

# 2009

## Black Scholar Awards



Tuesday, 7 April 2009 ♦ 6:30 pm

Cherry Auditorium  
Chester R. Kirk Center for Advanced Technology

Keynote Address by Lieutenant Governor Elizabeth Roberts

# **PROGRAM**

The Twelfth Annual  
Black Scholar Awards

sponsored  
by

The University of Rhode Island  
Black Scholar Awards  
Program Committee

7 April 2009

**TWELFTH ANNUAL BLACK SCHOLAR AWARDS PROGRAM**  
**Chester Kirk Center for Advanced Technology**  
**Cherry Auditorium**  
**University of Rhode Island**  
**Kingston, Rhode Island**  
**7 April 2009**  
**6:30 P.M.**

<b>Welcome</b>	<b>Christopher D. Hunter, B.S., M.S., Ph.D.</b> <b>Department of Civil Engineering</b>
<b>Invocation</b>	<b>Donna Gilton, B.A., M.S., Ph.D.</b> <b>Department of Library and Information Studies</b>
<b>Introduction of Speaker</b>	<b>Donald Cunnigen, B.A., MA., A.M., Ph.D.</b> <b>Department of Sociology-Anthropology</b>
<b>Speaker</b>	<b>The Honorable Elizabeth H. Roberts, B.A., M.B.A.</b> <b>Lieutenant Governor</b> <b>The State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations</b>

**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 longstanding financial support and encouragement of President Robert Carothers, University of Rhode Island Alumni Association, and the Office of Alumni Relations.**

**Black Scholar Awards Program Coordinators**  
**Dr. Donald Cunnigen and Dr. Christopher Hunter**

**Keynote Speaker**  
**The Honorable Elizabeth H. Roberts, B.A., M.B.A.**  
**Lieutenant Governor**  
**The State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations**



Lieutenant Governor Elizabeth H. Roberts was inaugurated as the 68<sup>th</sup> lieutenant governor of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations on January 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2007, making history as the first female elected to the position.

Prior to taking office, Lt. Gov. Roberts spent over a decade distinguishing herself as one of Rhode Island's most respected advocates for quality, affordable health care for every family and built a statewide reputation for being a tireless leader on health and medical issues. Roberts served in the Rhode Island State Senate from 1997 to 2007 and received the second highest rating in the General Assembly from Common Cause, Rhode Island's premier government reform organization.

Roberts is leading the fight to ensure that all Rhode Islanders have access to high quality health care at a cost they can afford. In October 2007, Roberts launched Mission: Healthy RI, an advisory work group of representatives from the medical community, the insurance industry, hospitals, business owners, labor leaders, consumers, advocates and other stakeholders. The culmination of Mission: Healthy RI came in February 2008 with the introduction of the Rhode Island Healthy Reform Act of 2008, Roberts' eight part, comprehensive, health care reform package. Four pieces of legislation from the reform package were passed in the most recent legislative session, which ended in June 2008.

Roberts serves as chair of the Long Term Care Coordinating Council, the Small Business Advocacy Council, and the Emergency Management Advisory Council. In her work on the Long Term Care Coordinating Council, Roberts is pushing to expand community-based care for seniors and people with disabilities.

Through Roberts' leadership, the Small Business Advocacy Council has focused on ensuring that small business owners have a voice in government. The council has focused on the rising costs of health care for employers and state investments in small business development.

As chair of the Emergency Management Advisory Council, Roberts has played a key role in working with state emergency management officials and the Rhode Island National Guard to ensure Rhode Island's preparedness for events like hurricanes and terrorist attacks.

Roberts graduated from Brown University in 1978 and earned an MBA in health care management from Boston University. Before serving in the Senate, Roberts worked as a business strategy consultant, policy analyst, and health care manager. She is married to Thomas Roberts and they have two daughters, Kathleen and Nora. The Roberts have been residents of Cranston's Edgewood section for more than 20 years.

Below: Lieutenant Governor Roberts working the phones for the Obama Campaign.



**PRESENTATION OF AWARDS FOR EXCEPTIONAL ACHIEVEMENT**

<b>Award</b>	<b>Presenter</b>
<b>William Gould Award for All-Around Outstanding Achievement</b>	<b>Earl N. Smith III, B.S., M.S.W. Assistant Dean, College of Arts and Sciences</b>
<b>Arthur L. Hardge Award for All-Around Outstanding Community Service</b>	<b>Marc Hardge, B.A. Talent Development Counselor</b>
<b>Martin Luther King, Jr. Award for Outstanding Leadership and Contribution to the University Community</b>	<b>Anna Barraza, B.A., M.S. Center for Student Leadership Develop, Program Coordinator</b>
<b>Harvey Robert Turner Award for Outstanding Service to the University of Rhode Island Black Community</b>	<b>Christopher D. Hunter, B.S., M.S., Ph.D. Department of Civil Engineering</b>
<b>Sojourner Truth Award for Scholarly Persistence and Dedication</b>	<b>Yvette Harps-Logan, B.S., M.S., Ph.D. Textiles, Fashion Merchandising and Design</b>
<b>Althea Gibson and Jackie Robinson Scholar-Athlete Awards</b>	<b>Gordon H. Dash, B.A., M.B.E., D.B.A. Department of Finance</b>
<b>St. Elmo Brady Award for Outstanding Achievement in Science</b>	<b>Charles Watson, B.S. Minority Student Recruitment and Retention Coordinator College of Engineering</b>
<b>Noreen Coachman Award for Outstanding Achievement by an Older Student</b>	<b>Donald Cunnigen, B.A., M.A., A.M., Ph.D. Department of Sociology-Anthropology</b>
<b>Estes Benson Award for Academic Achievement</b>	<b>Melvoid Benson, A.B. North Kingstown School Committee</b>
<b>Onyx Senior Honor Society Ceremony</b>	<b>Donald Cunnigen, B.A., M.A., A.M., Ph.D. Department of Sociology-Anthropology, Onyx Advisor</b>

## 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: Gessie E. Belizaire**

### **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: Ahyieh Mansue**

### **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 areas of organizational leadership, volunteer service, and general service in the University of Rhode Island community.

**Recipient: Sheena Gonsalves**

### **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: Brandy O. Derogene**

### **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: Catalina Gomez**

### **Jackie Robinson and Althea Gibson Scholar-Athlete Awards**

In 1946, Jackie Robinson broke the color line in American professional baseball. In 1957, Althea Gibson became the first African-American female tennis player to win the Wimbledon singles. As outstanding athletes, they never let the racism of the day defeat their purpose. The Robinson Award is presented to a senior male athlete(s) and the Gibson Award is presented to a senior female athlete(s) in recognition of outstanding performance in sports that highlighted skills of good sportsmanship and the best qualities of the scholar-athlete.

**Recipients: Chinyere G. Okpara (Volleyball), Ashley Roberson (Track), TyLynn Graham (Track), Jeffrey C. Martin (Track), Kahiem Seawright (Basketball), and Jason Francis (Basketball)**

**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 high academic achievement in the sciences among Black Students.

**Recipient: Martha Ofeibea-Tenkorang**

**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: Raphael Solawon**

**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: Joseph Godfrey (3.58) and Olubukola Babalola (3.96)**

**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: Elizabeth H. Roberts and The Underground Railroad**



## PAST AWARD RECIPIENTS

### Gould Award

1998

*Darran Anthony Simon*

1999

*Danielle Leigh Hill*

2000

*Chantale M. Edouard*

2001

*Patricia Dos Santos*

2002

*Marvens LaPorte*

*Monica Tavares*

2003

*Reza Clifton*

*Cynthia Prudence*

2004

*Naomi S. Govern*

2005

*Pascale Delaunay*

2006

*Nimofa A. Solola*

2007

*Jenell B. Yates*

2008

*Christian Apollon*

*Kalyanna Champlain*

### Hardge Award

1998

*Solomon Comissiong*

1999

*Marc Hardge*

2000

*Azikiwe Husband*

2001

*Ana P. Semedo*

2002

*Barry O'Connor*

2003

*Alberto DaCruz*

*Shaquila Hazard*

2004

*Andrea D. Hepburn*

2005

*Raydeana Roderick*

2006

*Nicole Austin*

2007

*Sharon L. Isom*

2008

*Aleah Bagwell Moreino*

### King Award

1998

*Ebony-Anne Smith*

1999

*Ibrahim Abdul-Matin*

2000

*Alissa P. Carroccino*

2001

*Igor S. Garcia*

2002

*Laura Santos*

2003

*Shawalewa Brown*

2004

*Paulo M. Cruz*

*Thelma Yaniza Titus*

*Benjamin Wesley*

2005

*Emily M. Hall*

2006

*Brian A. Monteiro*

2007

*Chris Washington*

2008

*Asad Akinfolarin*

*Michonne Gamble Rivers*

### 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*

*Maye E. Osborne*

**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*

**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*

**Robinson Award**

1998

*John Bennett*

*LaJhon Jones*

*Joshua King*

*Cuffino 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*

**Gibson Award**

1999

*Martinique Alber*

2001

*Zinobia Machanguana*

2002

*Yatar Kuyateh*

2003

*Gina Rosen*

2004

*Denise M. King*

2005

*Pascale Delaunay*

2006

*Erin Aseli Fleming*

2008

*Whitney Hollis*

*Safiatu K. Mojidi*

**Coachman Award****2002*****Maria L. Sampson*****2003*****Bryan Barros*****2004*****Barbara J. Ellis*****2006*****Brandy O'Donnell*****2007*****Frantz Medina*****2008*****Angela Lovegrove*****Benson Award****1998*****Katrina Douglas******Troy Robinson*****1999*****Cheryl Anne Connor******Jose Barbosa*****2000*****Angelica Gomes******John Harris******Wennzdehl Powell*****2001*****Kimberly Anderson******Michael Lyle*****2002*****Babatunde Ologun******Joyll Smith*****2003*****Cynthia Prudence******Claudio Rodrigues******Kimberly Starks*****2004*****Sharina Niera Savage******Freddie Skipworth*****2005*****Adilson M. Ribeiro******Millie N. White*****2006*****Kevin Delle Femine******Natasha L. Soares*****2007*****James G. Smart******Chris S. Washington******Amber L. Wells*****2008*****Frederick Arnett II******Cynthia Murray*****Brady Award****2004*****Demond M. Boseman*****2006*****Destiny Woodbury*****2007*****Lucelene Almeida*****2008*****Daryl Mensah*****Edmonds Award****2007*****Emily Bibb*****Drake Award****2008*****Tanzeem Ajmiri******Victor Gonzalez******Ryan Hughes******Sharon L. Isom******Delvin Johnson******Matthew Lewis******Jacquelyn Morein******Albert Omijie******Elvis Soriano*****ASBS President's Award****1998*****Darran Anthony Simon*****1999*****Olajumoke O. Akinrolabu******Danielle Leigh Hill*****2000*****Silas Otniel Rodrigues Pinto*****Uhuru Sasa Anniversary Award****1999*****Uhuru Sasa*****Hamilton Scholars****2005*****Moses Siums*****2006*****Jacqueline Moreino******Shantae Moreino*****2007*****Tifilayo C. Fakiyesi******Ruth Laurent******Jolene Octavius***

## 2009 Onyx Senior Honor Society Inductees

Olubukola T. Babalola, 3.96  
Paula C. Monteiro, 3.70  
Robin Covington, 3.62  
Marie H. Yattara, 3.62  
Joseph Godfrey, 3.58  
Adedamola Ajiboye, 3.47  
Temiloluwa A. Kusemiju, 3.48  
Babawale F. Jenyo, 3.47  
Bright U. Onye, 3.40  
Bukola O. Bakare, 3.33  
Nellie M. Semedo, 3.36  
Jasmin Souza, 3.35  
Sara L. Green, 3.30  
Khabria L. Hundley, 3.28  
Olunfunmilay Y. Jenyo, 3.26  
Chinyere G. Okpara, 3.18  
Marie Joseph, 3.17  
Coretta J. Antwi, 3.16  
Gessie E. Belizaire, 3.16  
Steve Barbosa, 3.15  
Sierra Cooper, 3.15  
Ankawha Blain, 3.14  
Denisha M. Ford, 3.13  
Ramatoulie Touray, 3.11  
Brandy O. Derogene, 3.10  
Theresa J. Evans, 3.10  
Carlos M. Miranda, 3.08  
Kasey L. Johnson, 3.05  
Ginette J. Bernadotte, 3.03  
Joseph P. McCullough, 3.03  
Ahyieh Mansue, 3.00  
Dwan J. Roberson, 3.00

### Brief History of Onyx Senior Honor Society

In 1974, three administrators and seven Black students at the University of Pennsylvania founded the Onyx Senior Honor Society. Its three main tenets place emphasis on heritage, humanity, and humility. Through these tenets, the Onyx recognizes Black student academic achievement by encouraging and providing incentives for scholastic excellence and community service. Onyx membership is extended to academically accomplished Black senior students with overall grade point averages of 3.00 or higher. The University of Rhode Island chapter has the distinction of being the first Onyx chapter established at a New England state university.

## **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 Center for Urban Environment  
Thomas Edison State College*