GOOD TO THE CORE

Xavier institutes changes to the Core Curriculum

Also in this issue:

Alumni Spotlights

Commencement

Honor Roll of Donors

Alumni Homecoming
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Dear Xavier Alumni and Friends,

I am pleased to present to you the latest issue of Xavier Gold magazine. I am inspired by our identity, unique as the only black, Catholic institution within all higher education in America. Our rich heritage as historically black and our Catholic mission to promote a just and humane society, these define our history and our future.

I remain committed to sustaining our founding mission and honoring our African American tradition and Catholic values, to maintaining academic rigor, standards of excellence and outcomes, and to promoting an inclusive Xavier community that offers a safe and assuring learning environment for all its members.

Xavier has had many successes during the past year with the forgiveness of the disaster loan, maintaining our status as the #1 producer of African American doctors, receiving national recognition on PBS, and ranking as the #2 HBCU in America.

We have been expanding our academic breadth with the addition of graduate and undergraduate programs. We are expanding into interdisciplinary fields of study such as Bioethics and Neuroscience. And, we have instituted exciting changes updating the core curriculum.

We have not made these changes lightly. Rather, they are the result of much thoughtful reflection and study by faculty and the academic leadership, and are being implemented presently to assure that Xavier graduates continue to be prepared for the ever-evolving demands of society and of the career marketplace.

As you would expect, today’s Xavier students continue to achieve and succeed beyond all expectations, and we are pleased to be able to share with you herein a few highlights from the past year.

This issue also features a few of our illustrious alumni: three young physicians who are determined to forever change the concept of the black male, a young professor who like many before her has returned home to educate the next generation, and, last but evidently not least, a resourceful 100-year-old gentleman who remains an example of the Xavierite to us all.

As always, Xavier Gold notes the annual Honor Roll of Donors, a comprehensive list of those who made financial contributions to the University during calendar year 2017, and a recap of the successful Give. Love. Xavier Day campaign. We know well that the support and generosity of each and every donor is vital to our mission to educate deserving students, and we are immensely grateful to each and every one of you who give. Our students are grateful.

The state of Xavier University of Louisiana today is well. Its purpose is clear. Our work is really never complete; but with your continuing and unwavering support, commitment, and prayers, this University will remain a source of pride to its alumni and continue to be a beacon to all those in search of an education in service to humanity.

Sincerely,

Reynold Verret
President
Xavier is still first among the nation’s colleges and universities in the number of African American graduates who go on to complete medical school, according to data obtained through the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC). The special report, “Top Undergraduate Institutions Supplying Black or African American Medical School Graduates,” covers the period from 2011-2017, during which time Xavier had 180 of its graduates earn their medical degrees while the second-place school had 150.

The Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) announced that Xavier was one of 43 providers from 22 states and the District of Columbia awarded accreditation for their educator preparation programs. The fall 2017 review by the CAEP Accreditation Council increased to 101 the total number of providers approved under the CAEP teacher preparation standards – rigorous, nationally recognized standards that were developed to ensure excellence in educator preparation programs.

The 2018 edition of the Fiske Guide to Colleges once again selected Xavier among its “Best Buy Schools” for academics and affordability. The publication designated 38 institutions in the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom – 20 public and 18 private – as “Best Buys.” Xavier, which has been awarded “Best Buy” status six consecutive years, was the only university in Louisiana and the only HBCU (Historically Black Colleges and Universities) to make the 2018 list.
Xavier and the University of California-San Diego (UCSD) entered into a three-year program designed to provide exceptional undergraduate students opportunities for summer research in the biological sciences. Under the new UCSD/XULA Graduate Pathways Partnership, up to six Xavier students will be selected to participate in the UCSD’s prestigious STARS program each year, an intensive eight-week academy modeled on graduate school life.

A special report by U.S. News shows that alumni giving to Xavier ranks ninth best among the nation’s Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). The report, “Historically Black Colleges Where Alumni Donate the Most”, ranked 46 HBCUs. The report shows that the proportion of HBCU alumni who donate to their alma maters varies widely across schools. While the average is 11.2 percent, at the 10 HBCUs where alumni contributed the most during that two-year span, the average is significantly higher: 26.4 percent. Topping the list was Claflin University with a giving rate of 47.7 percent, followed by Spelman College (39.3 percent) and Bennett College (35 percent). Xavier came in at ninth with an average percentage rate of 16.7 percent.

This past year students at Xavier had several new options to consider when choosing their preferred courses of study. Heading the list of additions to the College of Arts and Sciences was an undergraduate major in Neuroscience, as well as a minor in the area of Cognitive Neuroscience. Xavier also added another choice of concentration for its undergraduate major in Sociology, this one focused on Crime and Social Justice. A minor in Bioethics rounded out the new augmentations to the curriculum. [And there’s more... See feature in this issue.]

College Consensus, a unique college ratings website that aggregates publisher rankings and student reviews, ranks Xavier University of Louisiana as the nation’s #2 HBCU (Historically Black Colleges and Universities) in its newly released publication, Best HBCUs for 2018.

Xavier was singled out as one of the nation’s 382 best institutions for undergraduate education by The Princeton Review in the 2018 edition of its annual “The Best 382 Colleges.”

XULA was ranked as the best value among southern regional colleges and universities in the 2018 edition of “Best Colleges” by the U.S. News Media Group. In what is a new category for the publication, “Great Schools, Great Prices”, the guide made a determination of what colleges and universities offered the best value for the money as based on each school’s academic quality and its net cost of attendance for students who received the average level of need-based financial aid. Xavier was ranked No.1 in its grouping, heading the list of only 15 schools that qualified for the Southern Region.

College Factual, a leading source of data analytics and insights on college outcomes, ranked Xavier as the best school in Louisiana for military veterans studying chemistry in its 2018 review.

Xavier received other kudos in 2017-18: Psychology Program Named #1 in Louisiana (Zippia.com); Xavier ranked #11 among the 50 Best Value Historically Black Graduate Schools in the U.S. (Best Value Schools); Xavier ranked #2 among the nation’s Historically Black Colleges and Universities (Niche.com); and Xavier ranked No. 4 among the 50 Best Black Colleges and Universities (College Choice.net).
Xavier’s Division of Education and Counseling has the lead role in a U.S. Department of Education-funded initiative designed to recruit, prepare, and develop nearly 900 highly-effective, culturally competent teachers from diverse backgrounds for New Orleans by 2020. The federal agency is funding the ambitious project – which establishes a unique and innovative partnership of teacher training programs among three colleges and four New Orleans education non-profits – to tune of nearly $13 million.

Xavier earned designation as a 2018-19 Military Friendly® School from Victory Media, publisher of G.I. Jobs®, STEM Jobs, and Military Spouse. First published in 2009, Military Friendly® Schools is the most comprehensive, powerful resource for veterans today. Each year, the list of Military Friendly® Schools is provided to service members and their families, helping them select the best college, university, or trade school to receive the education and training needed to pursue a civilian career.

Xavier was one of only 90 colleges and universities nationwide profiled in the Kaplan Educational Foundation’s publication, Your 2018 Guide to College Transfer, a resource guide to the college transfer process for community college and high school students. The highlighted schools are deemed “transfer friendly.”

The New Orleans Black Chorale and the Xavier University Chorus received a nomination for “Best Classical Music Performance” by Gambit Weekly/Big Easy Entertainment for their performance of “Old American Songs & Spirituals” with the Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra. Winners will be announced at the 24th Annual Tribute to the Classical Arts, which benefits the Foundation for Entertainment Development and Education.
The Division of Business’ Team Xavier took first place in the PC Services Innovation trace in HP’s HBCU Business Challenge. The team – Janelle Jones, a junior accounting major from Gonzales LA; Alaina McClue, a junior accounting major from LaPlace LA; Cydney Stevenson, a junior accounting major from Fulshear TX; and Aaliyah Young, a junior accounting major from Birmingham AL (Shades Valley High) – created a Device as a Service (Daas) solution for the education vertical market, including new features that would bring more customizable technology to classrooms for teachers and students alike.

Eman Al-Bassisi, a P4 pharmacy student from Gretna LA, was one of only 13 graduate students selected to the 2017-18 class of Fellows for the New Orleans chapter of The Albert Schweitzer Fellowship. The Fellows will spend the next year learning to effectively address the social factors that impact health and developing lifelong leadership skills.

Four then-incoming freshman – Altonnesha Darby of Gonzales LA, Brooke Jones of St. Louis MO, Tshiama Muamba of St. Louis MO, and Soinkne Morant of Killeen TX – were among 100 top-performing high school seniors named Fund II Foundation UNCF STEM scholars. They each received a total award package of up to $25,000 that includes scholarships and a stipend for STEM internships over five years.

Allana Barefield, a junior mass communications major from Lynn MA, knocked it out of the park moderating a panel discussion during the National Association of Black Journalists (NABJ) convention in New Orleans. She was the only student journalist to moderate a major panel discussion during the event. Last summer she interned at both The New York Times and The Boston Globe.

Kobi Jones, a junior engineering major from Bowie MD, spent last summer at NASA Langley Research Center in Hampton VA, where he conducted research on sulfur/graphene hybrid cathodes for potential use in lithium-sulfur batteries, a possible successor to current lithium-ion batteries.

Brandon Mercadel, an English/English Education major from New Orleans, was featured in a Herchinger Report (later picked up by NOLA.com) article, “A New Orleans Summer Teaching Fellowship is Wooing Young Black Teachers — But Is It Enough?”

Savannah Samuels, a senior chemistry/premed major from Zachary LA, was featured in a Baton Rouge Advocate article, “Unusual Path Leads Zachary High Grad to Liver Cancer Breakthrough.”

Ericka Scott, a junior biology/premed major from Florissant MO, participated in a summer research program at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester MN, where she presented her findings, “Comparing Muscle Fiber Atrophy and Reduced Specific Force.”

Brianna Warren, a senior public health major from South Bend IN, was voted “Class MVP” for the 2017 pharmaceutical sales intern class with Eli Lilly & Co. She spent last summer working for Lilly in the New Orleans and Mississippi region.

Darryl Brown, a junior political science major from Burtonsville MD, was awarded an Ortique scholarship by the Greater New Orleans Louis A. Martinet Legal Society at the organization’s annual Scholarship Jazz Brunch.

Lauren Thornton, a junior biology major Arlington TX, was one of only two college students from Louisiana and 211 nationwide to be named a 2018 Goldwater Scholar by the Barry Goldwater Scholarship and Excellence in Education Foundation. She plans on pursuing a Ph.D. in neuroscience or molecular biology.
Bryan Redmond, a senior psychology/premed major from Memphis TN, served as a member of the White House Initiative on HBCU’s All-Star team. He was one of 62 college students selected for the program based on “their dedication to academics, leadership, and civic engagement.”

Camren Sewell, a freshman biomedical engineering major from Cincinnati OH, broke the Xavier school men’s cross country record for 6,000 meters with a time of 20 minutes, 8.1 seconds at the annual LSU Invitational. The previous record was 21:08.

Four juniors – Nicholas Hall, a biology/premed major from Shreveport LA; Rachel Hitchens, a biology/premed major from Zachary LA; Ericka Scott, a biology/premed major from Florissant MO; and Brittany Strauss, a psychology/premed major from Houston TX – were granted conditional acceptance into University of Rochester School of Medicine, via the Early Assurance Program, for entry in 2019. Students accepted through Rochester’s program are not required to take the MCAT.

Two student-athletes – Charlene Goreau, a sophomore business major from Toulouse, Francie; and Catalin Fifea, a junior sociology major from Bucharest, Romania – won women’s and men’s singles titles, respectively, for Xavier at the HBCU National Tennis Championships, held in College Park GA. Both were returning NAIA All-Americans.

Nicholas Davison, a senior art major from Grand Bay AL, and the editor of the Xavier Herald newspaper, was named a finalist in the College Media Association Display Ad Pinnacle category at the 2017 Associated College Oress/CMA national collegiate convention.

Ammiel Williams, a senior political science major from Los Angeles CA, was awarded a Rangel Fellowship, a graduate program that aims to attract and prepare outstanding young people for careers in the Foreign Service of the U.S. Department of State. The fellowship provides 22k in scholarship funds for graduate school, grants an internship this summer on Capitol Hill and the following summer in a foreign embassy, ultimately ending in employment in the state department as a Foreign Service officer.

Michael Williams, a sophomore dual degree chemical engineering major from Richmond TX, represented Xavier at the 5th annual HBCU Innovation Summit happening in Silicon Valley hosted by the United Negro College Fund (UNCF).
Two students – Yeisha Montalvo, a junior political science major from Bluffton SC, and Olivia Vega, a junior art major from Queens NY, made a presentation, “The Next Generation, A Unique Perspective on Creole,” at the Louisiana Creole Research Association’s 13th annual conference.

Janelle Jones, a junior accounting major from Baton Rouge LA, accepted a PwC IFS (PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP and subsidiaries - Internal Firm Services) Start Internship in Dallas TX. The program is designed to introduce PwC to high-performing students from traditionally underrepresented racial and ethnic minority groups within the professional services industry.

Jorian Reeves, a sophomore chemistry/pre-pharmacy major from Chicago IL, was one of 10 students nationwide selected for the Frederick Douglass Global Fellowship (FDGF) Program, a four-week summer study abroad program designed to enhance their leadership and intercultural skills in Cape Town, South Africa. FDGF covers all program fees and travel costs for the Fellows, who were nominated by their respective college presidents and selected from a large pool of applicants in a national competition.

BUILD scholar Simone White, a senior public health science major from Hot Springs AR, participated in the American Public Health Association Conference in Atlanta GA.

A Division of Business team of junior accounting majors – Janelle Jones from Baton Rouge, Alaina McClue of LaPlace LA, Cydney Stevenson of Fulshear TX, and Aaliyah Young of Birmingham AL – were the Grand Prize winners of the inaugural HP HBCU Case Competition. The competition required student teams to propose and present an innovative business idea to senior HP staff from across the nation. For their efforts, the students received HP laptops, a tour of three HP locations, and an internship opportunity with HP.

Three Xavier students – Sarah Bertrand, a junior biology/premed major from Baton Rouge LA; Maya Bragg, a junior biology/premed major from Peoria IL; and LaMiah Hall, a junior biology/premed major from Decatur AL – were all granted conditional acceptance into Geisel School of Medicine at Dartmouth College for entry in Fall 2019 via the Early Assurance Program (EAP). The special program allows eligible students to apply for early acceptance at the end of sophomore year at Xavier.

Four students – Shanzay Chaudhry, a junior biology/premed major and MARC scholar from Kenner LA; Victoria George, a senior biology/premed major and BUILD scholar from Cordova TN; Alanna Humphrey, a neuroscience major from Plymouth MN; and Ja’Niece Walker, a senior biology major and BUILD scholar from Spring Lake NC – received awards for their poster and oral presentations at the 2017 Annual Biomedical Research Conference for Minority Students in Phoenix AZ. In all, 33 XULA students presented at the conference.

Tiara Bradley, a sophomore psychology/premed major from Chicago IL, was accepted into the Wellman-HST Summer Institute for Biomedical Optics at Harvard University.
Cory Gettridge, a senior chemistry major from New Orleans, placed third with his research poster presentation, “The Synthesis of New Novel CK1 Inhibitors as Potential Therapeutics for Alzheimer’s Disease,” at the Louisiana Biomedical Research Network Annual Meeting in Shreveport LA.

Ilia King, a junior sociology major (health, medicine and society concentration) from Jonesboro GA, was awarded a fellowship for Western Washington University’s National Science Foundation-funded “Research Experiences for Undergraduate Program”, a summer research project investigating reproductive health in Rwanda. This past year she studied abroad at London Southbank University under Xavier’s exchange program.

Kylar Wiltz, a senior biology/premed major from Breaux Bridge LA, was introduced and honored by the National Basketball Association’s (NBA) New Orleans Pelicans during a home game for his outstanding impact and service to the New Orleans community. It was part of their celebration of Black History Month.

Team Xavier scored 11 trophies – including one for first place in interviewing and 4th overall in the team sweepstakes – at the HBCU National Speech and Debate Tournament. Alana Humphrey, a senior neuroscience major from Plymouth MA, was the top individual performer for Xavier, taking 1st place in interviewing and scoring in singles debate (semifinalist/#3 best speaker).

Corinne Williams, a senior history major from New Orleans, was selected for a highly competitive, ten-week communications internship in the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs’ Office of Rural Health in Washington DC.

Sarah Bertrand, a biology/premed major from Port Allen LA, was recipient of the Franciscan Mission Service’s 2018 San Damiano Award, which recognizes college juniors and seniors who have demonstrated outstanding commitment to service in their universities and communities.

Victoria George, a senior biology/premed major from Memphis TN, was awarded a Fulbright Scholarship to study and conduct research in West Africa’s Ivory Coast.

Timothy Ambrose, a senior political science major from New Orleans, was selected to attend the Clinton Global Initiative University at the University of Chicago this fall.
Educational theories, like pendulums, tend to swing back and forth in time as administrators and teachers struggle with the problems of educating each new generation. But some fundamentals never change—or do they?

Since its founding, Xavier University of Louisiana has prided itself on its commitment to the liberal arts, requiring all of its students, regardless of major, to take a prescribed set of courses that were deemed fundamental to a Catholic liberal arts education. Current students and thousands of alumni will recognize this as the Core Curriculum.

The Core in its current form, as rolled out in 1980, was designed to ensure that students in majors as diverse as business and history, or music and the sciences, would all have the same basic preparation. The expectation was that students, exposed to a wide variety of disciplines, would develop a wide range of intellectual capacities that would enable them to flourish throughout their lives – and to make a difference in the lives of others.

And while the number of required hours expanded from 56 to 60 and a few of the specific courses themselves were added or dropped since that most recent tweaking of the core, for the past 37+ years all Xavier students needed to meet those basic requirements to graduate.

That’s all about to see a significant change.

This fall semester will see the implementation of a new Core, the end result of years of study and planning by a dedicated faculty committee. This year’s new freshman class, e.g. the Class of 2022, will be the first students to follow the new standards, although upperclassmen will have the option to adopt them or remain under the Core their class came in with.

Although the most obvious feature of the new Core is that it reduces the mandated workload from 60 to 40 hours, the change goes far beyond simply requiring or not requiring, say, another math course. It fundamentally changes the essence of what the Core is supposed to do by modifying the types of courses that qualify as core requirements, increasing the flexibility for students to choose between different requirements, and introducing
several new courses to satisfy certain criteria.

The streamlined core will also give students greater opportunity and ownership of their education and open up the possibility to pursue majors, minors, concentrations, certificates, or classes both within and outside of their chosen degree path that are interesting and innovative.

Fundamentally the new Core embodies a series of “learning outcomes” which were approved by the University Academic Assembly more than two years ago. These desired outcomes are to ensure that all Xavier graduates will be able to communicate effectively through writing and speaking, be able to use quantitative, empirical, and critical reasoning skills to solve problems, be able to incorporate diverse cultural perspectives in their analysis of uses and to recognize the interconnectivity of human experience, be able to demonstrate a science-based understanding of the natural world, be able to interpret and evaluate diverse forms of human expression, and be able to apply socially responsible and ethical principles to promote equity and sustainability in ways that align with Xavier’s mission.

Continued on page 12

Performance Studies Laboratory Goes Mobile

Xavier’s Performance Studies Laboratory (PSL) program certainly isn’t new and you can’t a degree in it, but it is rather powerful and unique . . . and it’s about to get even better.

The PSL is a humanities-based interdisciplinary academic program which views performance as an object to be studied, a creative method of scholarly inquiry and representation, and a tool for community engagement. Working in an interdisciplinary context, the laboratory uses a performance-based lens for experiential learning and research that culminates with sharing creative work with public audiences.

The PSL offers wide-ranging learning and research opportunities for students such as undergraduate courses, research-based performance projects, practice-based workshops, and performance festivals involving multiple levels of community engagement and outreach. On average each year, the lab engages approximately 150 undergraduates in learning and research activities and reaches audiences of 500, including community members.

Xavier’s PSL is the only performance studies program in the nation at a HBCU.

Recently the program was awarded a $196,854 Louisiana Board of Regents Targeted Enhancement grant to support the creation of a PSL “mobile laboratory.”

Dr. Ross Louis, a professor of communication studies and the principal investigator for the grant, said the funding will enable the PSL to create a “mobile laboratory” with a full range of stage, light, sound, and video design equipment which can be organized into smaller, transportable units for use in individual courses and workshops and combined for large-scale performance research presented to campus and public audiences. In particular, the robust collection of easily transportable materials will allow the PSL to expand its collaborative humanities-based laboratory to include more students from various disciplines.

“We are grateful to the Board of Regents for fully funding this initiative,” said Louis. “The mobile laboratory will dramatically expand the technical capacities of performance-based courses offered in various academic departments, while strengthening faculty and student research, interdisciplinary collaborations, and community partnerships.”

For more information on the PSL visit http://www.xula.edu/performancestudies/index.html.
Dr. Richard Peters, an associate professor in the Division of Business and the Faculty Director of the Core Curriculum said the new curriculum, which has been designed to reach those goals, was crafted to be a unique blend of the University past with its present and future. It will integrate the rich legacy and tradition of Xavier’s identity as a historically Black and Catholic institution with its status a premier institution for contemporary liberal arts education.

He said the courses within the new 40 credit hour curriculum will challenge students to think critically and innovatively about their world, regions, communities, and themselves. Ideally, they will evolve and progress from the early foundational courses that will stress development of skills related to written/verbal communication, quantitative reasoning, and critical thinking, on to exploratory courses that will individually and collectively promote disciplinary and interdisciplinary inquiry.

The final stage of the Core is intellectual development that will empower students to engage holistically with complex issues on a global and societal stage.

Specifically, the core has three tiers, each building upon the other. Each tier consists of some existing courses, some existing courses modified to incorporate the Core tenets, and some new courses specifically designed to meet Core objectives.

The first of these, Foundations at Xavier (13 hours), introduces students to college-level written and spoken rhetoric, quantitative reasoning, and critical thinking and writing skills necessary for success in school and in life through selective courses in English, Math, and specifically-designed courses in the college experience and XCOR-level courses.

The second tier, Explorations in the Liberal Arts (21 hours), delves into such diverse subjects as African American Heritage & Legacies, Faith and Society, Scientific Reasoning, The Human Past, Human Behavior, and Examined Life and Creative Expression and Engagement.

The final segment, Engagements: (6 hours), focuses on engaging the Xavier mission and other important global issues.

Most significantly, all aspects of the new Core Curriculum are guided intimately by the University mission such that students are developed to be life-long learners and global leaders who actively contribute to a more just and humane society for all. XG
Thank You!

to everyone who participated on

give.love.xavier DAY 2018

To date, 2,215 donors have contributed $501,385

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1st Place
Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.

2nd Place
Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc.

3rd Place
Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc.

Rosalind Pijeaux Hale
For being the captain who raised the most money and who brought in the most donors.

Erin Petty
For being the captain who posted the most using the hashtag #63XU18

CHAPTER CHALLENGES
MOST DONORS

1st Place
New Orleans Alumni Chapter
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MOST MONEY RAISED AND MOST DONORS

1st Place
Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.

2nd Place
Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc.

3rd Place
Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc.

GROUP CAPTAIN
GROUP THAT RAISED THE MOST MONEY AND DONORS

1st Place
Class of 1998 “Never Forget!”
2nd Place
Class of 1963
3rd Place
XU Student Leaders

CLASS/GROUP
Class of 1963 | Class of 1998 “Never Forget!” | Class of 2008 | Class of 2017
Xavier Expands Its Academic Offerings

The new Core Curriculum is not the only area where changes have occurred, as Xavier has made a conscious effort to expand the University’s academic offerings. In just the past year the College of Arts and Sciences has added five new undergraduate programs, one additional master’s program, three minors, and a specialized certificate program.

Those new undergraduate degree programs include the Bachelor of Science (B.S.) in Bioinformatics, the B.S. in Data Science, the B.S. in Neuroscience, the Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) in Sociology with a concentration in Crime and Social Justice, and the B.A. in Music degree with a concentration in Jazz Studies, while those seeking an advanced degree need look no further than the new Master of Public Health (M.P.H) in Health Equity.

Here’s a complete look at what’s new:

**UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE PROGRAMS**

**Bioinformatics**
The Bioinformatics program is designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills relevant to the broad field of Bioinformatics, including understanding complex biological systems and their quantitative data; processing, storing, analyzing, and modeling of many types of biological data; and effectively communicating research findings.

The major will provide students with the scientific foundation for learning, discovery, engagement, and innovation. These opportunities will support a well-rounded understanding of the principles and theories of the computing and biological sciences so that students are willing and able to have leadership roles in their careers or as they enter graduate school.

The program’s interdisciplinary curriculum will provide students with content knowledge across the field. Graduates of the program will acquire the qualifications needed to pursue careers in industry, government, and academia as bioinformatics professionals, or pursue further studies towards obtaining advanced degrees or other STEM related degrees.

**Data Science**
The Data Science program will allow students to gain understanding and skills relevant to the broad field of Data Science, including information technology principles, concepts, practices, system and database software, learning from data, and analytical thinking.

Drawing most heavily on the offerings of the Division of Mathematical and Physical Sciences, the program’s interdisciplinary curriculum will provide students with content knowledge across the field, allowing them to acquire the qualifications to work as scientists, and the knowledge and understanding to pursue further graduate training in data science or other scientific fields.

Data Science graduates will be expected to demonstrate knowledge of computer science, mathematics, statistics, and data science.

**Neuroscience**
Research and technological developments are fueling rapid growth in the interdisciplinary field of Neuroscience, which is a study of the brain and the nervous system. Students in Xavier’s program, which is the first of its kind to be offered at an HBCU, will gain understanding and skills relevant to the broad field of neuroscience, including current issues, trends, and questions.

Students pursuing a degree in Neuroscience will augment a suite of Psychology courses with a flexible menu of coursework from Biology, Chemistry, Mathematics, and Computer Science. Graduates of the program will be qualified to work as scientists, to pursue further graduate training in Neuroscience or other scientific fields, or to enter training programs for health professionals.

The new program’s flexibility and interdisciplinary curriculum allow students interested in medical school to complete a pre-med curriculum in addition to the Neuroscience major. Alternatively, students may opt for a new minor in Cognitive Neuroscience.

**Sociology/Crime and Social Justice**
Students interested in sociology can choose to focus their study on the subfield of criminology and the criminal justice system. The new interdisciplinary concentration will use the lens of social justice to expand the study of criminology to encompass inequalities in the criminal justice system, the relationships among behavior, punishment, and public perceptions, and...
how social identities such as race, class, gender, disability and sexuality affect how individuals experience crime or the criminal justice system.

Unlike programs focused on vocational skills, Xavier’s new program will allow students to use sociological tools to develop critical, social scientific perspectives to consider how our definitions of crime, our awareness of its causes, and our reactions to crime are rooted in larger economic, political, and social contexts.

Jazz Studies

The Bachelor of Arts in Music with a Concentration in Jazz Studies is designed for students who have an interest in the performance, theoretical, and historical aspects involved with the study of Jazz. The concentration is based on theoretical concepts, aural applications, and historical information used in Traditional New Orleans Jazz, Swing, Bebop, Fusion and 21st Century Jazz forms and compositions.

The concentration will prepare students for performance, composition, and pedagogical application in the Jazz idiom. They will be introduced to devices used in early, main-stream and contemporary Jazz Improvisation, along with composition and arranging for the small chamber group to large Jazz ensembles.

GRADUATE PROGRAMS

Health Equity

The M.P.H. in Health Equity program will expose students to the five core areas of public health (biostatistics, epidemiology, social and behavioral sciences, health services administration, and environmental health sciences) along with a focus on the integration of determinants of health equity and healthy behaviors.

Students completing the graduate program in health equity at Xavier will be exposed to a broad range of skill-building experiences such as critical thinking, project management, and analytical reasoning to address a plethora of complex health issues and stressors through classroom dialogues, in applied research settings, and in-field practice experiences. The ultimate outcome of this program in health equity is to produce competent and highly-competitive graduates capable of entering the workforce or pursuing advanced training in public health, health policy, and medicine. The program offers both a thesis and a non-thesis option.

MINORS

Afro Latin American and Caribbean Studies

The Afro Latin American and Caribbean Studies minor is designed to enhance student awareness and understanding of the African influence in Latin America and the Caribbean region, and by extension, in Louisiana, as well as to increase development of cognizance and cultural sensitivity toward the international communities of color in the Americas. It will be an asset to students considering careers in international affairs, education, research, and the foreign service.

Bioethics

The Bioethics minor will give students the opportunity to study the ethical dimensions inherent in medical and scientific research, the delivery and practice of health care, and the creation of national and global health policy. This interdisciplinary program includes a wide variety of perspectives: topics in biology and public health, social and cultural issues, and dilemmas in philosophical and theological ethics. The study of Bioethics will challenge students to continually reflect on the meaning of a just and humane society.

Neuroscience (see page 14)

CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS

Spanish for Healthcare Professionals

The Spanish for Health Professionals Certificate Program is a language intensive 15 credit hour series of five courses will provide students with the language skills, experience, and cultural competence needed to aid those in the health care professions in successfully communicating with the Spanish speaking population in the United States. The program will offer two tracks: an international track in Costa Rica in which students gain international clinical experience and a local track in in New Orleans.
Like Déjà Vu, Only Different

Back when she was just a young undergraduate sitting through a chemistry lecture in the very same NCF Academic Science Complex room that today houses her research lab, Dr. Florastina Payton-Stewart ’99 never once envisioned she’d ever be teaching – much less teaching at her alma mater. But destiny was at work.

After spending two years as a chemist at Sigma Coatings USA in Destrehan LA – where she did most of the work and watched her supervisor get most the credit – Payton-Stewart took the good advice of Dr. Stanhope Turnbull, under whose mentorship she upped her career ante by earning a Ph.D. at Tulane University. It was there, as a graduate teaching assistant, she got inspired.

“One of the reasons I chose academia is because it offers me the best of both worlds: I can carry out research that I am passionate about and still impart knowledge on to future generations,” explained Payton-Stewart. “I discovered that teaching chemistry came very easy to me because of the enthusiasm and understanding I have for chemistry. Many people do not realize that chemistry is a part of everyday living. I enjoy turning a difficult subject such as organic chemistry into something interesting for my students.”

And so, she reckoned: if you’re going to teach; then why not Xavier?

“I know it sounds like a cliché, but I really wanted to come back so that young men and women could see someone who looks like them and who sat in the same seat who went on to obtain a post graduate education and accomplish their dream,” she said. “Teaching here at Xavier affords me the opportunity to give back to the place that inspired, nurtured, and educated me.”

Although Payton-Stewart has been back at Xavier for nearly eight years – and risen to the rank of Associate professor in the Department of Chemistry – there are some lingering habits from her undergraduate days that have proven hard to break. To this day she still refers to some of former professors and mentors – who are now her colleagues – as “Doctor”, which generally draws looks of consternation.

“I once viewed Xavier through the eyes of a student; now my view is through the lens of a faculty member,” she conceded. “And the view is very different.”

The students are different too. Payton-Stewart feels that although they are just as bright and similarly motivated, many of today’s students do not value research and study in the way her generation did because now there are so many resources literally available at their fingertips. Welcome to the information age!

“Back when I was a student we did not have instant access to almost unlimited information, so we had to research, study, and look for answers – and were proud of having done it,” she recalled. “We had to figure things out ourselves; many students today expect to be told what to do.”

Payton-Stewart admitted that, if used properly, today’s rapid access to resources can be a good thing as it can provide additional opportunities for students to learn. The question then becomes ‘Are the students utilizing the opportunities’?

Payton-Stewart considers it an important aspect of her job to make sure they seize those new opportunities.
That’s why she prides herself on not only being just a “teacher”, but an “educator” – that is, a person who not only dispenses general knowledge but a person who leaves a permanent impression on her students.

At Xavier, Payton-Stewart teaches Organic chemistry, and Molecular Structural Organic Synthesis (MSOS), as well as a special course that she developed herself, food chemistry. The latter, an innovative course which attempts to explain chemistry to non-science majors through a real-world context – in this case the chemistry of food and cooking – stemmed from her teaching philosophy.

“Food is a universal language that brings many different people together; so why not utilize this to motivate students in understanding chemistry,” she reasons.

“In the classroom, I try to generate an open atmosphere while conveying the material in an unpretentious manner,” she explained. “My main focus is to urge students to comprehend the information and to ask questions. I feel that in order to understand something, you have to embrace the subject matter.”

As much as she enjoys teaching, Payton-Stewart takes equal pride in her research component of her job, which provides the opportunity to bond more closely with her students.

“There is something about being able to see students apply the knowledge learned in the classroom to real-world situations in our research laboratory that is exciting,” she said. “Seeing their eyes light up because he or she understands the chemical reaction they are carrying out is a joy I cannot put into words.”

Her fully functional lab is also the site of some very serious research, which involves studying the chemical structures of phytochemicals in plants as well as existing drugs and then making structural modifications in order to improve their biological activity as anticancer agents. The ultimate goal is to develop a drug that can be used alone or in combination with current methods of treatment for aggressive diseases such as Triple Negative Breast Cancer (TNBC) and castration-resistant prostate cancer.

Payton-Stewart designs the synthetic approach for all experiments in her research laboratory. The daily operations are carried out by her research associate (Dr. Borui Kang), her research technician (Nhu Tran ’17), and her seven current undergraduate students: graduating senior Savannah Samuels, juniors Alaysia Madison, Tamia Luster, and Karla Martin, P1 Camri Eaton, and sophomores Marianne Alexis and Jonah Brown. She’s a little short-handed this summer, as three students are broadening their research horizons at other institutions: Madison (UC Davis), Luster (Baylor College of Medicine), and Martin (Tulane).

“I would like to give a special shout out to Nhu Tran, who has been in my research laboratory for the past three years as a volunteer student researcher, a BUILD scholar, and a BUILD technician,” said Payton-Stewart. “She is a special young lady who has added so much value to my life, my teaching, and my research. I will truly miss her as she leaves to pursue her graduate studies at the University of California-Davis.”

“Being a mentor to students is my favorite part of being back at Xavier,” she said. “I have learned much from my students, and we have formed bonds that extend beyond the research and the classroom. Knowing that I’ve had an influence on their lives is very important to me.”

The paradox is that those very bonds create what is one of her least favorite Xavier experiences.

“It is a very bittersweet moment for me when my students graduate,” Payton-Stewart admitted. “I know this is part of their progression and I am very proud of them; but it is also a sad time for me. I did not think I would be affected like this.”

Just wait. Maybe they’ll come back home too.
Life is Good @ 100

On the occasion of his 100th birthday, Oct. 28, 2017, Dr. S. Bernard Vagner ’39, summed it all up pretty succinctly: “It’s been a good life, no regrets and no felonies.”

You’ve got to love a guy with a sense of humor. And at the ripe old age of 100+, it no doubt really comes in handy on those days when, as you might imagine, just getting out of bed in the morning requires nothing less than an Act of Congress. Of course, he watered down that dry sarcasm a bit by adding the much more sentimental, “I wouldn’t change a thing. I’ve had a happy life.”

Not that Vagner is ready to pack it in. Not by a long shot. Now well into his second century of life and still living independently in his own home, he says he feels his age but that isn’t going to stop him from living his life; after all there is still plenty of good football left to watch. Besides, “I’m just doing this to irritate the Hell out of my kids. Is the will ready yet?”

All kidding aside, in South Bend, Indiana, Vagner is sort of a legend – and not just because he’s been around longer than most anyone else. One of the first African American doctors in the area, Vagner served as the team doctor at the University of Notre Dame, and along with his wife, the late Audrey Elliot ’39, played a pivotal role in fighting discriminatory housing practices in the city.

Born in Louisiana and educated at Xavier, Vagner left home for good when he headed up to St. Louis to complete his medical studies. Racial tensions being what they were in the South during that pre-civil rights era, he sought out what he thought would be a more conducive environment in the North.

There were several stops along the way, but South Bend was destined to be his long-time home. At the suggestion of a friend and at the invitation of some other city residents, the young couple moved to the iconic Indiana town in 1949, where he eventually set up a private practice.

“It had been to many places, but it was South Bend that welcomed us with open arms and gave me the opportunity to open up a private practice,” he said.

But even there he found that African Americans were less than welcome in certain residential neighborhoods. Several years later, the couple publicly testified during the Fair Housing Commission hearings on discriminatory housing practices and was credited with being instrumental in helping to pass the city’s Fair Housing Ordinance in the 1960’s.

That was not his only bout with discrimination, however. Vagner, who as a surgeon had privileges at two area hospitals, said that despite being generally well-liked by his patients and the community at-large, there were still some people who wanted to see him fail.

“I had some doctors at work that always wanted to tell, excuse the expression, ‘colored jokes’ all the time,” he recalled. “I didn’t pay any attention to them. I got dressed and went on about my business.”

Eventually the stress of private practice and being on call at the hospital 24/7 began to take its toll on his own health, prompting his friend and physician to give him a life-or-death ultimatum: slow down or suffer a stroke. But what could have been a career-ending blow turned out to be one the most fortuitous moments of his life.

It was about that time that he was approached by then Notre Dame President Father Theodore Hesburgh, who offered him a job as team physician, and even held the job open for 18 months while Vagner hemmed and hawed about closing his private practice. Actually it should have been a no brainer – not only was it a prestigious position with regular office hours, it opened up many doors to him that had been previously been closed.

As the official physician at Notre Dame, he not only treated the athletes, he treated the priests. Vagner remembers Hesburgh as a kind man and a good person, saying, “He was instrumental in saying: ‘Yes, it’s alright to have an African-American physician.’” said Vagner.
Vagner served as team physician at Notre Dame for 28 years, and was there when the Fighting Irish won the National Collegiate Football Championship in 1988. And he has a championship ring to prove it.

To this day, Vagner still runs into some of his former patients, which indicates he helped some of them stay alive as well.

Asked the inevitable question, Vagner says there is no secret to a long life, it's just a matter of luck. In fact he says it's a miracle he has gotten this far.

When he was 6-years-old he got pneumonia, well before the invention of antibiotics. ["They said if you made it through the ninth day you were probably were going to live; if you didn't make it to the ninth day, bye-bye."] Then when he was eight, he was struck by a car. Somehow he survived that as well, and, in fact it was the care he received after that incident that motivated him to become a doctor.

Now at 100 and counting, what Vagner misses most of all is the love of his life, Audrey. The pair met at Xavier, where he says he was immediately smitten, but it wasn't until years later that they found each other again and got married. They went on to have four children and were married for almost 70 years before Audrey passed away in 2012 from cancer.

“I was really proud of her,” he reminisced, recalling Miss Xavier of 1942. “She was a looker, but she was also a very intelligent young woman.”

Over the years, Xavier has been a rare destination for Vagner; in fact his last visit was in 1989 when his class celebrated its Golden Reunion. But he has never lost touch with his alma mater, which he credits with much of his success.

“The 1930’s was a different era. My high school did not prepare me for college, it prepared me to take up some trade or another,” he said. “I didn’t even have the necessary classes to enroll in Xavier, but the University took me in and allowed me to make up those deficiencies.”

To his credit, Vagner has repaid that debt ten-fold: his record of continuous financial support dates back well into 1960’s. And just this past year he made a planned gift of 60 acres of family property in Dixie LA to the University.

“I owe Xavier a lot,” he said. “If it had not been for Xavier I would never have been a physician.”

Vagner will turn 101 on Sunday, Oct. 28, and the last thing he wants is another big party like the one at which he was feted and fawned over last year. This time around he’s going to stay home and watch some football. After all, what’s the big deal about one more year without a felony? XG

“"If it had not been for Xavier I would never have been a physician."
Xavier Doctors Take the Pulse of Perseverance

It has been more than 150 years since the 13th Amendment to the Constitution officially ended slavery in the United States, and some 53 years since federal Civil Rights legislation effectively outlawed segregation. And yet, even today in 2018, a negative stereotype of the young Black male continues to persist within large segments of American society.

THE VISCERAL IMAGES – readily reinforced through the news, film, and other forms of communications – cast the young Black male as uneducated drug-dealing criminals or violent gang members. Even when young Blacks are cast positively, it more often than not involves sports or music. Rarely seen is the black doctor, lawyer, professor, or scientist, or other number of other worthy professionals.

As such, societal expectations are low, particularly in the K-12 schools, where the black male is not challenged academically nor held to high standards. He is judged not “fit” for certain jobs and professions. The most negative impact is upon the young black male himself, as derogatory portrayals demoralize and reduce self-esteem. They become victims of perception.

Stepping out of those shadows are three Xavier graduates – Dr. Pierre Johnson ’02, Dr. Maxime Madhere ’02, and Dr. Joseph Semien, Jr. ’01 – now all successful physicians, who have decided to challenge those misconceptions in the best way they know how: through the powerful, positive message of Black success.

Johnson is now an OB-GYN specializing in robotic surgery and pelvic floor repair, practicing in Chicago IL, where he grew up. Madhere, originally from Brooklyn NY, is an anesthesiologist in Baton Rouge LA. Semien, a native of New Orleans, is chair of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at Lake Charles (LA) Memorial Hospital.

In a new book, “Pulse of Perseverance,” published earlier this year, the doctors take aim at Black myth. By sharing how they personally overcame the obstacles of poverty, inadequate K-12 educations, and family dysfunction to reach their dreams of becoming doctors, they seek to empower and inspire black youth to work towards their own goals. But more than that, they hope the book will help redefine the portrayal of the black male.

BEFORE COMING TO XAVIER, Semien was leading a double life. To his parents, he was as a church-going teenager who had had some behavioral challenges in school but whose high marks had him on the track to college; but when he was out of their sight, “Lil’ Joe” was distributing drugs and fighting to protect his street reputation. Even after he enrolled, he still had one foot in the streets: he was taking pre-med classes and hustling drugs on the side.

Johnson had grown up in a violent Chicago home where both his parents had stayed strung out on drugs. He had graduated from a “college preparatory”
high school as salutatorian with a 3.67 GPA and a 22 on the ACT, but he arrived at Xavier without even knowing what the periodic table was. At many colleges and universities, pre-med courses are used to weed-out the unprepared. And who’s less prepared than a pre-med student who doesn’t know about the periodic table?

Madhere, who lived mostly with his father after his parents’ divorce, remembered his father bristling as one teacher after another belittled his son’s intelligence and whose cultural biases were expressed as low expectations. As he grew up he had adopted the appearance of toughness to survive in his urban surroundings and almost hadn’t made it to college. Two months after he’d argued with someone who deliberately bumped him on a city sidewalk, the antagonist caught him unawares. “Remember me? You ain’t so tough with a gun in your face, huh?”

In the book, Semien writes, “I was sick and tired of the low expectations everyone had for me, and I turned that anger into my impetus.” Truth be told, that sentiment was a driving force in each of their remarkable turnarounds.

AT XAVIER these three black premedical students struggled with the demands of the university’s rigorous curriculum. All three said that said their elementary and high schools had not prepared them for what lay ahead. But it wasn’t easy. Fortunately Xavier was there for them, providing acceptance, guidance, high expectations and the tools to meet those expectations. And a little tough love as well.

Johnson said that when he started at Xavier, he learned quickly that coasting through was not an option. “Seeing my grades fall was a humbling experience. It would’ve been very easy for me to slip through the cracks during the academic valleys of my freshman year; Xavier itself was my saving grace.”

Mahdere said the most important thing that Xavier gave him was self-confidence. “Xavier never made me feel like achieving my dreams was impossible.” Semien agreed, recalling that faculty gave him the road map to graduation, but the decision to succeed fell on his shoulders.

Just as important as institution support was the fact that these three struggling students somehow
found each other early on, recognized the positive traits they had in common (determination, perseverance, goal-oriented), and formed a bond that allowed them to succeed, despite the challenges and setbacks each would face. In doing so they unwittingly fell into the Xavier philosophy of fostering a spirit of community rather than competition among students.

And through it all, at Xavier, at medical school, and even beyond, they held to each other to one steadfast rule: Failure was not an option, not for any one of them.

“What I have accomplished I could not have done alone,” said Johnson. “Surrounding yourself with like-minded people with similar drive and similar goals is one of the most important things you can do.”

Semien wrote his life story was probably one of the hardest things I’ve ever done. That’s significant because it wasn’t easy for him to make it through college or med school or to pass the many required tests along the way.

“Over the years, I left that past behind me,” Semien said. The book reveals just how hard it was for him to extricate himself from that street life. Writing the book meant revealing to people who only know him as Dr. Semien that he used to be “Lil’ Joe,” the drug-peddling street tough. But he had to do it because he and Johnson and Madhere want their book to inspire children — especially those whose teachers may be writing them off as lost causes.

Semien recalls serving tables as a college student when a woman said, “Joseph? Joseph Semien?” It was his fifth-grade teacher. Proud that she’d remembered his name, he smiled and said, “Yes, ma’am.” And she said, “I thought you’d be dead by now.” (“Think about that,” he said. “Think about that.”)

Obviously, he wasn’t dead, and he explained that he was in college, that he was going to be a doctor. “Hmm,” he remembers her saying. “Well, good luck with that.”

FITTINGLY, the book was launched at Xavier, a campus that sends more African Americans undergraduates on to become doctors than any other college in the country. The event consisted of a Q&A forum, book signing and reception event that played to a standing-room only crowd in the Qatar Pharmacy Pavilion mega classroom and Atrium.

Award-winning New York Times investigative journalist Nikole Hannah-Jones moderated the Q&A. She was introduced to Johnson when she was researching her landmark piece on Xavier’s premed program, “A Prescription for More Black Doctors,” published in September 2015, and then helped them edit their book.

In the magazine piece, Hannah-Jones presented Johnson as a primary example of a doctor who had arrived at Xavier unprepared, where, she found, “they literally tailor the curriculum around addressing the deficiencies that students have.”

Their book is timely. Statistics show that there are fewer black American doctors in the work force in 2018 than there were 50 years ago. Evidence suggests that the reason so few black doctors are in the work force is the schools with primarily minority students leave these children unprepared for more intense classes.

The “Pulse of Perseverance” is an inspirational story of success; one that demonstrates the importance of a strong support system such as exists at Xavier.

“Today at Xavier we continue to sustain the unique educational experience that has yielded so much success,” said Xavier President Dr. Reynold Verret. “We know that students come to us with different levels of pre-college readiness, and at Xavier we embrace each one with an expectation of greatness, and they leave us ready to serve and to lead.”

The three doctors – prime examples of that success – agree wholeheartedly, and hope that young readers currently facing adversity take away one overriding message from the book.

“Your past does not define your future,” said Madhere. “If success is what you want, it’s there for the taking. You just have to go and get it.” XG
The philanthropic values of the Arthur Vining Davis Foundations (AVDF) are based on three key principles: that an educated society strengthens democracy through principled, thoughtful and compassionate leadership; that diversity and pluralism contribute to a strong, vibrant and sustainable society; and that knowledge and educational opportunity should be accessible to all.

Xavier University of Louisiana checks the boxes on all of these; therefore it’s not surprising that AVDF would take considerable interest in Xavier’s successful implementation of its mission. Beginning in 1987 with an initial unrestricted gift of $200,000, the Arthur Vining Davis Foundations have provided the University with nearly $1 million in financial support. That includes two major capital campaign gifts, some Hurricane Katrina-prompted emergency aid, and, most recently, a $250,000 grant which helped to get its fledgling Public Health major launched in 2013.

Today the Department of Public Health Sciences enjoys a robust population of 80+ students (nearly four percent of Xavier total undergraduate enrollment) in its Bachelor of Science program, and will add a Masters of Public Health (MPH) in Health Equity degree program this fall.

“Public health impacts all of our lives. It addresses a range of issues including the control of infectious diseases, clean air, and safe food and drinking water, as well as promoting healthy lifestyles, improving mental health, responding to natural disasters, and preventing chronic diseases,” said Dr. L. Faye Grimsley, Department Head of XU’s Public Health Sciences. “Xavier students are exposed to courses and field experiences designed to equip them with the knowledge and skills essential to leading the efforts of improving the health of communities here and around the globe.”

“The rapid growth of the Public Health Sciences at Xavier would not have been possible without the timely grant from AVDF...”

On behalf of the AVDF Board of Trustees and staff team, we are proud of the support to Xavier University of Louisiana for the launch of the Public Health major,” said Nancy J. Cable, President of the Jacksonville, Florida-based foundation. “AVDF has enjoyed a strong partnership with Xavier in the past, and we were glad to support this project that leveraged Xavier’s curricular strengths and network of industry partners to launch this new educational opportunity for students.”

The Arthur Vining Davis Foundations were created and initially funded through the will of pioneer industrialist and American philanthropist Arthur Vining Davis, who died in 1962. A leader of extraordinary work ethic and executive genius, Davis was a key figure when the Pittsburgh Reduction Company became the Aluminum Company of America (Alcoa) in 1907. Named company president three years later, he built the young enterprise into a vital national industry.

During a long and productive life, Davis amassed a great fortune, offered work and opportunity to thousands, and left a legacy of promise to strengthen the nation he loved.

The philanthropic priorities of the AVDF have traditionally included private higher education, interfaith leadership and religious literacy, and public educational media – all descendants of its historical funding commitments. But recently, the Board of Trustees expanded into environmental engagement, stewardship and solutions, and Palliative Care and End of Life – mirroring its desire to remain moored in its founder’s fundamental principles while meeting the evolving imperatives of the 21st Century.
That van – which today provides much-needed, reliable transportation for physically-challenged students who would otherwise have difficulty attending class and participating in campus events—cost $72,000. It was purchased partially through the generosity of the Entergy Corporation. A small ripple in a big pond perhaps, but it is indicative of how surprisingly nimble the monolith can be when it comes to helping improve the quality of life in communities where it operates.

On the one hand Entergy, one of the nation’s largest utility companies, is an integrated energy company engaged primarily in electric power production and retail distribution operations. It owns and operates power plants with approximately 30,000 megawatts of electric generating capacity (including nearly 9,000 megawatts of nuclear power), delivering electricity to 2.9 million utility customers in Louisiana, Arkansas, Mississippi, and Texas.

But that’s not the only type of energy it generates. Entergy also powers local and regional communities by giving back to the community, which it considers an integral part of its corporate mission. The company’s pervading philanthropic philosophy is based on its belief that educated, critically thinking individuals make for self-sufficient, productive citizens, who in turn give their local communities the fuel they need to thrive.

“We can only be as successful as the communities we serve,” said Rod West, Entergy Group President for Utility Operations. “Entergy is committed to creating and sustaining healthy, vibrant communities through philanthropic support for education, poverty solutions, and environmental programs.”

“It’s really quite simple,” he added. “If the community does well, Entergy does well.”

Last year alone the company awarded more than $17.5 million in grants awarded to more than 2,000 nonprofit organizations located in communities where Entergy has operations. West explained that funding for local projects can originate from either the company’s charitable trust or its many subsidiaries. Grants from Entergy New Orleans—one such subsidiary—are naturally primarily New Orleans-centric, while the Trust, on the other hand, takes the broader view of the entire region. He said the fact that the Corporation HQ is located in New Orleans sometimes allows those two interests to align.

West, a former member of Xavier’s governing Board of Trustees, said Entergy’s role in securing the handicap accessible van for Xavier was consistent with its long history of supporting and reinvesting in the communities that it serves.

“It’s important for the public to understand that Entergy is not some mystical entity, it’s made up of people who live and work right there in the community,” said West, “Our support of the community, and specifically in this case our support of Xavier’s educational mission, matters to me personally. It matters to us personally.”

Over the years, Xavier has been a major beneficiary of the company’s philanthropic efforts to contribute to a society that is healthy, educated, productive, and environmentally safe. Entergy’s record of financial support for Xavier University, which totals more than $1.5 million, includes several grants that were received over the past five years for student scholarships and in support of University programs.

“Entergy recognizes the important role that Xavier University has played and continues to play in the area of higher education, and it respects its reputation as one this nation’s finest HBCUs (Historically Black College and Universities),” said West.
The annual fund at Xavier is the lifeline to the University's operation. Gifts to the Annual Fund benefit the entire Xavier community by funding student life, maintaining and enhancing campus infrastructure, and securing renowned faculty.

In recognition of annual giving, the Loyalty Society honors alumni who have made a commitment to Xavier by making consecutive annual fund gifts.

The various degrees of loyalty range from our Ambassador members (young alumni just beginning their lifelong commitment to annual giving) to our Drexel supporters (who have given to the university for multiple years).

Qualifying Levels

Membership in each level is based upon the amount of the donor's annual gift. All donors must be an annual donor for 5 or more years (except the Piety Membership which is 10 or more years). Specific qualifications are:

- **Ambassador:** Within 5 years of graduation
- **Piety:** 10+ years of consecutive giving at any amount
- **Crescent, Leadership, Sustainer, and Drexel:** 5+ consecutive years of giving starting at $2,500.

For a list of Loyalty Society benefits, please refer to the following page. For more information about the Loyalty Society call (504) 520-7575 or go to www.xula.edu.

The Cold Giving Network is a great opportunity for first time Xavier alumni donors to make an immediate impact on the lives of Xavier students. As a Xavierite, your participation in the annual fund strengthens the foundation of our University and adds to the value of our Xavier degrees.

The Giving Networks are composed of alumni whose annual gifts also support departmental and/or affinity group scholarships. Affinity groups may include, but are not limited to:

- Former Athletes
- Greek Organizations
- Lawyers
- Mobilization At Xavier
- Pharmacists
- Physicians

Giving Network members pledge to make automated payments of at least $40 per month for a minimum of three years.

Benefits

- First time donor spirit package
- University updates with student highlights

For more information about the Cold Giving Network please call (504) 520-7575 or go to www.xula.edu.
The following Honor Roll of Donors includes gifts received by the University from January 1, 2017 through December 31, 2017.

Xavier University of Louisiana is thankful for the many gifts we receive from our alumni, friends, and supporters. Through their generous donations, these benefactors confirm their belief in our educational mission and help to ensure that our students receive a solid academic foundation.

Placement into the respective Honor Roll of Donor categories considers both the sum total of all personal contributions plus receipts from any donor advised fund and matching gifts during that time frame.

Xavier strives for accuracy and thoroughness. If you believe an entry is listed in error, or if you have questions about the Donor Honor Roll, please contact the Office of Institutional Advancement at (504) 520-7575 or toll free at (877) WE-LUV-XU [935-8898].

Alumni

Gift of $500,000 or more
The Estate of Mr. Leo P. Sam, Jr.

Gift of $250,000 - $499,999
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Mrs. Anna Mae Berhel
Rhodes (Estate)
Ms. Annie G. Roberts
Mr. and Mrs. Wilbert D.
Robichaux (Estate)
Dr. Quintin R. Robinson
Mr. Marlon E. Roundtree
Mr. Henry E. Rouson (Estate)
Mr. Leo P. Sam, Jr. (Estate)
Ms. Kathy L. Schulz, In memory
of Johann C.F. Schulz
Ms. Lillie V. Scott (Estate)
Mr. Frank B. Stewart, Jr.
Mrs. Minola Theriot Stuart (Estate)
Mr. Wellington D.
Swindall (Estate of)
Mr. Trevor K. Thompson
Dr. Samuel V. Vagner and
Mrs. Audrey E. Vagner
Dr. Anne Bouise Ward
Mrs. Louella C. White (Estate)
Ms. Jimmie C. Wickham
Mr. Charles H. Wilcox, Sr. (Estate)
Mr. Gary J. Willett
Reverend Nathan S. Willis (Estate)
Mr. Rawson L. Wood
Joyous celebration and reflection were evident everywhere as Xavier’s newest class of alumni received their degrees during the University’s 91st annual commencement ceremony, held May 12 in the Convocation Center.

The highlight for the graduates was, as always, walking across the stage and receiving their respective hard-earned degrees in front of family and other well-wishers. But the graduates also took in some words of wisdom from award-winning journalist Nikole Hannah-Jones, whose message was that “your success is the best revenge” against those who say “You don’t belong here.”

The University used the occasion to present President Emeritus Dr. Norman C. Francis ’52 with yet one more honor: this one an honorary degree from his alma mater.

Five students with perfect 4.0 grade points averages headed this year’s group of 44 summa cum laude graduates, including: Hannah Mbony, a biology/premed major from Brookeville MD; and four pharmacy students – Sarah Bilbe of Kenner LA; Rania El-Desoky of Muscat, Oman; Thao Pham of New Orleans; and Amanda Stevens of Kenner LA.
Bryan Redmond (St. Katharine Drexel Award) and Kylar Wiltz (Mother Agatha Ryan Award) earned the University’s top honors for service.

Award-winning journalist Nikole Hannah-Jones, the keynote speaker, accepts an honorary degree from XU President Dr. Reynold Verret.

Commencement 2018 produced Xavier’s inaugural class of doctoral graduates in the Division of Education — (L-R) Tania Coleman, Rosalyn Hartman, and Candace Williams.
XU President Dr. Reynold Verret, keynote speaker Nikole Hannah-Jones, and President Emeritus Dr. Norman C. Francis ’52 share a quiet moment backstage with the University’s 2018 Summa Cum Laude graduates just prior to the annual commencement ceremony: (first row L-R) Imani Miles, Amanda Stevens, Selena Gray, Jennifer Phan, Faith Simiyu, and Indigo Gill; (second row) President Verret, Lauren Hamilton, Andrea Phang, Janice Nguyen, Taqiyyah Elliot, Jazmyne Darby, Hassen Owens, Jessica Carmon, Anthony Nguyen, Rania El-Desoky, Gabrielle Gaston, and honorary degree recipients Dr. Norman C. Francis ’52 and Nikole Hannah-Jones (third row); Jazmin Stenson, Ezinne Agwaramgbo, Noor Fatima, Morgan Cottingham, Hannah Mbony, Sydney Labat, Steven Do, San Nguyen, Thao Pham, and Ebony Browne (fourth row); Dominique Cameron, Asha Tate, Ronald Salmen, Veronica Mayer, Sarah Bilbe, Savannah Samuel, Imani Reid, Jordan Smith, Bryant Redmond, An Nguyen, and Joshua Adkins. Not pictured: Summer Flowers, Ashley Gragg, Cassandra Johnson, Marilyn Ndukwe, Jonathon Nguyen, Deja Washington, and Phi Nguyen.
DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARDS

The purpose of the Distinguished Alumni Awards is to recognize Xavier University alumni who have embraced the Xavier University mission by making significant contributions in their career, service to others, philanthropy, and who have maintained a strong relationship with Xavier.

The Awards are named for three selfless Xavierites who embraced and lived the mission of St. Katharine Drexel and Xavier University daily.

In memory of Leo Sam ’52, the Career Distinction Award is presented to an alumnus recognized as having outstanding performance within their career or professional field.

In memory of Clarence Jupiter ’48, the Service Award is presented to an alumnus who exhibits integrity, love of family and community, a philanthropic spirit and lives the mission of St. Katharine Drexel through service to others.

In memory of Dolores Aaron ’47, the Spirit of Xavier Award is presented to an alumnus whose deeds and actions reflect the importance of their educational training, pride and loyalty to Xavier University of Louisiana as demonstrated through their interest in and support of the University and its programs.

Leo Sam Jr. ’52
Distinguished Alumni Award
Presented To
Katrice Albert ’94
In recognition and celebration of your outstanding career accomplishments.

Clarence Jupiter ’48
Distinguished Alumni Award
Presented to
Randy McKee ’91
&
Lisa Gibson-McKee ’92
In recognition of your philanthropic spirit and reverence to the mission of St. Katharine Drexel

Dolores Aaron ’47
Distinguished Alumni Award
Presented to
Rosalind Pijeaux Hale ’69
In recognition of the Spirit of Xavier that is portrayed through your deeds, actions, and support of Xavier University of Louisiana.
Maria Sly George ’58 was honored as the Alumnus of the Year during the 2017 Alumni Homecoming Gala. She was presented the Victor H. Labat Alumnus of the Year award during the annual event by XU President Dr. Reynold Verret, with Victor Labat ’55 and XU National Alumni President James Paschal ’57 also on hand.

The Homecoming Gala drew an impressive crowd of alumni and friends. During the event, class agents for the 14 special five-year reunion classes presented the University with gifts totaling $343,206. The Class of 2002 led the way with 100 members (the largest number of donors in any one class) contributing $58,050.

George, a retired elementary school teacher who worked both in Lafayette and Orleans parishes, is still an active member of the Xavier Alumni Association. A tireless volunteer in the University’s fundraising efforts for nearly 50 years, she has served three terms as president of the New Orleans Alumni Chapter and in numerous other roles on behalf of the National Alumni Association. She is a member of Xavier’s 1925 Society, a group of alumni who have made a decision to include Xavier in their estate plans.

Six XULA alumni were honored at the National Minority Quality Forum’s “40 under 40” Leaders in Minority Health event, including Imani Lewis ’05, Lauren Powell ’06, Dr. Cedric Salone ’08, Nicole Lee Plenty ’05, Dr. Amber Robins ’10, and Dr. L’Iissa Gates ’03.
Victor Jones Esq. ’07 and his colleagues, all Xavier-educated judges and attorneys, interacted with students at the Pre-Law Reception sponsored by the Office of Alumni Relations. Nearly 100 students were in attendance.

Dr. Paula Verrette ’75, Chief Medical Officer and Senior VP for Quality and Physician Services at Huntington Hospital in Pasadena CA, interacted with students Bryan Redmond, Larrianna Varnado, Vivian Nguyen, and Kylar Wiltz after delivering the keynote address at Founder’s Day.

Four XULA alumnae – Dr. Amber Robins ’10, Bridget Moore ’99, Mia Robins ’06, and Alexandra Alcorn McCarty ’11 — and three other women share their personal stories of success, struggle, and triumph in a new book, Empower Now for Women, part of the group’s efforts to inspire people to be their best.

Xavier premed students interested in orthopedic surgery as a specialty received a first-hand look at the profession during a Sawbones Orthopedic Bioskills Workshop presented on campus by orthopedist Dr. Christopher Marrero ’87 and Nth Dimensions Education Solutions, Inc.
Alumni Newsmakers

Dr. Jerryl Briggs ’85 is now serving as President of Mississippi Valley State University, having been named to the position by the Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning after a short term as acting president. He has already been credited with introducing a number of initiatives that have resulted in increased enrollment and retention, and has overseen a $17 million capital improvement of the university’s athletic complex.

Dr. Patrice Dupart ’00 is serving as Vice President of Pharmacy & Apothecary-in-Chief at New York-Presbyterian Hospital, one of the nation’s largest and most comprehensive medical facilities with some 2,600 beds, more than 6,500 affiliated physicians, and 20,000 employees. She has over 17 years of experience in hospital pharmacy operations, clinical pharmacy practice, supply chain and drug program regulations, and pharmacy automation. She previously served as Senior Director of Pharmacy Services at Inova Fairfax Medical Center in Washington DC.

Dr. Clevis Parker, Sr. ’95 was named Chief Medical Officer of Nathan Adelson Hospice in Las Vegas NV. In his new role he oversees the overall effectiveness, leadership, strategic direction, structure and management of the medical components of hospice and palliative care. Previously he was the Medical Director at Hospice of Yuma in Arizona. He earned his M.D. from LSU School of Medicine in New Orleans LA.

LaToya Cantrell ’97 made political history when she was elected the first female mayor in the 300-year history of New Orleans in a hotly contested race which drew 17 candidates. Before her election to the City Council as the District B representative in 2012, her community visibility was limited to the city’s Broadmoor area, where she led a nonprofit that expedited the neighborhood’s recovery after Hurricane Katrina. She follows in the footsteps of the late Ernest “Dutch” Morial ’52, who in 1977 was elected the first African-American mayor of New Orleans.
1950s
A portrait of President Emeritus Dr. Norman C. Francis ’52 was placed on display at the Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery in the historic art museum’s latest collection of its annual “Recent Acquisitions” exhibition. The portrait of the 86-year-old educator and lawyer from Lafayette LA was featured among images of numerous individuals who made “a significant impact” on the nation’s history and culture.

Dr. James Paschal ’57 was named Humanitarian of the Week by the Southwest Georgia Chapter of the American Red Cross for his volunteer work in areas of disaster mental health.

1960s

Dr. Gilbert Rochon ’68 joined the team at Academic Career & Executive Search, a West Harvard CT-based recruitment firm. He previously served as president of Tuskegee University, and has held various administrative and faculty appointments at four other universities.

Dr. Rosalind P. Hale ’69, Professor Emeritus of Education at Xavier, was presented the inaugural Dolores Aaron ’47 Spirit of Xavier Award during Alumni Homecoming 2017. She has also joined the staff of the Office of Alumni Relations as a volunteer, where she shares her institutional knowledge, creativity, and energy in support of alumni activities.

1970s


Paulette Fernandez ’72 is alive and well. The 2017 issue of XU Gold erroneously listed her as deceased. We deeply regret the error.

Rebecca Chaisson ’73 was named dean of the School of Social Work at Southern University at New Orleans. Previously she served as an associate professor at SUNO, and also had teaching stints at Louisiana State University and Tulane University.

Dr. Lavanza “Kercheryl” Butler ’75, a pharmacist, vice president, and union representative with the United Food and Commercial Workers International Union, was reappointed to the California State Board of Pharmacy by Gov. Edmund Brown, Jr. She has served on the board since 2013.

The Honorable Vivian Guilory ’75 delivered the keynote address at the Southeast Louisiana Legal Services 50th Anniversary Program and Reception.

Dr. Michael White ’76, the Keller Endowed Chair in the Humanities at Xavier, was featured in The New York Times and the Chicago Tribune in the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey, retelling his experiences with Hurricane Katrina in 2005. He also presented the Culture of New Orleans Series Lecture “Resistance and Redemption in Black New Orleans,” at the Louisiana Creole Research Association’s 13th annual conference.

Dr. Regina Benjamin ’79 (NOLA.com/The Times Picayune Endowed Chair in Public Health Sciences) was named to the Board of Directors for Proteus Digital Health, which specializes in digital medicines therapy.

1980s

Randall Schexnayer ’80, Assistant Dean for Academic Support in Xavier’s College of Pharmacy, served as guest speaker for a meeting of STEM students at the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff. He also visited the campus of University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences as a member of their Initiative for Maximizing Student Development (IMSD) External Advisor Committee.

Troye Madison-Washington ’82 MA ’87, an administrator at Lafayette Academy in New Orleans, reigned as Queen of the Zulu during the 2018 Mardi Gras celebration.

Lynda Plant McGee ’84, the college counselor at Downtown Magnets High School in Los Angeles CA, was named recipient of the 2016-17 Arthur S. Marmaduke Award by the California Student Aid Commission as the most outstanding high school counselor in the state of California. She has been a counselor at Downtown Magnets for 17 years, including 12 as the school’s college counselor.

Veronica Harrison ’86 was named the Atlanta Alumni Chapter’s “Alumnus of the Year” during its St. Katharine Drexel Jazz Brunch.

Ellen Hazeur ’86 was elected Civil District Court Judge for Division A in New Orleans. Previously she served as First City Court Clerk and prior to that on the New Orleans City Council.

Emmanuel Burke, Jr. ’88 served as the music director for the live production of Once on This Island at Le Petit Theatre du Vieux Carre in New Orleans.

1990s

Learnard Dickerson ’91, CEO and president of DACO LLC, a public relations and marketing firm, was the keynote speaker at Meridian (MS) Community College’s MLK Commemorative Celebration.

The husband and wife duo of Randy McKee, Esq. ’91, a partner with Carter & McKee LLC, and Dr. Lisa Gibson-McKee ’92, OB-GYN and a partner with Jackson Health for Women, were presented the inaugural Clarence Jupiter ‘48 Service and Philanthropy Award during Alumni Homecoming 2017.

Gwen Brown MA ’92, a motivational speaker and certified personal trainer in Silver Springs MD, published her first book, Never Give Up: A Guide to Being Resilient, which was inspired by the journal of personal stories she wrote in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. It is available on Amazon.com.

The Rev. Mitchell Stevens ’92, D.Min., a certified chaplain ordained by the Louisiana Freedman Missionary Baptist General Association in 2000 and known by many as an adjunct professor in the Music Department, joined the staff as an XULA chaplain. One of his key responsibilities will be to expand opportunities for multicultural, interfaith and interdenominational worship and service activities at Xavier.

Dr. Dr. John Jackson ’94, President and CEO of the Schott Foundation for Public Education and a member of the Xavier Board of Trustees, was named one of Ebony Magazine’s Power 100 African American Influencers. He was also named to the Board of Directors of the Nellie Mae Education Foundation, one of the largest philanthropic organization focused exclusively promoting equity and achievement in high schools across New England.

Alisa Orduña ’94 was named the Senior Advisor on Homelessness for Santa Monica CA, where she will coordinate the community’s comprehensive efforts to fight homelessness in the region. She previously served as Director of Homelessness Policy in Los Angeles CA.

Sharonda Williams ’94, a special counsel at the law firm of Fishman Haygood, was named to the Loyola University New Orleans Board of Trustees.
Where are they now?

Dr. Chad Dyer ’95 has been named Deputy Chief Administrative Officer for the City of New Orleans. He had been serving as the Director of Code Enforcement and as an attorney, also in New Orleans. His primary responsibility with the CAO’s office will be overseeing land use departments.

AT&T Executive Tanya Lombard ’95 and New Orleans Mayor-Elect Latoya Cantrell ’96 were named to Essence magazine’s 2018 WOKE 100 list, which honors women who are proven change agents, shape-shifters, and power players.

Dr. Angela Jupiter-McCon ’97, an Associate Professor of Nursing, Graduate Advisor, and Evaluations/Outcomes Chairman for William Carey University, was named the Martha Elizabeth Whichard Endowed Chair of Nursing at the Tradition campus in Biloxi, MS. She is the first to hold this endowed chair, which is also the first endowed chair on the Tradition Campus.

Dr. Miller Boyd, III ’98 conducted a National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Institute for College and University Teachers workshop on the Civil War at the Fannie Lou Hamer Institute on Citizenship and Democracy in Jackson MS.

Kevin Choice ’98, a classically-trained pianist and composer turned popular hip-hop musician blending jazz, R&B, and soul, successfully premiered his original piano concerto with the Oakland Philharmonic Orchestra. He is also an educator with the Oakland School of Creative Arts.

Dr. Brice Miller ’98 has been named the Director of the Office of Cultural Economy for the City of New Orleans. A jazz musician and vocalist, he is the owner/creative director of two entertainment companies specializing in music/cultural performers and digital story-telling.

Leslé Honoré ’99 was featured in a New York Times article about her youth enrichment program in Chicago IL, “Helping Young People to Develop Their Own Voices.”

Dr. Florastina Payton-Stewart ’99, a Professor of Chemistry and the CAT Kellogg Endowed Professor in Teaching at Xavier, was named to a steering committee for the American Historic Association and American Philosophical Association’s Mellon Foundation grant, “Extending the Reach of Scholarly Work to HBCU Faculty.” She is one of six HBCU faculty members, three historians, and three philosophers advising the project.

Dr. Kshyun Webster ’99 was named an associate professor of education at the University of Holy Cross in New Orleans.

2000s

Dr. Cedrek McFadden ’00, a colon and rectal surgery doctor affiliated with several hospitals in Greenville SC, was named a recipient of a Liberty Fellowship, an honor bestowed annually to individuals who are demonstrated leaders in their profession and in the community.

Dr. Tara Benjamin ’01, an Assistant Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology at the Indiana University School of Medicine and the Director of the IU Riley Maternity & Newborn Health program, was named a recipient of the 2017 Women of Influence Trailblazer Award by the National Center of Excellence in Women’s Health.

Melanie Caughman RN ’01, was named Director of Emergency Services at the Tulane Lakeside Hospital for Women and Children. She is responsible for the overall management and operations of the emergency department at the Metairie LA hospital.

Beryl Wagner MA ’01 was named assistant principal of Carencro Heights Elementary School (Lafayette LA Parish School System).

Wynter Evans ’03 is alive and well. The 2017 issue of XU Gold erroneously listed her as deceased when it was her mother, Mrs. Nettie Evans, who had passed. We deeply regret the error.

Dr. L’Issa Gates ’03, who specializes in preventive and prescriptive medicine at Ochsner Health Center for Children in New Orleans, was named a Role Model by the Young Leadership Council. She was also named a National Minority Quality Forum 40 Under 40 Leaders in Minority Health Award recipient. In addition, Gates was inducted into the prestigious Alpha Omega Alpha Medical Honor Society.

Dr. Kelley Harris-Johnson ’03 has been appointed an Assistant Dean of the College of Letters and Science at the University Wisconsin-Madison. She previously served as Biology Major Program Manager and Student Services Program Manager III at UW-M.

Jared Brossett ’04 was re-elected to the New Orleans City Council as the District D representative. He began serving on the City Council in 2014 after five years in the Louisiana State House of Representatives.

Royce Duplessis ’04 was elected the Louisiana State Representative for the 93rd District. He previously served as Special Counsel to the Louisiana Supreme Court, focusing on state and local criminal justice reform policy.

Dr. Alexis Stokes ’05 earned a Doctorate of Education degree with a concentration in higher education leadership and policy from Vanderbilt University as well as a post doctorate administrative fellowship from the Harvard University John A. Paulson School of Engineering and Applied Sciences.

Dr. Mary Green ’06, a recent graduate of the LSU-New Orleans School of Medicine, is a resident in pathology at the Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center in Winston-Salem NC.

Mia Robins ’06 was among seven women (four of them XULA alumnae) to share their personal stories of success, struggle, and triumph in a new book, Empower Now for Women, part of the group’s efforts to inspire people to be their best.

Crystal Moore ’07 was named a Fellow in the White House Office of Public Liaison (OPL). The White House Fellowship, a bipartisan leadership and public service program, allows mid-career professionals to spend one year working at the highest levels of the federal government. She will be focused on supporting the White House Initiative on Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs).

Dr. Ashley Sutherland ’08, a recent graduate of the University of Cincinnati’s College of Medicine, is a resident OB/GYN on active duty at the Wright State University/Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton OH.

Dr. Stephanie Warfield ’08, a recent graduate of the William Carey University College of Osteopathic Medicine, is a resident in internal medicine at Merit Health Wesley in Hattiesburg MS.

Dr. Federica Williams ’08, a recent graduate of the Ross University School of Medicine, is a resident in pediatrics at the LSU Health Sciences Center in Shreveport LA.

Dominique Johnson ’09 was accepted into medical school at Southern Illinois University and Wright State University.

Hieu Nguyen ’09 was named Pharmacist of the Year at the North Oaks Medical Center in Hammond LA, where he works as a staff pharmacist.

Kristina Robinson ’09, an instructor of English at Xavier, read from her creative writings at the Associated Writing Programs (AWP) annual 51st conference in Tampa, FL.
2010s

Dr. Kristopher Boone ’10, a recent graduate of the Morehouse School of Medicine, is a resident in internal medicine at Morehouse School of Medicine in Atlanta GA.

Dr. Amber Robins ’10 and Alexandria Alcorn McCarty ’11 were among seven women (four of them XULA alumnae) to share their personal stories of success, struggle, and triumph in a new book, *Empower Now for Women*, part of the group’s efforts to inspire people to be their best.

Dr. Nnanna Alozie ’11, a recent graduate of the Chicago Medical School at Rosalind Franklin University, is a resident in emergency medicine at Hackensack (NJ) University Medical Center.

Dr. Dexter Graves ’11, a recent graduate of the Drexel University School of Medicine, is a resident in emergency medicine at the University of Chicago (IL) Medical School. He was featured in a Philadelphia Inquirer article, “To Address Shortage of Black Doctors, Drexel Medical Students Create Mentoring Network.”

Dr. Stequita Hankton ’11, a recent graduate of the Virginia Commonwealth School of Medicine, is a resident in family medicine at Cook County Hospital in Chicago IL.

Dr. Marleesa Thompson ’11, a recent graduate of the Meharry Medical College, is a resident in emergency medicine at the University of Texas-Houston McGovern School of Medicine.

Taurah Dizadare ’12 has been accepted into the St. George’s University School of Medicine.

Dr. Chavez Scott ’12, a recent graduate of the Meharry Medical College, is a resident in emergency medicine at the Medical College of Georgia in Augusta GA.

Dr. Kristin Signater ’12, a recent graduate of the Morehouse School of Medicine, is a resident in internal medicine at the University of Tennessee Health Science Center in Memphis TN.

Dr. Jasmine Dillard ’13, a recent graduate of the Meharry Medical School, is a resident in pediatrics at the Cleveland (OH) Clinic Foundation.

Reniesha Franklin ’13 has been accepted into medical school at LSU-New Orleans.

Frances Germany ’13 was accepted into medical school at St. George’s University.

Candace Marshall ’13, a recent graduate of the Meharry College School of Dentistry, is a resident in advanced general dentistry residency at the University of Mississippi Medical Center.

Kayla Rodney ’13 read from her creative writings at the Associated Writing Programs (AWP) annual 51st conference in Tampa FL.

Dr. Courtney Royal ’13, a recent graduate of the University of Rochester School of Medicine, is a resident in family medicine at the University of South Alabama Medical School in Mobile AL.

Shavonne Temple ’13, an administrative program coordinator at the Tulane University School of Medicine Aids Education and Training Center, was accepted in medical school at LSU-Shreveport.

Dr. Kaylise Trahon ’13, a recent graduate of the Morehouse School of Medicine, is a resident in emergency medicine at University Hospital in Jackson MS.

Che’La Woods ’13 has been accepted into medical school at Rosalind Franklin University-Chicago.

Dr. Chigozie Dike ’14, a recent graduate of the University of Texas-Houston McGovern School of Medicine, is a resident in emergency medicine at the University of Texas-Houston McGovern School of Medicine in Houston TX.

Dr. Brandon Dotson ’14, a recent graduate of the University of California-San Francisco, is a resident in internal medicine at the Santa Clara Valley Medical Center in San Jose CA.

Dr. Mariah Dunbar ’14, a recent graduate of the St. Louis University School of Medicine, is a resident in family medicine at the St. Joseph Regional Medical Center in South Bend IN.

Dr. Maura Jones ’14, a recent graduate of the LSU-New Orleans School of Medicine, is a resident in OB/GYN at the University of California-San Francisco Medical Center. She was featured on Blakdoc.com, an internet peer blog designed to inspire the next generation of health care professionals.

Dr. LaDonna Kearsie ’14, a recent graduate of the Howard University School of Medicine, is a resident in general surgery at the Howard University College of Medicine in Washington DC.

Courtney Lavallais ’14 has been accepted into the Howard University College of Dentistry.

Dr. Alyssa Mercadel ’14, a recent graduate of the Texas A&M University School of Medicine, is a resident in OB/GYN at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical School in Dallas TX.

Dr. David Nguyen ’14, a recent graduate of the Tulane University School of Medicine, is a resident in plastic surgery at the St. Louis (MO) University School of Medicine.

Dr. Obinna Oko ’14, a recent graduate of the LSU-New Orleans School of Medicine, is a resident in OB/GYN at the University of California-Davis Medical Center in Sacramento CA.

Dr. Oluwadolapo Oyebadejo ’14, a recent graduate of the Baylor University College of Medicine, is a resident in emergency medicine at the Baylor University College of Medicine in Houston TX.

Donielle Williams ’14, a recent graduate of the University of Alabama-Birmingham School of Dentistry, is a resident in pediatric dentistry at the University of California-Los Angeles (UCLA) School of Dentistry.

Tarrin Casey ’15 was accepted into the University of Missouri School of Medicine and the Kansas City University College of Osteopathic Medicine.

Duy Dang ’15 was accepted into the Physician Assistant Program at LSU-New Orleans and Touro University-Nevada.

Edwin Scott ’15, currently in the graduate program in biomedical science at Mississippi College, was accepted into the Tufts University School of Dental Medicine.

Ashanti Anderson ’16, was named winner of the Tennessee Williams Festival Poetry Contest. Her award included a cash prize, publication in Louisiana Cultural Vistas magazine, and a reading at the annual Tennessee Williams Festival. She is currently writing in the MFA program at the University of California-Riverside.

Jessica Chu ’16 has been accepted into the physician assistant program at the A.T. Still University School of Health Sciences.

Katie Peagler ’16 was accepted into the Howard University College of Medicine.

Derriyan Price ’16 was accepted into the Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine at Auburn University.

David Heron ’17 has been accepted in medical school at the University of Illinois and Howard University.

Terry Hevery ’17 has been named a program coordinator at the RISE Foundation in Memphis TN, an organization which works to transform the lives of low-income workers through financial literacy.

Paige Jones ’17, a first-year medical student at University of Arkansas’ School for Medical Sciences, was featured on Blakdoc.com, an internet peer blog designed to inspire the next generation of health care professionals.

Levon Aldon LeBan II ’17 was accepted into the Ph.D. program in chemistry at Kansas State University.

Kaylee Moore ’17 was accepted into the Rural Scholars Program at the LSU-New Orleans School of Medicine.

Catherine Nash ’17 has been accepted into the Psy.D. programs at Midwestern University, the University of La Verne, and the California Lutheran University.

Riley Smith ’17 has been accepted into the Ross University School of Medicine.

Darrius Williams ’17 has been accepted into medical school at the University of Mississippi.
The Xavier family extends its deepest sympathy to the family, friends, and relatives of the following deceased alumni and friends of Xavier. The University was notified of these deaths during the period of June 01, 2017 through May 15, 2018. If a name has been inadvertently omitted or incorrectly listed, please accept our apologies.

**We Remember...**

**Our Alumni**

1944  
Mrs. Audrey H. Duncan  
Mrs. Mildred V. Prudeaux  
Mrs. Shirley R. Willis-Labranche

1945  
Mrs. Claudesta O. Gould

1946  
Mr. Wilbert C. Jones

1947  
Mrs. Leona H. Dawson  
Mrs. Dulcie D. Rudolph

1948  
Honorable Lois G. Bronz  
Mr. Lester J. Relf, Sr.

1949  
Mrs. Geraldine B. Washington

1950  
Mrs. Wilma P. Loyd  
Mr. Edward P. Pierre  
Dr. Mason C. Reddix

1951  
Mrs. Barbara T. Boute  
Ms. Bythelda M. Davis  
Mrs. Emma Goldman Lewis

1952  
Mrs. Constance Gonzales Crouch  
Mr. Frank McKendall

1953  
Mr. Paul L. Guidry, Sr.

1954  
Mrs. Blanche D. Stewart

1955  
Mr. William Houston, Jr.

1956  
Mrs. Stanislaus DePass Rachal  
Mrs. Lenora Zimmerman

1957  
Mrs. Joyce Joseph  
Mr. Joseph Leon  
Mr. Byron Mackie  
Mrs. Aurelia H. Orr

1958  
Mrs. Lois Carlson Cherrie  
Mr. Merlin J. Gibyot, Sr.

1959  
Dr. Clarence C. Haydel, Jr.

1960  
Mr. Elliot Evans

1961  
Mrs. Shirley Llorens Dejan  
Mrs. Marjorie Hamilton

1962  
Mrs. Leslie L. Lee  
Ms. Jacqueline M. Sharett  
Mrs. Moonyeen Taylor  
Mr. James O. Walley

1963  
Mrs. Myrna R. Malveaux

1964  
Mrs. Jean R. Hall  
Mr. Steven L. St. Mark

1965  
Mr. William J. Washington

1966  
Mr. Norman S. White, Jr.

1967  
Mr. Leonard Hillaire, III

1968  
Mrs. Gail T. Lopes

1969  
Dr. Emile Labranche, Ill

1970  
Reverend Murphy A. Lewis  
Valerie Petit Wilson, Ph.D.

1972  
Br. Robert J. Levesque  
Mrs. Pamela B. Lightsey  
Mrs. Ida Smith

1976  
Mr. John Q. Adams  
Mr. Bruce P. Gabriel  
Mr. James W. Kirkland III

1978  
Mrs. Joyce M. Doherty Reimonenq

1979  
Mr. Alvin L. Garibaldi

1980  
Mrs. Everlee H. Knight

1981  
Mr. Thomas A. Lee  
Mrs. Louise A. Doley Mills

1984  
Ms. Charlean Howard

1986  
Mr. Jude T. LaStrapes

1987  
Mr. Merrill J. Lange

1990  
Mr. Thomas B. Forte

1992  
Mr. Louis F. Lecour, Jr.

2007  
Ms. Doris Z. Hoskins

2012  
Ms. Ruth Russell

2014  
Mr. James L. Hearn

2015  
Mr. Kearns Louis-Jean

1993/2000  
Mrs. Angela M. Dupre

**Our Friends**

Dr. Laverne L. Baker  
Dr. William L. Dent  
Mrs. Janith D. Doley  
Mrs. Anna C. Epps  
Mr. Wesley R. Gladhart, Jr.  
Ms. Iris Haydel  
Ms. Lynette M. Leduff  
Monsignor Paul A. Lentz, D.D.  
Sister Patricia Lynch, S.B.S.  
Mr. Beverly J. Martin  
Ms. Darlene J. Millsaps

**Faculty & Staff**

Cynthia J. Cooper  
Ms. Vera Rogers

**Honorary Degree**

1994  
Dr. Eamon M. Kelly

*Correction: The 2017 issue of XU Gold erroneously listed Wynter Evans ’03 and Paulette Fernandez ’72 as deceased. They are both in fact, alive and well. We deeply regret both errors.*
Alumni Milestones
Alumni Milestones

2. Dominique Davis McConduit ’09, husband DJ, and daughter Dylan welcomed a son/brother, August James, on Feb. 23, 2018.
6. Sarah Ann Anderson ’06 married Kyle Burnett in 2017. Pictured with several Xavierites who were in attendance.
8. Nicole Forbes-Shaw ’98 married Dwayne S. Shaw on March 26, 2015 in New Haven CT.
10. Keisha Mitchell Burton, M.D. ’09 married James Barton, M.D. on October 22, 2016 in Houston TX.
12. Angele Young Boutte ’97, husband Corey Boutte, and daughters Isabella and Sophia welcomed their daughter/sister, Chloe’ Ray, on Nov. 18, 2017.
15. Christina Council ’06 got married in May 2016 and gave birth to her first child, Jackson McKinley King, on July 11, 2017.
16. Lorin Comer ’03, Anthony Williams, and four-year-old son Peyton Thomas welcomed their son/brother, Bryson Andrew Comer, on Aug. 8, 2017.
17. Theresa Sanders Bew ’08 married Jaron Bew on May 21, 2016, in Atlanta, GA.

Are you planning a wedding or having a baby?
Submit your good news and photos to alumni@xula.edu
for the next issue of the Xavier Gold!
Getting Involved With Your Area Alumni

Xavier University of Louisiana
ALUMNI CHAPTERS

Affinity Groups

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<th>Physicians Alumni Group</th>
<th>House of Studies</th>
<th>Athletes</th>
<th>Medtech</th>
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<td>President – Trevonne Thompson</td>
<td>President – Evita Bynum</td>
<td>Alexander Williams</td>
<td>Faye Penny Williams</td>
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Organizing Chapters
Alumni Chapters are growing across the country. If you are interested in activating a chapter please contact Assistant V.P. for Alumni Relations, Kimberly Reese ’95 at (504) 520-5189 or alumni@xula.edu or National Alumni Association 2nd Vice-President and Chapter Development Committee Chair, Simone Ellis ’95 at drsimoneellis@gmail.com

Alumni Chapters are vital to Xavier University and serve as a great way to socialize and network with fellow alumni and friends while supporting your Alma Mater.
Getting Involved With Your Area Alumni

Alumni Chapters across the country are working to support Xavier with their time, talents, and treasures. Participating members assist their alma mater with recruitment and fundraising, but are also actively involved in community service projects, family and social gatherings, and networking opportunities.
Getting Involved With Your Area Alumni

Detroit Chapter

Houston Chapter

Meridian Chapter
Getting Involved With Your Area Alumni

Northern California Chapter

New York Chapter

New Orleans Chapter

Washington DC Chapter
Comradeship and revelry were the order of the day as alumni from across the nation gathered for Homecoming 2017. Here is just a brief sampling. Make plans now to attend this year’s celebration, Nov. 14-18, and make your own memories. The 2018 event will feature the five-year reunions classes ending in “8” and “3”, but, as always, all alumni are encouraged to attend.
Homecoming 2017
A View from the Other Side:
Homecoming through the lens of social media.
SHOULD COME AS A SURPRISE TO NO ONE that both of the individuals now honored with banners in Xavier’s Convocation Center for their unwavering support of athletics, were also among the biggest proponents of high academic standards.

So it was that during halftime of the Gold Rush’s homecoming game that Sister Grace Mary Flickinger, S.B.S., now retired and a Professor Emerita of Biology, joined Dr. Norman C. Francis ’52, also retired and the President Emeritus, in a very special place of honor. A 4 x 8-foot banner bearing her name and likeness now overlooks the basketball court area, sharing rafter space with other banners celebrating Xavier’s championship athletic teams of lore.

Most alumni will recall Flickinger as a biology professor who held her students to the highest standards of achievements. She was a long-time proponent of one-on-one advising and of nurturing all students, but it was her reputation as tough but fair that endeared her to generations of students and alumni.

Lesser known is her 36 years as the University’s faculty athletics representative (FAR) and her major influence on the national level, serving two terms as the Gulf Coast Athletic Conference as president, FAR, and on its eligibility and executive committees. She was inducted into the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) Hall of Fame in 1998 and in 2007 she received the NAIA’s Wally Schwartz Award for her work as a FAR.

“Sister Grace Mary has given a lot of herself to Xavier,” said Director of Athletics & Recreation Jason Horn. “We wanted to show our appreciation for all that she has given and done—not just for student-athletes—but for thousands of students and staff throughout her time in New Orleans.”
Class of 1942: (L-R) President Dr. Reynold Verret with Onelia Simpson Martin.

Class of 1947: (front row L-R) Earline Simon Wilkerson, Alyce King Hammons, and Lorraine Gonzales Williams; (second row) President Verret.

Class of 1952: (L-R) Dr. Norman C. Francis, President Verret, and Mercedes Broussard.

Reunion

Class Photos

Class of 1962: (first row L-R) Carolyn Ross Wilson, Sydonia Davis Taylor, Arnaud Catherine, and Jack Hurry Jr; (back row) President Verret.


Class of 1967: (first row L-R) President Verret with Brendolyn Miller McKenna, Angela Dixon, Sandra Jackson Zimmerman, Anne Hamilton Thidodeaux, Diane Verrett Bynum, Linda Louis King, and Marquita Lumpkins Kimbrough; (second row) Myra Marion Lewis, Charles Kerley, Helen Haydel Kerley, Jerrol Larrieu, Bernard Bynum, and Numa Martinez; (third row) Horace Bynum, Sr. Mary Ann Stachow S.B.S., William Ingram, Charles Shaffer, Barbara Hicks, and Thomas Dean.
Class of 1987: (first row L-R): Joan Welch, Sheila Bouldin, Jon Williams, Richele Theodore, and Rosie Sanders; (second row) Felicia Mitchell Broussard, Shelvin Moore, and Tammie Boggan Brady with President Verret.


Class of 1987: (first row L-R): Joan Welch, Sheila Bouldin, Jon Williams, Richele Theodore, and Rosie Sanders; (second row) Felicia Mitchell Broussard, Shelvin Moore, and Tammie Boggan Brady with President Verret.
Class of 1992: (first row L-R) President Verret with Sabrina Echols-Sampson, Tina Jones, Madelyn Tyson, Dana Willis Henderson, and Holly Haydel-Terrie; (second row) Yvonne Collins, Robreka Henderson King, Kathleen Lemelle Crotchet, Rellamichelle Washington Tyree, and Pamela Lee Alexander; (third row) Darrius Hereford, Marc Barnes, Kris Loyd, and Hilliard Fazande III.


Class of 2002: (first row L-R) Dion Martin, Stephanie Williams Easton, Tamara Hudson Lewis, Brandy Gallien, Tammy Honore Brown, Ebony Smith, and Lauren Outlaw; (second row) Richard King, Nina Washington, Teal Holden, Oneka Richardson, and Neil Lewis with President Verret.

*Mixed Classes: (L-R) Danielle Burrell ’97, Taffie Jones ’97, President Verret, Karna Robinson ’97, and Deidra Carl ’97.

Mixed Classes: President Verret with Shiela Sims Sipes ’77.
By giving to the annual campaign you help to provide essential operating dollars. With continually rising expenses, tuition alone is not enough to meet the cost of providing a world-class Xavier education. An unrestricted gift gives us the flexibility to spend where the need is greatest. Through these gifts we are able to:

- Provide scholarships and awards to talented undergraduate and graduate students
- Recruit and retain exceptional faculty
- Support instruction and research
- Award fellowships
- Expand academic support and student services

By making a gift of any amount, you help to support all of these priorities and more.

Planned giving is inspiring. It is through these gifts that our donors express deeply felt emotions and demonstrate a heartfelt commitment to Xavier. When a donor makes a planned gift, it is given with an immense amount of love, optimism, gratitude and of course Xavier pride. These gifts are truly larger than life and will impact generations of Xavier students.

You can make a difference by:

- Making an annual gift to the Clarence Jupiter Scholarship Fund.
- Establishing a donor named annual scholarship. The minimum gift for this fund is $10,000 and can be paid over five years.
- Establishing a Donor named Endowed Scholarship with a minimum gift of $25,000 paid within five years. Endowed Scholarships create a permanent fund.

Planned giving is inspiring. It is through these gifts that our donors express deeply felt emotions and demonstrate a heartfelt commitment to Xavier. When a donor makes a planned gift, it is given with an immense amount of love, optimism, gratitude and of course Xavier pride. These gifts are truly larger than life and will impact generations of Xavier students.

Your gift can be made through:

- Bequests, outright gifts of cash, gifts of securities, gifts of personal property, gifts of retirement assets, life insurance, life estates, real estate, charitable remainder trust, charitable lead trust and charitable gift annuities.

We advise any donor considering a planned gift to contact us at (504) 520-7575. We are here to help answer any question and guide you through the process.

Make a gift through any of the methods. Help to continue the mission of St Katharine Drexel. Let’s all, **Pass It On.**

For more information about Annual Campaign, establishing a scholarship, or Planned Giving, call Office of Institutional Advancement at (504) 520-7575 or visit xula.edu.
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 14TH  
Distinguished Alumni Concert

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 15TH  
Young Alumni Happy Hour • Jazz Ensemble Concert

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 16TH  
40 Under 40 Young Alumni Awards  
National Alumni Association Board of Governors Meeting • Celebration on the Yard • Art Exhibit •  
College of Pharmacy Continuing Education Seminar and Reception •  
Departmental and Division Receptions •  
Alumni Mixer • TGIF Party

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 17TH  
Alumni Golf Challenge • Campus Tours •  
Leadership Breakfast • Tailgate BBQ • Basketball Game • Class Reunion Photos and Reception •  
Silent Auction and Homecoming Banquet

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 18TH  
Alumni Mass • Continental Breakfast

Special recognition and Reunion celebration for  
Peer Deans, Gospel Choir and MAX members

For more information on Homecoming please call 504.520.7575 or visit xula.edu

SAVE THE DATE
HOMECOMING 2018
NOVEMBER 14 - 18