



Acts & Facts

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Alums in the News...

***World of Praise* Tapes Pilot Episode at**

Oakwood: Wintley A. Phipps, Oakwood alumnus, minister, and founder of the U.S. Dream Academy, has now taken on a new role — that of television producer. The *World of Praise* broadcast taped its pilot episode before a live audience at the Oakwood College church on January 24. The program, which was incorporated into the church's mid-week prayer service, began with a praise session, followed by prayer and the spoken word. Pastor Phipps was later introduced by Oakwood's Senior Pastor, Craig Newborn, and the host of the broadcast, Kem Roper. He warmed the congregation's worship experience with his characteristically rich baritones, then went on to explain the mission he hopes to achieve through this broadcast. That mission is wrapped up in the U.S. Dream Academy motto, "A



child with a dream is a child with a chance,” to which he added, “And the opposite is also true — a child without a dream doesn’t stand a chance in this world.”

Pastor Phipps spoke of God holding “special blessing for broken vessels.” In between worshipful strains, he stated, “So close to the coming of the Lord, this is no time for us to be without a rock-solid sense of our identity in Christ.” He closed the program with video clips of Oprah Winfrey’s new school for underprivileged girls in South Africa. Pastor Phipps was one of the keynote speakers at the opening of Oprah’s state-of-the-art school and presented a tear-jerking mission report on the powerful effects of working toward one’s dreams, despite life’s obstacles. Throughout the program, Pastor Phipps reiterated his key thought: “Jesus has taught us that it is in the quiet crucible of our private sufferings that our noblest dreams are born and God’s greatest gifts are given.”

A total of ten tapings will take place at Oakwood’s church over the next several weeks. The first *World of Praise* broadcast is expected to air on 3ABN sometime between February and March. For more information, visit the link: <http://www.al.com/search/index.ssf?/base/living/1169201855205580.xml?huntsvilletimes?lnotes&coll=1>

Alumna Makes History on Capitol Hill: Christina Anderson Smith of Upper Marlboro, Maryland, made history on January 23 for being the first African-



American woman to take the official record for the State of the Union Address, which was given by President George W. Bush that night. For the past six years Smith has served as an Official Court Reporter for the United States House of Representatives taking the official record for hearings and floor proceedings on Capitol Hill. Her duties include verbatim reporting and transcription of congressional proceedings, meetings, hearings and caucuses.

“I am both humbled and honored to serve in this position,” Smith stated. “I am certain that I am in this place at this time for God’s glory, not my own.”

Smith is an alumna of Oakwood College (Class of 1982), and of Pine Forge Academy (Class of 1977). She is a member of the Emmanuel Brinklow Church in Brinklow, Maryland.

Health Disparities Expert Appointed Professor:

David Williams has joined the Harvard School of Public Health (HSPH) faculty as the Florence Sprague Norman and Laura Smart Norman Professor of Public Health in the Department of Society, Human Development, and Health. His work explores social influences upon health, including



trends and specific mechanisms by which socioeconomic and racial differences affect physical and mental health, as well as interventions that might reduce those health disparities. Williams has been a key figure in drawing attention to and gaining support for research designed to understand and reduce health disparities. "This is an opportune time in America for greater awareness and greater openness about the real gaps that exist in the quality of life," Williams said. "It's time to think of what works best from a policy perspective."

Williams, who is a member of the Board of Trustees at Oakwood College, spoke at a lecture at Harvard School of Public Health last year on the subject of health disparities. His talk may be viewed at <http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/now/feb18/research.html>. Said Lisa Berkman, chair of the Department of Society, Human Development, and Health, "We think of him as one of the most insightful thinkers around issues related to health disparities," said Berkman. "He is interested in factors that place people at a disadvantage, as well as those that serve to bolster people's reserve and their capacity to deal with difficult situations."

In recent work, he found that residential segregation and neighborhood quality contribute to racial disparities in the death rates of white and black Americans. He reported on how everyday encounters with discrimination diminish the mental and physical health of African-American women, and on how even small changes in socioeconomic status and social conditions can significantly improve health. Williams' research spans individual and societal determinants of health and also includes the impact of religion and, in South Africa, the additional effects of torture and violence. In one line of inquiry, he is seeking to understand the extent to which the stress of unfair treatment has health consequences. In another area of research, he aims to understand the impacts of religion upon health.



Donna Smith's Sound Advice Reaches Hope Channel:

A new television broadcast -- *Sound Advice with Donna Smith* -- will be aired weekly on the Hope Channel as part of a weekly program called *Glory Beat*. The program will be aired online at www.hopetv.org and becomes available by satellite in February. Smith served as a faculty member of Oakwood's Family and Consumer Sciences Department for 14 years. She is a registered dietitian and wellness coach who offers nutritional counseling that encourages striking a balance between good mental and physical health.

She is currently in the process of broadening the scope of her work in the health and fitness industry to include diabetes and cancer seminars, stress management. Her new efforts include a focus on effective communication that promotes mental health and aids in conflict resolution. For more information, visit <http://www.al.com/news/huntsvilletimes/index.ssf?base/news/1169646446152110.xml&coll=1>

Summer Wood Featured by Teach For America: Summer Wood was featured on the *Teach For America* (TFA) Web site as part of a diverse group of talented college graduates who possess the leadership skills necessary to make an impact in the field of education. Corps members are required to be recent college graduates and must have earned an average GPA of 3.5. Ninety-six percent of the corps' members have held leadership positions on their campuses prior to graduation, and Summer is no exception. She serves as the alumni representative to the Oakwood College Board of Trustees and graduated *summa cum laude* in May 2006 with a degree in Management.

Asked why she chose to apply to TFA, Summer commented, "I joined *Teach For America* so that I could make a difference in some child's life...so that they could have the opportunities that I was able to have due to a good education."

Teach For America provides corps members with training and development practices to help refine their teaching skills. Some 4,400 TFA members work in 25 urban and rural areas profoundly affected by the achievement gap. They are working to ensure their students achieve academic success—despite the inequities they face.

Out of approximately 4,400 corps member, only 20 member profiles were chosen for the Web site. Summer serves in the Baltimore region of TFA.

Student Achievement

Nicole Julius Crowned Miss Oakwood 2007:

The 15th Annual Miss Oakwood Pageant "Princess Diaries" was held on January 15, 2007 at The New Room at Trinity United Methodist Church. Six young ladies had the opportunity to showcase their talents and unique abilities. At the end of a wonderful evening, Nicole Julius, a native of Huntsville, claimed the title of Miss Oakwood College.



Nicole is a senior English and Spanish major who plans to study international law for human rights after graduation from Oakwood. Nicole believes in the importance of leadership and leadership development.

As Miss Oakwood 2007, Nicole will work toward promoting self-confidence, self-sufficiency, school pride, and leadership among Oakwood students.

Oakwood Students Win Awards at Research Conference: Four Oakwood College students have been honored with awards for research they presented at the Annual Biomedical Research Conference for Minority Students (ABRCMS) in Anaheim, California, in November 2006.

ABRCMS is an annual conference organized by the American Society for Microbiology (ASM) and supported by a grant from the National Institute of General Medical Sciences. Now in its sixth year, ABRCMS is the largest, professional conference for biomedical students. Over 2,500 people attended this year's conference including 1,633 students, 421 faculty and program directors and 418 exhibitors. The conference is designed to encourage underrepresented minority students to pursue advanced training in the biomedical and behavioral sciences and provide faculty mentors and advisors with resources for facilitating students' success.

"This conference addresses a critical need in this country to cultivate the scientific potential and talent in groups (women and under-represented minorities) that were historically and are currently under-utilized in careers within the biomedical sciences," says ASM President-Elect Clifford Houston, the chair of the conference.

During the four-day conference over 1,100 students participated in poster and oral presentations in nine sub-disciplines in the biomedical and behavioral sciences. All undergraduate student presentations were judged and those receiving the highest scores in each scientific discipline and in each educational level were given awards during the final banquet. A total of 120 undergraduates received monetary awards of \$250 for their outstanding research.

Oakwood College awardees include:

- **Lauren Pedersen-Buck** (*Senior, Quantitative Science*) was recognized for her research on potential new targets for future HIV protease inhibitors.
- **Shammah Williams** (*Senior, Physiological Sciences*) was recognized for her research on a novel compound with the potential for treating metabolic syndrome X, a condition characterized by obesity, insulin resistance, impaired glucose tolerance and hypertension.
- **Norris Hollie** (*Senior, Physiological Sciences*) was recognized for his research on how opioid receptors may undergo modification in the progression of heart failure.
- **Michael Knight** (*Senior, Molecular Sciences*) was recognized for his research on KLF11, a transcription factor that acts as a tumor suppressor for pancreatic cancer.

The 2007 ABRCMS has been scheduled November 7-10 in Austin, Texas. For more information, visit the conference Web site at www.abrcms.org.

To add your name to the mailing list, ask a question or share a comment, send an e-mail to pr@oakwood.edu or call (256) 726-7202.