

EPSILON ARCHOUSA JOINS GIRL SCOUTS BOARD



During the 2008 Girl Scout National Council Session, at its fifty-first convention in Indianapolis from October 30 through November 2, 2008, Archousa Marie Johns of Epsilon Boulé, Washington, D.C., wife of Archon Wendell Johns, was elected to the National Board of Directors for the Girl Scouts of the USA. The new board members will serve for the next three years as the Girl Scout movement continues its historic mission to encourage girls to develop courage, confidence and character.

"I feel confident that our new board will promote the heart of the Girl Scout mission – to make the world a better place," said Kathy Cloninger, CEO of Girl Scouts of the USA. "The guidance they provide will help to ensure that girl scouting remains a relevant and dynamic opportunity for girls and young women." The National Board of Directors consists of thirty men and women who have expertise in fields ranging from financial services to publishing and hail from the Latino, African American, Asian American and Caucasian communities, a reflection of the organization's strong commitment to diversity.

Archousa Johns is a former president and CEO of Verizon Washington, D.C., and Archon Johns is chairman of the board for the American Red Cross of the National Capital Area.

Founded in 1912, Girl Scouts of the USA is the preeminent leadership-development organization for girls and adult members worldwide. It strives to serve girls from every corner of the United States and its territories as well as those who attend American or international schools in ninety countries. For more information on how to join, volunteer, reconnect or donate to Girl Scouts, call (800) GSUSA 4 U (800-478-7248) or visit girlscouts.org.

*Archon Duane Taylor
Grapter, Epsilon Boulé*

Family Circle DELTA LAMBDA DAUGHTER GRADUATES IN SWAZILAND

Twenty-year-old Ifedayo Bethel-Sears graduated from Waterford Kamhlaba United World College of Southern Africa in November 2008. She is the daughter of Archon Alfred Sears, a member of Parliament and the former attorney general and minister of education of the Bahamian government, and Marion Bethel, an attorney and distinguished poet.

Ifedayo, whose name means *love brings joy and happiness* in Yoruba, prefers to be called Ife. Her participation in the International Baccalaureate's study program took place from January 2007 to November 2008. Asked why she chose Southern Africa, she confessed it had not been her first choice: "The UWC [United World College] National Committee of



the Bahamas chose Swaziland for me," she said. "It was an invaluable experience that has positively changed my life."

The school was "a miniature world on a mountain," where she found that cultural, religious and moral diversity encouraged students to respect and learn from each other. Academically, the rigor of the program obliged students to become highly focused. The first year of the program concentrated on European and world history; the second year emphasized African history, which fascinated her.

While in Swaziland she had an opportunity to visit neighboring nations, including South Africa, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Mozambique and Tanzania. "I have made long-lasting friendships with people from each of these countries," she said.

At Waterford Bethel-Sears was exposed to presenters from some of the top universities in the United States and Canada. She has since applied to nine U.S. universities and hopes to attend Columbia, where her parents studied and have lectured. She intends to major in international relations and history and hopes eventually to earn a law and business degree.

Bethel-Sears was involved in peer support for students at her school in Swaziland. They held group sessions and discussed such topics as drugs and alcohol, stress, sexuality and family relations. She had previously attended the same high school as her father – St. Augustine's College in Nassau, where she was vice president of the student council and a recipient of the National Student Leadership Award in 2006.

In the Swazi community, Bethel-Sears, who enjoys community service and the arts, taught preschool and primary-school children. Currently she is involved with the Bahamas International Literary Festival, which is organizing a street festival in downtown Nassau to boost public participation in the arts and increase opportunities for Bahamian artists.

*Archon Alpheus Finlayson
Grapter, Delta Lambda Boulé*

SIGMA ARCHOUSA NAMED INTERIM CHAIR



On January 16, Archousa Lana Rucks of Sigma Boulé, Dayton, wife of Archon Edmund Moore, was tapped to become the interim chair of the board of advisers for the department of psychology at Sinclair Community College. In this role Archousa Rucks will work with stakeholders on issues related to accreditation, improving student readiness and developing the department's strategic plan.

She is the founder and principal consultant of the Rucks Group, LLC, a managerial consulting company that serves clients within the private and public sectors who recognize the need for a transformative shift in mind-set in order to achieve behavior change. She has extensive experience in the behavioral sciences, and she works with organizations to develop innovative solutions to workforce development, employee engagement and talent-management issues. She received her doctorate in social psychology – a subfield that examines how situational factors affect behavior – from Ohio State University in March 2008.

Archousa Rucks cowrote an entry for the *Encyclopedia of Social Psychology* that highlighted the role of anxiety in performance, and her articles regarding social psychological issues such as groupthink and stereotype threat (how the mere reminder of a negative stereotype impedes performance) have appeared in the *Dayton Daily News*. Additionally, her essay detailing the importance of parent involvement in education, “A Well-Educated Black,” was published in Tavis Smiley’s *Keeping the Faith: Stories of Love, Courage, Healing, and Hope from Black America*. Archousa Rucks is often invited to speak to professional and general audiences on topics related to performance improvement.

*Archon Andrew C. Hughey
Grapter, Sigma Boulé*

DELTA TAU DAUGHTER SHINES IN MEDICINE



Delicia M. Haynes, M.D., age 31, daughter of Archon Tommy Haynes and Archousa Marilyn Haynes of Delta Tau Boulé, Frankfort, Kentucky, completed her residency in family medicine at the Halifax Health Center for Family & Sports Medicine in Daytona Beach, Florida. On February 3 she opened the Family First Health Center, a solo family practice in Daytona Beach, and she now has sixty patients to whom she offers primary-care services as well as preventive medicine, immunizations and screenings. She also conducted a health fair – “A Lifetime of Wellness” – on April 18 at Bethune-Cookman University’s Center for Civic Engagement.

Dr. Haynes was featured on the front page of the *Daytona Times: East Central Florida’s Black Voice* newspaper on March 12. Having her own office has been her dream even prior to attending medical school. She said that the business aspect of such an enterprise was a challenge and that she embraced it wholeheartedly. Local physicians “have been very supportive” in helping her establish a niche, she said. “People want to see me do well.”

She graduated from the University of Louisville in 2000 with a degree in biology and a minor in Spanish and obtained her M.D. degree from the University of Kentucky College of Medicine in 2005. She was selected as the Florida Academy of Family Physicians Resident Scholar in 2008.

*Archon Tommy Haynes
Grapter, Delta Tau Boulé*

CAMELLIA NAMED FOR ARCHOUSA RIVERS



A beautiful multilayered, dark pink camellia named in honor of Fort Valley State University's first lady, Archousa Betty H. Rivers, wife of FVSU president Archon Larry E. Rivers of Beta Chi Boulé, Fort Valley, Georgia, was unveiled during a ceremony Friday morning, February 13, at the C.W. Pettigrew Farm and Community Life Center on Fort Valley State's scenic campus. Camellia breeder Gene Phillips of Savannah developed the flower for the Archousa.

In her remarks to a large crowd of family members, students, friends, church members and other well-wishers, Archousa Rivers expressed her surprise when she was initially approached by the American Camellia Society with the idea of a namesake flower. She referred to the book of Genesis, when God called on Adam to name living things. "I am honored that one of God's creations will bear my name – a beautiful pink camellia. I am humbled by this experience."

Following the ceremony, which included a poem recital and performance by the FVSU Philharmonic Chorale, the camellia was planted in the university's newly established garden, which is complete with a stately white gazebo. The garden's name was also unveiled: Blossoms in the Valley: The Betty H. Rivers Camellia Garden. There were commemorative items for purchase, including a video produced by FVSU mass-communications students, a cup and a keepsake calendar titled "Celebrating Possibilities."

*Archon Berry D. Jordan
Grapter, Beta Chi Boulé*

BETA DAUGHTER NAMED CHIEF RESIDENT



In March 2009 Dr. Khalilah M. Brown, daughter of Archon Jesse B. Brown and Archousa Delores Gillum Brown of Beta Boulé, Chicago, was named the chief resident at the University of Chicago Hospitals Department of Neurology for 2009–10. As one of only two chief residents in this department, Brown will be responsible for coordinating and giving lectures to neurology residents and occasionally to third- and fourth-year medical students at the Pritzker School of Medicine, University of Chicago. Her academic, professional and vocational backgrounds have prepared her well for this honor.

Brown will subspecialize in pain management, with the goal of working with new interventional techniques and using her neurological diagnostic as well as counseling skills with patients.

*Archon Jesse B. Brown
Grapter, Beta Boulé*



Editorial Opinion

BLINDERS ARE NOT AN OPTION

By Archousa Vanzetta Penn McPherson

Whenever cataclysmic change occurs, especially when it alters established social discomfiture people inevitably expect centuries-old traditions to evaporate in months, or even weeks. Those same people expect the change agents to erase, as Barack Obama said in his “race speech” in March 2008, “the disparities that exist in the African American community today [that] can be directly traced to inequalities passed on from an earlier generation that suffered under the brutal legacy of slavery and Jim Crow.”

The label often assigned to this erasure is “color blindness.” That label doesn’t suggest an egalitarian paradise; rather, it summons the image of a society in which color – or race – is irrelevant to the political process, social intercourse and cultural exchanges. The concept of color blindness invites us to imagine a national community where race and color are not factors in any of the judgments, evaluations or decisions that people routinely make.

As appetizing as these postulates may be, the fact is that the current status of African Americans compels the conclusion that neither color blindness nor postracialism is realistic, desirable, useful – or even possible. Indeed, efforts to homogenize the population are likely borne of the tactical need of some whites to assimilate with the cast of characters from which a universally loved – and powerful – star has emerged, or the desperate need of some blacks to immunize themselves finally from the demerit of color.

The declared desire to see us without acknowledging us is a toxic pronouncement to a people whose twentieth-century literary masterpiece reminded them that they are often invisible. By attempting to skip from the elementary school of cultural awareness to the university of multiculturalism, those who aspire to color blindness encourage a society that erases the backdrop of history against which we gained full citizenship. That history, which includes triumphs over seemingly insurmountable odds, informs our collective identity and undergirds our faith in American democracy, especially the federal judiciary.

Our history also exposes the myth that we have taken more from this country than we have given. From the construction of the White House to valor in every American war, colored workers and soldiers have contributed to America’s greatness and to its power. Today the largely successful African American struggle to share in America’s constitutional bounty has made us the collective conscience of the nation, and many other groups – women, religious minorities, other ethnic minorities, the disabled and the elderly – have followed our paths of resistance to a more tangible democracy for themselves. This is a material part of the faces we wear.

Yearning for color blindness also disavows the residuals of human bondage that perpetuate our estrangement from others and our discomfort with each other. The effects of 244 years of involuntary servitude cannot be neutralized by ninety-one years of sanctioned racial hostility followed by fifty-four years of progressive racial tolerance – even if those three eras do culminate in the election of a black president. When British slave owner Willie Lynch counseled Virginia slave owners about proper management of their slaves in



Archousa Vanzetta Penn McPherson

1712, he shared methods of subjugating blacks that, in his words, would control them “for at least 300 years” by instilling among them “fear, distrust and envy.”

It was in that connection that President Obama readily acknowledged in his aforementioned race speech that he is “married to a black American who carries within her the blood of slaves and slaveowners” and that together they pass that “inheritance” to their “two precious daughters.”

The lingering impact of bondage is similar in effect to the enduring advantage of antebellum family wealth. The lingering impact of deliberate family disintegration is similar in effect to the continuing benefits of century-old political and social networks. The intensity of each phenomenon molded the past, shapes the present and presages the future. Thus, while we should condemn all efforts to indulge in slavish subjection or wallow in victimization, we should also condemn a social myopia that ignores the persistence of bias and adverse treatment based on race.

Finally, an insistence on color blindness neutralizes the melanin connection that yields pride in the achievement of blacks, emulation of the success of blacks, and co-ownership of the power held by blacks – one black in particular. To be sure, so random was the importation of human cargo during this country’s infancy that often skin color was one of very few links. An onset of color blindness in the 1700’s might thus have been more efficacious. By now, however, our common experiences, our similar stories and our identifiable world view connect us and engender a cultural adhesion that protects the integrity of our shared history and reinforces the modeling that we provide each other.

Inasmuch as we have unwillingly walked in the shoes of those similarly hued, we justifiably choose to do so at this time – our time. Those who now seek, as President Obama suggested, “to purchase racial reconciliation on the cheap” by suddenly seeing no color, may find that their erasers do not work and that the chalkboard of the African American experience has become a canvas.

