

University of Illinois at Chicago



Office of the
Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs
The African American Academic Network

Convocation Ceremony

May 8, 2015
7:30—9:30p.m.
UIC Forum
725 West Roosevelt Road
Chicago, IL 60607

The History of the African American Academic Network Convocation

The first event recognizing graduating African American students from the University of Illinois at Chicago (End of Year Ceremony) was co-sponsored by the black student organization NSWT-The Uniter and the African American Cultural Center (AACC). AACC Director Dr. Phillip Royster and NSWT organization student leader Malki Brown orchestrated the first two ceremonies in 1993 and 1994.

In subsequent years changing dynamics necessitated a spacious campus location and an official name change to Black-African Convocation Ceremony. In 1997, the coordination of the ceremony transitioned from the African American Cultural Center to the African American Academic Network (AAAN). Since May 1997, the annual AAAN Convocation Ceremony has feted the graduation and academic achievement of thousands of African American students.

The inspiration and purpose for the ceremony was to promote unity and the success of all black students. Supported by dedicated African American faculty and staff, this ceremony remains the singular event at UIC that celebrates the achievements of graduating African American students.

“Lift Every Voice and Sing”
By James Weldon Johnson

Lift every voice and sing,
till earth and Heaven ring,
Ring with the harmonies of liberty,

Let our rejoicing rise,
high as the listening skies,
Let it resound loud as the rolling sea,

Sing a song full of the faith
that the dark past has taught us,

Sing a song full of the hope
that the present has brought us;

Facing the rising sun of our new day begun,
Let us march on till victory is won.

Convocation Program

Processional	<i>Graduating Class of 2015 Grand Marshall Dr. Jamila Rashid Director of the Urban Health Program</i>
Salute to the Class of 2015	<i>Jeff Brown, Director African American Academic Network</i>
Lift Every Voice and Sing	<i>Paula Williams accompanied by Dr. Johari Jabir Assistant Professor College of Liberal Arts & Sciences</i>
Remarks	<i>Dr. Barbara Henley Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs</i>
Student Speaker	<i>Evan Taylor Class of 2015</i>
Musical Selection	<i>Paula Williams Vocalist</i>
Keynote Speaker	<i>Val Warner Co-host, Windy City LIVE</i>
Introduction of the Chancellor	<i>Dr. W. Clarke Douglas Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs</i>
Congratulatory Remarks	<i>Dr. Michael Amiridis Chancellor</i>
Recognition of Graduates	<i>Alex Sainvilier Academic Advisor</i>
Senior Affirmation	<i>Jeff Brown, Director African American Academic Network</i>
Recessional	<i>Dr. Jamila Rashid</i>

Keynote Speaker Val Warner



Val Warner is the co-host of Windy City LIVE, ABC 7 Chicago's new morning talk and entertainment show airing weekdays at 9 am. From the first moment Val auditioned for the show, the producers knew they had someone special. Val's sparkle, sense of humor and warmth made her the hands-down favorite amongst the hundreds of candidates who vied for the top job. Val and her co-host put the fun back in daytime television as they cover everything Chicago from politics, to celebrity interviews and fashion, to what's on people's minds around town.

Prior to joining Windy City LIVE, Val was co-anchor and traffic reporter on WGN-TV's Morning News. She joined WGN-TV in July 2005 as weekday anchor of the station's 5:00 am newscast. She has covered everything from politics and money-saving segments, to the two-day breaking news drama of a runaway dog on the Eisenhower that gained national attention. Val enjoys fashion and celebrity interviews, and co-hosted the popular Morning Show "Mommy Test" segment. She also interviewed outstanding teachers in the Chicago-land area for the "Teacher of the Month" program featured on the WGN News at Nine. Val's work has been nominated for several Emmy Awards in Chicago and other markets.

Valerie is a member of the National Association of Black Journalists and received her Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of California at San Diego in 1996. Val's family is her main focus. She spends most of her free time outside of work hanging out with her kids, mom, sister and grandmother as well as helping out in the community. She does manage to squeeze in time to take in a movie and work on her latest interest-running!

The Class of 2015

Doctoral Degree Candidates

Qiana Cryer, PhD in Social Work

Peggy Snowden, PhD in Special Education

Cheryl Watkins, PhD in Special Education

Master's Degree Candidates

Matthew Berkley

Master of Business Administration & Master of Public Health

Kikelomo Buari

Master of Energy Engineering

Jenifer Burgess

Master of Social Work

Nedak Efetuei

Master of Industrial Engineering

Christine Leak

Master of Social Work

Shambria McBrayer

Master of Public Health

Mylie Montgomery

Master of Education

Guillaume Ngonmeudje

Master of Science in Nursing

Olubusola Olatunji

Master of Science in Nursing

Aisha Pleasant

Master of Arts in Criminology, Law and Justice

Munirah Rahman-Harrell

Master of Science in Health Information

Jamel Russell

Master of Public Health

Kenneth Vasser

Master of Education

The Class of 2015

Bachelor's Degree Candidates

David Aboagye
Dominique Adams
Ramone Adams
Iyabode Adejumo**
Adetokunbo Adeyefa
Enyioma Alilionwu
Kenechukwu Anigbogu
Samson Awoyemi
Selidji Azogan
Rosa Bacio
Alexis Ball
Charan Bashir
Sana Bell (1)
Richelle Bernard (1)
Bradley Bibbs
Lyndia Bissell
Stephanie Blackwell (1)
Kara Ann Bland*
Allison Dawn Brackley (1)
Osman Braimah
Markeeta Bridges
Quamal Burton
Jeffery Childs
Paris Marie Clark*
Lexia Collins
Koren Nicole Cooper
Tyler Aundrianna Crump (1)
Ka'Derricka Davis
Aïssatou Diallo (1)
Valencia T Dickerson
Taiser Elsaed
Jewell Ewing
Randa Figuigui
Christopher Frazier (1)
Jeremy Frye
Brandon Gaskew

Sernard Gill
Shannon Hastings (1)
Aerial Henderson (1)
Jallisa Henry
Sharice Hill*(1)
Gladys Ijelu (1)
Nicole Jacobs
Johnnice Johnson
Ariel Jordan**
Moses Kagimu-Mbogga*
Tierra Keys
Jasmine Kidd
Alexander Kimbrough (1)
Stanley King
Morufat Kosoko
Elias Lawal (1)
Mia Lee
Carrington Lemon (1)
Sherren Lewis
Sade Lindsey
Sienna Little
Ronalyssa Loiseau (1)
Jazzlyn Luckett**
Gregory Madden Jr.
Jasmine Marshall
Michelle Matthews
Karl Miller
Chantal Mondji
Stephanie Moore
Patricia Mutai
Laeticia Ngamboma
Blessing Obioma*
Vera Odedoyin
Oluwefemi Ogunsanya
Philomina Okegbu**

The Class of 2015

Bachelor's Degree Candidates Continued

Hannah Oluyadi	Ashley Sturdivant	Shahtavia Young
Chizelle Onochie***	Evan Taylor** (1)	Aminat Yusuf-Akinbo**(1)
Chelsea Owens	Warren Taylor	
Porsche Palmer	Gabrielle Thomas (1)	
Ciera Patrick	Max Thomas (1)	
Abrianna Phelps	Nina Thompson	
Triton Pressley	Takeisha Thompson	
Kimberly Randall	Antoinette Todd	
Latiera Rayford (1)	Samara Toney	
Demitrius Redding	Gisselle Truiett	
Leon Reed	Shamari Truss (1)	
Casina Rice	Rayneisha Ubamadu (1)	
Jeanette Richardson	Briana Vasser	
Richmond Richter (1)	Janea Vinson (1)	
Ashley Riley	Kimberly Walker	
Alexis Roberts	Shoma Webster* (1)	
Peggy Sally	Raven Wells*	
Jacob Schulz	Daniel Whesu	
Shante Erika Shaw	John Williams (1)	
Morinola Shobajo (1)	Carla Wilson (1)	
Brittney Shurn (1)	Michael Wilson	
Catina Smith	Admasu Wondmagegn***(1)	
Essence Smith*	Kamaria Woods	
Tamika Stevenson	Abdul Aziz Yakubu***	
Kelsye Stone Moore	Basit Yakubu	

Student Recognitions & Honors

- * Cum Laude
- ** Magna Cum Laude
- *** Summa Cum Laude
- (1) AAAN Student Advisor Awardees

The African American Academic Network (AAAN)

MISSION

Our mission is to increase the recruitment, retention, and graduation rates of African American students.

In keeping with that focus, AAAN is also committed to establishing an inclusive and supportive campus environment.

AAAN sponsors academic, social and cultural activities to encourage student engagement.

STAFF

Jeff Brown, Director

Carlotta Johnson-McGowan, Senior Associate Director

Joseph Fields, Associate Director

Juanita McCary, Assistant Director

Paula Benton-Pierce, Learning Resource Center Manager

Ashley Stone, Academic Counselor

Joel Shinault, Academic Counselor

Alex Sainvilier, Academic Counselor

Fuad Raji, Academic Counselor

Qetsiy'ah Yisra'el, Math Specialist

Tiera Booker, Office Support

Special Thanks

UIC Office of the Chancellor

The Office of the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Provost

The Office of the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs

The University of Illinois at Chicago Administration, Faculty, and Staff

Chancellor's Committee on the Status of Blacks

UIC Forum Staff

University of Illinois Alumni Association

Campus Auxiliary Services

Val Warner

Paula Williams

Najwa Dance Corps

Student Convocation Planning Committee

Sana Bell

Shannon Hastings

Alex Kimbrough

Carrington Lemon

Stephanie Moore

Morinola Shobajo



**African American
Academic Network**



**Chancellor's Committee
on the Status of Blacks**

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