

CHALLENGE YOURSELF
CHANGE OUR WORLD



UNIVERSITY
of ST. THOMAS
MINNESOTA

LOOKING BACK WITH PLEASURE:

Honoring the Gifts and Talents

**2nd Annual Black History Month Heritage Gala &
Diversity Leadership Awards**



School of Law • Schulze Grand Atrium
February 9, 2008
5-9 PM

Welcome from the Office of Institutional Diversity



On behalf of the University of St. Thomas and the Office of Institutional Diversity, I would like to welcome you to our beautiful downtown Minneapolis campus. Many thanks for your generous support and choosing to join us as we celebrate the second Annual Black History Month Heritage Gala—“Looking Back with Pleasure: Honoring the Gifts and Talents”.

With tonight’s celebration, we honor a new tradition at St. Thomas—the announcement and presentation of the Diversity Leadership Awards. This evening we will recognize campus efforts and initiatives that promote inclusion. The Diversity Leadership Awards were designed to acknowledge personal efforts, unique contributions and initiatives that go above-and-beyond expectations. It is important for us as an institution to visibly salute people whom enhance and promote diversity on the St. Thomas campuses and in our community! Awards will be presented in three areas: (1) diversity leadership teaching/research award, (2) diversity leadership staff award, and (3) diversity leadership academic or service unit award.

In keeping with the University’s strategic priorities—access, excellence and Catholic identity—the Office of Institutional Diversity continues to find creative ways to raise funds in order to expand access and opportunity for our students, faculty and staff. This event is one major fundraiser to help achieve this goal. Access to higher education is a national imperative. In addition to creating pathways to access and opportunity, the Office of Institutional Diversity celebrates the excellence of our faculty, staff and students in many ways. The Diversity Leadership Awards are the capstone for recognizing such excellence. Moreover, as a Catholic institution of higher learning, we promote gratitude—“we celebrate the achievements of all members of our community in goals attained and obstacles overcome, and in all things give praise to God”.

We are proud to be the sponsor this event and feel blessed to have your support. Our entertainers this evening T. Mychael Rambo, Thomasina Petrus and Aimee Bryant. Our keynote speaker is two-time St. Thomas alumnus Steffan Johnson—CEO of Stratus Medical Group. My sincere appreciation to all who made this event possible. Sincerely, I am



Lawrence T. Potter, Jr., Ph.D.
Executive Director of Institutional Diversity

SPECIAL THANKS

Steffan Johnson, '01 & '07
Keynote Speaker

T. Mychael Rambo, Thomasina Petrus & Aimee Bryant
Performers

Dr. Gene Scapanski
Vice President for Mission

Helen Hunter
Office for Mission

Eliel Gebru
Graduate Student Diversity Assistant

School of Law

University Catering Services



MENU

(Dinner served buffet style; table numbers will be called)

Appetizers

- ▲ Chinese Pot Stickers
- ▲ Chicken Drumettes
- ▲ Seasonal Vegetables w/ dip
 - ▲ Meatballs

Salad

- ▲ Raspberry Vinaigrette Salad

Entrée

- ▲ Chicken Caribbean
- ▲ Beef Tips Bourguignonne
- ▲ Vegetarian Lasagna

Starch

- ▲ Parsley Buttered Steamed Potatoes
 - ▲ Wild Rice Pilaf

Vegetable

- ▲ Green and Yellow Beans with Baby Carrots
- ▲ Roasted Squash and Pepper Blend with Basil

Dessert

- ▲ Carrot Cake w/cream cheese icing
 - ▲ Apple pie

PROGRAM

Reception

(Second Floor)

5:00 to 6:00

Welcome and Introductions

(Atrium Level)

Lawrence T. Potter, Jr., Ph.D.

6:00

Dinner

6:10

“Looking Back With Pleasure: Honoring the Gifts and Talents”

T. Mychael Rambo, Thomasina Petrus & Aimee Bryant

6:15 to 7:00

Keynote Address

Steffan Johnson, MBA

CEO of Stratus Medical Group

7:05 to 7:30

Presentation of Diversity Leadership Awards & Closing Remarks

Dr. Lawrence Potter

7:35 to 8:15

About the Keynote Speaker



STEFFAN JOHNSON is a two-time alumnus of the University of St. Thomas. He first earned an undergraduate degree in Business Administration and International Business with a minor in Japanese. After earning his bachelor's degree, Johnson went on to work for 3M as a Supply Chain and Logistics Analyst. Over time, he became an IT consultant with Ultimius, Inc. in Cary, North Carolina. Steffan was able to design, develop, deploy, and manage the intranet/internet web-based business process solutions for many Fortune 500 companies such as Microsoft, General Electric, Siemens, Lockheed Martin and many others.

After years in the corporate sector, Steffan returned to St. Thomas to earn his MBA from the Opus College of Business and build his own consulting business—S.R. Johnson & Associates. In May 2007, Johnson graduated with his MBA. He is currently CEO of Stratus Medical Group.

About the Performers



T. MYCHAEAL RAMBO is an actor, vocalist, and educator. He has performed at Penumbra since 1989 and is now a company member. His most recent Penumbra credits include *Ain't Misbehavin'*, *Black Nativity-A Homecoming*, and *Get Ready*. He has performed with the Guthrie Theater, Illusion Theatre, Minnesota Opera, Ordway Music Theatre, Mixed Blood Theatre, Park Square Theatre and Hey City Theatre, a number

of regional theatre companies, at Carnegie Hall with the Minnesota Orchestra and internationally throughout Canada, Europe, Africa and Brazil. He has appeared in several local and national television commercials, HBO mini-series including *Laurel Avenue*, *Endeavor*, and *I Led Two Lives*. Film credits include *Mighty Ducks*, *Crossing the Bridge*, *Grumpy Old Men*, *The Cure*, *Equinox*, *Woolly Boys* and *Justice*.



THOMASINA PETRUS has performed in the Twin cities for the last 15 years, portraying lead characters on Penumbra, Mixed Blood, Illusion, Park Square and Old Arizona Theatre Stages. Most recently, Thomasina was seen at Penumbra in *A'int Misbehavin'*. A true "hometown girl", she has cultivated her talents as an actor and jazz vocalist through mentorship and

the vision of the Office of Institutional Diversity. Some of their programs and initiatives include Linkages Mentor Program, Mind-Body-Soul, J-Term Book Club, and the upcoming UST Community Challenge Day in March.

LIFT EVERY VOICE AND SING *Written by James W. Johnson*

Lift every voice and sing, 'til earth and Heaven ring,
Ring with the harmonies of liberty;
Let our rejoicing rise, high as the listening skies,
Let it resound loud as the rolling sea.
Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us,
sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us;
facing the rising sun of our new day begun,
Let us march on till victory is won.

Stony the road we trod, bitter the chastening rod,
Felt in the days when hope unborn had died;
Yet with a steady beat, have not our weary feet,
Come to the place for which our fathers sighed?
We have come over a way that with tears has been watered,
We have come, treading our path through
the blood of the slaughtered;
Out from the gloomy past, 'til now we stand at last
Where the white gleam of our bright star is cast.

God of our weary years, God of our silent tears,
Thou Who hast brought us thus far on the way;
Thou Who hast by Thy might, led us into the light,
Keep us forever in the path, we pray.
Lest our feet stray from the places, our God,
where we met Thee.
Lest our hearts, drunk with the wine of the world,
we forget Thee.
Shadowed beneath Thy hand, may we forever stand,
True to our God, true to our native land.

organizations to help make St. Thomas a more inclusive campus. In fall 2007, Glirbas was one of three staff members who assisted in creating a campus climate discussion group.



VICTORIA "TORI" SVOBODA is associate dean of students. At St. Thomas, she has been involved with many working groups, such as the CommUNITY Week Planning Committee, a University Diversity Advisory Committee working group, and the Luann Dummer Center for Women Advisory Board. Svoboda co-facilitated, with Glirbas, Sherrie Maze and others, the Conversations on Climate ad hoc group of faculty, staff and students. She organized a visit for Dr. Keith Edwards to facilitate a workshop for faculty and staff on Aspiring Social Justice Ally Development and a workshop for students on social justice issues. This visit was co-sponsored by several departments, including Campus and Residence Life, Campus Ministry, the Dean of Students Office, the Tutor/Mentor Program and the Luann Dummer Center for Women, and demonstrates Tori's ability to bring important diversity stakeholders together.

Recently, she served on a "Racism on College Campuses" panel organized by the Black Empowerment Student Alliance (BESA), coordinated meetings with students and alumni who drafted a letter to administrators with suggestions for how to improve campus climate and has worked with faculty, specifically Dr. Kanishka Chowdhury, to develop a workshop on "Responding Appropriately to Hostile Incidents/Gestures in the Classroom".

Diversity Leadership Academic or Service Unit Award



THE OFFICE OF MULTICULTURAL STUDENT SERVICES is recognized for its consistent implementation of exceptional diversity programs that foster and atmosphere of inclusion and aids in the retention of students from underrepresented groups. Multicultural Student Services staff members are Denise Dieffenbach (director), Tara LaFerla (assistant director), Tonia Jones (program manager) and Peggy Jerabek (coordinator).

Multicultural Student Services is concerned with providing a comprehensive system of advocacy and support for students of color and immigrants. Overall, the goal is to improve retention and the quality of life for these students and for the university in general. This year, Multicultural Student Services launched a series of important programs that resonate with

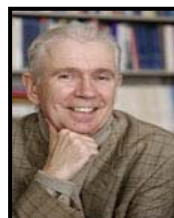
friendship with some of the Twin Cities most beloved artists including James "Cornbread" Harris, Sr., Jevetta Steele, Stokley, Regina Williams, Prince, T. Mycheal Rambo, and Lou Bellamy.



AIMEE BRYANT is a founding ensemble member of Congo Square Theatre in Chicago, Illinois, and a graduate of Howard University. Recent theatre credits include *Two Queens*, *One Castle* with Mixed Blood Theatre, *Seussical the Musical* at the Children's Theatre Company, and *Ain't Misbehavin'* at Penumbra.

About the Diversity Leadership Award Recipients

Diversity Leadership Teaching/Research Award



STEPHEN BROOKFIELD is University Distinguished Professor. For the past ten years, Stephen Brookfield has tried to challenge the dominance of Eurocentrism in adult and higher education, to promote scholarship on African American leaders the field's scholarship has ignored, and to model participation in Black-White racial dialogue. In the *Adult Education Quarterly* and the *Harvard Educational Review*

Stephen published articles on how the concept of critical thinking in adult education, and the field of adult education in general, might be racialized, drawing on the work particularly of African American scholars such as Lucius Outlaw, Maulana Karenga and Cornel West.

Brookfield has sought to use various annual Adult Education Research Conference Proceedings to present papers, and then publish them. Some of this work is solo-authored, some written with African American colleagues. For example, three of these publications deal with the dynamics of race talk—problematizing Whites' engagement in racial talk, the pitfalls facing Whites who seek to engage with work of colleagues of color, and the dynamics of dialogues on race and racism (the last co-written with Elizabeth Peterson). Three more explore the practices of adult educators of color such as Paul Robeson, W.E.B. DuBois (co-written with Talmadge Guy) and Nelson

Mandela. Two of the articles will be published in the forthcoming *Handbook of Black Adult Education* (T. Guy, L. Merrieweather-Hunn, & E. Peterson Eds.). In addition to publishing on race and racism, he also conducts a regular faculty development workshop on “Teaching about Racism: Common Mistakes of White Professors” at the University of St. Thomas.



NEKIMA LEVY-POUNDS is an associate professor of law and the Director of the Community Justice Project (CJP) at the University of St. Thomas School of Law. Levy-Pounds has dedicated her life to advocate on behalf of the poor, people of color, and those impacted by the criminal justice system. In her capacity as director of the CJP, Levy-Pounds teaches and trains law students to become "not just lawyers" but engineers of social change who "think outside of the box."

The goal of the CJP is to educate students about myriad issues that affect poor communities of color in the Twin Cities and nationwide and to arm students to take a problem-solving approach to addressing the needs of the community. As part of the curriculum, CJP students are expected to read the local community newspaper, engage in dialogue and discussions surrounding issues of race, poverty and disparate treatment, and to work directly with people of color from the community. Some of the systemic issues that Levy-Pounds and her students address in the CJP include civil rights violations, racial disparities in the criminal justice system, police misconduct, re-entry of former prisoners within society, and racial disparities within the public education and juvenile justice systems.

Professor Levy-Pounds has chosen to focus on the plight of women and children in her scholarship. She has presented at numerous conferences around the country, and in England and South Africa on civil rights issues, slavery, and racial disparities in the juvenile and adult criminal justice systems.



BUFFY SMITH is assistant professor of sociology and criminal justice. Her teaching philosophy is based on three principles: (1) cultural competency, (2) compassion, and (3) social action. The first principle, cultural competency requires both instructors and students to work vigilantly to overcome personal and social biases in order to understand and appreciate the diversity of one another.

Dr. Smith's says that the second principle, compassion, should be a prerequisite for teaching social problems and race and ethnicity classes. "Compassion refers to instructors and students practicing, gratitude, humility, patience, and forgiveness towards each other in

the pursuit of truth and academic excellence. In order to provide compassion for my students I have to respect them as fellow sojourners on the journey toward social justice. I model respect for my students by acknowledging that I am not perfect and that I do not always, "say the right thing" or "do the right thing" on social issues such as environmental justice or sexual harassment."

The final principle, social action, is a call for utilizing faith and reason to create a more humane and just world. Smith teaches her students that learning about the different facets of a social problem is just the first step toward social justice; they must take the next step and act. One recommender wrote, "She reminds them that earning a college degree is a privilege and they should use their knowledge and resources to create a better society for those that are less privileged."

In sum, Dr. Smith's mission is to produce a large body of research that examines the conditions that are necessary for students of color and first-generation students to acclimate successfully academically and socially on predominantly white college campuses. She has received grants to help advance her research and has presented preliminary results at a number of national conferences. Smith is interested in helping students survive the rigors of college, but more importantly, she wants to help them excel and thrive in academe.

Diversity Leadership Staff Award



MICHAEL GLIRBAS is a St. Thomas alumnus and currently works in the Office of the Registrar. He majored in Justice and Peace Studies, which inspired him to be a servant to others. Glirbas has been a health education intern with the Minnesota AIDS Project (MAP). Over the years, he has assisted MAP staff with numerous projects. His work with creating a hospitable campus climate for Gay-Lesbian-Bisexual-Transgender (GLBT) students and staff has not gone unnoticed. Glirbas joined a group of Allies on two occasions – one hosted by St. Thomas and one by Hamline – whereby the ACTC Networking Conferences brought together the five GLBT student-lead organizations, and their faculty and staff allies.

He has been an active participant of the UST SafeZone Project for the past six years and has actively participated in a number of diversity work-groups responsible for the implementation of the 2007 campus climate survey. Glirbas has served as co-chair for the CommUNITY Week Celebrations at UST in 2006 and 2007 as well as co-chair for Tommie Pride: Day of Caring and Sharing. He continues to assist the campus with identifying speakers and