Monday, April 4, 2011

University of Rhode Island
Ryan Auditorium
Center for Biotechnology and Life Sciences
Kingston, Rhode Island
PROGRAM

The Fourteenth Annual
Black Scholar Awards

sponsored by

The University of Rhode Island
Black Scholar Awards
Program Committee

April 4, 2011
FOURTEENTH ANNUAL BLACK SCHOLAR AWARDS PROGRAM
Ryan Auditorium
Center for Biotechnology and Life Sciences
University of Rhode Island
Kingston, Rhode Island
4 April 2011

Presider
Earl Smith, III, B.S., M.S.W.
Assistant Dean, College of Arts and Sciences

Welcome
Christopher D. Hunter, B.S., M.S., Ph.D.
Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering

Invocation
Donna Gilton, B.A., M.S., Ph.D.
Department of Library and Information Studies

Introduction of Speaker
Earl Smith, III, B.S., M.S.W.
Assistant Dean, College of Arts and Sciences

Speaker
Ibrahim Abdul-Matin, B.A., M.P.A.
Author, Social Activist and Sports Reporter, The Takeaway

Tossie E. Taylor Community Spirit Award
Donald Cunnigen, B.A., M.A., A.M., Ph.D.
Department of Sociology-Arthropology

Benediction
Donna Gilton, B.A., M.S., Ph.D.
Department of Library and Information Studies

About the Black Scholar Awards Program
The Black Scholar Awards Program was developed by Dr. Donald Cunnigen and Dr. Yvette Harps-Logan, members of the University of Rhode Island Black Faculty Association, in 1998 as a means of recognizing the outstanding accomplishments and contributions of graduating students of African descent. Although Black students received recognition from other entities on campus, the Black faculty wanted to demonstrate their commitment and interest in the recruitment, retention, development, and support of Black students at the University. Presently, the program is organized by the Black Scholar Awards Program Committee.

The University of Rhode Island Black Scholar Awards Program Committee acknowledges the financial support of President David Dooley, University of Rhode Island Alumni Association, and the Office of Alumni Relations. A special thank you is extended to Dean Earl Smith for invaluable assistance and Mr. Charles Watson for support and organization of this year’s reception. We would like to acknowledge the financial support of Dean Winifred Brownell with this year’s program and technical assistance in developing our brand new web site: www.uri.edu/bsa.

Black Scholar Awards Program Coordinators
Dr. Donald Cunnigen and Dr. Christopher D. Hunter
Ibrahim Abdul-Matin is author of the new book, *Green Deen: What Islam Teaches About Protecting the Planet*. For the past ten years, Ibrahim has been a passionate voice for transforming our pollution based way of life to one that prioritizes our planet and its people. Ibrahim's dedication to the environment is rooted in his Deen - his religion of Islam.

In 1999, Ibrahim graduated from the University of Rhode Island with a Bachelor’s degree in Political Science. He proudly served as the student commencement speaker where he reminisced about his time as a football player, student government leader, poet, and dedicated student. Post-graduation, Ibrahim worked for Outward Bound in the Boston Harbor, educating young people on issues of environment and leadership. With every new job, Ibrahim was committed to advocating for environmental justice. He worked as director of programs for the Prospect Park Alliance, an organizer for Active Element Foundation, a strategist for the Movement Strategy Center, and a Green for All fellow. In 2007, Ibrahim was accepted into the prestigious National Urban Fellows program. Along with being placed into a high-profile position at a private marketing firm, he completed a Masters of Public Administration from Baruch College. In graduate school, Ibrahim focused on mastering methods for efficient government management and operations. He served as a freelance consultant for Green City Force and soon after, was recruited by the New York City Mayor’s Office of Long Term Planning and Sustainability.
Today, Ibrahim is a policy advisor for PlaNYC - New York City's policy plan for making the City "green." He serves as a translator between government officials and the public. Ibrahim is a volunteer with Interfaith Leaders for Environmental Justice, GreenFaith, and a board member of the Muslim Consultative Network. As author of *Green Deen: What Islam Teaches About Protecting the Planet*, he has appeared on FOX News, ABC News’ “This Week,” and is a featured regularly on public radio’s morning news show, “The Takeaway.” His writing has appeared in The Washington Post, CNN.com, The Daily Beast, GOOD Magazine, ColorLines, Wiretap, and Elan Magazine. *Green Deen* has been featured on the Brian Lehrer Show, The Global Grind, Energy Now, the Center for American Progress, America.gov.

*Green Deen: What Islam Teaches About Protecting the Planet*, presents a new way of thinking about the environmental movement. “If we are really serious about protecting our planet,” Abdul-Matin argues, “we need more than gloomy scientific predictions and anti-corporate propaganda – we need to look to the deepest part of ourselves, and find motivation in our spiritual connection with the Earth.” *Green Deen* bridges the gap between the secular environmental movement and the Islamic faith, and the message appeals to Muslims and non-Muslims alike.

Above: Ibrahim Abdul-Matin speaking at the Apollo.
PRESENTATION OF AWARDS FOR EXCEPTIONAL ACHIEVEMENT

Award                                                                                                           Presenter
William Gould Award for All-Around Outstanding Achievement                                                      Kendall Moore, B.A., M.A.
                                                                                                                    Department of Journalism and Film Studies
Arthur L. Hardge Award for All-Around Outstanding Community Service                                               Marc Hardge, B.A.
                                                                                                                    Talent Development Program, Counselor
Martin Luther King, Jr. Award for Outstanding Leadership and Contribution to the University Community             Yvette Harps-Logan, B.S., M.S., Ph.D.
                                                                                                                    Department of Textiles, Fashion Merchandising and Design
Harvey Robert Turner Award for Outstanding Service to the University of Rhode Island Black Community              Darran Simon, B.A., M.S.J.
                                                                                                                    Reporter, Philadelphia Inquirer
Sojourner Truth Award for Scholarly Persistence and Dedication                                                   Gitahi Gititi, B.Ed., M.A., Ph.D.
                                                                                                                    Departments of English and African and African-American Studies
Jackie Robinson Scholar-Athlete Award                                                                            Gordon H. Dash, B.A., M.B.E., Ph.D.
                                                                                                                    College of Business Administration
Noreen Coachman Award for Outstanding Achievement by an Older Student                                            Raymond Watson, B.A., M.C.P.
                                                                                                                    Chairman, Alumni of Color Network
St. Clair Drake Award for Outstanding Scholarly Research                                                          Christopher D. Hunter, B.S., M.S., Ph.D.
                                                                                                                    Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering
St. Elmo Brady Award for Outstanding Achievement in Science                                                      Jason Pina, B.A., M.A., Ed.D.
                                                                                                                    Assistant to Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students
David Edmonds Award for Outstanding Artistic and Creative Expression                                            Donald Cunnigen, B.A., M.A., A.M., Ph.D.
                                                                                                                    Department of Sociology and Anthropology
Estes Benson Award for Academic Achievement                                                                     Melvoid Benson, A.B.
                                                                                                                    North Kingstown School Committee
Special Rhode Island Legislative Citations                                                                     The Honorable Anastasia Williams
                                                                                                                    Rhode Island Assembly—District 9
Onyx Senior Honor Society Ceremony

Donald Cunnigen, B.A., M.A., A.M., Ph.D.
Department of Sociology-Anthropology
Onyx Advisor

Earl Smith, III, B.S., M.S.W.
Assistant Dean, College of Arts and Sciences
Onyx Advisor

Remarks

Donald Cunnigen, B.A., M.A., A.M., Ph.D.
Department of Sociology-Anthropology

AWARDS

William Gould Award for All-Around Outstanding Achievement

William Gould was a member of the University of Rhode Island Class of 1958. He was the first Black appointed to serve as the chairperson of the National Labor Relations Board. The Gould Award is presented to a senior in recognition of all-around outstanding achievement in the areas of organizational leadership, peer relationships, faculty-student relationships, general service, and academic performance.

Recipient: Danielle Henderson

Arthur L. Hardge Award for All-Around Outstanding Community Service

Arthur Hardge was a major force in the affairs of Rhode Island’s Black community. As a part of his activity, he founded the Talent Development Program at the University of Rhode Island. The Talent Development Program has played an integral role in the growth of the University’s Black community. The Hardge Award is presented to a senior in recognition of outstanding service to the Black community outside of the University.

Recipient: Ashley D. Smith

Martin Luther King, Jr. Award for Outstanding Leadership and Contribution to the University Community

Martin Luther King Jr. was a civil rights leader, scholar, and visionary who played a pivotal role in the integration of American society. The King Award is presented to a senior in recognition of outstanding service in the area of organizational leadership, volunteer service, and general service in the University of Rhode Island community.

Recipient: Stephen Larbi

Harvey Robert Turner Award for Outstanding Service to the University of Rhode Island Black Community

Harvey Robert Turner was a member of the University of Rhode Island Class of 1914. He was one of the earliest Black graduates of the University. The Turner Award is presented to a senior in recognition of significant contributions made to the Black community of the University through activities that demonstrated a commitment to the community’s growth and recognition of others.

Recipient: Marquis Jones

Sojourner Truth Award for Scholarly Persistence and Dedication

Sojourner Truth escaped from slavery to become a significant figure in Black history. In delivering her famous “Ain’t I A Woman” speech, she made a lasting contribution to American oratory. The Truth Award is presented to a senior in recognition of success despite dire financial, physical and/or personal problems that would ordinarily impede progress.

Recipient: Ruth Phillips
Jackie Robinson Scholar-Athlete Award
In 1946, Jackie Robinson broke the color line in American professional baseball. As an outstanding athlete, he never let the racism of the day defeat his purpose. The Robinson Award is presented to a senior male athlete(s) in recognition of outstanding performance in sports that highlighted skills of good sportsmanship and the best qualities of the scholar-athlete.
Recipients: Willie V. McGinnis

Noreen Coachman Award for Outstanding Achievement by an Older Student
Noreen Coachman was a member of the University of Rhode Island Class of 1973. She exemplified the best characteristics of an older student by obtaining an M.D. after pursuing a secretarial career. The Coachman Award is presented to an older graduating senior who has achieved excellence in academic and extracurricular life while maintaining family and work responsibilities.
Recipient: Carlene Fiorito

Saint Clair Drake Award for Outstanding Scholarly Research
Saint Clair Drake was a noted anthropologist-sociologist who served as a distinguished professor on the faculty of Stanford University. The Drake Award is presented to a senior who has demonstrated the best aspects of scholarly research through the development, execution, and completion of a scholarly research project.
Recipient: John P. Brito

Saint Elmo Brady Award for Outstanding Achievement in Science
In 1916, Saint Elmo Brady became the first person of African descent to receive a Doctor of Philosophy degree in chemistry. He had a distinguished research and teaching career, including appointments at Fisk University, Howard University, Tuskegee Institute, and Tougaloo College. The Brady Award is presented to the graduating senior with the highest academic average in the sciences among Black Students.
Recipient: Eugenio Fernandez, Jr.

David Edmonds Award for Outstanding Artistic and Creative Expression
David Edmonds was a member of the University of Rhode Island Class of 1964. He had an outstanding career as an administrator at the University of Massachusetts--Boston. The Edmonds Award is presented to a student who has demonstrated excellence as well as originality and creativity in the arts.
Recipient: Albert B. Coelho

Estes Benson Award for Academic Achievement
Estes Benson was a member of the University of Rhode Island Class of 1979. As a student, he was a star athlete, fraternity man, and participant in a variety of campus activities. The Benson Award is presented to a male and a female student with the highest overall academic grade point average among Black seniors.
Recipients: Danielle Henderson (3.75) and Jean Aubourg (3.37)

Tossie E. Taylor Jr. Community Spirit Award
Tossie E. Taylor Jr. was a University of Rhode Island Ph.D. recipient in cell biology. He served in administrative positions at Delaware State University, Cheyney State University, and the Massachusetts Higher Education Coordinating Council. He was active in numerous community service groups, including Big Brothers, NAACP, Boy Scouts of America, and Rotary. The Taylor Community Spirit Award is presented to an individual or group in recognition of outstanding service that reflects the dynamic spirit of the New England minority community.
Recipient: Ibrahim Abdul-Matin
# PAST AWARD RECIPIENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Award</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Recipient</th>
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<tr>
<td>Gould Award</td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Darran Anthony Simon</td>
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<td>1999</td>
<td>Danielle Leigh Hill</td>
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<td>2000</td>
<td>Chantale M. Edouard</td>
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<td>2001</td>
<td>Patricia Dos Santos</td>
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<td>2002</td>
<td>Marvin LaPorte</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Monica Tavares</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Reza Clifton</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Cynthia Prudence</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Naomi S. Goben</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>Pascale Delaunay</td>
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<td>2006</td>
<td>Nimota A. Solola</td>
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<td>2007</td>
<td>Jenell B. Yates</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Christian Apollion</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Kalyanna Champlain</td>
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<td>2009</td>
<td>Gessie E. Belizaire</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Brandon F. Brown</td>
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<td>Hardge Award</td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Aleah Bagwell Moreino</td>
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<td>Ahyieh Mansue</td>
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<td>Wayne James Montague, Jr.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>Solomon Comissong</td>
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<td>Marc Hardge</td>
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<td>Azikiwe Husband</td>
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<td>2005</td>
<td>Andrea D. Hepburn</td>
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<td>2006</td>
<td>Raydeana Roderick</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Ebony-Anne Smith</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>Ibrahim Abdul-Matin</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>Alissa P. Carroccino</td>
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<td>2001</td>
<td>Igor S. Garcia</td>
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<td>Laura Santos</td>
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<td>Shawalewa Brown</td>
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<td>2004</td>
<td>Paulo M. Cruz</td>
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<td>Thelma Yaniza Titus</td>
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<td>Benjamin Wesley</td>
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<td>2005</td>
<td>Emily M. Hall</td>
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<td>Brian A. Monteiro</td>
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<td>Asad Akinfolarin</td>
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<td>Michonne Gamble Rivers</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Sheena Gonsalves</td>
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<td>2010</td>
<td>Douglas Tondreau</td>
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Turner Award
1998 Nepko Brown
1999 Winston Bedell
2000 Jonathan L. Lewis
2001 Marlon J. Mussington
2002 John C. Cruz
2003 Dorien Agyapon
2004 Claudette M. Bannerman
2005 Candace Ranglin
2006 Aaron M. E. Gardner
2007 Iziarah Roberts
2008 Matthew Lewis
2009 Maye E. Osborne
2010 Brandy O. Derogene
2010 Richlieu A. Norris

Edmonds Award
2007 Emily Bibb
2010 Jason E. Smith

Taylor Community Spirit Award
1999 Brothers United for Action
2001 Jack Reed
2002 Ambrose Jearld
2003 Jimmie L. Davis, Jr.
2004 Peter F. Hurst, Jr.
2005 Geraldine S. Hines
2006 Lisa Churchville
2007 D. Crystal Byndloss
2008 Nicky Sheats
2009 Elizabeth H. Roberts
2010 The Underground Railroad
2010 David Kyuman Kim

Truth Award
1998 Shirley Consuegra
1999 Celise Craig
2000 Cal Vinson Whitfield
2001 Abner Correia
2002 Nicole Love
2003 Naomi Love
2004 Teresa B. Evans
2005 Alex Bien-Aime
2006 Caroline O. Freeman
2007 Kristie Correia
2008 David Bell
2009 Catalina Gomez
2010 Kathy Young

Brandon Brown
2010 Gould Award Recipient
Robinson Award
1998
John Bennett
LaJhon Jones
Joshua King
Cuttino Mobley
1999
Preston Murphy
Antonio Reynolds-Dean
2000
Silas Otniel Rodrigues Pinto
2001
Andrew Wafula
Leroy Womack
2002
Brackston Poitier
2003
Lazare Adingono
2005
Randy Brooks
Reuben Ray
2006
Robert Eben Johnson, IV
Terrence Mack
Tyrese Sullivan
2007
Darrell Harris
Laejon Brooks
2008
Adrian Owen
William Daniels
2009
Jeffry C. Martins
Kahiem Seawright
Jason Francis
2010
Lamont Ulmer
Keith Cothran

Pascale Delaunay
2006
Erin Aseli Fleming
2008
Whitney Hollis
Safiatu K. Mojidi
2009
Chinyere G. Okpara
Ashley Roberson
TyLynn Graham
2010
Kehine Omisore

Omobola Oniyoki
2010 Drake Award Recipient

Uhuru Sasa Anniversary Award
1999
Uhuru Sasa

Gibson Award
1999
Martinique Alber
2001
Zinobia Machanguana
2002
Yatar Kuyateh
2003
Gina Rosen
2004
Denise M. King
2005

Coachman Award
2002
Maria L. Sampson
2003
Bryan Barros
2004
Barbara J. Ellis
2006
Brandy O’Donnell
2007
Frantz Medina
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Angela Lovegrove
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Raphael Solawon
2010
Joy Robinson
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<td>1998</td>
<td>Katrina Douglas, Troy Robinson</td>
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<td>Silas Otniel Rodrigues Pinto, Kevin Delle Femine, Natasha L. Soares</td>
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<td>James G. Smart, Chris S. Washington, Amber L. Wells</td>
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<td>Frederick Arnett II, Cynthia Murray</td>
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<td>2010</td>
<td>Joseph Godfrey, Olubukola Babalola, Maxwell Edmonds</td>
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<td>Brady Award, Jessica Adefusika</td>
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<td>Drake Award</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Tanzeem Ajmiri</td>
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<td>2009</td>
<td>Martha Ofeibe-Tenkorang</td>
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<td>2010</td>
<td>Omotol. Ashorobi</td>
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<td>Faith Tolulope Adewuusi</td>
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<td>ASBS President's Award</td>
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<td>1998</td>
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<td>Moses Siums</td>
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<td>Ruth Laurent</td>
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<td>2008</td>
<td>Jolene Octavius</td>
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<td>Darryl Mensah</td>
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2010 Award Recipients

Jessica Adefusika
2010 Estes Benson Award Recipient

Jason E. Smith
2010 David Edmonds Award Recipient

Maxwell Edmonds
2010 Estes Benson Award Recipient
2011 Rhode Island Onyx Senior Honor Society Inductees

Danielle Henderson, 3.75  Christina A. Knoll, 3.23
Carlene Fiorito, 3.72  John P. Brito, 3.23
Jessica Martin, 3.72  Justin Zebrowski-Blackson, 3.22
Brittany Hedger, 3.57  Mitzie Johnson, 3.20
Margaret N. Lwanga, 3.50  Albert B. Coelho, 3.14
Norma M. Dowdell, 3.46  Dante Aliesh Waters, 3.13
Jean W. Aubourg, 3.37  Ashley M. Reed, 3.11
David Grace, 3.33  Sylvester Makor, 3.11
Rita Tavers-Burk, 3.33  Willie V. McGinnis, 3.10
Megan E. Cruz, 3.33  Paulina I. Lacossade, 3.06
Theophilus K. Osei, 3.32  Rhode G. Laurent, 3.05
Ashley D. Smith, 3.30  Paul F. Monteiro, 3.04
Monica A. Krakue, 3.29  Diamonde C. Goncalves, 3.03
Nicole L. Duckworth, 3.26  Geneva S. Kpangbai, 3.01
Rodney Confident, 3.24  Stephanie A. Fenelon, 3.01

Brief History of Rhode Island Onyx Senior Honor Society

In 2005, Dr. Cynthia Hamilton, former Director of African and African-American Studies and Professor of Political Science and Dr. Donald Cunnigen, Professor of Sociology established the Rhode Island Onyx Senior Honor Society on the campus of the University of Rhode Island. The purpose of the society is to recognize the academic achievement of graduating seniors of African descent. The impetus for the founding of the independent Rhode Island organization was derived from a similarly named group established in 1974 by three administrators and seven Black students at the University of Pennsylvania. The Rhode Island Onyx Senior Honor Society has three main tenets, academic excellence, community service, and cultural pride. Through these tenets, the society recognizes Black student academic achievement by encouraging and providing incentives for scholastic excellence and community service. Society membership is extended to Black senior students with overall grade point averages of 3.00 or higher. The Rhode Island Onyx Senior Honor Society is not affiliated with the University of Pennsylvania’s Onyx organization.
2010 Rhode Island Onyx Senior Honor Society Induction Class

Special Thanks to DONORS
University of Rhode Island Alumni Association
URI Alumni of Color Network
Office of the President
Office of the Vice Provost for Academic Affairs
Office of the Dean, College of Arts and Sciences
Dean Earl Smith
Mr. Abu Bakr

The program was prepared 03/06/11. Please forgive any names spelled incorrectly, omissions, and other errors.
Past Speakers

1998
Dr. Harold D. Bibb
Associate Dean of Graduate School
University of Rhode Island

1999
Dr. John H. McCray
Vice President of Student Affairs
University of Rhode Island

2000
Dr. Robert Carothers
President
University of Rhode Island

2001
The Honorable Jack Reed
United States Senate

2002
Dr. Ambrose Jearld
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

2003
Dr. Jimmie L. Davis
MITRE, Incorporated

2004
Peter F. Hurst, Esquire
Chief-Executive-Officer and President
Urban Financial Group/The Community’s Bank

2005
The Honorable Geraldine S. Hines
Associate Justice
Massachusetts Superior Court

2006
Ms. Lisa Churchville
General Manager and CEO
NBC-10, WJAR

2007
Dr. D. Crystal Byndloss
Assistant Dean for Research
Temple University

2008
Dr. Nicky Sheats
Director of the Center for the Urban Environment
Thomas Edison State College

2009
The Honorable Elizabeth Roberts
Rhode Island Lieutenant Governor

2010
Dr. David K. Kim
Center for Comparative Study of Race and Ethnicity
Connecticut College