

40th Annual Dr. Martin Luther King Program Highlights



On Tuesday, January 10th, during the 40th Annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Program, the Office of Diversity and Inclusion (ODI) celebrated the legacy of the fallen Civil Rights leader. The celebration was dedicated to the late Dr. Frank W. Hale, Jr., former Vice Provost for ODI. Dr. Javaune Adams-Gaston, Vice President for the Office of Student Life was also honored with the 2012 MLK Celebration Dream Award. Dr. Michael Eric Dyson, author and cultural critic, was the guest speaker for the evening.

As always, the program was an exciting display of student leadership, talent, and accomplishment. Representatives of the Greek organizations Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. and Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. opened the program with words of welcome, a candlelight vigil, and an explanation of the significance of the kente cloth ribbons that were given to attendees. Members of the African American Voices Gospel Choir opened the program with a moving rendition of “Lift Ev’ry Voice and Sing” and contributed two musical selections mid-program.

One of the major highlights of the program was the presentation of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Scholarship. ODI’s MLK Memorial Scholarships provide financial support to some of the most talented African American undergraduates at Ohio State. The Office of Diversity and Inclusion thanks the many faculty and staff that contribute to this endowment through Ohio State’s Campus Campaign.

This year’s class of MLK Scholars were honored for their bold navigation of the academic rigors of their selected majors; numerous academic honors; enrichment of the campus environment through strong student leadership; and unselfish service to the university and broader community all while earning an impressive median GPA of 3.658 on a 4.0 scale.

Congratulations to Erica Abercrombie, Joseph Amos, Lawrence Charles, Jade Holmes, and Naomi Johnson, the 2012 MLK Scholarship recipients—job well done!

2012 Recipients of the Martin Luther King Memorial Scholarship

Erica Marie Abercrombie

Erica Abercrombie is from Cincinnati, Ohio where she graduated from Princeton High School. She is a senior enrolled in the Fisher College of Business, majoring in Marketing with minors in Popular Culture and Communication. Erica is an Office of Diversity and Inclusion Morrill Scholar and was a Mount Leadership Scholar. As a member of the Major Campus Events Committee, she chaired the 2011 CarnOval event. She co-chaired the Soul Time Event for the 32nd Annual African American Heritage Festival and served as an Associate Cabinet Director of Student Organization Support and Outreach for Ohio State's Undergraduate Student Government. She served on the E-board for the Office of Diversity and Inclusion's Undergraduate Recruitment Society; was a member of the Council of Black Students in Administration and Black Retail Action Group. She has interned with the Limited Brands and worked as a telecounselor for Undergraduate Admissions and was a big sister for the nonprofit organization Big Brothers and Big Sisters of America. In Autumn quarter 2010 she participated in the Fisher College of Business' Emerging Markets Field Study program in Panama. She recently became a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated, Theta Chapter. Erica has not allowed a neurological disorder to interfere with her ability to attain her collegiate goals. She will graduate this quarter with her Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration. Following graduation she plans to work at a marketing agency for 3-4 years then return to school to earn an MBA in Marketing Strategy.

Joseph Amos

Joseph Amos is from Webster, Texas where he graduated from Clear Brook High School in Friendswood, Texas. Joseph is a junior enrolled in the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences majoring in Economics with a minor in General Business. He is an Institute of Responsible Citizen Scholar, which is a nonprofit corporation that provides intensive leadership programs for America's best and brightest African American male college students. This program prepares students for successful careers not only for themselves but to serve others. He has participated in lectures, seminars and roundtable discussions with former Secretary of State Colin Powell, Congressman John Lewis and Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas. Joseph is an Office of Diversity and Inclusion Morrill Scholar, a member of the Undergraduate Economic Society and is the treasurer of the Fisher College of Business' Professional Development Program. He is a volunteer for Office of Diversity and Inclusion's Todd Anthony Bell National Resource Center on the African American Male. He is an Allstate Insurance Minority Scholar, an Actuarial Foundation Diversity Scholar, a member of the Department of Economics Honor Society: Omicron Delta Epsilon and the international Economic Honor Society. Joseph passed the Society of Actuaries Exam P/Casualty Actuarial Society Exam 1 this September. He completed an internship with Navigant Consultant Incorporated in Washington DC last summer. Following graduation in Spring 2013, Joseph plans to serve as a Summer Fellow with the Institute for Responsible Citizens then seek work with an Actuarial Consulting firm.

Lawrence J. Charles

Lawrence Charles is from Centerville, Ohio where he attended Chaminade-Julienne Catholic High School. Lawrence is senior enrolled in the College of Biological Sciences majoring in Biology with a Pre-Med focus. Lawrence is an Office of Diversity and Inclusion Morrill Scholar and a member of the National Society of Collegiate Scholars, the Golden Key International Honor Society, Phi Eta Sigma and Alpha Lambda Delta Honor Society. He was Kappa Alpha Psi's Fraternity East Central Province Student of the

Year and is a member of University Honors. He served as President of the Society of Minority Scientist, was selected to be a university ambassador for University Honors, served as a peer leader for the Office of Diversity and Inclusions' Todd Anthony Bell National Resource Center on the African American Male and Bridge Program, participated in Ohio State's Athletic Director Gene Smith's Team Smith program, was a member of Allies for Diversity and Multicultural Understanding through Non-traditional Discovery Opportunities. He traveled to London, England with MUNDO and Athens, Greece with University Honors. Joseph attended Columbia Med Center's Summer Medical and dental educational program. He tutored high school students in Chemistry at Eastmoor Academy in Columbus. In addition, he works as a Student Research Assistant for Ohio State's Department of Family Medicine, Division of Sports Medicine. After graduation, Lawrence plans to continue with his research in sports medicine and will be a teaching assistant for Anatomy 200. After this, he will attend medical school where he is considering cardiology. Lawrence plans to graduate in Spring 2012 and is on track to graduate magna cum laude.

Jade Holmes

Jade Holmes is from Pickerington, Ohio where she attended Pickerington North High School. She began her academic career at Hampton University where she was a Presidential Scholar. After completing her first year at Hampton, she transferred to Ohio State where she is now a junior majoring in International Studies with a specialization in International Relations and Diplomacy. She is Co-President for the International Studies Club, Vice President for the International Student Association, Secretary for Fairfield County Young Democrats, and a member of the Undergraduate Black Law Students Association. She is an Ohio State Diversity Ambassador, a participant in Ohio State's Symphonic Choir, African American Voices Gospel Choir and on the committee for Ohio State's Commencement Week activities. She is a volunteer Drill Instructor for Pathfinders International Youth Organization and a tutor for English as a second language. She campaigned for President Obama and for Congresswoman Mary Jo Kilroy. She was a camp counselor for the Ohio Conference of Seventh Adventists and is a musician and singer with an Indie Gospel Band. Last summer, Jade traveled to Quito Ecuador where she spent ten weeks living with an Ecuadorian family, took classes and participated in an indigenous Inti Raimi festival. Jade completed an internship with US Together, Incorporated where she was able to utilize her Spanish speaking skills to assist members of the Latino community with citizenship classes. After graduation, Jade plans to attend law school and pursue a career in international politics. Already fluent in Spanish, Jade plans to become fluent in the languages of Chinese, Arabic, French, and Italian. She plans to graduate in Spring 2013 and is on track to graduate magna cum laude.

Naomi Johnson

Naomi Johnson is from South Euclid, Ohio where she graduated from Charles Brush High School. She graduated in Autumn 2011 from the Fisher College of Business where she majored in Finance and Accounting. Naomi served as the treasurer and secretary for the National Society of Collegiate Scholars; was a member of the National Association of Black Accountants, the International Honor Society Beta Gamma Sigma; was on the planning committee for the African American Heritage Festival; and volunteered for the East Side Catholic Women's shelter the 2-1-1 FOODLINK.