

# AHEAD OF THE CURVE

THE FIRST CENTURY OF AFRICAN AMERICAN EXPERIENCES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF DUBUQUE





# INTRODUCTION

*Ahead of the Curve: The First Century of African American Experiences at the University of Dubuque* commemorates the coming of the University's first black students, brothers Solomon and Benjamin Butler. The Butlers, who entered classes in fall of 1915, certainly deserve more attention along the lines of what we gave them in last year's exhibition and catalog *Racing Past the Color Line: Sol Butler and Paul Robeson in Collegiate Athletics*. Their collegiate experiences placed their school ahead of the curve in terms of racial equality in higher education. In an effort to balance our coverage, however, we now focus on the experiences of African American students who came after the Butlers. Perhaps none of these alums achieved the same degree of international fame as did Olympiad Sol Butler, but our research convinces us that many have stories as compelling as that of a world-class athlete. More than just a commemoration, then, *Ahead of the Curve* celebrates the hard work, dedication, success, daring, and spirit of inquiry of students whose lives shaped and were shaped by UD.

This catalog commemorates and celebrates African American students at UD by providing a levelheaded look at their myriad experiences – good and bad – on campus and within the broader community. Toward this end, *Ahead of the Curve* features the research insights of burgeoning and seasoned historians and a wealth of memories from dozens of alumni. The catalog begins with historical essays by students Garrison Grubb ('15) and Gordon Musel ('17), who share what they have learned about the first century of African American history through their summer Chlapaty Research Fellowships. Dr. Richard Breaux, assistant professor in the Department of Ethnic and Racial Studies at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse, follows with a critical essay that

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examines how ahead of or behind the curve UD was in terms of race relations, especially in comparison with other Iowa institutions of higher education. The interviews come next and vividly bring to life generations of experiences through the transcribed memories of alumni, beginning with those of Virginia Diggs ('47), the first African American female to graduate from UD. Like Sol Butler ('19), the first African American male to graduate, Ms. Diggs majored in History. Her testimony provides an invaluable link to the early decades of black enrollment and provides a compelling introduction to the numerous interview excerpts that follow. We group these excerpts under four categories – “Journey to Dubuque,” “Academic & Social Life,” “Race & Diversity,” and “Life After UD” - that reflect the types of questions we asked in each interview. Rather than placing the memories in strict chronological order, we arrange them so as to evoke a conversation among the alumni across generations. We hope this structural approach facilitates your seeing links and patterns. Undoubtedly you'll see tremendous variety in experiences!

*Ahead of the Curve* has been a collaborative effort made possible by students and alumni. This past fall semester our inaugural Oral History class studied the art of interviewing. Students Dustin Ackerman, Sharon Boer, Garrison Grubb, Christian Kowolchuk, and Gordon Musel interviewed twelve African American alumni and transcribed a significant portion of these interviews. The first round of interviews took place over the phone and focused on alumni from the 1960s. The students' subsequent interviews took place in Chicago; the culmination of this trip was a group interview with Donna Cooper, Preston Fleming, Darren Glover, and Cynthia Slater, who attended UD in the 1980s. Jonathan Helmke and

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I conducted the remaining interviews over the phone or in person. Several of these have been filmed, thanks to Nathan Ripperger. The excerpts contained in this catalog represent only a small fraction of the memorable stories from these interviews.

In addition to the students and alumni already named, Jonathan and I wish to thank the many additional individuals who made this catalog possible, including: Virginia Diggs for welcoming me into her home for a delightful interview; Jim Martin for traveling to Dubuque to provide our Oral History class a vivid overview of campus life during the 1960s; Paul Clayton for sharing his “Journey to Dubuque” essay, thus inspiring one of our interview-section themes; Susan Bellinger, William Walker, Chestina Mitchell Archibald, Dozier Jones, Ozell Hudson, Alice Stubblefield, William Stubblefield, Cynthia Rivers, Edgar Friloux, Joyce Murray, John Couchman, John Taylor, Eugene Hawkins, Vernon Wright, Barbara Bailey-Lett, James Riddick, Mikelange Olbel, Kiesharlia Sainci, Anderson Sainci, Temwa Phiri, Andre Lessears, and Ericka Lessears for participating in interviews; and Peter Smith, Meghann Toohey, Laura Rapp, Mary Anne Knefel, Alan Garfield, Katie Kraus, Clarissa Ferguson, Tom Hogan, Alicia Connolly and President Jeffrey Bullock for their help and support.

This past spring Jonathan organized a “thank you” dinner for recent alumni who participated in individual interviews. During this dinner, Andre Lessears, training and development workforce coordinator for the City of Dubuque, identified the dramatic infusion of racial diversity in our community over the past decade:

*How many other communities can you say you're in the midst of a dramatic shift of what a community looks like and – if you choose to – you can be on the front lines and steering what that shift looks like. If you look at what's happened over the last ten years you look at rapid increase in every minority group, I think a 250% increase of every minority group in the community in the last ten years. In terms of history, that's literally overnight. To go from less than 3% total minority representation in a community to almost 10 to 11% total minority representation in a community in less than ten years, that's unheard of. What comes with that are all the challenges. It's essentially culture shock. The community realizes that they don't have the infrastructure to support certain populations... That's where Dubuque is right now. It's an exciting time, but challenging.*

Andre's historical perspective at this moment in time reminds us that the following stories of former students adjusting to and helping shape a university and broader community are part of a larger, ongoing story that we can help write. I hope this catalog and accompanying exhibition will provide insight on where we have been as we work to create a Dubuque well ahead of the curve in cultural inclusiveness.

Brian Hallstoos, Ph.D.  
Assistant Professor of History  
Co-Curator of *Ahead of the Curve*

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# AHEAD OF THE CURVE | CAPTURING THE STORIES AND MEMORIES

*What made this project so special was the unique conversations that I had with the various alumni. The stories that were told are powerful in many ways. Also the people who told these stories are special and provided the University a gift.*

As University Archivist, I have the privilege of interacting with many alumni across the country. As part of this interaction, I get to hear and capture the important stories that are key to understanding the university's past and how the university is going forward into the future. In the Archives, we have many administrative records, photos, etc. But we do not have the stories of past and current students. This project, *Ahead of the Curve: The African American Experience at the University of Dubuque*, is important to capture these stories for future generations of students, faculty, staff, and alumni.

What made this project so special was the unique conversations that I had with the various alumni. The stories that were told are powerful in many ways. Also the people who told these stories are special and provided the University a gift. There were happy memories of going on choir tours, sitting in the Underground, being at the Sol Butler House, etc. There were also many sad memories, the death of Martin Luther King, racist incidents, and loneliness. After hearing these stories, I came away with many things including being proud of these alumni who sacrificed and accomplished before, during, and after their time at the University of Dubuque. I am also proud of the past and current faculty and staff, like John Knox Coit and President Couchman, who impacted these alumni in many special ways. I am hoping as you read these stories and eventually can listen to them in the exhibit and online that you come away with the same privilege that I had to know these people and their stories.

I also had the privilege of co-teaching with Dr. Brian Hallstoos the Oral History course that collected many of these

oral histories. These students who did this work taught me how future generations of students can learn by asking people to share personal and unique stories.

In the summer of 2015, the University of Dubuque was chosen as one of a select group of 42 institutions nationwide – the only institution in Iowa – by the Council of Independent Colleges (CIC) to participate in a Consortium on Digital Resources for Teaching and Research. The Consortium intends to improve teaching and learning, enhance faculty and student/faculty research, and streamline administrative capabilities through a uniform digital system of cataloging important research material collections. This grant will allow the university to make the oral histories digitally accessible to UD students, faculty, staff, and alumni and to researchers around the world. The oral history recordings and the transcription from these recording will be available, along with photos and other important historical resources to tell this important story. Go to <http://digitalud.dbq.edu> for more information on this exciting project.

Thank you for taking the time to read this catalog and to see the exhibit itself. If you have any questions, please contact me at [archives@dbq.edu](mailto:archives@dbq.edu).

Jonathan Helmke  
University Archivist  
Assistant Director for Technical Services and Library System  
Charles C. Myers Library  
Co-Curator of *Ahead of the Curve*



# FROM THE DIRECTOR

The function of the Bisignano Art Gallery is both to reflect various interests and directions of the University of Dubuque and to lead in an examination of various aspects that live at the University. For example, just within the past year, we've organized works that focus on traditional art motifs by national artists, on international exploration in photography by our student travelers, on video works by students completing their academic requirements, and on informational documentation and research about human trafficking in our region. Dialogue about art, of course, fits comfortably within a gallery environment. But we're more than that.

Dialogue about university history and racism is equally relevant in our Gallery. Even in a so-called "post-racist society" which has elected its first African American President, as we hopefully try to assert Voltaire's maxim (we live in the best of all possible worlds), we can easily identify contemporary barriers that hinder effective dialogue on racism in our own time.

Yet back in more halcyon days of the university, the stories of those two brothers, Sol and Ben Butler, serve to inform us not only of our history but to point to the university's moral foundations. Indeed, we do stand on the shoulders of some pretty impressive giants.

Thanks to the research and organization by Brian Hallstoos and Jonathan Helmke, this show reveals to us just who some of those giants were. We learn about those students, staff, faculty, and administration who faced challenges, from subtle to blatant acts of hate and discrimination. And while a number of hands went into the making of this show, it is mainly Brian and Jonathan who we should gratefully acknowledge for the research and catalog. Please, let the dialogue continue.

Alan Garfield, Director  
Bisignano Art Gallery





# AHEAD OF THE CURVE | THE AFRICAN AMERICAN EXPERIENCE

AT THE UNIVERSITY OF DUBUQUE  
1915-1965 —GARRISON GRUBB



*Sol Butler (right)*

*113 African American, African, and other nationals of African descent attended the University from 1915 to 1965.*

In the summer of 2014 I researched the topic of African Americans and their relationship to the University of Dubuque from 1915 to 1965. While this essay, which draws upon 400 hours of primary and secondary research, does not represent all my gathered evidence, I believe it provides the keynotes of the African American experience within the time frame. In 1915 Sol Butler and his brother Ben Butler were the first African Americans to attend what was then known as Dubuque German College, arriving from Rock Island, Illinois. A small population of African Americans followed in the Butlers' footsteps, further integrating the small Presbyterian liberal arts college. 113 African American, African, and other nationals of African descent attended the University from 1915 to 1965. Among these 113 were Henry Martin, Virginia Diggs, Leroy Watts, Obinnaya Alozie, Doris Lewis, Ivan Livingston, John Agoro, and Geraldine Pollard, who I focus on in this essay. Each excelled in one or more disciplines during a time of staunch nationwide opposition to integration. Examining their experiences will provide a perspective on the university's dealings with students of color during the first fifty years of African Americans being admitted to the institution.

According to the research I conducted, there was a gap of seven years between UD's first African Americans (Sol and Ben Butler) and the next. The third African American to attend this University was a gentleman by the name of Henry A. Martin, Jr. He attended the university from 1927 until his senior year in 1931, but for one reason or another never graduated. Mr. Martin, Jr. appears in *The Key* yearbooks for the years of 1929-32, however the yearbooks do not quite match the school year they represent (the junior class

was tasked with the completion of the yearbooks so they would catalog it one year in advance, the year they were to graduate). Mr. Martin, Jr. attended during the University's suspension of participation in inter-collegiate athletics, but this did not stop the young man from expressing his athletic prowess. He played all manner of sports, including basketball, track, volleyball, baseball, speedball, and football. Henry Martin however did not finish his degree at University of Dubuque. The reason(s) for his departure I could not locate, and his transcripts provided no justification for his leaving. He would not be the last Martin to study at the small college. He would eventually obtain a degree in engineering from the University of Michigan, and then would serve in the US Navy during the Second World War.

The next African American I know of to attend this university was also this institution's first female African American, a young lady by the name of Lillian M. Martin (Henry A. Martin's younger sister). The Federal Census indicates that Lillian and Henry were children of Dr. Henry Martin 1st (Doctor of Theology). All we know about Ms. Martin is that she was from Belcher, Louisiana and that she was admitted in 1931. However she did not complete her program at this university; all known academic information I had to go on was gathered through her transcript, which does not describe whether she transferred credit to another institution or why she chose to leave. This led me to believe that her brother might have shared good thoughts about the school, considering there was a young ladies' college in Dubuque (Clarke College) that she could have attended instead.



The next chronological attendee was a young lady from Babylon, New York by the name of Doris Selvy who entered the university in 1938. She was part of a recruitment project of a former student-turned-recruiter (a Mr. Friedrich Abben) who lived in Babylon. This group was rightly named the “Babylon group,” which led to some initial confusion on my part. Constantly seeing this group referred to as the Babylon group originally led me to believe this amalgam of students was from the Middle East. However through further inquisition I was able to discover their true location of origin. In my personal opinion this collection of students should be looked into more, if for nothing else than the levity they brought through all sorts of shenanigans. Ms. Selvy herself ran into trouble in the dorms, and had to have council with the dean of the girls about her issues. It seems she too did not finish her training here at the University of Dubuque, but left due to less-than-sufficient grades. Evidence shows that she did attempt to come back a few years later, but nothing provides information on if she did come back or not. All evidence points to her as being the first African American female to integrate the dormitories. There is a personal letter between President Welch and Abben saying he would have to see if the White ladies would be fine with rooming with a “colored” girl. The fact that Doris Selvy was reprimanded in the girls’ dorms proved she was placed in the dorms with the White female students. Also, Ms. Selvy was brought to the university because of her potential as a writer, and Abben the recruiter informed the school about her writing talent. Due to her financial standing, she needed a job to assist her while in Dubuque. The university wrote back informing Abben that a faculty member was in need of an assistant, but they were unsure if he would accept having a “colored” girl working under him. In the next session of correspondences Abben

was given the green light telling him the faculty member would take her onto his staff. However, her finding financial assistance was not always accompanied with good news. The reason Selvy had to rely on a work-study program was due to no one sponsoring her education. When a university employee mentioned to a potential donor about Selvy’s economic standing, he quickly informed the university that he was a Southern Gentleman, and thus could not endorse the education of colored people.

Ms. Virginia Diggs is seen in both additions of the 1947 yearbooks representing different years. From the yearbooks we can confirm that she did finish her program in History and English, and that she arrived here from Chicago, Illinois. I believe she was the first African American female to graduate from the University of Dubuque. The reason for this deduction is no other African American female appears in the yearbooks for their senior picture with their major published, nor do any other African American females receive a diploma before her according to the transcripts. Another piece of evidence I encountered was a publication praising her accomplishments in the *Chicago Defender*. This was an African American newspaper that covered other African Americans in the region. For her to be recognized in such a manner accompanied with all other data led me to believe she was the university’s first African American female graduate. It was quite exciting to discover the University’s first African American female graduate. While at the University of Dubuque Virginia Diggs was elected to the YWCA Cabinet her junior year and Class Secretary and YWCA Publicity Chairman her senior year by a predominantly White student body, thus displaying the student-led meritocracy.

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*According to the 1950 yearbook, a young man, Obinnaya Alozie, arrived from Africa. "Obie" was a Nigerian Prince who was studying to become a doctor and would later continue his medical studies in Scotland.*

The 2nd edition of the 1947 yearbook includes Leroy Watts from Clinton, Iowa. He appears in this edition through the 1950 editions. Through these publications it is not hard to tell that Mr. Watts took full advantage of all the opportunities afforded him. Some activities include his being vice-president of a fraternity, the Phi Omicron, as well being on the Steffens Hall Council. He also was handpicked by the faculty to be part of the "Who's Who," all while being a member the Inter-Fraternity Council and participating in many different sports. The yearbooks show he finished his degree in Social Science. All of the offices he held were through election, and just like Ms. Diggs he too was elected to these positions by a predominantly white class. His acceptance into the "Who's Who," selected by an all-White administration, displayed the university's inclusive nature. To further the perception of inclusivity the essential reason Leroy Watts came to the University of Dubuque is because the flagship of the state, University of Iowa, would not allow him to play basketball. This truly proved to be their loss, and Watts was rewarded a letter for each year he played basketball.

According to the 1950 yearbook, a young man, Obinnaya Alozie, arrived from Africa. "Obie" was a Nigerian Prince who was studying to become a doctor and would later continue his medical studies in Scotland. Prior to departing for Scotland, Alozie finished his degree with a major in Chemistry and a minor in Biology. Also while at the institution he participated in extracurricular activities. The student newspaper interviewed him about his new life in America. During the interview, Alozie explained that as long as he informed people he was a foreigner he was treated fairly and that racial discrimination was an issue in this nation. But Alozie was more than happy to inform the interviewer that he did not have to encounter this at the University of Dubuque. This is a common theme: stay on campus and inclusivity is the norm, but step past the threshold of the campus and rediscover racial animosity. This is something that made

me reflect on the administration of the campus, under the leadership of President Welch, and how they had to teach these kids to forget what had been taught to them about race. The administration stood by its mission to make a campus absent of exclusivity. Yet it also made me ask, "How could these kids come from an environment that bred hostility and find themselves stripped of it?" It really makes me wonder how involved the administration was with the student body that it could create an oasis in a desert of prejudice.

The yearbook of 1952 introduces Doris Lewis and Ivan Livingston. Doris Lewis' transcript was not found, so the only information on her is provided by the yearbook. According to the *Key*, Ms. Lewis was from McDonald, Pennsylvania and she graduated with a degree in English and minor in History. While enrolled in the university, Ms. Lewis participated in many out-of-class organizations and was elected to a few prominent positions, including vice-president of her class her junior year and class treasurer her senior year. She too was elected to these titles by a predominantly White class. Doris Lewis also was an active member of a sorority, the Zeta Phi, all four years and was on the House Council for her dormitory both her sophomore and senior years. For the council she would have had to run and be elected for the position by people from multiple classes, and a sorority can turn away would-be inductees. This further implies that the university was operating on an inclusive mode.

Ivan Livingston from Verdun, Canada arrived at UD in the fall of 1950. Livingston had been lured to the university by none other than the Nigerian Prince, Obinnaya Alozie. Alozie quite often touted the university in a magnanimous manner, focusing on "the complete lack of racial barriers he had found there." Upon learning this, the young Livingston was sold on the small university in Dubuque, Iowa. Before graduating, Livingston would help transform the small college into a regional powerhouse in track by helping set an



Iowa Conference mile relay record of 3 minutes 25.2 seconds and being awarded three straight conference titles in 100 and 220 yard dashes. He also was inducted into the “D club,” an organization that recognized student athletes with high GPAs. Livingston was a Phi Omicron man, joining his senior year. Mr. Livingston’s transcript does confirm that he received his degree in June of 1954, but it is unmarked as to what discipline.

John Agoro, a Ugandan, came to the university his freshmen year, 1955. Agoro first learned about the University of Dubuque from two of Livingston’s friends while on a bus to the British Empire Games. They made Agoro privy to the fact that there was a university in Iowa that was searching for athletes, and had an open environment for people of African descent. He was amazed to learn of an American college that allowed “Negroes” to attend and graduate. The student body wanted Agoro at the university so badly they raised enough money for him to buy passage by freighter, but the United Kingdom would not allow one of their subjects to travel in such a manner. Agoro eventually arrived at the university after traveling by plane. It is unknown if he finished his degree. All that can be confirmed is that he too was a member of the D Club, a Phi Omicron man, and participated in track all the years he was here. This aspect is something that always intrigued me, the dissemination of information among African and African descendants about the University of Dubuque. People of African ancestry kept one another informed about this dot of meritocracy otherwise known as the University of Dubuque.

Finally we have Geraldine Pollard from Chicago, Illinois. According to the yearbooks, she arrived her freshmen year in 1961. While a student at the university, Ms. Pollard majored in Biology and minored in Chemistry, receiving her degree in 1963 and participating in many extracurricular activities. Pollard was a member of the Women’s Athletic and Recreation Association (WARA) all four years. She joined

the Chemistry Club her sophomore year, and also sat on the Dorm Council that same year. Pollard was elected to two class positions, Secretary and Treasurer, her junior year. Lastly she worked for the *Key* from her sophomore year to the end of her collegiate career.

In summation, it appears the University of Dubuque was truly ahead of the curve in fostering an integrated student body, beginning with accepting African Americans during a time of nationwide segregation to active recruiting of African Americans and other people of African heritage. The faculty too seemed supportive, from coaches to professors. There is an example of a coach pulling the basketball team from a competition due to the opposing team only accepting a meet if the “colored” student was benched. The fact that the faculty included African and African descendants into the “Who’s Who” and other honor clubs shows a spirit of inclusivity. The student body seemed inviting and welcoming, too. The student body elected people of color to elevated mantles, some being elected president and vice-president of fraternities and classes, and others secretary, treasurer, council seats for dormitories, and other council seats. Another student-based election was Homecoming Queen, to which African American women were nominated. It appears that the University of Dubuque was more inclusive toward Black people than most other schools of the time, both regionally and nationally.

*While a student at the University, Ms. Pollard majored in Biology and minored in Chemistry, receiving her degree in 1963 and participating in many extracurricular activities. Pollard was a member of the Women’s Athletic and Recreation Association (WARA) all four years.*





April 30, 1973

THE BLACK PRESIDIUM DEMANDS

ARCHIVES  
UNIVERSITY OF DUBUQUE

The Black Presidium of the University of Dubuque demands:

1. For the operating year 1973-74 a \$2,000 budget with the understanding that we are taking an \$800 cut as compared to the 1972-73 budget which was \$2,800 dollars.
2. That the admission of all black students be handled entirely by the Black Presidium starting the fall term of 1973.
  - a. All Black students that do not meet admission requirements be handled by the Black Presidium immediately (May 1, 1973) this includes the power to decide these students admittance or rejection into the University.
  - b. As of May 1, 1973 the admission department incorporate these changes in admission policies into all admissions department literature.
3. That Brandon Walker be reinstated as an B.A. for the year 1973 because of the fact that he was hired through a strict evaluation process.
4. That two Black persons be staffed full-time in the admission and Financial Aid departments. We demand that Charlie Smith be hired to work in 1 of the 2 departments.
5. That the Black weekend be an annual cultural event of the University of Dubuque with an annual allotment of at least \$5,000 from the university.
6. That all athletic scholarships for Black athletes be channeled through the Black Presidium.
7. That the ceiling, the partitioning, and the sealing of the wall be completed by May 8, 1973, also the completion of the basement floor by May 15, 1973.
8. That a Black person be hired full-time by the University of Dubuque to serve as a counselor for the Black students on campus.
9. That the University institute an accredited Black studies program and that they hire Black professors to teach these courses. We demand that the University start working on this program immediately and have the program incorporated into the curriculum and Black professors teaching these courses by January 1, 1974.

We, the members of the Black Presidium of the University of Dubuque, demand an answer from the administration regarding these demands by 3:00 pm. May 1, 1973.

Walter Peterson, President  
University of Dubuque

If you don't get us  
bigger better quarters  
for our Black Presidium  
pretty quick, we gonna  
get you, white man!

Student

ARCHIVES  
UNIVERSITY OF DUBUQUE



# AHEAD OF THE CURVE

# AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY

AT THE UNIVERSITY OF DUBUQUE  
SINCE THE 1960s —GORDON MUSEL

I heard and read phrases like “the campus was its own bubble” time and time again researching the African American story at the University of Dubuque. In interviews people referred to this imaginary bubble that seemed to surround and protect the University from racial turmoil that otherwise engulfed the rest of the nation throughout the 1960s, ‘70s, ‘80s, and even to the present day. Although I knew this view couldn’t be one-hundred percent true, I still admired the ideal and atmosphere that must have been present at the time to invoke such feelings for these African American students who experienced it. I set out in my summer 2015 Chlapaty Research Fellowship to study African American history at the University of Dubuque from 1965 to the present and see what made this campus the Mecca that so many claimed it was. At the same time I understood that the story would not come without some conflict and ugly tales of discrimination. I wanted to find out how UD struggled with, as well as stood up for, some of the great events of the civil rights era. This essay will describe the University of Dubuque’s own personal Civil Rights Movement within the context of the broader national movement. I will specifically examine who helped form this bubble, what programs were introduced to help pave the way for racial integration, and what happened on campus when that bubble of racial tension burst and the racial tensions came to our door step.

I began by researching the 1960s, a time that most people consider one of the most influential and important periods for civil rights. This was the decade where sit-ins, freedom rides, and racial riots seem to be at their peak and also where such important pieces of legislature were created like the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and 1968. These Acts outlawed Jim Crow

laws and began the integration of schools across the South. What I wanted to know was how UD was affected or how the campus reacted to the monumental changes happening in America. It turns out that UD was integrated with its first black students in 1915, long before the events that forced the rest of the country to do so in the 1960s. These students were none other than the famous Sol Butler, a renowned athlete of the time, and his brother Benjamin Butler. It seemed to me that the University of Dubuque had a large step up on many other parts of the country with its integrated campus, however small that population of black students might have been. African American alumnus Dozier Jones (1962-66) explained to me that during his time at UD there were never more than a handful of black students on campus at any one time, but they found a very welcoming atmosphere devoid of the racism that much of the rest of the country was experiencing. I conducted his interview during an oral history class in which we interviewed several alumni of the Civil Rights period who wished to share their personal stories of success and struggle being African American at the University of Dubuque.

In the UD Archives I came across documents on the Johnson C. Smith Exchange that proved to be very special because this initiative helped set UD above and beyond the racial bigotry of the time. Begun in 1963, this program was organized between UD and the Johnson C. Smith University in Charlotte, North Carolina. They agreed to exchange a small number of mostly white students from UD and black students from Johnson C. Smith in an effort to promote integration and the sharing of cultures from a mainly white school in the North and a historically black school in the South. The United Presbyterian Church in the U.S. funded the program, which

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was found to be very successful until 1964 when, due to lack of funding, it had to be cut. A few students transferred to the University of Dubuque because they enjoyed their experience so much.

This exchange happened under the leadership of the seventh president of UD, Gaylord M. Couchman (1953-1967). A pastor of Dubuque's Westminster Presbyterian Church before coming to UD, President Couchman frequently referred to issues of racism and discrimination in his sermons and conversations, demanding equality for all. The following excerpt is from a 1953 sermon about racial equality:

*"Most of us have not yet learned to think anything but 'White.' In our own town many of us casually walk past the signs that say, 'We cater to white trade only.'"*  
– Gaylord Couchman

*Long ago a wise man once asked a question that must haunt every one of us until its answer be found in the ways and work of the pattern we call the American Way. "Have we not all one father?" he asked. "Hath not one God created us?" Abraham Lincoln, believing the conclusion inferred in those questions would say with all the authority of his honest and devoted life, "As I would not be a slave, so victory of man?" And by that word "man," Lincoln meant every man! Our hands are not so clean as Lincoln's at the point of humanity and brotherhood. We may not be intentionally cruel, but still we remain like children who thoughtlessly pull wings off butterflies. Most of us have not yet learned to think anything but "White." In our own town many of us casually walk past the signs that say, "We cater to white trade only." In our smugness and lack of true brotherhood we even break the hearts of little children. It was so at Christmas time in an Easter City as a tiny boy in a great store came to visit Santa Clause. Many were waiting their turn. Before the child of our story could get to Santa's embrace, Santa Clause saw him in the crowd (he was easy to distinguish); he rose, and taking the child quietly by the hand, led him away from that crowd of children and started him home. The questions of a little curious lad were stifled in his brokenhearted weeping. For a Negro boy was not fit to sit on white Santa's Lap.*

*Whether such bigotry is reflected in such treatment of Negroes or Orientals or Jewish folk, Protestants or Roman Catholics it becomes a denial of everything we say we mean in American life. And we do deny so flagrantly in our practice the very fact of freedom we say we prize so highly.*

Gaylord M. Couchman's time as UD President ended in 1967. His personal stance and opinions on civil rights can be clearly seen in the operation of the Johnson C. Smith exchange as well as in the general atmosphere of the campus at the time.

At the end of the 1960s the racial tension on campus began to rise with tragedies around the country, like the murders of Malcolm X in 1965 and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in 1968, that contributed to an increase in black militancy and the violence that followed. The UD administration received a letter on December 6, 1968 from a collective of African American students announcing the establishment of the Black Presidium, a student-run organization dedicated to the wellbeing of the black students on campus that would later be renamed the Black Student Union. Along with this announcement came claims of racism on campus and a list of demands, which required the University to provide a facility on campus where the Black Presidium could meet and have an area solely dedicated for black students, much like many of the fraternities, sororities, and other groups had on campus. I found some of the organization's demands to be extravagant, such as the review of all black student records by the Black Presidium and final approval of all scholarships for black students by the Black Presidium. The correspondence between the Black Presidium and the University led to deadlines and a long list of possible buildings on campus that might fit the Black Presidium's demands for a facility. Finally in the fall semester of 1969 the administration convinced a seminary family to move out of one of the homes on campus (located where the visitors' parking lot now sits across from the Myers Building and Severance Hall) that then became the Black



Intellectual and Cultural Center and what would later be renamed the Sol Butler Memorial House in 1976.

It didn't take long after the establishment of the Black Intellectual and Cultural Center for racial tension to severely escalate as vandals set fire to the building on May 6, 1970 resulting in the sit-in and occupancy of one of the administration's buildings, Van Vliet Hall, the next day. More and more letters were received by the administration throughout the early 1970s in which the Black Presidium claimed instances of racism and demanded such things as the hiring of black faculty members, a stipend for the Black Presidium, and black awareness and history classes. On April 3, 1974 it was finally noticed by the administration that the list of demands seemed to be exchanged between local universities, as the UD's demands were the exact same as the demands the BSU at Loras College sent their administration the year prior. Many of the demands were fulfilled by the University and others were unmanageable. In April 1973 an incident where a young black student was fired from campus employment for allegedly assaulting a university faculty member caused a campus uproar. The Black Presidium sent yet again another list of demands on April 30, 1973 to President Walter Peterson with an unattached handwritten note that read "We're going to get you white man." Other letters followed, specifically an undated open letter that referred to the previous incident and was entitled "The University of Dubuque an Institution of Higher Learning; FOR WHITES ONLY." Eventually the administration throughout the late 1970s worked with the organization to fulfill more of their demands and even started a black cultural week and other activities to promote racial equality on campus. As the Black Presidium began to expand their week of black cultural celebration they brought in highly influential speakers and activists throughout the 1970s and '80s, such as Alex Haley, the author of *Roots*.

The rest of my research produced little else as eventful for the African American story as these decades in the university's history or at least nothing so earth shattering that was recorded and preserved. Claims of racial discrimination in other interviews recorded this past year with a small group of African American alumni from the 1980s seem to suggest that some form of this turmoil carried on. In talking to these few alumni it appears that black cultural awareness may have been brought to campus, but the divide that separated everyone only grew as they spoke of the Black Cultural Awareness Center (known as the Sol Butler House) being torn down and the number of black students decreasing on campus. So I wonder what other stories could be told from examination of our Archives or further interviews with alumni and faculty of the 1980s, 1990s and early 2000s. Will delving further into this research help prevent racial tension and improve understanding today? Maybe in examining these areas we can bring further recognition to tales of great triumph in racial equality and social justice here on our campus, possibly helping to heal decades-old wounds.

# Cross burnings, ra

By GREG SMITH

Associated Press Writer

DUBUQUE, Iowa (AP)—Dubuque has about 57,000 white citizens, just 331 black citizens, and one thing more:

A serious racial problem.

Since July 3, there have been 10 reported cases of cross burnings at schools, parks and residences—four of them last week.

Since this past summer, there have been at least eight instances of racial slogans—"KKK Lives" and "No niggers"—painted on school buildings. On Oct. 24, 10 city police officers patrolled the halls of Dubuque Senior High School to defuse tensions after a fight between black and white students.

"It reminds me of the images of the 1930s in the South, the 'Mississippi Burnings' and movies like that come to mind," said Paul Werger of Iowa City, a bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. "You say, 'Not here in River City.' We're past that, are we not?"

Evidently not, says Charles Azebeokhai, chairman of Dubuque's Human Rights Committee. He says the town's very white-

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YESTERDAY  
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THE "FIERY" SUMMONS

by  
WILLIAM JOSEPH



ON, BEHIND AND AHEAD OF THE CURVE:

# THE AFRICAN AMERICAN PRESENCE AT UD AND IN IOWA

—RICHARD M. BREAUX, PHD

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF ETHNIC & RACIAL STUDIES, UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN LA CROSSE

I first visited the City of Dubuque in August 1997 during a trip from Iowa City, Iowa to Madison, Wisconsin. I distinctly remember other African American students at the University of Iowa warning me that Dubuque had a vocal and active Ku Klux Klan. Their collective and recent memories of cross burnings, attacks on the property of newly arrived African American residents in December 1991, and featured stories on ABC's 20/20 and Phil Donahue in 1992 had seared the idea of Dubuque as a bastion of racial intolerance, white supremacy, and racism in the minds African American Hawkeyes and African Americans across the country.<sup>1</sup> Over the years, as I researched African American education and black collegians at Historically White Colleges and Universities (HWCUS) I visited nearly every flagship university in the Midwest and every public or private college in the state of Iowa. Not until I received an invitation from Dr. Brian Hallstoos in 2015 did I consider a visit to the University of Dubuque. Perhaps I convinced myself that any city with such an abysmal reputation for race relations so close to the turn of the twenty-first century could not possibly have been a place that attracted many people of African descent previous to this time. As regional and state colleges and universities go, I believed University of Dubuque (UD) was well behind the curve in regard to any African American presence and with respect to racial equality – the truth, of course, would prove to be more complicated.

At times, UD's march toward African American inclusion reflected a larger attitude in the state, region, or the country.

Some historians may argue it certainly mirrored racial attitudes in the City of Dubuque and Dubuque County. For example, just a few years before statehood, the Dubuque area was one of the only portions of the Territory of Iowa to report an enslaved population. Sixteen souls belonged to other people who lived in the general area and counted as slaves. These were some of the only enslaved people of the one hundred eighty-eight African Americans reported in the territorial census. The Dubuque area was ahead of the curve in that it had the largest of the territory's black population, but it also produced some of the most vocal opponents to the migration and presence of free blacks in Iowa.<sup>2</sup> Dubuque gave birth to some of the oldest African American congregations, but maintained racially segregated and separated schools even as other towns moved to include Iowa's black residents. During the US Civil War, African American parents petitioned for a school for their children. The school was eventually opened in the same building that housed the local African American Methodist church and \$10 was allotted for each student. In other cities black parents brought successful legal challenges to racially segregated education. First in Muscatine in 1868 in *Clark v. the Board of the City of Muscatine*, then in 1875 with *Smith v. the Independent School District of Keokuk* and *Dove v. the Independent School District of Keokuk*. Behind the curve, the Dubuque Board of Education did not close its black schools until the district court forced it to comply with parents' petition, judicial precedent, and state law in 1877.<sup>3</sup> From 1870 to 1940 Dubuque County was the only county in the

*I distinctly remember other African American students at the University of Iowa warned me that Dubuque had a vocal and active Ku Klux Klan.*

*African American women numbered eight of the first thirty-four black graduates of Iowa colleges and universities, and here too, UD fell behind the curve.*

state to see a decline in its African American population every consecutive decade except one, 1930, and the only county along the Mississippi River to experience a decline in its African American residents.<sup>4</sup>

In both 1900 and 1910, African American scholar and sociologist W.E.B. Du Bois conducted extensive studies on *The College-Bred Negro* and *The College Bred Negro American* as a part of his Atlanta University Publications. With the assistance of several African American graduates of Iowa's colleges and universities and white University of Iowa history professor Paul S. Peirce, Du Bois found that 34 African Americans had graduated from eleven Iowa colleges and universities before 1910. Twenty-eight of these graduates were men and eight were women. No institution had graduated both women and men, but these included the following:

The University of Iowa	11
Drake University	6
Iowa Wesleyan University	6
Tabor College	3
Iowa State University	2
Coe College	2
Cornell College	1
Grinnell College	1
Penn College	1
Amity College	1
Highland Park College	1 <sup>5</sup>

Only two years later, the University of Iowa reached seventeen graduates, Drake had eleven, Iowa Wesleyan added another to total seven, Highland Park rose to six, and Cornell, Penn, and Amity gained one each. Upper Iowa University and Central College in Pella, raised the total number of Iowa post-secondary institutions with African American graduates to thirteen. During this era, African Americans such as Du Bois and Tuskegee Institute President

and founder Booker T. Washington debated whether liberal arts and professional education or industrial, manual, and normal education best served African Americans. Both men had his supporters among African Americans of various socio-economic classes across the United States and Iowa. History remembers Du Bois as the champion of liberal arts and Washington as the advocate for manual and industrial education, yet both men understood the importance and value of all these forms of education. While Du Bois chronicled the liberal arts achievements of Iowa black collegians, Washington spoke in Mount Vernon, Iowa City, Oskaloosa, and Cedar Falls, recruited George Washington Carver from Iowa State, Frank J. Armstrong from Cornell College, and influenced several early black Iowa collegiate alumni to lead or establish Agricultural and Mechanical or Agricultural and Industrial schools for blacks in the South.

African American women numbered eight of the first thirty-four black graduates of Iowa colleges and universities, and here too, UD fell behind the curve. Iowa Wesleyan, Penn College, Highland Park College, Amity, and eventually, the University of Iowa and University of Northern Iowa (known then as Iowa Teachers' College), preceded UD in its enrollment and graduation of African American women. In 1879 near Fayette, Iowa, Susan Angelina Collins graduated with a Literary Degree from Upper Iowa University. Because this was a two-year rather than a four-year degree, historians consider Iowa Wesleyan's Susan Mosely (Grandison) to be the first African American woman to graduate from an Iowa college in 1885. Mosely and the five other African American women to graduate from Iowa Wesleyan College before 1914 participated in on-campus debates and held membership in campus literary societies. Some, like Mosely, gave the class commencement address. Others like Louisa Mason (IWC, 1891) served as junior class president and wrote for the student newspaper. Her sister Agnes (IWC, 1887) had membership in a campus literary society also. Black

women entered other private PWIs in Iowa at the turn of the twentieth century. In 1898, Florence Black entered Amity College, in College Springs, Iowa and Georgia Blackburn enrolled at William Penn College in Oskaloosa, Iowa. Both women graduated in 1902. Blackburn served as assistant editor of the literary section of Penn College's *Aurora* yearbook and as a member of the Alethian Quartette. Hattie Hutchinson also earned a PhB in Pharmacy at Highland College before it infamously closed its doors to all blacks in 1908.<sup>6</sup> This was the same year University of Iowa admitted its first two African American women, Adah Hyde and Letta Cary (both class of 1912). Iowa Teachers College (now UNI) followed with two African American women graduates in 1916 and Iowa State University graduated an African American woman in 1926. Still UD, was not the last Iowa college or university to admit an African American woman, although it was one of the last to grant one a degree. Lillian M. Martin, the younger sister of Henry A. Martin Jr. enrolled at UD in 1931. While at UD, Martin was a member of the campus Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) and the Choir. In the 1920s, campus YWCAs/YMCAs led the way in campaigns for racial inclusion and justice. Despite her brothers enrollment at UD and the prominence of her family Lillian M. Martin did not graduate from UD, but did graduate from the University of Minnesota. Other women, like Doris Selvy from New York State, enrolled at UD but struggle academically. Not until 1947 did Virginia Diggs graduate from UD. The senior class selected Diggs to be the class secretary and she also served as publicity chair for the campus YWCA.<sup>7</sup>

While most of Iowa's private colleges have not maintained a religious affiliation, eventually most came to enroll African Americans who were members of the affiliated denomination. The school that became the University of Dubuque in 1920 established itself to serve the German immigrant populations;

its various name changes between 1852 from the Van Vilet School (1852-1864) to the German Theological School of the Northwest (1864-1870) through Dubuque German College and Seminary (1911-1916) and Dubuque College and Seminary (1916-1920) reflected its singular focus rather than explicit racism. Other Iowa institutions were not without explicit racism. In 1908 after it graduated six African Americans, Highland Park College closed its doors to all African Americans. One Highland Park College official wrote,

*We have never had but one Negro graduate from the regular college of pharmacy. We have had very few Negroes in the past and two years ago, you will probably remember, we announced that we would not receive Negroes any longer, not that we had anything against the Negro, on the other hand we shall be glad to do anything that we can to further Negro education; but it became humiliating to the Negro and compromising to the school; the students would not sit by them in school and would have no communication with them, and since we had only one or two each quarter, we thot [sic] it would be better for all parties concerned to have the Negro seek his education under favorable circumstances.<sup>8</sup>*

One student forced to leave Highland Park College and enroll in the University of Iowa was Archie Alexander. Alexander entered Highland Park College in the fall of 1907. He wrote, "Due to the fact that Highland Park College changed their policy of admitting Negro students in the fall of 1908, [I] entered the State University of Iowa College of Engineering, graduating with a degree of BS in Engineering in 1912."<sup>9</sup> In admission and enrollment, UD was ahead of the curve in serving German immigrants and remained behind the curve in regard to its African American students. It did not admit its first African Americans until 1915. This also happened to

*While most of Iowa's private colleges have not maintained a religious affiliation, eventually most came to enroll African Americans who were members of the affiliated denomination.*



be the year, W.E.B. Du Bois's chief philosophical rival, Booker T. Washington, died.

Once it enrolled its first African American students, UD fell on and ahead of the curve of African American inclusion and equality in campus life. Unlike the University of Iowa and Iowa State University, UD did not exclude African Americans from campus dormitories. It followed other smaller Iowa colleges, like Cornell, Grinnell, Iowa Wesleyan, and William Penn College with allowing African Americans to take up campus dorm residences in the early twentieth century. A number of sports histories point to the presence of Solomon and Benjamin Butler and celebrate their athletic exploits as symbolic of UD's racial progressiveness. Solomon W. Butler entered Dubuque College (now UD) during the fall of 1915. Although he grew up in Hutchinson, Kansas, and played high school sports there for three years, he and Benjamin followed their coach to Rock Island, Illinois for their senior year. University of Dubuque alumnus Rev. Benjamin Lindeman, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Bettendorf, encouraged the Butlers to enroll at his alma mater. Sol Butler arrived at UD with a scholarship and a promise to be on the track and field, basketball, and football teams.<sup>10</sup>

Why they did not enroll at the University of Kansas, the University of Iowa, the University of Illinois, or Harvard University (where they wished to attend), remains unclear. All these institutions had long since admitted, enrolled, and graduated their first African American students before 1915. Blanche K. Bruce (nephew of the US Senator of the same name) graduated from KU in 1885. Alexander Clark, Jr. (L.L.B) and S. Joe Brown had completed a law and liberal arts degree at the University of Iowa in 1879 and 1898. The University of Illinois graduated William Walter Smith in 1900. Richard T. Greener earned the first bachelor's degree granted to an African American by Harvard University in 1870, after several African Americans enrolled in its various professional

schools and colleges, and graduated even earlier from those schools.<sup>11</sup>

Sports became one of the areas where UD fell ahead of the curve. Benjamin and Sol Butler both participated in track and field events, although Ben often acted as Sol's trainer. Sol proved to be an outstanding athlete and Iowa's first African American Olympic participant. Track and football were the two most popular sports played by African American collegians in Iowa before the Butlers. Frank Holbrook was a football and track star at the University of Iowa in 1896, Henry F. Coleman lettered for the Cornell College football squad 1907 to 1910, and Linton H. Martin played varsity football, baseball, and class basketball at Coe from 1902 to 1906. Harold Gooch was a contemporary of the Butlers and earned a "W" at Iowa Wesleyan in football in 1914 and 1915 and in baseball in 1914. Basketball proved to be the sport at which UD was most ahead of the curve. Sol Butler suited up for UD's varsity team before any other college or University in the state allowed an African American to play competitive intercollegiate basketball. So did Henry A. "Hank" Martin, Jr., the third African American to enroll at UD and member of a prominent African American Dubuque family that migrated from Belcher, Louisiana in 1910. Martin proved to be a spectacular all-around athlete in class basketball, volleyball, speedball, varsity football, track, basketball, and tennis. Martin's performance in the javelin, high jump, and broad jump led the track team to a triumphant 81 to 50 win over Wisconsin State Teachers' College at La Crosse. Although he grew up in Dubuque, Martin only stayed at UD for three years. Wanting a more robust social life that included other African Americans he transferred to the University of Michigan-Ann Arbor.<sup>12</sup> Only William Penn College in Oskaloosa, had an African American tennis player (Verne C. Green, 1923) before Martin played doubles at UD. The University of Iowa and Coe had black men on their class basketball teams, but a "Gentlemen's Agreement" in the Big Ten prevented an

African American from playing in its conference until 1946. Other universities like Iowa State belonged to the Big Six Athletic Conference and schools in this conference barred African Americans from all participation from 1917 through World War II. For this reason Clinton, Iowa-raised Leroy Watts came to UD to play basketball from 1946 to 1949.

Although most universities outside the South began to accept African Americans in almost all sports by this time, schools, leagues, and tournaments continued the tradition of prohibiting black players on desegregated teams from participating in various competitions. This was true for the National Association of Intercollegiate Basketball (NAIB) tournament, which prevented participation of black players on predominantly white teams. In March 1948, UD received an invitation from the NAIB to play against three other Iowa colleges or universities for its tournament in Kansas City. Citing its Christian values and its commitment to racial equality, UD refused to play rather than bench Leroy Watts. “The University of Dubuque is a Christian institution where racial discrimination does not exist...” stated an article in the campus newspaper, “a university that does not stamp a person for his color, his creed or nationality, but for his abilities as a human being. The University, like other schools throughout the country, rejected the invitation to play because of that fact, and will continue rejecting any such invitations that show racial discrimination.”<sup>13</sup> Shortly after UD declined the invitation, the NAIB lifted its racial ban.

For colleges and universities in the United States and Iowa, the faculty and administration were the last to racially desegregate. Most HWCUs refused to hire people of color for the first half of the twentieth century. Among African Americans in Iowa, this desegregation did not begin until World War II, when William Penn College hired Madeline Clarke-Foreman as a biology professor in 1945. The University of Iowa soon followed suit, hiring the Rev. Howard Thurman as a visiting professor in 1945 and Philip G. Hubbard a few years later. Drake hired Eddie Easley

in 1952 and University of North Iowa hired its first black faculty member in 1964. African-born Dr. Robert W. Murugi became UD’s first black professor in 1967; UD’s first African American administrator was alumnus Al Moran, who by 1971 served as the assistant dean of students.<sup>14</sup>

In at least two areas UD was well ahead of the curve. The first was its refusal to have any dealings with the Ku Klux Klan or its affiliates. The Klan klaverns, collegiate chapters of the KKK, have their connections to college campuses just a few years after ex-Confederate soldiers founded the organization in Pulaski, Tennessee in 1866. One of the earliest instances occurred at the University of Minnesota where white students put on blackface and KKK costumes in 1882, despite a supposed ban of the KKK by federal legislation in 1877. With the publication of Thomas Dixon’s *The Klansman* in 1905 and the release of D.W. Griffith’s *Birth of a Nation* in 1915 southern whites met to re-establish the KKK in Stone Mountain, Georgia in 1915. Membership in the Iowa, Wisconsin, Illinois, and Minnesota KKK between 1915 and 1944 was 7,000, 15,000, 95,000, and 10,000. The Klan refocused its sights from African Americans and northern whites in the South to all non-whites, immigrants, and non-Protestants during the course of its rebirth, and its national membership eclipsed one million. One of the University of Illinois’ first officially registered student groups was the campus chapter of the KKK. Another chapter soon spread to the University of Wisconsin and there was an official and unofficial Klan presence at the University of Iowa and University of Kansas. In 1921, University of Nebraska Chancellor Samuel Avery refused to let the local chapter of the KKK create a chapter on campus and threatened any student who dared join the KKK with expulsion. Cross burnings by the KKK lit up the night skies in Dubuque in 1923. By 1924, UD President Karl Wettstone refused to let a local Dubuque chapter of the KKK meet on the UD athletic field. Wettstone wrote, “The university athletic field has never been used for other than athletic purposes and the local



September 17th, 1924.

To the Headquarters of the  
Ku Klux Klan,  
Dubuque, Ia.

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Gentlemen:

In answer to your request for the use of Kane Heights athletic field for the purpose of staging a demonstration of the Ku Klux Klans of the State of Iowa, I wish to make the following reply.

The University athletic field has never been used for other than athletic purposes and the local High School is the only institution outside of our University that has been permitted to use it, though a number of requests have come to us from different organizations.

Aside from all personal consideration, I am conscious of the fact that to me has been entrusted the care and supervision of property not my own, but belonging to the constituency of the University, made up largely of church people. It is impossible for me to know the attitude of said constituency toward the proposed conclave and for this reason I regard it as my duty to decline your request.

You will understand that your request involves a great many things and it must be clear to you that you are asking a great deal. In declining your urgent request, however, I do not wish to appear to be playing to the Roman Catholic side, but at the same time I feel that I am a citizen of Dubuque and as such dare not work for a division as clear-cut as that for which your organization calls. Especially because of the recent troubles between your organization and a hostile group from the other side, it appears wise not to encourage a demonstration to be held on our grounds, which would, without a doubt, involve the University and its entire constituency.

Please believe me when I say that I am much interested in anything that stands for one hundred percent Americanism, the kind of Americanism that has made our country what it is today, but I do not wish to disrupt the

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good feeling in a town where I have been treated with fairness thus far by each and every citizen.

Thanking you for the courtesy you have shown me in calling upon me and granting me sufficient time for deliberation, I beg to remain

Very sincerely,

KFW/S

ARCHIVES  
UNIVERSITY OF DUBUQUE







high school is the only institution outside our university that has been permitted to use it.” Moreover, he claimed that whatever his personal feelings, as a representative of UD, he could not authorize such a conclave and as a citizen of the city of Dubuque, he dared to “not work for a division as clear-cut as that which your organizations calls.”<sup>15</sup> The Klan continued on without UD support. One year later, the KKK Konklave in Dubuque attracted 56,000 paying attendees, in addition a reported 15,000 children accompanied adults. Forty members of the Dubuque Ladies Klan Drill Team lead a “massive” crowd of hooded supporters as they paraded through the city’s streets in August 1926.<sup>16</sup> This could easily be why African American enrollment at UD remained low as enrollment at the University of Iowa, Iowa State University, and Drake swelled.

UD was most ahead of the curve in the integration of African American students into campus activities and clubs. In the nineteenth century, African Americans in small colleges in Iowa and throughout the US gained membership in campus literary societies. As more African American students enrolled in these institutions after the turn of the twentieth century, public universities began to restrict African American student access to some organizations, but this was less likely at Iowa’s liberal arts colleges. Sol and Benjamin Butler joined literary societies and local Greek-letter fraternities such as Phi Omicron and sororities like Zeta Phi admitted African Americans from their beginning. Nearly every enrolled African American at UD belonged to a local social Greek-letter society. This is most unusual because other campuses had chapters of national social Greek-letter groups and national academic Greek-letter groups with by-laws that explicitly excluded non-white members. Many predominantly white national social organizations barred African Americans from membership through the 1960s; however, because UD had social fraternities and sororities that were local, the color line that existed in many national organizations never fully gripped UD’s Greek life.

*Preceding page: Kathlyn (Kathy) Charlton, Homecoming Queen, 1964.*

The 1960s ushered in a period when some historically white Iowa colleges and universities felt inspired by the Civil Rights Movements and several universities around the United States established exchange programs between themselves and Historically Black Colleges and Universities. The University of Iowa created an exchange with Rust College in Mississippi and Le Moyne Owen College in Memphis. Cornell College in Mount Vernon, Iowa exchanged students with Fisk University.<sup>17</sup> In 1962 and 1964 the University of Dubuque exchanged students with Johnson C. Smith University in North Carolina. On University of Dubuque’s end, John Knox Coit, professor of philosophy, oversaw the program and ten students and one professor from UD took part in the exchange. The purpose of the exchange was “to enrich the educational experience of students involved, through the opportunity of residence and observation in another college which is basically academic similar, that is, each college is a church-related college, organically related to the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., and each has on its campus a Presbyterian Theological Seminary, but differ in their racial composition.”<sup>18</sup>

College campuses in the sixties also experienced an upsurge in African American student protests and demands for officially-recognized student organizations, theme or affinity houses, and courses related to African American experiences in the United States. All these, of course, occurred at UD with the founding of the Black Presidium, the establishment of a black cultural center, “the Black Presidium” in November 1969 later renamed the “Sol Butler House,” and the introduction of courses in Afro-American Studies.<sup>19</sup> Increasingly, the Black Presidium brought African American entertainers, speakers, and political activists to campus and introduced new programs on campus to attract African Americans and other students of color to campus.

This wonderful catalog highlights rarely and never-before-seen documents, photographs, and oral histories that offer a



glimpse into the African American presence at UD and the many ways the University has been behind, on, and ahead of the curve in various racial practices and discourses. The University of Dubuque has been a pioneer and trailblazer as well as a few steps behind its peers nationally and regionally. Without question, the detail and the complexity of the African American experience at UD complicates our understanding of the black experience in higher education and hints at education's ability to aid in racism's eradication.

<sup>1</sup>Rogers Worthington, "Hate Flares As Iowa City Courts Blacks," *Chicago Tribune* 17 November 1991; Peter Landry, "In Dubuque, Racism Fed By Backlash Over Plan," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 9 December 1991; Bruce Japsen and Bill Arnold, "KKK hikes recruiting in the city," 12 December 1991, *Dubuque Telegraph Herald*, Clippings folder, UD Archives, Dubuque, Iowa.

<sup>2</sup>Leola Nelson Bergman, *The Negro in Iowa* (Iowa City: State Historical Society of Iowa, 1969), 13, 34-35; Willis Goudy, "Selected Demographics: Iowa's African American Residents, 1840-2000," in *Outside In: African Americans in Iowa, 1838-2000*, eds. Bill Silag, Susan Koch-Bridgford, and Hal Chase (Des Moines: State Historical Society of Iowa, 2001), 23-25.

<sup>3</sup>Clarence R. Aurner, *History of Education in Iowa* (Iowa City: State Historical Society of Iowa, 1914), 375; William Edward Miller, *Revised and Annotated Code of Iowa: Containing All the Statutes of the State of Iowa of a General Nature in Force July 4, 1880, Being the Code of 1873, as Amended by Statutes Passed by the Fifteenth, Sixteenth, Seventeenth and Eighteenth General Assemblies* (Des Moines: Mills, 1880), 477; "Dubuque Community School District," *Encyclopedia of Dubuque*, [http://www.encyclopediaDubuque.org/index.php?title=DUBUQUE\\_COMMUNITY\\_SCHOOL\\_DISTRICT](http://www.encyclopediaDubuque.org/index.php?title=DUBUQUE_COMMUNITY_SCHOOL_DISTRICT), accessed August 15, 2015.

<sup>4</sup>Bergmann, *Negro in Iowa*, 34-35.

<sup>5</sup>W.E.B. Du Bois, *The College-Bred Negro American* (Atlanta: Atlanta University Publications, 1910), 29-31.

<sup>6</sup>Du Bois mentions Blackburn as being one of the alumnae teaching in Buxton although not by name, Du Bois, "The College-Bred Negro American," 31. For more on Blackburn's college years, see Penn College Aurora yearbook (1902), 51-52 and 176; William Penn College Archives, Wilcox Library. Who's Who Among Pennites (Oskaloosa, 1927), 18, lists Georgia Blackburn as a teacher in Chicago, Illinois; Caskey, *A History of Amity College*, 70; Penn College Aurora yearbook (1910), 6; Penn College Bulletin (1909-1910), 50; William Penn College Archives, Wilcox Library. Lafayette taught in Buxton for one year. Who's Who Among Pennites (Oskaloosa, 1927), 31 lists Ina Lafayette as a resident of Saskatchewan, Canada; Archie Alexander to Leola Bergmann, 24 November 1947, *Correspondence and Notes of Leola Bergmann* BL 85, folder 2, SHSI-IC; "Mrs. Hattie Hutchinson," *Bystander*, 6 December 1907. For comment by Highland Park College officials, see W.E.B. Du Bois, *The College-Bred Negro American*, 29; "Highland Park College Closed Against Negro," *Bystander*, 11 September 1908.

<sup>7</sup>UD Key yearbook (1935), 38, 68, and 71; UD Key yearbook (1947), 27; "Virginia Diggs Receives Degree," *Chicago Defender*, 7 June 1947, Clipping UD Archives, Dubuque, Iowa. Ten years before Diggs, Grinnell graduated its first African American woman in 1937 Edith Renfrow (Smith).

<sup>8</sup>Cited in Du Bois, "The College-Bred Negro American," 31.

<sup>9</sup>Ltr from Archie Alexander to Leola Bergmann, November 24, 1947, *Correspondence and Notes of Leola Bergmann* BL 85, folder 2, State Historical Society of Iowa, Iowa City, IA.

<sup>10</sup>*Racing Past the Color Line: Sol Butler and Paul Robeson*, (Dubuque: Bisignano Art Gallery, University of Dubuque, 2014), 10-11; Ocania Chalk, *Black College Sport* (New York: Dodd, Mead, & Co., 1976), 96-97; 310-317; David R. McMahon, "Pride to All: African Americans and Sports in Iowa," in *Outside In: African Americans in Iowa, 1838-2000*, eds. Bill Silag, Susan Koch-Bridgford, and Hal Chase (Des Moines: State Historical Society of Iowa, 2001), 483-484.

<sup>11</sup>Edwin C.J. Howard, George L. Ruffin, and Robert T. Freeman earned degrees in medicine, law, and dentistry from Harvard in 1869. See Warner Sollors, Thomas Underwood, Randall Kennedy, *Blacks at Harvard: A Documentary History of African American Experience at Harvard and Radcliffe* (New York: New York University Press, 1993).

<sup>12</sup>"Chicagoan Is Chosen Navy Honor Man," *Chicago Defender* 22 August 1942, UD Archives, Dubuque, Iowa; see John Behee, *Hail to the Victor! Black Athletes at the University of Michigan* (Ann Arbor: Ulrich Books, 1974).

<sup>13</sup>"Racial Ban Lifted Too Late for U of D," *The Cue*, 11 March 1948, UD Archives, Dubuque, Iowa.

<sup>14</sup>UD Key Yearbook (1967), 39; Hal S. Chase, "'You Live What You Learn: The African American Presence in Iowa Education,'" in *Outside In: African Americans in Iowa, 1838-2000*, eds. Bill Silag, Susan Koch-Bridgford, and Hal Chase (Des Moines: State Historical Society of Iowa, 2001), 151.

<sup>15</sup>Karl F. Wettstone to Headquarters of the Ku Klux Klan," 17 September 1924, UD Archives, Dubuque, Iowa.

<sup>16</sup>Steve Weber, "Racial tension dates back to early '20s," 5 November 1991 *Dubuque Telegraph Herald*, Clippings folder, UD Archives, Dubuque, Iowa.

<sup>17</sup>C. William Heywood Richard Thomas Harlan, *Cornell College: A Sesquicentennial History, 1853-2003*, Vo. 2 (WDG Communications, 2004), 3.

<sup>18</sup>Victor C. Arnold to T.R. McKinney, 1 March 1962, John C. Smith 1962-1963 folder, UD Archives, Dubuque, Iowa.

<sup>19</sup>Alvin J. Straatmeyer, *Child of the Church: University of Dubuque, 1852-2008* (University of Dubuque and WDG Publishing, 2008), 175-176; Hal S. Chase, "'You Live What You Learn: The African American Presence in Iowa Education,'" in *Outside In: African Americans in Iowa, 1838-2000*, eds. Bill Silag, Susan Koch-Bridgford, and Hal Chase (Des Moines: State Historical Society of Iowa, 2001), 153-154.



# VIRGINIA DIGGS



# THE FIRST AFRICAN AMERICAN WOMAN TO GRADUATE FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF DUBUQUE

Virginia Diggs (VD): I was born in Chicago. My father was a doctor. My mother was a teacher before she got married and had me. And I have a sister who is in drama, and now retired from drama, but she is in business of selling homes and stuff like that. She lives in New York and I live out here [in California]. And I've been out here since 1950 when my father died. I went to Europe in 1960. I taught in Germany for two years. I loved every minute of it. I did a lot of traveling. I got through most of Europe, and I was very impressed with what I saw. I loved the Christmas fair that was held in Germany. Then I went to Japan. I had two years in Germany, and I went to Japan for one year because I had to come back to LA. I didn't have to but I thought I did. And I should have stayed [in Japan], but I didn't. I loved it. I enjoyed Japan. I got to travel all over. I've been to different places in Europe and Japan.

Brian Hallstoos (BH): Were you teaching on military bases?

VG: On military bases. I was with the Army in Germany and with the Air Force in Japan, and I had the rank of Second Lieutenant. The teachers had that rank, and we could go to the

Officers' Club as a result, because if you weren't an officer you had to go to the privates' and sergeants' restaurants and clubs. But we could go to the Officers' Club. We were officers and we could eat there, which was nice. I would have liked to have stayed in Japan maybe a year longer and then come back to Germany or maybe go somewhere else and teach. I could have gone probably to Spain. But it was wherever there were Army bases with families with children. They also had other enlisted men with privates and all that. But we taught the children of the Army personnel regardless of whether they were privates or sergeants or majors or whatever.

BH: What did you teach?

VG: I taught fourth grade in Japan. I believe I taught fifth grade in Germany. I was a high school-trained teacher in History and English, but when I came out of school they didn't have a need for teachers in high school in those fields. Those are the two fields I would have been comfortable with and that was my preference. When I couldn't get a job in the high schools, then I went to elementary schools. I started there as a sub and then I was able to get a permanent job.

*I went to Europe in 1960.*

*I taught in Germany for two years. I loved every minute of it. I did a lot of traveling.*

*I got through most of Europe, and I was very impressed with what I saw.*

INTERVIEWED BY BRIAN HALLSTOOS



*We were right in Hyde Park. Cottage Grove was the main street with streetcars and about two or three blocks over was Drexel. We lived across from Washington Park so we would go to the park.*

Then I taught fifth and sixth grade, mostly sixth grade, which I thoroughly enjoyed. My last school was South Shores, here in San Pedro, which when I started for three years there it was just a regular elementary school, but then they closed it and we all thought that we were going to have to look for other schools, but then they reopened it as a magnet school for the arts – drama, music, art. I ended up being an art teacher as well as a drama teacher. But I also taught the regular grade, too. I enjoyed it. That's a job I miss. Since I couldn't teach high school, then I liked the older children. But I've taught every grade from kindergarten to seniors in high school as a sub, mostly.

*BH: When did you retire?*

VD: 1992. So it's been 20 years at least.

*BH: You mentioned your father was a doctor. Was he in general practice?*

VD: In those days it was general practice, but he was a surgeon and an obstetrician. He could do almost anything. You didn't have a designated job like you do more today. He was at Providence Hospital in Chicago. We used to live on 51st Street, not too far from there. We could walk up there. It was about four or five blocks from where we lived.

*BH: Would he walk?*

VD: Oh no, he drove. My father never walked anywhere except on a golf course and when they went to Europe or traveled. Then he would walk, but otherwise he had his car. My mother had her car and I had their cars. Mostly I used my mother's car because daddy always had his car. He was one of those doctors who would get up in the middle of the night and go to see a patient. They don't do that today. No one does it. But during the time that he was alive he would get up out

of his bed and miss affairs that he and my mother wanted to go to if a patient needed him, and especially if a woman was having a baby.

*BH: Was he gone most of the time?*

VD: Oh yeah, he was gone. We'd see him in the morning when we were getting up going to school and we would see him every night for dinner. But when he came home at night, now, we were usually in the bed. We liked chocolate ice cream, and we'd tell him to bring ice cream. He would bring ice cream, and we wouldn't remember that we had eaten it. We'd tell him "You didn't bring us any ice cream," so my mother got so that she just left the dishes out on the sink so that we could see that he had brought us ice cream. Most of the time we remembered, but there were times when we didn't.

*BH: You're eating it half asleep.*

VD: Half asleep. And we'd eat it, and we'd enjoy it. And then we'd go out as a family on weekends. He'd play golf on Wednesdays and Sundays. A lot of times the three men he usually played golf with, they had families and we knew them, and on Sundays we'd go to Sunset Hills, which was outside of Chicago or we'd go to someplace else. I don't remember now. And the families would take picnic lunches. We had a picnic almost every Sunday in the summertime.

*BH: So if you're at 51st and close to Cottage Grove, you were close to Hyde Park.*

VD: We were right in Hyde Park. Cottage Grove was the main street with streetcars and about two or three blocks over was Drexel. We lived across from Washington Park so we would go to the park. They didn't have the bushes then that they have now and we could go over there and ride our bikes and play with the kids in the neighborhood that we knew, and my

mother could look out the window and see us. She'd take us across the street. Then we wouldn't be in anybody's way on our street. There was a streetcar line that went in front of our house. Eventually they went to buses from the streetcars.

*BH: What schools did you attend growing up in Chicago?*

VD: I went to Willard. That was the elementary school. I went to Inglewood, which was the high school. It was out of our district, but we used my mother's friend who had two girls that we were very friendly with; we used their address and went out of the area to Inglewood because my mother didn't like the high school that was in our district.

*BH: What high school was that?*

VD: That was DuSable. She didn't like that one, so we went out there. We could walk home from there. It was an awfully long walk, but when you're that young you can walk as long as you want to. And we used to walk from our high school to our friend's home and we'd stay for a while and then we'd take a bus. Some of the time we would walk home from their house, too. That was a long walk. I wouldn't do that again now.

*BH: Were each of these schools predominantly African American?*

VD: The elementary school was. The high school wasn't. The high school was mixed. Not very mixed, but it was still mixed. It was primarily white. DuSable was primarily black. In fact it was probably all black, but we didn't go there. They had some incidences there that my mother didn't approve of. And she was concerned, she and my father both, so we went to Inglewood. We got permission to go there. You had to get permission from the Board of Education. So they got it.

*BH: What year did you graduate from high school and where did you go for college?*

VD: I graduated from high school in Chicago and went to the University of Wisconsin for one year. Then I was home for one year and then I went to Dubuque for two years. I went in as an advanced sophomore instead of as a junior. But the following year I got the proper grade level so I was a senior when I graduated. I didn't continue at Wisconsin because my sister wanted to go away to school and my mother wasn't ready for both of us to be away at the same time, so I stayed home and she went. She stayed away one more year and came home and I went away, and that was it. We both went to New York University to get our masters. She stayed in New York and I came out here, although I did go to Hartford first. I taught there for a while.

*BH: Could you talk a little about what brought you to UD?*

VD: My mother decided that I needed to be in a small school and neither of my parents were happy about my going to Wisconsin.

*BH: Why not?*

VD: Well, it's a large school and they just thought we should be in smaller schools. The college that my sister went to was a small school. But she wanted to come back home, so she came back home. And I didn't want to come home. I wanted to be away at school. I went to New York first. She came to New York after she graduated and she stayed. I stayed maybe for a year and then I went to California. I always wanted to come to California. When I graduated from college, my graduation gift from my parents was a trip to California. We had cousins living out here. So I fell in love with California and Los Angeles and I made up my mind I wanted to come.

*BH: Your mother basically told you you were going to Dubuque?*

VD: She just said we've got to find another college because I wanted to go away. I didn't want to stay home. She said we'll

*I graduated from high school in Chicago and went to the University of Wisconsin for one year. Then I was home for one year and then I went to Dubuque for two years.*



*He [President Welch] came to my house. That's when my mother made up her mind that that's where I was going to go. I had no say in it whatsoever.*



DALE D. WELCH, M.A.  
Cornell University; L.L.D. Coe College  
Appointment to University 1922, '28, '36.

find one, and how she found that one, I do not know because I did not want to go. But I went. If the parent says go, you go.

*BH: If you had your druthers would you have gone back to Wisconsin?*

VD: Probably, but my friends who were there were no longer there, and I would have had to start from scratch. And I was going to start from scratch at Dubuque anyway. I would have preferred going back, but I didn't have a choice. My parents knew where they wanted to send us and that's where we went.

*BH: When we spoke several months ago, you mentioned UD President Welch coming to your house. Is that correct?*

VD: That's what convinced my mother. I'm sure of it. I remember him. He was tall and sort of big. He came to my house. That's when my mother made up her mind that that's where I was going to go. I had no say in it whatsoever. I don't regret it. I had a good time there. I made friends there, some of whom I still have, some of whom I don't know where they are. I don't know if they're still alive. But I get a letter every year from one of them, Marion Deischer (now Skelly). She was a freshman when I got there. She and the group were freshman, and I came in as an advanced sophomore instead of as a junior. Of course I had to go through freshman orientation, so that's when we became friends. And there were six or seven of us who became friends. And we stayed friends for a long time. Most of them were from Iowa, and they were from small towns. I went to visit on the weekends that we could get away. Marion Skelly and her husband - he's a minister - moved a couple of times, but I've

saved their letters. We sort of stay in touch with each other once a year at Christmas time. We put little notes in a card as to what we've been doing and what's going on in life.

*BH: Did you travel to friends' homes at UD over the weekends to get home cooking?*

VD: No, we didn't do that much. You had to have permission to leave the campus to go someplace. You were at the University of Dubuque and you stayed there. A parent could come and get you, but you had to have a note from your parents that said you had permission to leave the campus and go someplace. We could leave the campus and go to the movies in town. We'd walk or take the bus. We could do that as long as we were back at the dorm by whatever time, I think it was nine-o'clock. We couldn't leave town without permission. I had permission to go to Anamosa to visit with Nancy. I think three or four of us went there a couple of times. I had permission to do that. But each time I got permission I had to get a letter from my mother or father. Mother mostly.

*BH: Who monitored you to make sure you returned on time?*

VD: You're supposed to be adult, and you're supposed to be honest, and the housemother knew when you were going and knew when you were supposed to be back. It didn't make any difference: nine-o'clock the doors were locked. If you weren't there you had to ring the doorbell. And you knew what was going to happen. She had to see the permission that you could leave the campus to go out of town. As long as you were in town that was Ok, because the town wasn't very big. There was no place to go except to the movies downtown. You didn't go downtown to shop because you didn't have any money. You had your allowance and that didn't buy anything other than to go across the street to Goats, and we did that all the time: go over there and have hamburgers and Cokes. And you didn't need permission. If you were on punishment, you stayed on campus - couldn't even cross the street. Couldn't go to Goats.

*BH: So Goats was a place where you would go for dinner, and to hang out and socialize?*

VD: Oh yeah. We went there to have hamburgers in the middle of the day or just to go and have a Coke. You know, just to get off campus, period. It was the shop across the street and most of the kids would go over there. If you didn't like what you were going to have for dinner you'd go over there. Or you could go there for lunch. On a weekend we got sack lunches at lunchtime. That was our dinner: sardine sandwiches. And you know, one does get tired of sardines. I don't eat sardine sandwiches, but we ate them then. It got to the point where we'd go across the street. We'd get a hamburger or something else to eat. It wasn't always hamburgers, but hamburgers were my favorite and still are so I probably ate more hamburgers over there than anything else. Coke was my drink, but they had other drinks. No liquor, no alcohol or anything like that.

*BH: Who would usually be with you at Goats?*

VD: We had the ASTP on campus. They had their hours and we had ours. It was Army. It was during the war period. They would come to some of our parties and dated some of the girls. But I brought my dates for prom from Chicago because there were no blacks in the ASTP at Dubuque. They may have been someplace else, but they weren't there. Well, the second year there were two black men: Leroy Watts, who I understand is dead now; and Thornton, whose father was a doctor in Dubuque. Oh, what was his last name? Was it Martin? I don't remember. He was a chiropractor I think, but here again I don't really remember. Those two came my last



year. I think I dated Thornton a couple of times, but that didn't work out with either one of us. Leroy and I never really dated, I don't think. I was too busy running around with my friends and he was busy running around with his friends. We saw each other, we spoke, we were together a lot of times at different gatherings, you know, at the university, but I didn't do much dating then.

*BH: So Thornton's father was a chiropractor in Dubuque?*

VD: He wasn't a chiropractor. Pediatricist, I think. All I know is that his father was a doctor. Now his older brother married one of our friends my sister and I had. Where we lived on 51st Street there were streets that had alleys and one of our friends lived across the alley. We all played out in the alley. We could play out in the backyard because mother and daddy owned the building. But the other people we played with were renting in other buildings and children could not play in the yard. Not that much. But everyone came to our yard because we couldn't leave our yard. We had to stay put. Once we got bicycles we could ride up and down the alley and go maybe in the next alley and around the block if we were good. Most of the time we were in the yard and they were there. And this friend married Thornton's older brother, Bob. And Bob is still alive, but he and Odette are in a facility for older people, and neither one of them are well. And he is well into his 90s. He was in the Tuskegee... Airforce. He's got to be in his 90s and she's probably in her 80s. She and my sister were close.

*BH: Do you know if Thornton is still living or not?*

*LeRoy Watts (center) sits with Virginia Diggs (far right) and two other women.*

*I probably ate more hamburgers over there than anything else. Coke was my drink, but they had other drinks. No liquor, no alcohol or anything like that.*

*I did not know that I was going to be the only black person there. All I know is that I got there and they put me in the Nurse's Office, which was a small room with one bed.*

VD: I haven't heard anything about him. I just found out that the husband of one of the gals who used to run around with us died. In fact two spouses died. The girls are still alive as far as I know. I used to stay with one of them when I came to Dubuque. I came for my 50th anniversary. I think I was there for the 25th anniversary of my graduation. One of the girls, Nancy, lived close by. I've forgotten the town she lived in right now. I stayed with Nancy, and we would go to Dubuque, but she would never spend the night. She didn't like to stay in hotels, so we would stay there until the festivities were over and then we'd drive back to where she lived. It wasn't that far.

*BH: Things have changed dramatically since you returned in 1997 for your 50th graduation anniversary.*

VD: Even after 25 years it had changed, and I was glad to see that there were more people other than Caucasians. There were blacks there, Mexicans, so forth. I was glad to see that. It was a nice college. It was small, and I enjoyed it. I really did.

*BH: Do you remember where you lived on campus?*

VD: Severance Hall. That was the only dorm for women. Steffans Hall was the male dorm, I believe.

*BH: Do you remember when you first came to Dubuque and your impressions at that time?*

VD: I wanted to go home. It was my mother's choice in the school, not mine. What changed my mind was the people that I met. They were friendly. I was the only black person there, and I did not know what I was getting into. Well, I did know, but I didn't realize until I got there because according to the President [Welch], "Oh, this was a wonderful school, actually. Everyone was very friendly, actually," all of the good things. I did not know that I was going to be the only black person there. All I know is that I got there and they put me in

the Nurse's Office, which was a small room with one bed. The gals that I ran around with were upstairs with everybody else, and I was downstairs with some upper classmen on the main level. You walk in. You go up a few stairs and you go into the dorm section. That's where I was, in a small room, one bed, a dresser, and a closet. And it wasn't a regular closet because it was a nurse's closet. That's where I was for one year. I would go to the bathroom with sophomores or juniors or seniors there, and I was a freshman and different. I got along, you know, and I got used to it. At first it bothered me because I knew what it was and therefore that bothered me. I was mad at my mother for making me go there. That didn't last long. It wouldn't have made any difference anyway. After I met the freshman that I ran around with all the time, I had a good time. They were friendly. I was friendly. We liked the same things. We weren't necessarily in the same classes, but we had a good time together. We obeyed the rules and we disobeyed the rules like all college people do. So I had a good time my second year. I went upstairs to the third floor where my friends were.

*BH: Did you have a roommate there that year?*

VD: I didn't at first, but then a black girl came and they put her in my room. I don't remember her name. We were friends, but we weren't close friends. She was only in the room – I called it "my room" – for maybe two months because she had come from Galena with two friends who were white. They were living down the hall and one of them went home. She decided that she wanted to go down and room with her friend, and I said, "Ok. That's nice. You should be with your friend. I'll help you move." So I helped her to move.

*BH: So you had a lot of space to yourself then?*

VD: No, I had more space. The nurse's room was not very big. It was small, but I managed. And I don't regret it. I was annoyed, you know, but it was part of the experience.



Growing up you have many experiences, some that are good and some that aren't good. And some you'll always remember, whether they're good or bad, and some you'll forget. And I remember most of the good things about being at the University of Dubuque. I had a good time. I had good friends.

*BH: Do you remember being made to feel different on campus?*

VD: No. Maybe by some people, but if I did, I don't remember it. I was in the group and we had a good time together. If you didn't like one, that's too bad. You got all seven of us, regardless of how you felt about one. We were always together. Even those who were dating some of the boys on campus, it didn't make any difference. And most of the ones who were dating were dating the fellows from Nicaragua. They were very friendly with everybody, you know. And they spoke their language, but they also spoke English. We all had a good time. We did a lot of things together. We picnicked together on Sundays when we didn't have to go to the [Peters] Commons to have dinner. It was nice because we'd go to Eagle Point Park. We'd go up there on Sunday afternoon and stay, and we would take our sack lunches and we would eat up there. That was fun, and then we'd come back down as it began to get dark.

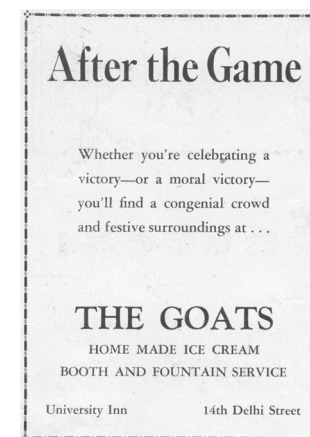
*BH: Do you remember ever being made to feel unwelcome by the Dubuque community?*

VD: You know, I don't really think so. I don't remember. The only place we went, really, was to the movies. I don't remember eating at a restaurant there. We didn't have any money. That was the main reason probably. You had an allowance, but it wasn't enough to go to a restaurant, a nice restaurant, at any rate. We might have gotten a hamburger or something like that. Most of the time if we wanted to eat different food we went to the Goats and we had sandwiches, and I always had a hamburger. That's my favorite, hamburger.

And that's where I took my parents when I graduated. My father wanted to see where the goats were. I said, "Daddy, there are no goats there. That's the name of the restaurant. It's the campus restaurant!" I took mother and daddy over there, and then my sister came, and I think one other friend came. We sat and had lunch there because I had the family car for the last week I was in Dubuque. By that time daddy had two cars, and he and my mother and sister and friend, which was Francis, I think, drove up in his car because I had the family car. By that time we could leave because I was already packed up and that that had to be sent was sent. Mother and daddy stayed in town at one of the hotels. Was the Hotel Julien, I think. That's where they stayed one night. Then we came home all together.

*BH: Did you attend church while you were at UD?*

VD: We had to attend chapel and there were times when we had to attend another church. There were some services that we were required to go to. If we weren't required, we were requested, which was the same thing. I just remember I went to some other church downtown that we as students had to go to, but I don't remember why. We had to make chapel at least three times a week. At least. We soon learned how to do that. I won't give our secret away. When I went, everybody was there, and you had to sign pieces of paper that you were there and put it in this basket. Now you know what probably happened. If somebody didn't want to go, you took turns, you know. They gave you one piece of paper, but we always found a way of getting two pieces of paper. We could put someone else's name down. That sort of thing. We went, oh I'll admit, plenty of times, but there were times when I didn't feel like going, so you don't go. You get someone to go because you've gone for them. You take turns. That was my first experience of being forced into... well, not physically forced, but you had to go. If you were sick then you had to let the housemother know that you weren't able to go. You should be in your room or you



*My father wanted to see where the goats were. I said, "Daddy, there are no goats there. That's the name of the restaurant. It's the campus restaurant!"*



*Mrs. Parsons would help you to remember the rules. Just as nice as she could be, do anything in the world to help you, etc., but you followed the rules, period. That was it.*

could sit out on the lawn because you didn't feel well. I'm sure Mrs. Parsons, that's who she was, she was our dorm mother... She wasn't young. Probably she was in her 50s, closer to 60. She had white hair or mixed grey hair and she was a nice build. She wasn't fat, but she wasn't, you know, skinny. She was definitely middle age, we'll say. Very nice, very nice, but she knew the rules. And you knew the rules. And you did follow the rules or Mrs. Parsons would help you to remember the rules. Just as nice as she could be, do anything in the world to help you, etc., but you followed the rules, period. That was it.

*BH: How were you involved in the YWCA while at UD?*

VD: I know I was involved. I might have been secretary, but I can't remember. We had the meetings. You know, it was like a regular college meeting, but I really don't remember too

much about that. But I came across the two albums that I had not too long ago when I was cleaning my closet and I started going through them, and I fell out laughing. I laughed, and I said, "I can't remember doing this. Did I really do this? Did we really do all these things? Did we really look like this?" What a change.

*BH: Do you remember being class secretary your senior year?*

VD: You know, that does sound familiar. How come I didn't see that in the album [yearbook]? I'll have to go get those albums again and look at them. I think I was now that you mention it. Thank you! I'd forgotten. I've forgotten a lot of things.

*BH: Do some faculty stick out for you in particular?*



Y. W. C. A. CABINET

*Left to Right:* Streinz, Schmitt, Miss McAllister, Johnston, Conant, Spaulding, Datisman, Wildermuth, Fowler, Westphal, Diggs, Sward, Rabe, Goergen.

VD: My history professor. Dr. Hurtz was, I think, the history teacher because I was a History major. Robert Smith was the minister. I liked him. You had to take Bible lessons then. I had to take it both years I was there. You started at the beginning and went to the end of the Bible. Professor Smith was excellent. I enjoyed his classes, but I also enjoyed him as a person. Dr. Hurtz was my history professor. There were about five or six of us in his class. Unfortunately he found out that I was a History major. Any time nobody could answer a question I would have to answer the question. I thought "Good grief! He's going to make me learn history whether I want to or not." Most of the time I could keep up with him, but I couldn't always. "Oh that's all right, Ms. Diggs," he'd go ahead. He was German and he had an accent. Those two (professors Hurtz and Smith) were my favorites. Anna Aitchinson was the English teacher. I liked her. Dean Fox was nice. I don't remember what he taught, but I remember him. Those four I remember. Oh, there was another one. I probably shouldn't say this, so I won't. I can't remember his name, but what did he teach? Everybody liked his class and the girls liked to sit in the front. I didn't. I never liked to sit in the front, even now. Girls liked to sit in the front. He was very nice. He was big. What's his name? I liked him, but he was up on cloud nine. You had to really think about what he was saying to you and how he listened to you. If he asked you a question and you answered it, you got an A. So everybody studied up to at least get one A. I remember that, but I can't remember his name. I assume that most of them are dead by now, I would think, because some of them were old, older than a lot of college teachers.

*BH: As a History major, do you remember what courses you took from Dr. Hurtz?*

VD: I didn't like American history. I always took Ancient, Medieval and whatever came after Medieval. Modern, I guess you'd call it. Those classes were the ones that I took. I think I did have to take an American history class, but I was more interested in the earlier history.

*BH: Was Dr. Hurtz part of what inspired you to be a History major?*

VD: No, I decided in high school that I wanted to major in History because I wanted to teach and I didn't want to teach anything but history. But I knew I'd have to have something else, so I chose English because I thought that would be easy, which it was up to a point. As a regular teacher sixth grade is the highest grade I've taught. I've taught kindergarten through high school, but my high school was mostly as a sub.

*BH: In high school what was it about history that inspired you to pursue it as a major?*

VD: I just was interested. It was just one of those things. I preferred subjects that I hadn't learned that much about because in high school you don't get all of that. So I knew I wanted to be a history teacher and an English teacher, but History was my major; English was my minor. American history I got in high school, and that was interesting, but it was something that I had to take, whereas with the European history I didn't know that much about it and I wanted to learn about it and it wasn't something I had to do. It was my choice. That might have been it. I never taught history. I taught fifth and sixth grade. Yeah, there was a certain amount of history we taught, but it was American history or South American history. Oh, I loved the South American history. American history I taught, but I didn't have the feeling about it that I had for the other.



*There were some people from my high school that I knew very well, and they also went to Wisconsin. So we sort of hung out together, and that was fine. But when I went to Dubuque I didn't know anyone and I did not expect to be the only one, but I was. I adjusted and I have adjusted ever since.*

*BH: Regarding history, your interview today helps us prepare for a fall exhibition that will celebrate a hundred years of African American students' experiences since the first black students, Sol and Benjamin Butler, came to UD in 1915.*

VD: My father knew Sol Butler, but I didn't realize he had a brother. I thought Sol was the only one who went. Daddy was one of the physicians that treated different athletes when they were in Chicago, but he never said anything about a brother. The only thing he said was he knew that Sol Butler had been there because I didn't want to go to Dubuque. I wanted to go to a different college and my mother said, "You're going there." She liked what Dr. Welch had said and daddy went along with her, and said, "Ok, fine." But he's the one who told me about Sol Butler.

*BH: Do you think your parents became aware of UD because Sol Butler had been there?*

VD: I don't know. I don't remember how my mother found out about Dubuque, but I know Dr. Welch came to see her and talked her into it. He's a good person to talk you into something evidently.

*BH: Did you meet Sol Butler?*

VD: No. I never heard of him. That was before my time, and I wasn't interested. When Dr. Welch was talking and my mother reported what he had said, I guess that's when daddy remembered that he knew Sol Butler. But I don't think he knew where he went to school. Knowing my father, I just assumed that he didn't, unless Sol Butler came to his office he probably wouldn't, although he was always interested in sports. Nobody else had been there, I was told. No other black had been there until I got there except for Sol Butler. I was told that I was the first black female to go there. Dr. Welch said that.

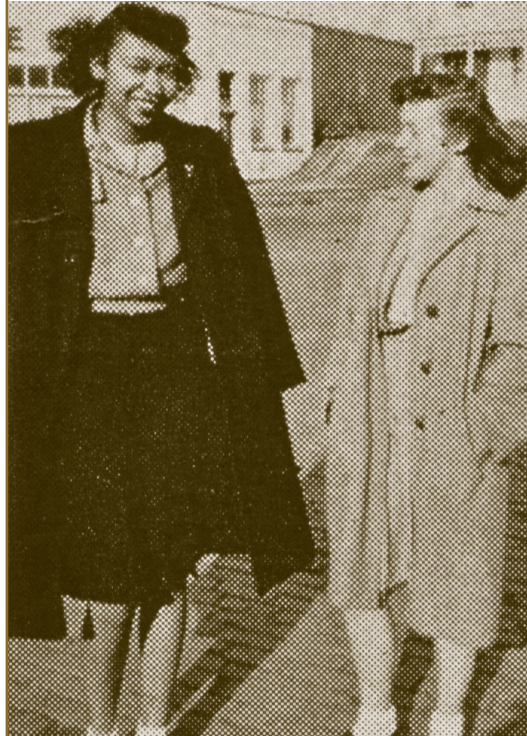
*BH: How do you think your experience at UD prepared you or failed to prepare you for where you went in life after Dubuque?*

VD: Well, they trained me so that I could be a teacher, and that was my profession, and I enjoyed that. The first two or three months were not what I expected college to be like, and it was not like any of my experiences at Wisconsin. But then I knew some people who were in school there. I was living in a co-op and it was an interracial co-op. They were not close friends. They were just the children of the parents that my parents knew, and I had met them. I went there as a freshman and they ranged from being juniors to seniors, so they were older. There were some people from my high school that I knew very well, and they also went to Wisconsin. So we sort of hung out together, and that was fine. But when I went to Dubuque I didn't know anyone and I did not expect to be the only one, but I was. I adjusted and I have adjusted ever since. Still, I was the only one at many of the schools I've taught at here. I was the second one, I think, that was at South Shores. And then we had a couple of others, but not many. Most of my children were Caucasian. Finally they were a mixture of Caucasian and Mexican. We went on this program where the schools had to be integrated and we got children from another school and our children had to go to another school. We didn't have a mixed faculty. I was there. The music teacher, she was black. And we had a Mexican teacher or Hispanic teacher, I should say, and that was it. I was the only one for a long time until the female music teacher came. She stayed there and retired the year before I did. She did all the music for our plays, and she even wrote a play and we did it. I was the director. My experience coming here: I've been in black schools, I've been in white schools, I've been in mixed schools, but I haven't been in a predominantly Mexican school. When they went into integration, then we got more black students and Mexican students bused in. For I guess some of the teachers there that was a new experience. It wasn't for me. I'd

## VERY RARELY DID WE SEE MEXICANS OR BLACKS

been mixed up so far as teaching goes and even as my own life. I've had different friends from different races, especially as an adult. Not so much as an elementary school child, but in high school it was mostly black and white – but it was mostly white rather than black - and then college has been a mixture. I've never been to an all black college. All of my colleges have been mixed, and I mixed up Dubuque as a female.

Even when we went into town [Dubuque] very rarely did we see Mexicans or blacks. Very seldom. Everybody was Caucasian, just about. And also on campus. But you know, it was something that didn't bother me. It did at first because I resented being put in the nurse's room the first year. I really resented that, but then I made friends. The one I stay in touch with or stays in touch with me I find out what happened to the people we ran around with and whose husband has died and all that sort of stuff, whose children have gotten married. So I keep up with that. I had a good time when I was there. You know, after the first month or two I had made friends and I got over the fact that I felt that I wasn't being... what is it? There's a word that I was going to use... Well, let's say I wasn't being segregated. I was just being helped to adjust. We'll put it that way. To adjust to being in an all white school. Well, I didn't have to adjust to that because I had been in all white schools before. Not as elementary school, but in high school and in the colleges that I went to before I came to Dubuque, so that was no problem. No problem whatsoever. It hasn't been since. It's still the same.



*There's a word that I was going to use... Well, let's say I wasn't being segregated. I was just being helped to adjust.*

## NO PROBLEM WHATSOEVER

# AHEAD OF THE CURVE PARTICIPANTS



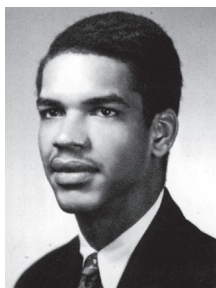
**Solomon Butler**  
C'1919  
BA History  
First African  
American graduate



**Virginia Diggs**  
C'1947  
BA History  
Minor: English  
First African  
American female  
graduate



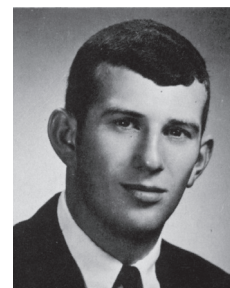
**Susan Bellinger**  
C'1959  
BA Sociology;  
Minor: Philosophy



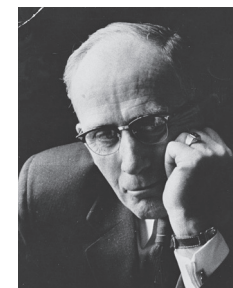
**Paul Clayton**  
C'1968  
BA Mathematics



**Donna Cooper**  
C'1989  
BA Sociology



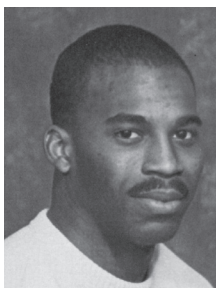
**John Couchman**  
C'1969  
BA History and  
Social Studies



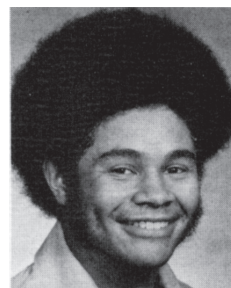
**President Gaylord  
Couchman**  
October 1953-  
July 1967



**Preston Fleming**  
1983-84  
College of Liberal  
Arts



**Darren Glover**  
C'1989  
BA Business  
Administration



**Eugene Hawkins**  
C'1976  
BA Drama and  
Speech



**Ozell Hudson**  
C'1969  
BA Political  
Science



**Dozier Jones**  
C'1966  
BS Business  
Administration



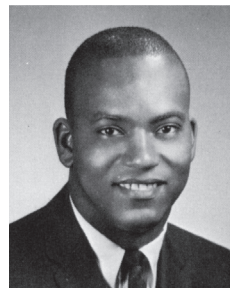
**Andre Lessears**  
Director of  
Multicultural Affairs  
2006-2007; C'2014  
MBA



**Ericka Lessears**  
C'2014  
MBA



**Brenda (Bailey)  
Lett**  
C'1978  
BA Psychology



**James Martin**  
C'1967  
BS Physical  
Education

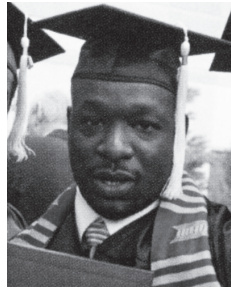


**Chestina Mitchell  
Archibald**  
C'1967  
BA Speech





*Joyce Murray  
1967-1970  
Education*



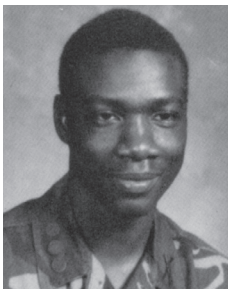
*Mikelange Olbel  
C'2008  
BA Sociology and  
Criminal Justice;  
Psychology Minor*



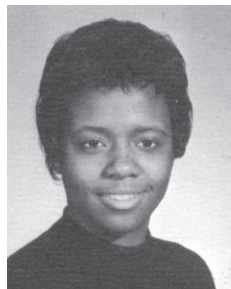
*Jalal and Jamil Paul  
Current Students  
Flight Operations and Aviation Management*



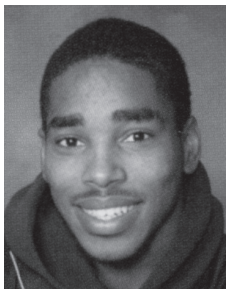
*Temwa Phiri  
C'2013  
BS Health,  
Wellness, and  
Recreation*



*Lt. Col. James R.  
Riddick  
C'1991  
BA Sociology*



*Cynthia Rivers  
1963-1965  
Music*



*Anderson Sainci  
C'2010  
Bachelor of Business  
Administration;  
C'2012 MAC*



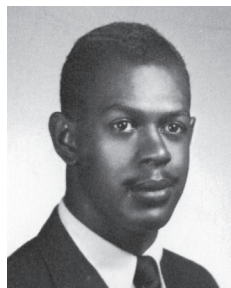
*Kiesharlia (Tuck)  
Sainci  
C'2011  
BA Criminal Justice*



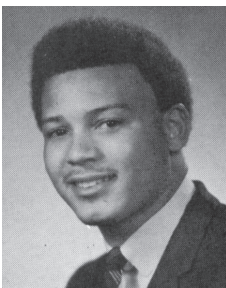
*Cynthia (Veal)  
Slater,  
C'1986  
Bachelor of Business  
Administration*



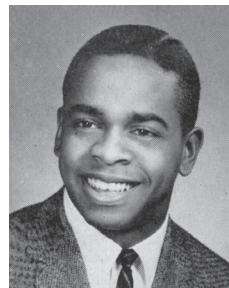
*Alice (Thomas)  
Stubblefield, C'1966  
BS Biology, Minor:  
French*



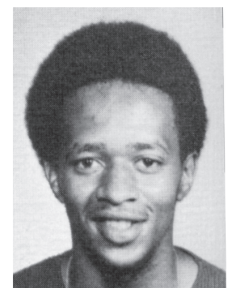
*William Stubblefield  
C'1967  
BS Biology*



*John Taylor  
C'1970  
BS Mathematics*



*William Walker  
C'1958  
BS Biology*



*Vernon Wright  
C'1977  
BS Business  
Administration*





*This is our Dubuque*



# JOURNEY TO DUBUQUE

*I came to the UD because I was offered the opportunity. I grew up entirely under segregation, racial segregation. I was born in Jeff Davis County, Georgia. That's the county named after the president of the Confederacy. I did not know a white person by name and did not really have a conversation with one until I got to UD. That puts me at 17-and-a-half-years-old growing up and all my teachers, all my classmates were Black. Got it? I grew up in a rural area until I was ten and I picked cotton, cropped tobacco, that type of stuff, and then I moved to Savannah. It was still segregated. When I finished high school in Savannah, the only opportunity I had to go to college was to play football and I decided that I didn't want to just have to play football. I wanted to have more options, although I enjoyed playing football. So I contacted my pastor. I was a Presbyterian. My pastor had two cents on a college and my mother figured the church wasn't paying him enough, "so ask him how he was doing it." And I did, and he put me in touch with a Dr. Samuel Johnson of the United Presbyterian Church out of Atlanta. Dr. Johnson was placing students of the South in colleges and universities all around the country. I did not know that at the time. He connected me with Dubuque. He had about twenty other students at some point or another involved in the program at Dubuque. He said my grades were good to go to Dubuque and I went to Dubuque with the partial aid scholarship. I went out for football when I got there, but I didn't have to play. I also went out for the wrestling team, although I never wrestled in high school or elementary. I wrestled for four years and played football for four years. I was captain of the football team. —Ozell Hudson*

*I am from Thomasville, Georgia. It was a small rural town in South Georgia right across from the Florida border. I am from a family of six. I had 55 in my graduating class and I was number five. Everything in Thomasville was segregated. Even at one point, the different races walked different sides of the sidewalk.  
—Chestina Mitchell Archibald*

*I grew up in the Henry Horner Housing development on the west side in Chicago. It was predominantly Black, African American. I didn't know anything about the University of Dubuque. My assistant principal at Crane High School was an alumni of the University of Dubuque and I wanted to go to the University of Iowa. They took so long with making a decision if I was going to be accepted. So he said, "Well, since you haven't been accepted, why don't you consider the University of Dubuque?" So I said, "Oh, okay." He offered to take me up to Dubuque and look at the campus. I just decided to do it because I had so much respect for him and it seemed like I was gonna have a little more support coming from him. He did give me financial support once a year for my books - pretty much covered it. I got grant money and then I had some scholarship money that I had earned. So I said, "Well, you know what? I don't have much to lose." I didn't know how I was going to fit in because when I made the visit, I think, school was out. So I didn't get a feel for the campus. It seemed kind of weird as we were approaching the bridge. I was like, "Oh my goodness, what is this?" And I just remember saying, "Okay, we'll see what happens." —Cynthia (Veal) Slater*



*I was born and raised in Chicago. I grew up on the West Side. I learned about the University of Dubuque in high school. My Assistant Principal Delbert Bodon took me and a couple more students up to the University of Dubuque to visit the school over one summer. I was a junior in high school at the time. He kind of encouraged me and another student to attend the University of Dubuque. Actually, I had fun that weekend up there. There were no students there because it was over the summer. We were both gonna come here together as freshmen. At the last minute, one of my friends that was supposed to come decided to go to Tennessee State because she ended up with a music scholarship. I actually was gonna follow her to Tennessee State, but my other friend that already did a year at UD wanted me to come up there to be with her so she wouldn't be the only Black girl at UD. So I was torn between the two. UD was closer than Tennessee State and I had never looked at Tennessee State or had any contacts with them. I made a little imprint in Dubuque, so I decided to go to Dubuque.*  
—Donna Cooper

*I was born and raised in upstate New York about 50 miles north of Manhattan in an area called the Hudson Valley. That region is surrounded by places like West Point, Bear Mountain State Park, really beautiful country – farming country back then. I'm one of twelve children and grew up in a rural community. I'm the fourth oldest in that family of twelve, and was raised by a single mother. My dad died young. I had all of my elementary and high school education in the same community. It's a pretty tight-knit, small community. Our neighbors were farmers, but we weren't. My mother actually didn't work until my dad died. When he died she actually supported us as a housekeeper, working as a domestic housekeeper for an undertaker in our community where she worked for many, many, many, many years. It was an interesting community. It wasn't very large at all and didn't really start to grow at all until I was in high school. Then there was an enormous migration from Manhattan out to the more rural areas. I think*

*the early years of what we now call planned communities started popping up. The community itself was pretty well integrated, although when I left that community, I didn't really realize just how white my upbringing probably was in the early '70s. It was predominantly African American, some Hispanic and white families in the community. Interestingly enough I think the first Asian family didn't move into the community until the late '80s or early '90s. It's called Washingtonville, New York. It's known for being the home of America's oldest winery, Brotherhood Winery.*  
—Eugene Hawkins

*I'm from Akron, Ohio. I lived there until I went away to college. I did my undergrad in Canton, Ohio at Walsh University. I graduated in 2003 and then moved to Dubuque in 2006. My husband took the Director of Multicultural Affairs here at the University of Dubuque, and so that brought us to Dubuque and got me first acclimated to the campus of UD. Mine was more from a spousal role, but I did a lot of things on campus, met a lot of students. All of the organizations he was a part of here, he kind of tagged me along. That was our journey to Dubuque. We left after a year and then made our way back in 2009 and have been here ever since working at the City of Dubuque.* —Ericka Lessears

*I hadn't planned to attend UD. Actually I applied to Temple University and I never heard anything back. I was a counselor at a summer camp. It was a church camp. Our minister was sort of like my second father, and he was like the head of the camp. So he came up to visit in early July and asked me what my college plans were. I told him I haven't heard back from Temple, so I planned to work for a year and save up some money and then go to college. He didn't want to hear anything about that. He said, "No, you're going to go to college because if you go get a job, you're going to get a piece of junk car and other cool stuff and probably never go off to college." So I pointed to him – we use to call him "Rev" – I said, "Rev, listen. It's early July, college starts in September." And*

he says, "Let me work on it." So he came back up to the camp two or three weeks later and he said, "You're going to go Dubuque." I said, "What! Are you kidding me? I don't even know where Iowa is," and I told him no. "Thanks for all the help," but I wasn't going to go. And he asked me, "Look, Paul, do me a favor. Just go for one semester. If you don't like it and want to come back home, fine, all bets are off, no questions asked." So I really couldn't say no to him because he had done so much for me, sort of like a second dad. Turns out the reason he was able to pull it off was because he at the time was the moderator of the Presbyterian Church in the United States and that was back in '64. First time a person of color had ever been elected to do that, and as a part of his tour he had gone through Dubuque. Ironically enough, the president of Dubuque, Gaylord Couchman, was his roommate at Union Theological Seminary in New York. The Reverend had contacted Dr. Couchman, told him about my story, and said, "Yeah, send him out here for a semester." So I gave in and I went.

—Paul Clayton

I grew up as a Presbyterian and in the Church of the Master which was very famous in Harlem. James Robinson [the Pastor], who started Operation Crossroads Africa, which was a forerunner for the Peace Corps, really was a mentor of mine, and he was the one actually almost insisted that I go to the University of Dubuque. I had scholarships to several colleges in New York, but it was a time when there was just the beginning of integration. There was a feeling clearly that I can maintain myself in that school because I had the experience being in a all-white school previously. My mother was very active in the Presbyterian Church and she was committed to me going. It was a decision made with the Pastor. I was the only African American female in my class at UD. There were several African American males. —Susan Bellinger

My godfather, Alex Nides, who also graduated from the University, taught me while I was at Russell High School, which was located in East Point, Georgia. He recommended that I attend the University.

He told me that it would be an honor to him if I were to attend the University. Then that is what I did.

—James R. Riddick

I was born in Abilene, Texas. My dad was in the U.S. Air Force, so I wasn't there very long. I moved a lot. The majority of my youth was in Yakoto, Japan on a military installation there. I kind of say that's where I grew up. I've also lived in Aviano, Italy for about four years, as well, before I came to UD. The majority of my childhood was spent in Japan. I went to school on the military installation, so it was all American military dependents at the school. All throughout my youth up through Yakoto, Japan it was always very diverse, people from multiple ethnicities on the base. When I got to Aviano, Italy, it was not diverse at all. There were probably four or five graduating students in my class that were a different race than white, so it wasn't very diverse for the last part of my education. —Kiesharlia (Tuck) Sainci

I grew up in Florida with a single mother and three brothers. I grew up kind of in poverty with my family. A strong mother and strong grandmother who supported the young men and gave us some core values: believe in God, always help people, and never stop fighting. So I had an older brother who basically came out to college here for wrestling. All of us are wrestlers, actually, so we have a background in wrestling. I wanted to get out of Florida because I didn't want to stay in Florida and everyone kind of knew everyone, and I wanted to experience something new. So I had an older brother who was out here and an older cousin who was playing football for the University of Iowa, so I took my chances and came out to the University of Dubuque to wrestle. Wasn't really thinking too much about the grades part of it, getting a degree, it was more just to wrestle and just enjoy life and do something different. Most people would think English is the first language I learned. It's actually Creole. My mother is from Haiti, so the first thing that I learned was Creole. —Anderson Sainci

*My parents are originally from Haiti. I was born here in America in Fort Lauderdale, raised in Pompano Beach, Florida. We was exposed to many environmental challenges living in an urban area. Early on I was exposed to people selling drugs. I was exposed to prostitution. I was seeing all these things that was going on in my community. Our parents came here as immigrants; they were working. We lived in a van for a little bit. It was five boys and two parents living in a van. I watched my father take us from a van to a one-bedroom, one-bath apartment to a two-bedroom, one-bath, to a four-bedroom and three-baths house. I watched gradually what work ethic can do growing up, watching my father - he actually passed away last year, July 22, 2014 - who was a great role model, my definition of a real man's man. He really wanted to get us out of that environment. —Mikelange Olbel*

*It started in Japan. I was a sophomore, junior and I met Bob Broshous. He kind of talked to me a little bit about UD and I wasn't interested at all. Then we met again when I moved to Italy and he came and saw me, which was awesome because you don't think that someone would actually remember you as they're traveling to different military bases. I met with him and he gave me a little bit more insight on the school and told me about how there were a lot of military dependents there. There's kind of a horror story with military dependents going to school. We usually drop out and join the military or we're traveling. We're bumping from school to school, so we don't stay at the same place. He kind of talked with me about that and let me know how Dubuque is a good city to integrate back into living on the homeland, so to speak. So I came after I talked to him the second time, and I loved it. —Kiesharlia (Tuck) Sainci*

*I went to John Marshall Harlan High School, which was probably 50/50 in terms of its racial mix. A representative of Dubuque came to the school, pitched the school, and informed the student body, actually the counselors, that they were having a program down at the Continental in Chicago, a very prestigious hotel in*

*Chicago, to make people aware of what the University had to offer. I went to their recruiting session. I was just very impressed with the gentleman that I met. He was representing the University, and he was a white gentleman. So my first acquaintance with the University did not come from something being passed on by another African American. I was not interested in going to a large state school. I was not interested in going to a historically Black university or college. I really firmly believed in having an integrating educational experience. I just didn't want to go in as a freshman to the University of Illinois: I'm sitting there in an intro class with 300 people; that didn't appeal to me at all. He talked about size of the school, student/teacher ratio. He talked about all of the activities available at the school. And the fact that it was only 200 miles away from my home, I was not so far away that it was difficult to come back home on a short holiday. Those were some of the things that were appealing to me. —William Stubblefield*

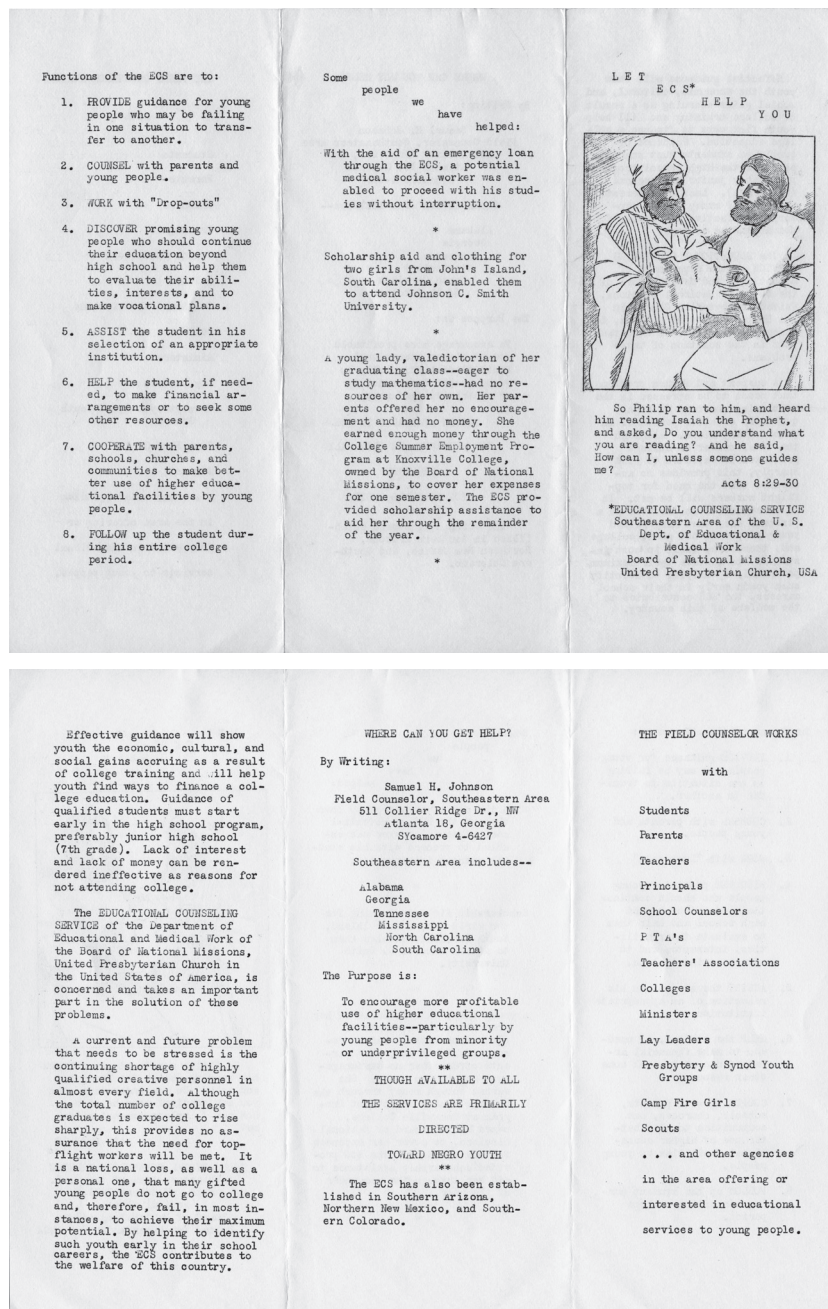
*I grew up mainly in McDonough, Georgia. I graduated from Henry County High School in 1962. I came in the area of science, the biological sciences for the years 1964 through 1966. I got a full scholarship. It was dealing mainly with academics. I started off in 1962 at Mary Holmes Junior College in Mississippi. They were following me and my academic standards all the way of my freshman and sophomore year. I guess since I had done so well in my freshman and sophomore years they gave me a full scholarship as a transfer from Mary Holmes Junior College to the University of Dubuque. —Alice (Thomas) Stubblefield*

*I was born in Zambia and lived near Lusaka, that's the capital, for eight years. In October 1998 we moved over to the United States to East Lansing, Michigan. Living in Africa, being eight-years-old, everything's exciting. You're in the phase of learning a lot of different things. I went to private elementary schools there. I also had the whole family in the area. We did a lot of family stuff,*



tribal, cultural stuff. For the most part I do remember it. I've got my older two brothers that remember everything, and then my younger brother has a fair amount that he does remember. Education is what brought us over to the United States. My father was a banker, so he managed over 40 or 50 different banks. They called him for approval for different things. My mother was also an accountant there. Fortunately enough, my mother's high school teacher came from East Lansing. They taught in Zambia for some time and grew pretty close with my mom. They became really close friends. They recommended a great place to move to for education in East Lansing. —Temwa Phiri

I grew up in Tuscaloosa, Alabama in 1948 to 1966. That is home of the Crimson Tide, University of Alabama. I made a journey from Tuscaloosa to Dubuque, Iowa to go to school. That was not my intention to do that. We had an individual from the National Presbyterian Church speak at our high school. He talked about scholarship offers his organization had. I remembered, "Why are you wasting my time?" He did not offer me anything. So I left and I went to my Trigonometry class. I am sitting there and one of the workers from the office came up and asked for me. I thought, "Oh no! The principal wants to see me?" Then she mentioned some of the females in the class. They couldn't be involved in anything. I felt I was on safe ground. We got down there. Dr. Johnson [from the Presbyterian Board of Missions] talked to us and offered us help financially if we went to a different college and university that he would choose for us. I came here. Mr. Johnson visited schools in Alabama, Mississippi, Georgia, Florida, I believe. I am not sure about Florida. Quite a few of us had come from those states. —John Taylor



Educational Counseling Service recruiting brochure.  
Presbyterian Historical Society, Presbyterian Church (USA) (Philadelphia, PA).

*During the time there was a move in the Presbyterian Church to integrate their schools. A lot of us were dispersed throughout the country at various Presbyterian schools. The Presbyterian Church was going throughout the country finding folk that needed some help to get to college and they thought that we would study and make a contribution. Mr. Johnson visited the UD campus at least bimonthly. He became a father figure. Everyone told Mr. Johnson about everything. He was a father figure to all of us. He came from Atlanta, Georgia. His coming was underwritten by the Presbyterian Board of Missions. Not only did he come to Dubuque, he went to all these Presbyterian schools around the country. That was his job. Recruiting these African Americans and keeping an eye on them. When he came, he took all of us [recruits] to dinner. Again, that was underwritten by the Presbyterian Board of Missions. —Chestina Mitchell Archibald*

*This school was smaller than my high school. I had 523 or 524 kids in my high school graduating class. We had a three-year high school at that point in time. There was over 1600 or 1700 students. When I came here, we were hard pressed to get 650. That would be counting the townies and everybody. It was quite small. The only thing I think that was helpful was that my freshman class had probably 12 African Americans, 12 or 13, which far exceeded the four that were on campus in the other three grades. I think there had been only one senior, an African American female. There was a junior, an African American female. Then there were two males, one being Kent Cushinberry in which I came to school with and the other being Dozier Jones. It was the largest group that the school ever had up to that point. I entered in September 1963. It was probably a little less than four weeks after Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream" speech. —James Martin*

*I was born in the South, a little area called Franklin County, Georgia. My father and grandfather were sharecroppers. When I was about five-years-old we moved from Georgia to North*

*Carolina and we lived in a little town called Statesville, North Carolina for a few years. I wanted to go off on my own, so I left home in Statesville, North Carolina at thirteen and decided to move to Atlanta and live with a couple of my oldest sisters. That worked all right for about the first couple of years. As I was growing boy I was eating too much, so my brother-in-law thought I should consider doing some other things through my church at that time, which was Ebenezer Baptist Church. Martin Luther King, Sr. was the pastor of that church, who was the father of Martin Luther King, Jr. It was at that church where I found some housing with a lady as a boarder and I boarded with her for a couple years and went to Booker T. Washington High School in Atlanta. I became a busboy at a place in Atlanta called Leb's Restaurant. Believe it or not, my roommate at that boarding house was an African. He was from Ghana, and we shared a room. At Booker T. Washington I played football, tried to play a little basketball and a little baseball, as well. I did pretty well in school, and had some wonderful, wonderful teachers. It was my football coach that came up to me one day and said, "Where are you going to college?" I hadn't thought about it. I was a senior and told them my goal was to get a real nice job at Leb's Restaurant as a waiter, make a lot of money, buy myself a '57 Chevy, get married and raise a family. He very quickly told me that, "I think you should go to college." He knew of a gentleman by the name of Sam Johnson that worked for the Presbyterian Foundation and they were recruiting African American kids out of the South, sending them to various schools where what we called "up north." So they sent Mike Sims to the University of Dubuque; another close friend of mine that was a football player went down to the University of Wisconsin; and then another friend of mine was an excellent tennis player, they sent his information to Purdue. The young man who went to the University of Wisconsin and I said, "Well, we are not going to go to school unless we get to go to school together," college that is. I couldn't get into Wisconsin because I was about 25 pounds smaller than my friend. At that time he was about 210 and I was about 195. So I said "hello" to the University of Dubuque. —Dozier Jones*



*Back in the early '70s there was a fairly heavy recruitment of students at large from the northeast to come to the Midwest to go to school. I actually learned about the University of Dubuque from my guidance counselor and then also from one of my best friends, who went to the UD in 1971. He was a year ahead of me in school. We were pretty close friends and my senior year I was pretty lost because my friend Don had gone away to school already, and I thought, "Well, I'm going to go there, too." That was my introduction to the UD. I did my research. I applied to New York state universities, but there was something in my gut that said you want to leave home, and you want to go away and sort of find yourself and do all those things that you do at eighteen. So I applied and got accepted and decided that's where I was gonna go. In the meantime, my best friend at UD... the school didn't agree with him. He didn't return for his sophomore year. He ended up graduating from Fordham in New York, and I decided that I'm going to go and I'm going to make this work for me, and that's what I did. —Eugene Hawkins*

*I came here to play sports and to get an education. I came to play football. I happened to be a basketball player and a baseball player in high school, so I played all three at UD. I did intend to get a education and which I did get. I actually heard about the University of Dubuque because there was a student here. He was a year ahead of me in high school. We lived across the street from each other - really kind of kitty-corner - during the formative, early part of my childhood. Kent Cushenberry was going to school here. How he found the University of Dubuque, I have no idea. The other part of it was the football coach at that time here went to my high school. He was from Racine, Wisconsin, where I am from. There was a connection there. There was kind of a push there because his father was kind of at every sporting event. —James Martin*

*I am from Chicago and born and raised here. I've traveled a lot. When I first went to the University it was 1967. My parents and I were trying to investigate different universities for me to go to. It was our pastor at our church that I'm still affiliated with - Presbyterian Church - that suggested University of Dubuque. He said to my parents and me, "Why don't you try University of Dubuque. It is a Presbyterian college, and we had some more members of our church send their children there and they were successful." It was the first time I got that idea, and that is exactly where we settled. I can remember my first day. As a matter of fact, I have a picture of my very first day at the university with parents. That very first day I meet up with the other students. I meet my big sister whose name was Jolene, and she was going to be my mentor. I also found on the very first day that I had to wear a beanie that was royal blue and white. I had to have that beanie on at all times, and I should refer to upperclassmen as "Yes ma'am" and "No sir," that kind of thing. I had to be respectful, which I'm always anyways. The next thing I can recall is that I began practicing for the freshman talent show during the first few weeks. We had to pick and choose people who might want to be in our little group. Some people did skits, and some people did dances. My talent: I played the piano, and I played "Moonlight Sonata." I did quite well, even though I was very nervous because we had an audience. Those are the memories of my very first days. —Joyce Murray*

*I started in 1974 and I left in about 1976. I returned in 1978 to finish and graduated that year. I am originally from Chicago, Illinois. That is my childhood home. I went to Dunbar Vocational High School and I majored in custom dressmaking graduating in 1972. Then I went to Lake College, now is the Harold Washington College in downtown Chicago. —Brenda (Bailey) Lett*

*I was born and raised here in Chicago on the West Side. We're about five or six miles from where I was born. I actually stay in that same house now. I moved back to take care of my mother a*

few years ago. She passed away in 2008. As you can see, I was very much a basketball player. Mom, she was really more academic than sports. She was glad I enjoyed basketball, but she knew academics was first. In her house I was the last of four. Once you reached high school you had to go to summer school. Whether you passed or failed it didn't matter. So I had an opportunity. You ever heard of Project Upward Bound? It's a program to help under-privileged get prepared for college. Six weeks out of the summer they would live on a college campus. The program I was in was out of Northwestern in Evanston. Every summer I would stay on the campus and we would take classes. Between your senior year and your freshman year of college you'd take college courses, so by the time I got to Dubuque it was like I wasn't really a freshman. I wasn't going through what the rest of the freshman were going through. I had college credit. I had lived on campus for three summers by then and not only that. If you lived on a college campus playing basketball you played against college players, so I probably had an unfair advantage I would say by the time I arrived there in Dubuque. It was funny because I wasn't recruited by Dubuque. Every place that I was recruited from was either too far or too close. By me being the last child I got all the chores so I knew by my senior year that I was going away. But I wasn't going so far that my mother couldn't come see me play because by then she had hooked on after seeing the newspaper articles and stuff. In my freshman year a senior got recruited to Dubuque, so that's when I first heard about it. My senior year they gave us an English class or something and you had to apply to six or seven colleges. I just threw Dubuque in there since I had to come up with six. So I applied, and I was accepted. I got a letter from Coach Davison then so I did a visit and it was during the summer actually and he was having all the kids he recruited to come in. I don't know if they still do it but they used to have basketball camp every summer on campus. Coach Davison used to run it and all the recruits came in to play against his present players, all the ones he had working in the camp because he had offered everyone on the team an opportunity to make some money during the summer. I played

against them guys and they started recruiting me very heavily. That's how I ended up in Dubuque. —Vernon Wright

My mom had suggested that I stay close to home only because at that time, I think, I had just turned 17. So actually I could've graduated at 16, but I wanted to stay back and play sports at Thornton Township High School in Harvey, Illinois. So I stayed back a year, needed half a credit, played baseball and football at Thornton. Then I was given a scholarship for baseball and football to the University of Dubuque. When I went up to visit, it was closer to home and my parents were the ones to push me to a different school. The football coach - name escapes me; it's been 30 years now - he had come to see me play at one of our games, and had approached via a letter to my parents. That's how I came to see the program. —Preston Fleming

I am a child of the '50s. In the '50s, baseball was king. Football wasn't before ESPN. I really wanted to be a baseball player. But I knew when I came here that I was going to be playing football. That is where my name is in the record books, not baseball. I played baseball all through college. —James Martin

I was accepted to the University of Dubuque in 1962. I took a bus from Georgia to Dubuque. When I got off the bus I walked into this bus station and saw no black people. Now mind you, in the South all you see at that time was black people and white people. So I thought I was at the wrong place because I had never been to a place where I did not see a black person. I walked out on the sidewalk and stood there for a few minutes. I went back in the bus station and I said, "What town is this?" and the gentleman said, "This is Dubuque, Iowa." I nearly thought, "Oh my god, what is this?" Jim Meyer picked me up. He was an upperclassman, lived in Dubuque. I later became a fraternity brother of his. Jim picked me up in this Chevy convertible. We were riding from the bus station



to the University past this park, which I think is still down there on University Avenue. The first thing I heard from a kid was “Hey nigger,” and I just felt like, “God, what have I got myself into?” That was just the beginning. It turned out that little incident there was just somewhat of an awareness that I was in a different place and it was not a place I had ever been in. I had been around white people all my life, but we were always separated. They did their thing and I did mine. I was usually in a work environment and never had conversations with anyone of a different color except topics related to a job or something of that nature. So it was quite an experience to all of a sudden have a white roommate in college where we shared a room, talked, and to go into a cafeteria that was all-white. When I first got there, there was only two African Americans and I think there was an exchange student from Ghana. —Dozier Jones

My roommate the first year, he was from Wisconsin, came from a small farm. I was coming in from lunch one day, a group of us. This was when everyone was coming into the dorms to get their rooms. I noticed the door was open. His entire family was there. As soon as I walked in I introduced myself. Went to shake his hand and everyone... you could hear a pin drop. Some jaws were dropped, and no one else said a word. It was that quiet. So I went in and shook his hand, introduced myself, said “hello” to his parents, and just walked out after that. They were in shock. I did end up rooming with him. It was cordial, but there was no rapport or real interaction between us. I take that back. One time we went out to his farm with a group of guys. —Darren Glover

There was a student that went to the school at Dunbar that knew, heard about UD. We actually took a bus and drove up to Dubuque. They had something that they used to call “Black Weekend.” We came up for that. It was really nice because there were a lot of people of African descent. It was a party. It was fun times. It was really informative. So I decided that I wanted to go there. There were speakers. There were programs. Showed

us around to the gym. I am not sure if the Black Presidium was going on at that time. They had some students that were part of a organization like that. It was very warm and welcoming. However, when we got ready to go back to school there, many of those people did not attend UD. —Brenda (Bailey) Lett

I was one who always wanted to please my father because he was a man I greatly admired. There's five of us brothers. Only two of us got a high school diploma. Only one of us has an undergrad degree and a graduate degree, and that's me. I was about proving to my father that I will be the best son that he has. I went through this journey. I was playing high school football up until my junior year. I tore my ACL. I was getting letters from different schools and I was looking at Mississippi State University. I had my heart set on that. None of the schools wanted me after I tore my ACL. Then I heard about University of Dubuque at a Division III football conference where the recruiters would come in and talk to the kids. I ran into a guy. He was a running back coach named Chris. Chris was a good football coach. He was from West Palm Beach. He was like, “Uh, what's your GPA?” I said 3.5 and I showed him my transcripts from what it was before to what it is now. I went from a 1.5 to a 3.5. I got all these awards for having one of the most community service hours. I took a visit trip, and I flew into Moline. I was like, “Ok, this is more city-like... Where are you guys taking me? Am I going to be safe here?” I really had a culture shock being an inner-city kid where you have all these big buildings just down the street and all this other stuff to “we've got cornfields.” I liked the visit. My parents came to drop me off. My mom said, “Son, I'm coming here for two things. I'm coming here to drop you off so you can start school, and I'm coming here for your graduation. I'm not coming to Homecoming. I'm not coming to no Parents' Night. None of that.” My mom asked the football coach, Coach Brautigam, “How long does it take a college student-athlete to finish?” He said, “Well, it takes about five to five-and-a-half years.” My mom said, “No, my son will be done in four years and his GPA will still be up.” I looked at my mom like “Mom, what are you doing?” and she told me to shut up. “Shut up. You're going to do what I tell you to do.” —Mikelange Olbel

Well, in those days we literally had no money. I forget how much it cost, and it must have been about 50 bucks to take the bus out there. My family accompanied me down to the Port Authority in New York. Port Authority is literally about an eight- to ten-story building that takes up one full square city block. And forget the number of buses that go in and outta there on a daily basis; it's like well over a thousand. So I get on this bus and seems like forever later I got to Chicago. I port the connecting bus to Dubuque. I got to Dubuque. I looked around. I didn't see any other people of color at all. I was told to call the University when I arrived and ask for Dr. Couchman. I told him that I had arrived and he told me to get in a cab. I had twenty bucks and the cab was like two dollars. So I took a cab up to the University and pulled up in front of Steffens Hall. As I'm getting out of the cab, Dr. Couchman was walking down the path and greeted me there. He said, "Welcome to Dubuque," and that was it. —Paul Clayton

A few years ago somebody sent me a copy of his farewell address when he [Gaylord Couchman] left Westminster Church to come to the University of Dubuque. He gave some kind of extensive going away talk. In his talk he devoted a major portion of the talk, he challenged the church that they should take on the issue of Negroes in Dubuque, this what he called "colony of families" that lived up on the hill and the injustices they suffered. He talked about how he went to see them. He had some of the lady deacons go up there with him, and he challenged the rest of the church to get to know them and take on their issues. It was very prominent in his preaching. —John Couchman

My mother was a teacher in Chicago and she got two masters degrees at the University of Chicago. When you were a doctoral candidate or masters degree candidate at the University of Chicago, they let your children go to the lab school for free. You can understand being the only black kid in a room of white people was not something [they were used to] with their chauffeured

driven cars picking them up at school. My father became the first black-boarded orthodontist in the country. This was in the late '50s. I had gone to another school, Drake University. This was during the time of the Korean War where you got below a "C" average, you did not go back to school that year. You went to the training camp. Whatever year that was, I got below a "C" average, and that was in May. I was in military in September. That was the way they did it those days. When the recruitment office got your grade and determined that you were below a "C" average, they just said "Greetings!" That was the end of the discussion. I was in Korea until I applied to the University of Dubuque.

—William Walker

I got a random postcard from UD. At the time – it was senior year – I was thinking about where my peers before me have actually gone. They've gone to out-of-state. I was just like "it would be really cool to go out-of-state and experience a different area and expand myself there". What helped out actually is what I was doing while in high school. I was very involved in the Black Student Union, with track, with football, and then when wrestling came along, and also doing a lot of volunteering. I was kind of like able to create my own thing, but I wanted to see if that's because my family was already here. My two oldest brothers already had some sort of name that they created for themselves in the high school. So I got a postcard from UD. I was like, "Ok, this is a really cool football field that they got. Looks awesome and well kept. I'm pretty sure the rest of the campus doesn't look that bad." So I came here, fell in love with the place. It was weird driving in. There was no police officers, no cars really around. I mean, it was late at night, but still I saw an elderly lady just walking with her purse like it was no problem, 1 AM. I was sitting here looking around like maybe there might some cop cars flying around... nothing. I'm used to the whole Lansing area. It's a bigger city itself, so there's a lot of police patrolling. Anyways, I took my tour and fell in love with the place. —Temwa Phiri



*We all knew that the number one priority in my family was getting an education. We were not the wealthiest family around, so when I got the full scholarship, of course I went to wherever the scholarship was. It so happened that the University of Dubuque was one of the best choices I could have made.*

—Alice (Thomas) Stubblefield

*I came to the University of Dubuque on a wing and a prayer. I just prayed and I said, “Lord, you listen to me. I want you to send me to a school that these folks [other family members] have never heard of. They do not have to spend any money for me to get there or whatever.” That night, I wish I could pray like that one more time. My bedroom looked like it lit up and I saw an image of what I thought was Jesus coming through a pecan orchard. The next day the high school counselor called me in. She said, “Chestina, how would you like to go to a all-white school like in Iowa?” I said, “Ioway!?” She said, “No, Iowa.” I said, “No Ma’am.” She said, “Don’t say ‘No Ma’am,’ say ‘No.’” I said, “Yes Ma’am.” She said, “What if I said to keep your grades up and get a little job or whatever. We have to get transportation money to get you there. You can work on campus. You do not have to spend a penny to be up there.” The voice said, “That is what you prayed for.” I said, “Yes, ma’am.” She said “What?” I said, “Yes, ma’am.” She said, “Say, ‘Yes.’” I said “Yes, ma’am.” She said, “Okay, you mean it.” I said, “Yes, ma’am.” She said, “I will see if I get somebody to go with you.” She got a girl named Cynthia Rivers to come with me. I came. A large portion [was paid by the Presbyterian Church] and I got a loan for the remaining. When I got there, my sister - having gone to an African American school where people dressed a little bit differently - sent me to school with a white suit, a white blouse, a white pillbox hat, and some white gloves. When they [UD representatives] met me at the train station, they were wondering “Who in the world?” Chestina, you are in Ioway now! When I got there, people seemed really nice, I thought. —Chestina Mitchell Archibald*

*The first time that I saw the campus was when I came out for my freshman orientation. The school was not a big school, and I found the thought of going to New York State University pretty daunting at the time. The whole piece of just having a different kind of experience really attracted me, and having to sort of rely on myself. At the time that I was contemplating going to college I was the eldest child at home and had spent a few years sort of being the father figure with my siblings, helping raise my siblings, so it was really important to me to have that opportunity to move away from that. I admit to you that I was feeling very lost when I first landed there. I remember leaving JFK. I remember my mother just sort of having a total breakdown at the airport, and then getting there, and all of a sudden there was like no family. I was just there. It really took me a few months to adjust and get grounded. It took me a few years to know where I fit in. It was a little bit of a shock to the system. I finally got to campus and thought the campus looks great, charming, you know, all of these things, but I just didn’t quite know what to expect. My freshman orientation was so overwhelming. I didn’t know a soul. The first friends that I actually did meet – I had a drama participation award – were in Ruston Hall. I made my first friends in the drama department because I was a Drama and Speech major. That was during the first week, and that was what helped get me grounded. —Eugene Hawkins*

*It took me 25 hours on a Greyhound bus coming from Atlanta to the University of Dubuque. Then once I got to the University, a gentleman by the name of David Wentzlaff and one of his colleagues picked me up at the bus stop. They transferred me from that location to the University. I retook my ACT exam prior to formal entrance. Once I took that and they evaluated my score, they allowed me to go to 115 Cassett Hall. That was my first room at the University. —James R. Riddick*

*Another young lady and I took a bus all the way from Tuscaloosa to Dubuque, Iowa, something I do not recommend. It was a two-day trip with stops and layovers. We got in Chicago and they started announcing departures. I could not understand a thing they were saying. Fortunately, the lady I was with did. So we boarded the bus going to Dubuque. I remember seeing all the corn fields. Corn, corn, and more corn. I thought, "Oh boy!" Then we got off at old downtown Dubuque. I looked around after we got off the bus and I started to get back on the bus. I said, "I am going back home!" She said, "That bus does not go back home." I said, "Watch it." In about that time some kids from the University of Dubuque came running up saying "Hey, hey! Are you going up to the University of Dubuque?" She hollered "yes" quickly and they grabbed my bags and threw them in the car and threw us in the car. Then we got up to campus and everything looked much better than old downtown Dubuque. —John Taylor*











# ACADEMICS AND SOCIAL LIFE

*I'll never forget the first time that I went pheasant hunting with Keith Kephart and Chuck De Farkus. It was in Dewitt, Iowa. We had gone pheasant hunting, and this was the first time I had ever been. I had done some hunting in the South, rabbit hunting and things like that. I remember calling my mom, and I said "Mother, look. I'm going pheasant hunting. These guys invited me to go out with them, and I'm not sure if I really want to do it. I don't know if they want to take me out there and shoot me and say it was an accident." And that was the honest-to-God truth. But she asked me a few questions and then finally said, "Go on ahead, son, they're reaching out to you and trying to show you a little love." So I went on that trip. If you talk to any of those guys about my first hunting trip, that was the time I shot a skunk. I was out, we were spread out, and all of a sudden this rabid skunk came out charging me. I asked the rest of the guys, "What should I do?" Finally Chuck said, "Shoot it." So they talk about that today, about me going pheasant hunting and ended up shooting a skunk. —Dozier Jones*

*Sometimes you would go downtown Dubuque to the movies, or sometime you would go to little small towns outside of the campus. By being so far from home, we didn't travel all the way back home on certain short vacations or whatever. Sometimes we would go visit other parents of students, the other students in the Chicago area for those holidays. —Alice (Thomas) Stubblefield*

*Going over to Loras College, hooking up with the boys: that was a favorite. It was always nice to have Clarke and Loras right there. At the time Loras was an all-male school and Clarke was an all-girls school. It was always fun. —Joyce Murray*

*Bob Johnson and Dozier Jones (standing 4th and 5th from right) with Phi Omicron fraternity brothers.*



*There was a young man from Chicago Heights. His name was Bob Johnson, and it was not unusual for him to interact with whites because he went to an integrated school. Bob kept me up quite a bit as to discern who was actually being open-eyes and who was not. Bob and I were both freshmen. Bob was a linebacker and so was I. Bob and I both were admitted into the Phi Omicron fraternity, and Bob had gone out one weekend about a year after I was there as tradition would have it. All the fraternities would go out for the weekend to the lake just to party and have a good time. So Bob and a couple guys were out on a boat. We don't know all the details in the evening - they could have been drinking - so the boat had flipped over and Bob drowned in May of 1963. Of all the things that happened at the University of Dubuque, whether it was racial comments of whatever, that was the most devastating one for me: to lose someone who was so helpful to getting me to adjust to an environment that I felt was going to be pretty difficult. —Dozier Jones*

*I had to turn down some opportunities because I was saying "yes" to too many things on campus. I had a lot of things going on, but I helped with the Phi Beta Sigma's marketing. A big part of my*



*campus life which actually drew me more toward our fraternity was what I was seeing in the members of the time, and it's just how involved they were, how community oriented they were, too, and still are. And that's something I saw in myself. That's what I want to do, but I want to do it better and more effective than just being on my own. And that's kind of what drew me to Phi Beta Sigma and the brothers in there. —Temwa Phiri*

*I was a Gamma Phi Delta. Very nice experience with the girls. Enjoyed the group situation. We washed cars, we had parties, and we just hung out together. —Alice (Thomas) Stubblefield*

*I joined a sorority. I joined the Zeta Phi. I remember creating a dance group. A small dance group. That was the next year when another African American student came on. I was asking about*



ZETA PLEDGE CLASS—Standing—C. Panak, S. Bellinger, N. Von Dohren, M. Elshiemer.  
Seated—M. Gaddis, C. Cords, S. Christian, C. Harmon.

*her and her name was Tracy Batteast from Chicago. We used to do Modern Dance with a couple of other people. I had actually established some good friendships. I was not that much engaged in that many other activities. I did belong to the Honor Society, but we did not really meet that much. There was little diner, Goats. I hung out there a lot. —Susan Bellinger*

*One of the things I remember most and has probably influenced my career most is that it was a really small, scrappy, struggling department Speech and Drama. At the time it had young professors; they were both master's prepared out of Ohio. There was an older professor there – Doc Thompson – and he was in the process of leaving after my freshman year, and a couple by the name of Holly and Roger Drake. They were very forward thinking when it came to theatre content, but they also had very classical theatre education and really instilled in us how important theatre history was and classical theatre and the origins of theatre, so there was a real strong foundation there. They just knew how to really get a small group of people fired up to do big things. And we did during their tenure some really, really nice productions. One particular production – and it was my first major drama that I was involved in – was called Slow Dance On A Killing Ground. It was about an African American character, who is trying to find, sort of, his place in life. His journey or his socialization had been fraught with just craziness. And he found himself in this delicatessen with a survivor from the Holocaust and a young New York, Brooklyn girl – I think she was from Brooklyn – and it was a real powerful, powerful piece. We had a lot of shared relationships with Clarke College at the time and their drama department got lots of accolades. It was probably one of my most memorable experiences on that campus that year. —Eugene Hawkins*

*I was in the ROTC program. Sergeant Murray recruited myself and my roommate Kevin Richardson. We initially started off, I think we took a map reading class. He would always tell us about*



*the program and try to get us in. Eventually it worked. I think the end of my sophomore year is when I joined up. It was inclusive. At that time we were the satellite unit. The main program was at Platteville, Wisconsin. We had three instructors at the University of Dubuque. Everyone was helpful. If you needed something answered, everyone's forthcoming.*

—Darren Glover

*I studied political science and I really didn't receive hardly any counseling in that field at the time. I just used role models from my community. My pastor's son, the one that had referred me to Dr. Johnson, he was valedictorian at my high school. He went to this college that was predominantly black and he majored in political science. Then he went to Harvard Law School, and so I just said, "Hey, I'm just going to do what he did." I didn't have counseling in high school and didn't hardly have any at UD. That's just the way it was.*

—Ozell Hudson

*It was the beginning of my junior year. They announced that that would be the last year that a drama major would be offered at the University of Dubuque. I was actually the last Speech and Drama major that graduated in 1976,*

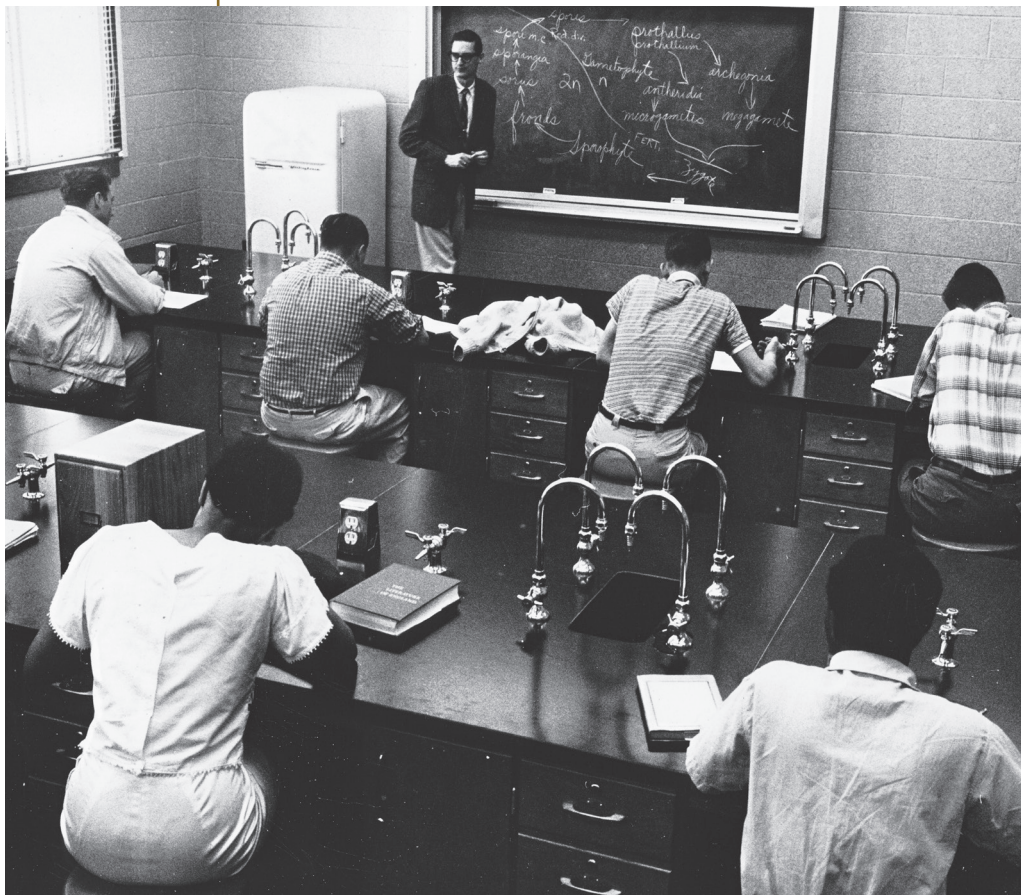
*and that threw me into a tailspin. Fortunately my senior requirements except for my show had been met. I sort of didn't know what to do. I considered going to UNI and finishing my senior year there, but after three years at the UD I was, "I just really don't want to go." Everything I had left to do was my electives for senior year and my senior show, so I stayed. Oh, I forgot Mary Jane. There was an English professor who became my advisor and sort of oversaw what I needed to do to complete my major for my senior year and she became my advisor for my senior show. I managed to finish there. Senior year was great because everything was elective and I worked a lot. I was trying to figure out what I was going to do with the rest of my life. —Eugene Hawkins*



Steve, Carol, Munson, Marie, Dave, Holly, Kirk, Gayle, Mark, Gene, Roger, Glenn, Colleen.



*My major at the time was elementary education, and I had a minor in music. I can remember a team of professors, a husband and wife team, Dr. Mahmoud and his wife. One taught key skills and the other taught theory. I struggled through those classes. I use to lay wake thinking I bet they're talking about me. "What should we give her, a C or a D?" I really didn't do very well in either one of those. It was at that time where I said, "Maybe music isn't my thing." —Joyce Murray*



*All of the professors of the classes prepared me for what I really wanted to go into and what I came there for. I knew that I was in the area of science so science lab was my second home.*

—Alice (Thomas) Stubblefield

*Mr. Muzinga, I used to wonder about this guy all the time. He was always hilarious, but I always felt like he was on my case, always. I never understood why until now. He used to always say, "You know what? Wake up in class," or "Hey, push yourself harder. It's not going to be easy for you as an African American male." It never really registered what he was trying to do was take me to a new level to make me understand that as an African American male in society nothing's going to be given to you. You've got to work maybe a little harder than anyone else. When I see him now, he just looks at me and says, "I'm proud of you." I will always remember Mr. Muzinga for the work he did for me. I think he was the same for all of his kids of color in really just saying, "Hey, you're not from this area. You're not just gonna come here and think you're just here for sports and not get this degree. You need this degree. You need to work hard. No excuses. Get up. Do your work." And a lot of us actually succeeded because of that.*

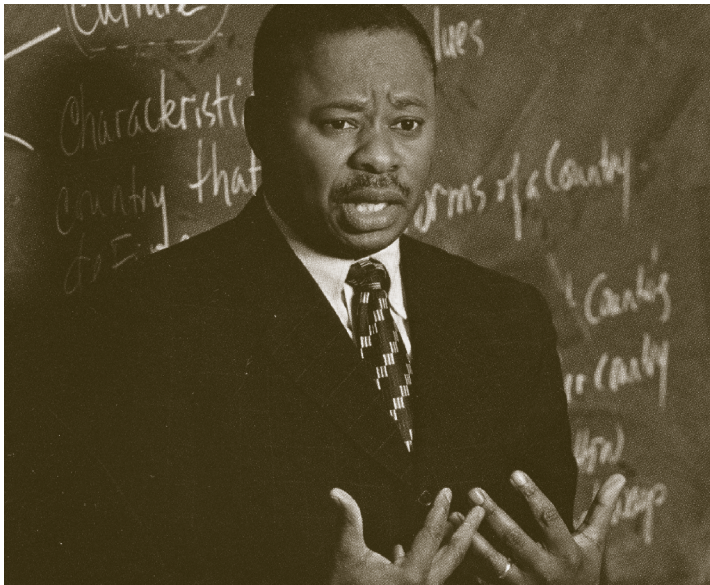
—Anderson Sainci

*You can't and you will never find faculty like those that were at the University. They cared about all the students. Color be dead. It was a humanity type of effort. There was a lot of love that went around there to do the right thing. There was no single person that made my day. My day was made by being there and having the opportunity to achieve there. —James R. Riddick*

*I had an advisor that was very good. He was very good because he treated me like a human being, sort of meaning that he treated all the students the same way. Clearly you could see that on how he interacted with us, so I had a lot of respect for him. I had Educational Psychology. He was one of my teachers for that.*

—Brenda (Bailey) Lett

*I had a Chemistry professor. I knew that he was very good intellectually. He was kind of tough to follow during his lectures, but you had the perception that he was good. I did very well in Chemistry. I had a professor and he and I could talk about different things. He would give pointers on what I should do or need to do. I did very well with him. There was Dorothy Taylor, Physics. She did not let up. She had very high standards. She wanted everyone to excel in what they were doing. —John Taylor*



*Dr. Lawrence Muzinga*

*I'll never forget the team doctor. He was on the Board of Trustees. Paul Laube was his name, from Dubuque, and another gentleman like Couchman. He would always come up to you and talk with you, ask you how things were going. Marge Kremer was the lady who kind of ran the cafeteria food service and another angel that showed love and appreciated a lot of the African American kids. And they didn't single you out. They showed it to all the kids, and you'd be part of that group. They didn't just say, "I'm going to go*

*talk to him because he's black." They talked to all of us that way and they cared for all of us. My leadership skills on the football team, my leadership skills in the Marine Corps, my leadership skills in Vietnam - I was a rifle platoon commander - was all enabled and all started there at the University of Dubuque because there I had people of all different ethnicities and backgrounds that I befriended. When I went into other areas - the Marine Corps or corporate America - it was my experience at the University that helped me communicate with and to lead people of different backgrounds, from different parts of the country and different colors. So it is one of the most important steps I think I ever took in my life, and I'm still connected with many of the friend I made at Dubuque. —Dozier Jones*

*Walter Hosey was the Director of the Multicultural Student Affairs at the time, and he always found leadership positions for me to be in. Actually Walter informed me about the Wendt Character Scholarship. He was like, "You need to consider that." I was like, "Walter, they're not going to give it to me. I'm dealing with some cultural issues here." Walter was just like, "Look. I don't care about your challenges. I need you to do this." Sure enough, I went after it. I was awarded, and it was one of the best decisions. When I got the Wendt Character Scholarship I stopped playing football because academics is more important than anything else. People can take sports away from you. They can take everything else away from you, but they can't take the knowledge you possess.*

*—Mikelange Olbel*

*There were people that had their own agenda and there were people that genuinely assisted us. I will never forget...He was a safety instructor, Fred Wagner. I worked for him for work study. He kept encouraging me to major in safety and I wouldn't do it. I wish I had because I'd probably make a lot of money. I used to go in his little office and work. He was just so unorganized. Stuff was all over the place, and I used to say, "Fred, what are we gonna*



*do about this office?" He was like, "I don't care about this office." He could find everything he needed. I think he had a genuine caring for me. He really cared for me. I think I worked for him the four years that I was there. He taught me how to drive. I knew how to drive, but I never went to driving school. So I developed relationships with certain people there. I really wanted to do well there. I really wanted bigger relationships, but it just didn't happen. Some of the professors, I remember them, they were helpful. Kelly Hoxmeier was like the sweetest person you ever wanted to meet. Reb Hose, she was a secretary up on the second floor of one of those buildings. Her husband was the coach of the softball team. I just remember anytime*

*I needed something, that was my girl, my go to girl. If I needed something typed for the Black Presidium, she would do it. If I just had a question, it was like always the same person always treated me nice. I remember Marge who sat at the cafeteria who knew everybody. "Click," she didn't even have to look up. She could just click and know you was there. It was people like that that I really came to appreciate and I liked. —Cynthia (Veal) Slater*

*I liked Kelly Hoxmeier. I know she's married now. I can't remember her married name. She was the English professor. I loved that lady. She took me in as a freshman and she really broke it down to me.*



*She got me straight on how to write a paper, with all her little red markings on my paper. She took time out to make sure I had all the things I need when I was going towards deciding what major I was getting into. She took care of all my electives and made everything easy for me when I had transferred from her to Larry Odegard because I went into Social Work.*

*—Donna Cooper*

*I can't remember his name, He worked at John Deere and taught part-time, engineering drawing. He made an impact not only from the standpoint of the class he taught. He taught me how to step back from the pressures of what you were doing and take a breath. He came in one night and we were all there looking forlorn, down and out. He came in, dropped his briefcase and looked around, and he said, "What's wrong? Everyone looks like somebody shot their dog." One guy spoke up and said, "I worked all day. This is tough." Then somebody said that they have other classes. This is tough. [The instructor] said, "But you know you do not have to do it all at once. Just take little pieces. Step back and relax a little bit. Then come back." That worked. That was a very good class.*

*—John Taylor*

*The first real, warm overcoat I had - I can't remember the professor's name now, but he was a part-time professor - was one that was given to me. He probably saw I was running around Dubuque with a jacket on in the middle of winter because I did not have a coat. He gave me one of his coats, so it was very, very quickly that people like that changed how I felt about how we as a nation were separated but in a lot of ways we were not. If you showed a lot of love, a lot of heart, a lot of respect for the individual, there was nothing wrong with being friends. At Dubuque there were more real, loving, caring kids than there were those who were a little concerned about me being there or felt that*



*I didn't fit in. Overall it was a wonderful, wonderful environment.*

*—Dozier Jones*

*John McGovern was a father figure, growing up without a father. He went out of his way to make sure that all of his athletes reached their full potential. I wish I would have took advantage of it when I was actually in the process of wrestling and trying to be a national champ. It wasn't until after my senior year I didn't finish wrestling because I had a hurt knee really thanking him for not giving up on me and thanking him for just being a dad. Even today a lot of guys would say John McGovern is a father figure because he will go beyond what a coach is supposed to do for his athlete. If you needed a buck for a pop or an apple or something and he had a buck in his hand and it was the only buck that was going to last him the rest of the week, he would give it to you. There are so many great things that I can say about John McGovern. He's an inspiration. He will forever have a special place in my heart, always. —Anderson Sainci*

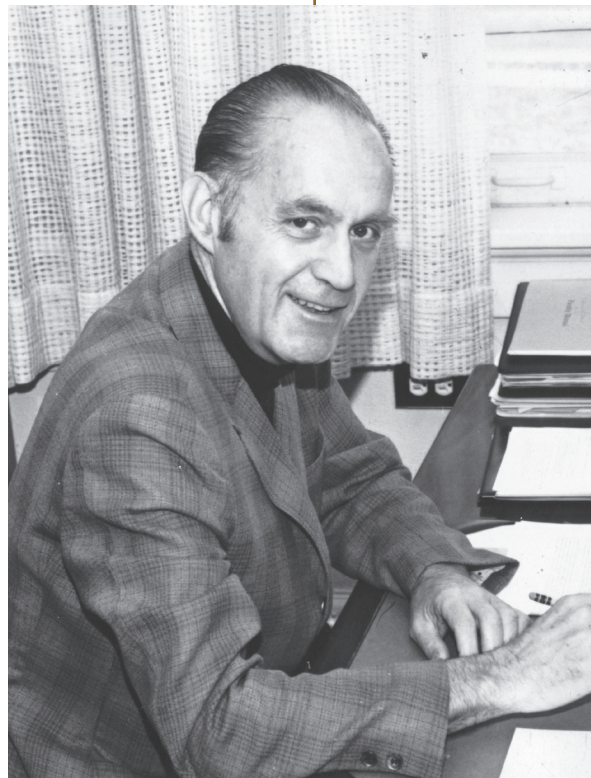
*Dr. Couchman was President at that time. He is one of my favorite people. He was such a stand up guy, so involved with the student body, and so supportive. I can't get to his name... his name was the "Blade." He was the faculty advisor to the Phi Omicrons. At one time Dr. Coit was also an advisor, but I think he stopped being an advisor the year before I was inducted into the fraternity. The Blade, he was just a younger guy. When I say younger I'm going*



to say his late thirties. He was a religious instructor. He just had this way of calming everything down as we went through hell week without stifling what normally goes on during those times. I was a pre-med student. Dr. Bird was a chemistry instructor. He stands out as that extra support in terms of chemistry. Organic chemistry was not one of my strongest subjects, and he was just there to give you any help you wanted. I know he's one of my wife's favorite instructors. She was also pre-med. He was a fantastic teacher in terms of being able to explain. If you needed any help, there was not question he was going to give it to you, no matter how long it took. —William Stubblefield

John Knox Coit was the reason that I actually changed my major and I took every Philosophy course that I could. One of the things that I remembered was sitting in Goats, sometimes very late talking with him. Incredibly sophisticated, incredibly knowledgeable and incredibly welcoming. Not only was he a teacher, but I considered him a mentor. —Susan Bellinger

We met every night in the coffee shop. It was the basement of some building. I do not remember what it was called. There was Dick Van Iten, myself, Dr. Coit, and Cal Neymeyer. I do not know what time the place closed, but we go there an hour before they closed. We will sit in this booth. We will listen. He would give us the names of writers and philosophers that we should read. A lot of books that he wanted us to read were in the library of the



John Knox Coit

theology school. We would go over there and read these books and read these articles. The four of us would listen in this booth and he would just throw out things and listen to us discuss them. For somebody that did not know philosophy, I thought this was great. This was a good way to learn. I liked this stuff. So the four of us would sit there, and he would lead us in discussion and tell us

when we were not on point and when we were on point. How do we get this from that article and this from that article. He was a fantastic teacher. I learned a lot. I learned a lot about myself. When you are brought up in Chicago in a segregated neighborhood, you do not know a lot of white people. There was no television. You did not see them on the streetcar. You did not know who the hell they were. Cal Neymeyer and Dick Van Iten both came from Iowa. I do not know where John Knox Coit came from, but he was just an unbelievable philosophy teacher. The only way to describe him was that he was a force. He used to give blue book exams. He would walk in the room and write three or four questions on the blackboard. Then he sat at his desk and read a book. He gave you blue books and he would sit there as long as there was a student

filling out this blue book. He was there reading journals. He was taking notes. He was about education.

—William Walker

*John Knox Coit was a philosophy instructor. He was very interested in athletics. He was a Ph Doc, but he dispensed aspirin after football games like he was a MD Doc. A great gentleman. Just an excellent person that had an interest in me.*

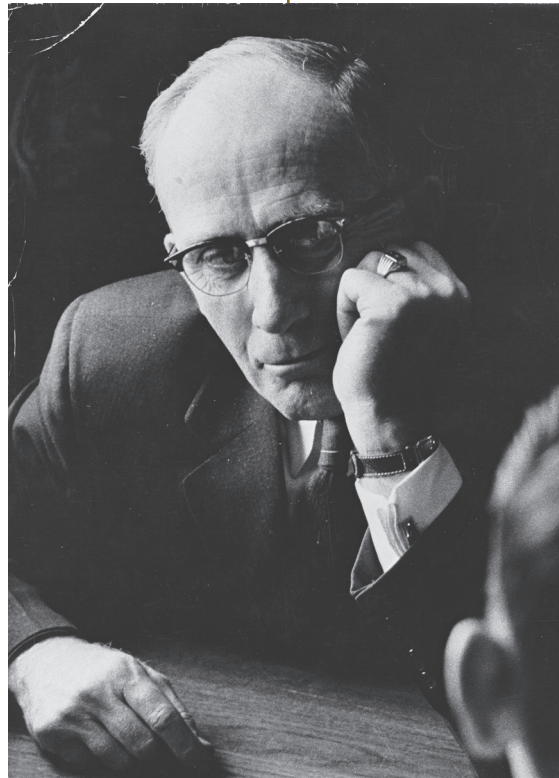
—James Martin

*Let me just tell you a little bit about the support I got from the professors and what not from the school. Gentlemen like Couchman, who was the president, was one outstanding man. I have a little list of people that I keep. I have a list of mentors. I have a list of who I considered to be true angels of God. God brought us together and Gaylord Couchman was one I felt truly was an angel, and he never forgot your name. He knew who you were. He would always talk with you. I mean not just talk at you, but pull you aside. I had some wonderful conversations with him and numerous holiday dinners at his home. Once in a while he gave me the opportunity to baby-sit and earn a little money. John was his son at the time and I would ensure he was behaving. Just great people.*

—Dozier Jones

*Dr. Couchman was very present and very visible. He knew your name. He talked to you as the same way I hope that Dr. Bullock talks to you when he sees you walking on campus. Roger Woods was a religion professor, who was very young, who came over and played basketball intramural pick-up games with us. Very instrumental. Very nice man. We had some good professors that made you toe the line.*

—James Martin



*President Gaylord Couchman*

*Dr. Couchman showed me the error of my ways. I never told UD that I went to Drake University. When I went to Drake, I was interested in being an athlete and running track and all that stuff. I run in some AAU events and they picked up my name. It was not that Dubuque investigated me. The stuff basically fell in their lap based on the fact I did not know that when you run in a race*

*for the AAU, they keep records. They did not have to go searching. Here my name popped up on something that I did at Drake. All they did was say, "Hmm, Drake University. Chicago, you know. Same father. Same mother. I think we have somebody that has been lying." When they set up the appointment, I called my father in Chicago. He got on the train and came there. The appointment was with Dr. Couchman and my father. My father tried to take the weight. Dr. Couchman would not buy any of that. He picked out the truth of everything. He told how long I was going to be on probation. I think I was an officer in the class and I had to give that up. He was very fair. He told me what he could or couldn't do. He said, "Let's see what happens." Dr. Couchman decided what years he would give me credit for and what years he would not give me credit for.*

*I never asked him because I was so happy he was going to let me stay at the University of Dubuque. He said, "Let me go over this. I will let you know." I said, "Dr. Couchman, anything you do is fine with me as long as you let me stay here. You just tell me what I got to do to stay here." From there on, I was a good student at the University of Dubuque after Dr. Couchman got hold of me. It became personal to me because I did not want to let him down. Dr. Couchman was the closest man to God I ever met in my life.*



*He never challenged you. He just talked to you. He got you to say things that you never thought coming out of your mouth. You said them and you apologized. I look up to that person that turned my life around. He was just a wonderful man. He was an incredible human being. I hung around a lot of presidents of universities. He was a president but also a minister, too. There was just something about the man that you knew that you could not let him down. After you made a promise to him there was no way in the world that you could let him down. —William Walker*

*Most of our lives were spent in the student union. Every Friday they would have the dance there, and that was the big social life. 95% of my life was at the campus. I didn't venture too far off, other than having some many friends and fraternity brothers inviting me to their house, and that was a whole other experience. But in terms of day-to-day social life, it was always on the campus. Again back in those days very few of us had cars. You were pretty much stuck to campus.*

—Paul Clayton

*I remember Michael Jackson's "Thriller." We all went to that Underground complex and watched the video. It was filmed in 15 minutes. That was huge, I mean the whole school would go down there. We had a big screen TV down there, floor model. Everybody would sit around and watch this 15-minute video with Michael Jackson "Thriller." That came out at that time.*

—Preston Fleming



*The Student Union, that's where we mainly socialized. At that time we socialized with everybody. There were only 22 blacks, so everybody socialized with everybody. We played cards, we danced, we talked. Sometimes you would just go in there and listen to music, read, do homework, whatever, and you ate sandwiches, pizzas, whatever.*

—Alice (Thomas) Stubblefield

# THE QUE

University of Dubuque Dubuque, Iowa

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## Black Controversy Stirs UD

Are the blacks getting more than their fair share? Or are they finally receiving the rights they should have been granted long ago?

With the establishment of the Black Cultural Center on campus, this controversy has become acute and everyone—professors, administrators, and students—has jumped in to voice their opinions.

Some say the Center is a step forward—others say it is fostering segregation. To get the com-



*As a general rule, there was not a whole lot of social functions going on. We made what is the Underground kind of a social part of it. I think I went to school during the heyday of Motown. Every week, almost we got them later than anybody else, there was a new Supremes hit, Four Tops hit, Impressions hit. We kept trying to get the jukebox updated so we can hear the latest on the jukebox.*

—James Martin

*I was a member of a Black student body group. We called it and started it and named it the Black Presidium. They gave us a building that was not being in use on campus. It was the original Sol Butler House. Right over here on the corner. They tore it down. We would meet there. We would meet in other places. We finally started meeting there. We had a very functioning group, just talking of the issues of the day like everyone else: Vietnam War, things that were going on in Black and White America. We were deeply involved in that. We probably had about 40 people. There were about 40 or 60 [African American students] on campus. It may have been in 1968. They might had some dances. Stuff like that. Before we just go to one of the houses or dorms and we played music and danced. That infringed on other people. We had to turn it down. So finally we were able to get that place. It was hits of the time. R&B, "My Girl," Temptations, Four Tops, The Supremes, that kind of stuff.* —John Taylor

*The TGIF at the gathering hall, it was the commons area where we would have our dances on Fridays and that kind of thing. I would always be a part of that. And the other thing I remember that Dubuque did was bring in guest speakers and musicians to entertain us, which was really cool. I can remember that several singing groups came and that was pretty entertaining. We had a speaker, a very well-known black guy that I can't think of his name. Black people would come out and sing or dance or speak to the group. It wasn't just the black people that went; it was everyone. It was a connection. It was a good thing I thought was great.* —Joyce Murray

*There was the Rocky Horror Picture Show. They gave us like a poncho, some tomatoes, and we went in and watched this in a little theater room. They allowed us to throw the tomatoes at the screen, at each other. So it was a lot of fun. They tried to create an atmosphere that was inclusive for everybody. The University knew in order to keep these students they had to provide them with something to take their mind off the stuff in town. There was always the ping-pong to play, the big screen to watch or sports to play, study groups to have, little parties at the house. There was always something so you really didn't have to travel too far to try to find something to do.* —Preston Fleming





*I actually lived in Severance Hall. I used to live in the second floor, I think it was. It was actually for upperclassmen. When I came to Dubuque, I was a junior when I got there. It was actually kind of nice. I had my own room. I had an eight-track player. It was a portable eight-track. I also had a television. My television did not play well in my room so I loaned it to another student down the hallway that got better reception. We used to go down to her room and watch the TV, "Streets of San Francisco," Soap Operas, and also game shows. —Brenda (Bailey) Lett*

*The campus was the quadrangle. It was not until, I think I might have been a senior, when the two new dorms down by the football field were opened. We thought it was in the boondocks. There was no way a upperclassman would walk that far from class from the football field to the quadrangle. —James Martin*



*I remember Atchison Hall. That was an all-girls dorm. Guys on the floor, oh my god. In the '60s that was a no-no. The guys would walk us to the front door, say goodbye and leave. With the girls they always had spot checks: check your dorm room, make sure you're in by a certain...I couldn't remember the time, maybe 10:30. —Joyce Murray*

*It was the first time that I had seen snow. What happened? Miss Jarvis was her name, and I will never forget it. She was the Dean of Students that she stayed in the building [Severance Hall]. You couldn't go out of the building after nine, ten, or whatever it was. When I saw all that snow, I burst through the door. I just have*

*never seen that ever in my life. She said, "Leave her alone." It is that amazing! Something as simple to someone else, I had never seen that before. —Chestina Mitchell Archibald*

*I grew up in a non-denominational church and my mother was Baptist, so I didn't go to the school's chapel maybe but once or twice. There was a church called Rock of Ages. They had church on the campus, and so we used to go to that church. It was the chapel in the administrative building, our church of fifteen people. That was it. And sometimes we would have our own Bible studies. For me to be kind of somewhat grounded I went to Rock of Ages. —Cynthia (Veal) Slater*

*When I was in Zambia, my mom, we went to Trinity Church there, a non-denominational Christian church. When we came to the United States there was a Trinity Church there, too. It had the same feel, background, and everything else. I grew up within the church, my mom being like the leader. I also knew going into college that I'm on my own. I don't have mom, my spiritual leader, being there able to help me, so I need to kind of connect quickly. There's a thing that happens when you go to college. A lot of life starts happening and different things you start experiencing will challenge you, your faith, your beliefs, and everything else. If you're not really prepared for it, you'll... I wouldn't say go astray. Your journey will be a lot different than what it could be. When I first got here I spoke with Jim Gunn, trying to be involved with the chapel right away before I had anything else I was involved in. I wanted that to be the first. I knew what would happen because I can't say no for the most part. So I started getting involved with going to chapel and seeing the Gospel Choir. That was another thing I was involved in, just trying to anchor myself as best I could. The spiritual pulls were there. Having chapel Monday, Wednesday, Friday, that was great. And then I had Sunday service over at New Life that was just up the hill closer to Finley. That's where I went. Being at a university that has a Christian belief, that helps. In class*

*you can express your spirituality, whatever your spirituality is. I think that really helped out to get me more anchored. —Temwa Phiri*

*Everyone went to Chapel. It was on Fridays about 10:30 in the morning. It was held at Westminster Church. They took roll. It was a requirement. —James Martin*

*It was like an Alice in Wonderland on that campus. It was just unbelievable considering in the '60s all the crap that was going on in the world. Forget the world, in the country. We were in a cocoon, and that is not a complaint. It was a great experience. It shields us from a lot of crap that was going on in the country. We were so wrapped in how positive the experience was at the university that I just sort of shut myself off. We just shut ourselves off from all the other ugliness going on in the country. In those days the one time you'd see the ugliness going on in the world is when you went to the student union and turned on the black and white TV and watched the news and see all the insanity going on. —Paul Clayton*

*Most of the classmates at Dubuque were pro-Vietnam. I mean they were pro-military. At best there were some more enlightened, I'd say some students, a handful. They didn't necessarily speak out against the war, but they were trying to avoid the military draft. I knew one young man from Chicago who went to Canada with his girlfriend. Other than that the student leaders at Dubuque, black and white, were pro-military. You only got one side of that picture on campus. —Ozell Hudson*

### Kathy Haselton, Paul Clayton Reign Over May Fete



Kathy Haselton and Paul Clayton at coronation.

*I don't think there were any students who were out. My friend was certainly pegged. I often believe to this day it was one of the reasons he was black balled from the fraternities. People had perceptions that just weren't fair. There just wasn't a presence that you'd find on some other campuses today, and there weren't the affinity organizations that exist today on college campuses. —Eugene Hawkins*

*When I came in he [Anderson Sainci] was a sophomore. I think he dated someone that I lived in Italy with because I'm a military dependent so I lived overseas before I came here. And so he met me through her and added me on MySpace. We went to a lot of different events and saw each other then. We kind of knew each other just through other people. We weren't really like best friends or anything until my sophomore year. That's when we started dating and then eventually had our son, and went from there. —Kiesharlia (Tuck) Sainci*

*My wife and I at that time were dating, but I don't know if I pinned her or not. I remember receiving a phone call at the dorm and my wife was very upset, where our relationship was going. She was thinking about leaving school. Dr. Couchman asked me to come over to his house. He just sat down and he talked to me about it. He wanted to know how serious I was about Alice and wanted to explain her feelings and her concerns. For the president of the university to involve in two students romantic life concern, I was just surprised. As president of the student body, there were things I interacted with him on, official things. You'll see groundbreaking pictures for dorms with him. But I was always impressed with him being that concerned about the welfare of his students. —William Stubblefield*



*At the time I wasn't out. I was beginning to recognize that there were orientation issues that I needed to deal with in terms of myself. The show I did was called **The Madness of Lady Bright** and it was a one-act piece by Terrance McNally about an aging homosexual male who was going crazy. It was pretty controversial to do that on campus. The lead character that I cast in that show happened to be a senior in high school who was very, very talented. I often wonder where he is today. His older brother was a fraternity brother of mine, and I dated his sister. He auditioned, and he was the best person to audition for this role and did an amazing job on it. I got an amazing response from folks on campus. I think people were pretty surprised of the content, but the feedback I got was more about how well done and complete it was as a production. Today I don't think people would blink twice about the content, but then I was scared to death about doing the show that had gay content. That's just something in the '70s you didn't put out there.*

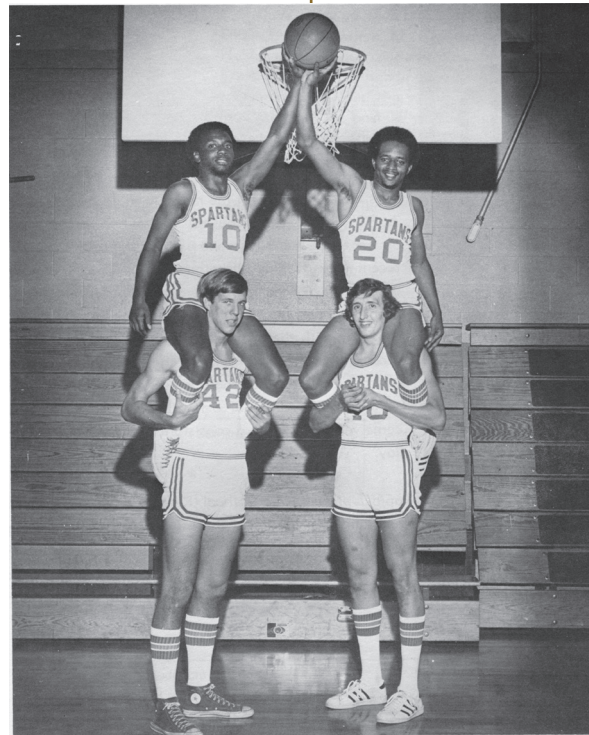
—Eugene Hawkins

*I wanted to play ball. That was part of me at that time. They had just started letting freshmen play on varsity, and guess what happened? I made varsity as a freshman. Now imagine this, semester ends like the beginning of December. All the students go home. During that period I take the starting spot on varsity, point guard. I can't wait for the students to come back and hear "Point guard, freshman, Vernon Wright." When the*

*students get back, I'm on crutches. I started maybe a total of three games. At first they thought it was just a bruise. Shin splints is what they called it. Shin swelled up a little bit and the doctors told them "you might as well let him play" after I had sat out couple of games. I don't know how in the world you call yourself taping up shin splints, but Davison did the best he could. I wanted to*

*play. He tapes me up and it didn't work. You know how if something is hurt on you, a cut or anything, you're always going to hit that. It becomes a magnet, right? So game starts and he doesn't start me, puts me in the game so I'm ready to go to work. Now I'm trying to remember, he was bigger than me. Of course, when you're small you have to be fast. So in my mind's eye anybody his size I'm fitting to leave in the dust; I'm fitting to shake him up. So I go to do my thing and move, but I'm not as fast 'cause the leg is bad, so he cuts me off, and guess where our legs meet? Right on that spot. Almost as if there was a target and he just kicked it, so I dropped like a bag of rocks. I get up to take a stand and right back down we go. The referee goes, "Get him out of here." So Davison takes me to the hospital. My year is over with. By the time students got back in January I'm*

*on crutches. Now you know Dubuque is hilly, so that is not a good place to be on crutches. It really isn't. —Vernon Wright*



"You hold 'em, we'll score 'em"

"The height" and "the might" get together for some teamwork to score an easy one!  
Rick Tallman 6'8" - Bryan Dunn 6'6" - Tim Jackson 5'9" - Vern Wright 5'10"

*I was gonna play softball. That's why you see my picture in the yearbook. I didn't feel like I was part of the team and so I didn't play after my freshman year. I just lost my love for it. I loved softball, but I didn't feel like playing anymore after that first year of riding the bench. I kind of understood why I rode the bench, but it wasn't really communicated to me. You know, I wasn't the best player and I could've built up to be that. I had never rode the bench before! Who rides the bench? I played second base. I was the starting player when I became a freshman, so to not play? And then the coach had me run for somebody else because I could run pretty fast. —Cynthia (Veal) Slater*

*I never wrestled in high school or grade school, but I went out for the team. The coach Moco Mercer was the coach and he encouraged me. One of the things I remember of that experience was the sweatbox, although I didn't need it because at that time Moco had me wrestling at heavy weight. I was wrestling guys 50 pounds heavier than me. But anyways, the sweatbox, he used a chicken coop, or not a chicken coop, an incubator - that's what we called it - where guys would go in there and sweat. So the facilities didn't have state of the art like they have now. The wrestling program was in a different location and there were no weight rooms and weight facilities, you know, all the stuff they have now. —Ozell Hudson*

*UD had a level of funding, and in those days it wasn't anything near where it is now in cost. With a subsidy that you may have gotten from the foundation and any scholarship money that the University had you were pretty much able to have somewhat of a full ride with an exception of personal expenses. The University was very, very open in helping men, the kids being black or white, with getting jobs on campus or jobs in town. I had an opportunity to work in the town of Dubuque in two areas. One was the post office during the holiday season because I didn't have the funds to go back to the South or Atlanta during the holidays, so I would*

*work. The other place I worked was one of the gyms in Dubuque where they had intramural or kind of city league basketball. I was referee, and that didn't go over too well. If I didn't make the right call I wasn't treated too well. —Dozier Jones*



*The Black Presidium in the Sol Butler Memorial Center, 1974.*





# RACE AND DIVERSITY

*At seven I became a Christian. I became a Christian through a mission that was located back then in what we called skid row. They had a club for teenagers and adolescents. Through that youth center I became a Christian and the people that was over at that youth center were pretty much Caucasian. So from seven and eight I was able to communicate and be exposed to Caucasians on a weekly basis, like about three times a week. That interaction was pleasant. They were honest people. They didn't look at me as an African American individual, a black individual. They just looked at me as another child of God. From that it just showed me that all people are created equal. With growing up my parents never taught me to hate any other race. That just wasn't in our household. We had experiences where we were treated unfairly because we were Black, but we didn't go home and talk about it like, "We don't like white people." I mean, it just didn't happen. That helped me when I went to the University of Dubuque. I was able to make that transition. But the difference was a lot of the students and the faculty and the community, they were not used to African Americans. So that was the challenge. A lot of the students, they treated me nice, they treated me fair. But we just didn't socialize together. We didn't really have much in common. But they would talk to me. Some of them would help me with my classes. They were friendly. The overall students that came to the University, I wouldn't say they were racist or prejudiced. Some of them had really never been exposed to living around African Americans. So it was like this curiosity situation more or less of them trying to be rude to Black people. That's what became uncomfortable. We were just different. —Cynthia (Veal) Slater*

*My roommate, we became very close friends. I was her maid of honor at her wedding. We were like sisters, so now you understand what I mean by it didn't matter what nationality you were. That's*

*the one I was with when I came there and that's the one we stayed with and which remained as a friend.*

—Alice (Thomas) Stubblefield

*We found out our freshmen year that letters had been sent out to the student body asking people if they would have an objection to have a Black roommate. I remember when we found out about it, we... well, nobody sent us a letter. And the response was, "We kind of figured you didn't have a problem having a White roommate. You're coming to a White school." My first years I was with a gentleman by the name of Howard Norris. He was from Chicago, like myself, African American. We roomed together my first two years. He got married at the end of my sophomore year. The next year I had two White roommates. We had a top floor. It was dorm space for four guys. We chose to be with each other.*

—William Stubblefield

*Although I grew up in the South, adults didn't speak much to children about social conditions. Even though my teachers were black and they had attended colleges throughout the country for their graduate degrees because the state of Georgia would not allow them to go to Georgia Tech or the University of Georgia, they went to schools like Iowa State and Michigan and Columbia and NYU for their graduate degree. My parents were educated, as well, but no one spoke about social conditions, including racial discrimination. I just knew that there was one world and that world was the black world that I came from. When I got to Dubuque that world changed. Where I had always been in the majority in my segregated community, I was now a minority for the first time in my life. —Ozell Hudson*



*I went from an environment that was 90% black to an environment that was pretty much 98% white, so it was a learning experience. Evanston is where Northwestern is and Evanston is pretty mixed, so it wasn't real culture shock. But the Caucasians in Evanston were used to being around Black people. The Caucasians in Dubuque wasn't. And I believe that we're all, I don't want to say racist, but we all favor our own kind, and it wasn't the kind of racism that we're hunting people down and lynching them. It was racism, and it wasn't just on one side. I don't want you to think it was just one side, like it was just Caucasians being racist. Blacks were being racist, too, up there. When I was up there, there was between 80 and 90 of us between University of Dubuque, Loras and Clarke. At that time Clarke was all-girls. The racism, if you can call it that, was from lack of knowledge. You didn't know certain things that you weren't supposed to say to these people each way. I think that's the first that I noticed that these people aren't used to being around Black people. Most of the Black people that was there didn't have that Upward Bound experience, although there were some: the guy I played guard with was raised in Iowa. —Vernon Wright*

*Most of the students, especially African American students that attended back in the 1980's, were athletes. They came to play football or a couple of guys played basketball. No one played baseball. I mean I was the only African American student on the baseball team. We had some challenges as freshmen coming onto the university from the city. I came from a high school that played with other nationalities in sports. Some of the guys from Chicago, from the inner city schools, didn't have any other ethnicities on their squad, so they weren't use to interaction. At the same time, a lot of the Caucasian athletes had not had interactions with anybody other than themselves. So the first week that the athletes got down to the dormitory, you had an exchange of ideas and philosophies from both sides. They crashed, and they fought, and a lot of guys left and decided that "I'm not going to take this. I'm going to go back to Junior College. I'm a*

*leave here and go back home" or whatever "cause I'm not going to stand for this." As I grew older, I realize that the Caucasians had their perspective. They saw things like Roots and things of that nature and they didn't know how to deal with African American students. On the other hand, the African American students didn't have interactions with Caucasians and they didn't have an understanding of how to deal with them. I on the other hand was okay because I interacted with other nationalities through sports and through going to my high school. Growing up playing baseball I had no issue being on the bus with nothing but Caucasians or playing ball because I had interaction with them. But for some of the other guys it was a problem, on both sides, because some of the White guys had never even seen Blacks before. —Preston Fleming*

*In some places early on, you would hear the "N" word at basketball games. In 1963, as far as I know, there were two black students at Central College and one I played against in high school. I knew him so I talked to him. There were probably a handful, eight to ten kids that went to Upper Iowa University which is in Fayette, Iowa. Very few at Wartburg. Luther...BV...William Penn had a few, primarily off the East Coast. Buena Vista...I do not remember a black kid there. —James Martin*

*When it came to sports a lot of people of African descent interacted with their classmates on teams, like the football team, basketball team... Those relationships were pretty positive and upbeat. But in terms of academics, I did not see a whole lot of interaction with European people and people of African descent. —Brenda (Bailey) Lett*

*Sue [Bellinger] and I said that these were serious white people at UD. That was the only way to describe the place. These were serious white people. There was not phony-baloney there. The people from the Theological Seminary, these were very serious people, even though they were in that building on the other side of*







*the quadrangle. I mean, if you look at that them, these people looked serious. —William Walker*

*I went to an integrated high school. I lived in Racine, Wisconsin. When I say, “integrated,” I had an argument one night with a lady who thought that Racine Park was 95% African American. We probably had 2% or 3%. This was not unusual for me coming into an integrated situation. What was unusual was that there were many whites in the ‘60s that have never seen or never gone to school with anyone of color. Had never lived in a dorm with anyone of color. Certainly some never had roommates. All of those things were not unusual for me. Not that I had a lot of white roommates, but I played on baseball teams where I was the only African American. So when we traveled, I naturally had a white roommate. That was not an unusual thing. —James Martin*

*Some of the students had never really had experience with people of color. It was always really interesting. You learn to just sort of tune out, “Well, you don’t sound black.” You know, those comments. And then have the dialogue, “Well, what does black sound like?” It was like Diversity 101 of the ‘70s. It was really about understanding who it was sitting across the table from you, and that’s what the experience really was. —Eugene Hawkins*

*I was a member of the choir the whole time I was there. We traveled everywhere. I think I went to every Presbyterian church in Iowa, North and South Dakota. We stayed in the parishioners’ houses. If you can imagine in those days, there were a whole lot of people that knew nothing about black people. The kids in the choir and I always used to laugh about this. We always decided wherever I went, it was always going to be the home of the minister because the minister was not going to pawn me off on somebody else. So I always stayed with the minister and his wife. It did not take me long when I traveled around Iowa, where the*

## Traditional Spirit



Back Row—I. Benedict, H. Church, J. Pierce, R. Dirksen, R. West, C. Neymeyer, C. Vanderwerf, K. Pease.  
Front Row—W. Walker, D. Busse, R. Koos, R. Kline, B. Ukena, R. Voigt, R. Casper.

*black people were and the black people weren’t. I remember the many Presbyterian Churches that we sang in and I think I was the only black person in the choir. I don’t remember seeing any black people in the audience in the church, not that the churches were segregated. There was just no black people around. They did not live there. The Presbyterian churches that we sang in were good middle-class, upper-middle-class churches because they had to pay for the choir to get there. —William Walker*

*I remember humorously a stereotype that immediately emerged because I was automatically placed in the Choir because I think they [UD Officials] felt blacks could sing and I am one of the few maybe in the world that cannot sing a lick. I had to inform them that they had made a mistake and that they would be sorry that I was on the Choir. —Susan Bellinger*

*There was one particular teacher kind of told me that “you would never get better than a C in this class,” like that. Some of my classmates shared some of those types of experiences. To be very honest, I did not really work as hard as some of the students that were doing much better. But what I find generally in many of the schools - and I been to a few schools at this point - is that you have one set that are encouraged to do their very best and another set that are pretty much left on their own devices. If you do not come there with that internal “I want to be a very good student” and that kind of thing, you are not necessarily nurtured or encouraged to do that. —Brenda (Bailey) Lett*

*There were more students who were engaged coming to the Multicultural Affairs Office talking about their experience on campus. Primarily a lot of kids feel marginalized. They’re having teachers say, “Hey, you shouldn’t be here. You don’t belong here,” indirectly or directly, through actions or implicit ways they interact with the students. —Andre Lessears*



1985 New Student Days Committee, Front Row: Patty McMahon, Gil Korthals, Robert Hardy. Second Row: Donna Cooper, Dawn Laubach, Carrie Kevern, Sonia Ortell. Third Row: Chris Jones, John Duba, Vicki Turner, Keith Scharnau. Fourth Row: Tammy Black, Brenda Krumviede, Bev Larson, Denise Lingle, Kim Gates (chairperson). Fifth Row: Doug Heil, Mike Taylor, Mike Green, Kirsten Zitzewitz, Nancy Welch. Sixth Row: Todd Thein and Rick Leonard.

*You know what? UD has made a great impact on my life, coming from a predominantly Black environment with school and in my neighborhood. It was kind of like a culture shock when I came there. 23 black students came in UD in the fall of 1983, 22 of them were male. I actually was the only black female freshman there. For my first two years there at the school it was only two black females there, me and my friend. She would have been the only sophomore and the only junior there at the time. So UD has made a great impact on my life because I never had to deal with different races and I dealt with it. The gentleman that got me there, my Assistant Principal Delbert, encouraged me. After the first year I was thinking about transferring out of Dubuque and he talked to me and told me one thing that stuck with me. He said, “Listen, I know where you come from and I understand, but if you can just stick it out two years, I guarantee you anywhere you go in the world you will be able to deal with different type of people.” He said, “The diversity that you will receive in UD will help you along in life.” That has stuck with me. I came back my sophomore year, and actually he was right. It got easier and easier to deal with the different cultures I was encountered with. I actually got a little comfortable and I started to like it and, you know, I end up staying my whole four years at UD only because of that conversation I had with my assistant principal from High School. —Donna Cooper*

*Sometimes it got tough with dealing with, you know, going to the malls and people looking at you and staring at you - people running up to me, thinking I was Kim Fields. Once there was a robot in the mall and a guy named Jeff, who had went to the University. He was real tall and looked like Mr. T. The robot came up to him and said, “Hey Mr. T, give me five.” You know, it was just a lot of stereotypes that we had to deal with and it was just funny. We go to the restaurants and sit down and eat. People would stare. It was weird so that made it almost not the best experience. After becoming a sophomore, I was like, “Okay, I’m gonna leave. I’m gonna transfer and I’m gonna start all over.” That*



*just wasn't an option for me. I didn't have a lot of money, and then my mother didn't want me to transfer. I was like, "Mom, you don't know what I'm going through. They're prejudiced. They're racist." She just ignored me. So I stuck it out, hung in there. And I had a really good community friend, Claudette Thomas. I just remember Claudette always being there for me, assisting with just talking and navigating. We became really good friends, her and her husband and I. —Cynthia (Veal) Slater*



*President Gaylord Couchman (center)*

*The first week that I was there I had to go into town to buy sheets or something for my room. The bus driver asked me if I was the girl from India who was going to the school. I thought he was being sarcastic or just being funny. I realized that he actually did not know that I was African American. I was stunned because he had*

*found out that there was a Indian girl coming to school. I really did think he was joking. I found out that he really did not know the difference between someone who looked like a Indian and someone who looked like an African American. —Susan Bellinger*

*I knew that I would not find white people like that at UD anywhere else in the world. Sue [Bellinger] and I used to talk about that there wasn't any angry people in Dubuque. They wanted to teach you. They wanted to be nice. When I used to live in South Carolina, when people said "hello" to you, they expect an answer. People at the University of Dubuque, they are nice to you because it is the way they are. Sue and I used to talk about white people that we used to meet on the planes and so forth. They were not serious white people. They did not care about you at all. People at Dubuque cared that you did well.. They were there to help you do well. That is not true everywhere. I have been in education all my life and there is a whole lot of people that we have in education that should not be in education because it is a paycheck to them. That is why a place like Dubuque, if it was like the place when I was there, is a perfect place for African American students to be because the environment is about education. It is because of people like John Knox Coit. They wanted to teach. They did not take "no" for an answer. They will make you learn. These are things that I have not talked about since I left Dubuque. —William Walker*

*The great thing about UD was that the students, the faculty, the administration, especially Dr. Couchman (who was president at the time), Dr. Norton (one of our faculty advisors), and my classmates were all... everyone that I encountered was welcoming. You know, issues of race didn't even come up. It was like it was non-existent. It was like Dubuque was in a bubble and at that time I was not informed enough to know. I don't know the exact number, but I'm just going to say around 14 to 20 black kids on campus. We all knew each other and there were maybe only a couple of frats at that time that actually had a history of*

accepting African Americans. One or two sororities had a history. Others didn't have a history. So the frats and sororities were your opportunity to engage and socialize at Dubuque. You have to understand the importance of this. The kids who come from that local area, they go home on weekends. Their parents come on campus, they go home for the holidays. Many of the kids like myself who came from Georgia, South Carolina and Mississippi, Alabama, some of us didn't get home but once a year. I know I stayed and worked up in Minnesota during the summer and I went home for Christmas. —Ozell Hudson

There were people who were fascinated with me because I was African American, who clearly never were anywhere near a person of color. At some levels it was like living in a bubble. There was very little talk of race. I really didn't run into prejudice. I ran into discomfort. People would ask all kinds of questions of me because most of the people on campus had never been anywhere near an African American. I went home with someone one Thanksgiving to South Dakota and made her a celebrity because everybody in the church wanted to meet me. I had a couple of experiences like that going into towns where clearly they had never seen an African American in their lives. But I mean no one nearby was hostile. If there was hostility, I did not know about it. To be honest, it was kind of wearing being in Dubuque. People were obviously friendly and supportive. I was almost like an alien. People asked all kinds of questions that I considered dumb at the time. It was not out of hostility. It was out of really not having been around a person of color. That sometimes was wearing. —Susan Bellinger

During the civil rights movement and during the time there was marching going on in the South there were white students at the University of Dubuque that were going South to get involved, to march. You're talking about something that was impressive. I don't remember all their names, but I thought that is really, really outstanding. That told me a lot about that school, told me a lot

about Dr. Couchman and the kind of kids he brought into that environment. I'll never forget the first time we had an exchange program. Dr. Couchman was a good friend of the gentlemen who was the president of Johnson C. Smith University in Charlotte, North Carolina. White kids had to go to Charlotte, North Carolina to an all-black school for a period of time, and the black kids from Johnson C. Smith came to the University of Dubuque. I think Svrluga and maybe Dave Bacon went to Johnson C. Smith University. So I'm around people that really stepped up their game

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APRIL 24, 1964

THE QU

## Exchange Students Review Program Highlights

*U of D*  
Dubuque Students  
Acquainted With  
Southern Comfort

The University of Dubuque students who spent a week at Johnson C. Smith University, Charlotte, N.C. returned to Dubuque Saturday.

Their activities at JCSU included a welcome party, a bus tour of the city, participation in a SCA forum about the role of sororities and fraternities in college life, a formal reception, a fireside chat, and an all-school dance.

The Dubuque students felt that although the week was a profitable experience, one week was too short a time to do anything but get acquainted and say good-bye. When asked about their feelings toward the exchange and their impressions of JCSU they had this to say.

Jo Clark: "We had a very good time, were very busy, and at the same time made many friends and, we hope, stopped some misconceptions and gained understanding about the Negro race."

Jo, a senior and head resident at Aitchison, was particularly interested in the women's dormitory organization. It is stricter, matron-controlled, and I returned feeling more confidence in the UD system."

Bill Blum, junior, "enjoyed the friendly campus atmosphere. JCSU is quite similar to Dubuque, but classes are more lenient, with students arriving and leaving



*JCSU*  
Students Express  
Their Sentiments  
Before Departure

Before leaving for North Carolina last Saturday, several Johnson C. Smith students were interviewed and asked to state their impressions of the week at Dubuque.

The following answers are typical of the sentiments expressed by the exchange students.

Laban R. Latham, Bob "I don't want to go back. I enjoyed myself immensely, but think it would have been more beneficial if we had had more time."

Carole Coles agreed and said that it takes about a week to really get acquainted.

Frank Colclough: "This week has given me a better understanding of people of a different racial and cultural background. I was deep impressed by the faculty members there seems to be a close relationship with the students. This is one thing I would like to improve at JCSU."

He noted that "President Couchman calls many students by their first names." He also said he has "not come across any type of discrimination in Dubuque."

Dr. Jack S. Brayboy: "I think there has been very little that could have been improved." However, he did feel that future discussion members should be reminded not to become involved in a debate. Discuss questions should not be taken personally but as issues — important all of us."

to do things that you wouldn't think they would do. I thought the only white people I see marching are the ones jumping on the buses and coming down from New Jersey, but that was just probably a small piece of a number of white kids that lived in Iowa or maybe the city of Dubuque that got involved in a lot of the things that were going on in the South during that time. —Dozier Jones



*I knew Chicago was on fire in '68. I didn't hear it myself, but it was rumored and reported that when Dr. King was assassinated one of the white students was running on the floor saying the wicked witch was dead. So I knew Chicago was set afire. I knew Detroit was burning in '67. I knew there had been conflicts, I mean serious confrontations down in the South. But Dubuque was isolated from all that. In my freshman year my residential counselor at Severance, one of my classmates - I found it out about forty years later - had actually participated in the march in Selma. I didn't know anyone else who had been connected to Dubuque and had been involved in civil rights activity. There could have been, but I didn't know them. —Ozell Hudson*



*Dr. Samuel Johnson (center) with high school students. Presbyterian Historical Society, Presbyterian Church (USA) (Philadelphia)*

*I believe there were like between 15 to 20 black students of a population of over 1000. I had been very comfortable being around an all-white environment and multi-culture and mixed environment. When I got to Dubuque I was like “so here we go again. As more black kids came on, their experiences were totally*

*different and unique from mine. They started recruiting a lot of kids from the South, and some of my fraternity brothers had never been in a school with other white kids, much less a white teacher. I mean they were all black kids and black teachers. —Paul Clayton*

*The University of Dubuque was a turning point in my life. I had a opportunity to go to a black college, but I was afraid to go South. Being brought up in Chicago I do not think I was strong enough to deal with that southern stuff. So Dubuque was the place for me to go to do what I wanted to do. They showed me what I wanted to do. That was very important to me. —William Walker*

*Alice Stubblefield is from Georgia. She was part of a group that came up from the South, a place called Thomasville, Georgia. And there were several others, I can't remember all their names that were a part of that program. I forget the exact name of the foundation, but they were going after bright kids out of the South that could assimilate into or they felt could assimilate into the white schools in the North. There were kids that went to Simpson College. My good friend Nathan Jenkins went to the University of Wisconsin. My high school buddy, Art Powell, went to Purdue. That was all spurred on by the Presbyterian Foundation and Dr. Sam Johnson. —Dozier Jones*

*I think what happened in the '60s when the Civil Rights Movement started, the Presbyterian Church made a concerted effort on a lot of levels to address the issue of race. They created a Commission on Race and Religion, the denomination did. My father was a member of that from the beginning and Eugene Carson Blake, who was the stated Clerk, the CEO of the national church body, was very much involved. He went to civil rights demonstrations and other things. There were a lot of efforts. So it was natural given the University's receptivity, given my father's passion and given the environment for the time, these three forces really came together to*

*create the opportunity for Dubuque to serve during the '60s and early '70s a much larger percent of African Americans than you would have anticipated for a school in Iowa. —John Couchman*

*I felt welcomed. There was not a point where I felt not welcomed. The town was different. We were up here on the hill. We were kind of in a different world. Dubuque had three African American families. They lived on Ninth Street going down. Those families lived behind those billboards in difficult housing. There wasn't any African American presence here. I had a car after my sophomore year, and for kind of Sunday afternoon giggles we would look in the paper and see where houses were for rent. We would take a look at them and see how people shuddered when we knocked on the door. So it was very different. We did not have too many issues. We would walk to the movie theater. Then the movie theater was downtown on one of the main street. You would come back. You would have some hooligans that would drive by and yell the word "nigger" as you were walking up the street. When I first got here, I did not know anybody. I did not know the other freshmen. There was a barber, and I needed a haircut. I realized when the guy made the first move that he never, ever cut an African American's hair. That was the last time I went to a barber in Dubuque. —James Martin*

*I cannot remember one incident during my four years that involved students with any type of racial tension. On campus you were totally accepted. You got into the town of Dubuque—that was an entirely different situation. We cut our own hair because there were no black barbers. I did eventually meet one black man that lived in Dubuque, but there were very few blacks that lived in Dubuque. They were all kind of down toward the river, if I remember correctly. I'm Roman Catholic and I had some guys that I knew that attended Loras College, which was a men's college, and they were African American. They attempted to go to mass at one of the little churches and were turned away at the door,*

*even after they identified themselves as being Loras students. The summer after my junior year there was some construction being done on campus, an addition to the back of McCormick gym and building of some dorms. I and some other guys - through the help of President Couchman - could get jobs that summer on construction crew. At first we were going to live off campus, and there was an advertisement for an apartment available for this summer not that far from campus. We went over there to inquire about it and were told it was not available. We had noticed that apartment continued to have a "For Rent" for quite a bit after we had inquired about it. —William Stubblefield*

*My father told me personally that he went to college in Des Moines at a school called Des Moines University that no longer exists. At the time it was a Baptist school. He attended there in the '20s and he often talked about the fact that one of his college classmates and football teammates was an African American man who went on for a PhD in Chemistry and to have a very successful career. The way that he was treated on the football field and among classmates and as they traveled around the Midwest to various cities made a tremendous impression on my father, for whatever reason, and he never forgot it. He often talked about that as kind of being the thing that centered him on this issue. The other thing through looking at what he said in many of his talks and written communications on this subject, he had an unyielding belief that all human beings were the children of God. His Christian faith would not allow him any room for any prejudice or bigotry on any level for any group of people because he literally believed that every person had the same value because they were the children of God. The issue of race was always prominent, but as the civil rights struggle became more evident after World War II in the '50s and '60s, it was just natural for him to gravitate toward that, both because of his own personal experience in college and because of his Christian faith. —John Couchman*

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*It turned out to be quite a fascinating place, Dubuque, a beautiful city. When I got there back in '62 that there were five black families out of 60,000 people that lived in that town. As we got more black students on campus, people wanted to know where they could get a haircut. The white barbershops either didn't know how to cut your hair or you didn't have the courage to go in and see if they would be willing to learn. Then the black girls: if they didn't have their black girlfriends doing their hair they didn't want to find a beautician. So we became friends with some of the younger blacks in Dubuque, but I never had any real huge problems.*  
—Dozier Jones

*I cannot recall one situation that was racial during those four years involving the students. I, for political reason, had Governor Ross Barnett come up to talk because I figured you bring evil out to the light, but what I did not anticipate was how negative the townspeople were who came to campus to hear him and to listen to the UD professors debate with the Governor, and how they literally shouted down the professor because they challenged his racial positions. It became ugly to be quite honest.* —William Stubblefield

*We did have a number of convocations where we had pro-integrationists that came to speak because that was a topic of the day. Certainly he [Ross Barnett] was an opposing view. Another speaker was Lynn Sloan Coffman, a Freedom Rider, a Presbyterian minister, and had marched at Selma. I knew the history of what was going on. Was I an active participant in the civil rights? No. Should I have been? Probably yes. But from my vantage point in Racine, Wisconsin, I did not see the reality of the situation. It almost looked like what you were seeing on TV was somewhat not part of your reality.* —James Martin

*I can recall going to the drug store, which was down the street, and a little girl yanked at her mommy's coat and said, "Mommy, look!*

*Look!" and pointed to me, and was as if she had never seen a black person before. Most blacks that you saw were from the University of Dubuque, Clark, or Loras. It was new because I have never been someplace where I was in such a minority.* —Joyce Murray

*I can tell you a kind of humorous story that has always stuck with me. I was sitting on campus one day and a little girl sat down next to me and started talking with me. She must have been maybe six, and she asked me where I was from. I said, "New York City." She said, "It must be very hot in New York City." I looked at her and said, "What?" and kinda said, "Where did that come from?" She said, "Because when I sit out in the sun I get dark and you are so much darker. It must be very hot." But it was a lovely conversation and she was lovely. I can't remember her name and I wound up being a babysitter for her a couple of times just because whenever she saw me, I became one of her favorite people. She had never seen a person, you know, a person of color before. It showed that she was open at least to the experience.* —Susan Bellinger

*I remember a terrible story, but I'll tell it because it's reflective of the ignorance that was in Dubuque at the time. I remember when I was in the fourth grade at Irving Elementary School I had a teacher. I don't remember the context of it, but in the course of the day she was talking about that she'd grown up in Des Moines or something and there'd been a lot of blacks in Des Moines or whatever. I remember her making the comment that blacks didn't have to have screens on their windows because flies and mosquitoes couldn't bite them. I just remember being horrified and going home and talking to my parents about it. I'm sure they might of talked to her. In retrospective in thinking that there's probably 25 kids in that room, I was horrified that the other 24 probably believed it and how many years did it take for them to know better, some of them maybe never.* —John Couchman

*In those days I didn't venture off campus. One, I didn't have any transportation, and if you wanted to go off campus you had to walk, and you weren't going to walk downtown Dubuque by the river. You might go that Route 20. There was a bar there we use to go to and have some beers or stuff, but that is as far as we went. That first semester I may have gone to downtown Dubuque twice. In those days I think the population in Dubuque was like 55,000 and I think the total black population was 25. Ironically enough, of the 25 I think they all lived on the exact same block. It was unbelievable. —Paul Clayton*

*A couple of times I was out running around with the fraternity. We were going to places we probably shouldn't have gone anyway. We ran into some issues with race where someone would say they were not going to serve me, and right away Phi Omicron was ready to take the place down. I wouldn't let that happen. —Dozier Jones*

*Dozier Jones and his fiancé Kathy had gone down to the theater in Dubuque. Kathy had an extremely fair complexion. If you go through the yearbook, she looked Hispanic. When they came out of the theater they were harassed by these thugs. Dozier is very dark in complexion and they thought he was with a white girl. I wasn't there, but the story told that he went back in to get Kathy and they called back to the University to contact our fraternity brothers. At that time a number of the star football and basketball players were members of Phi Omicron fraternity, so these were not little gentlemen. They came down to "intercede," I'll put it that way. They came down to kick behind. That was not the only time my fraternity had interceded when one of their black members was treated poorly. —William Stubblefield*

*I had a white young lady when I was a freshman walk up to me. She wanted to rub my skin. She asked whether or not it was going to rub off or what and just see what your skin feels like. In retrospective, I would look and say that some of the issues that*

*were prevalent in the South were clearly prevalent in the North. You had some of the same dynamics. Going around Iowa, there were plenty of places where people looked at you strange. As a freshman I played basketball. We went to Mt. Pleasant, Iowa where Iowa Wesleyan College was. We played at William Penn that night and we were going to stay there. We went to this hotel. They had a black hitching post boy outside. I told the basketball coach that I was not staying in this hotel. He said, "Jim, you have to. We do not have any other places to stay and we already paid for your room. You have to stay there." I said, "I am not staying there with this hitching post black boy out front." I just thought that was very derogatory. He finally talked me into staying there. Then next morning I did not eat breakfast. I took my breakfast money and went to the hardware store and bought a can of spray paint. The coach participated. When we left the hotel to play our game, the basketball players, they were all white except me, stood around the hitching post and I painted it white. We got on the bus and drove out. —James Martin*

*There was a Caucasian lady, Mimi Vernon. I will never forget her as long as I have breath and I am living. She was from North Carolina. Her husband was a doctor. Often she would come to campus and get us. Her husband and son died in their private plane. But when I went to Mimi's house, there was always this picture of this African American man. I said, "Mimi, who is that?" She said, "That is my father" or "my daddy." She was so blonde until her eyelashes were blonde. I said, "That is not your daddy." She said, "That is the daddy that I know, Chestina." I said, "What are you talking about?" Then later on towards we got very, very close. She said her dad [was not there], and whatever this man's name was would always be the one she could talk to about anything. He worked for them. She said, "So that is the closest thing I know a father should be." Mimi would take me to different places throughout Iowa like different church groups and stuff. —Chestina Mitchell Archibald*



Even on the University campus there was unrest at times, especially during the late '60s. It was all about Black Power and all this stuff and I remember the blacks on the university campus formed a group called the Black Presidium that allowed us to speak out and be heard in a civil type of way. We would meet with the spokesperson. I was just part of the group. I didn't really have a major role. They'd meet with the president of the university at the time. I can't remember what the issue was that we wanted at the time, but I remember we had a sit-in in order to have whatever it was done. We weren't going to riot. We were a peaceful group. I think that once we formed that group the University listened to us. I'm not certain we accomplished what we set out to do. That was just a sign of times. People were doing that at different universities.

—Joyce Murray

In the whole time I was at Dubuque as far as student demonstrations I mean involving the entire student population, the white and black kids, it was to protest the firing of the wrestling coach Moco Mercer. That's just about how socially active Dubuque's campus was at the time. Now in terms of Black students there were students that came in from Chicago, Milwaukee, New York that were much more informed than I was. They had grown up in urban areas so they knew about Malcolm. I didn't. I knew about Dr. King. I'm talking about around my freshman year. So I learned from those students. Some of those black students, they realized the importance of the things that were going on. They had participated in some civil rights activities. So there were certain



#### Gregory Challenges Establishment Highlights of Gregory's Speech

"There is nothing wrong with most people that a new heart wouldn't fix."  
 "We have in the United States today moral pollution, not air pollution."  
 "America is sick, not dead."  
 "We must use our energies to heat the 'Capitalistic System' behind the constitution, not in front of it."  
 "The United States runs, owns, and operates Saigon."  
 "If Democracy is so good, why are we running around the world shoving it down people's throat with a gun?"  
 "Most people are so busy today trying to make a living, that they forget how to live."  
 "Institutions (educational) indoctrinate, not educate."  
 "Black and White are not colors, they are attitudes."  
 "Stop being a male which can only reproduce, and become a man which can make the world better."  
 "Being young doesn't mean anything except the way you think."  
 "You can't argue for non-violence with a constitution which permits carrying guns."

## THE QUE

University of Dubuque  
 November 22, 1968  
 Dubuque, Iowa  
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### APO Sends Delegates To Conference

Right members of Pi Beta chapter, Alpha Phi Omega, attend of the Sectional Conference, held at Simpson College on November 16. Nine of the ten active APO chapters in Iowa were represented: Iowa State, Northern Iowa, Loras, Greenland, Simpson, Luther, Upper Iowa, Drake and Dubuque. Representing the University of Dubuque were Carl Bostels, Phil Bostels, Peter Bostels, and Bill Bostels.

### Expanded Curriculum for Second Term

The University of Dubuque has announced the addition of several new courses for second semester, which extends from January 15 through May 12.

A faculty and program exchange program with Loras will be held second semester. Associate professor of Religion at U.D., Dr. Roger Woods, will teach Contemporary Protestant Thought at Loras College at the University, a course entitled Contemporary Roman Catholic Theologians will be taught by Dr. (Fr.) John C. Meyer, who is an instructor in Theology at Loras. The thoughts and contributions of contemporary theologians in Afro-American History at the University next semester. The significance of Africanism and the effect of African cultural heritage upon American society will be the main concern of this course; an emphasis will be placed upon the Black man's reaction to American slavery and his cultural, economic, social, and political life to the present day.

The schedule of Adult Education Classes to be held at the University next semester has been made; these classes are open to the non-

degrees of protest on campus. The black students would basically stand and actually face away from the flag and give the salute that was given like during the '68 Olympics. When the song by James Brown was very popular, "I'm Black and I'm Proud," it used to be played in the student union, the underground portion over there by Atchison Hall. There used to be a jukebox in there, I mean an old time jukebox that had records, and students would basically play that song and form

a kind of human chain and circle that particular room singing "I'm Black and I'm Proud." That was very important in those days. The only black speaker that came on campus was Dick Gregory. At the time he was a comedian. He later became recognized as a humanitarian. I think he was acceptable to the Dubuque students because he was a comedian, but he also had a social message.

—Ozell Hudson

The thing that I learned most from Dubuque is to know the difference between when someone critiques what you are or doing as opposed to criticizing it. I learned this from Mr. Robinson which was in the area of Speech and Drama. He could only do what he knew to do. I think they gave out two or there freshmen speech contest little things. William Stubblefield got one and I got one. Since I was a Speech and Drama major, he would say, "Chestina, you need to enunciate more." Remember I won a speech contest and won most of them at school. Coming from South Georgia, you can say "swingin" as opposed to "swinging." So he was not criticizing me, he was critiquing my speech in order that when I left him and the school I would speak "general American" as

opposed to a distinct Southern drawl or accent. I was mad. On the other hand that was good, but often persons want you to live out their perverted illusions of you. Since I was a Speech and Drama major, he did not want me to graduate without having been in a play. It was always safe for him to put me as an assistant director. He said that "at least I want her to be in one play before she leaves." He worked all summer looking for a play that he thought I could play a role in. So I would try out for the leading role then since I was a senior. He said, "No, the public could not accept you in that role." It was a comedy. He thought I could play a comical maid. It was Spring of 1966. I told him one thing, "I worked on my granddaddy's farm and I was not a maid in South Georgia. I was not coming up to Iowa acting like one." So I did a brief cutting of that play *Green Pastures* and went all over town getting all the black folk that was at Loras, Clarke...to be in this play. We pulled it off. The play was held in Peter Commons.

—Chestina Mitchell Archibald

I had a little run-in with one of my history instructors at the University when he was lecturing and he said he never read of any unhappy slaves. Of course, I had to call him out on that. I did not have to do that, but my arrogance made me do that. I should not have done it. Dr. Couchman told me to apologize. I went to apologize. But to tell a negro that slaves were all happy, you know that I would not sit in that room and put up with that foolishness. Dr. Couchman said that I could have handled it in a different way, and he was right. I should not have raised my hand to tell the instructor that he was not telling the truth. So he corrected and Dr. Coit corrected me on that.

—William Walker



I was not a card player until I came to college, although I learned very quickly how to play bid whist. Probably most black kids know how to play bid whist. Probably most white kids don't. Certainly the kids from the South all knew how to play bid whist. In the early years, we did eat together, the African American students, and we did go down into the underground area below Peters Commons. We played cards right after dinner until 7:00 or when everyone took off to go study. John Knox Coit did come to us. I remembered specifically that he came to us and said that people were concerned that all the African American students ate together. Why was it? Was it whether we felt unwelcomed or we thought we needed to stay in a group? He wanted to know why we in the Underground all stuck together. We were all around the central table. There was only one table. We played "Rise and Fly," which means if you win, you stay. If you lose, you are out of here. If you take all the tricks, it is called a "Boston." If someone has a hand that they know they are going to take all the tricks, as my good friend Dozier Jones taught us how to do it, you put your cards down in a certain way that your knuckles hit and everybody knows "Here we go!" So we made a lot of noise. People were somewhat concerned about it. So he asked us why we did it. We said that we were the only ones

who know how to play bid whist and nobody has asked us. We had a number of kids out of New York who were not afraid of African Americans and were not standoffish. "So hey, tell them to come over. We will give them a lesson before we take their money at night." We did not play for money, not in the Student Union. We did play for money in some of our rooms. That part of it we had to kind of explain what the dynamic was: one-we did not feel ostracized; two-we ate together because we wanted to; and three-we played cards 'cause we were only playing bid whist.



*Did I know how to play bridge? Yes, because I played with my friends and played some other card games with guys that I played ball with. That part of it was the only time where anybody really asked us about how we were doing socially. We did well socially. Did African Americans date whites? As a rule, no, not much. In 1963, Catholics did not date Protestants. Protestants did not date Catholics. That was the way the world was. Blacks did not date or marry whites. Loving v. Virginia was not until 1967. It was the first time that the Supreme Court said it was not illegal for blacks to marry whites. It was a time change. We are kind of in the middle of it. So there wasn't much of an issue. Did we go out with whites? Yeah, we did. Nobody ever said anything to us. I have no idea what was said in dorms about it. It happened.*

—James Martin

*I will never forgot that some of the Caucasian students who would ask, "Why are you all sitting together?" I would say something like, "Why don't you join us?" My grandfather had a phrase that has carried me farther than any formal training. That one phrase was "Keep turning it." Whatever the subject matter, if you keep turning it, your tunnel vision will move to a greater angle. This is in religion and this is in everything. —Chestina Mitchell Archibald*

*There was some racial unrest there. I don't remember all of it. But there was some situations. We were involved in dealing with those with the administration, as well with the students. I was pretty involved with that. Then I was also involved in bringing additional students of color to the University of Dubuque. My brother ended up coming there. I had a couple of other friends and acquaintances from Chicago that ended up attending there. So the word got out about the University of Dubuque. It made it really nice because it was a driving distance from Chicago, three to four hours. Back in those days, it was a nice drive in terms of the scenery.*

—Brenda (Bailey) Lett

*You think about it, it is hard to hate someone if you have a working knowledge of them and they of you. You can hate someone you do not know easily. Not so much if you are side-by-side doing things and all of that. You can do it. But it is more difficult to do. That was pretty much of the goal. We got the opportunity to co-exist and co-mingle, and talk about different things. One of the biggest events happened during our freshman year. In our dorm we were sitting there studying and my roommate had gotten out for something. He came back said, "Man, you would not believe what those crazy white guys are doing. They are knocking on doors." We just caught our little kits from the bookstore. They were knocking and people would answer. They sprayed them with shaving cream. I said, "You are kidding" and he said "No!" I said, "Do you think that they would come to our door," and he said, "They might!" So we took one of our trunks and stood it up behind the door. I said, "If they come, I am going to get on the trunk and you just fling the door open and I will hit them from the top." Sure enough, we went back to studying, and they were kicking down on the door. I got in position. He got on the other side of the door and flung it open. I started spraying from the top as they looked up. At the end of that, we all got together and laughed about it, the whole thing.*

—John Taylor

*We had always had a TGIF Thank God Its Friday dance down in the lower part of Peters Commons. Because my mom owned a restaurant, I knew about songs on the jukebox. When the man came, I told him he had to change those records. He said he did not have anything that was on the list that I had given him. So when Shirley [a classmate] went to Chicago, I said "You bring me back the 45s." So I stood and waited for the man to get there and I said, "I have the songs to be put on the jukebox." Do you know music can revolutionize a campus. That is what happened. Everybody started changing, having a better time or a different time on Friday evenings. I think that they enjoyed it more. Songs from Chubby Checker, "Doing the Monkey," being from Georgia... "Georgia, Georgia," "Sitting on the Dock of the Bay." Yes, African*

Americans songs of the day. I liked some of the Beatles. We knew how to do line dances. When you do line dances, everyone dances. Have you watched something like "Soul Train"? When we taught them [white students] how to do the "Soul Train" stuff, it relieved them. —Chestina Mitchell Archibald

My sophomore, junior and senior years I stayed in Dubuque for the summers. One of those summers I used to hang out with the rugby players, and most of the rugby players used to work or live in this house that was right next to Van Vliet or just down the street a big white house. I can still see it. They used to go out and drink beer and party on Saturdays and they always asked me to come with them, and I was like, "No, I can't do it." But one Saturday I did go, and we went to the Dubuque Flats for beers – some bar – and it was the first experience I'd ever had like this where the bartender refused to serve me. I thought I was going to die that night because the rugby players were ready to jump over the bar at the bartender. He eventually poured a draft and we had a beer and we left, but that was the first time I had really sort of experienced blatant – I wouldn't even call it hate today – but blatant ignorance or not knowing that that's not how you treat people. —Eugene Hawkins

I was involved in the Black Presidium, and every year we did our Black Awareness week or month. I would be responsible for the fashion show. So that kind of kept me busy. I think that kind of kept me there because I understood the importance of helping all the other black students that were coming along and I just wanted to be there for them. The person which helped me was Arnold Coleman. He had really nurtured me and showed me how to help the others along. It wasn't this thing that we didn't want to be associated with white people or we felt we were better. We just wanted to be embraced because we wanted to be at the school. —Cynthia (Veal) Slater

I think on campus and in town and at the other two schools there may have been a total of 60 African American students. There weren't a lot of students, but I will tell you that there was a lot of peer pressure, and I just remember walking into Peters Commons into the dining room and a lot of times I'd opt to sit with whomever I was going to lunch with or dinner with. Back in the '70s if you're African American there was kind of this silent expectation that you sat at the same table. I didn't do that. It was one of the most uncomfortable things for the first year that I've ever experienced, and then I just realized that I have to identify who I am. It was a growing experience for me. —Eugene Hawkins

There was a campus mother, Mother Barbara Smeltzer. I love Mother Barbara. She made me feel like I was her son. I remember being in the cold in November. Can't go home for Thanksgiving because Florida kids, we only get home twice a year, that was Christmas break and the summer. We couldn't afford it any other time. I remember Thanksgiving break she came and brought me a box of cereal, noodles... I mean, I was so shocked. I couldn't believe it. I was like, "Man, this is awesome!" For me, as a freshman, that solidified that I was in the right place. The second time I got off the plane, and that time I landed in Dubuque airport, I dealt with some racial issues. That was hard for me. I was being called the N-word. I was being oppressed because I was dating a white woman who actually is my wife today, and we persevered through all of that together. When you have people who see past color, like Barbara, who see past cultural differences and everything else, oh man, it makes a home a home. I believe that Barbara has such a great heart. It's just genuine. —Mikelange Olbel

In the movie *Roots* African Americans were called the "N-word," and that transferred from the lips of the Caucasians, athletes, to the African American males because that's all they knew. The African American students, they weren't accepting that. Its like, "There's no way in the world you going to call me that. We



*fighting.” And that’s exactly what they did. The dorms went up in fights all the time. So if you trade with me on the field and, you know, something happens, whisper that name. Ah, it’s on and poppin’.* —Preston Fleming



*Sol Butler Memorial Center on the corner of Algona and Grace Streets.*

*It was times that I really couldn’t focus on studying, on my studies, because of what was going on with how we were being treated. When I became a senior, it was a threat that they were going to tear down the Black Presidium building. I can’t even remember what it was called. Maybe it was called the Sol Butler Center. That’s when I kinda championed the community and anybody that could support us to give assistance to keep that center. Well, it’s the*

*only remote identity we had as a group of people. It was a lot of innuendo about what we were doing in the facility, which was all incorrect because I was the only one that had the key to the facility. It was just a building to study. We could go there and cook potluck dinners. It was just a place for us to go to feel a little at home because the different dormitories were even just segregated. Like, you had your white fraternities and sororities - they had their own little corners - and you had us in between that. I was in Severance Hall. I was the only African American female on that floor with other sororities. It was kind of like I had my own apartment because I didn’t have a roommate. Most of the people did. That’s why I loved that dorm.* —Cynthia (Veal) Slater

*You couldn’t go to any clubs. I don’t think there were any clubs. Clarke, which was all-girl school at the time, that’s where we would go. If they would have a party we would kind of go in a group. We would go over there because we only have two girls at our school. We go over there and go to their dances. They’d kick us out after a while ‘cause we try to sneak in there. The locals weren’t use to us, so you’d have people staring at you, saying things to you that they weren’t supposed to be saying. So you had to pretty much stay close to campus at that time, because you pretty much never knew what was going to happen. If you went anywhere you kind of had to go in groups. I remember my roommate, Tyrone, he was a quarterback, and he had gone to visit some girl over at Clarke. He got chased back to the dormitory. He got back and his clothes were ripped. He was jumping fences and all kind of stuff because the local guys saw him out there all by himself. They chased him all the way back to the University of Dubuque.*

—Preston Fleming

*We came in the early ‘80s, and what was shocking to me was that there was still a lot racial tension back then. So the small group that we had always stuck together, like a little buddy system kind of thing. My first contact with racism was in Dubuque, Iowa. I was going to the cleaners on Grandview. I stayed at Atchison dorm and*

*I was walking up to the cleaners and a white male was coming in the opposite direction of me and he stopped me. He asked, "Can I ask you a question?" I was thinking he was gonna ask for some directions or something like that, and I was like "Okay, yes, you can ask me a question." He said, "What if someone called you a nigger?" It kind of blew me away that he was literally standing three feet in front of my face to ask me something like that. No one ever asked me that. I never had to worry about that. And when he asked me, he had this strangest look on his face, so I didn't know if he was gonna taunt me or attack me or what. I was so scared that day, and I kind of blew him off and kept walking real fast. I went into the cleaners and there was a lady there. She was like, "What's your problem?" 'cause she seen the fear on me and I told her what just happened, so she kind of calmed me down. She waited and allowed me to call some of my friends back on campus. The guys come up to the cleaners to get me. I told them I didn't want to go back out there because I didn't know where he was. So that was my first real contact with racism. —Donna Cooper*

*No one was in that house doing anything because I was the only one who had the key. We didn't go in the house every day. I'll tell you now, we didn't go in that house, even maybe once a month because it was nothing there. It was cold. It didn't have any heat. So we would try to get together. They didn't make the house a place where we really even wanted to be. The furniture was old. It was always cold. So it wasn't an ongoing thing where we was in and out of that location. But had they embraced us, they would've helped us to get that house to be a place where students could go. They didn't understand why we had a designated place. No one else had a designated place. But they did have a designated place because you'd have one, what do you call those buildings? Dormitories. If you have a dormitory, you have all your sororities in that place. They are amongst the group they wanna be categorized in. We didn't have that. So it's not that we wanted to be special or different. We just wanted a place! —Cynthia (Veal) Slater*

*The only culture club that I was affiliated with while I was at Dubuque was the Black Presidium. That's another thing that got me so on to Dubuque. The recruiters and the administrators, they really emphasized the fact that "we have a minority culture center for you guys," and I guess that was their way of making us comfortable so we wouldn't be so homesick or whatever and a place to go just to be around other people with our backgrounds. They wanted to make the minority students more comfortable. —Donna Cooper*

*Occasionally we would gather in someone's room if we had the room solely to ourselves, but you can only fit so many people in a room. The Student Union, underneath the cafeteria, occasionally we would gather there because they had a little snack bar and they had a television that was going 24 hours a day. But mainly it was the Sol Butler House. The fraternities and sororities had a*



*On the front porch of the Sol Butler House.*



location, and we really didn't have anywhere to come together and gather or speak openly or share experiences and things like that. Just a support system, the Sol Butler House was that. During the weekends we would prepare meals for us. That was our place to go study. It was our place to just go relax. And then it was taken away, without reason. I believe one of the ladies had a key for it. It was always secured. If my memory serves me right it was sophomore year and we arrive to go open the door. Locks were changed, and then found out that it was given to the Aviation Department. No one told anyone. It was a surprise. You go to use it, and it was locked. No forewarning whatsoever. No answer. Whatever information related to Sol Butler from the house, I think they took it to the gym. —Darren Glover



*James R. Riddick (center)*

We were brought from these inner cities and put on this island, like with no life raft, you know? Nothing to save us but ourselves, so that's why the Presidium was so important. That's the only thing we identified with because that said these are the Black people at the school and we want to learn and we want to do things so you don't have to be bothered with us. Just let us be together. We all had other Caucasian friends and Malaysian friends. Some African students were there. I can't remember any other ethnic group but the Malaysians. They were really nice. We had fun with them. So the Presidium just kept us sane. But then we had to fight for the Sol Butler Center. The space that we were occupying was this one house on a corner. It wasn't like this big place anyway. It didn't have any updates of anything in it. It was just a spot. So to try and take that from us... The day after I graduated, I came back up there. It was flattened. The house was gone. They made parking out of it, just that quick. I'm the one who was the president and I guess the one who was raising all the hell, as people would say, but as soon as I graduated they flattened it. It was the funniest thing ever. So they just waited till I left! —Cynthia (Veal) Slater

I was in a fraternity, Mug Siga Beta. At the time we were the largest on campus. I did run into some bad elements in the community. Whatever happened, to be honest, the University was large enough for me during that time that I was always protected. I always had my fraternity brothers. I always had the professors. I always had the ROTC Community. I always had a support base. I always had the National Guard guys who I was working with. So I was never alone. I was never isolated from that perspective. —James R. Riddick

I remember one time I went to Hy-Vee and I had my kids. I have five kids now, but then I only had three, and I was pregnant with my fourth. I had a lady who was really rude to me. She was just calling me out because I was black and I'm "probably getting assistance" and I've "got all these kids" that I have. "No husband

around,” even though I was clearly married. Clearly had a ring on, but he wasn’t with me. She was some random lady. She wasn’t talking to me, but to someone, “Well, look at this girl with all these kids. She’s probably getting assistance. She’s probably, you know, on housing. And she’s probably getting all this stuff. Look at all these kids, probably have all these dads, and she’s by herself.” For me, I just went on about my business. There’s no need for me to engage and give her any satisfaction in me getting upset or trying to prove her wrong or right with my attitude. —Ericka Lessears

The thing about race relations at Dubuque: students, teachers, administrators were wonderful at an individual level; there just was nothing that was going on systemic. The only thing that I felt and later realized had a more institutionalized impact was that Dubuque offered a course in African American history in my senior year. It wasn’t that the professor was great, but the literature was great. The required reading included Lerone Bennett’s *Before the Mayflower* and for the first time I realized who I was, how the NAACP all fit together, how the African civilizations of Mali and Songhay and the slave trade and the Middle Passage and the antebellum South, slavery, and the Reconstruction period... It was the first time in my life I got the big picture. Before that I just thought that black people were always here. I didn’t know where we came from, but I just knew that we were always here and we were different and we were not accepted. That was about it. I didn’t know the history. I didn’t know the culture. I was ignorant. —Ozell Hudson

I came to UD on a whim essentially because I was trying to get someplace to develop myself, to be on my own and I didn’t really care where it was. When I got to UD, they were in transition. They were on the upswing of trying to recover from nearly closing, and they had made a really intentional decision that I don’t think they really fully realized. I think they’re really finally starting to see what that decision can lead them to be. They’ve always been

the university where they advocated for people who are less likely to be given a chance, and that’s part of UD’s history. That’s really why they were founded. Somehow or another that got mushed and muddled and when it came time to figure out, “Ok, how are we going to keep our doors open,” they made a decision. “Ok, we’re going to go back to why we were founded. Go back to being the place where the kid who is probably not the valedictorian of his school or just is looking for an opportunity to pursue higher education, but may just not know why. You know, those students of color who right now people are saying there’s just no other place for them or at least they seem like their possibilities are limited, and we’re going to actively target those kids that ‘no one else has given an opportunity.’” And now they’re seeing the fulfillment of that commitment. —Andre Lessears







# LIFE AFTER UD

*I still go back to Dubuque two or three times a year since I graduated in '87. I come back every year on the Homecoming. I missed only three in the past 30-some years, so I think I have a good track record. I have good friends that still live in town.*

—Donna Cooper

*When I received my degree, I did my student teaching at a high school there in Dubuque from September 1966 to January 1967. Then after I finished that I didn't go directly into teaching because I really wanted to go into the labs. I became a microbiologist at University of Illinois Research in Chicago. I was prepared for that, but I found out that that's really not what I really wanted to do because I'm a people person. I had the background for teaching, so I went into teaching, working with students, exactly what I wanted to do.* —Alice (Thomas) Stubblefield

*After college, I taught one year in Epworth High School. Then I went to Howard Law School from 1969 to 1971. Then moved to Chicago. Going to school at Dubuque helped me be relaxed around all diverse groups. I think that was instrumental. When my husband got a job in a major law firm, they wanted to make sure all the wives could communicate. So that [education at UD] gave an edge. We stayed there about two years and he started a law firm in Nashville, Tennessee. I never practiced law. Then I started working in the Governor's office in Tennessee. From there I was running from the call to preach. When you run from the call to preach, you have a lot of Jonah experiences. "Belly of the whale" might seem mild in comparison. I had a host of those. I said, "Hey God, my arms are too short to box with you," then ended up going to seminary. After that went back to Nashville, got a job in campus ministry and then the chaplain and stayed there [Fisk University] until retirement.* —Chestina Mitchell Archibald

*I went into law enforcement. There was a time when I believe the city was trying to recruit minorities in to kind of balance things out. I was approached to come in and be a police officer in Dubuque. I put some thought into it. The person I spoke to, they told me to think about it. I'd already had five years or less in the department I was with and I had kind of established myself. That would have been a hard sell. I had different experiences just in my department. I was the first African American officer they had. That was a different venue. My experiences in Dubuque helped me with that, so it wasn't just a shock. I knew how to deal with it. Now that I think about it, those first three years were hard, but I adjusted. I thought at the time, there are a lot of things going on there, plus I was looking at it from the standpoint of the police officers in Dubuque. Details weren't explained to me. Me coming in as an outsider and maybe foregoing some of the testing process that they would typically do just to bring in a minority, I didn't know how well they would take that and if they would be open to it or not. It's bad enough if you deal with the bad element of the community. That should be your main focus, and the protection of law-abiding citizens. You don't want to take that if there's some animosity from co-workers for whatever reason you're hired. Plus dealing with a community that you already know from experience that there's racial tension. I didn't want to tackle that.*

—Darren Glover

*When we first moved here it was school, it was work, and back home, I mean, that was it, and we went to the mall and maybe Walmart. I don't think we ever went downtown. I just heard, you know, stories about it. It was a really isolated experience. There was a point we were here for at least two months and we hadn't heard a police or fire siren. "Are there police here?" I didn't see them. We didn't hear the sirens. I mean, what's here? And people were like scary friendly, like they were interrogating you. Like,*



*“Where are you from? Who you with?” Trying to feel out why are you here. You don’t fit the people who are usually here. We were just joking about this last night: if you see another person of color in Dubuque or on campus there’s this instant “I have to know that person. They have to be my friend because they may be the last black person I ever see in Dubuque.” And now that’s not the case. It’s not odd, whereas when we first lived here it was odd for me to see another person who was black and me not know them. There was this impulse to go and introduce myself and say, “Hey, I’m having dinner at my house just because I met you. You’re going to be my new friend because I see you and I want to know you.” Now there’s not that draw. Now I work downtown and I see random black people all the time, like “oh, I don’t know that person. Ok, that’s good.” —Andre Lessears*

*I went to the University of Iowa for a CLEO Council and Legal Education Opportunities program. It was a pre-law program for black students from around the country. It wasn’t just for Blacks, but there were Native Americans, Hispanics or Latinos, and the program was kind of like a pre-law program where you spent the six to eight weeks taking law school courses. I had already been accepted to the University of Iowa Law School and there were other people who had been accepted at Notre Dame and other schools around the country. They would participate in this program and make them better prepared for law school. For those who had not been accepted it would help them to gain admission. I did that for that summer of ‘69 and I had the opportunity. One of the guys that was there who is still my friend today, he was from Madison, Wisconsin, and he had invited me to go home with him for a Fourth of July and I did. I fell in love with the University of Wisconsin’s campus for that weekend. I applied for law school there, lets see, it was after July fourth, and then I got accepted and started school there August 8. Within a month of applying I managed to switch from Iowa to University of Wisconsin. I spent four years in Iowa at Dubuque and it was great, but I wanted*

*something different since I hadn’t really seen much geographically.*  
—Ozell Hudson

*After UD I received my Army commission earlier than most and went to a lot of different places. I retired four years ago as a Lieutenant Colonel Promotable, which meant if I opted to stay in I would have been promoted to full Colonel. I got married and purchased a home. I decided to get out and spend more time with my family and also search for a civilian permanent job before the economy got a little rougher. I was trying to protect and be wise. Currently I am working within the Department of Homeland Security as a Program Management Analyst of full promotion, soon. —James R. Riddick*

*My major was English and Philosophy. My goal was to learn those two subjects and take that on to law school. I wanted to become a lawyer, because the people I admired were lawyers. That’s one thing and I knew that they had to be creative and go before the judge. You know, they make good money, some of the ones that I knew. I learned differently later, but my goal as a freshman was to learn English and Philosophy, go to law school, become this lawyer, and by time I reach thirty years old I wanted to make at least \$100,000 a year. That was a goal. I also set a goal that I didn’t want to have any kids, I didn’t want to be married, I didn’t want to do any of that until I got my career going. So I knew this before I got to Dubuque. At the age of 16, before I got to University of Dubuque, I got trained by a fellow by the name of S.B Fuller. He was instrumental in training Mary Kay and Mr. Johnson of Johnson & Johnson Products and a lot of other people. At 16 I worked for him over the summer as a door-to-door salesperson. I was a top teen seller. So by the time I got to the University of Dubuque, I had set some goals for myself. If I stayed the course, everything would work itself out. It was mainly due to that fact that my family made okay money. We weren’t middle class, but we were kind of blue collar. We did okay. I wanted to make money*

so I could be able to help my mom. Well, from the ages of 16 to 17 till now I've been self-employed. I've never had a job. Even going through school, when I went to Howard, I had my own agency for a network marketing company. And I've started businesses from scratch, built them up and sold them. Even today I have two businesses, but I've never had a job, so I've never punched a clock. I don't know what that's like. I learned at the age of 16 that someone had to create the job and someone had to work the job that was created. I had to look at who was the person who made the most money: the person who worked it or the person who created it? That person was who created it, so I always created work.

—Preston Fleming

I didn't finish at the University of Dubuque. I went on to National Lewis University and finished there. I've done pretty well. I did secure a job working for the board of education, and I taught for 39 years right here in Chicago. I didn't like science all through high school, but then I got to the university and I took five years of science. It was the University of Dubuque that really got me interested. I took geology. I taught science to my students.

—Joyce Murray

My non-profit, we work with diversion kids. I located my office in one of the ruralist areas that has one of the highest crime rates because I want to help save some kids. I used to watch my mom feed people when I was growing up, and they didn't pay her. She always taught me, "The biggest payment that I can get is knowing that I helped feed someone else's child." That taught me wonders. If I find out there's a kid in my program that didn't eat, I go to the phone and buy his family groceries. I still carry some of the very things I learned from childhood, and that was also what I was doing in Dubuque. We actually have a food program that we don't really publicize it because demand could get so high. We privately provide groceries to different families. Our non-profit is called Team Saving Our Youth. I founded it back in 2012. During that

time I was working for another non-profit so that I can gain that experience. During that time I was still feeding families. Every year we give away book bags with school supplies in there. We do HIV/AIDS awareness for the community. We work diligently with the court system so kids don't end up in prison. They have an educational opportunity to change their behaviors around. We provide substance abuse testing for the community to make sure parents are holding kids accountable. There's a wealth of stuff that we do. We're in the process of turning this organization into a mental health organization. We realize there are a lot of people with mental health problems and not getting the proper treatment for it. —Mikelange Olbel

My first promotion to any student who goes to college is join organizations, get yourself active in at least something. The people that you meet may not impact you now, but later on they will. The transition into the Dubuque community life was pretty smooth. At the point of maybe sophomore or junior year I started doing more of the volunteering within the community. I started meeting locals. Started building relationships with different businesses, so that was little checkmark, bookmark points for later on. "Ok, these are points I can touch on when I start expanding out in that area." It went pretty smoothly. I work with the Reengagement Program with the Dubuque Community School District. I work as a Reengagement Coach, and I work with students that are 16 to 21 that are at risk. I don't like the term, but they're dropouts. What I do is that I serve them by doing some outreach. The school gives me a list of whoever has dropped out, and I find them within the community and plug them whether to getting their diploma or physically going back to school or working with myself on-line or we can go towards the High SED route, which is the GED. It's a new programming that they're going through. I challenged myself to create my own name, create my own thing, and that's what this has become being here in Dubuque. It's become something I created. It became a lot bigger than myself simply because of the



people that I met and the impact I was hearing I was having. I care about the connections that I do have. I would hate to pull myself from that just to have to start all over in a different area when I could be of use while here. —Temwa Phiri

The Dubuque Black Men's Coalition started maybe five years ago, and I've been involved in the last two years. In a nutshell, that is a group of black professional, local guys who come together and basically say, "All right, let's share our experiences with one another because you need that infrastructure in place." When I say "infrastructure," I mean something in place that makes you want to stay here. If it's people, if it's grocery, it's home, school, whatever that connects you here. A lot of people didn't have that interaction where they could talk to someone about those feelings so that was created at one point for them to have that social network. Eventually as they built relationships with one another they said, "Ok, what can we do in the community to make a difference?" There was a need at that time with the growing minorities coming in, especially African American males. Teachers or people couldn't interact with the kids, and they needed some type of support to help them. They reached out to the Black Men's Coalition, say, "Hey, would you help us because we're not really getting the reaction that we want out of these kids?" Or "Is it us? Is it them?" What we do is we build relationships with youth in the community. We try to paint a new picture. So if you ask the majority of those kids what they want to be when they grow up, it's not surprising that they want to be a basketball star, football star, or entertainer, you know, the things that they see on TV. They never imagine working for the local government or being the head of John Deere or being the president at the University of Dubuque. And it's not because they don't want to, but no one has ever told them that they could or they don't see someone that looks like them in those positions. We do a college tour. We bring them on campus - University of Dubuque, Loras, NICC - and we're not here to say that you have to go to college, but we want them to see kids that

look like them, probably in similar areas that they've grown up with, and say, "Hey, there's kids like you here. This is an option for you, and if this is something that you want to do, let us help you." Sometimes kids look at us and be like, "You don't understand the struggle, Anderson. You don't know what we go through." And it's like, "Buddy, I've been there, I understand, and I'm here to say that you can make it out, too." That's one of the things we try to do with the Black Men's Coalition is make sure that kids understand that at the end of the day they can make it. —Anderson Sainci

I just wish things could've been different for me. I think I would've had a better outcome academically and a better experience but I don't regret going because I'm a business owner. I have my own business and I'm doing pretty good. I'm happy with that and I think that has prepared me for this opportunity as well as the career that I had for over sixteen years at UPS. I learned how to be tough in terms of sticking with stuff. Anything you want in life, you have to stick with it and so I have that sometimes to the extreme. I know how to prepare and stick with stuff because that's what I had to do at the University of Dubuque. I don't give up easily. —Cynthia (Veal) Slater

I had a number of valuable experiences at the University of Dubuque. I would not have traded for any of them. It helped me to prepare to live in Manchester, New Hampshire. Now I work at the New Hampshire of Corrections. [Editor's Note: Lett wrote a book called *Race Between Us: Racism A Human Experience*, 2015]. —Brenda (Bailey) Lett

The school didn't look anything like it looks today. I got a chance to go there for Homecoming and realized that if there is an athlete or student just interested in getting into a college and they visited the University today, hands down there's no way they can leave there and say, "I don't want to attend this school." Dubuque has

everything now. We didn't have any of that. I was really impressed with the school. —Preston Fleming

I was married my senior year. We had a child. I was working and she had two years to go before she graduated, so I continued to work. Started with the [Dubuque] Pack and then went on active duty. Came back and went to John Deere. Worked at John Deere for about 14, 15 years. Then I went to work for the State of Iowa. Most of that was here in Dubuque, although for about, I say, ten years or nine years I lived in the Quad Cities in Clinton. I worked for the employment service. This job just found jobs for people. I helped them file employment claims. Then the last duty that I had was working in welfare reform helping with parents who were receiving assistance. I helped them work through the system either get work or go to school. I started there in 1986 and I believe that it was in the 1990s that we formed that unit [welfare reform]. Then I went to work doing that. I retired in 2010. I worked for the state 24 years. [Now I am] working with Rock of Ages Church [in Dubuque]. The pastor who had been there 25 years or so retired. I was the Associate Pastor. I took over from him. We are just trying to work to increase the membership and also look for a permanent location. —John Taylor

I am a Family Self-Sufficiency Coordinator. What that means is that I work with clients who are on the Section 8 Program. We identify people who want to make a sustainable change in their life. The purpose of our program is to help them eventually be self-sustaining so they don't need any type of services, housing, food, anything like that. The key for that is employment, and so we do a lot more with employment and education, getting people to go back to school. We work on their goals of school, work on their goals of employment. If they get employment and increase their earned income, their rent will obviously increase, but the federal government will put money into an escrow account for them. Once they graduate from our program, which means they're paying their

full amount of rent, then they get that escrow amount. Hopefully they put it toward home ownership, or if they want to go back for a Bachelor's or Master's, they could put it towards that. They can do anything they want, but those are the kinds of things we try to encourage that money to go to. That's the first half of my job. The second half of it is I work for the Circles Initiative. That initiative helps people pretty much the same way. It's helping people who want to live a more sustainable life. The only difference is that you don't have to be on housing for that. That's open for anyone to do. —Ericka Lessears

I applied to dental school and I got into Howard University. After I graduated from dental school, I worked in my dad's office for about three weeks. He said, "We have to get you something else to do. You are not going to make a living doing this. You are not very good at it. I think we are going to get you in graduate school." He called a friend of his at Boston University. From there, I went to Boston University for graduate school to my speciality training in orthodontics. I finished my graduate work there in 1968 and taught there from 1968 to 2011. So when I got my degree at Boston University in 1968, there was only one other [African American] person in the country that would have received training in my speciality. —William Walker

I went to Boston University and got a Masters in Social Work. I was a social worker for about five years. Then I went to Colombia University School of Social Work where I became an officer. Then I created a company and became a social work organizational management consultant. Most of my life I have been a consultant to non-profit organizations. I was also a Vice President of the Fund for the City of New York. I was also a director at Edna McConnell Clark Foundation. The Fund for the City of New York is a foundation that helped social service agencies perform better. I helped managers with budgets, fundraising, and operations with personnel. The last job that I had was the director of the



*foundation Edna McConnell Clark Foundation. It was to help neighborhoods in New York City to be self-determined, to take responsibility for the adolescents. I did not actually do the work, but I funded. I was giving million-dollar grants to people that were trying to improve their neighborhoods, mainly in Harlem and the South Bronx where people are poverty-stricken. —Susan Bellinger*

*I firmly believe that the true measure of leadership is are you developing leaders? So if I leave, is there someone in place who I feel that they're willing and capable to step up into a leadership position? It's gone to the point where Anderson Sainci and I still meet and talk and chat, but it's more like of a discussion than me trying to tell him or provide advice. It's much more of a conversation, like a sharing of ideas. He's gone and really started instituting a lot of initiatives. He just says "Hey, this is kind of what I see needs to happen" and then he just goes and does it. It's less about me and more about Anderson, which I love because I'm getting fewer calls just for random things and he's getting more calls. To me that's how it should be. I often say, "I'm probably not the right person to call. You should probably call to talk to Anderson" because he's much more on the ground implementing things. The fire that he has for getting out there and making a change and being a change is rare. —Andre Lessears*

*I think what truly keeps us here in Dubuque is the spiritual component part that the work is still not done. There's a biblical text that says, "The harvest is plenty but the workers are few." And I think for us we are on the ground doing some work. It's just not our time to leave yet. In the meanwhile you can either complain or you can try to get some things done while you're here. We try to volunteer, not just us, but get our kids so they understand the value of it. We connect with the people we have a relationship with. That's another thing that keeps us here is the people. Because we have those infrastructures now in place for us, you start saying, "Dubuque isn't a bad place." —Anderson Sainci*









*LeRoy Watts enjoys jazz with white UD student, circa 1947.*