James Lomax	
1973-74		Lee Coffey	
1974-75		Lenny Howard	
1975-76		Tony Palimore	
1976-77		William "Butch" Randolph	
1977-78		David Allen	
1978-79		Charles Kennedy	
1979-80		Takesha Dockery	
1980-81		Paul Davis	
1981-82		Avery Rose	
1982-83		** Iris Foster / Lorraine Vincent	
1983-84		Marvin Johnson	
1984-85		Gina Louissant	
1985-86		Larry Patrick	
1986-87		Darryl King	
1987-88		R. Seth Williams	
1988-89		Courtney Pinkney	R. Seth Williams (USG)
1989-90		Tanya Burnett / Walter Mosley	
1990-91		Nicole Batts	
1991-92		Gail Williams	

* 1969-70 Black Student Union was led by a Coordinating Committee of 5 people

1970-71 James I Garner led the Black Student Union, but was not identified with a title.

Anthony Leonard was treasurer and spokesperson.

** 1982 Iris Foster elected Black Caucus president, but resigned prior to taking office.

Compiled by Darryl Daisey June 2024

Penn State Black Student Government Presidents (Continued)

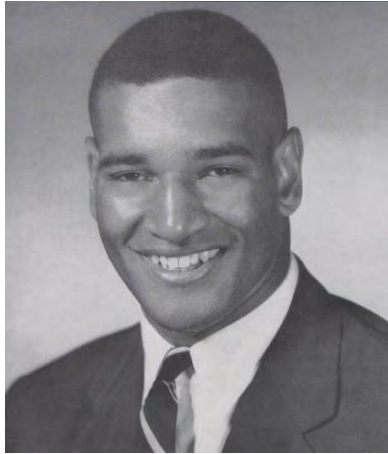
School Year	Douglass Association/ Black Student Union	Black Caucus	All University/ AWS/ USG/ UPUA
1992-93		## Ingrid McIntosh / Desiree Trader	
1993-94		Marcella Nixon	
1994-95		Christopher A. Atkinson	
1995-96		Sheneka Soloman	
1996-97		Nikitra Bailey	
1997-98		Rashid Njai	
1998-99		Luanda Johnson	
1999-00		Joseph Dawkins	
2000-01		LaKeisha Wolf	
2001-02		Hasan Amenra	
2002-03		David M. Davis	
2003-04		Tiffanie Lewis	
2004-05		Edward Smith	
2005-06		Gandarvaka Gray.	
2006-07		Darryl Watson	
2007-08		Anthony Washington	
2008-09		Kenya Goods	
2009-10		Christopher Nock	
2010-11		Christopher Nock	Christian D. Ragland (UPUA)
2011-12		Ryan Brown	
2012-13		Ryan Brown	
2013-14		Naeem Holman	
2014-15		Jada Hill	
2015-16		Genevieve Logerie	
2016-17		Genevieve Logerie	
2017-18		Danieltta Pantoe	
2018-19		Danieltta Pantoe	
2019-20		Fatima Odebisi	
2020-21		Nyla Holland	
2021-22		DeAndre Malcom	
2022-23		Ava Starks	
2023-24		Jhordan Price	
2024-25		Kenisha Brown	Zion Sykes (UPUA)

Compiled by Darryl Daisey June 2024

1992 Ingrid McIntosh left school shortly after taking office

Sources: *Daily Collegian*, *Penn Stater Magazine*, *Onwardstate.com*, Penn State Archives and *The Drum* Newsletters

Penn State University Black All Student Government Presidents



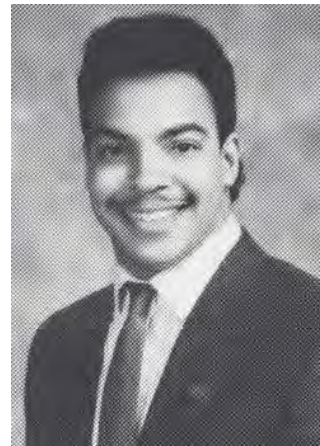
H. Jesse Arnelle (1955-56) All-Univ Gov.



Julie Cromitie (1964-65) Assoc. of Women Students



Ted Q. Thompson (1969-70) USG



R. Seth Williams (1988-89) USG



Christian Ragland (2010-11) UPUA



Zion Sykes (2024-25) UPUA

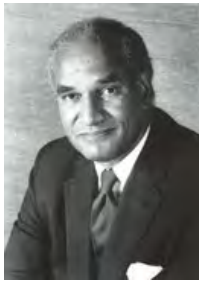
Appendix D

Penn State University Black Board of Trustees Members

<u>Name</u>	<u>First Year Elected/Selected</u>	<u>Selected by</u>	<u>Last Year on Board</u>
* H. Jesse Arnelle	1969	Alumni	2014
Hardy Williams	1972	PA Governor	1975
Kim Hammond	1980	Student Rep.	1982
Cecile M. Springer	1981	PA Governor	1995
Barry K. Robinson	1989	Alumni	2004
** Cynthia A. Baldwin	1995	PA Governor	2010
Kenneth C. Frazier	2009	Bus & Industry	2015
Adam J. Taliaferro	2012	Alumni	2015
Brandon D. Short	2018	Alumni	
Randolph B. Houston	2021	Alumni Association	2023
Janiyah R. Davis	2021	Student Trustee	2023
David M. Davis	2023	PA Governor	

* H. Jesse Arnelle elected Chair of the Board of Trustees from 1996 - 1997

** Cynthia A. Baldwin elected Chair of the Board of Trustees from 2004 – 2006



H. Jesse Arnelle



Hardy Williams



Cecile M. Springer



Barry K. Robinson



Cynthia A. Baldwin



Kenneth C. Frazier



Adam J. Taliaferro.



Brandon Short



Randolph Houston



Kim Hammond



Janiyah R. Davis



David M. Davis

Appendix E

Penn State University Black College Deans



Rodney Reed, Education (1990 - 1998)



Clarence Lang, Liberal Arts (July 2019 - present)



B. Stephen Carpenter II, Arts & Architecture (Jan 2020 - present)



Levon T. Ester, Graduate School (May 2023 - present)



Tonya L. Peebles, Engineering (Jan 2024 - present)

Appendix F

**Penn State University
Black Commonwealth Campus Chancellors**

Joanne E. Burley,
Penn State McKeesport (now Greater Allegheny)
July 1, 1992 to June 24, 1999



Curtiss E. Porter
Penn State Greater Allegheny
June 25, 1999 to December 2013



Anita D. McDonald,
Penn State DuBois
February 24, 2003 to December 31, 2012



Emanuel Osagie
Penn State Fayette
February 1, 2007 to March 9, 2010



Francis Achampong
Penn State Fayette, March 22, 2010 to July 31,
Penn State Mt. Alto, August 1, 2013 - present



2013

Tina Q. Richardson
Penn State Lehigh Valley, July 5, 2015 to present



George Grant Jr
Penn State Berks
January 4, 2021 to December 1, 2022



Ron Darbeau
Penn State Altoona
January 2, 2023 to present



Appendix G

**Penn State University
Directors of the Black/Paul Robeson Cultural Center**

1971 – 1973 – Warren Coleman



1972 – 1973 – James Carter

1973 – 1982 - Elmore Brown

1983 – 2004 – Lawrence W. Young.



2004 – 2009 – Toby Jenkins



2010 – 2022 – Carlos Wiley



2023 – Present - Evan Williams



Appendix H

Penn State University Black/Paul Robeson Cultural Center Student Founders 1972

Gary Abdullah	Zwadie Abdul-Malik	David Bland
Patricia (Pat) Brown	Ronald Brown	Natalie Burrell
Michael Carpenter	Clarence Cobb	Lee Coffey
Charles Cooper	Elaine Craig	Steve Davis
Reginald Green	Andrew Jackson	Samuel James
Eleanor Johnson	Anthony Leonard	Barry Manns
Alfred McGilberry	William Mebane	Judith Peters
Jonathan Pinkett	Samuel Lewis	Barry Reddish
Carla Roser-Jones	Ronald Roston	Jorja Spence
Michael Stewart	Joanne Stevenson	Darryl Trent
Vinnie Thompson	Gary R. Tyler	Michelle Williams



Some of the Paul Robeson Cultural Center founders at the 50th Anniversary Gala in 2023 (delayed a year due to Covid).

Appendix I

Penn State University

First Documented Black Student Intercollegiate Athletes (by Sport)

(Information courtesy of Diana Kenepp and the Intercollegiate Athletics Diversity Council - March 2008)

Men's Teams

School Year	Sport	Name	Team	*Year Sport Began
1909 – 1910	Basketball	Cumberland Posey	Freshmen	1896
1910 – 1911	Basketball	Cumberland Posey	Varsity	1896
1911 – 1912	Track & Field	James Ambrose Piner	Varsity	1891
1925 – 1926	Boxing	Theodore Elkton Gilbert	Varsity	1919
1926 – 1927	Soccer	Mousa Ismail Serry	Varsity	1911
1941 – 1942	Football	Dave Alston	Freshmen	1887
		Harry Alston	Freshmen	1887
1945 – 1946	Football	Wally Triplett	Varsity	1887
1909 – 1910	Baseball	Cumberland Posey	Freshmen	1875
1956 – 1957	Baseball	Robert S. Hoover	Varsity	1875
1956 – 1957	Wrestling	Bruce Gilmore	Varsity	1908
1962 – 1963	Fencing	John C. Cooper	Varsity	1926
1971 – 1972	Gymnastics	Vincent Faust	Varsity	1931
		William Mitchell	Varsity	1931
1973 – 1974	Lacrosse	Andy Fairfax	Varsity	1913
1977 – 1978	Tennis	Cecil Green	Varsity	1911
1984 – 1985	Volleyball	Javier Gaspar	Varsity	1976
1997 – 1998	Swimming	Shaun Anderson	Varsity	1936
		Chris Bagley	Varsity	1936
2016 – 2017	Ice Hockey	Liam Folkes	Varsity	2012

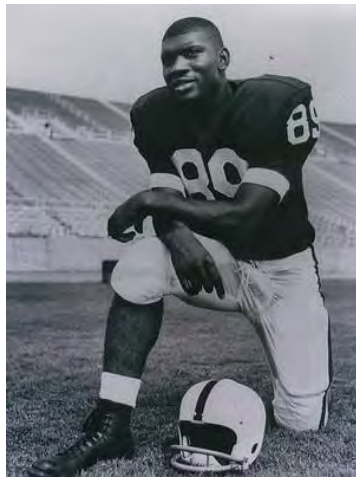
Women's Teams

School Year	Sport	Name	Team	*Year Sport Began
1968 – 1969	Gymnastics	Barbara Rose	Varsity	1964
1969 – 1970	Field Hockey	Lorraine Hutchings	Varsity	1964
1969 – 1970	Basketball	Lorraine Hutchings	Varsity	1965
1969 – 1970	Lacrosse	Lorraine Hutchings	Varsity	1965
1970 – 1971	Tennis	Sandy Turner	Varsity	1965
1971 – 1972	Fencing	Diane Snow	Varsity	1964
		Pam Hall	Varsity	1964
1972 – 1973	Softball	Barbara Snell	Varsity	1965
1975 – 1976	Track & Field	Doris Moore	Varsity	1974
1976 – 1977	Volleyball	Teresa Wilson	Varsity	1976
1998 – 1999	Soccer	Gillian Samuel	Varsity	1994
2010 – 2011	Swimming	Lauren Barnes	Varsity	1968
2021 – 2022	Ice Hockey	Avery Mitchell	Varsity	2012

* Year that sport became designated as an intercollegiate sport at Penn State. The list does not include club or intramural sports.

Appendix J**Penn State's Black Hall of Fame Athletes****College Football Hall of Fame**

<u>Name</u>	<u>Year Inducted</u>
Richard "David" Robinson	1997
Lydell Mitchell	2004
Curt Warner	2009
LaVar Arrington	2022



David Robinson



Lydell Mitchell



Curt Warner



LaVar Arrington

Penn State's Black Hall of Fame Athletes

Professional Football Hall of Fame

<u>Name</u>	<u>Year Inducted</u>
Lenny Moore	1975
Franco Harris	1990
Richard "David" Robinson	2013



Lenny Moore



Franco Harris



David Robinson

National Baseball Hall of Fame

<u>Name</u>	<u>Year Inducted</u>
Cumberland "Cum" Posey	2006



Cumberland Posey

Penn State's Black Hall of Fame Athletes

Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame



Cumberland Posey

<u>Name</u>	<u>Year Inducted</u>
Cumberland “Cum” Posey	2016

National Track and Field Hall of Fame

<u>Name</u>	<u>Year Inducted</u>
Henry Norwood “Barney” Ewell	1955



Barney Ewell

Penn State's Black Hall of Fame Athletes

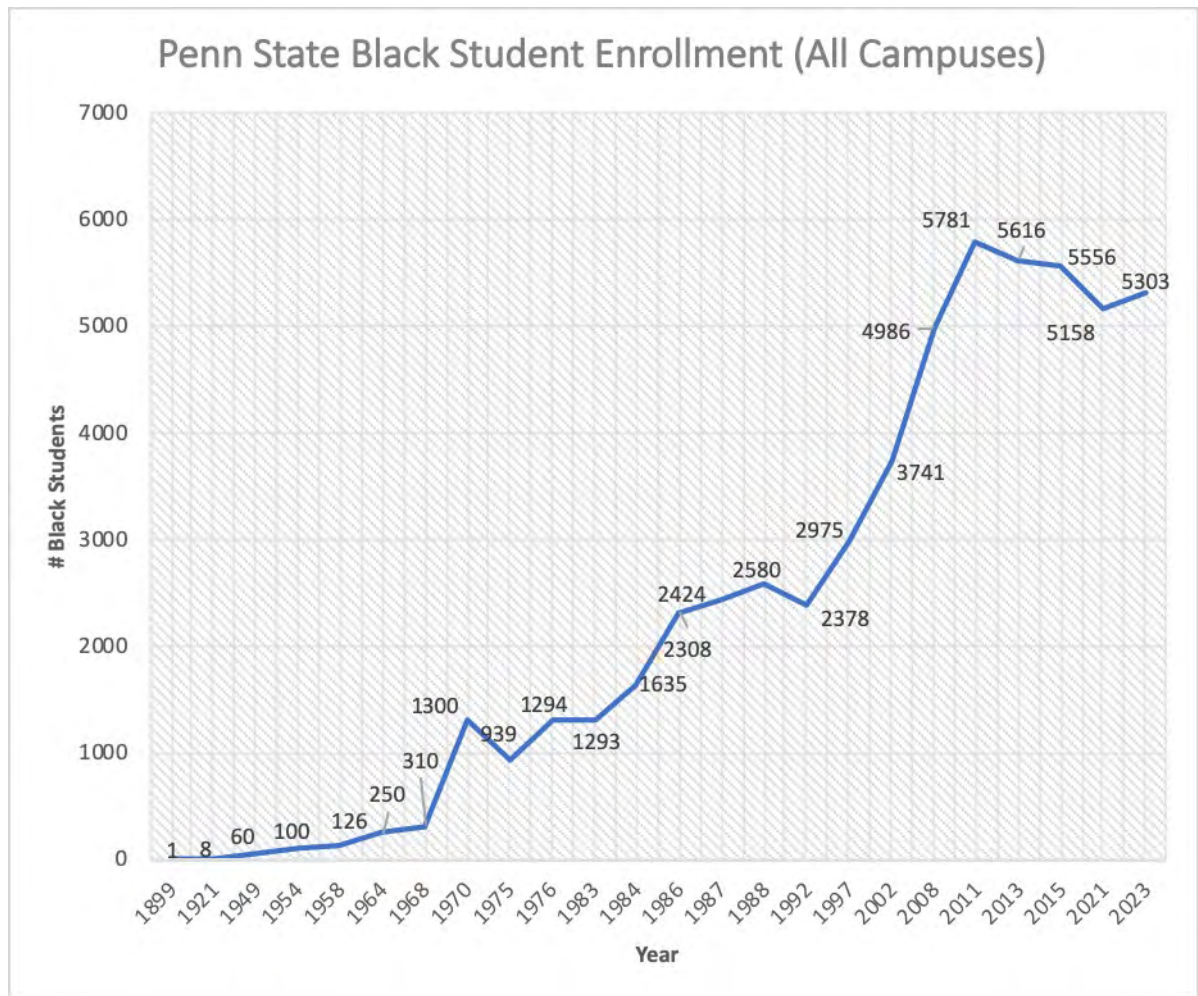
National Wrestling Hall of Fame



Kerry McCoy

<u>Name</u>
Kerry McCoy

<u>Year Inducted</u>
2014

Appendix K

Note 1 - The enrollment numbers prior to 1970 are estimates. No official count of Black students prior to that year

Note 2 - In complying with government regulations Penn State added a "Two or more race" category in 2009

Note 3 - Penn College enrollment is not included

Note 4 - Demographic % in August 2023 - Black 6%, Asian 7.3%, Hispanic 9%, Multi-Race 3.6%

Source: Daily Collegian, Penn State Fact Book, and Penn State Data Digest.

Appendix L**Davage Report - 1958**

Below is the summary page of a 1958 study titled “**Racial Discrimination in the State College Community.**” The study was commonly referred to as the “Davage Report” after its author, Robert H. Davage, associate professor of psychology. Go to www.blackhistory.psu.edu to view the entire report.

Overall Summary

This study of racial discrimination in the State College community was based on an analysis of questionnaires administered to a sample of 67 Negro students in the Spring of 1958. The two major objectives of the study were (1) to obtain estimates of the extent and nature of discriminatory practices in the local community, and (2) to determine the attitudes of Negroes toward discrimination problems and toward possible corrective programs.

Estimates of the actual extent of discriminatory practices were derived from reports of discriminatory experiences personally encountered by Negroes. Overstatement of the extent of discrimination was prevented by requiring extensive documentation from the respondents and by providing internal checks in the data. Understatement of the actual extent of racial discrimination could not be eliminated from the basic data but was systematically assessed.

Major findings were as follows:

1. Two out of every five Negroes have personally encountered racial discrimination in the local community. Further analysis of the data reveals that this figure would be much higher were it not for (a) the confinement of some Negro activity to the campus, and (b) the protective measures that Negroes use to avoid direct encounters with discrimination.
2. It is assumed that the task of getting services which are rarely or not at all available is more basic than the task of improving the range and quality of available services. On the basis of this assumption, it is judged that the State College community has some severe problems of racial discrimination. Areas of most severe discrimination are (a) housing, and (b) tonsorial services (in particular, beauty salons for women). Other areas of discrimination problems are fully discussed and evaluated.
3. Reactions of Negroes to discriminatory experiences are intense and varied but much more likely to be despairing than aggressive. The kinds of corrective programs judged to be most effective by Negroes are those that emphasize persuasive, educational techniques. Other attitudes of Negroes are discussed.

Appendix M

**Penn State University
Black Homecoming Queens**



Almaria Eberhardt (1969)



Suzanne Clement (1996)



Tahiiarah H. Allen (2005)



Shartaya Mollett (2006)



Tracey Edouard (2012)



Rhonda Bates (2013)



Kenya Crawford (2014)

Appendix N

**Penn State University
Black Homecoming Kings**



John Mitchell (1992)



Gerardo Jimenez (1996)



Chris Chambers (2002)

Theodore Jackson (2005)



Christopher Talley (2007)



Anthony Estes (2008)



Serge Gaba (2015)

Appendix O

Penn State University Black Homecoming “Guide State Forward” Winners

In April 2018 Penn State Homecoming announced it was officially replacing Homecoming King and Queen in favor of a gender-neutral court. Starting in October 2018 Homecoming would crown two gender neutral “Guide State Forward” award winners. The award goes to two rising seniors, regardless of gender, who exemplify Penn State’s core values of service, leadership, and academics.

2019

Freddy Purnell and Marlisa Shaw

2021

DeAndre Malcom and Jaylen Carr

2022

Star Lawson

2022 (Graduate & Professional Court)

Savanah Jackson

2023

Carolyn “Tomi” Oluwaseun-Apo and De’jah Coates

Appendix P

“I Love This Penn State – But Freedom Is Dearer to Me”

H. Jesse Arnelle: “A Love-Wait Affair” – May 18, 1968

*(Note: On May 18, 1968 H. Jesse Arnelle, the former Nittany Lion basketball All-American and football All-American honorable mention, was the guest of honor at the Penn State Football Awards Banquet. Arnelle would stun many in the crowd by denouncing the University's record in failing to recruit more Black students, faculty, and staff instead of talking about sports. He further shocked many by turning down the first Annual Alumni Award in protest. The following is an **abridged** text of H. Jesse Arnelle's speech delivered that evening as printed in the November 19, 1968 Daily Collegian. A more complete text of this speech can be found at www.blackhistory.psu.edu.)*



H. JESSE ARNELLE

My undergraduate years here were untypically exciting and stimulating. Having grown up, as it were, in a slum, I miraculously received the benefits of a university education and hold, therefore, enormous gratitude and profound affection for my university. The four-year undergraduate love affair I had with Penn State continued upon my graduation and during the intervening years has assumed a form of jealously protective of her virtue and honor.

I am not unmindful of the nature of the occasion which brings us here tonight. I know the “sweet smell of success” and have contributed in by gone days partially to the then moments of Penn State glory, but in growing protective of her virtue, I grew distant in my respect for her (Penn State) when alas I became less caught up in the euphoria and more aware of the faults which in my mind's eye despoiled greatly the otherwise matchless beauty of her symmetry. Mine was never a love-hate relationship; it has been a love-wait affair. However, over the years I have grown weary of waiting, and last month while in Memphis, Tennessee and Atlanta, Georgia on the eve of the calamity (*the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.*) which compelled me immediately from Los Angeles, I decided that further delay served only to prolong my disenchantment. So at the risk of queering the pitch, it becomes necessary now to sharpen the controversy. ...While the University rejoices tonight victoriously in the one area, it has historically courted disaster in another.

The Pennsylvania State University must become a principal player on the field of social and educational change. Far too long it has been the largely impassive spectator, on a distant sideline, aroused momentarily by the reports filtering through concerning the great conflict raging somewhere in the outside world. Isolated as it is from the teeming, sprawling, urban jungle; insulated from filth, stench, and the sodden pock-marked ugliness of the black ghetto, the University in splendidly contrasting surroundings while grown bigger in size, student

enrollment, and resources has grown ratably smaller in commitment to social change and largely insensitive to the frustrated aspirations and daily indignities of the “Other American,” which James Baldwin, Kenneth Clark and Claude Browne have written so movingly.

When I wore my freshman “dink” it was fashionable to refer to Penn State University as a lovely predominantly middle-class college in social transition, framed by a picturesque college town which while conservative, was coming to grips with social enlightenment largely due to the university’s presence. At the time of my graduation there appeared to be a glimmer of hope both on campus and off.

Today, more than a decade later, in spite of all that has transpired in America, despite broad public acceptance of formerly unrelieved truths, Penn State in the interim of my graduation has yet to come to grips with contemporary moral and social consciousness. Somehow she seemed to have lost the way. For it is now more than a century since the commencement of this land grant college and there has never been a Black American on the faculty, with tenure, holding the rank of a full professor of anything.

There has never been a Black dean of a Penn State faculty; there has never been a Black vice president of the university in any capacity; there is no known Black Penn State graduate appointed, assigned, or consulted at the policy-making level of the university. Should the University’s president call his immediate staff in conference there wouldn’t be a black face in the room. When the Board of Trustees meets their deliberations have never been enriched by the contribution of a black trustee member.

These days one not only hears a great deal of talk about Black power and student power on university campuses but one quickly is made aware of their existence here at Penn State. During the early 1950’s the university’s undergraduate student enrollment was between 9000 and 12,000. The then percentage which Black students comprised of that total was one percent. Today the university with 42,000 undergraduate students is among the top 16 universities in enrollment, but Black student enrollment represents still only one percent of the total. The majority of the students graduating from Pittsburgh and Philadelphia high schools are Black.

Unwavering One Percent

While it was insisted when I was here as a student and student leader that Penn State looked not to racial characteristics in her admission policy ... nor would it countenance a racial quota under any circumstances more than mere coincidence must be now attributed to the unvarying one percent Black student representation which persists even today. With the Black ghettos in the commonwealth pleading for education, Penn State University has responded with traditional “tokenism.”

The shameful record of more than 113 years has run unabated at the university suggesting the in residency of America’s most crippling and destructive sickness. ...Ask why Black Americans are the excluded stepchild in the university system and I am sure you will be told by a university official “... we have found few qualified and those so found decided to go elsewhere.”

But more can be done building on these recent developments. ...the University should substantially increase the number of scholarships, grants and athletic assistance programs for Black youth; the University must waive the present artificial admission standards which favor middle-class backgrounds over the ghetto poor; the University can through a variety of ways create a climate of sincerity in making the Black brother welcomed....

Let no one doubt that I love this Pennsylvania State University deeply, but freedom is dearer to me. So in the words of Martin Luther King, let freedom ring; Let freedom ring from the top of Mount Nittany; Let freedom ring from the bell in Old Main; Let freedom ring from the chairs of every Dean and Department head of every faculty. Let freedom ring! Let Freedom ring from the Office of the President of the University; from the meeting room of the Board of Trustees; from the Governor's oak desk in Harrisburg, and when the day dawns on freedom at my beloved Penn State and all its commonwealth campuses then I will come back and join hands, and we will sing together the prophetic words

Free at last.

Free at last

Great God Almighty we're

Free at last.

Note: Following Arnelle's speech, Ridge Riley, the Penn State Alumni Association President, got up to present Arnelle with the first annual alumni award – a large statue of the Nittany Lion, "as a token of our thanks. We are proud of your achievements and of your dedication to the great problems of our time," said Riley. Arnelle walked to the podium, and after the applause died down, he said "I am deeply honored with appreciation, but I decline to take it with me now. I will come back for it when freedom is here, when I can accept it with gratitude, affection, and extreme humility."

In June 1969, Arnelle was elected by the Alumni to serve on the Penn State Board of Trustees. He was subsequently elected to fourteen additional three year terms, ending his board tenure in May 2014. He died on October 21, 2020.

Source: Daily Collegian, - May 21, 1968 and November 19, 1968

Appendix Q**Award-Winning Black Students****Paul Robeson Cultural Center Student Awards****Student of the Year Award**

Akosua Mensah	2014 – 2015
Shameika Frias	2015 – 2016
Anthony Mitchell	2016 – 2017
Sabrina Sayoc	2017 – 2018
Trystn Murphy	2018 – 2019
Kelli Suen	2019 – 2020
Daniel Gizaza	2020 – 2021
Michael Garza	2021 – 2022
Ava Starks	2022 – 2023
Raya Petty	2022 – 2023
Shyanne Torres	2023 – 2024

**Social Justice Leader Award**

Adriana Lacy	2016 – 2017
Brian Davis	2017 – 2018
Cameryn Hunter	2019 – 2020
Jesse Onyango-Opiyo	2019 – 2020
Nyla Holland	2020 – 2021
Eno Abrefa	2022 – 2023
Anton Aluquin	2022 – 2023
Lyana Laili Sun	2023 – 2024
Han Change	2023 – 2024

Academic Excellence Award

Nicole Telfer	2016 – 2017
Natasha Roberts	2017 – 2018
Devin McDuffie	2018 – 2019
Emma Dodoo	2019 – 2020
Carlos Norman	2020 – 2021
Star Lawson	2021 – 2022
Alana Nesmith	2022 – 2023
Kennedy Jackson	2023 – 2023
Brooklyn Jones	2023 – 2024

Paul Robeson Cultural Center Student Awards *(Continued)*

Humanitarian Award

Wideline Seraphin	2016 – 2017
Alexis Scott	2017 – 2018
Cam Hunter	2018 – 2019
Terrell Lewis	2019 – 2020
Blake Toliver	2020 – 2021
Maryah E. Burney	2021 – 2022
Iris Cholula Lopez	2021 – 2022
Michael Garza Jr.	2022 – 2023
Kayla Cwalina	2022 – 2023
Olivia Springer-Hunte	2023 – 2024



Image Award

Ashley Rankine	2017 – 2018
Freddy Purnell	2018 – 2019
Luis Otano	2019 – 2020
DeAndre Malcolm	2020 – 2021
Celeste Good	2021 – 2022
Star Lawson	2022 – 2023
Trinity Milan	2023 – 2024
Wilkinson Osbourne	2023 – 2024

Arts in Activism Award

W.O.R.D.S.	2016 – 2017
Rabiyatu Jalloh	2017 – 2018
Valencia Are	2018 – 2019
Mahamadou Dow	2019 – 2020
Michael Kume	2020 – 2021
Miatu Kormah	2021 – 2022
W.O.R.D.S.	2022 – 2023
Rachel Kichline	2022 – 2023
Mariam Suliman	2023 – 2024

Pioneer Award

Derrick Wright	2017 – 2018
Natasha Roberts	2018 – 2019
Ishbel Correa-Narvaez	2019 – 2020
Latisha Franklin	2020 – 2021
Erleen Escoto	2021 – 2022
Marieme Dia	2023 – 2024

Paul Robeson Cultural Center Student Awards *(Continued)***Athlete Award**

Whitney Brown	2016 – 2017
Dannielle Gibson	2017 – 2018
Ben Wilson	2018 – 2019
CJ Thorpe	2019 – 2020
Audra Koopman	2020 – 2021
Jaclyn Navarro	2021 – 2022
Golden Isreal-Achumbe	2023 – 2024

**Whitney H. Brown Award**

Fatima Odebisi	2018 – 2019
Indyha Fielder	2019 – 2020
Jalynn Buruss	2020 – 2021
Maya Robinson	2021 – 2022

Appendix R**Award-Winning Black Alumni**

Distinguished Alumni Award – The Distinguished Alumni Award, established in 1951, recognizes the achievements of outstanding alumni “whose personal life, professional achievements, and community service exemplify the objectives of The Pennsylvania State University.” Alumni are nominated by trustees, faculty, staff and alumni, then chosen by the Board of Trustees. The Black recipients are:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Graduation</u>	<u>Year of Award</u>
Shani Jamila Allison	2001	2013
Thomas Jefferson Anderson Jr.	1951g	1990
H. Jesse Arnelle	1955, 1962g	2016
Cynthia A. Baldwin	1966, 1974g	1995
John T. Biggers	1948, 1948g, 1954g	1972
Charles L. Blockson	1956	2007
Guion S. Bluford	1964	1983
K. David Boyer	1973, 1982g	2000
William E. Brown Jr.	1949	1981
Cedric Bryant	1984g, 1989 PhD	2021
Mildred Settle Bunton	1932	1973
Jack L. Burley	1965	1999
Harold E. Cheatham	1961	2012
Arthur H. Coleman	1941	1979
Julian Abele Cook Jr.	1952	1985
Ronald R. Davenport	1958	1975
Judith Loftin Davenport	1961	1995
William A. Donan	1968	2006
Benson L. Dutton	1933	1971
Kenneth C. Frazier	1975	2003
Roland G. Fryer	2001g, 2002g	2017
Roosevelt Grier	1955	1974
Franco Harris	1972	1982
Louis Ivey	1953	2021
Tanya R. Kennedy	1989	2020
Joseph L. Johnson	1918	1977
Stanley B. Lathan	1967	1984
Shirley Mahaley Malcom	1974	2001

Distinguished Alumni Award *(continued)*

<u>Name</u>	<u>Graduation</u>	<u>Year of Award</u>
Stephen L. Mayo	1983	2014
Kerry R. McCoy	1997	2018
Eddie N. Moore Jr.	1968	1999
William H. Moses	1933	1980
Herbert Nipson	1940	1973
Emmett Paige Jr.	1974g	1988
James H. Robinson	1949	1978
Matthew T. Robinson	1958	1994
Henry R. Smith, Jr.	1939	1982
Ala Stanford	1991, 1997 Med	2024
John H. Stanford	1961	1998
James H. Stith	1972 DEd	2023
Henry Tomes Jr.	1960g, 1963g	2015
Wallace Triplett III	1949	2007
Warren Washington	1964g	1991
Hardy Williams	1952	1997

Alumni Fellow Award – The Alumni Fellow Award is the most prestigious award given by the Penn State Alumni Association. Administered in cooperation with Penn State’s academic colleges and campuses, the program, established in 1973, provides recipients with the opportunity to return to campus to share their knowledge with the University community. The Black recipients are:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Graduation</u>	<u>Year of Award</u>
Cheryl Lynn Allen	1969	2013
Derrick P. Alridge	1997g	2019
Thomas Jefferson Anderson Jr. 1951g		1982
Arthur L. Baldwin	1969	2011
Cynthia A. Baldwin	1966, 1974g	2000
Wanda J. Blanchett	1997	2015
Charles L. Blockson	1956	1981
Guion S. Bluford	1964	1986
Donald K. Boswell	1975, 1977g	2010
T. Robert Boulware	1986	2010
John L. Braxton	1966	1996
Cedric X. Bryant	1984g, 1989g	2006
Renee M. Christoff	1977, 1979g	2021
Andre Collins	1991	2021
Ronald R. Davenport	1958	1973
Judith Loftin Davenport	1961	2001
Murry N. DePillars	1976	1989
William A. Donan	1968	1994
Jhan Doughty	1994g, 2001g	2021
Kenneth C. Frazier	1975	2001
Mirian Graddick-Weir	1978g, 1981g	2003
Roosevelt Grier	1955	1991
Franco Harris	1972	2005
Reginald D. Hedgebeth	1989	2021
Wanda Bryant Hope	1987	2021
Robert C. Hutchins	1970g, 1973g	1984
Margaret Lucas Jacobs	1973g	1985
Gordon Johnson	1963	1998
John R. Kemp III	1966	1999
W. Terrell Jones	1974g, 1985g	2014
Keegan-Michael Key	1996g	2014

Alumni Fellow Award *(continued)*

<u>Name</u>	<u>Graduation</u>	<u>Year of Award</u>
Stanley B. Lathan	1967	1982
Robert Lugo	2014g	2023
Shirley Mahaley Malcom	1974	1995
Ronald L. Mallet	1969, 1970g, 1973g	2007
Sharon L. McDaniel	1983	2019
Beverly J. McIver	1992g	2010
Emmett Paige Jr.	1974g	1993
Jeannine D. Peterson	1978	2021
Lindwe Sangweni-Siddo	1993	2012
Alisia Salters	1988	2007
Reginal W. Spiller	1979g	2010
James H. Smith	1972	2005
Ala Stanford	1991, 1997g, Med	2022
John H. Stanford	1961	1990
Bruce W. Trotman	1965	1985
Bridges A. Turner	1939	1985
James E. Walker	1972	1988
Gerri Warren-Merrick	1973	2002
Warren Washington	1964g	1989
Donald Watson	1950	1989
R. Seth Williams	1989	2011
Eugene A. Woods	1987, 1991g, 1993g	2016

Alumni Achievement Award – The Alumni Achievement Award, begun in 2005, recognizes alumni who are 35 years of age and younger for their extraordinary professional accomplishments. Nominated by an academic college or campus, these prominent young alumni return to campus to interact with students and the University community, demonstrating that Penn State alumni succeed in exceptional fashion at an early age. The Black recipients of this award are:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Graduation</u>	<u>Year of Award</u>
John Amaechi	1994	2006
Shaun Anderson	2001	2011
Sharifa T. Anozie	2008	2015
Natasha Bangsopaul	2010	2020
Jemar R. Bather	2014	2024
Heather Bennett	2008, 2013g, 2017	2021
Joshua Brady Branch	2013	2022
M. Christopher Brown II	1997	2005
Telecia Dambreville	2013	2019
Laura M. K. Dassama	2013	2019
Tabbatha A. Dobbins	2002	2007
Alice Adu Gyamfi	2015, 2020 Law	2024
John H. Gilmore	2001	2012
Eric C. Hall	2009g	2017
Lacresha L. Hall	1995	2009
Carla J. Hargrove	1997	2006
Brittany Hawkins	2008	2019
Mikel Jones	2015	2024
Keegan-Michael Key	1996g	2007
John Mathew	1997g	2008
Meredith Monroe	2010, 2016g	2023
Javier Moreno	2007	2015
Rob Mukahlera	2014	2021
Oliver Noel	2018g, 2021 Med	2022
Jeremy C. O'Mard	2013	2021
Santosh Sankar	2010	2024
Devan Shimoyama	2011	2019
Titlayo Shodiya	2010	2020
Devon Still	2011	2018
Menessie M. Taddese	1997g	2006
Christopher M. Thomas	2003, 2008g	2012
John C. Urschel	2012, 2013g	2017
Aniyia L. Williams	2007	2019

K. David Weidner Diversity Award – The K. David Weidner Diversity Award recognizes an individual who has significantly contributed to fostering diversity at Penn State by sharing or volunteering his or her talent, time, and resources on behalf of the University. The Alumni Association Alumni Council selects the recipients. The Black recipients of this award are:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Graduation</u>	<u>Year of Award</u>
Cynthia Hamlin	1995	2006
Darryl Bundrige	1993	2007
Christopher Thomas	2003, 2008g	2008
Andrew Jackson	1974, 2004g	2009
Troy Cromwell	1988, 1990g	2011
Charonda L. Hill	2006	2013
William Dennis	2010	2016
Tracey D. Baker	1993	2017
Gibran Jones	2008	2020
Whitney Stringer	2007	2021
Brandon McGraw	2009	2022

AAAO LEGACY AWARDS RECIPIENTS

Award recipients were chosen by a Black Alumni Reunion organizing committee and/or members of the African American Alumni Organization.

H. Jesse Arnette / Cynthia A. Baldwin Outstanding Alumni Award

– This award honors alumni who have made significant overall contributions and services to the African American community at Penn State, and / or the public at large.

Recipients:

2012 - Kenneth Frazier '75 – Chairman, President and CEO of Merck

2014 – Dr. Ivory A. Toldson '97g – Professor, Howard University

2016 – Tonya R. Kennedy '89 – Supreme Court Justice, State of New York

2018 – Barry Robinson '67 – Former Board of Trustees member (1989-2004), Chief Counsel for Economic Affairs – Department of Commerce

2022 – Tracey Baker '93 – Penn State Alumni Council, Executive Board

Ronald & Judith Davenport Alumni Achievement Award – This award honors alumni who have made significant career advancements, including long-term leadership within their chosen profession and/or public service, paving the way for others to follow.

Recipients:

2012 - Angela Guy '78 – Chief Diversity Office, L'Oreal

2014 – Dr. Bruce Trotman '65 – Digestive Disease Specialist

2016 – Leslie Anderson '85 – Executive Director, NJ Redevelopment Authority

2018 – Jeff Ballou '90 – Past President of The National Press Club

2018 – Emilee J. Taylor '74 – Retired Teacher, Former Executive Board Member of The Philadelphia Federation of Teachers

2022 – Dr. Ala Stanford '91 MED – Founder of the Black Doctors COVID-19 Consortium (BDCC)

Alisia Salters Young Alumni Achievement Award – This award honors alumni **under 35 years of age** who have made significant career advancements, including leadership within their chosen profession and/or public service.

Recipients:

2012 – LCDR Rashid Njai '98PhD – Epidemiologist, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health promotion

2014 – Chris Thomas '03, '09g – Global ECLP Leader, General Electric Company

2016 – Travis Salters '11 – School teacher and co-founder of Next Generation Men in Atlanta, GA

2018 – Christopher Talley '08 – Founder of CPTC Consulting, Former Program Manager at Aramark

2018 – Aaron Maybin '08 – Artist, Community Activist, Former NFL Player

Helen Darling / Lenny Moore “Heart of a Lion” Award – This award honors a former student-athlete who, through their involvement in communities, or through specific acts have served as noteworthy examples of good citizenship, humanitarianism, or activism.

Recipients:

2012 - Keith Goganious '91 - Assistant Head Football Coach - Hampton University

2014 – Rohan Murphy '06 – Motivational Speaker

2016 – Tyoka Jackson '94 – ESPN Analyst, Franchise Owner, Former Pro Football player

2018 – Devon Still '11 – Former Pro Football player, Founder of Still Strong Foundation for Pediatric Cancer Research

2022 – Elijah Robinson '07 – Former Penn State Football player, Texas A&M defensive line coach

John Bigger / Matthew Robinson Visual and Performing Arts

Award – This award honors alumni who have made significant contributions to the areas of visual, written, and /or performing arts.

Recipients:

2012 - Stan Lathan '67 - Movie and Television Producer

2014 – Beverly McIver '92g - Painter and Professor of Art (NCCU)

2016 – Marquis Smalls '94 - Award winning film screenwriter, director and producer

2018 – Anthony T. Leach '82, '96 PhD – Founder and Conductor of Essence of Joy Choir

2018 – Betty Love Gibbs '56 – Gymnastics, Dancer – Pittsburgh Creative and Performing Arts (CAPA) School

2022 – Delmar Washington '05 – Filmmaker, CEO Ximen Media

Christian Ragland / Julie (Cromitie) Welker Student Leader

Award – This award honors a current or past student leader who has demonstrated the utmost in leadership and advancement of student causes, service to Penn State and/or the State College community, and academics. This recipient must have presented himself or herself as being genuinely interested in the welfare of students and the development of the university as a whole.

Recipients:

2012 - Katrina (Scott) George '86 - Committee for Justice in South Africa

2014 – Theodore “Ted” Thompson '70 - USG President and Douglass Association member

2018 – LaKeisha Wolf '01 – President of the Black Caucus during “The Village” sit-in and other demonstrations, Executive Director of UJAMMA Collective

2022 – Brian Davis '18 - 2018 recipient of the Eric A. Walker Award in recognition of contributions to Penn State.

Charles T. Davis / Thelma T. Price Faculty / Staff Award – This award honors a Penn State faculty member, staff member, or administrator who has gone above and beyond the call of his/her normal university duties and has given unselfishly of his/her time and talents in advancing diversity at Penn State. The recipient of this award does not have to be a Penn State alumnus.

Recipients:

2012 - Terrell Jones '74, 85g - Vice Provost of Educational Equity

2012 - Kathy Lyons - Bunton/Waller Scholarship Program

2016 – Marcus Whitehurst – '97 MA, '07 PhD, Vice Provost of Educational Equity

2018 – Lydia Abdullah '75 – 40 years of advocating for diversity at Penn State and in the State College community

2018 – Gary Abdullah '74 – 40 years of advocating for diversity at Penn State and in the State College community

2018 – Michael Phillips '83 – Director of Penn State Pittsburgh Recruiting Office

2022 – Curt Marshall '86 – Coordinator of multi-cultural programs, College of A&A

James “Joseph” Cramer Excellence Award - This award honors a Penn State faculty member, staff member, or administrator in the Smeal College of Business who has gone above and beyond the call of his/her normal university duties.

Recipient:

2012 – Vernis Welmon '98g – Associate Dean for Diversity and Community, Smeal College of Business.

Dave Alston Medal – This award honors student-athlete alumni who have demonstrated commitment to academic, athletics, and career achievement by manifesting the spirit of Dave Alston '42.

Recipients:

2012 – Wally Richardson '96 – Former Penn State Football Quarterback.

2014 – Megan Hodge '10 – former Penn State Women's Volleyball, Academic All-American, Olympian.

2018 – Charlie '69 and Tony Pittman '94 (Father and Son) –Former Penn State Football players, Academic All-Americans, undefeated at starters during playing days.

2022 – Shana Cox '07 – Track & field great, 11 time All-American and Olympian. One of the greatest Penn State athletes of all time.

African American Alumni Organization Appreciation Award – This award honors alumni who have demonstrated commitment in advancing the mission of the AAAO.

Recipients:

2012 - Donald Campbell '64 – Founder of original Penn State African American Alumni Interest Group

2014 – Jeffrey Moore '92, '96g – 2008, 2010 and 2016 Black Alumni Reunion Chairperson

2018 – Thomas Poole '84 PhD – Retired Vice President for Administration, former Associate Vice-Provost for Educational Equity

2022 – Cheryl Harrison – Penn State Alumni Association

2022 – Heather James '92 – 2012 Black Alumni Reunion Chairperson, Penn State Alumni Council, Executive Board

The Leader Alumni Achievement Award is designed to recognize alumnus/a who graduated, or an organization founded, any time between the 1990's and the present.

Recipients:

2016 – Donavan West '96 – Founder of Multimedia MD

2016 – Charnita Brock Walker '96 – Rita's Water Ice franchise owner (DC Area)

2018 – Queen C. Nworisara Quinn '01 – Partner, Kupanda Capital, Gates-Cambridge Scholarship Winner

2018 – Karla Trotman '98 – President – Electro Soft

2022 – Johnnnie Geathers '11 – Noted mental health therapist

The Legend Alumni Achievement Award is designed to recognize alumnus/a who graduated, or an organization founded, any time between the 1960's and the 1980's.

Recipients:

2010 – Thelma Price – Assistant Dean of Student Affairs, mentor to students, alumni and faculty

2010 – The Douglass Association/Black Student Union (1967 – 1971) - Activist group that pushed Penn State towards more diversity and inclusion

2012 – Cynthia A. Baldwin '66, 74g – First African American President of the PSU Alumni Association, First Black female chair of PSU Board of Trustees

2012 – Guy Bluford '64 – First African American in space

2012 - Charles T. Davis (Faculty 1961 – 1970) – First Tenured Faculty member at Penn State

2014 – Barbara Gee '83 – Vice-President, Online Sales Alliances – Comcast

2014 – Darryl Daisey '83 – Penn State Black History Project

2016 – Andrew Jackson '74, '07 PhD – FOBA Humanitarian Award winner, PSAA Diversity Award winner, founding member of the Black Caucus

2016 – Grace Hampton, Senior Faculty Mentor

2018 – Wanda Bryant Hope '87 – Chief Diversity Officer, Johnson & Johnson Worldwide

2022 – Donald Ferrell '76 – First African American head coach (Bowling) at Penn State

The Pioneer Alumni Achievement Award is designed to recognize alum that graduated, or an organization founded, any time between the 1910's and the 1950's (can be a posthumous award)

Recipients:

2010 – Charles Blockson '56 – Renowned Historian

2010 – Wallace Triplett '49 – First African American Varsity Football Player at Penn State

2012 – Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Delta Gamma Chapter Charter Members (1953) - First African American Sorority at Penn State

2012 - H. Jesse Arnelle '55, '62 JD - First African American on Penn State's Board of Trustees

2012 – *Lincoln Hall Residents (1930 – 1949)*- Black male boarding house residents from the 1930s and 1940s

2014 – *Ronald '58 and Judith '61 Davenport* - *Founders of Sheridan Broadcasting Corporation and major philanthropists*

2018 – *Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, 1921* – *Founded in 1921, First African American organization and fraternity at Penn State*

2018 – *Mildred Jordan '50 PhD* – *First African American woman to earn a PhD from Penn State*

2022 – *Herbert Nipson '49* – *Longtime executive editor of EBONY Magazine*

Forum On Black Affairs' Humanitarian Service Award – This award was created in 1985 to honor a person who has provided outstanding service to Black citizens of Pennsylvania, especially at any Penn State Campus. Such service includes leadership of offices, programs or organizations that develop or implement policies impacting Blacks. The award is presented at the annual FOBA Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Banquet.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Name</u>
1985	James Stewart
1986*	* <i>Being Researched</i>
1987	Black Student Coalition Against Racism
1988*	* <i>Being Researched</i>
1989	Cynthia Baldwin
1990* – 1991	* <i>Being Researched</i>
1992	Harold Cheatham
1993* – 1999	* <i>Being Researched</i>
2000	William Henson
2001* – 2004	* <i>Being Researched</i>
2005	Cynthia Baldwin
2006	Beverly Vandiver / Cathy Lyons
2007	Elmore Browne
2008	Andrew Jackson
2009	Hank McCoullum
2010	Anthony Leach
2011	Vernis Wellman
2012	Amy Freeman
2013	Randall Robinson
2014	Charles Dumas
2015	Anthony Mitchell Sr.
2016	Grace Hampton
2017	Pastor Harold McKenzie
2018	Edgar & Barbara Farmer
2019	Lydia Abdullah
2020	Michael A. Phillips
2021- 2022	<i>Not Awarded Due to Pandemic</i>
2023	Leslie Lang
2024	Earl F. Merritt



James Stewart, Lawrence Young, and Harold Cheatham in 1989

African American Studies Department Awards – Recipients were selected by the staff of the African American Studies Department.

Student Award – LaVerne Marie Thomas Award for Academic Excellence:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Recipient</u>
2015	Charisma Rickxy
2016	Michael Benerjee

Alumni Award - Frances Harper Distinguished Alumni Award

<u>Year</u>	<u>Recipient</u>
2015	Darryl Daisey

Alumni Award – Goodridge/Whipper Distinguished Alumni Award

<u>Year</u>	<u>Recipient</u>
2015	Charles and Judith Dickerson

Alumni Award – Alain Locke Distinguished Alumni Award

<u>Year</u>	<u>Recipient</u>
2015	James Stewart

Black Arts Festival Alumni Award – The Black Arts Festival Alumni Award was given in conjunction with the 1984 Black Arts Festival at University Park. The awards were presented by Black students to recognize not only the professional achievements of Black Alumni, but also their contributions in aiding the University to recruit and retain Black students and faculty. Award recipients were chosen by a committee of students, staff and the director of the Paul Robeson Cultural Center.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Graduation</u>	<u>Year of Award</u>
Jack L. Burley	1965	1984
Glenn R. Mahone	1968	1984
Barry Robinson	1967	1984

Appendix S

Penn State University Black Greek Organizations Chartered

<u>Organization</u>	<u>Year First Chartered</u>
Omega Psi Phi Fraternity	1921
Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity	1947
Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity	1952
Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority	1953
Delta Sigma Theta Sorority	1960
Zeta Phi Beta Sorority	1976
Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity	1979
Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority	1987
Beta Phi Pi Fraternity	2002
Iota Phi Theta Fraternity	2008
Groove Phi Groove Fellowship	1971
National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC)	1989



Photo from 1989, courtesy of Khea Staycē.

Appendix T**Penn State University
Earliest Black Faculty/Staff**

(Source: Pioneering African American Faculty & Staff (1956 - 1970), Tiffanie Lewis)

1956 (Spring) – Mary E. Godfrey, Assistant Professor of Art Education

In the spring of 1956, Mary Godfrey became Penn State's first full-time African American faculty member. She began her Penn State career as an assistant professor of art education and taught courses in elementary and secondary art education, supervision, the history of art education, and introduction to crafts. Godfrey served on the faculty until her retirement on July 1, 1979 and remained in the State College area until her death on April 30, 2007.

(Source: Penn State University African American Chronicles 1899 – 2008. Photo courtesy of Penn State Archives)

1956 (Summer) – Preston N. Williams, Assistant University Chaplain

Preston Williams first visited Penn State in the summer of 1956 to participate in a religion and science institute. During that visit, University Chaplain Luther Harshbarger hired Williams to serve as Assistant to the Chaplain. Williams earned his bachelor's degree from Washington and Jefferson College, and ultimately received a master's in sacred theology at Yale University.



Williams served as advisor to Kappa Alpha Psi fraternity and Entre Nous, the first non-Greek lettered student organization dedicated to supporting the growth of Black students at the university. Williams was promoted to Assistant University Chaplain in 1957 and left the university in 1962 when he accepted an appointment as professor at the Boston University School of Theology. In 1971 he became a Houghton Professor at Harvard Divinity School. In 1974-75, he served as acting dean of the Divinity School and then, in 1975-77, was acting and founding director of the W.E.B. DuBois Institute for African American Research. After his June 2002 retirement, Harvard recognized Williams with the establishment of the Preston N. Williams Black Alumni Award. (Source: Interview with Preston N. Williams, Penn State University African American Chronicles 1899 – 2008)

1956 (Fall) – Clifford V. Smith Jr., Instructor in Civil Engineering

Clifford V. Smith Jr., former assistant superintendent for water and sewerage treatment for the city of Ames, Iowa, was named an instructor in civil engineering at Penn State in October 1956. He had earned bachelor's degree in civil and sanitary engineering from the University of Iowa in 1954. Smith was a member of and served as a sponsor of Kappa Alpha Phi Fraternity while at Penn State.

Smith would leave Penn State to continue his education at Johns Hopkins University, earning a Master of Science Degree in Sanitary Engineering and Water Resources (1960); and a Doctorate in Radiological Science and Sanitary Engineering (1966). A long-distinguished career as an engineer and administrator, serving in government, industry, and academia would follow. (Source: University of Iowa Alumni Association, Daily Collegian Archives)

1957 (Fall) – Robert H. Davage, Associate Professor of Psychology

Robert H. Davage joined the Penn State faculty in September of 1957 as an associate professor of psychology. He led the "Pyramid Program" which was started that same year. The pyramids were composed of freshmen, sophomores, a junior and a senior as a study group. The goal was for students to develop the attitudes, knowledge, and skills to enable them to pursue their academic work with greater motivation, resourcefulness and independence. In March of 1958, Davage conducted a formal survey of Negro students to determine the level and impact of racial discrimination in the State College community. The "Davage Report," which was issued in the fall of 1958, was sponsored by the Centre County Layman's League. The report outlined some major problems, especially in the areas of off-campus housing and personal services. For the full text of that report, go to www.blackhistory.psu.edu. In the fall of 1959, Davage left the university to teach at Hunter College (NY). He died in 2001. (Sources: Daily Collegian Archives, Penn State Archives. Photo courtesy of Penn State Archives)

**1961 – Charles T. Davis**, Professor of English

Charles T. Davis joined the faculty in 1961 as an associate professor of English after teaching at Princeton and New York University. On July 1, 1963, Davis was promoted to a full tenured professor of English, becoming the first Black faculty member to become tenured at Penn State.

In September 1968, Davis developed and taught the new "*Afro-American Literature in the 20th Century*" course. In July of 1969

Davis was elected chair of the University Senate Committee on Undergraduate Student Affairs (SCUSA). He would leave the university in September 1970 to head the Afro-American Studies Program at the University of Iowa. Davis would later become the Director of the Afro-American Studies Program at Yale University, where he gained a national reputation as an influential literary critic, author, and scholar. Prior to his March 26, 1981 death, Davis mentored and influenced young future high profile scholars such as Henry Louis Gates. (Source: Daily Collegian Archives. (Photo courtesy of Penn State Archives)

1961 – Stanley Shepherd, Assistant Professor of Physics

Stanley Shepherd joined the university faculty in 1961 after teaching physics for a year at Tuskegee College in Alabama. Originally from Port Antonio, Jamaica, he received his master's degree from Kent State University in Ohio. Shepherd taught first at the Altoona campus, joining the University Park faculty four years later. Known as a "gifted teacher," Shepherd received the first teaching award ever to be handed out by the College of Science in 1972. He retired from the university in 1991. In the State College community, he was known for his artistic renderings of Caribbean folk songs and for conducting guitar lessons for children. Each Spring. Since 2005, the Physics Department bestows the "Stanley Shepherd Graduate Teaching Assistant Award" to the best TA in the department. (Source: Daily Collegian Archives)



1963 – James “Joseph” Cramer Jr., Professor of Accounting



Joseph Cramer is believed to be the first Black faculty member in the College of Business. He received his bachelor's degree from Texas Southern University and a master's and doctorate of business administration from Indiana University at Bloomington in 1963. After passing his CPA exam in that year, Cramer pursued several interviews his alma mater had set up for him. However, Cramer recalled in an interview with the Centre Daily Times that, "half of them were terminated when the interviewer walked into the room and discovered I was Black." Cramer was one of nine Blacks in the country to hold both a CPA certificate and doctoral degree. He was one of 150 Blacks out of a total of 120,000 CPAs nationwide. Subsequently, he was hired at Penn State to serve as an assistant professor of accounting.

In 1968, Cramer was appointed to the American Institute of Certified Public Accounts' Committee on Recruitment from Disadvantaged Groups to help recruit men and women

from disadvantaged groups into the field of accounting. In 1971, he was appointed the acting head of the Department of Accounting and Management Information Systems, at the same time, chairing the department's Graduate Policy Committee. In 1974, Cramer was named Arthur Anderson Faculty Fellow in the College of Business Administration. It was only the second appointment since the establishment of the position of faculty fellow. University President John W. Oswald noted at the time that he demonstrated a "high level of excellence in his scholarly activities." At the university level, Cramer served on the Committee on Black Studies as well as the Academic Advisory Committee of Upward Bound. He was treasurer and a member of the board of directors of the University Renaissance Fund, and he served on the University Senate. Cramer was also a proud member of Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity.

Cramer died of AIDS-related complications in 1986 in Washington, D.C. At the time, he was associate dean of the Business School at Howard University in the same city. The "Cramer Account," the official quarterly newsletter of the National Association of Black Accountants (NABA) of Washington, D.C, was named for and dedicated in memory of Cramer on March 6, 1987. (Sources: Daily Collegian Archives, NABA website)

1964 – Thelma “Mom” T. Price, Assistant Vice-President of Student Affairs

Thelma Price joined the Penn State staff in 1964 as Assistant Dean of Students at the New Kensington campus. She was named acting director of the Equal Opportunity Program (EOP) at University Park in 1971 and Assistant Vice-President of Student Affairs in February 1972. Price served as a key liaison between the students, the University administration, and state legislators on many issues during the often-turbulent early 1970s, and beyond. Born in Detroit, she received a bachelor's in social studies from Bennett College, and her master's in history from the University of Pittsburgh.



Price served the University on several critical task teams but is best known for her advocacy of minority student concerns. Nicknamed "Mom" by many students and alumni, Price would often find book money, food, housing and clothes for needy students, as well as identify untapped resources for student programming—such as the Black Arts Festival. She frequently used her business connections to help students obtain internships and fulltime employment, and she actively mentored many past and current students, staff and faculty members.

In 1977 Price was elected president of the local NAACP, serving in that role for several terms. After her 1986 retirement from Penn State, she became an active community

advocate for children and the poor through her work with Diversity Committee and Respect Committee of the State College Area High School, Stand for Children, Housing Transitions Inc. and the opening of Mom's Kitchen—which provided free hot meals. (Source: Daily Collegian Archives Photo: Penn State Archives, Onwardstate.com)

1967 – William L. Henson, Director of Minority Student Programs, College of Agriculture

Dr. William Henson completed his doctorate at Penn State in 1967 and subsequently accepted a position as Agricultural Economist with Economic Research Service, USDA, stationed at Penn State. He was the only Black faculty member in the College of Agriculture at the time. Simultaneously, he served part time as special assistant to the associate dean for resident education for minority and disadvantaged students in the college. Under his leadership, enrollment of students of color increased significantly.

In 1984, Dr. Henson was named coordinator of graduate student recruitment and was instrumental in assuring funding for the College of Agriculture's "Grad-Op Program." He is also acknowledged for the creation of the Minority Student Apprenticeships in Agriculture Program, which helped to increase enrollment of students of color.

In 1989, he received the University's Equal Opportunity Award for his contribution to affirmative action efforts and for creating an environment that allowed for "cross-cultural understanding." In 1991, he was appointed president of the National Society for Minorities in Agriculture, National Resources and Related Sciences (MANRRS). In 1996, he won the university's Excellence in Advising Award for advising, academic, and career assistance and support.

He also pledged his commitment by participating in many committees such as the Black Studies program planning committee and the advisory committee to the Paul Robeson Cultural Center. Dr. Henson passed away in 2008 leaving a legacy in the College of Agriculture and a lasting impression on the students and faculty members he influenced.

(Sources: Penn State University Archive material, Agricultural Experiment Station biographical data- Penn State University, Centre Daily Times- January 16, 1999.)

1968 – Warren B. Coleman, Instructor in Physical Education, College of Physical Education, Health and Recreation

In July 1968, Warren Coleman was named assistant track coach at the University, becoming the first Black to coach any athletic team at Penn State. Coleman earned his bachelor's degree in physical education from Hampton Institute in 1955. Coleman attended Hampton Institute on a football scholarship, and also was a member of the track team. Following graduation, Coleman began a successful thirteen-year stint as a high school track coach, football



coach, and athletic director in Illinois and Virginia.

At Penn State, Coleman would become the unofficial coordinator of the new Black Cultural Center in October of 1971. He was officially appointed the first acting director of the center in January 1972 and held that position until late that year. He resigned as assistant track coach in August 1972 for “personal reasons.” Coleman was also well known at the University as a popular bowling instructor, and for his long running (1975 – 1992) Sunday morning radio persona, *The Witchdoctor*, on WQWK 97 FM. (Source: Daily Collegian Archives)

1968 – George R. Culmer, Admissions Director, Special Projects

Ten days before the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. in 1968, George Culmer was named Admission Director of Special Projects. After joining the director of academic services’ staff, Culmer led the campaign for identifying and recruiting Black students to Penn State.



Originally from Philadelphia, Culmer received his Bachelor of Arts in Sociology from Lincoln University and completed work toward a Master of Arts in Urban Sociology from Temple University. While at the university, Culmer helped establish additional criteria to be used for Black student admissions. He assisted Penn State by visiting high schools around the state in recruitment endeavors while working collaboratively with the coordinator of university programs for the disadvantaged.

In 1969, he helped to coordinate a career day for students hoping to attend college in Philadelphia. In 1970, he served as acting director of the newly established central office for the university’s educational opportunity program. (Source: Daily Collegian Archives, Penn State Archives)

1968 – James Perine, Director of Upward Bound, Instructor in Community Service

Upward Bound, was established 1965 by the United States Office of Economic Opportunity with a budget of \$250 million for universities to help provide disadvantaged high schools students with resources and academic preparation to increase their chances for college admission. In 1968, Penn State joined 200 other universities around the country in establishing an Upward Bound summer program on campus.

James Perine, who came to the university as an instructor in community service, was named director of Penn State’s Upward Bound Program in 1968. He previously held a position in Washington as a research psychologist for the Office of Economic Opportunity. He completed undergraduate work at Missouri State University in philosophy and psychology and received a Master of Arts degree from the University of Maryland in 1968.

In 1972, Perine was appointed Assistant to the Dean in the College of Human Development (now known as Health and Human Development). Among his many duties in this position, he oversaw college academic programs and headed the college's Educational Opportunity Program, all while serving as an advisor to incoming freshman. He taught courses on adolescence and coordinated scholarships and financial aid programs for the college.

From 1977-1978, he served as coordinator for the Black Studies program and authored several articles pertaining to Black history. Perine also assisted with the development of an honor society for the College of Human Development. (Source: Penn State Room, Employment History documents, CDT in May 16, 1968, Daily collegian, 1982.)

1968 – Hodges Glenn, Admissions Counselor

Glenn came to Penn State as a doctorate candidate in 1966 and was appointed Admissions Counselor (Black Recruiter) in the Director of Admissions Office in September 1968. A talented painter, Glenn received both his bachelors of arts and masters of arts from Florida A&M.. Prior to coming to Penn State to pursue his doctorate in art, he taught for more than ten years in the public school system of Tallahassee, Florida. He served a number of roles in the Tallahassee school system, including art teacher and county art supervisor.



In 1968 Glenn painted the mural in the main lounge of Pollock Hall (pictured to the right). Hodges received a doctorate in Education from Penn State in 1970. Shortly afterwards he would move to Amherst, MA where he taught at Smith College and the University of Massachusetts. Following his retirement he would return to Tallahassee. Glenn died in 2001. (Source: Daily Collegian Archives. Photo provided by Donald Sheppard and Hodges Glenn family.)

1968 – Donn F. Bailey, Instructor of Speech



Arriving in at Penn State in September 1968 to pursue his doctorate, Bailey quickly became an active and outspoken member of, and advisor to, the Douglass Association/Black Student Union. Bailey also served as advisor to the Jazz Club. In the spring of 1969 he was awarded a Ford Foundation Advance Study Grant for Black graduate students pursuing doctorate degrees. Bailey came to Penn State after teaching in the Chicago public school system for 14 years. He received both his bachelor's degree in Speech and Hearing Therapy (1954), and later his master's degree in Speech Pathology and Audiology

from Indiana University.

In 1965-1966 he joined with Dr. Donald H. Smith and Dr. Nancy L. Arnez in the founding of the Center for Inner City Studies (CICS) of Northeastern Illinois University. After receiving his doctorate from Penn State in 1974, he was appointed the Director and Professor of CICS, a position he would hold for the next 22 years.

Bailey ultimately became a national and international leader in the field of speech and language, co-founding the National Black Association for Speech-Language and Hearing in 1977; he served as its first Executive Director from 1978 to 1981 and as Chairman of its Board of Directors from 1984 to 1990. He also served as chairman of the Chicago Board of Education's Commission on School Desegregation in Chicago public schools from 1986-1990. Bailey was an active member of the Chicago Alumni Chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi fraternity. Bailey died on December 21, 2007. In April of 2008, the Northeastern Illinois University Board of Trustees officially named the historic auditorium at the CICS the "Legacy Hall in Honor of Dr. Donn F. Bailey." (Source: Daily Collegian, - July 10, 1969, Northeastern University's President's Report to the Board of Trustees – April 10, 2008.)

1969 – Edward V. Ellis, Associate Dean of Continuing Education, College of Human Development



Edward Ellis joined the Penn State University faculty in 1969, coming from the University of Minnesota. He was simultaneously appointed associate professor of public health and associate dean for continuing education in the College of Human Development (now known as College of Health and Human Development). Prior to coming to Penn State, he held positions as consultant for the Pennsylvania Department of Health, and director of community education programs in Washington, D.C., North Carolina College, and the Wake County Health Department in Raleigh, N.C.

Dr. Ellis received a bachelor's degree from Shaw University and a master's in public health from North Carolina College. He then went on to receive his doctorate in public health from the University of North Carolina. He served as a fellow of the American Public Health Association and served as chairman of the association's Committee on Prejudice in Delivery of Health Care Service.

University President John W. Oswald appointed Ellis to serve as Special Faculty Assistant in the office of the president in July 1970. Among his duties, he advised President Oswald on recruitment and retention of faculty of color, and the employment of minorities in technical and administrative areas, student admissions and support. Subsequently, Dr. Ellis chaired a number of other committees focusing on educational opportunities for students of color.

Among his many achievements and awards, Ellis was named acting director of the division of biological health in the College of Human Development (1972), chosen as Outstanding Educator of America (1973), and appointed by the president of Penn State to serve on the task force to increase enrollment of Black students at the university (1975). In 1979, he was elected to a three-year term on the Commission on Higher Education of the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools. By 1981, Dr. Ellis had become Associate Dean for Public Health and Commonwealth Campuses, while maintaining his in-demand status for speaking engagements and serving as an associate professor. (Source: Daily Collegian Archives, Penn State Office of Public Information, Bruce Ellis. Photo provided by Bruce Ellis)

1969 – Elizabeth G. Ellis, Associate Librarian and Head of the Undergraduate Library.

Ellis, a Raleigh NC native, had a distinguished career as a librarian. The former head of the government publications section of the Pennsylvania State Library and adjunct professor of library science at Drexel University came to Penn State in 1969 to be named the head of the Undergraduate Library. The North Carolina Central University graduate, and lover of African American art, was the wife of Edward V. Ellis, the mother of current assistant athletic director, Bruce Ellis, and a sought-out speaker on the women's liberation movement. Ellis was a proud member of Delta Sigma Theta sorority, and Links. She died on March 2, 2005. (Source: Daily Collegian Archives, Bruce Ellis. Photo provided by Bruce Ellis)



1969 – Emma C. Durazzo, Director of Educational Opportunity Program (EOP)

In 1969, Emma Durazzo served as an instructor in the College of Education and in the Upward Bound Program. In 1971, she was appointed director of the university's Educational Opportunity Program. She was the first director of this new centralized office, which was part of President John W. Oswald's plan to reinforce opportunities for disadvantaged students. Previously, she taught Social Studies and English in State College area schools.

In her role as director of the Educational Opportunity Program, Durazzo was to manage admission programs, counseling, tutoring, financial aid, and other supportive resources for qualifying students. However, several months after her appointment, she was relieved of her duties and replaced by Thelma Price, director of the Educational Opportunity Program at New Kensington campus. (Source: Penn State Office of Public Information, CDT, 1971)

1969 – Boone E. Hammond, Associate Professor of Sociology, College of Human Development

Boone Hammond, a sociologist, was appointed associate professor of human development in 1969. Prior to coming to Penn State, Hammond had been an assistant

professor of sociology at Southern Illinois University for two years where he also was chairman of an ad hoc committee on an experimental Black studies program. Previous to that he was a research associate at Washington University (St. Louis) working in the areas of social problems and minority relations. Hammond received a Bachelor of Arts degree in Sociology from Southern Illinois University, and a Master of Arts degree in Sociology from Washington University. Hammonds died from sarcoidosis on May 27, 1971, a few weeks before his 37th birthday. Shortly after his death, his widow, Rita Hammond, accepted a position in the admissions office. She worked at Penn State until her retirement in 1993. (Source: Daily Collegian Oct 1, 1969, Rita (Hammond) Samelson.)

1969 – Scott W. Williams, College of the Liberal Arts



For two years after earning his doctorate in mathematics from Lehigh University, Dr. Williams was a post-doc in mathematics at Penn State. He was also involved in the anti-war March on Washington and he flirted with moving from mathematics to social psychology. He didn't make that change, and eventually co-founded the first organization of African American Mathematicians in 1969. It lasts today as the National Association of Mathematicians. In 1971 Dr. Williams left Penn State to take a position at the University of Buffalo, SUNY. Dr. William's father, pianist Roger Williams, was one of the first Blacks in the country to earn a Ph.D. in Psychology (Penn State, 1946). (Source: Scott W. Williams Biography 2005)

1970 – Cyril E. Griffith, Associate Professor of History and Director of the Black Studies Program

Griffith was appointed an assistant professor of history at the Pennsylvania State



University in 1970. He became an associate professor in 1976 and taught African history at Penn State for 23 years, retiring as an associate professor emeritus in 1993. He served as the first director of the Black Studies Program from 1975 to 1979.

Born in Bermuda on September 5, 1929, Griffith earned a bachelor's degree from Wilberforce University in 1963, a master's degree from Bowling Green State University in 1965, and a Ph.D. from Michigan State University in 1973. He was the author of *The African Dream: Martin R. Delany and the Emergence of Pan-African Thought* (1973). A founding member of the Black History

Advisory Committee of the Pennsylvania Historical Commission, he was cited by them for his "deep commitment to the promotion and preservation of Black history and culture in Pennsylvania." He was a member of the African Studies Association for the Study of Afro-American Life and History and the Penn State Faculty Senate. Griffith died of a sudden heart attack on July 22, 1994. The "Cyril Griffith Papers," housed in the Archives and Special Collections of the Penn State Libraries, include his extensive

research into African American history, religion, and culture, including detailed work on African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E). churches. (Source: Penn State Archives)

1970 – Don Ferrell, Penn State Athletics



Don Ferrell came to Penn State in 1970 as the assistant and freshman coach of the Penn State Basketball team and finished his more than 30-year career as the Director of Academic Support Services in 2003. In 1975, he became the coach of the men and women bowling teams; his 1979 women's team won the national championship. He also coached the men's Rugby team before becoming the Director of Academic Support Services. During that time, he held the position of assistant professor in the College of Health and Human Development.

Ferrell completed undergraduate work at Drexel University and graduated from Penn State in 1976 with a master's degree. (Source: Collegian, Oct 28th. 1989, July 2, 2003. Photo is from 1979 *LaVie* Yearbook.)

Other Early African American Faculty/Staff

1968

Rose Perine – Joined the staff in April 1968 as Assistant Director for Admissions and Recruiting (EOP). She was the wife of James Perine.

Jeanne C. Davis - Became the Director of Guidance for the Upward Bound Program in 1968. She was the wife of Charles T. Davis.

1969

James Kingsland – Came to Penn State as a specialist in African Studies and an assistant professor of political science. He began teaching “Social Science 110: An introduction to contemporary Africa,” the first African Studies course at the university, in September of 1969.

Hoyt Taylor – Instructor of Physical Education and Assistant Football Coach

1970

Commonwealth Campuses – The January 16, 1971 Daily Collegian indicated that “A total of 14 faculty members from 7 of the University’s 18 commonwealth campuses were invited to participate in the conference (Pennsylvania Conference on Black Higher Education).” Invitations to this conference were extended to all Black faculty and staff members of Pennsylvania’s colleges and universities. Since the article did not list their names, all but one of these commonwealth campus staff members is still to be identified. The only identified commonwealth campus staff member was Thelma Price. She was at the New Kensington campus at the time of the conference. The first Pennsylvania Conference on Black Higher Education commenced on February 3, 1971.



*"Soon we know a guiding hand
Will disperse our little band,
Yet we'll ever loyal stand ..."*