



The Voice

NATIONAL BLACK GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION

2009-2010

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Tina L. Ligon

President
University of Maryland College Park

Brian W. Kellum

Vice President for Administration
University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

Ivory M. Berry

Vice President for Conference Affairs
University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

Antoinette Landor

Vice President for Membership Affairs
University of Georgia

Michelle J. Tucker

Vice President for Information Systems
University of Arizona

Thomandra S. Sam

Treasurer
Auburn University

Monica Y. Ragin

Secretary
University of South Carolina

Nathaniel Tinadall

Parliamentarian
Georgia Institute of Technology



Passing Baton: Nameka R. Bates and Ivan B. Turnipseed flank 2009-2010 NBGSA President, Tina L. Ligon. Newly elected president with members of the 2008-2009 NBGSA Leadership Team.

FROM THE DESK OF THE PRESIDENT

Greetings from the National Black Graduate Student Association:

I am delighted to serve as your president for the 2009-2010 academic year. I've been involved with the organization for several years and hope to contribute to the overall mission of NBGSA by providing opportunities to improve the status of African Americans in higher education. My tenure with NBGSA has provided me opportunities to present my research, network, and develop strong leadership skills. I hope to share my experiences with members and play a part in the further cultivation of their academic, professional, and social skills.

With the assistance of my hardworking and wonderful leadership team, we promise you an exciting year. There are several networking socials planned, in addition to five regional conferences, and of course the national conference that will be held in March of 2010 in San Diego, California.

I dedicate this issue of *The Voice* to all of our black graduates and wish you the best in your future endeavors. NBGSA is only as good as its membership. I strongly encourage you to get involved as an alumnus or by becoming a state or academic representative and presenting your research at one of conferences this year.

Warmest Regards,

Tina L. Ligon
NBGSA President

Regional Representatives

North Central Region: Dominique C. Hill, University of Illinois Urbana Champaign; Joseph Johnson, Western Michigan University; **Northeast Region:** Antonio White, Morgan State University; **South Central Region:** Lecia Gresham, Jackson State University; Ge'Andra Johnson, University of Tulsa; **Southeast Region:** Aysha Foster, Virginia State University; Dhymsey Owens, Virginia State University; **Western Region:** Matthew Morris, University of Nevada Las-Vegas; Amber Wilburn, Oregon State University



VP FOR MEMBERSHIP AFFAIRS

Greetings and welcome to all current and new members of the National Black Graduate Student Association! The 2009-2010 Leadership Team is excited about the upcoming school year and working extremely hard to continue the notable legacy of NBGSA by serving as the national voice for Black graduate and professional students.

As Vice President of Membership Affairs, I am delighted that you have decided to join in the celebration. One of our most important goals is to increase membership and expand our networks. Through this year's membership campaign, we hope that every member will bring in two new members to be a part of this exciting organization. I, with the help of both Regional and State Representatives, am working to increase the number of BGSA chapters across colleges and universities throughout the United States in an effort to recruit more scholars into NBGSA. If you are not a member of NBGSA or your campus does not have a BGSA chapter, we can help you start one! As we continue to grow as an organization, I encourage you to take full advantage of the numerous opportunities we have to offer and I hope you get involved, remain active, and inform others about this wonderful organization.

Do not hesitate to contact me at if you have any questions regarding membership. See you in San Diego!!!

Sincerely,

Antoinette Landor

Vice President for Membership
Affairs

vpmembership@nbgsa.org

KUDOS:

BRILLIANCE IN BLACK

Da'Shaun A. Joseph of George Washington University in Washington, DC, recently earned her Systems Engineering Certificate. Only 6 more classes to go before she obtains her Masters.

Mary Akhimien of University of Pittsburgh will be graduating with a Juris Doctorate (JD) degree from the University of Pittsburgh School of Law. She will join a corporate law firm in Wilmington, Delaware upon graduation.

Donald Mitchell, Jr. of the University of Minnesota - Twin Cities recently passed his written comprehensive exams in the department of Educational Policy & Administration. This November he presented the paper "Working with the 'whole' student: Mentoring, counseling the first year student, and teaching with tools from youth culture" at the Faculty Resource Network Annual Symposium in San Francisco. He also co-published "Outcomes of a spiritually focused wilderness orientation program" with A. Bobilya and L. Akey in the *Journal of Experiential Education*, vol 31(3). The full manuscript is forthcoming.

Jason Edgar of Azusa Pacific University will be receiving his Masters in Psychology this July. He will continue at APU to obtain his Doctorate of Psychology (PsyD). Jason is the recent recipient of the American Psychological Association's (APA) Minority Health Program Fellowship, a great honor. The fellow-

NBGSA

NATIONAL BLACK GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION

ship is awarded to individuals that show a dedication to improving the relationship of minorities and the mental health field. In addition, Jason and three peers will be giving a symposium at this year's APA Conference in Toronto, Canada, on the subject of personal narratives and cultural bias in therapeutic settings and supervision situations.

Shanequa L. Abney of Virginia State University graduated with her Master in Science in Psychology on May 17. She recently presented the paper "Perception of Region and Racial Stereotypes amongst African American College Students" at the Second Annual Graduate Research Symposia at Virginia State University, "Developing Graduate Research Excellence and Leadership." Her future plans are to pursue her PhD in Psychology.

Brian W. Kellum of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign was recently awarded a minority dissertation fellowship at Middle Tennessee State University. He will be teaching a course in the music department and writing his dissertation with the goal of graduating with his PhD in May.

Kristi Hall of American School of Professional Psychology-Argosy University in Washington, D.C., just completed her second Master's in Clinical Psychology. Kristi also served as President of the SGA at American School of Professional Psychology-Argosy University this past year as well as the Vice President of the newly formed Argosy DC chapter of NBGSA.

Minnjuan Flournoy of the University of South Carolina recently completed her dissertation "An Examination of Access and Utilization of Oral Health Services for Persons Living with HIV/AIDS in Rural South Carolina." She now has a PhD in Public Health with a concentration in Health Services Policy and Management.

Tina L. Ligon of the University of Maryland College Park recently earned her Masters of Library Science and Archives Degree.

Ge'Andra Johnson of the University of Tulsa helped to conduct a study on the effects of cell phone radiation on the foraging and navigation behaviors of the honeybee (*Apis mellifera*). The article that resulted from this research was recently published in the journal *The Science of Honeybee Culture*. Ge'Andra was a co-author.

Antoinette Landor of the University of Georgia received a Masters of Science Degree in Child and Family Development on May 9. She will continue on for her doctoral degree in the field. In addition, Antoinette was recently awarded a prestigious University of Georgia scholarship, and her research proposal on the influence of religion on African American adolescents' sexual behavior was accepted to the National Council on Family Relations Conference in November.

Keisha Robinson of the University of Arizona graduated in May 2009 with her Masters in Public Health and was named the Spring 2009 Outstanding Masters of Public Health Graduate Student. Keisha was also recognized for the Best MPH Internship Conference Presentation.

Rowena Campbell of the University of Arizona was selected to attend National Institutes of Health Recruitment Week this past February as well as the Proctor and Gamble Research and Technical Conference in June. Rowena was also nominated a University of Arizona Outstanding Graduate Student Leader and elected as a 2009 NBGSA Elections and Nominations Commissioner.

Michelle J. Tucker of the University of Arizona just graduated in May 2009 with her Masters in Public Administration. Michelle was also selected as the Feature Student on her home .

Ndidi Amutah of the University of Maryland College Park is getting married on August 1 to her college sweetheart in their home state of New Jersey. Ndidi will also be advancing to candidacy this summer, and her proposed dissertation topic is related to low birth weight and infant mortality in Washington, DC.

Randy Vazquez of the University of Arizona was selected as a 2009-2010 BioME Fellow.

Miriam Zmiewski of the University of Arizona recently graduated with her Masters in Public Health. Miriam has also won a scholarship to attend the International Federation of Public Health Conference in Istanbul, Turkey.

Keosha Hooks of the University of Arizona graduated in May 2009 with her Masters in Public Administration.

Shanna L. Smith of the University of Maryland College Park published three poems in *Artists in Revolution: A Community Arts Project*





Regional Conferences Updates

South Central Regional Conference

"Building Relationships Incorporative of Diversity among Graduates Entering Society"

Jackson State University

October 1-3, 2009

North Central Regional Conference

"A Community of Scholars: Re-Establishing Purpose, Remembering our Identities, Re-Stating our Commitments"

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

October 2-4, 2009

Northeast Regional Conference

"The Power of Definition: From Invisible Places to Visible Spaces"

Morgan State University

October 16-18, 2009

Southeast Regional Conference

"Metamorphosis: Changing Yourself by Changing your Motives"

Location TBA

November 12-14, 2009

Western Regional Conference

Arizona State University

October 16-18, 2009

2009 NBGSA AFFILIATE OF THE YEAR

The University of Arizona

We take our role of supporting members of the Black Graduate Student Association at the University of Arizona (BGSA-UA) very seriously. That's why we were thrilled to be selected as the 2009 NBGSA Affiliate of the Year at the 21st Annual NBGSA Conference held March 11-15 in Houston, Texas. Only two years old, our chapter has hit the ground running. We know that students face both the rigors of graduate school and the changes that come with relocating to Tucson, Arizona, so we act as a buffer to those challenges. Our activities adhere to three foundational pillars: Academic Excellence, Fellowship, and Community Service. With such a strong and relevant foundation, we've been able to successfully create, implement, and serve Black graduate students across the University.

Simply put, BGSA-UA has done a lot. Whatever you want, we've most likely got it. If we don't have it, we try to get it. For example, to satisfy our members' need for financial savviness,

presentation skills excellence, and writing finesse, BGSA-UA implemented C.A.S.H.F.L.O.W. (Constantly Acquiring Secret Habits For Locating Our Wealth), Chalk Talk, and an Academic Writing Group. These three BGSA-UA breakout groups boosted members' professional repertoire and excellence in academics. To serve the campus, the Tucson area, and global communities, we facilitated a "Get Into Graduate School" brown bag seminar for undergraduates and a care package collection for the Deng Ater Foundation (Building Schools in Sudan) as well as the Tucson Urban League in honor of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. And you know we have to have some fun! Our fellowship opportunities have ranged from debate watch parties, to karaoke, to learning ballroom dance, to a fundraising networking party called *Copyright Potential*, a party from which all proceeds went directly into BGSA-UA. Yup!

BGSA-UA was also the host chapter of the 2008 NBGSA Western

Regional Conference held at the Bio5 Institute in Tucson, Arizona. The conference, which featured dynamic speakers, student presentations, and networking opportunities, was a great success. Also notable was SANKOFA, an event which brought together Black faculty, staff, and students at the University of Arizona for a breakfast, HATwalk, and more. More of our activities can be seen on our newly revamped website, www.arizonabgsa.org. We wanted the website to serve as a professional portal for prospective and current graduate students. On the website, you can blog with us, get to know our members of the month, our support network, and our membership as well as view the *BGSA-UA News Magazine* (Year in Review) edition.

The future looks promising for BGSA-UA as we seek to become more of a campus and community presence. The 2008-2009 outgoing Executive Board—Immediate Past President Chinedu Nworu, Public Relations Chair Rowena Campbell, Treasurer Joe Deas, Jr., Executive Secretary Keosha Hooks,

NBGSA

NATIONAL BLACK GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION

and Vice President Ishmail Sillah—and I will help usher in the new crew. Our 2009-2010 Executive Board is as follows: Immediate Past President Ada Dieke, Public Relations Chair Kerton Victory, Treasurer Randy Vazquez, Executive Secretary Oluyomi Ajibode, Vice President Gerard Robertson, and President Candice Morrison. It is also worth mentioning our faculty advisor for 2008-2009, Dr. Bruce Smith, and our Director of the Website Development Committee, Torry Dixon.

Many things worked for our chapter to become successful; we'd be happy to share those tips here. Try to recruit members through word of mouth, graduate student orientations, wearing your chapter t-shirts, welcome back events, and department recruitment weekends. Have a retreat-like team building transition meeting so that the new E-Board gets acquainted with each other and the

old E-Board. Affiliate with NBGSA and other sister organizations, like we did with the BGSA at Arizona State University and the University of Nevada-Las Vegas and the Latino Graduate Students in Science and Engineering.

. At the transition meeting aim to plan the calendar for the upcoming semester or for the year. Plan socials so that they act as a fundraiser as well. See yourselves as an *organization* and not just a campus club. You are more likely to operate in a professional manner while building a strong reputation that way. Create a logo and mission that will represent your organization in every way and in every medium. This is in line with the trusted business principle of establishing your organization as a brand. However your E-Board decides to operate, stick with it for the year. Ours functioned in a collaborative manner. Lastly, what worked for us was our welcoming, familial atmosphere. All Black graduate stu-

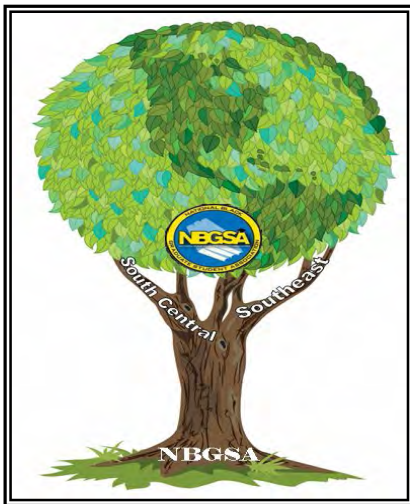
dents in the Diaspora are welcome to join. We love our active members yet we still welcome those that come every once -in-a while. We also love hearing about our members' accomplishments (and honoring them with a congratulatory fist bump).

Once again, we thank NBGSA for recognizing our chapter. We'd like to continue to develop ourselves and collaborate with other BGSA's. And we definitely hope to see the BGSA-UA legacy of excellence continued.

By Ada Dieke, 2008-2009 BGSA-UA President



NBGSA Grows New Branches



In an effort to better serve our members and to form more intimate communities for our southern states, NBGSA has split the Southern Region in two. The 2009-2010 Southeast Regional Representatives,

Aysha Foster and Dhymsey Owens, are very excited to have the opportunity to service the following states: Virginia, West Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Tennessee, Kentucky, and the Virgin Islands.

Aysha, a native of Houston, TX, and Dhymsey, originally from Spring Valley, NY, are both doctoral candidates in the Health Psychology

program at Virginia State University. They invite you to meet them on Facebook @ National Black Graduate Student Association -- Southeast Region. Here you will be kept abreast of upcoming activities in the region such as the first ever Southeast Regional Conference titled "Metamorphosis: Changing Yourself by Changing your Motives." The Facebook page is also a high-way that connects NBGSA chapters and colleagues in your area. Be sure to look

out for details on state mixers where you can meet up with other NBGSA members near you.

Our goals for the year are to increase the number of local chapters in each state and encourage affiliation at the national level. NBGSA is not just a service we provide to you, it is an organization that belongs to you. This said, we look forward to meeting you at *your* Regional Confer-



PIONEERING THE CHANGE WITHIN!

Greetings from the newly formed South Central Region of the National Black Graduate Student Association. Our great region encompasses students from graduate programs in the states of Arkansas, Kansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Oklahoma, and Texas. Your 2009-2010 regional representatives that will provide leadership for this region are Lecia Gresham and Ge'Andra Johnson. Since the inception of this new region, your regional representatives have been hard at work, increasing membership, recruiting chapters, planning the regional conference and spreading the word about the great opportunities of NBGSA.

Lecia Gresham hails from Birmingham, Alabama and is a first year doctoral student in Environmental Science at Jackson State University (JSU). She received a Bachelor of Arts degree from Talladega College in Talladega, Alabama and a Master of Science Degree from Jackson State University in Jackson, Mississippi. Her research interests include studying the mechanism of action of anticancer agents in Vernonia Amygdalina, a Nigerian shrub, and its potential effects on Estrogen receptor-negative breast carcinoma. Lecia's love for research and positive attitude has allowed her to present (and place) at several local, state, national

and international conferences and symposiums.

Ge'Andra Johnson, an Oklahoma City native, is a first year Industrial and Organizational Psychology Master's student at The University of Tulsa in Tulsa, Oklahoma. She earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology in 2008 from Oklahoma State University in Stillwater, Oklahoma. Ge'Andra is a student member of the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology, as well as the Association of Black Psychologists. In the past, Ge'Andra has conducted (and presented) research in the fields of comparative psychology and entomology on the effects of GSM radiation on the navigation and foraging behavior of the honeybee (*Apis mellifera*). However, her current research interests lie on the effects of surface level diversity on promotion in large corporations.

This year's South Central regional conference is scheduled for October 1-3, 2009. The host institution will be Jackson State University, Jackson Mississippi. The theme for the 2009 conference will be B.R.I.D.G.E.S.

Feel free to join the newly created National

Black Graduate Student Association – South Central Region Facebook page for updates on this region.

Thank you,

Lecia Gresham and Ge'Andra Johnson

South Central Regional Representatives



Members on the Move: Affiliate Chapter News

University of South Carolina

2009 BGSA Award Winners:

Academic Service and Community Outreach: Mr. Muhammad Salaam

Faculty Mentor Award: Sandra R. Glover PhD, MBA

Graduate Student Leadership Award:

Ms. Monica Y. Ragin & Ms. Mary Jones

Hats off to our 2009 Graduates:

Minnjuan Flournoy, Muhammad Salaam, Mary Jones, Charissa Minnis, Jelani Kerr, India Walters, Alvin McKelvey, Shalonda Bynum

University of Arizona

New 2009-2010 BGSA-UA Executive Board

- * President--Candice Morrison
- * Vice President--Gerard Robertson
- * Executive Secretary--Oluyomi Ajibode
- * Treasurer--Randy Vazquez
- * Public Relations Chair--Kerton Victory
- * Immediate Past President--Ada Dieke

Members of the Month

February 2009-Candice Morrison

March 2009-Sanyu Kibuka

April 2009-Torry Dixon

May 2009-Oluyomi Ajibode

University of Maryland College Park

Congratulations to our new 2009-2010 Executive Board

President: Shayla Atkins

Vice President: Krystle Norman

Treasurer: Jennifer Rivers

Secretary: Leia Dickerson

SAVE THE DATE

2010 National Conference

“Pioneering the Change Within”

March 10-14, 2010

Hilton Del Mar

San Diego, California



"Engaged. Empowered. Expect It!"
Houston, Texas
March 11-15, 2009